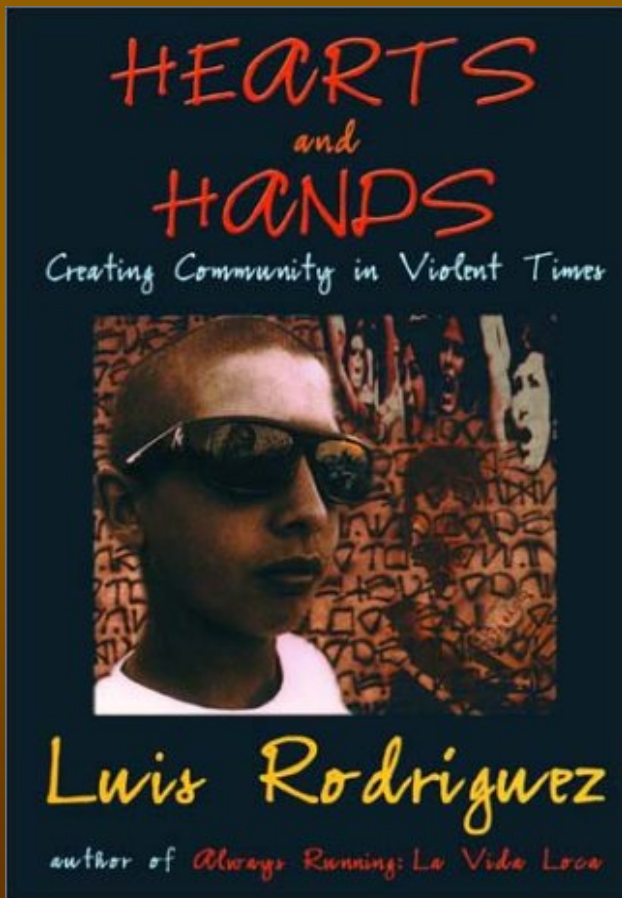


The Violence of Youth The Presence of a Pen

*"The Violence of Youth
The Absence of Elders"
Part 1 of Hearts and Hands*



Lecroy Rhyanes
(Criminal Justice/English)

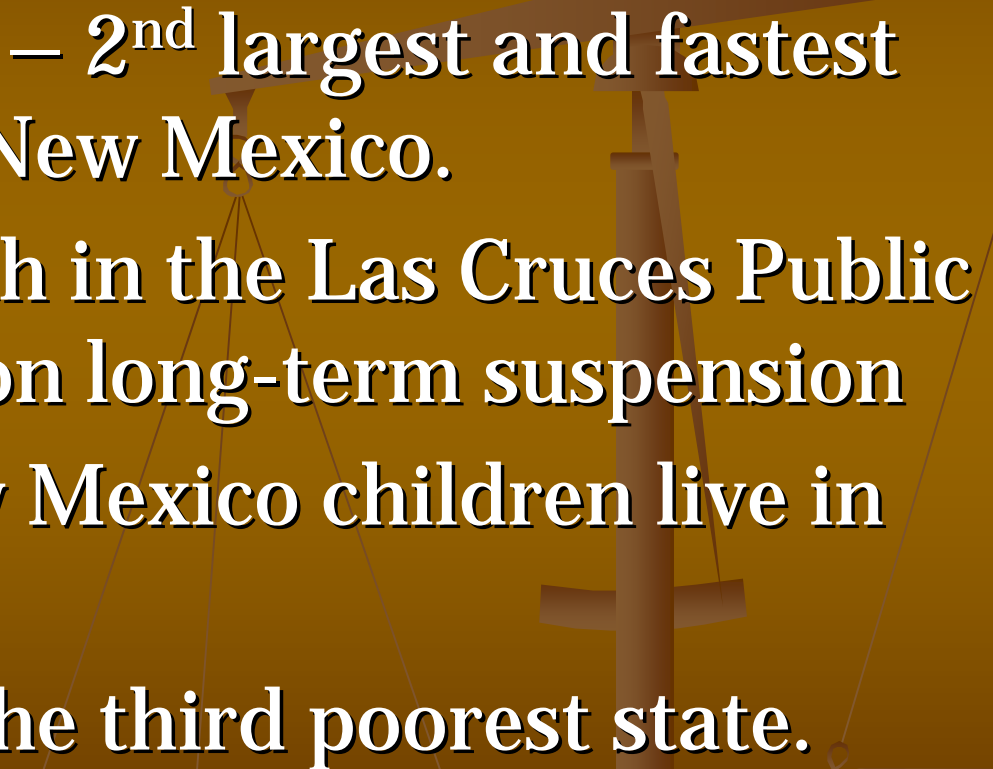
lrhyanes@gmail.com

Dr. Cynthia Bejarano
(Criminal Justice)

NMSU Ronald E. McNair
Post-Baccalaureate
Achievement Program

Statistics

(Family and Community Violence Prevention Proposal)

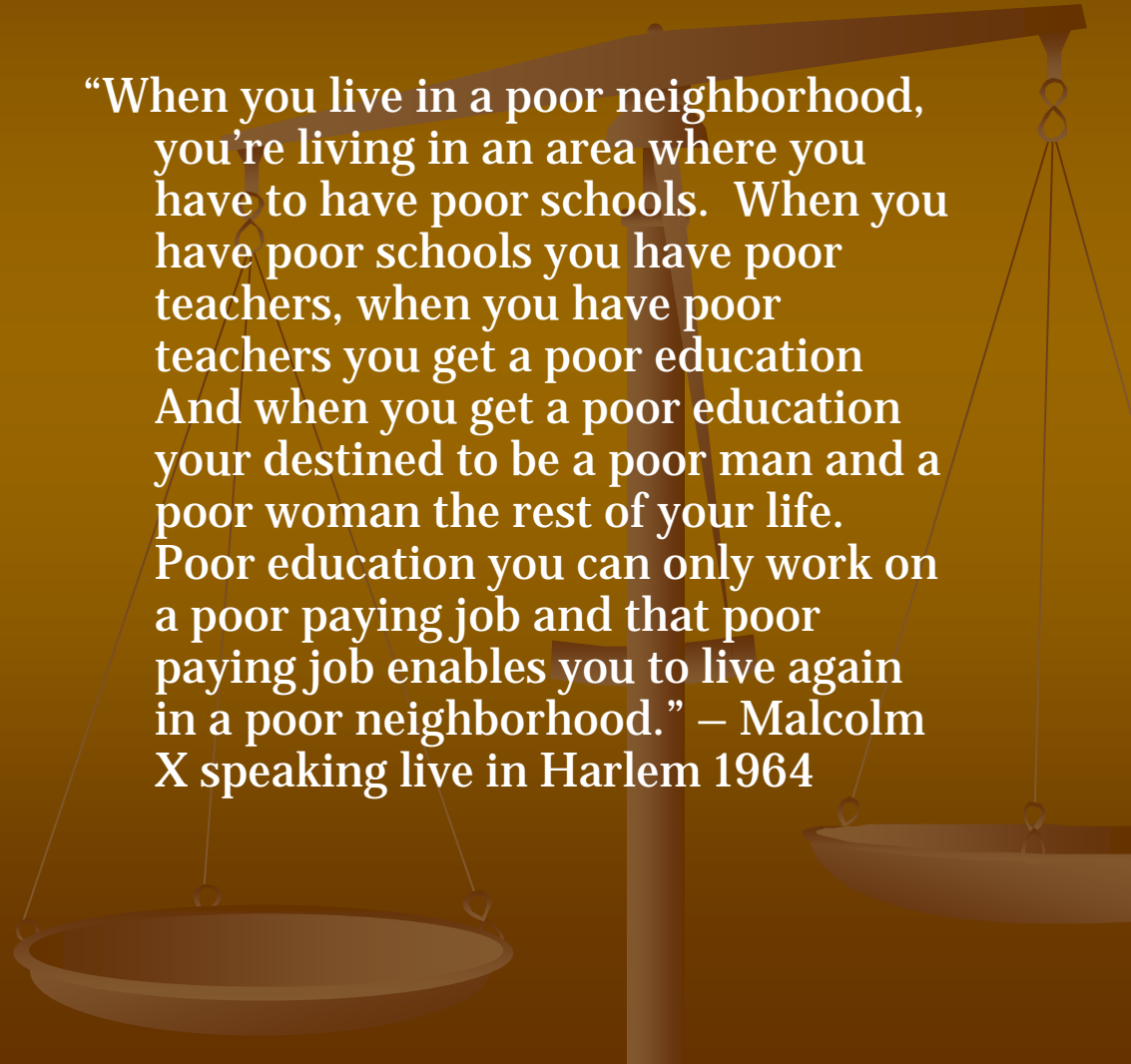
- Las Cruces, NM – 2nd largest and fastest growing city in New Mexico.
 - 2001 – 800 youth in the Las Cruces Public School District on long-term suspension
 - Over 1 in 4 New Mexico children live in poverty.
 - New Mexico is the third poorest state.
- 

Vicious Cycle

Harlem, 1964

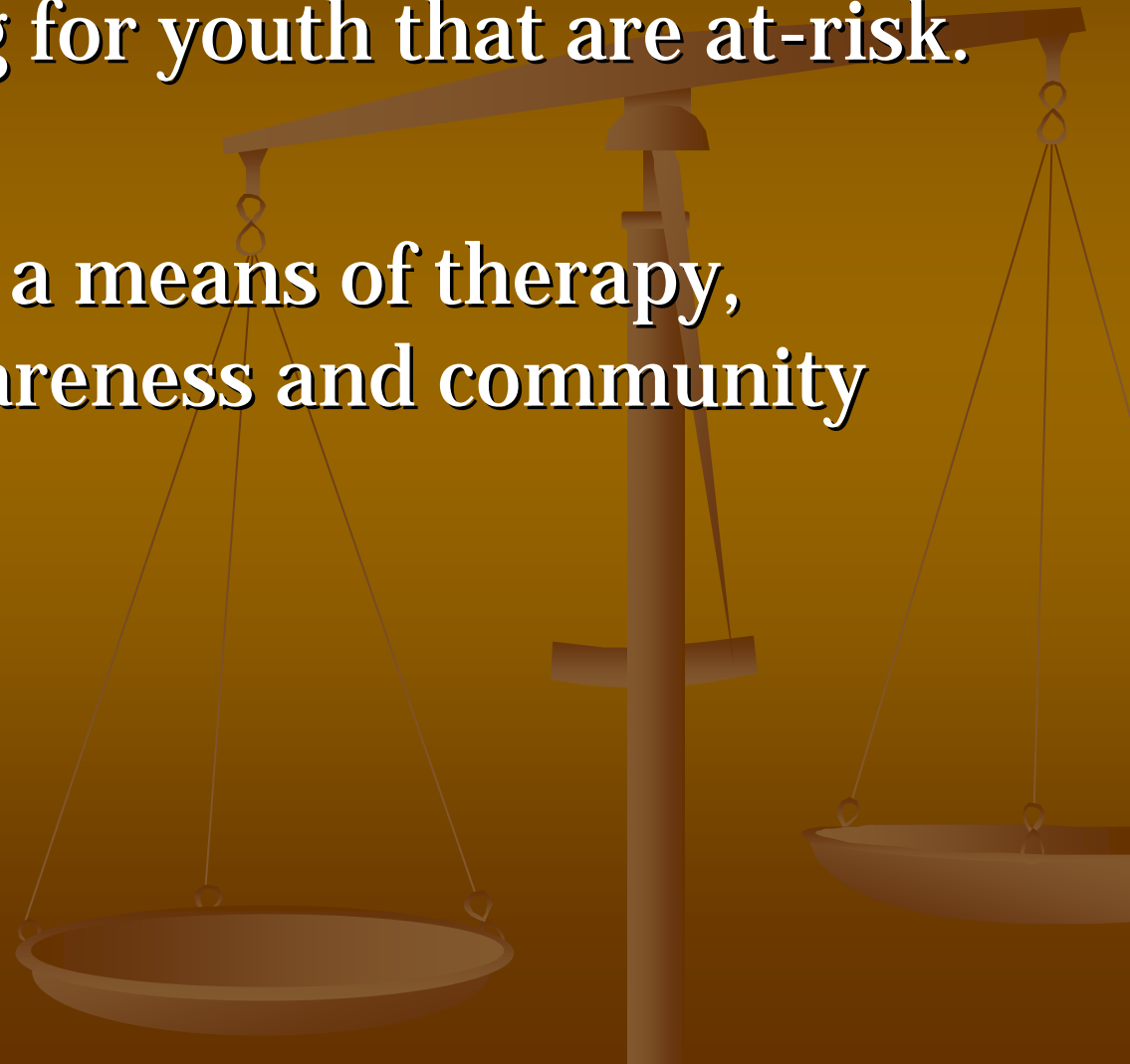


“When you live in a poor neighborhood, you’re living in an area where you have to have poor schools. When you have poor schools you have poor teachers, when you have poor teachers you get a poor education And when you get a poor education your destined to be a poor man and a poor woman the rest of your life. Poor education you can only work on a poor paying job and that poor paying job enables you to live again in a poor neighborhood.” – Malcolm X speaking live in Harlem 1964



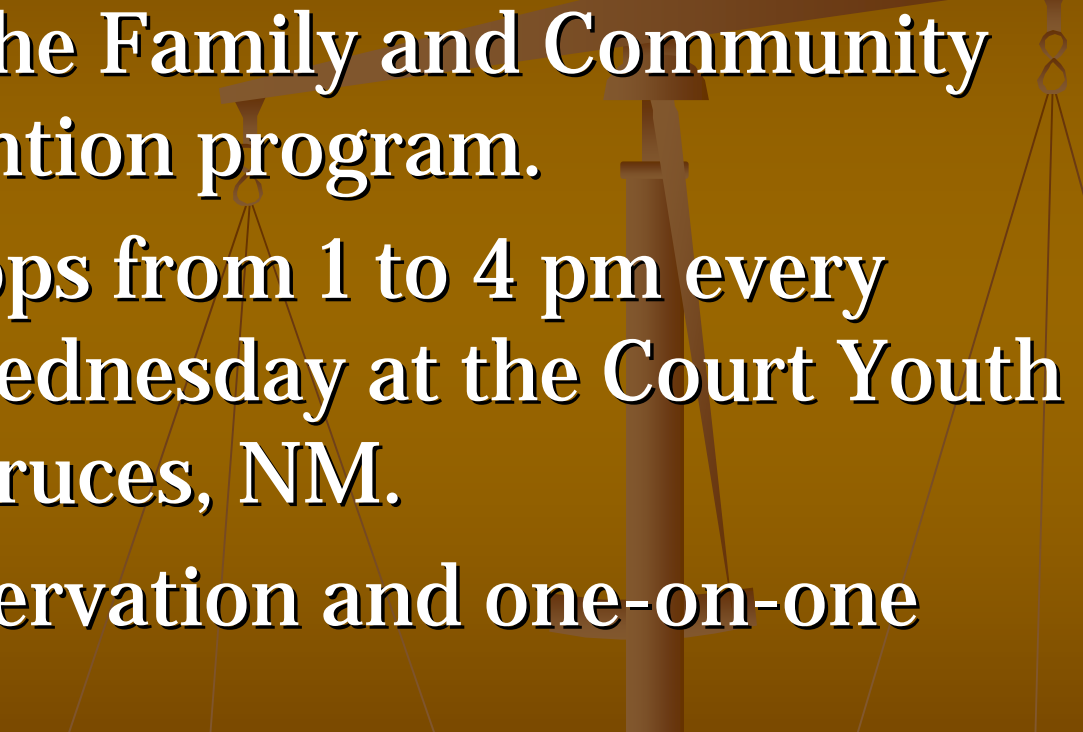
My Research Project

- Creative writing for youth that are at-risk.
- Using poetry as a means of therapy, educational awareness and community development.



Methodology

Aqui Se Puede

- Facilitator for the Family and Community Violence Prevention program.
 - Poetry workshops from 1 to 4 pm every Monday and Wednesday at the Court Youth Center in Las Cruces, NM.
 - Participant observation and one-on-one interviews.
- 

Methodology Cont.

The Beat Within



- Interviews with 3 staff members from The Beat Within.
- <http://thebeatwithin.org>

Accomplishments

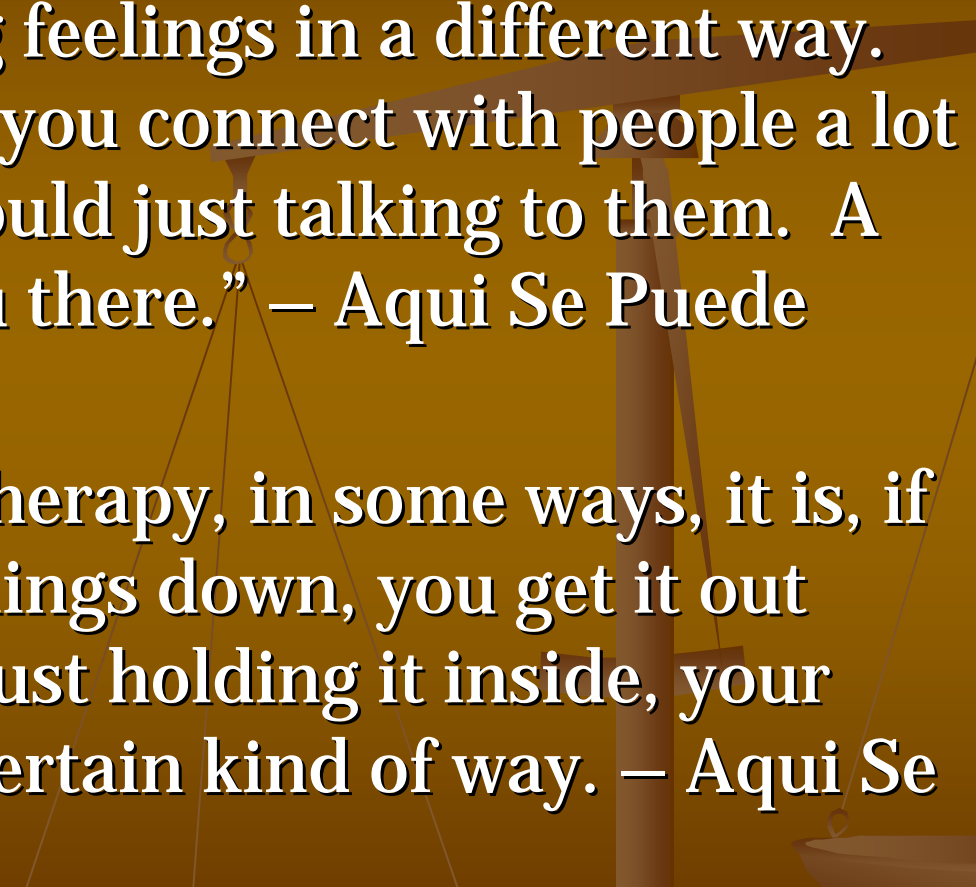
Aqui Se Puede



- Completed Interviews (6)
- Poetry Jam 2004
- Poetry Pamphlet
- Aqui Se Puede Website
www.aquisepuede.com
- Support

Aqui Se Puede

Interviews

- “You’re expressing feelings in a different way. You touch people, you connect with people a lot better than you would just talking to them. A poem will take you there.” – Aqui Se Puede student
 - “I think it can be therapy, in some ways, it is, if you write your feelings down, you get it out because your not just holding it inside, your letting it out in a certain kind of way. – Aqui Se Puede student
- 

The Beat Within

Interviews

- “We give them this form to express themselves and get their pains off their chest and learn how to hopefully make better choices.” – Co-founder of the Beat Within.
- “It transformed from being a publication into an actual therapy....I’m writing my feelings down, and somebody that doesn’t even know me is going to respond to my feelings.” – Former CYA inmate now Staff of The Beat Within.
- “Not only have they become more literate in the manner of expressing themselves...but they have become much more literate in their thinking, they examine what they say in their writing.” – Staff Member of The Beat Within

Conclusion

The Goal

- Find a way to implement a writing community in the community.



Why Do You Write Poetry? by the Aqui Se Puede Poetry Jam Class

Because things affect us
Make us angry, frustrated, happy, upset and
We have to
Write
To keep sanity, get feelings out, release soul
and mind
Tell a story
To kiss the sky,
Express feelings
With a respect for life and history.
Because I like it
Rhyming and rapping.
It uses both sides of the brain, but
Comes straight from the heart
Truth.