

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

Anna Fisher, assistant professor of American culture, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to associate professor of American culture, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	2012	Modern Culture and Media, Brown University
A.M.	2008	Modern Culture and Media, Brown University
M.A.	2007	Performance Studies, New York University
B.A.	2004	Program II Media and Visual Studies, Gender/Sexuality emphasis, Duke University

Professional Record:

2015–present	Assistant Professor, Department of American Culture, University of Michigan
2015–2018	Assistant Professor of Residential College, University of Michigan
2012–2015	Andrew W. Mellon Post-doctoral Fellow, Society for the Humanities, Cornell University

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Fisher’s rigorous syllabi, the range of objects and texts that she has students examine, and the interdisciplinary range of her courses across visual culture, digital media, and performance studies, enhance her successful record as an instructor of large and small courses. She has already created seven new courses, including key courses in the Digital Studies curriculum. She very successfully challenges students to defamiliarize new technologies, and her assignments demonstrate great creativity and student-centered design.

Research: Professor Fisher’s pioneering research bends the digital humanities simultaneously toward the feminist fine arts and cultural theory. Her collaborations are visionary, including her work with the Precarity Lab. Her book, The Play in the System, promises to shape her field and find a broad audience even beyond the academy. Professor Fisher’s research examines the politics and aesthetics of resistance in contemporary U.S. visual and digital culture by focusing on how resistance is modeled in sites ranging from the rarefied world of experimental art to the more mundane architectures of control on the Internet.

Recent and Significant Publications:

The Play in the System: The Art of Parasitical Resistance. Durham: Duke University Press, 2020.

“Introduction, Parts I-VII.” In New Media, Old Media: A History and Theory Reader, 2nd edition, edited by Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Anna Watkins Fisher, and Thomas Keenan. Abingdon, England; New York, NY: Routledge, 2015.

Precarity Lab Network (Anna Watkins Fisher, Silvia Lindtner, Ivan Chaar-Lopez, Cengiz Salman, McKenzie Wark, Kalindi Vora, Jackie Wang, Cass Adair, Lisa Nakamura, Cindy Lin, with Meryem Kamil). Technoprecarious. London: Goldsmiths Press, 2020.

“Safety Orange.” *Journal of Visual Culture* (Forthcoming, Spring 2021).

“Remind Me Tomorrow: Resistance in an Age of Inevitability.” *Media-N: Journal of the New Media Caucus* (Forthcoming, Fall/Winter 2021).

Service: Professor Fisher has served on important departmental committees, is a founding member of the Digital Studies Institute, and has done national editorial and academic association work. In the Department of American Culture, she has served on numerous committees, including the Undergraduate, Admissions, and Salary Committees. In addition, Professor Fisher is helping to develop a graduate certificate program in digital studies.

External Reviewers:

Reviewer (A): “There is no question that she has accomplishments that are comparable to (or exceed) faculty in her field that are promoted at my peer institution...Fisher’s...work-in-progress...bode[s] well for her imminent and long-term productivity. In addition to substantive scholarship, Fisher has also contributed to shaping her (inter)discipline. In her characteristically clear prose, Fisher provides the framework within which readers can make sense of not just the logic of an anthology but the logic of a field of study...Anna Watkins Fisher...is a productive scholar with a consistent set of research questions that she has rigorously explored over her tenure-track years. Based on my review of her scholarly contributions and her professional accomplishments, it is my considered opinion that Anna Watkins Fisher should be awarded this promotion.”

Reviewer (B): “...*The Play in the System*, will position her as one of our great thinkers of complicity...Fisher easily exceeds the tenure standards for my own institution and at all institutions that I know well... [H]er scholarship...and her pedagogy are so critically important to ongoing work on digital cultures... Editing sits quietly in the CV, but Fisher’s work on *New Media, Old Media* is nonetheless substantive... One could almost teach an introduction to [a] digital culture course with Fisher’s intro texts alone; certainly, one could structure a syllabus around them.”

Reviewer (C): “Professor Fisher’s work is of very high quality... She has been a productive and active scholar, not only as an individual author, but as an editor ... Her work is distinctive in encompassing both traditional, single-authored scholarly publication and more experimental multi-authored writing. The impact of Professor Fisher’s work will be significant for a broad range of scholars in the fields of new media studies, contemporary art history, and feminist theory and practice... Her forthcoming monograph, *The Play in the System: The Art of Parasitical Resistance*, is particularly outstanding and will receive significant scholarly attention.”

Reviewer (D): “There is much in Dr. Fisher’s work that has engaged my scholarly interest and that will have input into my own research and teaching in the future. She is clearly emerging as

a notable scholar in the field of digital media studies and is undertaking rigorous and imaginative work. ...the book [The Play in the System] could be used in a number of university courses in a variety of departments, at both the graduate and undergraduate level. Her work more than holds its own among other important books engaging computational culture and aesthetics.”

Reviewer (E): “[Professor Fisher] has earned a reputation for being one of the most interesting media theorists among her cohort of scholars addressing not only questions of digital media technology, but also of gender, aesthetics, performance, and affect. Her work is important... *The Play in the System* will have a major impact in digital media theory as well as in feminist art criticism.”

Reviewer (F): “*The Play in the System* is a superb book, and an outstanding work of scholarship...an extraordinary accomplishment because of the way that it does a number of things at once. I think that the book will have a major impact in the fields of art theory, cultural studies, performance studies, and feminist theory; as it is both accessible and urgently powerful, I think that it will have a more general impact across the humanities as well. The anthology of readings that she co-edited and wrote a number of introductory sections for, *New Media Old Media*, is [i]mpressively capacious and filled with important articles [b]y major critics and theorists.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Fisher is a recognized leader in her field who will continue to produce outstanding research over the course of a long career. Her contribution to the teaching and service missions of the college has been exceptional. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Assistant Professor Anna Fisher be promoted to the rank of associate professor of American culture, with tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



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Anne Curzan, Dean  
Geneva Smitherman Collegiate Professor of  
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