

Contact Info: vríos@fas.harvard.edu

Summary I belong to an emerging generation of academics that rejects the commonly accepted idea that research is inexorably detached from policy decisions and social mobilization. Relying on data analysis and research journalism, I advance an acute understanding of the pressing social problems of Mexico, my home country, as scholar, top-political advisor and non-profit entrepreneur.

Education **HARVARD UNIVERSITY** Cambridge, MA

PhD/MA in Government, 2013 **Major:** Social Policy and Inequality.

- Conducted research on government policies, organized crime and governance.
- Designed big-data algorithm to geocode crime hotspots in Mexico. Results requested by CIA, DEA, FBI, and featured in *Foreign Policy*, *Huffington Post*, *Scientific American*, and others.

Awards: American Political Science Association's Leonard D. White prize award for the best dissertation in the field of public administration; Harvard's Merit Fellowship for outstanding research conducted at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences; selected as one of [15 Harvard's stellar graduates](#) of 2013 by Harvard Gazette.

INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO AUTÓNOMO DE MÉXICO (ITAM) Mexico City

Bachelor of Arts, 2005 **Major:** Political Science; Graduated top-1 of graduating class

Professional Experience

2009-on **Academic, HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

- Visiting Assistant Professor at Harvard University (2019) and Purdue University (2017-2018); teaches seminar about Corruption in Latin America and Mexican Politics
- Researches Mexico's corruption, violence and inequality. Has published 7 peer-review papers at top-journals in social and computer sciences.
- Harvard Summer Faculty (2017-on); teaches Public Policy, and Mexico-US Relations. Previously taught at HKS Executive (2011-2013), and as TA at Government Department (2009-2010).

2016-on **Political Analyst, THE MEXICO INSTITUTE** Washington, D.C.

- Author of [#TheMissingReform](#), a book analyzing Mexico's rule of law and corruption issues.
- Nominated by Mexican Senate to be "selection commissioner" of Mexico's Anti-corruption System, and honor reserved for the best academics and activists studying or fighting corruption.
- Weekly editorialist at Excelsior, Mexico's National Newspaper.
- Private adviser/consultant for top political and business leaders. Identifies, measures and exposes counter-intuitive policy truths using data. Advisees: COPARMEX, largest business organization in Mexico; National Security Spokesman, The World Bank, among others.

2014-2015 **Founding director, MÉXICO ¿CÓMO VAMOS? (MCV)** Mexico City

- Managed and developed strategy for think tank researching on Mexico's subnational economy.
- [Profiled at The Economist](#) as Mexico's "new mover and shaker" for designing an anti-corruption campaign ("*anti-corruptómetro*") that was instrumental in instigating anti-corruption reform.
- Honored by Mexico's National Council for Policy Evaluation as "best impact data generator" due to innovative impact model (cutting-edge quantitative research decoded to decisions makers).
- Increased MCV's market value on 529%, up to capitalizing \$10M USD yearly in unpaid publicity.

2013 **Policy Adviser, MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHCP)** Mexico City

- Represented the Minister at National Security Council and directive cabinet meetings.
- Teamed with IADB & experts to redesign national pension reform and unemployment insurance.

2011 **Policy Adviser, OFFICE OF MEXICAN PRESIDENT** Mexico City

- Advised National Security Spokesman on criminal trends in one-on-one bi-monthly sessions.
- Created Bayesian crime index to evaluate impact of security policies on Mexico's security.

2006-2007 **Deputy Director, MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT** Mexico City

- Authored policy reports on best global poverty-relief practices to enhance Mexico's strategies.
- Wrote annual report on children human rights; delivered to the UN.

2003-2005 **Research Assistant, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY** Mexico City

- Assessed Mexico's political risk to recommend allocation of USAID's funds in Mexico.
- Assisted in publication of dozens of research articles and book *Courting Democracy in Mexico*.

Methodological Skills: Econometrics, microeconomics, statistics, geographic referencing and formal modeling.

Coding, Programs and Languages R, STATA, English, Spanish (native).

Peer-Reviewed Publications (selected)

- “Information provision and competition among Mexico’s drug cartels” (with Phillips) in *LAPS* (2019).
- “Cash transfers’ effect on government support” (with Ivaschenko and Doyle) in *Disasters* (2019).
- “Media effects of Mexico’s drug violence” (with Ferguson) in *Justice Quarterly* (2019).
- “Criminal Violence Against the Press” (with Holland) in *Jour. of Conflict Resolution* (2017).
- “How Government Coordination Controlled Crime” in *Jour. of Conflict Resolution* (2015).
- “The Role of Drug-Related Violence in Promoting Mexican Migration” in *LA Research Review* (2014).
- “Multicultural Institutions, Distributional Politics and Mobilization” in *LA Pol & Soc* (with Eisenstadt) (2014).
- “Why Did Mexico Become So Violent?” in *Trends in Organized Crime* (2013).
- “Knowing Where and How Criminal Organizations Operate Using Google” in *CIKM* (with Coscia) (2012).

Think-tank and applied research reports (selected)

The Wilson Center: *Anti-Corruption Legislation in Latin America* (May 16), *Crime Reduces Economic Complexity* (Dec 15), *Economic growth Follows Rule of Law* (Oct 13).

Mexican Economic Studies: *Inequality* (Dic 15), *Rule of Law* (Dic 12), *Informality and Poverty* (Nov 15), *Reducing Poverty in Mexico* (Nov 15), *Advancing Mexico’s Economy* (Aug 15)

Trans-border Institute: *Drug Violence in Mexico Policy Reports* (with Molzahn, Shirk 2011; Shirk 2010).

Other Publications (selected)

El País: *El talón de Aquiles de AMLO* (2018).

The New York Times: *Time to Accept Responsibility and Act* (2014); *Drug Legalization Could Create More Crime* (2012); [Doing the Math on Mexican Drug Wars](#) (2010).

The Washington Post: *How to Win the Mexican Drug War* (2013).

Harvard Kennedy School Review: *Who Started the Mexican Drug War?* (Cover article; 2013).

Harvard Review of Latin America: *Keys to Reduce Violence. Targeted Policing and Civic Engagement* (2012).

Conferences and public speaking (selected)

Wilson Center: *The Missing Reform* (2018) (Washington, DC); *Nudge Innovation in Mexico* (2016) (Boston, MA).

United Nations Public Service Forum: *Using Data to Reduce Corruption* (2018) (Marrakech, Morocco).

Mexican Institute of Finance Executives: *Understanding the Economic Effects of Corruption* (2017) (Mexico).

Harvard University “*Political Origins of Corruption* (2019); *Mexico Security Challenge* (2019) (Cambridge, MA).

Cornell University “*Corruption Types & Income Inequality: Evidence from LA* (2019) (Ithaca, NY).

The Guggenheim Foundation “*Understanding Mexico’s Drug Violence*” (2011) (New York, NY).

US Department of State “*The Future of Mexican Drug Cartels*” (2011) (Washington, DC).

TV and Radio (selected)

- National TV Talk Show; *La Hora de Opinar*, Political Analyst (Mex; Weekly, 20 minutes, 2018-on).
- 103.3FM; *Anchorwomen* with Ruiz-Healy, (Mex; Weekly, 2 hrs, National Radio, 2014-2016).
- Bloomberg TV; *Regional Economy Analyst* (Mex; Weekly, 2014-2015).
- National TV Talk Show; [La Entrevista con Sarmiento](#), March 1, 2017

Research Grants Wilson Center Fellow 2015-17, Guggenheim Fellow 2014, Stanford University 2012, Harvard Real Estate Institute 2009, Harvard Kennedy School 2010, David Rockefeller Center for LA Studies 2011, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs 2010, Institute for Quantitative Social Sciences 2011, University of San Diego 2009, University of California, San Diego 2009-10.

Scholarships: Mexico’s National Counsel of Science and Technology, Harvard University, Fulbright Scholar.

Professional References: (1) Steve Levitsky (Department of government, Harvard University; slevitsky@harvard.edu); (2) Gary King (Institute for Quantitative Social Sciences, Harvard; king@harvard.edu); (3) Manuel Molano (Mexican Institute for Competitiveness; manuel.molano@imco.org.mx)

Volunteer Experiences: Mexico’s National Anticorruption System (Selection commissioner 2016-on); Admissions Committee to Harvard College (Interviewer 2013-15); Open Source Creation (Member 2012); Harvard Mexican Association (Campaign 2012, Treasurer 2008); United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office (Intern 2008) Quality of Professional Journalism (Spokesperson 2005); ITAM’s Political Science Student Assoc. (Coordinator 2002), ITAM’s Newspaper & Literary Magazine (Editor 2002).