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Award Winner

Mireille Miller-Young, an associate professor of feminist studies at UC Santa Barbara, has received two prestigious awards — the John Hope Franklin Prize and the Sara A. Whaley Prize — for her book “A Taste for Brown Sugar: Black Women in Pornography” (Duke University Press, 2014).

The Franklin Prize, awarded annually by the American Studies Association, recognized the best book published in American studies. The Whaley Prize, also awarded annually by the National Women’s Studies Association, honors the best book on women and labor.

“A Taste for Brown Sugar” is based on Miller-Young’s extensive archival research and interviews with dozens of women who have worked in the adult entertainment industry since the 1980s. She documents their interventions into the complicated history of black women’s sexuality, looking at individual choices, however small — a costume, a gesture or an improvised line — as small acts of resistance.

Miller-Young builds on the work of other black feminist theorists, contributing to the field of sex-work studies and seeking to expand the discussion of black women’s sexuality.

“I am thrilled that my book ‘A Taste for Brown Sugar’ has earned recognition in this way,” said Miller-Young. “To win top awards from both the American Studies Association and the National Women’s Studies Association is massively significant to me because it shows that research on porn, sex work, and black women’s sexualities

is no longer considered marginal in the academy.

“This opens up space for more scholarship in these transgressive areas of study to come to center and receive the attention they deserve,” she continued. “More importantly, these book awards in a way validate the lives and stories of the women in the sex industry that I write about. They are no longer invisible and unheard.”

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.