

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS



The Journal of Empirical Legal Studies, published by the Brazilian Network of Empirical Legal Studies (REED), presents its fourth number. We believe this journal is consolidating its goal of becoming a gateway for spreading quality legal scholarship interested in empirical manifestations of Law.

The Brazilian Network of Empirical Legal Studies has been able to articulate researchers from diverse regions of the country in both its regional and national meetings (the annual national meeting is already in its fifth edition). This is reflected in this journal, which maintains a serious and rigorous process of double-blind peer review, while preserving a considerable regional variation in the realm of possibilities of a recently developed field of research.

This edition is composed by works of long reflection, born out of projects conducted in the last few years by professors and researchers of different institutions throughout the country. Withstanding the risk of being reductionist, these papers could be grouped in two sets of issues: those related to social rights and democracy and the ones related to the state's punitive apparatus. In the first set of papers, there are works on the cases of the quilombola population going to court, on the challenges for popular participation within the municipal councils of Ribeirão Preto, and also on the confidence in the justice system in Brazil and the propensity of the population to follow the law. Closing this group, there is an epistemological essay on the discourses used for the realization of social and economic rights in Brazil, a paper that has been discussed and revised by its author and this editorial board since its submission, two years ago, up until this final version.

The second group is bigger and deals with various issues. Two articles present data on the functioning of specialized courts on domestic violence in different regions of the country, painting an interesting design on the application of the Maria da Penha Law. Another

paper presents a systematic analysis of sentencing mechanisms and the reasons and motivations used by courts in different countries, including Brazil. The rehabilitation of prisoners in society is the object of a paper that brings us the results from a research project developed by a team from the IPEA (Instituto de Pesquisas Econômicas Aplicadas – Institute of Applied Economics Research), coordinated by our dear colleague, Carla Andrade. Finally, the last article tackles the always polemic issue of the regulation of drugs through parliamentary debates on the topic.

Once again, we would like to send a special thanks to all our blind reviewers, our language reviewers and translators, whose commitment and technical expertise allowed us to proudly reach this fourth number.

Happy reading!

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