

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

Allison Alexy, assistant professor of women's and gender studies, and assistant professor of Asian languages and cultures, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of women's and gender studies, with tenure, and associate professor of Asian languages and cultures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2008	Yale University, New Haven Connecticut
M.Phil.	2003	Yale University, New Haven Connecticut
B.A.	2001	University of Chicago, Chicago Illinois

Professional Record:

2015-present	Assistant Professor, Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, and Department of Women's and Gender Studies, University of Michigan
2011-2015	Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Virginia
2009-2011	Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Lafayette College
2008-2009	Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology and Sociology Lafayette College

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Alexy is a dedicated, innovative, and very successful teacher who has made vital curricular contributions to both of her departments at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Her courses focus on gender, the family, intimacy, and law and society in contemporary Japan and the U.S. and include both large lecture format and smaller seminars. Her syllabi are clear, well organized, diverse in topics and texts, and exciting in their vision of learning and their creative framing of subjects that equip students to examine the intersections of social structures and institutions with their own lives, choices, opportunities, and relationships. In addition, Professor Alexy has a strong record of informal teaching and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students. She is chairing one dissertation committee, has served or is serving as a member of two others, and has chaired two master's theses. She has advised two undergraduate honors theses, served as a second reader for another, and mentored underrepresented students through both the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) and the Michigan Humanities Emerging Research Scholars (MICHHERS).

Research: Professor Alexy is an anthropologist of contemporary Japan whose work has been crucial in establishing the field of intimacy studies. Her ethnographic studies of gender, kinship, intimacy, and law in contemporary Japan reveal how these categories and experiences are both formed by and challenge official policies and social norms. Her research program is characterized by her critical approaches to fieldwork in Japan that illuminates the "intimate political economy" as a function of historical trends in labor and gender norms colliding with the disillusionments, concerns, and hopes of Japanese men, women, and children negotiating or considering the major transition of divorce in post-1990 Japan. Her current work in her second book project, Family Law in a Family Nation, extends her studies of intimacy and familial conflict to the topic of parental abduction of children in and beyond Japan. She proposes a critical examination of what legal scholars have generally termed "family law exceptionalism:" the notion that family disputes are largely incompatible with the law.

With a specific focus on Japanese legal consciousness (*hō ishiki*) as it informs custodial decision-making, this new work is likely to strengthen even further Professor Alexy's reputation in sociolegal studies and legal anthropology.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Intimate Disconnections: Divorce and the Romance of Independence in Contemporary Japan. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020. (Japanese translation under contract with Misuzu Publishers; Chinese translation under contract with East China Normal University Press).

Intimate Japan: Ethnographies of Closeness and Conflict. eds. Allison Alexy and Emma E. Cook, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019.

"Introduction: The Stakes of Intimacy in Contemporary Japan." In Intimate Japan: Ethnographies of Closeness and Conflict, edited by Allison Alexy and Emma E. Cook, 1-34. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019.

"Intimate Dependence and its Risks in Neoliberal Japan," *Anthropological Quarterly* 84(4) (2011): 897-920.

Service: Professor Alexy has distinguished herself for stellar service to her two departments, including election to the Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) Executive Committee and service on the Asian Languages and Cultures (ALC) Curriculum Committee. She has also served on major lecturer review committees in both WGS and ALC. In WGS, she served as an undergraduate advisor for three semesters. As part of this role, she presented monthly information sessions to potential majors and minors, infusing the department's recruitment efforts with new energy. In her notable service to the profession, Professor Alexy has served since 2015 as the series editor for *Asia Pop!*, a book series published by the University of Hawai'i Press. She is also the creator, host, and co-producer of *Michigan Talks Japan*, a podcast produced by the University of Michigan's Center for Japanese Studies, a project that constitutes a significant contribution to publicly engaged scholarship.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): "Written in refreshingly clean prose, with ethnographic storytelling that is at once richly rendered and inherently interesting, and given a smart analytics that is historically contextualized, *Intimate Disconnection: Divorce and the Romance of Independence in Contemporary Japan* will make a major contribution to the fields of Japan Studies, Anthropology of Japan and Anthropology of the Family and Law."

Reviewer (B): "Allison Alexy is an excellent ethnographer, careful researcher, bold thinker, and one of the top [junior] scholars of Japan anthropology today."

Reviewer (C): "Alexy's book is mature and likely to be a classic in Japanese studies. It updates all the older (and now outdated) studies of Japanese family, marriage, gender, and intimacy in the post-War era. Of the many works I have read about Japanese family and households over the years, I consider Alexy's the most useful (to teach), the most comprehensive, and most timely."

Reviewer (D): "Professor Alexy's interdisciplinary methods enable her to situate the trends she observes in Japan in relation to changing social and gender norms elsewhere, making her scholarship relevant for researchers investigating related questions about family dissolution, changing gender norms, and the relationship between intimate life and socioeconomic trends in other parts of the

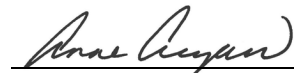
world ... She builds from feminist scholarship that foregrounds intimate life and relationships as key sites for understanding the dislocations produced by neoliberal ideals of independence, self-maximization, and the marketization of affective worlds.”

Reviewer (E): “Dr. Alexy impresses me as a rising leader in her field ... [Her book] is rigorously and comprehensively grounded in ethnographic fieldwork, and her analyses are clever, nuanced, richly developed, and deeply thoughtful ... [*Intimate Disconnections*] is engagingly written, empirically scrupulous, theoretically original, and analytically rich.”

Reviewer (F): “[Professor Alexy’s *Intimate Disconnections*] offers an excellent model of empathetic ethnographic writing and I expect it to become an important milestone in the anthropology of Japan as well as in the anthropology of law, kinship and gender relations.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Alexy is an innovative scholar who has made valuable contributions to the research and teaching missions of the Departments of Women’s and Gender Studies and Asian Languages and Culture. Her scholarship, service, and leadership contributions at the University of Michigan and on national and international levels have already been excellent. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Allison Alexy be promoted to the rank of associate professor of women’s and gender studies, with tenure, and associate professor of Asian languages and cultures, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



Anne Curzan, Dean
Geneva Smitherman Collegiate Professor of
English Language and Literature, Linguistics,
and Education
Arthur F. Thurnau Professor
College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

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