UC SANTA BARBARA

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Film Studies Professor Anna Everett is 2001 Winner of Prestigious UC Santa Barbara Harold J. Plous Award

It makes perfect sense when you think about it.

A young girl is raised in a household where the television runs day and night, a kind of soundtrack to the family's daily life.

Bathed in media influence, the child grows up, goes away to college and becomes a leading media scholar and critical thinker.

Thus might read a thumbnail biography of Anna Everett, a member of UC Santa Barbara's Department of Film Studies and the winner of the Harold J. Plous Award as the university's outstanding assistant professor of 2001.

"I grew up with the ubiquitous television," said Everett, who earned a Ph.D. in Critical Studies from the School of Cinema-TV at the University of Southern California in 1996 and joined the UCSB faculty in 1997.

"But it was never this object to be stared at and its messages accepted.

There was this constant talking back, this expression of 'Can you believe that?

That's ridiculous.'"

Everett still talks back to the media.

But she does it now in scholarly books and papers.

And the academic world is listening.

"Professor Everett's contributions of original research are numerous," said Plous Award Committee Chairman Carl Gutierrez-Jones, chair of UCSB's Department of English.

"Dr. Everett has also authored an impressive number of papers published in top journals ... and stands out as a gifted teacher."

Her most recent book, Returning the Gaze: A Genealogy of Black Film Criticism, 1909-1959 (2001, Duke University Press), rescues from obscurity the extensive and insightful work of black film critics in the first half of the 20th century.

"She found that black film criticism in the 1920s and 30s was already theorizing audience behavior, something that was not addressed by mainstream film scholars until the 1980s," Gutierrez-Jones said.

"Dr. Everett's discovery ... was a surprise and has made a large impact on the field."

As director of undergraduate studies in the Department of Film Studies, Everett has developed several new courses and consistently receives high evaluations from her students, who applaud her high standards and teaching skills.

In addition to her interests in film and television, Everett is also a pioneering scholar of new media and recently spent four months in the Netherlands at Universiteit Utrecht as the Belle Van Zuylen Visiting Chair in Women's Studies and New Media.

"More recently, I've been focusing my research on digital media," Everett said.

"At first glance, it may seem like a complete departure, but it really isn't; it's a continuum."

As the Plous winner, Everett will give a public lecture on her research during the spring quarter 2002.

The date will be announced later this year.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.