

**Women deprived of liberty:
reading and writing of reviews as alternative for reducing sentences¹**

*Mulheres privadas de liberdade:
leituras e resenhas como alternativa de diminuição de pena*

*Mujeres privadas de libertad:
lecturas y reseñas como alternativa para la reducción de condenas*

Ana Maria Marques²
Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso

Joselene Ieda dos Santos Lopes de Carvalho³
Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso

Danielle Souza Gabriel⁴
Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso

Letícia Souza de Arruda⁵
Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso

Abstract: This paper discusses the topic of female incarceration and the alternatives for reducing sentences through educational actions. The actions presented in it resulted from the experiences of the community outreach program developed from November 2022 to October 2023. The methodology employed is based on critical literacy and reading as a practice of freedom. The main goal was to assist women deprived of liberty in their processes of writing and to assess the reviews written by them, aiming the remission of their sentences. The outreach program included biweekly visits to Ana Maria do Couto May Women's Penitentiary in Cuiabá, in which around thirty women engaged in preparing reviews. Part of that experience is described here, together with the discussion of female incarceration and remission through reading as the main topics.
Keywords: Gender; Remission of sentences; Critical literacy.

Resumo: Este artigo discute a temática do (des)encarceramento feminino e as alternativas de redução de pena por meio de ações educativas. As ações extensionistas trazidas resultaram de experiências realizadas a partir do projeto de extensão desenvolvido entre novembro de 2022 e outubro de 2023. A metodologia desenvolvida

¹ Translated by Natália Cristina Corrêa Castelo Branco. E-mail: profnataliacastelobranco@gmail.com.

² PhD in History. Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso, Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brasil. E-mail: anamariamarques.ufmt@gmail.com; Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/3982340840178047>; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4853-8200>.

³ PhD in History. Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso, Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brasil. E-mail: joselene.carvalho@ufmt.br; Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/5420511423378423>; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4210-2027>.

⁴ Graduated in History. Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso, Brasil. E-mail: danysgbl@gmail.com; Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/8597057535341617>; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0003-8463-2477>.

⁵ Graduated in Pedagogy. Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso, Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brasil. E-mail: leticia.arruda.la@gmail.com; Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/6410039051620054>; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-8148-088X>.

fundamenta-se no letramento crítico e leitura como prática de liberdade. Nosso principal objetivo foi o de auxiliar os processos de escrita e avaliação de resenhas com fins de remição de pena para mulheres privadas de liberdade. Ao longo do trabalho extensionista, frequentamos quinzenalmente a penitenciária feminina Ana Maria do Couto May, localizada na cidade de Cuiabá, onde cerca de trinta mulheres participaram da elaboração das resenhas. Neste texto, buscamos apresentar parte da experiência realizada ao discutir encarceramento feminino e remição pela leitura enquanto principais tópicos.

Palavras-chave: Gênero; Remição de Pena; Letramento crítico.

Resumen: Este artículo aborda la temática del (des)encarcelamiento femenino y las alternativas de reducción de condenas a través de acciones educativas. Las acciones de extensión presentadas surgieron de experiencias llevadas a cabo en el proyecto de extensión desarrollado entre noviembre de 2022 y octubre de 2023. La metodología desarrollada se basa en el alfabetismo crítico y la lectura como práctica de libertad. El objetivo general fue ayudar en los procesos de escritura y evaluación de reseñas con el propósito de reducción de condenas para mujeres privadas de libertad. A lo largo del trabajo de extensión, visitamos quincenalmente la penitenciaría femenina Ana Maria do Couto May, ubicada en la ciudad de Cuiabá, donde aproximadamente treinta mujeres participaron en la elaboración de las reseñas. En este texto, buscamos presentar parte de la experiencia realizada al discutir el encarceramiento femenino y la remisión a través de la lectura como los principales temas.

Palabras clave: Género; Reducción de condenas; Alfabetismo crítico.

Received on: December 1, 2023

Accepted on: June 18, 2024

Introduction

The present article is the result of extension activities carried out by university professors and undergraduate students with incarcerated women in a prison unit in Mato Grosso. Over the course of a year, other agencies were also engaged to assist women who had been released from the prison system (workshops and reviews), always pursuing the main goal: to reduce the jail time of incarcerated women. We utilized a legally provided but seldom-used tool in Brazil: sentence reduction through educational activities.

The methodology of the work involved readings, studies on legislation, and pedagogical practice through classes and courses. The main outcome of the work is the reviews produced by incarcerated women, intended for attachment to their legal files for sentence reduction.

In addition to the reviews, we organized discussions on topics presented by these women themselves, regarding their daily lives. The work methodology is inspired by

the understanding of education as a practice of freedom, in a theory that, as bell hooks (2013) wrote, offers us a place of healing, a foundation for new possible interpretations of the world.

Apart from reading the books that would once a month result in the reviews, we organized discussion circles on topics raised by the women involved in the project. As one of our main challenges, we understood that it wasn't about consolidating the legislation -the right to sentence reduction-, but about understanding the realities experienced by these women throughout their lives.

Throughout the work, we reflected on the most recurring causes of imprisonment, the gender disparity that further marginalizes women, and also on the positive effects of educational activities on the processes of liberation from the conditions that oppress them.

The issue of gender in the prison system

The main objective of extension activities was to promote educational and training processes for incarcerated women and for those who were released from the Ana Maria do Couto May Women's Penitentiary in Cuiabá-MT, from November 2022 to October 2023. The project highlighted both the possibility of practically implementing the resocialization laws provided by human rights public policy which guarantee the education access, and the dignity of women in deprivation of liberty.

According to Juliana Borges (2019, p.28), we are often "conditioned to think of prisons as an inevitable consequence for any socially conventionalized transgressions. Therefore, punishment has already been naturalized in the social imagination". For women, the naturalization of guilt persists throughout their lives, and when they are deprived of liberty, this becomes even more intense. The basic conditions guaranteed by Human Rights are seen as privileges, and the suffering caused by the prison system is sometimes considered legitimate. Consequently, there is a joint punishment imposed by the society and internalized by the incarcerated women due to this common sense.

In 2018, the National Survey of Prison Information (INFOPEN Women) - highlighted:

[...] regarding exclusively female units, the states of Pará, Mato Grosso, Pernambuco, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Tocantins stand out, where the percentage of units with visiting areas is below the national average. (INFOPEN, 2018, p. 24).

Something reported by the women who participated in our project is the disdain from some of their family members and civil society regarding their experiences in the prison system. Few mentioned receiving visits; thus, every two weeks during our meetings, they showed interest in participating because it was one of the rare occasions when people came to the penitentiary to visit them and learn about their lives. On the day the project activities ended, one of them confided, "my good days are exactly the class days." (Lírio⁶, 10/26/2023).

During the development of the project, we conducted bibliographic research through which we gained more information and understanding about the themes of incarceration and gender. What becomes evident is the penal system's neglect in considering female vulnerabilities. Angela Davis (2018, p.54) reminds us: "although men constitute the vast majority of the world's prisoners, important aspects of the operation of state punishment are ignored when it is assumed that women are marginal and therefore unworthy of attention.". Women are minority compared to the total number of incarcerated individuals, but when considering the support networks and continuity of life projects involving incarcerated people, women constitute the majority, as they continue to provide care and support, whether for the incarcerated person, their children, family members, or others.

The first relevant factor to emphasize is discussed by Caroline Nunes and João Paulo Macedo (2023), who refers to the longstanding lack of interest in criminalist epistemology in studying the specificity of women:

[...] it is evident that positivist ideas still influence criminology studies, as even in critical approaches, remnants of these thoughts persists. Pathological and corrective clinical orientations remain, and even sociological perspectives continue to focus on the study of the causes of criminality. (BARATTA, 2011 apud NUNES; MACEDO, 2023, s/p.).

Within this perspective, the authors list elements and the various particularities that involve female criminality compared to male criminality. After all, the prison population is generally composed of men who commit 95.62% of crimes in Brazil, which is one reason why female incarceration does not receive as much attention from the media, the government or the society. The women specificities need to be considered in the analysis of penal control. Criminologist Salo de Carvalho (2015, p. 636) states:

⁶ When we quote incarcerated women testimonies, we replace their real names with the names of flowers considered resilient to the effects of time. This change is to protect their identities.

Furthermore, it is essential to apply the gender lens when analyzing the war on drugs policy. That is because women and black people represent the most vulnerable groups to the criminalizing selectivity of drug repression. For this reason, the population of women, largely black, imprisoned for drug-related offenses has proportionally increased the most in the last decade.

The supposed women's fragility can be considered a facilitating element for the sale and transportation of illicit products. The recidivism in crime is evident, as the lack of perspective and opportunities pushes these women into the world of crime. Most of them are mothers and responsible for providing for their children, whose fathers neglect the duties of parenthood. According to Social Statistics published by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (BRASIL, 2021), women dedicate almost twice as much time to household chores compared to men and are much more involved in children's care.⁷

Most incarcerated women are not only abandoned by their partners, boyfriends, or spouses, but are also separated from their children and family (often, they are ashamed to present themselves in this condition). The state of neglect these incarcerated women find themselves in intensifies their needs and vulnerabilities, and distances them from their "abolitionist processes", as advocated by Angela Davis, Gina Dent, Erica Meiners and Beth Richie (2023).

The exponential increase in female incarceration has fostered the focus of feminist criminology, and together with criminal sciences, we aim to deepen the debate. When analyzing the gender context in women's participation in the criminal scenario, especially in drug-related crimes, it becomes clear that these offenses are the main contributors to female incarceration in Brazil. Twelve years ago, 65% of imprisoned women were charged under the Drug Law (Lei de Drogas nº 11.343/2006 [Brasil, 2006]), accused of drug trafficking⁸ - a situation that remains similar today. The aggravation of the penal aspect due to the law is characterized by the broad definition of what constitutes trafficking, which includes eighteen verbs to describe such conduct⁹.

⁷ Available in: <https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-sala-de-imprensa/2013-agencia-de-noticias/releases/30172-esta>

⁸ Available in: Agência CNJ de Notícias, 2011. https://www.jusbrasil.com.br/noticias/trafico-de-drogas-esta-ligado-a-65-das-prisoas-de-mulheres-no-brasil/3196821#:~:text=Adicione%20t%C3%B3picos-Tr%C3%A1fico%20de%20drogas%20est%C3%A1%20ligado%20a%2065,pris%C3%B5es%20de%20mulheres%20no%20Brasil&text=Nos%20%C3%BAltimos%20cinco%20anos%2C%2015.263,foi%20de%20tr%C3%A1fico%20de%20drogas_ Access in: October 08, 2023.

⁹ The article 33 of Law 11.343/2006 defines crimes related to the practice of illicit drug trafficking, including the following actions in its text: "Importing, exporting, sending, preparing, producing, manufacturing,

When considering the women's context, it is necessary to reflect on their existence and vulnerabilities within a patriarchal system that places them in a position of subservience and inferiority in relation to men, especially when we consider the intersections of class and race.

We agree with Soraia Mendes (2012, p. 188):

"Adopting the feminist point of view means an epistemological shift, which requires starting from the reality experienced by women (whether victims, defendants, or convicts) within and outside the criminal justice system. I believe that this is the ultimate goal of feminist criminology, which cannot be conceived as 'a new ingredient' within the frameworks already produced by other criminologies".

It becomes evident that if, in the past, women were condemned based on the societal gender norms, when they start to occupy different spaces in society, and break the paradigms of imposed domination, thanks to the strengthening of feminist movements, the system places another obstacle to their rights to freedom of movement as women: the strengthening of penal measures in the criminalization of women (NUNES; MACEDO, 2023).

This scenario begins to change when feminist movements - black feminism, intersectional feminism, decolonial feminism, queer feminism and others - enter the scene, formulating critiques to the conceptualization and classification of female criminality, and making historical analyses that seek to break away from the idea of a hegemonic struggle. They bring the issue of gender as an area that needs to be explored in the diverse realities experienced by women. Additionally, authors like Angela Davis have dedicated themselves to discussing the conceptions of the types of behavior expected in women's prisons. According to her:

They were based on the assumption that 'criminal' women could be rehabilitated through the assimilation of proper feminine behaviors -that is, by becoming experts in domestic life, especially cooking, cleaning and sewing. Obviously, training intended to produce better wives and mothers among middle-class women resulted in producing qualified domestic workers among black and poor women. (DAVIS, 2018, p.54).

In other words, to women, especially to black women, it was not allowed any form of rehabilitation. The prison system was seen as a means to offer the standardization of a femininity that these women, being considered criminals, had lost. Regarding the issue of race, we understand that the concept of intersectionality contributes to our interpretations of

acquiring, selling, offering for sale, having in storage, transporting, carrying, keeping, prescribing, administering, delivering for consumption, or supplying drugs, even if free of charge."

the daily lives of women, mostly poor and black, in the prison space. From Collins and Bilge's perspective (2020, p.16), "in the early years of the 21st century, the term 'intersectionality' began to be widely adopted by scholars, public policy, professionals and activists in various locations.". The authors argue that human rights activists were fundamental to the practical understanding of how to perceive historical subjects in various aspects, reflecting on the different forms of power in which they were embedded.

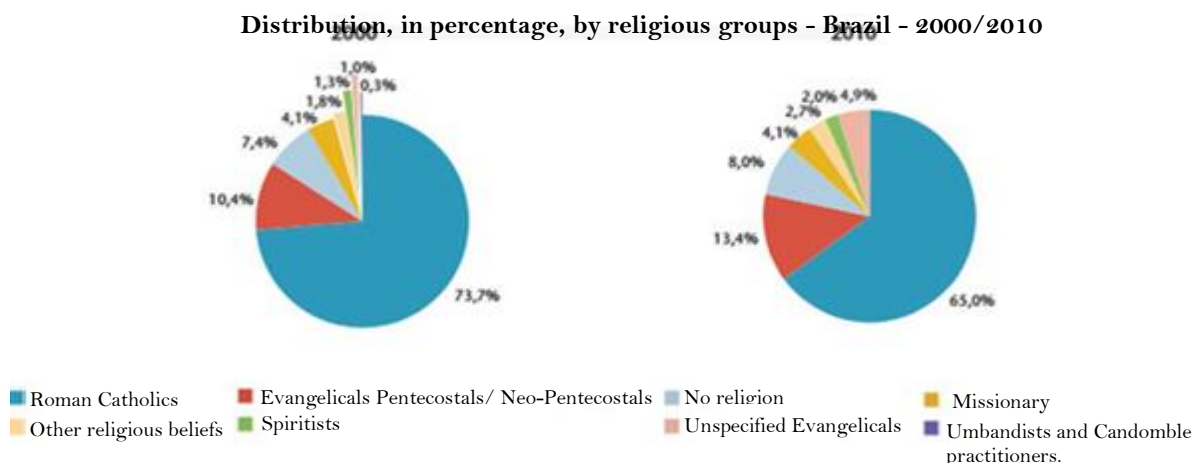
According to the National Secretariat of Penal Policies (SISDEPEN), as of June 2023, there were approximately 27,375 incarcerated women, while 616,930 were men (BRASIL, 2023). Most of the imprisoned women are young, mothers (185 of them pregnant or lactating). Additionally, there are those who care for their children in nurseries (429) and day care centers (9). Balancing motherhood and serving a prison sentence in a closed regime also penalizes children.

According to the mission of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) - one of the UN agencies - the offenses for which women are imprisoned differ from those committed by men. Most women are imprisoned for non-violent offenses, and when a woman is sentenced for a violent crime, it is usually committed against her male partner or someone close to her. It is often claimed that violent crimes committed by women are against individuals from whom they have suffered violence and/or sexual abuse in their pre-incarceration lives (CERNEKA, 2009).

Another factor that needs to be revisited and considered in the reality of female incarceration is religion. There is complexity in addressing religion within the prison system. Some literature suggests that partnerships with evangelical actions are advantageous in providing basic conditions for incarcerated individuals to serve their sentences and reduce the rate of criminal recidivism upon their return to society.

According to the Demographic Census of IBGE from 2010, the Catholic religion continues to be the majority.

Figure 1 - Religions practiced in the prison system (2000-2010)



Source: SILVA; FROM, 2019

It is imperative to clarify that, despite the consistency of the Catholic Church and the existence of other religions (2.7%), such as Spiritism (2.0%), the overwhelming presence of evangelical religion predominates in prison units.

The Penal Execution Law (LEP) No. 7.210/84 (BRASIL, 1984), in articles 11 and 24, ensures this religious assistance within detention centers, providing appropriate spaces for religious services and allowing inmates to possess religious books freely.

For some research focused on male prisons, the evangelical actions of Christian and (neo)Pentecostal religious institutions within prisons can be effective in maintaining discipline and order. This is due to a theology that preaches discipline, salvation, "docility," and control over carnal desires and impulses. On the other hand, in female prisons, there is often an emphasis on preaching guilt and repentance.

In the specific case of 'religiosity,' the presence of religious groups and the circulation of religious discourse act as mechanisms of power and control to maintain calm among the prison population. Simultaneously, for female inmates, attending religious services and the presence of religious groups serve as ways to pass idle time, to hear words of comfort, and to have channels of contact with people outside the prison (VARGAS, 2005, p. 27).

That said, if the influence of religion (Pentecostal or Neo-Pentecostal evangelicalism) is a factor that grants individuals privileges—such as staying in separate wings and receiving support from prison administration and from society—it would be interesting to analyze to what extent many incarcerated individuals adopt this religion as a strategy for better living conditions during their sentence.

The penal system is undemocratic when it allows only one or two religious presences consistently within women's incarceration, disregarding the subjectivities of women and their rights to religious freedom. Added to this is the harmful action of churches that sometimes turn rehabilitation into religious indoctrination, imposing fear, guilt, and conformity.

The reduction of the sentence

“Remição” is different from “remissão”, in Portuguese. Although both words exist in the Portuguese language, they have different meanings. They are homophones, but 'remição' refers to the redemption, payment; while 'remissão' carries the sense of forgiveness, absolution of sins. Therefore, we are not using any religious or spiritual connotation of sentence reduction, but rather referring to a legal right.

We conducted a search on academic papers (theses, dissertations, and monographs) addressing the topic of female incarceration from the perspective of sentence reduction (remição) through educational activities, and found few studies.

One of them was by Fabiane Coutinho from Fortaleza (Ceará). It is a study involving incarcerated women participating in Adult and Youth Education (Educação de Jovens e Adultos - EJA), where the author emphasizes the importance of reading:

The practice of reading becomes present from the moment a human being begins to understand the world in which they live. In the constant desire to decipher and interpret the meaning of things around them, to perceive the world from various perspectives, to relate fictional reality to lived experience, in the contact with a book, in all these cases, in a way, one is reading, although often without this conscious perception. In this sense, it is understood that reading shapes citizens with critical and selective thinking, seeking better learning and professional opportunities throughout life. (COUTINHO, 2012, p. 12).

Another monograph, by Izabel Farias, also from Fortaleza (Ceará), highlights reading as a tool for critical thinking:

Reading is the critical movement in the constitution of the text, as it is the privileged moment of the verbal interaction process: the moment when interlocutors, by identifying themselves as such, trigger the process of signification. (FARIAS, 2012, p. 12).

In common, the importance of reading in incarceration settings is evident. Reading, coupled with written expression, constitutes processes of liberation, as through these

practices, other places and forms of expression are reached, subjectivities are articulated, and multiple knowledges are developed. Therefore, we understand how the methodology of writing reviews and holding discussions could serve not only as a right fulfilled but also as a space for listening and support.

The work for sentence reduction through reading and writing at the Ana Maria do Couto May Penitentiary had its first phase between 2017 and 2019, when one of the authors of this article participated voluntarily in the commission for the production and evaluation of reviews—an experience that was published (MARQUES, 2020). During the years 2020, 2021, and most of 2022, the work of reading, analyzing, and producing reviews of literary works was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In October 2022, we resumed this work as a one-year extension project. The proposal constitutes a collective investment to reduce social inequalities and offer opportunities for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women to better reintegrate into society upon release, with an awareness of their rights, particularly through access to formative and educational processes that promote autonomy and contribute to reducing recidivism in the systems that condemn them (DINIZ; GEBARA, 2022).

The methodology incorporates the concept of "critical literacy," as proposed by Hilary Janks (2016), understood as a way to promote questioning of dominant discourses. Through the discussion of various works with incarcerated women, the aim is to build their intellectual autonomy while also obtaining sentence reduction, in accordance with Resolution 391/2021 (BRASIL, 2021) of the National Council of Justice (CNJ), Article 5:

[...] For the purpose of sentence reduction through reading, the person deprived of liberty will register the borrowing of a literary work from the unit's library collection, from which point they will have a period of 21 (twenty-one) to 30 (thirty) days to complete the reading. Within 10 (ten) days after this period, they must present a reading report on the work, according to a guide provided by the competent Judge or Validation Committee.

The methodological inspiration also came from Paulo Freire and his American interpreter bell hooks (2021), who propose the construction of a learning community and the development of critical thinking (hooks, 2020). Each person's knowledge is contextualized and must be respected to strengthen and expand it.

Many challenges need to be overcome for freedom through reading to be achieved. Broad access to libraries, or even their existence, is a fundamental step. Insufficient collections, the absence of a professional librarian or someone responsible for the library are

recurrent situations in both female and male prison units. It is imperative to guarantee free access to books to prevent statements like Lírio's from resonating: "In here, we start to forget even proper Portuguese." (26/10/2023).

In her doctoral thesis, Maria Luzinete Ribeiro (2017, p. 131) highlights, among other activities related to work and education: "the program of sentence reduction through reading also has low reach in Brazilian prisons, with approximately 1% of the country's prisoners participating in such projects." We believe that in recent years this percentage has increased slightly, but it remains low. Considering the low level of education in the prison environment, it is common to seek to complete Basic Education in the Youth and Adult Education (EJA) modality. However, educational activities should not be mutually exclusive but rather complementary. There should be a wide range of options: EJA, literature, courses, and physical/sports activities; however, generally, incarcerated individuals need to choose what to do based on what is available or offered.

Throughout our educational work, we started from the principle of education as a practice of and for freedom. We were not interested in knowing what crimes the women had committed; these narratives emerged spontaneously in the form of personal venting, a few expressed words, and even through absences. The stories we know about these women who were with us during this one-year project are those they told us. It was also a work of listening, trust, and credibility.

More than an extension project, it was a right they have – sentence reduction through reading – but which is sometimes understood, like other rights, merely as a restructuring of punishment, considering that a certain behavior and even a place in prison is required for them to deserve to participate in the project. Those housed in certain wings, such as the factioned ones, for example, are considered dangerous to coexist with others. Inside, they need authorization to participate in these educational actions. When they commit some insubordination, it is the deprivation of the right to study and access knowledge that is put on the scales of punishment.

Petúnia, one of the 27 women who participated in the sentence reduction project through reading, gives us a sense of how the work with literature helped her development and brought hope:

This project really helped me in developing my writing [...] the professors really help us, talking to us, they see us as human beings, and not like monsters like we are treated here. I want to thank you for not giving up on us, even in the face of difficulties. (26/10/2023).

In Petúnia's words, there is also resentment, gratitude, and dignity. Like Margarida, who is serving a fifteen-year sentence and found hope in literature: “These days redeemed by the reading project renewed my strength to keep going and not lose hope that soon I will return to my family.” (26/10/2023).

The way time is spent changes as well, creating anticipation, as Dália says: “Literature makes us anxious and counting the days until the next course.” (26/10/2023). Crisântemo, an imprisoned and retired teacher, states: “I remembered what I had forgotten and learned a lot from the readings, books I hadn't read before. I hope it continues next year.” (26/10/2023). Then there is Hibisco, who didn't read before and started to enjoy it.

At the National Forum on Prison Education and Social Integration (FNEPIS)¹⁰, held on November 9, 2023, the need to establish partnerships with State Education Departments and Higher Education Institutions was identified as a strategy to ensure the presence of teachers in prison units, in EJA, reading activities, and Physical Education. This strategy is part of the axis on Education, Human Rights, Inclusion, and Diversity – equity and social justice in guaranteeing the right to education for all people and combating different and new forms of inequality, discrimination, and violence.

Conclusions

This article is the result of reflections from a project organized by professors at the Federal University of Mato Grosso, Cuiabá campus, in collaboration with extension students. We aim to present some of the main concerns that were part of our daily routine throughout the execution of the project—from November 2022 to October 2023—a period during which biweekly meetings made us reflect on topics such as female incarceration and sentence reduction through reading.

In the first part of the text, we sought to highlight how gender issues are fundamental to understanding the reality of the women who participated in the project and who are deprived of freedom in the Ana Maria do Couto May Penitentiary in Cuiabá. This penitentiary is located across from the male facility, which is larger in territorial terms and in the number of people deprived of freedom. We agree with Davis (2018, p. 54) that “although men constitute the vast majority of prisoners in the world, important aspects of the operation of state punishment are overlooked when it is assumed that

¹⁰ Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ObgDlsaSbUs>.

women are marginal and therefore do not deserve attention.” The space occupied by the women who were the main focus of this text is less frequented by social projects and family visits. As discussed throughout this article, the female prison system is filled with religious entities that, most of the time, seek to emphasize that salvation for their bodies and minds is punishment as a form of redemption—sometimes hindering participation in educational activities—appearing to be in opposition.

Thus, we understand this project from a perspective contrary to religious conceptions. We do not punish and do not believe that the sense of punishment should be part of these women's lives; the State, along with other institutions, takes care of that. We believe that sentence reduction is a right and that, through the experiences shared in discussion circles, book readings, and the preparation of reviews, these women can once again feel like builders of their own stories.

It is a challenge to frequent the female prison space, not out of fear of the women deprived of freedom, but due to the amount of bureaucracy imposed by society, which not only fails to see them as subjects of rights but also seeks to insert them into a punitive order, without any possibility of “forgiveness” or leniency. The process of serving a sentence, including educational actions, needs to be embraced by all agents of a prison unit, including correctional officers and unit management, especially since we rely heavily on their goodwill.

Reading in the prison environment presents itself as a challenge, understood less within school routines and more as programs dependent on institutional partnerships that, in turn, do not yet guarantee continuity. Books should not be seen as material enemies: pages scribbled on or used to pass messages or be burned. They need to be considered allies, regardless of whether they have been scribbled on, marked, damaged, or even stolen from the library. We understand that all of this is a manifestation of interest in the book—it poses no risk, as argued by security agents. The most important thing is to be facilitators of reading. It is necessary to understand, as Maria Ribeiro (2017, p. 194) says, that:

[...] reading can significantly contribute to the resocialization process, impacting the modulatory and alienating prison routine of this individual, minimizing the effects of imprisonment, and allowing for the reformulation of their worldview.

We understand that there is still much to be done. However, we believe in the importance of social projects that create new possibilities, even in a hostile environment, and that assist in the fulfillment and demand of the State for the development of effective public policies.

Referências

- BORGES, J. *Encarceramento em massa*. São Paulo: Sueli Carneiro; Pólen, 2019.
- BRASIL. Conselho Nacional de Justiça. *Resolução n. 391/21, de 10 de maio de 2021*. <https://atos.cnj.jus.br/atos/detalhar/3918>. Acesso: 08 out. 2023.
- BRASIL. Dados Estatísticos do Sistema Penitenciário. *Relatório de Informações Penais*. 1º semestre de 2023. Disponível em: <https://www.gov.br/senappen/pt-br/servicos/sisdepen/relatorios/relipen/relipen-1-semester-de-2023.pdf>. Acesso: 28 nov. 2023.
- BRASIL. Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE). *Estatísticas Sociais*. 2021.
- BRASIL. *Lei n. 7210, de 11 de julho de 1984*. Institui a Lei de Execução Penal. https://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/l7210.htm. Acesso: 08 out. 2023.
- BRASIL. Lei Ordinária nº 11.343, de 23 de agosto de 2006. *D.O.U* de 24/08/2006, pág. nº 2
- CARVALHO, Salo. O encarceramento seletivo da juventude negra brasileira: a decisiva contribuição do poder judiciário. *Rev. Fac. Direito UFMG*, Belo Horizonte, n. 67, p. 623-652, jul./dez. 2015.
- CERNEKA, H. A. Homens que menstruam: considerações acerca do sistema prisional às especificidades da mulher. *Veredas do Direito*, Belo Horizonte, v. 6, n. 11, p. 61-78, 2009.
- COLLINS, P. H.; BILGE, S. *Interseccionalidade*. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2021.
- COUTINHO, F. A. *Dificuldades na leitura: um estudo com as detentas educandas do Iº segmento da educação de jovens e adultos no instituto penal feminino Des.ª Auri Moura Costa em Aquiraz/CE*. Monografia (Especialização em Educação de Jovens e Adultos). Faculdade de Educação, Universidade Federal do Ceará, Fortaleza, 2012.
- DAVIS, A. *Estarão as prisões obsoletas?* Rio de Janeiro: Difel, 2018.
- DAVIS, A.; DENT, G.; MEINERS, E. R.; RICHIE, B. E. *Abolicionismo*. Feminismo. Já. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2023.
- DINIZ, D.; GEBARA, I. *Esperança Feminista*. Rio de Janeiro: Rosa dos Ventos, 2022.
- FREIRE, P. *Educação como prática de liberdade*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1967.
- FARIAS, I. C. de. *A importância do ensino da leitura na vida cotidiana e na ressocialização dos educandos da Casa de Privação Provisória de Liberdade Professor José Jucá Neto*. Monografia (Especialização em Educação de Jovens e Adultos) – Faculdade de Educação, Universidade Federal do Ceará, Fortaleza, 2012.
- HOOKS, B. *Ensinando a transgredir: a educação como prática de liberdade*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2013.

HOOKS, B. *Ensinando pensamento crítico: sabedoria prática*. São Paulo: Elefante, 2020.

HOOKS, B. *Ensinando comunidade: uma pedagogia da esperança*. São Paulo: Elefante, 2021.

JANKS, H. Panorama sobre letramento crítico. In: CARBONIERI, D.; JESUS, D. M. de (org.). *Práticas de multiletramentos e letramento crítico: outros sentidos para a sala de aula de línguas*. Campinas: Pontes Editores, 2016. (Coleção Novas Perspectivas em Linguística Aplicada). v. 47.

MARQUES, A. M. Ler, escrever e libertar: experiências que promovem a diminuição de pena para mulheres privadas de liberdade em Mato Grosso. *Revista Tempo e Argumento*, Florianópolis, v. 12, n. 29, p. e0104, 2020.

MENDES, S. da R. Cenas da experiência histórica das mulheres: frente ao poder punitivo. In: MENDES, S. da R. *(Re)pensando a criminologia: reflexões sobre um novo paradigma desde a epistemologia feminista*. Brasília: [s. n.], 2012. cap. 3, p. 134.

NUNES, C. C.; MACEDO, J. P. Encarceramento Feminino: um Debate entre Criminologia e Perspectivas Feministas. *Psicologia: Ciência e Profissão*, v. 43, p. 1-15, 2023. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/pcp/a/kgknkmDyBCTFhBcF8TWPVwK/?lang=pt>. Acesso: 09 nov. 2023.

RIBEIRO, M. L. P. da C. *Uma teia de relações: o livro, a leitura e a prisão - um estudo sobre a remição de pena pela leitura em Penitenciárias Federais Brasileiras*. 2017. 240f. Tese (Doutorado em Literatura) – Instituto de Letras, Departamento de Teoria literária e literaturas, Universidade de Brasília, Brasília, 2017.

SILVA, E. M. N.; FROM, D. A. A influência da religião como forma de ressocialização no sistema prisional brasileiro. *Revista Vitrine*, Curitiba, v. 7, n. 1, p. 46-55, 2019. Disponível em: <https://www.unidombosco.edu.br/revistas/index.php/vitrine/article/view/82/89>. Acesso: 07 set. 2023.

VARGAS, L. Religiosidade: poder e sobrevivência na penitenciária feminina do Distrito Federal. *Debates do NER*, v.6, n.8, p.21-37, 2005. Disponível em: <https://seer.ufrgs.br/index.php/debatesdoner/article/view/2757/2027>. Acesso: 17 out. 2023.