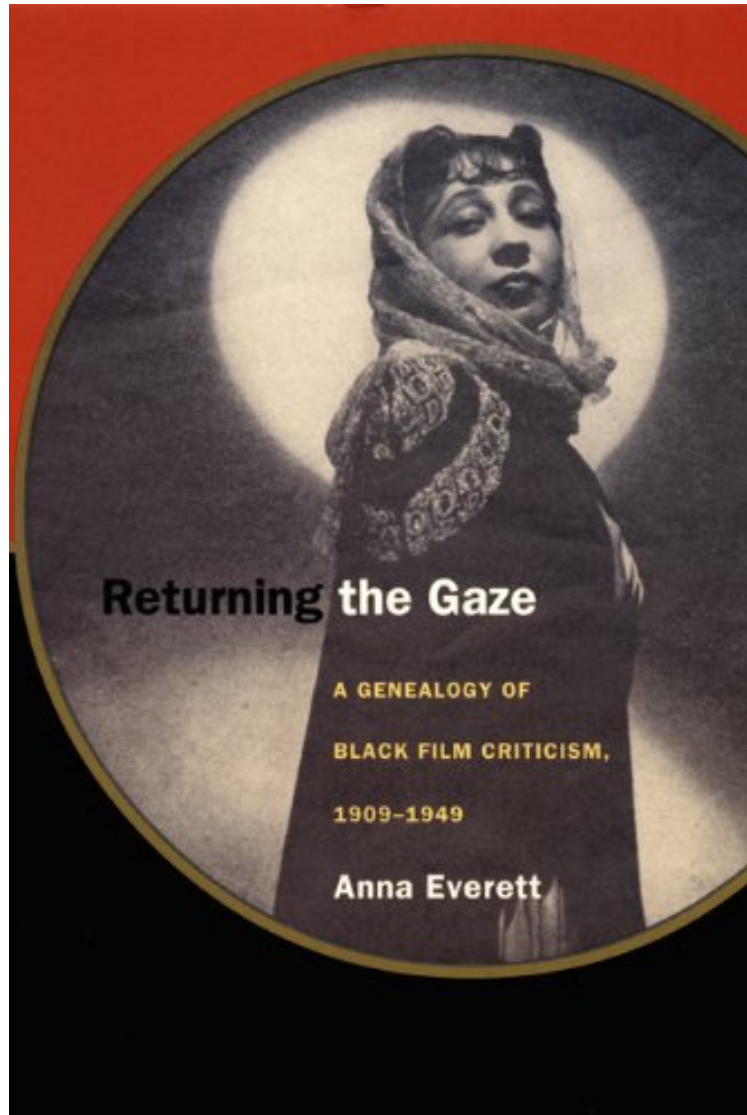


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Returning the Gaze: A Genealogy of Black Film Criticism, 19091949

Anna Everett

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Anna Everett : Returning the Gaze: A Genealogy of Black Film Criticism, 19091949 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Returning the Gaze: A Genealogy of Black Film Criticism, 19091949:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Oh Wow this was goodBy Jessica SalmonsonIntelligent, informative, and thrilling all in one go, this is an area of cinematic history that interests me endlessly, and I learned so much more than I already knew though I knew a lot.

In *Returning the Gaze* Anna Everett revises American film history by recuperating the extensive and all-but-forgotten participation of black film critics during the early twentieth century. While much of the existing scholarship on blacks and the cinema focuses on image studies and stereotypical representations, this work excavates a wealth of early critical writing on the cinema by black cultural critics, academics, journalists, poets, writers, and film fans. Culling black newspapers, magazines, scholarly and political journals, and monographs, Everett has produced an unparalleled investigation of black critical writing on the early cinema during the era of racial segregation in America. Correcting the notion that black critical interest in the cinema began and ended with the well-documented press campaign against D. W. Griffiths *Birth of a Nation*, she discovers that as early as 1909 black newspapers produced celebratory discourses about the cinema as a much-needed corrective to the predominance of theatrical blackface minstrelsy. She shows how, even before the *Birth of a Nation* controversy, the black press succeeded in drawing attention to both the callous commercial exploitation of lynching footage and the varied work of black film entrepreneurs. The book also reveals a feast of film commentaries that were produced during the roaring twenties and the jazz age by such writers as W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, and Zora Neale Hurston, as well as additional pieces that were written throughout the Depression and the pre and postwar periods. Situating this wide-ranging and ideologically complex material in its myriad social, political, economic, and cultural contexts, Everett aims to resuscitate a historical tradition for contemporary black film literature and criticism. *Returning the Gaze* will appeal to scholars and students of film, black and ethnic studies, American studies, cultural studies, literature, and journalism.