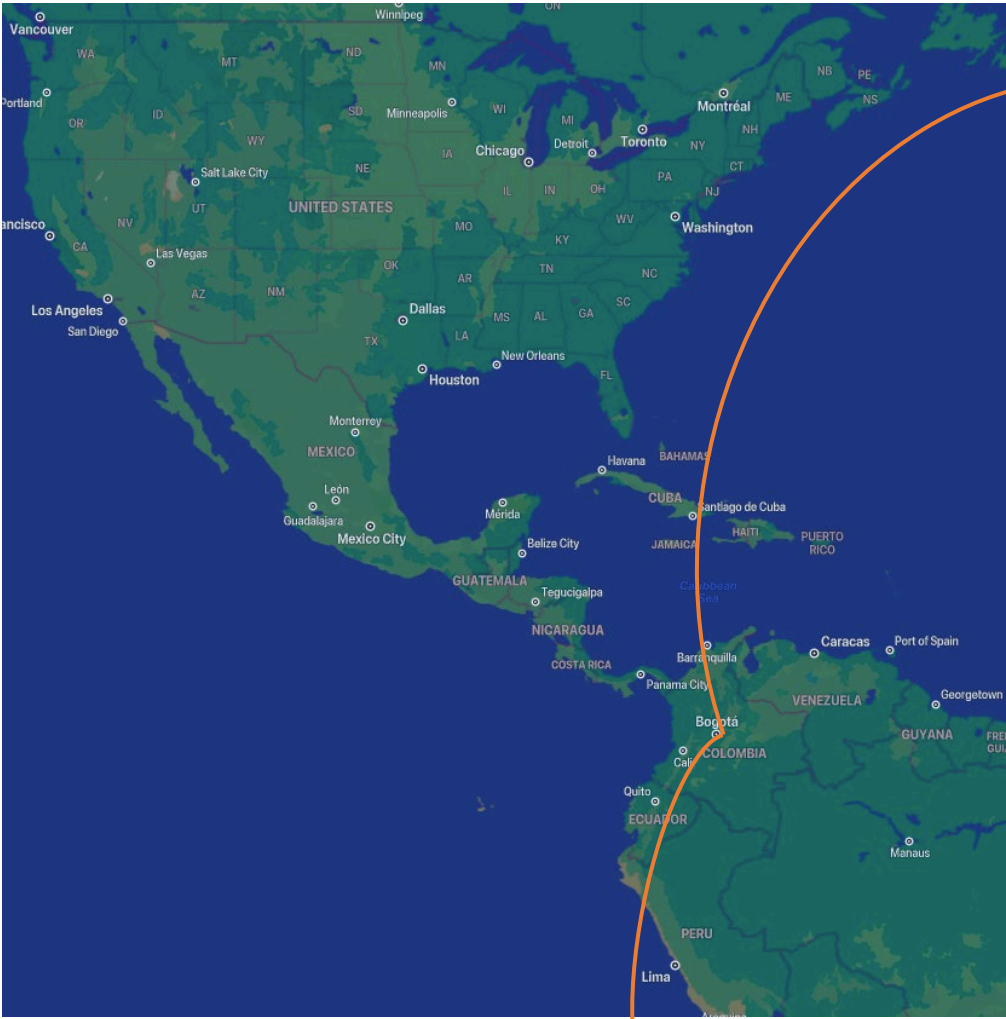


Community libraries and urban environmental struggles in Bogotá, Colombia: Shifting meanings and futures

Claudia Grisales, Informatics PhD program,
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Carlos Solano, La Violetta community library, Bogotá
Leidy Salazar, La Violetta community library, Bogotá





Bogotá

Monserate



Colombia

Photo by Mauricio Moreno for Futbolred
<https://www.futbolred.com/fuera-del-futbol/bogota-medidas-y-restricciones-por-posesion-de-gustavo-petro-domingo-7-de-agosto-163462>

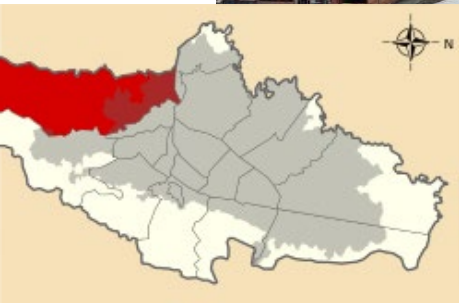
Bogotá

630 sq. mi (Chicago City x 3)

> 8 million people (Chicago x 3)



Cuidad Bolivar



- Border neighborhood—urban and rural land.
- **“A place for new beginnings”**
- A socioeconomic periphery of Bogotá, but **a center of creativity, resistance, and solidarity.**
- A landscape marked by extraction; **a site for the “defense of the territory” as vital space.**

Map from Milenioscuro, “Ciudad Bolívar” in Wikipedia

Landfil photo by autor

Quarry photo from El Tiempo: <https://www.eltiempo.com/bogota/bogota-cantera-villa-paula-responde-por-acusacion-de-mineria-ilegal-600305>

La Violetta Community Library

“El Paraiso” Neighborhood

Library as community processes around reading, writing and orality.

Leidy



Convenciones: Lugares Habitados Violetta

	Nuestra Casa 2013 2016 2019 2020		Restaurante Chino 2015
	Casa Doña Rosa 2012		Casa de Doña María 2016
	Ludoteca 2013		Casa de Don Miguel 2017 2018
	Paradero de buses 2013		Tierra Nueva 2014 2015 2017 2018
	Casa de Don Pablo 2014		Puerta al Paraiso 2017

Carlos



Library, Territory, and Community

- Insisting on **community work** in Ciudad Bolivar despite tensions and difficulties.
- Popular education and **transformative pedagogies**
- **Rewriting narratives** about Ciudad Bolivar
 - “We come from believing that we are the worst of Bogota, the segregated, the marginalized ... We are changing those stigmas and generating a sense of belonging to the territory” (Carlos).



“What would El Paraiso be without Violetta?”



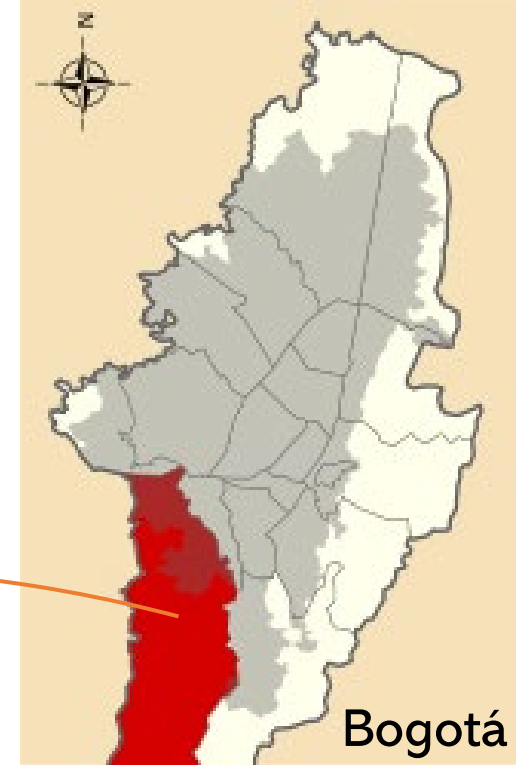
“We recovered a corner that was a garbage dump, literally the street was full of garbage, we made an activity in which **we started cleaning and recovering the space** ... we painted the street, then the neighbors started bringing us coffee, and then **they said, let's decorate the block**, they started to paint the sidewalk, we got some decorations to hang over the street, and then **other neighbors said, what if we make a nativity scene for Christmas**, and then everybody started taking things to the corner and organizing ‘novenas’, a guy got gifts for the children, and a girl said, let's make a barbecue, and we got the meat and **today nobody allows garbage to be dumped on that corner...**”

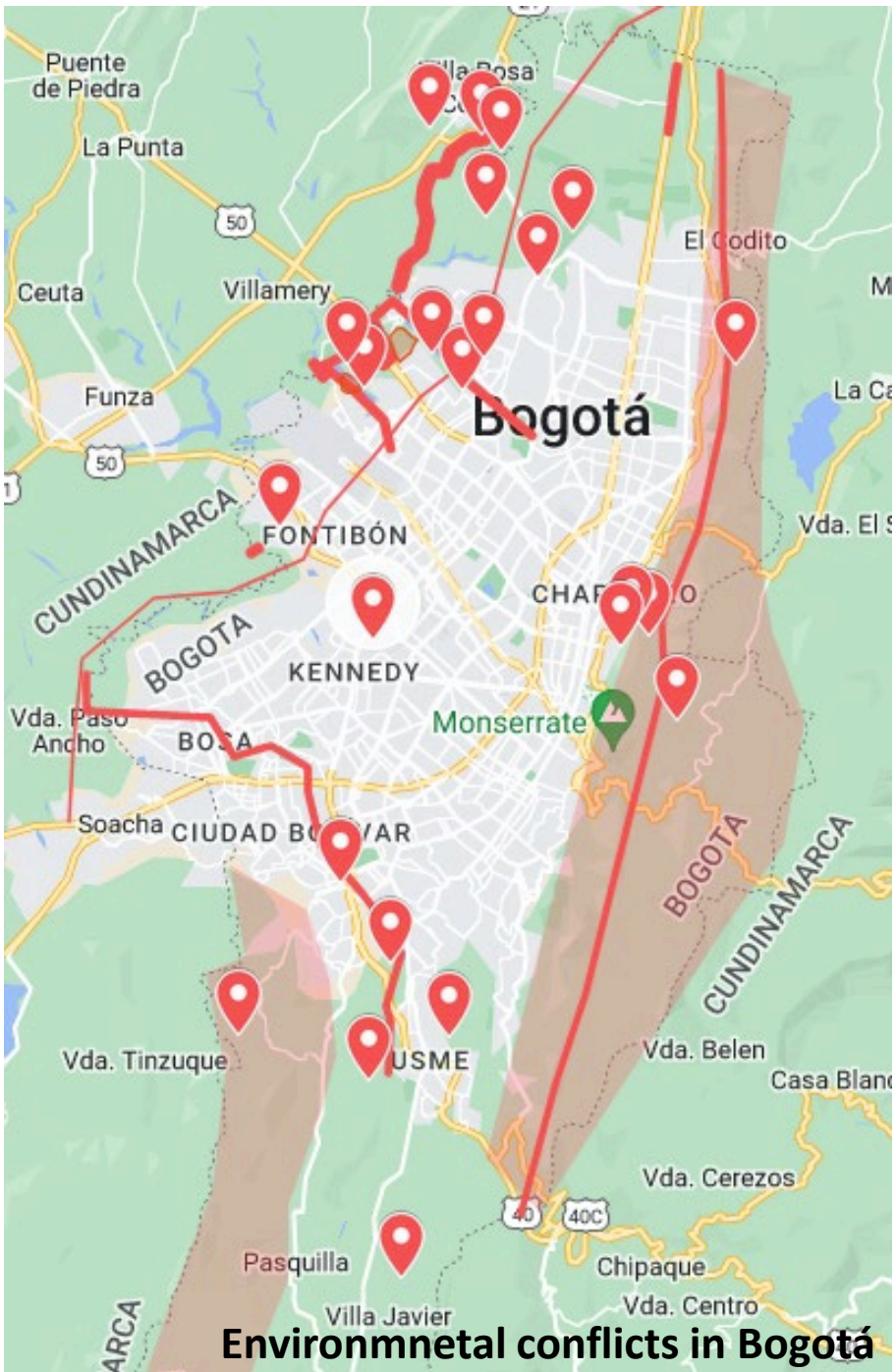
(Carlos)



CAPIR Network

- 20+ **grassroots organizations**
 - 3 rural libraries
 - 2 environmental libraries
 - 12 community libraries
 - 2 moving libraries
 - 1 popular library
- 3 public libraries
- Promoting articulated actions around **reading, writing and orality** in Ciudad Bolivar.





“The environmentalism of the poor:”
 Poor people defend the environment in rural areas and in cities all over the world.
 (Martinez-Allier, 2012)



“Right to the city—their right to change the world, to change life, and to reinvent the city more after their hearts' desire.”
 (Harvey, 2012)



- Bogotá:**
- BibloRed: 140 public “reading spaces,” including 32 public libraries
 - 130+ community libraries



Thank you!