

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION/THESIS/RESEARCH PAPER/CREATIVE PROJECT: Examining the Implications of Poverty from the Perspective of Mothers and Children Living in Urban, Suburban, and Rural Communities

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Poverty, specifically child poverty, has been an area of great concern impacting the United States for decades (Chen & Corak, 2008; Douglas-Hall & Chau, 2008; Fajth & Holland, 2007; Germany, 2007; Raphael, 2005; Wight, Chau & Aratani, 2010; Wilson, 2010). This paper explores the differing views, experiences and perceptions of poverty through interviews with three impoverished families: one child and mother each located in an (1) urban (2) suburban and (3) rural community. By looking at children and parents living in impoverished homes in diverse neighborhoods I sought to investigate the societal, social, and emotional perceptions and experiences of children and parents living in urban, suburban, and rural poverty. Children between the ages of 6 and 7 years old were interviewed, as were their mothers, utilizing a qualitative, case study methodology. Research found parental themes of overall concern regarding child well-being due to past personal and peer experiences, a fear of the future, and the differences in variations of family, community, and financial support. Child themes included an awareness of the financial burdens of their families, knowledge of crime and violence and perceptions of wealth and home.