

PROMOTION RECOMMENDATION
The University of Michigan
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

Sheila C. Murphy, assistant professor of screen arts and cultures, College of Literature, Science and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of screen arts and cultures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2002	University of California, Irvine
M.A.	1998	University of California, Irvine
B.A.	1996	University of Rochester

Professional Record:

2003 – present	Assistant Professor, Department of Screen Arts and Cultures, University of Michigan
2002 – 2003	Visiting Instructor, Program in Film and Video Studies, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluations:

Teaching – Professor Murphy is a gifted teacher and mentor, who inspires students to achieve the highest standards. She is able to teach a wide range of subjects because her interdisciplinarity is real. So core television courses, the graduate seminar in theory for students in film and television, film history, and digital technologies are all within her purview. This makes her an extremely valuable member of the department. In fact, Professor Murphy has single-handedly crafted an impressive curriculum in new media studies that is attracting students from across the university.

Research – Professor Murphy was trained in visual culture and she is interested in studying digital moving images and the machines that deliver them, especially computer games. Her recent book, *How Television Invented New Media*, explores the emergence of gaming at specific moments in history when new machines were literally hooked up to televisions, in certain technologies like the remote control, and in specific texts that work through the social impact of these new media. Her other work has already made an impact and she is being invited to publish in the books that are constructing her field. Her essays are being taught in universities and they appear in the readers for her field.

Recent and Significant Publications:

“Every which way but...reading the Atari catalogue, circa 1980,” *Before the Crash: Early Video Game History*, M. Wolf, (ed.), Wayne State University Press, forthcoming 2011.
How Television Invented New Media, Rutgers University Press, under contract and due 2011.
“‘This is intelligent television’: Early video games, TV and the emergence of the personal computer,” *The Video Game Theory Reader 2.0*, M. Wolf and B. Perron (eds.), Routledge, 2008, pp. 197-212.
“‘Live in your world, play in ours’: The spaces of video game identity,” *Journal of Visual Culture*, 4(1), 2004, pp. 223-238.

Service – Professor Murphy was one of the first scholars of the nascent field of digital studies at Michigan. In this role, she imagined a solid curriculum in the Department of Screen Arts and Cultures and made it a reality. She was an important advisor to the College as well as to chairs and directors who crafted the successful “Digital Environments” proposal for a cluster hire. She serves on the Steering Committee governing the library’s well-known Computer and Video Game Archive. The Grant Opportunities Collaborative Spaces (GROCS) in the Digital Commons has drawn on her expertise, where she served on their review panel. She helped establish the Rackham Graduate School Research Group on Digital Media Studies. At the national level, she is a key member in the Society for Cinema and Media Studies’ Information Technology Committee and the newly formed Video Game Studies Special Interest Group.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“...the dossier portrays a committed and caring teacher, a colleague who has contributed significantly to the development of the program, and a researcher who...has made substantial and significant contributions to the field. ...the positioning and trajectory of Professor Murphy’s work bodes well for the future, as media developments and academic fields continue to shift and realign.”

Reviewer (B)

“...*How Television Invented New Media* is an ambitious and exciting project and has the potential to make a valuable contribution to media studies. ...she has developed many interesting new digital media courses during her time at Michigan and has served on a handful of graduate committees as well.”

Reviewer (C)

“Clearly, Professor Murphy is an extraordinarily accomplished scholar with an important, original voice in the field of Visual and Media Studies. ... The power of her academic work lies [in] what [is] still most lacking in the emerging field of Digital Media Studies, but [w]hat many departments are desperately seeking for at the moment: a rigorously historicizing approach to emerging digital cultures that (re-) integrates new media studies into the broader field of Screen Studies.”

Reviewer (D)

“...it has been my pleasure to review the work of a scholar who...is poised to make a significant impact on the fields of digital cultural studies and digital media theory. Her work is highly original and in many respects unique. ...her research and teaching provides a dynamic framework for examining, critically and historically, the complex network of mutual influence between film, television, video, and interactive media in ways that can appeal to students in a variety of disciplines.”

Reviewer (E)

“*How Television Invented New Media* is sure to be an important book in the nascent history of screen studies. It is blessed with a strong, compelling thesis with real validity... The book’s chapters are varied in their focus, allowing Murphy to cruise across multiple media forms without losing sight of the book’s center, and both the research and the theoretical grounding are strong. The first, third, and final chapters are absolutely outstanding.”

Reviewer (F)

"...[*How Television Invented New Media*] is both a tour de force reading of media history and an incredibly thoughtful, well researched, and lucid theoretical reframing of how we need to understand new media. ... I would categorize Professor Murphy's work as being in the top tier of research scholars studying new media and video games. Her contributions are fresh and insightful and her publications are in well-respected books and journals."

Reviewer (G)

"I was in fact quite amazed that Murphy was able to take a project that on its face lends itself to a smooth linear history so readily and subsequently produce an account that in fact tells us not that new media owes a debt to television (and why), but that television reciprocally has been made over through new media, and there is no easy way to see television's boundaries. ... Her understanding of 'new television' is better informed than [her peers], and subsequently what she has to say about the medium now in terms of its history and in terms of a theory of the medium makes more sense."

Reviewer (H)

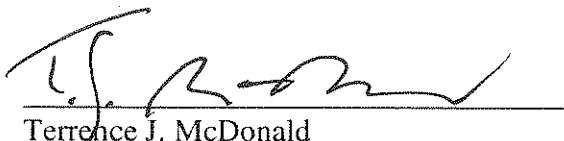
"...her training in visual studies has allowed her to gain knowledge in a range of inter-related fields including film studies, television and media studies, video game studies, and art history."

Reviewer (I)

"The book's scope is excellent, filling a unique gap in the body of scholarship spanning a number of different digital platforms and eras. It features engaging prose and effective conversation with a wide array of scholarship across a number of fields. I cannot think of another book that better bridges the fields of television and digital studies."

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Murphy is an accomplished scholar and an innovative teacher. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Sheila C. Murphy be promoted to the rank of associate professor of screen arts and cultures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Terrence J. McDonald
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor,
Professor of History and Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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