

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is a pleasure, as well as an obligation, to acknowledge all the individuals and institutions that made this book possible. First, to all those who opened their lives, shared memories, offered interpretations, and often challenged my own, enriching not only my work but more importantly, my life. Fortunately they are too many not to forget some, but my thanks to my roommate Michael from Fancy House, Robert Helms, Dave Onion, Frank Little, Jason, John, Spam, Scott, Shon, Mc Mike, Michael and Cidar Girl from Cidar House, Farmgirl at the Farm House, and James. Beyond the guinea pigs in West Philadelphia, I also want to thank the trust and commitment from King Lab Rat and the Canadian Guinea Pig.

At the Community-Based Trial Organization (CBTO) the director supported this project enthusiastically and made every effort to help me through it. The same can be said of all of its staff, its education coordinator, the nurses at the research department, and the members of the institutional review board. A special mention should be made of the CBTO's principal investigator, who encouraged me to pursue this research and who submitted graciously despite his tight schedule. Michael, Geraldine, John, and all the other patients deserve special thanks for their trust and disposition to share their very personal and sometimes painful recollections in a candid, open way, in order to help me get things right.

At the Graduate Center, City University of New York, Shirley Lindenbaum provided an inspirational model of scholarship, intellectual support, and kindness. Michael Blim, Ida Susser, and Don Robotham were dedicated mentors who contributed with their vivid interest and thoughtful critiques to bring to my attention key aspects of my work. I also owe a great deal of gratitude to former students and friends in the anthropology

department. In particular Suzana Maia, Larissa Honey, Susan Falls, Erin Martineau, and Julian Brash engaged enthusiastically in discussing and providing valuable comments on numerous chapter drafts. Joseph Moses, David Vine, Nicole Laborde, and Lynn Horridge proved to be great colleagues and supportive friends.

At the Mayo Clinic I received enthusiastic support and encouragement from Barbara Koenig, Victor Montori, Molly Dingel, Marguerite Strobel, Jon Tilburt, Ashley Hicks, and Robbin Dawson.

Thanks to Betty Levin, Nicholas Freudneberg, and Barbara Weinstein at the Health Sciences Doctoral Programs, Graduate Center, for making me feel at home during my last phase of manuscript preparation.

Generous financial support gave me the time and ease to complete this project. Thanks to the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research for a four-year Wadsworth International Fellowship that made true my dream of becoming an anthropologist and supported me beyond coursework and into my fieldwork and writing. Pam Smith made me forget the more bureaucratic aspects of dealing with granting institutions, and I am very happy to be able to thank her for that. Thanks also to the Irving Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy that in 2005 provided support for my writing. Finally, a CUNY Writing Fellowship at Queens College during 2003–4 provided additional help.

At Duke University Press I had the enthusiastic guidance of my editor Miriam Angress and their dedicated staff and also benefited enormously from the comments and suggestions from Carl Elliott and Michael Oldani, the outside reviewers. This book is no doubt much better because of their combined efforts.

Writing this book has been an exciting intellectual journey, but it was not free of stress or anxieties. Luckily I was unconditionally supported by a close group of family and friends. Thanks to my extended Puerto Rican family in New York City: Tomas Noel, Monxo Lopez, Libertad Guerra, Camila Gelpi, Yesenia Aponte, Rebio Diaz, Ulla Berg, Macdara Vallery, and Vanessa Senati. From California my sister Cecilia, my two nieces Nicole and Angie, and my brother-in-law-Eduardo reminded me how much we love each other and what a long road we have traveled together. In Montevideo my sister Ximena, my nephew Santi, and my dad Roberto reminded me of what I left at home. From the other shore, in Buenos Aires, Daniel Zahra proved that it is possible to cultivate a friendship despite distance.