

UC SANTA BARBARA

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POP CULTURALIST AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT ON PRINCESS DIANA

England's Princess Diana died in a car accident a year ago Monday (Aug. 31). Much has been said about Princess Diana's image as a popular culture icon, and about the media's role in the commercialization of that image. UC Santa Barbara film and media scholar Anna Everett has been studying why Princess Diana generated such interest.

Everett has explored:

What the American media's obsession with Diana and the public's appetite for news and gossip concerning her reveal about Anglo-American society's conflicting admiration at once of the opposing ideals of democracy and monarchy.

How Diana's affinity for America conveys a lot about contemporary views on nation and identity, democracy and monarchy.

The image of Diana as 1) "the peoples' princess," 2) a pioneering AIDS activist and human rights advocate, 3) a wronged and vulnerable young wife, 4) an indomitable single mother, 5) the inventor and savior of Britain's modernized monarchy, 6) a conspicuous consumer--a fashion plate, 7) a self-serving publicity maven, 8) evidence of the monarchy's obsolescence and anachronistic indulgences, and 9) undeservedly sanctified with paeans not even accorded Mother Teresa.

About UC Santa Barbara

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