



MEXICO VIOLENCE RESOURCE PROJECT

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

General Style Guidelines

The purpose of the Mexico Violence Resource Project is to facilitate the open exchange of analysis and information among analysts, policymakers, and journalists. To this end, all publications should strive for clarity and accessibility.

We encourage:

- Straightforward argument and analysis that acknowledges and incorporates diverse local contexts and nuances. We know you could transfix a room of professors with academic jargon and theories, but making sure we can communicate with a wider audience requires using language that is accessible to all. This does not mean simplifying your argument, but rather making sure that aunt Susan can finally understand what your work is about.
- The use of narrative and anecdotes to tell stories that illuminate important conclusions. This is the place to bring stories from the field or that you have encountered in your work that could not be incorporated in academic publications because Reviewer #2 did not see the value.
- Images, maps, graphics, and photo-essays that enrich our understanding or provide a new picture of on-the-ground conditions.

We discourage:

- Writing that sensationalizes or dramatizes violence and its causes.
- Writing that relies on generalizations.
- Diatribes against government agencies or public servants. We understand you may not be a fan of policies implemented to prevent and reduce violence in Mexico. We are not either. However, it is unfruitful to make blank statements about the “State”. We certainly welcome discussions about policies but please afford them the same treatment you would to the work of your colleagues.

Categories:

1. Research Brief/Summary of Resources

- a. Length: Three to seven paragraphs (400 to 700 words).
- b. Sources: Use blog-style in-text links; provide a list of sources at the end.
- c. Audience: Should be accessible for a wide audience of interested readers, avoid jargon and dense technical language.

- d. **Style and Purpose:** These descriptive essays are designed to provide a general audience with a clear, concise overview of the best evidence and analysis about a given topic. It is best to frame them around one or two key extremely simple questions such as “What do we know about the relationship between the kingpin strategy and violence?” The stubs should summarize analysis, findings, and arguments of key sources and researchers and, when available, provide relevant statistical information.

2. General Perspective Essay

- a. **Length:** Varies, typically 1,000 to 3,000 words.
- b. **Sources:** Use blog-style in-text links when necessary.
- c. **Audience:** Can be either general readers or experts but should attempt to explain information clearly enough for a general audience.
- d. **Style and Purpose:** If you are tired about reading or hearing about “narco avocados” this section is for you! This section provides a space for writing about your pet peeves regarding coverage of violence in Mexico. These argumentative opinion pieces do not have a fixed format, but should provide readers with an engaging, provocative perspective on an issue. This may be an attempt to provide a new interpretation of an issue or a new way of contextualizing an event, and the essays should have an argumentative tone and clear authorial voice. Help us put an end to stories about how guacamole fuels the drug war.