

Approved by the
Regents
May 15, 2014

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

Stuart A. Kirsch, associate professor of anthropology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of anthropology, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1991	University of Pennsylvania
B.A.	1982	George Washington University

Professional Record:

2007 – present	Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan
2003 – 2007	Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology University of Michigan
1995 – 2003	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan
1991 – 1995	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Mount Holyoke College

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching – Professor Kirsch teaches an array of undergraduate and graduate classes that are integral parts of the department's curriculum. He is an effective teacher who challenges his students with innovative teaching methods and writing assignments. Student evaluations at all levels are very strong and comments confirm students' appreciation for Professor Kirsch's teaching skills. He has helped reform the curriculum for graduate students in the Doctoral Program in Anthropology and History and provided advice on curricular issues to the Doctoral Program in Social Work and Social Science. Professor Kirsch has been an extraordinarily active mentor of graduate students. He currently serves on 21 Ph.D. thesis committees and is chair or co-chair of nine of these.

Research – Professor Kirsch's research offers innovative, critical approaches to the study of multinational corporations, environmentalism, and how their contentious interactions produce new forms of political economy. His essays have been intellectually daring and a model for scholars who want to blend activism, ethnography, and theory-building in rigorous new ways. His forthcoming book, Mining Capitalism: the Relationship between Corporations and Their Critics, examines the lawsuit brought by the Yonggom people of Papua New Guinea against the Ok Tedi gold mine. Professor Kirsch uses this case to explain how big corporations and their opponents interact in ways that are reconfiguring the global political economy. Along with future research projects on advocacy, inequality, and knowledge production, Mining Capitalism will solidify his reputation as one of the world's leading practitioners of engaged anthropology.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Mining Capitalism: The Relationship between Corporations and Their Critics, University of California Press, in press.

"Juridification of indigenous politics," in Law Against the State: Ethnographic Forays into

Law's Transformations, J. Eckert, et al. (eds.), Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 23-43.

"Capitalism and the politics of resignation," with P. Benson, *Current Anthropology*, 51(4), 2010, pp. 459-486.

"Social relations and the green critique of capitalism in Melanesia," *American Anthropologist*, 110(3), 2008, pp. 288-298.

Service – Professor Kirsch is an active participant in his department, university, and profession. He has served as subfield head of sociocultural anthropology and participated on multiple faculty search committees. He has been a member of the university's Institutional Review Board and the Executive Committee of the Doctoral Program in Anthropology and History. He sits on the editorial boards of important journals and reviews papers and grants for leading journals and funding agencies. He consults with a wide range of non-governmental organizations, provides guidance to advocacy groups, and offers expert testimony to panels and special meetings of the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, and the U.S. Congress and Department of State.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A)

"...[Kirsch] has mastered the art of writing in ways that are lucid and to the point without being simplistic. This is a real skill and has further helped his ideas travel into the worlds of activism."

Reviewer (B)

"...Kirsch's argument that the connection between mining companies and their critics is now pivotal to the dynamics and regulation of what Kirsch, along with his co-author Peter Benson, call 'harm industries' is powerful and will be widely cited."

Reviewer (C)

"...Kirsch has developed an impressive body of scholarly work that builds directly upon extensive and equally impressive work as an engaged anthropologist, committed to use his professional expertise in service to the people and movements he studies. Academics and advocacy require quite different skill sets, and few scholars integrate these as thoroughly and powerfully as Prof. Kirsch."

Reviewer (D)

"Stuart has a continuous record of grant support; he makes between a half-dozen and dozen academic presentations every year; and, equally impressive and meritorious to me, he is a visibly engaged scholar: he has extensive and active collaboration with a variety of national and international NGOs, indigenous rights groups, and so on – to an extent that is unusual for such an active scholar. ...[he] is a scholar of unusual energy, breadth, and insight; he is at the top of his form and still on an obvious upwards trajectory."

Reviewer (E)

"Kirsch is a scholar of the highest order. He is...an excellent ethnographer, with extensive experience and a keen ability to move from local details to structural conditions and dynamics. He is adroit theoretically, drawing from diverse sources. And [he] is an exceptionally capable

communicator, both orally and in writing. These capacities have allowed Kirsch to make a significant contribution both within and beyond scholarly circles, in settings around the word.”

Reviewer (F)

“What I respect about Dr. Kirsch’s efforts...is his commitment to *scholar*-activism, that is, to connecting social theory with social justice and to making lessons learned in the field relevant to reforming the institutions in which we live and work. The critical impulse here is fundamentally anthropological and the approach duly mindful of the risks entailed in making ethnographic research ‘politically relevant and useful.’”

Reviewer (G)

“Kirsch has opened a path within anthropology for the creative combination of practically engaged anthropological work (in the form of research reports, court appearances, oral testimonies at hearings, strategy sessions with NGO’s and grassroots actors), and scholarly concerns; moreover, he has demonstrated how efforts in these two realms can dovetail, and ultimately complement one another.”

Reviewer (H)

“Prof. Kirsch is making important contributions to many of the key issues in the field of anthropology.... I think the book on mining will generate a good deal of attention and become a popular book for class assignments. Insofar as it deals with environmental issues, it is also relevant to a very new but I think rapidly developing field of anthropology.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Kirsch has made vital contributions to the field of anthropology. He is an effective teacher and an inspiring mentor, as well as an excellent citizen. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Stuart A. Kirsch be promoted to the rank of professor of anthropology, with tenure, in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Susan A. Gelman
Heinz Werner Distinguished University Professor,
Professor of Psychology and Interim Dean
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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