

“Report it and they’ll kill you”: Resisting Dominant Discourses of Violence in Santa Fé, Bogota.

Wednesday March 30, 2016.

Jenna Meguid Major Research Paper

Submitted to Dr. Justin Podur at the Faculty of Environmental Studies

A Major Paper submitted to the Faculty of Environmental Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto Ontario, Canada

Candidate Signature

Supervisor Signature

Contents

Abstract.....	3
Foreword.....	4
Introduction	5
Chapter One: Research Methods.....	8
Grounded theory and interview methodology.....	8
Obstacles to interviews.....	10
Ethnographic participant observation	11
Chapter Two: Popular Imaginings and Government Intervention in Santa Fé.....	14
Popular Imaginings of Santa Fé.....	14
Government Intervention in Santa Fé	16
Chapter Three: Conceiving of Space and Government Control in Santa Fé and Colombia.....	19
Public Urbanism and Bogota.....	19
The negative consequences of urban policies in Bogotá.....	21
Race, indigenaety and socio-spatial strategies of control in Colombia	22
State policing efforts in marginal urban zones	23
Space, Government Intervention, and Colombia’s Civil War	24
Chapter Four: Gender, decency, civil war, and public space in Bogota’s sex work tolerance zone	26
Chapter Five: Denying violence in Santa Fé.....	28
Chapter Six: outsider violence	31
Chapter Seven: “All they do is use people”: government and non-profit efforts in Santa Fé.....	34
Chapter Eight: “Their Money is Coming from Our Pockets” – police brutality in Santa Fé.....	38
Chapter Nine: Conclusion	44
Works Cited.....	46

Abstract

The piece of writing that follows has a number of goals. I begin with a detailed outline of the research methods used in this project. I hope to provide the reader with a strong sense of the strengths and the blind spots of this project, as well as some of the very real compromises required when conducting ethnography in a context such as the Santa Fé neighbourhood. I then turn to a discussion of the popular representations of Santa Fé. I hope to call attention to some of the popular media and government narratives of Santa Fé and the ways that Santa Fé is constructed as a neighbourhood filled with anonymous violence, as well as highly sexualized, but anonymous and voiceless, women.

I will contextualize these constructions of Santa Fé in light of the writing which contemplates the experience of governmental use of space as a mechanism for social control in Colombia, and in Bogotá specifically. I will focus both on the rich literature which considers the connection between space, public visibility and government control of urban spaces, as well as the literature which considers the ways that Colombia's long-running civil war has been wrapped up in the use of territory and space as a mechanism for social control. I will follow this chapter with one which contemplates the ways that government control of public space is tied to agendas that, in the name of capitalism and production, seek to exclude sex workers from particular spaces.

I will then turn to the main task of this project, which is to highlight the voices of people living and working in Santa Fé, specifically, the trans sex workers and people living and working in street sales or as street recyclers. I will highlight some of the ways that they understand their own neighbourhood, and connect these understandings to the literature which conceptualizes the Colombian government's use of space as a mechanism for social control.

Specifically, I will consider four tactics that people used to push back against dominant narratives of the neighbourhood. First, some chose to deny the neighbourhood was a site of violence at all. Second, some chose to focus on calls to a racialized understanding of community, and distinguish between insiders and outsiders in the neighbourhood. Third, many offered pointed comments regarding the nature of individual police behaviour as well as overall policing strategy within the neighbourhood. Finally, others chose to critique or call attention to the overall patterns of government behaviour in the neighbourhood.

Foreword

There are a number of distinct goals that I was hoping to accomplish in my Plan of Study. The third of my learning components outlined in my POS is entitled “Intersectionality through Trans Sex-Worker and Homeless Experiences and Identities”. Within this learning objective there are two learning objectives:

1 - Learning Objective 3.1 engage with theoretical and ethnographic accounts of trans, sex worker and homeless experiences of violence and insecurity in cities.

2- Learning Objective 3.2 --understand the trans, homeless, and sex-worker experiences of public policy regimes geared at managing violence.

In the pages that follow, you will see a detailed ethnographic analysis of trans and sex worker experiences of violence and insecurity within the city of Bogotá. In relaying my own findings, I have also engaged with and analyzed the academic literature which contemplates the way that governments, and Colombia’s governments in particular, have leveraged public policy initiatives to contain and quarantine those bodies deemed unwelcome for public space or unworthy of state protection.

Other major learning goals for this POS included understanding the context of Colombia’s ongoing civil war and peace process, as well as the academic literature which characterizes the literature critical of dominant approaches to urban security and safety. While the lens of citizen security was ultimately not used for this paper, this paper also centrally contemplates “the ways that predominant discourses around public security respond to the needs of particular social groups”, as mentioned in learning objective 2.2.

Finally, while I have not written extensively about the process of demobilizing from a civil war specifically, the work that follows has engaged with the impact of the civil war and the state’s approach to supporting those who have been impacted. The discussion of the massive displacement and the state’s failure to respond in supporting those displaced from their lands has been central to the issue of Colombia’s peace process as well as the question of urban safety and urban policing.

Introduction

In March of 2011, I arrived in Bogota for the first time. I arrived alone, without any housing, Spanish language ability, or clear plan for how I was going to spend my time. Within half a year, I had become enamoured with life in Colombia's capital city, and in particular, I had become captivated by a neighbourhood in the centre of the city called Santa Fé. The city's predominant sex work tolerance zone or red light district split geographically between trans and cis-gendered women, it was notorious in the city for being dirty, dangerous, and filled with random, as well as highly organized, violence.

I became connected to the neighbourhood through an organization called the *Fundación Procrear*. Perhaps the best-known social service organization in the neighbourhood, *Procrear* operates a daily drop-in at a storefront location in the zone. They work with homeless, recycler, trans, and sex-worker communities, as well as families and children that live in the neighbourhood. Through the drop-in centre, which opens daily in the mornings, the staff take on a caseload of individuals with any number of social and medical problems. Lost or stolen identity documents, inability to access anti-retro-viral therapies, access to medical treatment or legal aid or addictions counselling—the staff manage all manner of complex situations with grace and compassion.

The staff of *Procrear* consist of a mix of young professionals in social work and occupational therapy, as well as those who have lived and worked on the streets of the neighbourhood. It is through *Procrear* that I met some of the bravest, most creative, and deeply insightful activists for social change that I have had the good fortune to work with. In particular, Andrea Correa, better known simply as *Coqueta*, became (and remains) an invaluable mentor who has given generously with her time, brilliance, and deeply subversive laughter. Embroiled in interesting work in a neighbourhood that takes time to reveal its secrets, my own plans, to return to Toronto and being law school, were put on hold, and I took on a role with the organization.

Supporting myself through a few hours of early-morning or late-evening English classes to businesses, I became a long-term, full-time volunteer. At times I worked as a front-line service provider with the drop-in, offering *agua de panela* (traditional morning refreshment) and bread, running activities, chatting and checking in with those, largely street vendors or recyclers, who came by. Or, I would work as part of a research team funded by an international public health organization, conducting private interviews with men who had sex with men on the street. Other times, I accompanied one or two spectacular trans activists as they balanced their roles within institutions such as *Procrear*, with their ambitious organizing and grass-roots activism in the neighbourhood. Though it may sound high-minded, it is also true: I became captivated with the neighbourhood, the resilience, humor, affection and wisdom of its inhabitants, as well as the complexity and devastation of the violence of both statelessness and state mis-intervention.

Throughout, it struck me that the way the neighbourhood was discussed – in the news-media, with friends and colleagues unconnected to the neighbourhood, and in interviews with politicians and the police – was in sharp contrast to some of the realities I was learning about within the neighbourhood. Eventually, two years later than scheduled, I returned to Toronto to begin law school. I was thrilled to be able to return to Santa Fé the summer after my first year in law school with funding to work on a project directed at researching and reducing police violence against trans women and people living on the street.

I enrolled in a joint law/Master's in Environmental Studies degree upon my return from that research trip, which allowed me to return once again in the summer of 2014 to complete the field research that forms the basis for this project. At that point I had been connected to two mentors who have been instrumental to this project. The first has been my supervisor and long-time advocate, Dr. Justin Podur, whose patience, pragmatism and politics have been critical to my successful completion of this project, as well as my overall mental health. I was also connected to brilliant researcher Amy Ritterbusch, whose principled action research and critical geography work with girls involved in the street trade has been an invaluable resource to my own understanding of the neighbourhood, and whose compassion for those living in Santa Fé has been a strong anchor for my own work.

The piece of writing that follows has a number of goals. I begin with a detailed outline of the research methods used in this project. I do this as part of a critical ethnographic tradition which seeks to allow the reader as much information as possible to contextualize the analysis offered. That is, in outlining my methods and who I interviewed and under what circumstances, I hope to provide the reader with a strong sense of the strengths and the blind spots of this project, as well as some of the very real compromises required when conducting ethnography in a context such as the Santa Fé neighbourhood.

I then turn to a discussion of the popular representations of Santa Fé. I hope to call attention to some of the popular media and government narratives of Santa Fé. Specifically, I hope to call attention to the ways that Santa Fé is constructed as a neighbourhood filled with anonymous violence, as well as highly sexualized, but anonymous and voiceless, women.

Next, I hope to contextualize these constructions of Santa Fé in light of the writing which contemplates the experience of governmental use of space as a mechanism for social control in Colombia, and in Bogotá specifically. In this section I will focus both on the rich literature which considers the connection between space, public visibility and government control of urban spaces, as well as the literature which considers the ways that Colombia's long-running civil war has been wrapped up in the use of territory and space as a mechanism for social control. I will follow this chapter with one which contemplates the ways that government control of public space is tied to agendas that, in the name of capitalism and production, seek to exclude sex workers from particular spaces.

I will then turn to the main task of this project, which is to highlight the voices of people living and working in Santa Fé, specifically, the trans sex workers and people living and working in street sales or as street recyclers. I will highlight some of the ways that they understand their own neighbourhood, and connect these understandings to the literature which conceptualizes the Colombian government's use of space as a mechanism for social control.

Specifically, I will consider four tactics that people used to push back against dominant narratives of the neighbourhood. First, some chose to deny the neighbourhood was a site of violence at all. Second, some chose to focus on calls to a racialized understanding of community, and distinguish between insiders and outsiders in the neighbourhood. Third, many offered pointed comments regarding the nature of individual police behaviour as well as overall policing strategy within the neighbourhood. Finally, others chose to critique or call attention to the overall patterns of government behaviour in the neighbourhood. In my conclusion, I will offer some thoughts for further research.

On January 1, 2016, Enrique Peñalosa replaced Gustavo Petro as mayor of the city of Bogota. Petro branded his tenure over the city with the phrase "Bogotá Humana", or, "A Humane Bogota". During his tenure, the municipality focused heavily on LGBTI politics, and on a generally progressive civic agenda.

The city saw the creation of the municipal Women's Secretariat, the opening up of additional soup kitchens, as well as a mobile health van. Peñalosa, on the other hand, is notoriously hostile towards all informal street-level commerce, whether in sex work, informal sales of music and movies, and, especially, the sale of drugs. Many of those involved in front-line work with the municipality's social services have lost their jobs. The realities of this new political regime will have a massive impact on the experiences of those in Santa Fé.

That is, the city's poor and informal workers are now bracing themselves for an increasingly intense war for public space in the centre of the city of Bogota. In addition to bracing themselves for a new wave of public policies designed to remove undesired bodies from public spaces, Santa Fé joins the rest of the country in bracing itself for the outcome of the ongoing peace talks between the Government of Colombia and the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*. Whether the peace agreement is ultimately signed or not, Bogota, and the historical centre, are poised to continue to receive those who have been displaced as a result of violence in other regions of Colombia.

Perhaps, then, this is a particularly important moment to pay attention to the voices of those in the neighbourhood of Santa Fé. At the very least, I hope this work serves as a reminder of the ongoing ways that the Colombian state is invested in demonstrating its presence through particular socio-spatial forms of control, specifically with regard to those whose presence on the street is connected to extreme poverty or government failure. Given increasing income inequality, the massive devaluation of the Colombian peso relative to the US dollar, steeply increasing inflation rates and a municipal government increasingly hostile to the urban poor and the recently displaced, it is more important than ever that we remain vigilant against some of the well-documented, ongoing ways that governments in Colombia have failed their poor.

Chapter One: Research Methods

For the purposes of my field research, I focused on street-level experiences of violence as lived by the trans sex-worker and homeless communities. What types of violence do homeless and sex-worker communities face? What do they understand to be the source of this violence? What do the homeless and trans sex-worker populations in Santa Fé think about the state's intentions and capabilities with regards to protecting citizens, and the trans and homeless communities in particular? Do the trans and sex worker population have any perception on public policy efforts related to policing, citizen security, or demobilization from the civil war? These were some of the questions which guided my research.

In order to pursue these interview questions, I used a blended qualitative research methodology. Initially, this methodology consisted of two related qualitative research methods: ethnography and grounded theory. I chose to use a blended approach because work in Santa Fé is fraught and dangerous. There are many parts of the neighbourhood that are unsafe for me to enter, and many places where my presence would also constitute a risk for my research subjects and participants. Multiple research methods allowed me to 'triangulate' the accuracy and validity of my research, and allowed me to supplement gaps in research through one area with a complimentary research technique.

Grounded theory and interview methodology

Grounded theory research methods are built on the intellectual pillar of theoretical flexibility (see Strauss and Corbin, 1997; Creswell, 2007), and suggest that researchers should begin a theoretical inquiry without having a preconceived theoretical position, but rather develop and analyze data as it is gathered, and review and adapt the focus and scope of qualitative inquiry according to tentative theories which are grounded in the realities of research subjects.

The grounded theory component of this research project involved a series of interviews with the homeless and trans sex-worker individuals who live and work in the Santa Fé neighbourhood, specifically with regard to their experiences of violence. I conducted a total of eighteen interviews, which lasted from five minutes to an hour in length. The average length of an interview was between 25 – 30 minutes. Interviews were recorded and the relevant portions of those interviews were transcribed in order to analyze data trends. With only one exception, participants were very generous with their time, and very happy to share their thoughts.

Many of these interviews were conducted in the *Fundación Procrear's* medical office or storage room. The medical *consultorio* is a small room on the first floor of the *Fundación's* main site in Santa Fé. Still on the first floor and very close to the main drop-in space, but also a space that only staff and volunteers were given regular access to, the *consultorio* was a good compromise, offering the safety of being near staff (and in a well-trafficked area within earshot), but also offering a modicum of privacy. The back room, while significantly dustier, and a storage-place for all manner of dismembered mannequins, cleaning supplies, and food and books for families in the neighbourhood, also provided the right balance between the safety and privacy required for an interview, and ease of access to other staff should a problem present itself.

In order to be a suitable participant for research, there were a number of criteria that needed to be met. First, participants needed not to be high in order to be considered suitable for an interview. The politics of the *Fundación Procrear's* drop-in are such that clients are under no circumstances allowed to consume (marijuana, glue, rubbing alcohol, bootlegged beer or crack cocaine) within the walls of the

Fundación. However, there is no blanket prohibition on individuals who come into the space while clearly under the influence.

These decisions are more judgement calls left to the staff – in general, if an individual does not present a risk to staff, themselves, or other participants in the space (keeping in mind that many of those participants are children and youth), there is a strong presumption that nobody should be excluded or removed from the drop-in. Some individuals, despite not presenting with aggressive or erratic behaviours, were known to other staff as having a history of behaving unpredictably when under the influence. Those participants were gently excluded from the pool of potential interviewees.

Second, and heavily related to the first, participants needed to be known to *Procrear*, and my two main collaborators during this study. Most of the research participants were regulars at the neighbourhood centre. For some, this meant coming in every day to receive the hot drink and take part in an activity or two. For others, this meant having come by the centre every once every month or two, for years. In practice, most of those interviewed were not only individuals known to *Procrear*, but also individuals that I had built relationships with during my four-year relationship in the neighbourhood. Where I had strong relationships with individuals, I would ask them for half an hour of their time. In other instances, Coqueta or another member of the *Procrear* staff would strike up a conversation with an individual and ask them if they had 30 minutes to answer some questions anonymously about the neighbourhood, violence, and gender. Most agreed up-front.

There were many individuals who seemed suitable candidates for interview according to my own criteria, but after pointing this out to Coqueta, I was told simply “*Ese no*” (“not that one”). These directions were presented as orders that were meant to be followed without question, and it is in that spirit that I did follow them. I had no interest in questioning Coqueta’s instincts, and I followed her direction unquestioningly.

The process of receiving informed consent for my interviews, especially with those who were living on the street, was a complicated one. The processes required by North American academia are not always easy to translate and modify so that they are relevant for the intended context. In my own case, I always began the interview by explaining that I was writing a major research document about the neighbourhood, violence, gender, and the role of the state. I asked permission to record, and never began recording before the informed consents had been signed. I went over the informed consent form with each participant.

I started by giving them a copy and asking if they would prefer to read it or if they would prefer that we went over it together. Some chose to read the informed consent, and others requested that we go over it together. Interestingly, given the strong presence of HIV and AIDS research projects that have taken place in Santa Fé, many recognized the informed consent process as part of the theatrics of institutionalized process that comes along with outsiders researching in the neighbourhood. Having previously conducted research in the neighbourhood that was connected to such theatrics, I understood this perception.

Regardless of whether the participant said they had read the form, I went over the major content of it with individuals before the interview began or was recorded. Given the nature of the population I was working with, this process happened quickly: “this paragraph says you can stop this interview whenever you want, this next paragraph is very important, it confirms that I will not write your name down on anything associated with the interview.” This sort of quick, pragmatic overview was often key to building

comfort in the interview room. It disrupted the impression that we were about to embark upon a stuffy, formalized process that dismissed many of the realities of those living on the street, and rather allowed for a more frank and honest discussion.

With regard to the content of the interviews, I always began by asking participants how long they had been connected to the neighbourhood. The rest of the interview was semi-structured, and the rest of the questions were impersonal. I asked about impressions, not about experiences, although often people chose to respond with examples of experiences. This was in line with other qualitative and ethnographic research methodologies developed by those working in areas of high social conflict. Sarah Thomas, for instance, argues that refusing to centre interviews around individual experiences of trauma, violence, or humiliation ensures that individual interview participants remain in control, and that interviews remain dignified and safe (39). In keeping with the dictates of grounded theory, I developed a few initial questions that I asked all participants, including questions such as “do you think the armed conflict has had a big impact on this neighbourhood?”; “what do you think the neighbourhood will look like in the post-conflict era?”

Participants were compensated in some way for their time, but this was not promised at the outset of the interview (at the request of the executive director of *Procrear*). In particular, given some of the dynamics involved in the neighbourhood, the director of the *Fundación* believed that it was damaging for the neighbourhood to condition people to demand something in exchange for their time. I followed his directive as a courtesy. At the end of my interviews, I asked individuals if they had anything else they wanted to tell me, and asking them how I could thank them for their time. I told them they were able to take a piece of clothing that had been donated to the organization’s clothing bank (usually clothing had to be exchanged for new clothing, or purchased, even if only for 10 or 20 cents), that I could invite them to a meal. In rare cases, I gave participants money for their time – this was always in moments where we were outside of the *Fundación*, and other options were untenable.

Obstacles to interviews

There are a number of methodological challenges that are worth discussing, in order to allow the reader to better contextualize the responses to the questions asked during interviews.

First, and this should not be underestimated, is the language barrier. By the time I had passed my ethics review and was in a position to conduct my field research, I had been speaking Spanish for roughly four years. I learned Spanish in Colombia, and a large part of my Spanish was learned in Santa Fé. Having worked in that neighbourhood without problem, and having tested my Spanish in myriad other professional situations in Colombia, I did not want to rely upon the services of a translator. Indeed, my ability to speak fluent Spanish, and particularly the informal Spanish spoken on the streets of Bogota, was often a helpful tactic to establish with interviewees that I was familiar with many of the realities of the neighbourhood, and had spent some time and effort to acquaint myself with the area.

However, my familiarity with the language, and the local conventions around language use, came up against some very real barriers. Many of my interview participants were regular users of either glue or crack cocaine, and many had been regular users for many years. Both of these substances are prone to cause tooth loss as a side effect, and I interviewed many individuals, particularly men who lived on the street, who believed that I understood them more than I did. In interview transcripts as well, there are moments where insights become simply impossible to decipher, because of some combination of background noise (usually the yelling and screaming of children delighted with whatever activity was

going on in the main *Procrear* drop-in space), differences in vocabulary, and my inability to decipher some of the changes to language that arrived in the population I was interviewing.

Second, as mentioned above, the neighbourhood of Santa Fé, while created as a dumping ground for unwanted individuals, is also a heavily surveilled and controlled neighbourhood. The rules around what can and cannot be discussed are clear and well understood. They are also connected to the safety of participants. Therefore, some of my initially naive questions (“who runs this neighbourhood?”) were quickly eliminated, either vetoed by Coqueta, or deleted from research based upon the reaction of participants (usually, a steadfast commitment to refusing to answer those questions), and, in some cases, replaced by other, more subtle questions, that spoke to the same issue but did not present a risk for participants to answer.

In addition to being very strongly surveilled from within, there were strong legacies of collective suspicion of outsiders hoping to come into the neighbourhood, from those living and working in Santa Fé. These experiences were strongly divided along gender lines. In particular, as a sex work tolerance zone, the neighbourhood is a well-trodden path for the slack-jawed and rubber-necked. Both in informal conversation and during interviews, trans women noted the practice, undertaken often by men, sometimes by university students, and not infrequently by the more *amarillista* (“yellow” or sensationalized) news reporters, of driving down the main streets of Santa Fé with a cell phone, camera, or video-recorder, and recording, without consent or permission, women engaged in trying to engage clients.

During my time in the neighbourhood there was more than one experience where a journalist or photographer arrived in the neighbourhood with a request to meet some of the sex workers and interview them for a human interest story. Almost invariably, these requests turned into sensationalist and reductive accounts of the work and lived experiences of the trans women who volunteered, if any at all did. Promises to focus on dignified portrayals of the women, to not sensationalize, to not reduce or reframe or focus on violence, promises to give final editorial control to the subjects – these promises are almost inevitably ignored by journalists coming into the neighbourhood, and contribute to high levels of suspicion towards outsiders hoping to interview trans women.

That is, were it not for the years that I had committed to the neighbourhood before the period of my research began, it would have been much more difficult for me to access the thoughts of trans women in the neighbourhood. As it stood, my research collaborator Coqueta was often a critical resource, vouching for my intentions and politics of solidarity with trans women in the neighbourhood. I was always honoured to receive such endorsements.

Despite the generosity with which Coqueta endorsed my intent and contextualized the risks of anonymous participation in my research, there were those who were not interested in participating in an interview. Of course those decisions were respected, and no individual was pressured to participate in an interview. However, the history of experiences with irresponsible or exploitative outsiders was still undeniably present in the interview room with all of my interviews with trans women.

Ethnographic participant observation

The ethnographic component of my field research was also based out of the *Fundación Procrear*. One major methodological school within ethnographic field research advises that ethnographers engage directly with the community, instead of remaining distant participant-observers (see Emerson 2011;

Clarke 1975). As such, the ethnographic component of my field research was based on my role as a front-line service provider with the *Fundación Procrear*.

This work involved staffing a daily drop-in for homeless and trans and other community members in Santa Fé. I chose this method of integration because I am familiar with the role of front-line staff at Procrear, having previously worked with the organization. I took detailed daily field notes that placed a high emphasis on the context in which the homeless and trans sex-worker communities live their lives. I focused on how, where, and when violence occurs, what the source of violence is, and how violence is understood by its victims. I also focused on particular moments of state presence or absence within the neighbourhood.

In particular, I attempted to engage both staff and visitors to the centre in collaborative ethnographic research. Collaborative ethnography has a strong history in Colombian ethnographic methods (see Rapaport, 2008), and my research follows in this tradition. Specifically, this involved being transparent about the fact that data is being collected, and speaking with participants about data that has been collected (while maintaining anonymity). This collaborative ethnographic approach included regular informal conversations with staff and service-users regarding the types of observations I was making, and my understanding of the meaning that events and conversations have for the residents of the neighbourhood.

The strength of this ethnographic method is that it allowed me to centre some of the additional contextual features of the neighbourhood that were not uncovered in my interviews. Ethnographic participant-observation allowed me to pay specific attention to the cultural and political context in which violence is experienced by individuals living in the neighbourhood. In particular, the ability to observe the daily lives (or at least one sliver of the daily lives) of many of my interview subjects provided me with the ability to cross-reference what was being said to me, with what I observed on a daily basis.

As Susan Thomas argues, using ethnographic observation in concert with interview-based research allows a researcher to “dig deeper when consensus versions...inevitably arose, to go beneath the accepted standards of what could be safely discussed with an outsider” (Thomas 34). Being embedded in the setting of *Procrear* allowed me to witness many of the realities faced by my participants that we were unable to talk about in the 20 minutes they were able to spare – encounters with the police, attitudes towards other marginalized groups in the neighbourhoods, the social geography of the area.

In addition to the pragmatic reasons for engaging in participant observation, there are intellectual and political reasons which drew me to ethnographic research methods. Thomas notes that “by entering into conversation with others researchers can elicit stories that result that have [sic] the potential to validate the knowledge of ordinary people as subjects that tend to be omitted from academic research and policy formulations alike” (36). She goes on to argue that ethnographic and interview-based research methods offer to the researcher the opportunity to develop “new ways of knowing and of developing new frameworks and theories based on the lived realities of ordinary people, particularly those rooted in individual experiences of conflict”(36).

Indeed my own interest in ethnographic research methods was centered in just such aspirations. Santa Fé, as I will discuss in my next chapter, is a four block radius in the centre of Bogotá that looms large in the collective imagination in the city as a site of violence, dirty, and social wasting. But these narratives remain untested or unanalyzed because the voices of those who live and work in Santa Fé are rarely, if ever, present in the social discourse around the neighbourhood and what to do with it.

Thus, in this chapter I have outlined the research methods that I used in order to uncover many of the ways that people living and working in Santa Fé understand and resist the narratives about their neighbourhood. Before I outline my research findings, I will take up some of the dominant media and government narratives of Santa Fe. It is this task I turn to in my next chapter.

Chapter Two: Popular Imaginings and Government Intervention in Santa Fé

In this chapter, I will accomplish two things. First, in order to allow the reader to contextualize the purpose of this study as well as better understand the comments of my interview participants, I will canvas popular media narratives of the neighbourhood of Santa Fé.

Second, and related to this first goal, I will outline some of the ways that the governmental goals for Santa Fé are represented in official documents. This will allow the reader to better understand the current intent of government intervention in Santa Fé, as well as the dominant discursive constructions which those in the neighbourhood are actively resisting with their own comments and thoughts in the neighbourhood.

Popular Imaginings of Santa Fé

Santa Fé lives large in the collective imagination of Bogotá.

The neighbourhood frequently appears in *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Colombia's two highest-circulation national newspapers. News articles frequently refer to the neighbourhood as a space of general destruction, poverty, and sensationalized violence: "in the neighbourhood of Santa Fé, the city's most famous tolerance zone, the destruction is evident: the house where the poet León de Greiff lived is now the parking lot of a brothel" ("*El Patrimonio Olvidado de Bogota*")¹. Another article quotes a woman who witnessed a murder on New Year's Eve in the neighbourhood: "It's crazy. The assassin was a young guy who left [the scene] so slowly, coldly... and the body, just thrown there, in the middle of the street" ("*Santa Fé, Un Barrio de Contrastes*", 2016). A third article casually describes the neighbourhood as "full of danger, chaos and dirt" (Torres 2010).

There are also strong and recurring narratives of random, unprovoked, irrational violence in the neighbourhood. One article recounts a story of retaliation where a man, trying to manipulate the gas on his stove in his apartment caused a fire that reached three neighbouring apartments. An unidentified mob of "at least 30 people" tried to lynch the man accused of setting this fire ("*Habitantes del Barrio Santa Fé Intentaron Linchar a un Hombre*", 2011). That is, the even events that are in some ways germane to the experience of living in a highly urbanized area, such as the possibility of a fire, is cloaked in an account of uncontrolled, anonymous mob violence.

Another recent incident in November, 2015, recounts controversy over a mural being painted in the sex work tolerance zone – public opinion was that beautification in the sex work tolerance zone was wasted time and money for the zone. Petro, the mayor at the time, is quoted as saying "Art is for everyone, even those who are thinking about robbing" ("*Petro Dice que El Arte es Para Todos 'Incluso Para el que Está Pensando en Robar'*"). It is striking that even Bogotá's most senior politician concedes, seemingly without thought, that the sex work tolerance zone is naturally inhabited by those who, if they are not actively robbing, are surely thinking about it.

One story in particular provides a particular example of the types of narratives that regularly appear in the news media about the neighbourhood. In its entirety, the article reads:

¹ Authors are not provided for online articles in many of the newspaper articles cited, so I have used the APA convention of citing by article title and date, when the date is available.

Two Venezuelan men, that were leaving a bar in Santa Fé, were attacked by three armed men. The victims said they had their jewellery, money, and one passport stolen. One of them suffered light injuries to one hand. (*"Atracan a Venezolanos en el Barrio Santa Fé"*, 2010)

That is, the alleged assailants, the alleged victims, and the source of the information are all unidentified. The only clearly information offered in the article is that the location for this random, anonymous violence is Santa Fé. Anonymous, random, senseless violence seems to emerge directly from the neighbourhood, not its inhabitants or those who happen to be passing through. That is, rather than provide the reader with any specific information about a police investigation, about the identity of the people involved, or any deeper context, the article offers only one contribution – it reminds us of the violence present in the neighbourhood.

In a city the size of Bogota, with crime statistics that point to a clear problem with street-level security, an armed robbery is not an unusual experience. In many cases, it is not a newsworthy experience. What, we might ask, makes this incident worthy of reporting in a national newspaper? The discursive linking anonymous violence, which seems to come from within the neighbourhood, to the presence of innocent outsiders, does not seem accidental.

Another strong narrative present in media representations of the neighbourhood are sensationalized and voyeuristic representations of sex workers and trans women. One 2006 article details for the interested reader some facts about the hairdressers' salons that are within the sex work tolerance zone (*"Las Peluquerías del Barrio Santa Fé"*, 2006). The article details the most frequently requested procedures bought by sex workers in the salons, and takes special pains to note that, for trans women working in the sex trade, there are some hairdressers that offer the service of breast massage, in order to serve the needs of women who have had implants or breast enhancement surgeries.

Another article, dated 2006, is entitled "The Hairdressing Salons of Santa Fé are Witness to the Dramas of the Prostitutes" (*"Las Peluquerías del Barrio Santa Fé son Testigos de los Dramas de las Prostitutas"*, 2006). It interviews a number of people working in Santa Fé that work with the women working in the sex trade, but do not interview any individuals actually engaged in the sex trade. The author of the article gives themselves the last word, and concludes rather dramatically: "Outside, paid-for love is in demand. It's offered by women with pastel-painted nails" (*Las Peluquerías del Barrio Santa Fé son Testigos de los Dramas de las Prostitutas*, 2006).

Again, notable about these examples are the sensationalized, anonymous narratives provided by journalists who do not seem to have interacted with the sex workers about whom they are writing. The women working in the sex trade are not interviewed, or given any opportunity to make their own voices heard. Rather, we hear from those who work in the industries that sex workers use. It is not clear what the news value is of an article discussing the nail-polish patterns of those working in the sex trade. Again, this article serves as another an example of a general attitude towards the neighbourhood of Santa Fé: its inhabitants are salacious, sexualized, and voiceless, and the populace of Bogota (and indeed the nation) are regularly treated to some of the more sensationalized details of their lives, perhaps in part as a cautionary tale.

Finally, there are myriad reports of some of the other informal commercial activities that take place in the neighbourhood, and a consistent conflation between informality, illegality, and violence. One article notes that in Santa Fé, “informality combines with illegality, where people behind the legal sales sell drugs, rent public spaces or watch possible victims on behalf of criminal organizations that especially rob *residencias* and vehicles” (“*Así se Tomaron las Bandas el Espacio Público*”, 2016). Indeed, even the existence of informal economic activity is understood to be a risk in the context of Santa Fé: “....people dedicate themselves to informal labour in the streets, which generally attracts activities like child prostitution, drug sales, and thievery” (“*Así se Tomaron las Bandas el Espacio Público*”, 2016).

That is, the media narratives about Santa Fé construct the neighbourhood as a place of random, anonymous, senseless, exceptional violence, where even the most prosaic of activities (going to the hairdresser, getting one’s nails done) are viewed through a lens of sensationalized, othered, often sexualized discourse. Through canvassing the patterns of media reporting about Santa Fé, I have also highlighted one of the primary motivations for my own research: to provide an platform to highlight the perspectives for those who are talked about but whose voices are noticeably absent from characterizations of Santa Fé.

Government Intervention in Santa Fé

While somewhat more subtle, a quick canvass of government policy documents pertaining to Santa Fé also reveal a particular set of attitudes about the neighbourhood, as well as providing a more concrete sense of some of the recent interventions in Santa Fé. In this section I will briefly canvass some of the ways that government seems to conceive of Santa Fé, as well as the impact of some of the ongoing governmental programs in the neighbourhood.

The first of these government interventions is Plan Centro. Plan Centro is a massive urban renovation project that is to be completed between years 2004 and 2038, and is poised to have a number of very serious implications for those living and working in Santa Fé. The goals of the project are a particularly telling starting place for our purposes. The goals of the project are to create: “a centre to live in”, “a centre with balanced territorial use”, “a competitive centre”, and “a renovated, preserved, and consolidated centre” (Ritterbusch 2011, 153). More germane to Santa Fé, the Plan contemplates the “recuperation” of the sex work tolerance zone and the construction of massive private commercial and residential spaces. There is a strong focus on recuperating the historical centre of the city – which surrounds Santa Fé – as a prime destination for tourists.

As Ritterbusch points out, the goals of Plan Centro imply “that the center does not possess these qualities to date”(153). She goes on to argue that Plan Centro’s goals reject or dismiss the current uses of the centre of the city, having the effect of “essentially annulling [current inhabitants of the centre] as actors in the scene.”(153) She also argues that these characterizations of the current uses of the centre invalidate or preclude any public participation from those that live in the neighbourhood.

Outside of the general goals of Plan Centro, Santa Fé’s future is also conceived of in a number of other important policy documents. The most important of these is the *Plan de Ordenamiento Teritorial* (in this paper referred to as the *POT*, to distinguish it from Plan Centro). The *Plan* is a nationally implemented planning mechanism that articulates each municipality’s goals for its socio-spatial development. Interestingly, one recent article claims that at a national level, the tactic of instituting the *POTs* is a response to the perceived illegitimacy and ineffectiveness of the Colombian state (Asher and Ojeda,

2008). Specifically, the authors argue that the POTs across Colombia make state power visible “at a moment when neoliberal economic policies emphasized private-sector led, free-market growth over state-sponsored development” (293). That is, as I will return to later, the purportedly neutral planning tools put in place by the government are understood as connected to the preservation of certain spaces for capitalist production, and the removal or discursive erasure of people whose bodies are incompatible with such goals.

With respect to Santa Fé, the POT has a number of specific goals. The first of these goals is to reduce and mitigate the impacts of the sex work tolerance zone on surrounding areas, specifically with regard to mobility and parking (Decreto 492, 2007). The POT also has the goal of “promoting the reordering and improvement of the urban conditions and the function of the Tolerance Zone.” (Decreto 492, 2007)

The *POT* goes on to articulate a number of social strategies identified for Santa Fé. Specifically, the *POT* provides for:

“The formulation, adoption, and implementation of a plan of social development that orients the actions and institutional investment at a national, district, and local level and includes NGOS, through programs and projects in the short and medium term, to provide attention for people in vulnerable situations, as well as those involved in the dynamics created by the Implementation of the Operation.” (Decreto 492, 2007)

The *POT* also goes on to provide for:

“The structuring and construction of networks of public space, especially those geared at taking economic advantage of public spaces, with preference for traditional cultural events of the Centre that form part of the intangible heritage of the Centre, such as: gastro festivals, street parties, folk festivals, artisan markets, popular markets, and others.” (Decreto 492, 2007)

Through these two snapshots, we see the two sides of the government intervention strategy in Santa Fé. On the one hand, the *POT* calls attention to the high concentration of vulnerable people in Santa Fé and the need for particular programs to ameliorate the social conditions in the neighbourhood. Interestingly, the need for action seems unrelated to any previous government intervention or government lack of appropriate intervention. The social problems in the neighbourhood seem to be inherent to the neighbourhood. Interestingly, even the provision of the *POT* that outline the government’s social agenda in the neighbourhood takes pains to mention the ominously-named ‘dynamics’ that will emerge as a result of the increasing commercialization of Santa Fé authorized through *Plan Centro* and the *POT*.

On the other hand, however, we see in the second provision a clearer statement of what the municipality is hoping to accomplish with the neighbourhood. It will become a space for “the public”, but it is also clear what “public” will be welcome in the neighbourhood. The *POT* is very clear about its

hopes for a Santa Fé that contributes to the city centre as an economic engine for Bogota. The *POT* seeks to create a space for commercial activity, artisanal markets and street parties that will appeal to the increasing numbers of tourists that are arriving to Colombia's capital city.

Notably absent from this conception of the commercial engine of the neighbourhood are those who are already at the heart of the economic and social engine of the neighbourhood: the women and men who work and live on the streets of the neighbourhood. That is, the government has a clear conception of what sorts of economic activity are welcome, and further, what sorts of citizens are considered welcome in the neighbourhood. The current inhabitants and economic activities that take place in Santa Fé do not seem to be welcome.

That is, through the *POT* and the specific intervention of *Plan Centro*, we have seen that government narratives of Santa Fé foreground the popular social conception of Santa Fé as a neighbourhood rife with social decay and chaos. We have also seen clear evidence of the government's understanding of the commercial activities that take place in the neighbourhood, and, in particular, the sorts of economic activities that the government hopes to see in the neighbourhood.

In this chapter, then, I have outlined the dominant media discourses that circulate in Bogota about the neighbourhood of Santa Fé. These discourses seek to characterize Santa Fé as a site of random, senseless, highly sensationalized, and deeply gendered violence. I have also canvassed and characterized dominant government interventions into the neighbourhood, which come from the overlapping planning tools of *Plan Centro* at the municipal level and the *Plan de Ordenamiento Teritorial* at the national level. Before I outline the response of those actually living in the neighbourhood of Santa Fé, I will spend my next chapter outlining the dominant academic traditions which have sought to characterize the use of space as a tactic for particular types of government agenda.

Chapter Three: Conceiving of Space and Government Control in Santa Fé and Colombia

In this chapter, I will canvas the academic literature which characterizes the relationship between space, government, and power in Colombia. I start by considering some of the academic perspectives that argue that Bogota's approach to urban renewal has had a positive impact on social relations in the nation's capital. However, I will quickly move on to point out that whatever positive effects that are discussed are also accompanied by an increase in the exclusion of those working on the streets and living in public spaces.

From there, I will outline the ways that Bogota's approach to urban renewal in the centre of the city has been tied to the creation of a moral panic around visible homelessness and sex work, which has led to a number of specific state-based strategies to deal with visible urban poverty. In particular, I will discuss the strategies of discipline and cleanliness and strategy of social cleansing, both of which have been tied to the context of Bogota. Before I move to discuss the politics of space in the context of Colombia's civil war (as opposed to the urban security and planning context), I will consider logics of policing which characterize police intervention into poor, urban, violent neighbourhoods. Finally, I will outline some of the ways that Colombia's national government has used special-based strategies of governance in order to contain its afro-Colombian and indigenous communities, especially as they try to move off traditional lands and into major urban centres.

I then turn to the ways that Colombia's government has used the territorial and spatial dynamics of the civil war in order to justify its own failure to protect its citizens outside of priority areas. I will then outline how the dynamics of displacement and territoriality have in the context of Colombia's civil war have played out specifically in Bogota.

Throughout this chapter, my goal is to establish that all levels of Colombian government have very particular goals when intervening in public space in Colombia's capital. Dynamics of visibility and invisibility, especially regarding undesirable populations, are very relevant to government bodies' ability to demonstrate to their primary constituents that they maintain exclusive and legitimate sovereignty over spaces that are at best, contested spaces.

As I have just argued, there are two predominant ways that space and territoriality are conceptualized in the academic literature which considers Colombia. The first of these relates to the urban planning and public space discourses I have been discussing in this chapter. The second relates to the role of land and space and government intervention in the context of displacement of civilians by Colombia's long-standing civil war. I will canvass each of these in turn.

Public Urbanism and Bogota

The use of public space in Colombia has garnered much attention from academics who focus on the use of public space and its connection to political and social goals. For instance, there are a number of authors who argue that the municipal government has tried to use planning and public space as a social good. Rachel Berney points to a made-in-Bogota approach to public space and planning which she calls pedagogical urbanism (Berney, 2011). She points to the mayors of Bogota between 1995 and 2003, Antonio Mockus and Enrique Peñalosa (who returned to the post in January 2016), and argues their

tenures were informed by a specific “socio-spatial vision” for the city, which focussed on empowering and strengthening civil society, and focusing on the public sphere as an important exercise of rights (16).

Berney argues that the use of public space in Colombia, and in Bogota specifically, has always been political. She defines pedagogical urbanism as “a mode of urban development focused on citizen education and reform that produces figurative and material space in the city for educational encounters” (17). She further argues that the interventions produced under the name of this pedagogical urbanism resulted in “a more unified and positive identification by individuals with the city and with other citizens” (Berney, 2011, 17). That is, through focusing on experiences in public space that forge connections between historically divided social strata, Bogota has been able to improve social cohesion while simultaneously re-asserting government presence in urban spaces that have been historically outside of the domain of the state.

Berney is joined by other authors in understanding government intervention into public space as a net positive for communities historically excluded (see, for instance, Berney, 2010; Castro Jaramillo 2003). Luis Eslava, for instance, writes that Bogota’s approach to land use and urban planning has allowed Bogota to “achieve a remarkable level of community engagement, measured urban growth, financial stability and the highest levels of education, health and public utilities coverage in the nation” (284). Becket and Godoy go so far as to characterize changes in how land and public space were used in Bogota in the late 1980s and 1990s as exclusively altruistic. They note that the “sometimes controversial inhabitants of these public spaces, including the homeless, drug users, recyclers, vendors and sex workers”, were in fact “the target of inclusive social policies rather than exclusionary and punitive ones” (Becket and Godoy 283).

However, even the authors who argue that Bogota’s approach to urban development and planning has offered a net gain, are unable to dismiss the extent to which Bogota’s use of public land has had a disproportionately negative impact on the city’s most marginalized and vulnerable citizens. In her argument that the politics of pedagogical urbanism have much to offer the poor and dispossessed, for instance, Berney is unable to dismiss the impact that such public space initiatives have had on the homeless and street vendors. She comments that “the city monitors and curbs uses and behaviour that are seen as antisocial or unattractive, especially anything related to vending or homelessness” (2011, 17). Similarly, Eslava notes that the strengths of Bogota’s urban land use planning have also come with an increasing demarcation of the “illegal population that is not...included and regularized in the official map” (296). That is, the risks Bogota’s approach to public space for those on the street has been noticed, but is not understood to undermine the overall contribution of Bogota’s approach to public space.

However, there is also another literature which, with some depth, engages some of the negative consequences of the increasing demarcations of public and private. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I will consider four perspectives. I will engage with Carlos Suárez’ account of the territoriality of violence and government control of the poor in Colombia. From there, I will consider the ways that spatial control in Colombia is tied up with racial and ethnic identity. I will follow that with a discussion of what we know about state policing efforts in urban slums. Finally, I will consider the ways that territoriality and government control are related to Colombia’s civil war and the treatment of internally displaced peoples.

The negative consequences of urban policies in Bogotá

Both in Colombia and throughout Latin America, there is increasing recognition that violence, particularly in Latin American cities, is “territorial in nature” (Aguilera, 21). In particular, there is a strong recognition that state control over how space is constructed and understood is a political objective of the state (Soja 1996).

Carlos José Suárez writes about the specific history of urban renovation and urban renewal projects in Bogotá’s historical centre. He argues that the current approach of government intervention in the centre of the city can be characterized as the era of megaprojects of urban renewal (115). Suárez argues that these mega-projects are informed by the desire to “control public space thanks to the incorporation of a clear panopticon” which seeks to “erase from material memory any sign of depravation and ignominy” (115).

Suárez argues that in Bogotá, people living on the street have been consistently been used as a justification for the production of mega-projects such as Plan Centro. He argues that people living on the street have been constructed as “*sujeto productor de miedo*”, or as foils to produce fear and a strong sense of danger in the middle class (116). He notes that discursive representations of those living on the street are frequently used by dominant groups to create a moral panic around the presence of people living in the street in areas that are subject to policies of ‘reclamation’ (116).

At the root of homelessness, for Suárez, is extreme poverty. As such, the presence of large populations of people on the street presents a problem for the state, as street-based homelessness is a clear signal that the state has failed to provide among the most basic and fundamental necessities for some of its citizens. The presence of large numbers of people working and living on the street has the potential to call very public attention to the failures of the state, and pose a threat to the legitimacy of its governance.

Therefore, the state has responded, at least in the Colombian context, by constructing those living in concentrated numbers on the streets of Bogotá’s centre, as sources of disorder and evil in the heart of the city (116). The mega-projects geared at recuperating or urbanizing the centre of Bogotá, he argues, are symbolic processes as well as material ones, and requires the erasure of the bodies that are the source of the moral panic, as well as the environments that provided refuge or home for those individuals.

Specifically, Suárez notes that there are particular ways that the state will use the heightened anxiety around the presence of undesirable bodies in Santa Fé and other neighbourhoods in the centre of the city. The first of these is a strategy called ‘*limpieza y disciplina*’ (cleanliness and discipline). This strategy prioritizes the ‘saving’ or recuperation of particular individuals who are understood to have ‘fallen’ into undesirable social conditions (116). Those living and working on the street are pathologized and psychologized, and are severed from any sense of agency and autonomy in their own neighbourhoods.

The second strategy Suárez identifies he calls “social cleansing”, which is a social process well-known to the urban landscape in Bogotá, and Santa Fé in particular. This strategy is understood as providing a cautionary tale for others living in the neighbourhood (116). It involves the removal, either through state-perpetrated disappearance or displacement, or through summary execution allowed by state agents and committed by gang leaders, of individuals who are considered particularly undesirable (117). This strategy is deployed more selectively, but importantly, is a much more public strategy, used against those who commit multiple infractions against the state’s logic of power.

Critical to the logic of urban renewal is a discourse of security, which takes special care to locate violence and depravity within the neighbourhoods that have high levels of concentrated poverty and visible homelessness (117). The tactics outlined by Suárez “stigmatize and magnify endogenous violence” (117). Santa Fé and neighbourhoods like it are categorized as a “neighbourhoods lent only for crime, which doesn’t recognize social cracks, or connections between illegal markets and the Police” (117). That is, there is nothing natural or pre-theoretical about the way government localizes violence in particular neighbourhoods in the centre of the city. Rather, the focus on certain neighbourhoods as violent places needing to be recuperated, is a discursive strategy used to support moral panic and justify the erasure of particular bodies from public space.

Indeed, even were Suárez not writing about the experience of Santa Fé and other neighbourhoods in the centre of the city, we can see many of the elements of his analysis in the current state of discourse and government intervention in Santa Fé. As I have argued above, the dominant media discourse, both as expressed through comments by the mayor as reported in the media as well as through media reports more generally, does lean heavily on characterizations of the neighbourhood as a site of severe and senseless violence. The nature of public intervention in Santa Fé is also framed in the context of recuperation and salvation.

To conclude, Suárez provides us with a theoretical lens to understand the discursive tactics engaged by the media and the popular press, as well as the intent of government intervention in the neighbourhood. He points out the extent to which visible poverty is a threat to the state’s claims of sovereignty or control, and points out that in Colombia, the logic of mega-projects purporting to recuperate the centre of the city are geared at a particular type of territorial recuperation or control. These recuperation projects are opportunities to erase discursive threats to the state through strategies of cleanliness and discipline as well as social cleansing.

Race, indigenaety and socio-spatial strategies of control in Colombia

The policies of land use in Colombia have not only been understood as policies that impact the homeless and street vendors. There is also a strong literature which discusses Colombia’s national government and its approach to land use planning in the context of the governance of its racial minority and indigenous populations. Diana Bocarejo, for instance, writes about the ways that the Colombian national government has sought to erect socio-spatial barriers that relegate indigenous communities to the geographic, and consequently the political and social, margins of Colombian society. She points to the history of indigenous *resguardios* (reservations) and the government recognition of *pueblos afro-descendientes* (Afro-descendant villages) as two predominant legal mechanisms embraced by the Colombian government to contain and manage indigenous and afro-Colombian communities.

Specifically, she notes that the Colombian government has embraced legal strategies which relegate indigenous and afro-Colombian communities to specific geographical swaths of land. Many of the rights that are constitutionally recognized for those two populations, including culturally appropriate education and funding for social services, are only available when members of those communities are in their own recognized territories. When members of these two visible minority populations try to enforce their rights outside of their traditional territory, they are unsuccessful.

Bocarejo argues that government efforts to relegate visible minority and indigenous populations to the geographic hinterlands of Colombia is a tactic taken on by Colombia’s largest cities because they

understand the presence of minority bodies in white spaces as a “pathology that interrupts the natural correspondence of an ethnic group to a territory” (Bocarejo 39). That is, the Government of Colombia has undertaken deliberate strategies to force indigenous and afro-Colombian communities to choose between social and cultural recognition of their distinct history, and leaving their governmentally recognized territories in order to seek economic opportunities outside of their territories, which are predictably far from urban centres and economic opportunity. As I will argue in subsequent chapters, the socio-spatial control of race is a dynamic which has also impacted the ways that those living in Santa Fé understand their own experiences in the neighbourhood.

State policing efforts in marginal urban zones

Another feature of neighbourhoods such as Santa Fé that will become relevant for the purposes of my own analysis is the role of policing efforts. In their 2014 work *Violence and the State at the Urban Margins*, Javier Auyero *et al.* recount the findings of 30 months of ethnographic fieldwork in a neighbourhood in Buenos Aires with conditions very similar to Santa Fé (Auyero *et al.* 98). In their work, they discuss the various ways that policing is pursued in the neighbourhood. The thrust of their argument is that in neighbourhoods with highly visible poverty, the police appear in the lives of poor people in contradictory, and often incoherent ways (103).

Specifically, the authors argue that in neighbourhoods that act as public warehouses for the visible homeless, the police tend to take on two roles that contradict each other: “The police acts as the repressive arm of the state against criminals but also as the perpetrator of crime” (103). They argue that “police agents uphold the rule of law and simultaneously break it” (103). They go on to argue that under some circumstances, the police become “an integral part of the crime they (say they) seek to combat” (106). The police will often pursue an aggressive campaign against particular drug dealers or thieves, while simultaneously protecting others from police investigation or intervention.

To add injury to insult, the authors also argue that law enforcement efforts in such neighbourhoods are “not only intermittent and contradictory (in the sense of doing mutually opposed or inconsistent things) but also highly selective” (106). Auyero *et al.* note that in addition to pursuing some thieves or drug dealers but not others, the state is also much more hesitant to pursue certain *types* of crimes. Intimate partner violence and sexual violence are two areas where police in urban poor environments are highly unlikely to intervene. The authors go further and point out that specifically with regard to sexual crimes, the police are again as likely to be complicit as they are to be a resource for survivors. The authors point to the lingo of “blowjob police” as a neighbourhood term of a common experience – police officers threatening to arrest women who refuse to provide coerced and uncompensated sexual services to police officers on demand (110).

All of these dynamics, the authors argue, are often ignored or misunderstood, as well as very current, ways that police intervention perpetrates violence within visibly poor urban communities. They argue that rather than focus on violent neighbourhoods as primordially or inherently violent, researchers rather need to focus on the real and tangible ways that such discourses render invisible the intentional and often self-serving ways that police intervene in such neighbourhoods. This is a dynamics I will return to in later chapters of this paper.

Space, Government Intervention, and Colombia's Civil War

In this chapter, I have canvassed many of the dominant ways that Colombia's relationship to space and government power have been understood. I have also outlined some of the logics of policing in poor violent neighbourhoods similar to Bogota. Before I conclude this chapter, there is an additional conceptualization of the relationship between space and government power in Colombia that I will canvas in this section: the relationship between Colombia's civil war and the government's use of territoriality and space.

As Serje de la Ossa *et al.* write, the war over territory between the FARC and the Colombian government has been characterized by the creation of clear lines between areas where the government rules, and areas where it does not. The areas of strong government control, un-coincidentally the economic and political power-houses of Colombia, are discussed by government agents as urban paradises totally untouched by civil war or violence of any kind. These areas are contrasted with "the Other Colombia", areas considered wild and uncivilized, and untouched by the civilizing impact of the state (Serje 38). The authors note: "behind the screen of the alleged 'absence of the state,' there lies a definite and coherent line of action by means of which the national and local state-elites have sought to gain dominance of Colombia's 'wild regions'" (de la Ossa 39).

The authors argue that the purported absence of the state have created "large-scale 'red-light districts'" at a national scale. These spaces of discursive (but not material) suspension of the presence of the state provide a space for all sorts of illegal activities—drug trafficking, smuggling, of forced labour in emerald or gas mines. The authors point out: "the state-elites, as they repeatedly turn a blind eye to these practices, have not just been passive beneficiaries; they have orchestrated and regulated [illegal activities]" (39). For the authors "the notion of the absence of the state makes this intertwining of the legal and the illegal possible." (39) The state-generated discourses about the purported absence of the state serves as a narrative smoke-screen to justify and render invisible all manner of violent interventions by state elites. The authors are joined by others in arguing that government elites have often used the presence of FARC and paramilitary leaders to justify their own inaction or complicity with economies of illegal extraction (see Maher and Thompson, 2007; Petras and Harding, 2000; Petras and Brescia, 2000; and Brittain, 2000).

Carolina Olarte Olarte and Illan rua Wall also write about the dynamics of public space and the politics of Colombia's civil war with a specific focus on the dynamics of internal displacement in Bogotá (Olarte and rua Wall 2012). In their article "The Occupation of Public Space in Bogotá: Internal Displacement and the City", the authors provide us with a more Bogota-specific account of the meaning of public space in the centre of Bogota, in the context of the massive numbers internally displaced people (IDPs) fleeing civil war in other parts of the country.

They write about a specific moment in 2009 when a group of internally displaced peoples chose to occupy the public space in the centre of the city very near to Santa Fé. The authors note that the municipality of Bogota, when faced with a large and highly visible population of IDPs, understood the visibility of such individuals as a particular threat to its authority. In particular, the authors note that internally displaced persons sleeping in a public park were considered a threat to government's claim that Bogota is a city outside of or unaffected by the civil war (324). That is, the presence of internally displaced peoples was incongruent with the spirit of public urbanism espoused by the municipality, and undermined the government's ability to demonstrate that it had unquestioned control over public space in Bogota.

Interestingly, the authors also discuss institutional mechanisms that support the municipality's political project of removing IDPs from visibility in public space in Bogota. One of these worth noting is the issue of bureaucratic incompetence (325). The authors write about the many overlapping and mutually reinforcing ways that emergency services for those that have been internally displaced are incoherent and inaccessible. The bureaucratic hurdles include the difficulty of accessing clear information about what IDPs can expect from support systems, a lack of clarity and high levels of documentation required in order to establish belonging to the group of internally displaced persons, having to physically attend government offices that are neither physical safe nor financially accessible, a proliferation of uncoordinated agencies and services, massive delays, and inadequately funded services (Olarte and rua Wall 327). The authors argue that "while these are not in themselves invisibilizing mechanisms, they operate to order IDP priorities in such a way that their presence within the political sphere is discouraged." (327) That is, institutional incompetence and barriers to access of essential services are also connected to the geo-spatial strategy of social control being deployed in Bogota.

Therefore, in addition to being a tool of social control in urban spaces, we have also seen some of the ways the Colombian government uses space and discourses about space in service of its particular goals with regard to the ongoing civil war. Before I turn to comparing the analysis presented here with that offered by those actually living and working in Santa Fé, there is one more area of academic interest that I will outline: the relationship between space, gender, and social control. In the chapter that follows, I will address this area of research.

Chapter Four: Gender, decency, civil war, and public space in Bogota's sex work tolerance zone

Up to this point, I have canvassed the academic literature which considers the ways that space and territoriality have been caught up in government assertions of power, both in the context of the civil war and in the context of urban planning and recuperation of public space in Bogota. Before I turn to the experiences of those in Santa Fé, I must canvas one additional academic literature which will help me contextualize the experiences of those living in Santa Fé: the relationship between space, government-orchestrated social control, and gender.

I will begin by canvassing the academic literature which contemplates the ways that space, morality, and the state control of transgender identities are bound up with each other. From there, I will briefly connect that literature to the literature which contemplates the relationship between the policing of trans women and Colombia's civil war. I will conclude by taking up Amy Ritterbusch's recently published article which contemplates the experiences of girls engaged in the sex trade in Santa Fé.

Leticia Sabsay argues that government intervention into where trans sex work is performed, especially when it is performed on the streets, while often framed as a response to concerns about safety or the corruptibility of children, is often primarily concerned with delineating the line between acceptable and unacceptable gender identities (214). She asserts that corralling trans bodies into certain spaces is an effort to police problematic gender identities and sexualities (insomuch as trans sex workers are often understood to overlap with the category of gay men)(216).

Specifically, the author argues that such projects are often "intended to constrain and put aside certain sexual practices from the public domain" (214). In this view, then, trans sex worker bodies in visible, highly valuable urban spaces are a problem for the state's project of maintaining its stranglehold over the definition of acceptable gender identities. Noticeable trans sex worker bodies are "capable of subverting the whole heteronormative system of sexual rules that continues to organize our social reality" (216). Their removal from public spaces, then, allows the state to send a public message regarding the consequences of deviating from appropriate gender identities.

Elijah Adiv Edelman also writes about the significance of government control of trans sex worker bodies in public spaces. He writes that the exclusion of trans sex worker bodies from particular urban spaces in DC was in fact a war pitting "good" and "bad" citizens against one another in service of the maintenance of a particular capitalist ideology. In this vein, the exclusion of trans sex worker bodies from particular public spaces (and conversely, their mandated visibility in others) serves "a broader societal role to delineate and segregate those bodies deemed sick, pathological, undesirable, and in some cases, disposable" (854).

He writes that "trans feminine bodies are undesirable, unwanted, and ideologically unproductive" insomuch as they signify the deviant sexualities and transgressive gender identities that are incompatible with the neoliberal capitalist project of production. He writes: "[trans bodies] come to exemplify all that urban "revitalization", and the reproduction of the values of the nation-state, vilifies" (851). This removal of trans bodies is in service of ensuring the comfort of citizens whose bodies are welcome to, and reflective of, our particular moment of capitalism (852). Phil Hubbard also points out the strong connection between the regulation of trans bodies in public spaces and the state's interest in maintaining sexually moral spaces that support capitalist production (2001).

That is, it is not accidental that efforts to remove trans sex workers from public space are often targeted not to areas where sex work is concentrated. Rather, these efforts tend to be most frequent in areas where areas of historical poverty are being repurposed or gentrified as economically productive zones. Edelman concludes by arguing that, similar to the state's cordoning off of prisoners, lepers, and other "enemies of the state", the "zones of exclusion" created by excluding sex workers from particular zones serves to "physically and socio-politically cut off bodies spatially from the gendered public"(855).

Further, many of these dynamics have been exacerbated in light of Colombia's civil war. As I detailed in my previous chapter, de la Ossa *et al.* argue that one of the predominant discursive tactics used by Colombia's government to justify its human rights abuses and failure to protect its citizens outside of major urban and commercial centres, is the reliance on establishing that the state is notably "absent" from some regions of the country (39). As I detailed in my previous chapter, the authors connect the national logics of state presence and absence to the legal mechanism used to corral and control sex workers. The authors argue that the Colombian government, through its consistent assertions of incomplete sovereign control over particular "wild regions" of Colombia, has "maintained... large-scale 'red light districts' where all sorts of illegal practices have been pursued" (39). That is, both in the sex work tolerance zones as they are practiced in urban districts, and the discursive red light districts that are created at the national level through the discourse of "state absence" in isolated and rural areas, are mechanisms for the state to assert particular types of power in service of its own agenda.

To conclude, I canvas the work of Amy Ritterbusch, who writes and researches specifically the relationship between space and the social control of trans bodies in Colombia. Writing specifically about Santa Fé, Ritterbusch writes that the trans sex workers in Santa Fé are "doubly displaced" – many have been displaced through Colombia's civil war to Bogota, and have then been displaced again into the sex work tolerance zone, which is the only public space deemed appropriate for trans bodies(7). For many, the sex work tolerance zone in Santa Fé is the first place where they are able to express their gender identity in public, without having to fear for their lives. It generates "a new sense of belonging, family, affordable body transformation practices, love, and work" (7).

At the same time, the sex work tolerance zone is a site of "social cleansing, killings, police abuse, and other forms of gender-based violence" (7). Ritterbusch concludes that "the movements, practices, and representations constituting transmobility in Colombia should not be conceptualized as a privilege but rather as a way of disciplining and displacing transgressive bodies from public, heteronormative spaces" (10). That is, the dynamics articulated above which understand the removal of trans bodies from public spaces as a part of a neoliberal, socio-spatial politics of policing gender identities and the overall respectability of public space seem to apply specifically to the experience of trans sex-workers in Santa Fé.

To conclude, then, in this chapter I have outlined some of the important ways that gender (particularly transgender), government agendas for social control, and the regulation of public sex work have been understood generally, as well as specifically in the context of Santa Fé. This discussion, as well as the previous chapters on government control of urban space and its political dimensions and chapters which canvassed discursive media and material government intervention in Santa Fé, will allow me to contextualize and understand many of the ways that those living in Santa Fé experience the neighbourhood. In the chapters that follow, I will outline the four ways that individuals spoke about their own neighbourhood, and call attention to the ways that those living in the neighbourhood resist dominant discursive categorizations of their neighbourhood.

Chapter Five: Denying violence in Santa Fé

In this chapter I begin to unpack the ways that those living in Santa Fé resist the dominant discursive characterization of the neighbourhood as one filled with random, senseless, anonymous violence. In this chapter, I will draw attention to the strategy of denying that Santa Fé is a neighbourhood subject to extraordinary violence at all.

When interviewed about what they thought about the neighbourhood, some argued that dominant narratives of the neighbourhood were sensationalist, overblown, or in other ways incomplete or disingenuous. For instance, one individual rolled his eyes when asked about whether Santa Fé is a violent neighbourhood: “yes, there’s violence, but you have to go looking for it”, he argued (Anonymous interview, July 24, 2014). He went on to clarify that “maybe if I don’t get involved with anyone, then they don’t get involved with me.”

Another individual who had lived on the streets of the city for some time told me:

“I like it now, it’s not bad the way they describe it, you know, they say the centre [of the city] is the worst, no, being from here, you can be here without fear. Almost as though nothing, like they’re not going to say anything to you at all. And so you can walk around safe.” (Anonymous interview, July 22, 2014)

A number of individuals provided comments that reflected this conception of Santa Fé as a refuge from some of the violence experienced in the context of extremely conservative social attitudes towards mental illness, drug use, and queer and trans identity. One gentleman observed “if you start to treat people badly, to treat people around you badly, then you’re going to have problems” (Anonymous interview, July 22, 2014). Another noted that “if you know how to live in this neighbourhood, you can live a very tasty life” (Anonymous interview, July 26, 2014). Finally, a third told me that “it’s great to live in this neighbourhood, because each person can be whoever they want to be” (Anonymous interview, July 26).

Interestingly, even those who vehemently denied that the neighbourhood was a threat were likely to mention that they carried knives, switch-blades, razor blades, or in some cases, large wooden poles in order to protect themselves. Those who vehemently denied that the neighbourhood was a violent place for them, seemed to recognize that there was something distinct about the area that required particular attention.

How can we understand these denials of violence when juxtaposed against the measures that individuals took to protect themselves? As Suárez argues, discursive representations of people living and working on the street have historically been critical to justifying mega-projects in the centre of Bogota (116). In particular, he reminds us that the government of Colombia is adept at creating moral frenzy or panic about neighbourhoods with visible poverty. These moral panics have often been orchestrated to justify interventions that will produce the removal of those living and working on the streets from public space. Suárez also argues that one of the three main tactics that the government of Bogota has used

once it has created these moral panics, is to use such moral panics as smokescreens to justify the removal of undesirable bodies from the streets through campaigns of discipline and order.

In light of the goals of the *POT* and *Plan Centro*, we can understand the instinct to deny violence as one which seeks to undermine the moral panic that the government needs as a justification for its “recuperation” interventions in Santa Fé. Those that deny that Santa Fé is a dangerous neighbourhood are, on some level, seeking to undermine the government and media narratives which whip up a particular type of moral frenzy with regard to the workers. To deny that Santa Fé is a neighbourhood rife with violence and crime is to deny that the neighbourhood is in need of particular, unwelcome government intervention.

Strikingly, while some men who lived and worked on the street were likely to dismiss out of hand the narratives of violence and danger in Santa Fé, many trans women called attention to the ways that Santa Fé is both a source of safety *and* a source of violence in their daily lives. One woman commented:

“These days in the neighbourhood we [trans women] can walk around safely, in parenthesis, let’s say. Our security to walk around is between 22nd street and 19th street, between Caracas [14th avenue] and 16th avenue [the geographic boundaries of the tolerance zone]. But yes, there is absolutely violence against trans women. From the doormen, the administrators, the owners, all of those who believe themselves bosses of this area” (Anonymous interview, July 28, 2014).

The same woman also commented about the collective experience of trans women in the neighbourhood:

“Bit by bit we made ourselves recognized, and we made ourselves practically, in quotes, owners and women. But that is a total lie. So, we’re in charge of our own daily lives and we’re ‘recognized’ in the neighbourhood, but that’s as far as it goes.” (Anonymous interview, July 28, 2014).

That is, the extent to which people were interested in wholesale denial of Santa Fé as a violent neighbourhood was directly connected to their gendered experiences in the neighbourhood. Further, in the comments of the woman quoted above, we can see Ritterbusch’s conception of the gendered dynamics of safety and violence in Santa Fé. The sex work tolerance zone is an important source of safety and community for many trans women, and so the women call attention to the ways that Santa Fé is in fact *less* violent for them than many other areas of the city. However, less violent than other neighbourhoods is importantly distinct from being able to claim that the neighbourhood is not violent or threatening for trans women.

Thus, many, especially those who live on the street, resisted dominant narratives of the nature of the neighbourhood they lived by rejecting outright that violence was a dominant or important part of their experience in the neighbourhood. However, this strategy also highlights ways in which experiences of

safety and violence in Santa Fé are tied to gender identity, and trans gender identity in particular. I will now turn my attention to the second strategy identified by my research: focusing on outsiders or newcomers as a source of violence in Santa Fé.

Chapter Six: outsider violence

In this chapter, I will focus on a second way that those living in the neighbourhood chose to undermine dominant narratives of the danger and vice in the neighbourhood of Santa Fe: externalizing violence, or locating it in waves of newcomers to the neighbourhood.

According to statistics released in 2013, Colombia's civil war has left 220,000 dead and more than 5.7 million people internally displaced, as well as 26,000 people who have been disappeared and remain unaccounted for (Ince 45). Colombia has one of the world's largest populations of internally displaced persons. As argued in previous chapters, mass displacement from other regions of the country is written into the neighbourhood, and has informed government strategies for social control in Bogota.

Given the vulnerability that this displacement has on the people fleeing violence, there are a number of social service organizations in the neighbourhood that provides emergency housing for those arriving to Bogota as *desplazados* (or IDPs). Indeed, there are *inquilinos* (shelters) specifically set up to receive and resettle people displaced by the civil war. As mentioned above, because of the availability of cheap housing, largely dorms which cost 2,000 or 3,000 pesos a night (roughly the cost of a ride on public transit, between 1 and 2 Canadian dollars depending on the exchange rate), the centre of the city, and Santa Fé specifically, are natural choices. It is worth noting that the vast majority of those that have been displaced through Colombia's civil war are afro-Colombian, indigenous, or belong to other ethnic groups understood to be 'outsiders' or not endogenous to Bogota (Dugas 210).

That is, in the majority-mestizo city of Bogota, the arrival of racialized outsiders from discursively far-off regions of the country brings discourses of race and violence to the fore. In Santa Fé, as in all other parts of Bogota, and, indeed, Colombia, race, ethnicity, regional identity are in play. As mentioned above, all of those interviewed for the purposes of this study had spent at least 1.5 years in the neighbourhood. Most of those who had been displaced from other parts of the country had not been displaced recently, and had spent enough time in the neighbourhood to see themselves as a part of it, as belonging to Bogota, and particularly to the centre. There are also families and individuals that have been living in the neighbourhood all of their lives, and draw very different boundaries when categorizing particular groups of people as "new" or "old".

However, regardless of the length of time that interview participants had been in the neighbourhood, they overwhelmingly considered themselves as belonging legitimately to the neighbourhood. Some understood the influx of new people into the neighbourhood as being a source of insecurity and violence. One participant argued:

"There's a huge migrant population, there are people coming to this neighbourhood from all over... this creates like a new door, for all the people arriving from all of the other departments. They come here in order to rob, they come here in order to commit crime. All of these problems are arriving in this neighbourhood."
(Anonymous interview, July 28, 2014)

In a similar vein, another participant argued:

“I think [this security issue] is a really tenacious one. Here people are arriving every day from other places. Here there are demobilized soldiers. Here there are all sorts of people from all different populations and they are arriving from all over.”
(Anonymous interview, July 26, 2014)

Though not many were willing to say more beyond this in formal interviews, in the summer of my field research in 2014, in the *Procrear* site, there were further discussions of a new wave of ‘outsiders’ and their presence in the neighbourhood.

During June and July of 2014, people coming into the neighbourhood centre were remarking that the neighbourhood was going through a particularly dangerous time. An *olla*, one of the particularly militarized brothels/drug distribution centres controlled by armed and organized non-governmental forces, had been closed down, suddenly and without notice, by the police. This was a striking and unusual experience, given the longstanding tradition of cooperation and collusion between the *ollas* and the police force.

Those who controlled the *olla* were said to be looking for blood, and were in particular said to be looking to punish (read: disappear or murder) anyone who was involved. More than that, it was clear that whatever consequences were meted out to those who had alerted the police or the *Fiscalía* of the presence of the *olla* were going to be public. The rules were clear – snitching of this level would require a brutal, and very public, response on the part of those who ran the *olla*. As a result, many tried to spend as little time in public on the streets of the neighbourhood as possible.

Informally, many within the drop-in and within the neighbourhood attributed these recent events to the arrival of a large number of “*negros*” (a common moniker for people of pacific or Caribbean origin, as well as those from all parts of the country who are black), in the neighbourhood. This anonymous group was often considered at the root of this new wave of violence in the neighbourhood. Some understood this new group as being associated with new waves of organized violence that were trying to upset the existing distribution of power within the neighbourhood. Others postulated that they were recently demobilized soldiers who had demobilized in light of increasingly promising peace talks between the FARC and Colombia’s government. Overall, the amorphous group of “*negros*” were painted as a pool of outsiders who brought violence *into* the neighbourhood.

There are two ways that we can conceive of this strategy of locating violence in a racialized set of outsiders. The first of these brings us back to Diana Bocarejo’s comments about the way that the Colombian government has tried to erase them from the collective consciousness in the urban sphere (323). That is, the inhabitants of Santa Fé may have absorbed the racist logics of the central government, which understand racialized bodies in Bogota’s landscape as a pathology which needs to be eradicated.

The same racist logic deployed by the Colombian government in trying to erase the racialized and displaced from urban public space, can also be identified in the comments of those in the neighbourhood. Those with black bodies are identified as ‘outsiders’, whether by virtue of their race or their perceived recent addition to the neighbourhood. Their very presence in places where the government has sought to exclude them is conflated with exceptional and extraordinary violence. That is, this first interpretation of the comments about the afro-Colombian outsiders understands the

racialized discourses of the state as so powerful that they have been repurposed by the (non-Afro) Colombians living in Santa Fé to understand violence in the neighbourhood.

Whereas it is clearly possible that those in the neighbourhood have internalized the logics of the state project to contain racialized bodies within particular geographic regions of Colombia, there is another way to conceive of the comments of those living in the neighbourhood with regard to the 'newcomers'. As I outlined earlier, Suárez argues that in order to justify its mega-project interventions in the centre of Bogota, the government tries to advance discourses that "stigmatize and magnify endogenous violence"(117). As a part of this project, it is important that violence be considered *endogenous*, or within the neighbourhood.

We can understand the instinct to characterize violence as exogenous to the neighbourhood as a response to the damaging discourses which have sought to locate violence within Santa Fé. The focus on a group of 'negros' who have recently arrived to the neighbourhood is an attempt to resist the categorization of Santa Fé as an inherently violent neighbourhood, and therefore a neighbourhood inherently in need of particular types of state intervention.

What is most salient about the group of afro-Colombians (whether real or discursive in nature) is their status as a visible group of new-comers. If violence can be brought into the neighbourhood, it can also be removed through targeted intervention that falls well short of the mega-renovations being pursued by the government. In this line of analysis, what is most salient is the attempt to resist narratives of violence as endogenous to Santa Fé by identifying recent newcomers who can be constructed as the source of violence.

In this chapter, I have considered the ways that those living and working in Santa Fé seek to resist discourses which characterize the neighbourhood as an inherently dangerous one by taking up dominant conceptions of race, and afro-Colombian bodies in urban spaces in particular. In my next chapter, I will outline a third way those interviewed resist the government discourses which justify intervention in Santa Fé. Specifically, I will focus on the characterization of government services in Santa Fé.

Chapter Seven: “All they do is use people”: government and non-profit efforts in Santa Fé

Those living in Santa Fé, when asked about the state, talked predominantly about two things. They talked about the patchwork of government-provided and government-funded social services in the neighbourhood, and they talked about the police. In this chapter I will discuss the ways that those in the neighbourhood characterize the government-provided social supports in the neighbourhood. In order to understand peoples’ characterizations of government, I will first sketch out the patchwork of available services.

Under the reign of Gustavo Petro, the municipal motto for Bogota was “*Bogota Humana*”, or, a humane Bogota. During Petro’s tenure, Santa Fé saw an increase in investment and social services in the neighbourhood. The municipality invested in expanding the social service presence in the neighbourhood and in the centre of the city overall.

During the summer of 2014, for instance, street outreach workers with the municipal Women’s Secretariat appeared in the neighbourhood for the first time. A pair of young men made weekly appearances at our drop-in centre in the neighbourhood, looking for particular individuals in order to accompany them to a medical appointment, replace lost identity documents, or provide an update on a court process. The municipality also funded a public hospital within walking distance of the neighbourhood where people without public health insurance or formal affiliation to one of Colombia’s private insurers could, in theory, be seen for emergency care. Periodically, once or twice a month, the city’s mobile health units would make an appearance in the neighbourhood and offer check-ups, wound care, dental care, and referrals to mental and physical health services in the area.

The national government’s social outreach arm, called Social Integration, would hold *brigadas de salud*, days where they would set up a temporary station in a public park or parking lot and would provide fresh clothing, a place to shower, towels, an extra pair of socks, a hot meal, and access to a one-off medical or dental consultation. Social Integration also ran a shelter and a food kitchen in the neighbourhood.

In addition to these organizations, there were a number of grassroots organizations that formed in the neighbourhood to address political issues. The *Community Trans Network* is one I have mentioned in other parts of this paper. While largely political and activist organizations, many also provided some social services, particularly accompaniment to medical services and informal social work services, connecting individuals to better-funded and more institutionalized organizations. The work these organizations do is enormously valuable, but distinct in nature from the work of large, institutionalized bureaucracies. The analysis offered in this section is not meant to apply to these scrappy, small, immensely valuable organizations.

Those in the neighbourhood would frequently come to our drop-in centre with stories of being denied access to services, of hostile service providers, of scarcity of access, and of long lines and unreasonable bureaucratic roadblocks to accessing essential services. Trans women and people living on the street are routinely denied access to the area’s public hospital on account of their appearance, often by the private security guards contracted by the hospital. Indeed, one of the core jobs of the front-line staff at the drop-in at *Procrear* was to accompany people to local hospital or provide people with official requests, on *Procrear* letterhead, confirming that they were connected to our organization and therefore worthy of receiving publically funded services.

Without the presence of someone with an air of ‘respectability’, many were denied access to the public services they were entitled to, and were often desperately needed. Indeed, the quality of the publicly available healthcare services was so lacking that *Procrear* and other community-based organizations in the area worked to find alternatives to the publically provided services. In the case of *Procrear*, this meant arranging to have students in their final semester of medical school attend two-week rotations in the drop-in, where they provided wound care, doled out prescription medications donated to the drop-in, and helped individuals navigate the public system.

When asked about what they thought about government intervention in Santa Fé, then, not many had positive feedback. In particular, interview participants were able to point out many of the ways that government services seemed to be oriented towards gathering statistics and completing services in a pro forma way. One interview participant observed of the government and NGO services in the neighbourhood that “lots of those organizations, what they do is use people, make fools of them [*cogerles como indios*], and they don’t offer real processes.” (Anonymous interview, July 28) He noted that there is an excessive focus on irrelevant bureaucratic requirements for services.

Why, for instance, he asked, does the mobile health van have a rule where they will only see four patients in the morning and four in the afternoon? He noted that the van will arrive, and given the desperate need for health services among the population of those living on the street, a crowd of injured and ill people will inevitably gather. The doctors will fill their list, collect the requisite signatures from those receiving services, and once they have seen their quota of patients, the doctors and other health professionals will announce they have met their morning quota, and that those interested in services will be told that they will have to return for the afternoon.

They will then enter the health bus and close the door behind them until they are required to open again for the afternoon shift, where, because of extreme restrictions on the number of patients seen, many will be turned away once again in the afternoon. For this interview participant, these sorts of practices and bureaucratic restrictions are senseless and unnecessary. Others expressed frustration at trying to access the emergency or outreach services of the near-by hospital. Why, many asked, would the municipality invest in services as essential as hospital-based health-care services for those without access, and then station private security guards at the door who deny access to the very populations identified as priorities for health interventions?

People understood these rules and barriers as an indication of the underlying intent of government social programming. Many argued that the current patchwork of systems was geared towards reinforcing the status quo rather than providing essential supports or opportunities for transformative change. The services, many argued, were more oriented towards demonstrating presence in the neighbourhood (through collecting signatures and establishing quotas for services), instead of starting with a genuine understanding of the needs of residents in the neighbourhood. One man scoffed when asked about the government’s efforts to produce change in the socioeconomic conditions in the neighbourhood: “Here we’ve never had a government that really changes things. And if they’re going to get power, they kill them. Like Gaitain.” (Anonymous interview, July 3, 2014)

Others argued that government social programming in the area was more focussed on cheap, simple, band-aid solutions at the expense of more meaningful, but more expensive services that would have a larger impact on the neighbourhood. In particular, there was strong agreement, particularly among those living and working on the street, meaningful employment opportunities were the most needed

intervention in the neighbourhood. One person noted that “in order to decrease violence, the best thing would be jobs” (Anonymous interview, July 28). Another argued that in order to address insecurity and suffering in the neighbourhood, “people need quality of life. If there’s not a politics of work, of generating employment...” (Anonymous interview, July 26) A third chimed in with a similar observation: “Here in this neighbourhood there are people without anything to do, they’re not only hungry, they need something to do, they need work to do, they need to be on somebody’s payroll.” (Anonymous interview, July 26)

Carolina Olarte Olarte and Illan rua Wall note that Bogota has often understood the visibility of poor and displaced populations as a threat to the government’s ability to demonstrate its uncontested sovereignty over a neighbourhood. In order to address this socio-spatial threat, the government of Colombia erects a wall of bureaucratic and institutional barriers very similar to the ones discussed by my interview participants and faced by those coming into the drop-in centre. That is, those whose bodies are unwanted in public spaces in Bogota are removed from that public space through bureaucratic hurdles that make their ongoing presence in an area untenable. As the authors note, such bureaucratic hurdles serve to order priorities “in such a way that their presence....is discouraged” (327).

That is, though bureaucratic barriers and incompetence are usually not considered socio-spatial strategies for social control, Olarte Olarte and rua Wall argue that in the context of Colombia’s battle for legitimacy and its struggle to assert its sovereignty through control of public space, they are spatial strategies geared at achieving visibility or invisibility of particular populations. When those working on the street are required to invest significant amounts of time shuttling between social service agencies in an attempt to obtain the right documentation, be on the right lists, and be able to access services, they are literally and discursively from the streets.

Massive delays, rationing of essential health services, the insistence on to-the-letter compliance with rules that are incompatible with the lifestyles of many people living or working on the street, and the obsession with documentation – these are strategies familiar to those who have been displaced and have sought refuge in the centre of the city. Those living in the neighbourhood recognize them as strategies used to encourage those in Santa Fé to move on to other areas of the city. The quality of service provision in Santa Fé is not accidental. Even when the municipality is engaged in service provision for those living on the streets or working in the sex trade, there is a strong sense that those services are not offered in good faith, but are rather one of many strategies used to keep people from settling permanently in the neighbourhood or making a life for themselves in the neighbourhood.

Finally, it is worth noting that comments offered by those in the neighbourhood can also be understood in the context of Suárez’ analysis of Bogota’s tactics of social control regarding the homeless and visibly poor. He argues that the presence of visible poverty on the streets at the centre of Bogotá is useful for the local and central governments, as it justifies many of the mega-projects that are currently undertaken in the city (116). That is, the mega-projects which are justified under the rhetoric of ‘recuperating’ neighbourhoods like Santa Fé, require visible poverty, homelessness, and social decay in order to retain popular support in other areas of Colombian society.

Suárez argues that, in the context of *Plan Centro*, the government may have more incentive to provide the illusion of services for those in Santa Fé than actually providing effective services for those living in poverty in the sex work tolerance zone. If the government were able to provide effective interventions in terms of safety, employment, housing, and health, it would become much more difficult to justify the massively disruptive recuperation projects undertaken by the city.

Thus, we can understand the criticism of government services by those living and working in Santa Fé as another way that those in Santa Fé resist their categorization by dominant media and government elites. Their presence on the streets is not about choice or an affinity for violence and chaos, but rather a result of half-hearted and ineffective social services for the poor that have created the situation which brought many to Santa Fé and to the streets in the first place.

Before I conclude, I will now turn my attention to the final way that those in Santa Fé resist dominant narratives about the neighbourhood: comments about policing in the neighbourhood.

Chapter Eight: “Their Money is Coming from Our Pockets” – police brutality in Santa Fé.

In the previous chapter, I canvassed some of the ways that government intervention is understood in Santa Fé by those living and working on the streets. However, the government presence in the neighbourhood is not limited to social service agencies. The dominant governmental presence in the neighbourhood of Santa Fé is that of the national police. It is to this presence that I now turn. Specifically, I will argue that whereas dominant narratives of government control construct those who live and work on the streets as being perpetrators of violence, those that I interviewed called attention to the extent to which this violence was not a problem for the government, but was rather perpetrated by its agents. I will begin by canvassing the perspectives of men working and living on the streets, and will then move to discuss the specific, and unique, experiences of trans women with police in the area.

The neighbourhood of Santa Fé is one with a high, but unpredictable police presence. The neighbourhood is sandwiched between the presidential palace, the mayor’s office, major east-west and north-south transit hubs, as well as one of the major economic centres of the city. That is, there is a heavy police presence in the centre of the city, and the police presence in Santa Fé reflects this. Though there was no discernable pattern to the ebbs and flows of police presence, a few specific moments during my field research stand out as particularly relevant.

First, it is not uncommon to see police officers on motorcycles drive through the neighbourhood in pairs. Other days, there are police officers, also in pairs, who have been sent to provide a visible presence of the police in the neighbourhood. Stationed in pairs on street-corners of the neighbourhood, or sent to wander among the brothels and drug distribution sites, they would stop people, ask for identification and perform ostensibly ‘random’ body-searches and ID checks. Sometimes, younger police officers (18 or 19 years old) would be seen in pairs walking through the neighbourhood. These people are often assumed to be in the neighbourhood because they are looking to contract a sex worker.

In the drop-in centre, I was given another window into people’s interactions with the police. More than once, individuals came into the drop-in centre looking for medical care after having been mistreated by police. One man came into the centre bleeding from the wrists, and described having been handcuffed so tightly that he bled, and then hung by his handcuffs from a hook on the ceiling of the police station that he was taken to. More than one came to the centre after having been illegally detained for between 24 and 72 hours in the *Unidad Permanente de Justicia* (the ominously named Permanent Justice Unit). People returning from the *UPJ* often reported being denied food and water for their 24 hour (almost always illegal) incarceration. Women and girls often reported being told to “get onto their knees” and provide sexual services in exchange for an earlier release. Trans women were exclusively incarcerated in the men’s area of the prison.

On other, much less frequent occasions, the police arrived in large numbers. One particular afternoon in July, after violence in the neighbourhood had received yet another wave of press attention, those of us in *Procrear* for the afternoon shift were surprised to see a massive parade of senior-ranking police officers, heavily armed and wearing full riot gear, walking in lines of four through the main street of the neighbourhood, 22nd street. Between us, we counted at least 40 officers of fairly significant rank (as discerned by their shoulder-lapels). Many in the neighbourhood stopped what they were doing or emerged from stores and *residencias* to watch the spectacle. This presence was understood by

spectators as a display of force and a veiled threat, a reminder for those in the neighbourhood of what the police were capable of if the neighbourhood were to pose a public problem in an ongoing way.

As remarkable as these moments of police presence in Santa Fé are the moments of police absence. In this respect, one particular instance sticks out. One afternoon in early July, as I wondered between the drop-in centre and a community soup kitchen that was organized by a grass-roots trans ally organization, I was greeted by a regular attendee of the drop-in centre, who asked me if I had managed to hear the gunshots. I had not.

I had narrowly missed a drive-by shooting. Two armed men on motorcycles let loose a volley of shots aimed at an *olla* one block away from our drop-in. One individual was injured. The police, predictably, were nowhere to be seen, and, as far as I could ascertain, never arrived to question witnesses or follow up. As far as I and those working in the drop-in were aware, they never arrived to investigate. This is not to suggest that the presence of the police in such circumstances would be a positive response to such events. Rather, I point out the absence of the police to complete the patterns of police behaviour in the area. In a society that collectively considers a police presence an important part of the response to violence, particularly drive-by shootings, it is significant that the police response in such contexts is one of absence or neglect.

Strikingly, but perhaps not surprisingly given this context, none of those interviewed related that they had positive experiences with police officers, or considered them a source of safety or security in the neighbourhood. When asked what he thought of the police presence in the neighbourhood, one man responded:

“Insecurity? That’s about the abuse of authority. Police officers, because they have that green uniform, they think they’re better than the rest of the world. Whether you are a person living in the street, whether you’re destitute, whether you’re a normal, good person. Whatever you are. For the pigs [cops], everyone is a thief, a rat, a pot-head, a crack-head, whore, all of it. The worst of the worst. They never give you the treatment you deserve as a human being.”

(Anonymous interview, July 22, 2014)

In addition to individual examples of the violent presence of the police, many called attention to the ways that police corruption and violence were not limited to corruption and apathy. Rather, those living in the neighbourhood pointed out many of the ways that the police, individually and as a powerful institution in Colombian society, were benefitting from the creation of a state of exception and chaos in Santa Fé.

First, many were critical of the way that the police were deployed. Some called attention to, and questioned, what they perceived to be real intent and effect of policing strategies in Santa Fé. One said:

“Security? I don’t think we should trust the government to do that. They have tons of police, but really what the police are doing is they know

where drugs are being sold, and so they tax those places, and so the security situation doesn't change at all.... It's all about the police in this neighbourhood."

(Anonymous interview, August 14, 2014).

This was a common criticism. For many, it was disingenuous and absurd to consider the police presence in the neighbourhood without considering the extent to which the police were engaging in corrupt and self-serving behaviours inside the neighbourhood. Similarly to the individual above, another man who spent time in Santa Fé asked similar questions of the police:

"In other countries you don't see this. No, no, you never see this sorts of things. A place like this, right next to the presidential palace? You go up to 7th street [very close-by], and there's the president. How are they going to let this happen in the middle of the commercial centre? Right next to a military battalion?" (Anonymous interview, July 3, 2014).

Another observed:

"Wherever there's money, you're screwed. If the cops came here really and saw all this shit and there's no money changing hands or anything like that, they'd fix it up because they would fix. It. Up. But what happens is they show up and 'no, we're going to give you so much [money in exchange for being left alone]. Okay. They [the cops] go so far as to arrive [at the *ollas*] to advise them of a raid. 'Brother, in two hours we're going to come here and clean all this up. So get everyone out of this crap because they're on their way already.' Then they [those in the *ollas*] give the police some money, and two hours later, the cops arrive and there's nobody there, there's nobody there. So they're all the same." (Anonymous interview, July 24, 2014).

When I asked (naively) whether this sort of police corruption and collusion could be addressed by reporting to outside police authorities, or suggested that the experiences of violence at the hands of the police was not a policy at a higher level, but rather the individualized behaviour of individual police officers, the response was clear and unequivocal: "You cannot report this sort of thing, because if you do you'll lose your life." (Anonymous interview, July 27, 2014).

Some other men who worked in the neighbourhood agreed:

“It’s the state that is trying to cover all this up, because it is not convenient for them to talk about certain things, especially when it’s possible they will be blamed. So it [police violence] becomes a daily experience. Why did they [the police] kill him? Because he owed them something, because he was alive, because you can’t talk about the way things actually are.”(Anonymous interview, July 28, 2014).

“Right here. You know there’s an olla super-close? Lies. There’s not one – there are like three. Close, more or less. Each olla, in each olla there are police officers. It’s like they are the security for the ollas. Because there the cops are doing drugs right beside it. The railroad tracks – you know what it’s like down there. The olla, and then the CAI [police station] right next to it. And right between them, the youth shelter.” (Anonymous interview, July 22, 2014)

These patterns of policing are striking in light of how academia understands the current nature of the police in Bogota and Colombia more generally. Aguilera argues that recent decades in Colombia have seen the police force in Colombia undergo “important reform” which brought it “closer to the citizenry” (27). During the early 1990s, for instance, the security budget in Colombia doubled, but has also largely been understood as becoming “more efficient” (26).

However, we can see similarities between the tactics identified by research participants in my own study, and the work of Auyero *et al.* in Buenos Aires. Specifically, we see that in Bogota policing strategies have also been “intermittent and contradictory”. At times the police presence in Santa Fé seems geared towards particular types of criminal activities, such as when the *olla* was closed down by police (written about in a previous chapter). However, they only seem to be interested in shutting down certain criminal actors, and are frequently and visibly seen profiting from the illegal economies that exist in the neighbourhood due to their patchwork policing strategies.

Those in the neighbourhood understand state and police intervention as integral to the violence in the neighbourhood, and point to specific ways that the government and dominant narratives simply dismiss the consistent realities of policing in the neighbourhood. Auyero *et al.* argue that rather than characterize violent neighbourhoods as primordially violent, we rather need to focus on the real and tangible ways that such discourses render invisible the intentional and often self-serving ways that state agents, the police in particular, are intervening in these neighbourhoods. Given the comments of my interview participants, this certainly seems to be the case for Santa Fé.

The experiencing of policing in Santa Fé is also a gendered experience. Before I conclude, I will canvass some of the comments of the trans women working in Santa Fé, and their experiences with policing strategy in the neighbourhood.

One trans woman who had been in and out of the neighbourhood for decades commented that, while the police abuse faced by trans women had changed, the police were an ongoing source of violence:

“The types of violence evolve [with the police]. Now they don’t hit me anymore, they don’t shave my hair, they don’t send me to jail for a month for wearing women’s clothes, but now they mistreat me in different ways. It’s nothing more than a comment by a police officer ‘there goes what you want’ [to another police officer, but using pronouns that clearly identify trans women as men], or they start to laugh at you, or when they see you coming down the street they’ll yell ‘everyone watch out, they [trans women, again referred to by male pronouns] are going to rob you.’ They do things that.....let’s say the violence is evolving. Now because of the whole idea of human rights, they’re not allowed to hit, because that can turn into a problem for them. Now they use a different sort of violence.”

(Anonymous interview, August 14, 2014).

Other women echoed this sentiment. The neighbourhood of Santa Fé is, for many women, the first place they are able to openly express their gender identity without having to fear constantly for their lives. However, as Colombia’s most recognized home for trans women and trans sex workers, the visibility of transgender and gender-non-conforming people also attracts heightened, and very particular, patterns of violence from the police.

Although the violence that trans women face at the hands of the police has changed through the years, the police tactics of violence have been focused on policing acceptable gender presentation in public space. As I have established above, government and police violence towards transgender sex worker bodies is often primarily concerned with demonstrating to society the acceptable gendered ways to appear in public space (Sabsay 214).

Even in the sex work tolerance zone where the presence of trans women working in the sex trade has been explicitly authorized by law, trans women are not immune to police violence. indeed, they remain particular targets for some of the more creative and sadistic incidences of police brutality, as Ritterbusch (2016) has argued. I argue that this is not accidental, but rather illustrative of one of the dominant logics used by government and policing forces in Santa Fé. That is, Santa Fé, as a sex work tolerance zone with a high number of trans women, is a place where police authorities send messages about acceptable gender presentations in public space.

Shaving the heads of trans women, jailing them for wearing the ‘wrong’ clothing, as well as the newer strategies of publically shaming trans women by identifying them by male pronouns and characterizing them publically as likely to be violent – it is not accidental that the violence deployed towards trans women has remained, over the years, obsessed with highlighting and punishing deviant gender roles. As Elijah Edelman has argued, the exclusion of trans sex worker bodies from particular public spaces (and conversely, their mandated visibility in others) serves “a broader societal role to delineate and segregate

those bodies deemed sick, pathological, undesirable, and in some cases, disposable” (854). That is, those who live in the neighbourhood and work in the neighbourhood refuse to cede to dominant discourses of what sources of violence or security are. They do not understand their own neighbourhood to be one that is inherently violent or inextricably linked to immorality.

In addition to this discursive resistance, there is another way that many of the trans women in Santa Fé commonly use to undermine the power imbalance that they must navigate regularly with the police. As mentioned above, it is not unusual to see officers stationed on street corners or walking through the neighbourhood in pairs. One common response from the sex worker community, particularly trans women working in the sex trade, is to call loud and dramatic attention to the presence of the police officers.

That is, officers who walk through the neighbourhood, sometimes regardless of rank, are often greeted by loud catcalls, whistles, and explicit, specific invitations to enter brothels. Women, waiting in pairs in the entrances of many of the brothels will shout and whistle at the backs of these officers, who never turn around, and never engage. This is often a source of much hilarity for other women watching the encounter (and was a consistent source of terror for this researcher, who was very certain that the atmosphere of impunity for police violence would invite serious retributory violence), and many would laugh loudly, and take obvious pleasure in the reversal of traditional relations of power.

Thus, both through discursive resistance in interviews, as well as through public acts of defiance to police officers in the street, the women of Santa Fé further problematize our dominant conceptions of Santa Fé. They note many of the ways that violence in the neighbourhood is connected to police and government social control over acceptable gender norms in the neighbourhood, rather than the presence of sex work or trans bodies in general.

So, having canvassed the gendered experiences of police violence in Santa Fe, the role of government social services, as well as discourses of violence in the neighbourhood that either deny or externalize violence, I have outlined the four main ways that violence in Santa Fé is understood differently by those who live and work in the neighbourhood. In my next and final chapter, I will offer some concluding thoughts.

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

Since I first touched down in March of 2011, much has changed in Bogota. Gustavo Petro and his leftist political agenda have been replaced by Enrique Peñalosa, who has collapsed the bureaucracies of *Integración Social* and the *Secretaría de la Mujer*, declared his intent to speed up recuperation efforts in the centre of the city, and further escalated a battle for public space in all parts of the city with his inflammatory comments about street vendors and the homeless. In 2015, low oil prices meant the Colombian peso's value was cut in half against the US dollar. Rates of inflation rose from 2-3 to 8-9 percent from 2014 to 2015, and serious, sustained droughts throughout Colombia have stretched municipal funds and increased the flow of people displaced towards Bogota from rural and remote areas of Colombia.

At the same time, the peace process between Colombia's government and the FARC continue. Deadline after self-imposed deadline to sign a final agreement pass without a successful accord, and, while many in Colombia remain hopeful for a successful demobilization of South America's oldest civil war, the challenges of a national demobilization program in a country whose economic growth is starting to flag dramatically, are lost on none. It is also true that the process will not be able to sustain high levels of political support indefinitely.

The quickly changing urban landscape and the increasingly sparse social service infrastructure have also left their mark on Santa Fé. When I last returned to visit in December of 2015, I learned that one of the residents of Santa Fé with whom I had had a long-term relationship, and had interviewed for this project, had passed away since my last visit. He passed away in a public space, without warning, and he was alone when he died. There was nowhere to pay my respects – his body had been unclaimed, and had been buried in a mass grave somewhere outside the city. His death was the most recent, but by no means the only, loss to the neighbourhood in recent years.

In this context, it is perhaps more important than ever that we pay critical attention to the ways that Colombian elites advance regressive or exclusionary social agendas through land use planning. In this paper, I have tried to do exactly that. Specifically, I have outlined the dominant media discourses and government interventions regarding Santa Fé. I have argued that Colombia, and the centre of Bogota in particular, have frequently been subject to campaigns of urban renewal and recuperation that are actually informed by government social agendas to exclude and render the poor invisible. I have called attention to the ways that government efforts to maintain spatial control are connected to race, as well as to policing efforts in poor urban areas. I have also examined the dynamics of socio-spatial control as they relate to Colombia's experience of ongoing civil war. I have also engaged these dynamics as they relate to the gendered policing of trans bodies, as well as to the experience of trans women in Santa Fé specifically.

However, my primary motivation in pursuing this research has been to elevate the voices of those who are traditionally excluded from public discourse and political decision-making. In this vein, I have tried to highlight four ways that those living and working in Santa Fé push back against dominant discursive characterizations of their home. I have argued that some push back against the moral panic created about the neighbourhood, and deny that it is more violent than any other. Others acknowledge violence in the neighbourhood, but seek to externalize it to newcomers to the neighbourhood, sometimes using problematic government-propelled ideas about race and belonging in the city.

Many were critical of the government's social service presence in the neighbourhood, and questioned the genuineness of government intentions. Finally, many pushed back against narratives of violence in the neighbourhood by calling attention to the variety of ways that police intervention, lack of intervention, or mis-intervention in Santa Fé create and foment dynamics of violence.

Throughout my research, the resilience, good humor, political subversiveness, and instinct to resist domination or erasure from public space contained within the neighbourhood has remained a source of inspiration and drive for my own academic inquiry as well as my political work within the neighbourhood.

I will conclude by offering the words of one of my interview participants, who broke down into tears during our interview while considering the possibilities for his neighbourhood, and the actual legacy of government intervention: "Violence here in Santa Fé is not just hitting someone over the head with a machete – violence is also lived through words, through actions" (Anonymous interview, July 26, 2014). Indeed, it is only when we are able to see past convenient government narratives which focus on random and senseless street-based violence, and instead highlight the violence inherent in government policies that seek to exclude and to isolate, that we understand the real sources and impact of the violence being enacted in Santa Fé.

Works Cited

- Aguilera, Alfonso Valenzuela. (2013). "Power, Territory, and the Social Control of Space in Latin America." *Latin American Perspectives* 189(40): 21-34.
- Asher, Kiran and Diana Ojeda. (2009) "Producing Nature and Making the State: Ordenamiento Teritorial in the Pacific lowlands of Colombia." *Geoforum* 40: 292-302.
- Auyero, Javier, Agustín Burbano de Lara, and María Fernanda Bertí. (2014). "Violence and the State at the Urban Margins." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 43(1): 94-116.
- Becket, Katherine, and Angelina Godoy. (2008). "A Tale of Two Cities: A Comparative Analysis of Quality of Life Initiatives in New York and Bogota." *Urban Studies* 47(2): 277-301.
- Berney, Rachel (2010). "Learning from Bogota: How Municipal Experts Transformed Public Space." *Journal of Urban Design* 15(4): 539-58.
- Berney, Rachel. (2011). "Pedagogical Urbanism: Creating Citizen Space in Bogota, Colombia." *Planning Theory* 10(1): 16-34.
- Bocarjeo, Diana. "Emancipation or Enclosure?: The Spatialization of Difference and Urban Ethnic Contestation in Colombia." *Antipode* 44(3): 663-683.
- Brittain, James J. 2005 "Bolivarian movement for a new Colombia clandestine politics and bottom-up organizing in Colombia." *Socialism and Liberation Magazine*.
<http://www.socialismandliberation.org/mag/index.php?aid=367>.
- Castro, Jaramillo. (2003) "Espacio público: más que maquillaje urbano." In Universidad de los Andes (ed.) *Bogotá y lo Público*. Bogota, Colombia.
- Chabat, Jorge and John Bailey. (2011). *Seguridad pública y gobernabilidad democrática: Desafíos para México y Estados Unidos*. Mexico City: CIDE/Georgetown University.
- Clarke, Michael. "Survival in the Field: Implications of Personal Experience in Field Work." *Theory and Society* 2, no. 1 (January 1, 1975): 95–123.
- Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2006.
- Dugas, John. "Paramilitaries and the Economic Origins of Armed Conflict in Colombia." *Latin American Research Review* 47, no. 1 (September 7, 2012): 205–13.
- Edelman, Elijah Adiv.(2011). "'This Area has been Declared a Prostitution Free Zone': Discursive Formations of Space, the State, and Trans 'sex worker' Bodies," *Journal of Homosexuality* 58: 814-864.
- Editorial Board. (2016). Santa Fé: Un Barrio de Contrastes. *El Espectador*. Retrieved from <http://m.eltiempo.com/buscador/MAM-3828113/1>

Editorial Board (2010, November 9). Atracan a Venezolanos en el Barrio Santa Fé. *El Tiempo*. Retrieved from <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-4244212>.

Editorial Board. (2011, Jan 17). Habitantes del Barrio Santa Fé Intentaron Linchar a un Hombre. *El Tiempo*. Retrieved from <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-8787105>

Editorial Board. (2006, December 17). Las Peluquerías del Barrio Santa Fé son Testigos de los Dramas de las Prostitutas. *El Tiempo*. Retrieved from <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-3370193>

Editorial Board (2015, November 10). Petro Dice que El Arte es Para Todos 'Incluso Para el que Está Pensando en Robar. *El Tiempo*. Retrieved from <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/bogota/petro-dice-el-arte-todos-incluso-el-esta-pensado-robar-articulo-601645>

Editorial Board. (2016, January 6). Bogota: Así se Tomaron las Bandas el Espacio Público. *Semana*. Retrieved from <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/bogota-hurto-homicidio-prostitucion-por-espacio-publico-invadido/456786-3>

Editorial Board. (2006, December 18). Las Peluquerías del Barrio Santa Fé. *El Tiempo*. Retrieved from <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-2321641>

Editorial Board. El Patrimonio Olvidado de Bogotá. *Semana*. Retrieved from (<http://www.semana.com/cultura/galeria/bogota-las-joyas-olvidadas-del-patrimonio/456856-3>)

Eslava, Luis. (2009). "Decentralization of Development and Nation-Building Today: Reconstructing Colombia from the Margins of Bogotá." *The Law and Development Review*, 2(1): 283-352.

Emerson, Robert M. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. 2nd ed. Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing. The University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Ewald, W. (1985). *Portraits and dreams: Photographs and stories by Children of the Appalachians*. New York: Writers and Readers.

Hubbard, J. (1991). *Shooting back: A photographic view of life by homeless children*. San Francisco: Chronicle.

Hubbard, Phil. (2001). "Sex Zones: Intimacy, Citizenship, and Public Space." *Sexualities* 4(1): 51-71.

Ince, Matt. (2013). "Filling the FARC-Shaped Void." *The Rusi Journal* 158(5): 26-34.

Lushpa, Peter. (1996) "Transitional Organized Crime versus the Nation-State." *Transnational Organized Crime* 2(1): 21-48.

Maher, David, and Andrew Thompson. (2007). "The Terror that Underpins the 'Peace': the Political Economy of Colombia's Paramilitary Demobilisation Process." *South Central Review*, 4(1):95-113.

Olarte Olarte, Carolina, and Illan rua Wall. (2012). "The Occupation of Public Space in Bogotá: Internal Displacement and the City." *Social & Legal Studies*, 22-40.

- Petras, James and Michael M. Brescia. 2000 "The FARC faces the empire." *Latin American Perspectives* 27 (5): 134–142.
- Petras, James and Timothy F. Harding. 2000 "Radical left responses to global impoverishment." *Latin American Perspectives* 27 (5): 3–10.
- Prada Prada, Nancy, Susan Herrera Galvis, Lina Tatiana Lozano Ruiz, and Ana María Ortiz Gómez. (2011). *A mí me sacaron volada de allá! Relatos de Vida de Mujeres Trans Desplazadas Forzosamente Hacia Bogotá*. Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- Rittebusch, Amy. (2011). *A Youth Vision of the City: The Socio-Spatial Lives and Exclusion of Street Girls in Bogota, Colombia* (unpublished dissertation). Florida International University, Miami, Florida.
- Ritterbusch, Amy. (2016). "Mobilities at Gunpoint: The Geographies of (Im)mobility of Transgender Sex Workers in Colombia." *Annals of the American Association of Geographers* 0(0): 1-12.
- Sabsay, Leticia. (2011). "The Limits of Democracy: Transgender Sex Work and Citizenship." *Cultural Studies* 25(2): 213-229.
- Sanchez, Lisa. (1997). "Boundaries of Legitimacy: Sex, Violence, Citizenship, and Community in a Local Sexual Economy." *Law and Social Inquiry* 22(3):543-580.
- Serje, Margarita. (2007). "Iron Maiden Landscapes: The Geopolitics of Colombia's Territorial Conquest," *South Central Review*, 47: 37-55.
- Soja, Edward. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Suárez, Carlos José. (2010). "Renovación Urbana: Una Respuesta al Pánico Moral?" *Territorios* 22: 111-124.
- Strauss, Anselm L., and Juliet M. Corbin, eds. *Grounded Theory in Practice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997.
- Thomas, Susan. *Whispering Truth to Power: Everyday Resistance to Reconciliation in Postgenocide Rwanda*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013.
- Torres, Y. (2010, Feb 6). El barrio Santa Fe, un lugar de contrastes con viviendas, locales comerciales y prostíbulos. *El Tiempo*. Retrieved from <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-7136887>.
- Wang, Caroline. "Who Knows the Streets as Well as the Homeless? Promoting Personal and Community Action through Photovoice." *Health Promotion Practice* 1, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 81–89.
- Wang, Caroline, and Mary Burris. "Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment." *Health Education & Behavior* 24, no. 3 (June 1, 1997): 369–87.