

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

Catherine Brown, associate professor of comparative literature, with tenure, and associate professor in the Residential College, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, is recommended for promotion to professor of comparative literature, with tenure, and professor in the Residential College, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.

Academic Degrees:

Ph.D.	1991	University of California, Berkeley
M.A.	1984	University of California, Berkeley
B.A.	1981	Brown University

Professional Record:

2015-present	Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Literature and the Residential College, University of Michigan
1997-2015	Associate Professor, Department of Comparative Literature and Department of Romance Languages and Literatures, University of Michigan
2001-2002	Visiting Associate Professor of Romance Studies, Duke University
1991-1997	Assistant Professor, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures and Program in Comparative Literature, University of Michigan

Summary of Evaluation:

Teaching: Professor Brown is known and admired as a dedicated and inventive teacher focusing on courses dedicated to medieval and early modern material. She has a rare talent for bringing to life the thoughts and practices characteristic of time periods many students know little about. Her teaching evaluations document that her students are deeply appreciative of her care and creativity, and attest that she reorients students' understanding of the world. She has also volunteered as a teacher in the Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility. As the director of undergraduate studies in Comparative Literature and the director of the Arts and Ideas major in the Residential College, Professor Brown has been central to renewing the curriculum in both of her units.

Research: Professor Brown is a comparative medievalist, specializing in medieval Spain and the Iberian region. Her first book, Contrary Things: Exegesis, Dialectic, and the Poetics of Didacticism (Duke UP, 1999), investigated binary oppositions and their entanglements in Spanish and Latin texts between the twelfth and fourteenth century BCE. Her forthcoming monograph, Remember the Hand: Manuscript in Early Medieval Iberia (forthcoming, Fordham UP), explores illuminated manuscripts dating to the ninth and tenth centuries. The highly original second book is certain to make a widely recognized and admired contribution to our understanding of the history of the book, the intersection of manual and intellectual labor, and the relationship between authors, scribes, and readers in hand-lettered books. Remember the Hand is certain to further secure Professor Brown's status as a foremost expert in her field.

Recent and Significant Publications:

Remember the Hand: Manuscription in Early Medieval Iberia. New York: Fordham University Press, forthcoming 2023.

“A Manuscript Present: Translation and Remediation in Early Medieval Latin Iberia.” *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 14, no. 1 (2022): 28-40.

“Scratching the Surface.” *Exemplaria* 26, no. 2-3 (2014): 199-214.

“Medieval Poetry.” In The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, Fourth Edition, edited by Roland Greene. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012.

“Manuscript Thinking.” *postmedieval* 2, no. 3. Special issue: “New Critical Modes.” (2011): 350-368.

Service: Professor Brown excels in roles supporting an engaging and demanding undergraduate curriculum. She has served for several years as the director of undergraduate studies in Comparative Literature and the director of the Arts and Ideas major in the Residential College. In these roles, she has been a committed mentor to graduate student instructors as well.

External Reviewers

Reviewer (A): “In the trans-disciplinary and well-plowed fields of monastic, manuscript, and material culture studies, [Professor Brown] has been a pioneer and remains a highly original and influential voice.”

Reviewer (B): “[Professor Brown], beyond all doubt and with great finesse and originality, accomplishes her central claim that ‘these monastic scribes go out of their way to make sure that readers regard their manuscript books not only as works of literature, law, or theology, but also as the products of very particular human hands.’”

Reviewer (C): “[M]edievalists admire [Professor Brown’s] work, which participates in some of the most stimulating kinds of scholarship in interdisciplinary medieval studies.”

Reviewer (D): “This book is a unique scholarly achievement: at once erudite, theoretically daring, and creative.”

Reviewer (E): “Altogether, this corpus is quite thought provoking, intended, I think to disquiet any complacent medievalists out there by encouraging, if not forcing them to evaluate the basis and presuppositions of their learned practices as scholars of texts and textual objects from the Middle Ages.”

Reviewer (F): “She writes as an impassioned teacher, as a therapist even: we will be better people if we appreciate medieval writing as we should. And so the book announces on every page that it is the work of a quite unique scholar: a conventional endorsement of its ‘originality’ would fall short of its particular idiosyncratic brilliance.”

Summary of Recommendation:

Professor Brown is a highly accomplished medievalist and cultural historian, and a core member of both her units where she is highly valued as a teacher, intellectual presence, and generous colleague. Her forthcoming book in particular is expected to secure her place as a foremost scholar of early medieval manuscripts. The Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts and I recommend that Associate Professor Catherine Brown be promoted to the rank of professor of comparative literature, with tenure, and professor in the Residential College, without tenure, College of Literature, Science, and the Arts.



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Anne Curzan", is written over a horizontal line.

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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