

1999-2000 CSUS PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

The President's Award was established in 1989 and is given each year to recognize extraordinary research and creative activity over the past five years by a member of the CSUS faculty. Nominees for this award must be in their first ten years of service at CSUS. Dr. Moore is the tenth recipient of this award.

Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, Professor of History, is the recipient of the 1999-2000 President's Award for Research and Creative Activity. A member of the CSUS faculty since 1989, she received her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees from the University of California, Berkeley. She is a member of the American Historical Association (AHA), the Organization of American Historians (OAH), and the Western Historical Association. She has chaired the OAH's Commission on the Status of Women in the History Profession and has served on the Board of Editors for the *Western Historical Quarterly*.

Dr. Moore is the author of the forthcoming *To Place Our Deeds: The African American Community in Richmond, California, 1910-1963* published (Fall, 1999) by the University of California Press and is co-editor of *African American Women in the Trans-Mississippi West* which is being published (Fall, 2000) by the University of Oklahoma Press. She has chapters in eight books and has had numerous journal articles and book reviews published. She has averaged five presentations at professional meetings during each of the past five years.

In addition she has written and produced a one-woman, multi-media show, "Women's Lives in Song: Workers, Wives, Mothers, Daughters, Lovers and Wild Women." In this show she narrates and sings an array of international songs she composed about women's experiences.

The abstract of her award lecture is reproduced below.

TRADITIONS FROM HOME: BLUES CLUBS, BLUES MUSIC AND THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

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The lecture will examine the role and function of an enduring African American cultural expression--blues music--as it developed in Richmond, California during World War II and the postwar years. Blues music, an expression of black working class culture and aspirations, was infused with a southern agrarian ethos and transported to the urban industrial arena by thousands of African American southern newcomers who entered the Golden State during World War II.

They came to Richmond in search of the economic advancement and social freedom that employment in the Kaiser Shipyards seemed to offer during the war. While the migrants were determined to leave Jim Crow behind in the South, they steadfastly refused to relinquish the cultural traditions they had known in their home states. Blues music was an important tradition that flowered in California and in the city of Richmond, particularly. In the war and postwar era nationally known blues clubs with names like the Savoy Club, Tappers Inn, and Minnie Lues flourished in predominately black North Richmond and showcased legendary performers like Jimmy McCracklin, Lowell Fulson, Sugar Pie DeSanto, and Charles Brown.

The lecture argues that despite their rough-and-tumble atmosphere, North Richmond's blues clubs offered working class black men and women a refuge from the harsh urban industrial and racial environment that often devalued African Americans. In addition to serving as self-affirming cultural oases, the clubs provided black people with a power base from which to attack Jim Crow. Moreover, some black women in Richmond, suffering under the double yoke of racial and gender oppression, found that owning or operating blues clubs and clandestine "after hours" clubs offered them a chance for economic and social autonomy in a society that denied them access to these things. This lecture will explore these issues and offer a sampling of the music and images that comprised these cultural "traditions from home" in Richmond, California.