

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

Helmut Puff, associate professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, associate professor of history, with tenure, and associate professor of women's studies, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, professor of history, with tenure, and professor of women's studies, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1992	University of Basel
Staatsexamen	1988	University of Hamburg

Professional Record:

2012 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Women's Studies, University of Michigan
2002 – present	Associate Professor, Departments of Germanic Languages and Literatures and of History, University of Michigan
1996 – 2002	Assistant Professor, Departments of Germanic Languages and Literatures and of History, University of Michigan
1995 – 1996	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
1995	Assistant, German Seminar, University of Basel
1992 – 1995	Research Fellow, Research Project on Renaissance Marriage Treatises in German

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching—Professor Puff is a dedicated and successful teacher at all levels and in several different disciplines. His courses are listed or cross-listed between German, History, Women's Studies, Medieval and Early Modern Studies (MEMS), and History of Art. His classes have represented core components of the curriculum in medieval and early modern German literature and history as well as visual analysis, on the Reformation, the history of sexuality, and the history of opera. Student comments and evaluation scores show that he is well-received as a teacher. He has spearheaded new teaching initiatives in fields of the history of gender and sexuality on the graduate and undergraduate levels.

Research—Professor Puff has been exceptionally successful at developing a scholarly reputation on both sides of the Atlantic. He has published 28 essays and articles on a broad range of topics and in a broad array of fields, and he co-edited essay collections on interdisciplinarity and on the history of sexuality. He has two major books in process. The first, Miniature Monuments: Modeling Destruction and German History, currently under revision, represents a major contribution to visual history and the interdisciplinary study of ruins, and takes him into the field of 20<sup>th</sup>-century German history and memory. In the second, Histories of Ancient Customs: Writing Global Histories in Early Modern Europe, Professor Puff approaches *mores* as a site for exploration of social relations and societies on a global scale between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Recent and Significant Publications:

After the History of Sexuality: German Genealogies with and beyond Foucault, co-edited with D. Herzog and S. Spector, Berghahn, 2011.

“Homosexuality: Homosociabilities in Renaissance Nuremberg,” in The Cultural History of Sexuality in the Renaissance, B. Talvacchia (ed.), Berg, 2011, pp. 51-72 and 208-216.

“Ruins as models: Displaying destruction in Postwar Germany,” in Ruins of Modernity, J. Hell and A. Schoenle (eds.), Duke University Press, 2010, pp. 253-269.

Zwischen den Disziplinen? Perspektiven der Frühneuzeitforschung [Perspectives on Interdisciplinarity in Early Modern Studies], co-edited with C. Wild, Wallstein, 2003.

Service—Professor Puff has accumulated an impressive record of service within the university and external to it, serving on executive and steering committees of his departmental units and related institutes, serving as interim chair of Germanic languages and literatures and as acting director of MEMS. He co-edited an important journal in his field, and he has served on committees and as an officer in national professional organizations.

External Reviews:

Reviewer (A)

“Most impressively, Puff represents one of the most successful, truly interdisciplinary scholars I have encountered. The range and breadth of his interests is breathtaking, yet consistently grounded in meticulous and judicious spadework in both primary sources and secondary literature. He has compiled an enviable scholarly record and his future trajectory looks even more promising.”

Reviewer (B)

“...With this body of work Helmut Puff shows a very strong profile as a historian not only of early modern Germany but also as a highly innovative and revisionist historian of Europe in a broader context. His research trajectory is indeed very impressive and full of innovative research projects and new readings of texts and documents. No historian of early modern Europe can sidestep the works of Helmut Puff...the history of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and of the reformation have been deeply shaped by his analyses.”

Reviewer (C)

“Puff is one of a handful of leading scholars shaping the study of early modern sexuality and gender studies. He has achieved this position through a significant monographic study... Since the publication of this important study he has branched out widely, developing new interests and topics, extending his temporal range into the modern era and a global perspective on sexuality.”

Reviewer (D)

“His work is known throughout the Anglophone world of scholarship, and in many different fields: primarily in the history of sexuality, but also and increasingly in the study of visual/textual culture. In addition, he enjoys a very substantial reputation in German-speaking scholarship, in Austria, Switzerland and Germany. ... He is simply one of the most exciting scholars now working in the field of sixteenth century German studies.”

Reviewer (E)

“...[Miniature Moments] displays a breathtaking ambition within a compact package and displays Professor Puff’s talent for rigorous interdisciplinary research to the full.”

Reviewer (F)

“...Professor Puff’s record is extraordinary—both proven with a long list of publications and filled with life and movement that promise many years of productivity... The record of accomplishment and the promise for continued excitement and innovation are impressively duplicated in his teaching record...”

Reviewer (G)

“Professor Puff’s future work will be equally innovative, broad-ranging and provocative. By his own account, the recent Fellowship at Wolfenbüttel has already allowed him to structure his next project on Histories of Ancient Customs...into two main strands for exploration over the coming years.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Puff is a world-renowned scholar with an impressive publication record. He is an innovative teacher and has a demonstrated record of service. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Helmut Puff be promoted to the rank of professor of Germanic languages and literatures, with tenure, professor of history, with tenure, and professor of women’s studies, without tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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

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