Permeable Bodies:

Children, Cancer, and Biomedicine in Argentina

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

11:30 – 1:00 pm | Anthropology & Sociology Building | Room 1109
6303 NW Marine Drive

Refreshments and reception will be served following colloquium in the graduate lounge at the Anthropology & Sociology Building.

RAFAEL WAINER (PhD Candidate in the Department of Anthropology at UBC; M.A. in Anthropology, UBC, 2008; Lic. in Anthropology, University of Buenos Aires, 2005) Rafael's main interests are biomedical knowledge and practices, children, corporeal experience of medical treatments, and the perils and promises of cancer treatment for children in a Latin American context. Rafael's dissertation is based on ethnographic research on a local clinic site in Argentina and asks questions about subjectivity, capacity for action, the body, social care, and the limits to medical knowledge and practice placing children's bodies as the focal point of his analysis.

The vast improvement in survival rates in childhood cancer has expanded expectations of survival. Surviving cancer is the result of invasive and life-disrupting treatments. To understand the long and taxing medical journeys of these children living with cancer this study traces children and families' experiences at *Hospital Infantil* in the City of Buenos Aires, Argentina. It examines how children and families as well as hematologists, communicable disease specialists, and palliativists struggle with the treatments and care for these children. This thesis is an anthropological reflection on the role of the body, especially children's bodies, in cancer treatment, palliative care, and cure. This study argues that cancer treatment turns children's bodies into "permeable bodies," bodies painfully turned inside out, as a way of producing knowledge and an urgent therapeutic relation that stretches in multiple dimensions. Children become the embodied objects of cancer treatment.

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