

**Making Makin' It Possible**  
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**Annual Reports**  
**2000-2004 (Years 1-4)**

Rationale for the Study

Early in my career, I began studying the literacy practices of "marginalized" adolescents in and out of school, with a focus on three adolescents' (and several other "peripheral" adolescents) "unsanctioned" literacies. One of my findings from that early work was that the youth I worked with did not see themselves as marginalized by social systems or structures and yet they were failing in school. Their failure was due, at least in part, to the schools' failure to acknowledge their unique experiences, their cultural practices and experiences, and their particular challenges or frustrations. In effect, the young people had internalized their failures as something individual to them and/or to their cultural backgrounds. This observation supports Ogbu's argument that members of "pariah" groups internalize failure as an aspect of their culture.

However, Ogbu (1987) argues that this internalization of cultural failure is furthered by maladaptive responses of resistance and by attempts to maintain cultural identity—collective struggle—among marginalized groups, an argument which stands in contrast to the practices of the small sample of adolescents with whom I worked early on. Instead, they routinely demeaned members of their own cultural groups in ways that denied collective struggle and limited their own chances for success in school, work, and community settings. Much like the unsuccessful young African American men studied by MacLeod, and unlike the successful African American and Chicano/a youth studied by O'Connor (1997) and Foley (1990), the young people in my sample accepted an individualistic achievement orientation, refused to acknowledge structural oppression in society, and routinely demeaned their culture, even while they maintained their cultural or ethnic practices. Thus, these youth who were sophisticated and intelligent users of language and literacy lived in a social space in which their identities were constructed as marginal and their possibilities as limited. They did not have the critical awareness or the social tools, including literacy tools, to negotiate multiple social and cultural spaces; in short, they were not resilient.

The research I proposed as part of the Faculty Scholars program seeks to study the existing social spaces of marginalized youth, to teach students how to negotiate existing social spaces and carve out new "public spaces" (cf. Greene, 1995), and to study the process of that teaching. To that end, I intend to replicate and extend my prior research on adolescents' literacy perspectives and practices both in and out of school (cf. Moje, 1996, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, in press; Moje & Thompson, 1996), to study school classrooms and after/out-of-school community programs that provide opportunities for young people to make it in school, and—using the findings of this research—to develop both theoretical and empirically tested structures that support adolescents as they construct identities and decide for themselves what "makin' it" means and how to accomplish their goals. My particular research focus will revolve around adolescents' and teachers' uses of literacy as tools for developing awareness and taking action (cf. Moje, Fassio, & Willes, 1999).

### Key Issues in the Project

“Making it,” or success and achievement, for the purposes of this work, is not defined in traditional terms of getting good grades or high test scores (cf. Smith, Gilmore, Goldman, & McDermott, 1993). “Making it,” will be defined by the young participants of the study as they discuss their life aspirations and goals. Moreover, these definitions will acknowledge the importance of particular social and literate practices in young people’s lives, even when those practices (e.g., gang practices) may seem problematic, even dangerous, for positive social development.

That said, I do hope that this work will shed light on how we might support youth of all backgrounds in achieving both their own standards of success, as well as more mainstream standards, as measured by school grades, test scores, retention rates, and college. To that end, I do compare young people’s own definitions of “making it” to this more generally accepted standard. That is, throughout this project, I ask questions about young people’s achievement in school and beyond, with a particular focus on whether the necessary steps for mainstream achievement may require activities that conflict with, or even contradict, home and community values and practices dear to the youth and their families. Thus, “making it” for this study revolves around developing a sense of self or identity that allows young people to set and achieve goals and aspirations that are important to them. However, those goals and aspirations, as well as subjectivities and identities, will be examined *vis a vis* the goals and aspirations necessary for mainstream success. Thus, it will be important to examine what students learn (cf. Cazden, 1998; Heath, 1998), what assumptions formal learning environments make about how and why students learn, what counts as achievement in various contexts of the youths’ lives, and how those different valuations of achievement shape students’ identities, resiliencies, and commitments to collective struggle.

### Goals of the Project

The goal of this work was to document the social and school literacy practices of adolescents, teachers, community workers, and parents over five years by (a) observing and working with them to document the learning of content and social awareness in school classrooms for two years (2000-2002), collecting follow-up data in classrooms over the entire five years; (b) conducting formal lived experience interviews with selected student participants in the community for one year (2002-2003); (c) conducting in-depth case research of a small pool of the adolescent students for two years (2002-2004) in which I study their literacy and social practices intensively, both inside and outside school; and (d) collecting data in a community-based, after-school program with the ultimate goal of developing and studying additional structures to support adolescents’ resilience, structures designed according to the theories that drive this project and in accordance with the data collected in previous years (2004-2005).

The proposed research plan laid out the following specific research questions for Year 1, 2000-2001, during which time I plan to focus only on *school classrooms*: (a) What, if any, school-based and/or curricular structures support the development of critical awareness or a sense of collective struggle? (b) How does literacy learning/use play a part in these structures? and (c) What are the outcomes of this development? (d) How might these structures be enhanced through classroom curriculum? Additional foci include an analysis of what content youth learn as they engage in projects with a critical focus.

### **Progress in 2000-2001 (Year 1)**

We were able to gain access to 6 middle-school classrooms of 3 teachers (2 science teachers, with 2 classes each, and 1 English Language Arts teacher, with 2 classes). This

classroom arrangement allowed us to follow 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students from science to English Language Arts (ELA) classes 2-3 days each week and to observe 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students in 1 science classroom.

### Key Emerging Findings

In regard to the research questions laid out for Year 1 (see above), we examined the content learning, literacy learning, and “social action” learning that occurred across the science and ELA classrooms. Within the science classrooms, we documented, via an analysis of pre and post-test scores, student gains in content knowledge, particularly in low-level—or literal level—knowledge areas. That is, students were able to show gains in science information, such as the ability to distinguish elements from atoms or molecules from compounds. Students in these classrooms showed smaller gains in higher-level, process-oriented science tasks, such as those requiring students to evaluate data obtained in a scientific experiment. What’s more, we were not able to document any particular structures within the science classrooms that supported the development of critical social awareness. Although the curricula were designed to focus on real-world science problems such as air and water quality, the level of conversation remained at the surface, examining air and water quality issues from rather abstract or overstated standpoints (e.g., there are a lot of factories in our communities; factories pollute the air). We did not document instances in which students were encouraged to take up the issues as related to specific situations in their communities, despite the fact, for example, that a neighborhood alliance project was launching a lawsuit against a local oil refinery and all students and their families had been asked to complete surveys related to air quality.

Although this community environmental issue seemed like a prime opportunity for situating the science content in real-world issues requiring social action, the burdens involved in completing the curricula, allowing for state- and district-mandated testing programs, and dealing with personal life issues mitigated against the science classroom teachers’ attempts to engage students beyond the standard curriculum activities. We will continue to work with the teachers to try to situate curricular activities within the real issues faced in the community, and we will continue to inform the teachers about the real-world issues of these particular young people as we document their lives outside of school.

We were able to document, however, several instances in which opportunities to make such connections were available because of students’ knowledge and experiences outside the classroom. We thus hope to build on these instances to help teachers find spaces in the curriculum where they can make more specific connections to students’ interests.

In contrast to the science classrooms, as noted above, the ELA classroom regularly made a space for the study of issues related to social justice. The ELA teacher engaged students in a variety of activities designed to raise their awareness about oppression, including readings on the slave trade, with accompanying discussions of oppression and racism. The ELA teacher also encouraged frank discussions of issues in the students’ community (e.g., debates about gangs, poverty, and racism), and she regularly told students that she was providing them with novels from a neighboring affluent suburb’s school reading list because, as she stated, “If kids your age in [name of suburb] can read these books, then you can and should be, too!” Such comments underscored students’ observations of differential access to resources between their urban community and surrounding suburbs. The teacher’s comments thus contributed to students’ developing awareness that communities, not just individual people, might experience poverty due to unequal distribution of resources and power. Her openness also encouraged students to ask questions and engage in thoughtful discussions about such issues. It is, perhaps, worth noting, that the ELA teacher was a Latina who had emigrated as a non-English speaker to the United States when as a young adult. She drew frequently on her experiences as an immigrant in her ELA lessons. Again, these observations, combined with our observations of the different identities enacted by students across these classrooms (see below), suggest possibilities for

teaching practice that may support students' developing awareness of equity issues and their abilities to take action in response to societal inequities.

Observing students' literacy practices in each classroom over time and across content areas and teachers provided opportunities to observe how students negotiated the different classroom spaces and teacher styles in various ways. In particular, we documented different (a) student-teacher and student-student interaction styles, (b) national oral language practices, (c) written language practices. In particular, we noted that students appeared to be actively engaged in all three teachers' classrooms, but that in two of the classrooms they spoke with more frequency and force. These classrooms engaged students in more active involvement in curricular activities. Further, we noted that Spanish dominant speakers (also known as English Language Learners) appeared more willing to engage in both oral and written English language in the classroom of the fluently bilingual Latina teacher, who used a *sheltered English instruction* approach to her teaching. That is, although most of her instruction was conducted in English, this teacher often translated troublesome words and assignment instructions into Spanish. This sheltering of the English allowed the Spanish dominant speakers to engage in the activities because they were able to understand the concepts. She also encouraged Spanish dominant speakers to first answer questions in Spanish, if necessary, and then to try to translate into English. This teacher was also observed to engage in conversations in Spanish with the fluently bilingual students, thus supporting the desired expressed by a number of students to "maintain their Spanish" even as they grew more proficient in English. We hypothesize that this teacher's ability and willingness to engage with students in their native language, while also requiring them to learn English, showed respect for their cultural backgrounds and desires to maintain ethnic identities that were important to them.

#### Publications, Papers, Briefings, and Presentations

Moje, E. B., Collazo, T., Carrillo, R., & Marx, R. W. (2001). "Maestro, what is quality?": Language, literacy, and discourse in project-based science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 38(4), 469-496.

Moje, E. B. (2001, April). *Space matters: Examining the intersections of literacies, identities, and physical and social spaces*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

Moje, E. B. (2001, April). *Research on real people in unreal times: Relational dilemmas in research with urban youth*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

Hall, K. & Moje, E. B. (2001, April). *More than method: Teaching and mentoring future educational ethnographers*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

Collazo, T., Moje, E. B. and Carrillo, R. (2001, April). *Voice in science classrooms: Exploring the potential for critical analysis*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Seattle, Washington.

Moje, E. B. (2000, December). *Merging official and unofficial literacies: Personal and political dilemmas in research with adolescents*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Reading Conference, Scottsdale, Arizona.

Moje, E. B. (2000, December). *Constructing "third space" for early adolescents:*

*Merging disciplines and discourses.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Reading Conference, Scottsdale, Arizona. (Also presented at the High School Reading Symposium National Center on Education and the Economy, Washington, DC.)

Moje, E. B. (2000, April). *Examining the value of literacy, awareness, and struggle in negotiating access for marginalized youth.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Carrillo, R., Moje, E. B., & Marx, R. W. (2000, April). *A Latino family computer program: Socially constructed discourse and the production of multiliteracies.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Moje, E. B., Collazo, T. , & Carrillo, R., Marx, R. W. (2000, April). *"Maestro, what is 'quality'?" : Toward developing linguistically responsive science curricula.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Association of Research in Science Teaching, New Orleans, LA.

#### Media Coverage and Other Electronic Dissemination

Report on my past and current work published in *Book* magazine.

#### **Progress in 2001-2002 (Year 2)**

We continued to collect data in middle-school classrooms of 2 teachers (1 science teacher, with 3 classes, and 1 English Language Arts teacher, with 2 classes). (The science teacher from the previous year left the school to pursue an advanced degree.) This classroom arrangement allowed us to follow 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students from science to English Language Arts (ELA) classes 2-3 days each week and to observe 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students in 1 science classroom.

We also continued to collect data on individual students outside of school. These lived experience interviews, combined with the beginnings of ethnographic data collection (participant observation across a wide variety of home and community sites) provided a great deal of information that we are drawing from to propose variations of classroom practices. These findings also inform the development of science curricula, in which I participate as part of a separate, but related research and development project.

#### Key Emerging Findings

To address research questions laid out for Year 2 (see above), we continued to examine the content learning, literacy learning, and “social action” learning that occurred across the science and ELA classrooms. We found that the remaining science teacher was working to develop literacy activities that might build on students’ experiences out of school and that would teach students how to be “metadiscursive.” That is, he was making more explicit attempts to help students translate the language of their everyday lives to more scientific discourse about similar topics (a move that we theorize as essential to critical literacy skill development). Although his efforts were well-intentioned, some of his classroom practices around literacy activities foiled his efforts. Students appeared to interpret his writing assignments as filler or busy work, and often did not complete the assignments to the greatest degree possible. We are currently working on including strategies in the curriculum to address such issues. Namely, we are developing activities that support teachers in teaching the conventions of scientific discourse and comparing those conventions to everyday discourse. We are including these activities with some frequency

as a way of making science writing (and reading) a normative part of classroom activity, thus mitigating against, we hypothesize, the notion of writing and reading as “busy work.”

We continued to document teacher and student teacher practices in the English Language Arts (ELA) class, as well. Our particular emphasis was on following students from 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade with the same teacher, but different content. Because we had engaged in intensive, ethnographic interviewing and observation with a subset of the youth over the summer months, we were able to document how the ELA teacher, in particular, tapped into youth cultural and ethnic cultural practices important to the students.

Ethnographic work with a sub-sample of 10 students yielded several initial findings. First, we documented evidence of strong and positive ethnic identities among the youth. Second, we found that those identities served as a buffer for challenges the young people faced in their communities. However, we also found some evidence of developing street gang connections among a sub-set of this sub-sample. Indeed, we found that among this very small sample, young people who exhibited highly politicized ethnic identities appeared to take up icons of street gang affiliation, but did not appear to be active participants in street gang activities. They appeared to see their support of gangs (if not participation in gangs) as support for resistance to oppression. One young man, for example, explained a sticker that illustrated an Aztec leader, Cesar Chavez, and a modern-day street gangster as a resistance sticker. He stated that gangs symbolized resistance in today's Latino/a world. This is not to say that the youth romanticized gangs, but that they saw gangs as one avenue for active resistance. By contrast, those students who enacted positive, but not highly politicized, ethnic identities eschewed gangs and lamented living in their community. We have also noted a second major difference between these two groups: phenotype and national language practices. Those students who appeared to adopt a more politicized, Chicano/a identity were typically darker skinned than those who appeared to enact less politicized, but nevertheless Mexican, identities. The more overtly politicized students also spoke less Spanish. Finally, the more overtly politicized students were often second generation Mexicans (see Suárez-Orozco, 2001), although this was not always the case, as phenotype and language practice appeared to be mediating factors in how such identities were enacted by individual youth. It should be noted that these findings are offered from a very small sample of youth; however, these findings support and are supported by research among larger samples (see Eccles, 2002; Suárez-Orozco, 2001), while also providing an in-depth look at nuanced differences in identity enactments.

#### Publications, Papers, Briefings, and Presentations

Young, J.P., Dillon, D. R., & Moje, E. B. (2002). Shape-shifting portfolio youth: millenials, literacies, and the game of life. In D. E. Alvermann, (ed.), *Adolescents' multiliteracies in a digital world* (pp. 114-131). New York: Peter Lang.

Moje, E. B. (2002). Graffiti. In B. J. Guzzetti, (Ed.), *Literacy in America: An encyclopedia of history, theory, and practice* (pp. 208-212). Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.

Moje, E. B. (2002). Literacy in informal settings. In B. J. Guzzetti (Ed.), *Literacy in America: An encyclopedia of history, theory, and practice* (pp. 315-318). Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.

Moje, E. B. (2002). But where are the youth? Integrating youth culture into literacy theory. *Educational Theory*, 52, 97-120.

McCarthy, S. and Moje, E. B. (2002). Identity matters. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 37, 228-237.

Moje, E. B. (2002). Re-framing adolescent literacy research for new times: Studying youth as a resource. *Reading Research and Instruction*, 41, 207-224.

Moje, E. B., McIntosh Ciechanowski, K., Carrillo, R., Ellis, L., & Kramer, K. (2002, April). "I'm not white:" *Racial and ethnic identity representations among Latino/a youth in urban spaces*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence, New Orleans, LA.

Moje, E. B., and Ciechanowski, K. (2002, April). *Literacy, language, and life in the millennial world: A study of Latino/a youth literacy in one urban community*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

Young, J.P., Dillon, D. R., & Moje, E. B. (2002). *Shape-shifting portfolio youth: millenials, literacies, and the game of life*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, LA.

### **Progress in 2002-2003 (Year 3)**

We maintained access to middle-school science classrooms during this year. We also added high-school classrooms, as we followed both the middle-school students and their ELA teacher to the neighborhood high school. Working with the ELA teacher gives us entrée to high-school Spanish language classrooms and "corrective reading" classrooms. This new site allows us to observe Latino/a youth who were formerly at an almost exclusively Latino/a populated middle school in a high school setting in which they represent only about 65% of the population. We are also able to observe one of the most notable transition points for adolescent youth: the move from middle school to high school. In addition, this transition documents the movement from a setting in which bilingualism was the norm among students and many teachers to a setting in which bilingualism remains strong, but is not the school's focus. Most of the dual-language classes at the high school are referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, rather than as bilingual classrooms, a point which puts a very different frame on movement across two languages. The Spanish language classes are particularly interesting to study because the youth are, by and large, fluent in oral, everyday Spanish language interactions, but not always fluent in written and formal Spanish language interactions. Thus, we are able to observe identity enactments as prompted, sustained, and mediated by national language practices and skills.

### Key Emerging Findings

My research team and I continued to examine the content learning, literacy learning, and "social action" learning that occurred in the two middle-school science classrooms at the bilingual immersion school. In addition, as a co-PI on an NSF-funded project-based science curriculum development and research project conducted in 20 schools across Detroit, I have been able to document science teaching and learning practices across classrooms of teachers and learners of different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Namely, our work across Detroit takes us into schools with predominantly African American populations (averaging 95% African American populations) and with Latino/a and African American teachers.

We are currently working on including strategies in the curriculum to address such issues. Namely, we are developing activities that support teachers in teaching the conventions of scientific discourse and comparing those conventions to everyday discourse. We are including these activities with some frequency as a way of making science writing (and reading) a

normative part of classroom activity, thus mitigating against, we hypothesize, the notion of writing and reading as “busy work.”

My out-of-school work with young people has yielded several interesting findings. In contrast to my earlier work with young people in the West, our team has found that that Latino/a youth in Detroit have strong, positive ethnic identities, perhaps because this population in Detroit is concentrated in one homogeneous geographical area surrounded by Black neighborhoods. physical and social space seem to be important aspects of youths’ identity enactments and their resilient and successful school behaviors. However, these strong and positive racial and ethnic identity enactments seem to lead to different kinds of resilient behaviors, not all of which positively affect their school achievement and later social and economic success. In addition, initial analyses of our data over time suggests that the Detroit youths’ identities are subject to developmental contexts and processes. In particular, as many of the youth enter neighborhood high schools and as they reach the legal driving age, they encounter more people of different ethnic, racial, and linguistic backgrounds, and their thinking about race, ethnicity, social class, and gender shift in dramatic ways. Thus, their relatively segregated community serves to support the enactment of strong and positive ethnic identities that may or may not be recognized as positive by school personnel; however, when they leave their community and encounter people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, their sense of self as ethnic beings, and their ability to enact positive identities is challenged.

Another set of findings that crosses the out-of-school/in-school binary revolves around youths’ strategic use of language and literacy to enact powerful identities in their social and physical spaces. Throughout observations and interviews, the youth all articulate specific reasons for engaging in particular language and literacy practices, usually tied to specific spaces or relations in their everyday lives. In every case, the youth demonstrate awareness of how their use of oral and written language positions them *vis a vis* dominant society, and they base their language decisions on relationships they found themselves and goals they held for their futures. That is, they were strategic about their decisions to engage with people, whether in school or out, in Spanish or English. They were strategic in their use of dress to signal identities, and they chose texts to read, write, and view in relation to the people around them and to the identities they wanted to represent. In general, we assert that their language and literacy strategies revolve around their efforts to define themselves in ethnic terms, in large part because the world defines them in those terms.

A third pattern speaks to the role of popular cultural texts in these negotiations of identity via language and literacy. Each of these texts and their accompanying literacy practices (most often, shared readings coupled with oral interpretations in groups) accomplished similar purposes for youth. In particular, these texts of popular culture built and maintained variations of ethnic identities; distinguished youth from each other; and built alliances--based on similar affinities or shared interests--with other youth. What is most compelling about these uses of popular cultural texts is the strategic and thoughtful way the youth we work with make use of the texts, an observation that contrasts with common representations of young people as mindless consumers of popular culture (see, for example, Cottle, 2001).

#### Publications, Papers, Briefings, and Presentations

Moje, E. B., McIntosh Ciechanowski, K., Kramer, K., Ellis, L., Carrillo, R., & Collazo, T. (2004). Working toward third space in content area literacy: An examination of everyday funds of knowledge and discourse. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 39(1), 38-71.

Moje, E. B., & van Helden, C. (2004). Doing popular culture: Troubling discourses about adolescence. In J. Vadeboncoeur & L. Stevens (Eds.), *Re/Constructing 'the adolescent': Sign, symbol and body* (pp. 221-247). New York: Peter Lang.

Moje, E. B., Peek-Brown, D., Sutherland, L. M., Marx, R. W., Blumenfeld, P., Krajcik, J. (2004). Explaining explanations: Developing scientific literacy in middle-school project-based science reforms. In D. Strickland & D. E. Alvermann, (Eds.), *Bridging the Gap: Improving Literacy Learning for Preadolescent and Adolescent Learners in Grades 4-12* (pp. 227-251). New York: Teachers College Press.

Moje, E. B., & Hinchman, K. (2004). Developing culturally sensitive pedagogy for adolescents. In J. Dole & T. Jetton (Eds.), *Adolescent literacy research and practice* (pp. 331-350). New York: Guilford Press.

Moje, E. B. (2004). Powerful spaces: Tracing the out-of-school literacy spaces of Latino/a youth. In K. Leander and M. Sheehy (Eds.), *Spatializing literacy research and practice* (pp. 15-38). New York, Peter Lang.

Lewis, C., & Moje, E. B. (2004). Sociocultural perspectives meets critical theory: Producing knowledge through multiple frameworks. *The International Journal of Learning*, 10.

Moje, E.B., & Sutherland, L. M. (2003). The future of literacy teacher education. *English Education*, 149-164.

Moje, E. B., and McIntosh, K. C. (2003). *Literacy, language, and life in the millennial world: A study of Latino/a youth literacy in one urban community*. Manuscript in progress.

Moje, E. B. (2003). "I'm not white:" *Racial and ethnic identity representations among Latino/a youth in urban spaces*. Manuscript in progress.

McIntosh Ciechanowski, K. & Moje, E. B. (2002, December). *Youths' language and literacy practices in enactments of identity*. Manuscript in progress.

Moje, E. B. (2003, December). *Powerful spaces: Tracing the out-of-school literacy spaces of Latino/a youth*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Reading Conference, Scottsdale, AZ

Sutherland, L. M., Moje, E. B., Peek-Brown, D., Marx, R., Blumenfeld, P., & Krajcik, J. (2003, December). *Making scientific explanations: The development of scientific literacy in project-based science classrooms*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Reading Conference, Scottsdale, AZ.

Moje, E. B., & Lewis, C. (2003, November). *Sociocultural perspectives meet critical theories: Producing knowledge through multiple frameworks*. Symposium panel, New Directions in Socio-cultural Research on Literacy: Agency and Power in the Production of Knowledge. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, San Francisco, CA.

Lewis, C., & Moje, E.B. (2003, July). *Sociocultural theories meet critical theories: Producing knowledge through multiple frameworks*. Learning Conference, London, England.

Moje, E. B. (2003, May). *Unsanctioned literacies in the everyday lives of youth: Implications for content area teaching and learning*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Reading Association, Orlando, FL.

Moje, E. B. (2003, May). "What kind of person do you think I am?" *Urban youth talk and write about identity and literacy in a global world*. Roundtable paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Reading Association, Orlando, FL.

Ciechanowski, K. & Moje, E. B. (2002, December). *Youths' language and literacy practices in enactments of identity*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Reading Conference, Miami, FL.

#### Media Coverage and Other Electronic Dissemination

Braun, L. W. (2004). Making meaning: An Interview with Elizabeth Birr Moje. *Public Libraries, 43*, 30-32.

#### **Plans for 2004-2005 (Year 5)**

In the WT Grant final year, we are currently engaging 6-8 youth from the larger sample in projects that they have generated, all designed to build their awareness of power relations, oppression, and inequities in society while also building, refining, or expanding their literacy, research, and other communicative skills. At the same time, this set of research projects will require them to gain knowledge upon which to base the claims they want to make in their projects. The current plan is that each youth will construct a photo essay from photos they've taken or from newspaper and magazine images. The specific topic of each photo essay is different, but the overall topic that will tie the photo essays together is "life for young people in Detroit." Their working title is "Underneath the Streets of Detroit." To produce the photoessays, the young people must design a research question, decide what they can represent with images, and then conduct the necessary research to ground their claims in data (reading census and other demographic data of different cities, for example, to produce a comparative analysis of Detroit with other US cities or with the surrounding suburbs, etc.)

The next step will be to use the photoessays as storyboards for a group video production, set to music and oral narration. The video will thus bring together multiple ways of communicating ideas: images, print, music, oral language, and whatever else they think of. We haven't settled on a single focus for the video yet, beyond the title, "Underneath that Streets of Detroit." Obviously, what that means will have to grow out of their photoessays. The task of integrating their sometimes conflicting ideas about life in the community should prove to be an important learning process. A final step, if all goes well, will be for the young people to contribute chapters based on their individual and group projects to a book that we would co-author.

Throughout all three phrases of the process, we hypothesize that the youth will develop, expand, or refine their literacy skills; learn important content knowledge; examine the workings of power and oppression in their lives and the lives of others; and experience the value--and challenges of working with others to struggle against (collective struggle) inequity in the world.