

Review of VCC-01

Beasts of Prey or Rational Animals? Private Governance in Brazil's Jogo do Bicho

After reading both the prospectus and the article, I must agree with the other reviewers that this article does not really fit an issue focusing on violence and capital accumulation. Though the *jogo do bicho*, or animal lottery, is a very important component of much of the graft and corruption that has existed in Brazil since the game's inception in the 19th century, it is only peripherally a cause of the violence. It also is not a part of the international criminal activity which the prospectus describes. Though the article has received good general reviews from other readers, most of the comments point out that the article might be reassigned to another issue. I agree. The article, though a bit superficial and descriptive of the structure of the apparatus of the *jogo do bicho*, nevertheless touches upon one of the most common forms of corruption that affects various levels of Brazilian society, and has a deep impact on the relations between ordinary citizens and cultural and political leaders. Everything, from local neighborhood fruit vendors to samba schools to electoral candidates, are affected by this informal lottery, which though widely decried by authorities as a criminal machine, is almost impossible to suppress given the widespread complicity between operators and public officials. Though the author does not go into enough specific details which exemplify many of the topics he outlines (for example, which political candidates and which *jogo do bicho* bosses have colluded – perhaps an indication of just how generalized this activity is) his explanation of the structure and ubiquity of this activity is important in understanding the complexity and extent of corruption and criminal networks in Brazil. Because of this, I think the article might be reassigned and published in the Brazil issue. For readers not familiar with the *jogo do bicho* and its impact on Brazilian politics this article may serve as a coherent and well-explained introduction.

It is written in (British) English, and there are minor grammatical problems that can be easily corrected. It should not be too difficult to edit. Also, though the actual article is 27 pages, the extensive bibliography (mostly made up of secondary sources) takes up another 19 pages! I wonder how much of this is necessary.

Though I believe the article should be published, I think it would be good to insert more specific examples (both historic and current) taken from newspapers and other media of how the *jogo do bicho* has and continues to affect politics and society. Right now the article is too academic. A little journalism might make it more effective.

Grade: A-

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