

## **Literacy as Social Reproduction and Social Transformation: The Challenge of Diasporic Communities in the Contemporary Period**

James Collins  
University at Albany/SUNY

This paper examines socially reproductive and transformative tendencies in the literacy practices of children and youth in two immigrant communities in the United States: Yemeni Americans in Dearborn, Michigan and Trique (Mexican) immigrants in Albany, New York. Drawing upon analyses of literacy activities in family, community, and school settings, I call for close attention to units of analysis if we are to understand just what is being reproduced or transformed by given literacy practices, and I also argue that layered TimeSpace scales are immanent in the encounters between migrant communities, local schools, and state agencies and thus must be part of the specification of units and the analysis of practices. I conclude that contemporary globalization and diaspora-formation fundamentally challenge beliefs about literacy, progress, and national belonging, and thus how we think about literacy and inequality.