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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Independence and rights

Alexandra Ozorio de Almeida | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Rape is one of the most violent and abject crimes we face. This type of aggression subjects the victim to a high level of stress that leaves psychological scars and can also cause physiological transformations.

A team at the Federal University of São Paulo (Unifesp) that also offers outpatient care researched the impact of sexual violence on women's bodies at a cellular level. Over half develop a specific type of PTSD characterized by light but long-lasting inflammation that programs their immune system to react to aggression.

In addition to understanding the nature of this trauma, the team investigates more effective ways to treat victims. Improving sleep quality is important to reduce stress symptoms and psychological suffering (*page 6*).

Sadly, the indigenous peoples of the Amazon have recently been in the public spotlight due to state neglect and illegal gold digging in their lands. The demarcation of their territory is guaranteed by Brazil's 1988 Constitution and has been a work in progress in recent decades.

Mapping the indigenous population in the Brazilian territory is an important prerequisite for land demarcation. The anthropologist Marta Maria Azevedo is a pioneer in indigenous demography. Her work contributed to the inclusion of questions on language and ethnicity in the national census conducted every ten years. In an interview for *Pesquisa FAPESP*, Azevedo estimates that 400 distinct indigenous peoples will be identified in the ongoing census (*page 12*).

September 7, 2022, marked the bicentennial anniversary of Brazil's independence from Portugal. Although 200 years have passed, new documents are still being discovered, data are being reanalyzed, and new perspectives are being elaborated upon. History is an ongoing process of reinterpretation; thus, our newsroom set out to discover what is new and interesting in this area of research. Published in August 2022, *Pesquisa FAPESP's* special jubilee edition provided an in-depth view of a complex historical moment essential for understanding Brazil today.

In this international edition, we selected the translated versions of three features published in the original Portuguese jubilee edition. These articles look at different themes, including ambitious proposals for universal public education that did not proceed due to a lack of funds (*page 58*). The lack of political rights did not stop women from participating in the process that led to independence and the internal wars waged after Brazil formally separated from Portugal (*page 62*). Although Brazil was the only Portuguese colony on the South American continent, connections to its Hispanic neighbors can be identified during the independence process, many of whom were also fighting for emancipation (*page 52*).

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