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Global Aspects of Sexual and Reproductive Health

Widespread discussion of sexual and reproductive health is a relatively recent development. Despite positive trends in the ways in which many people think about sexual health, the international organizations that determine the global health agenda often lag behind, leaving crucial problems unaddressed. That the World Health Organization did not decide to remove homosexuality from its International Classification of Diseases until 1990 is only one example of this gap between health needs and response.

Even today, despite more open discussion of personal sexuality, this discussion needs to be further expanded to include global topics of sexual and reproductive health. In Volume IV, issue I of *The Journal of Global Health*, we focus on the challenges of addressing critical issues of sexual and reproductive health within diverse social, economic and political contexts.

Sexual and reproductive health encompasses a breadth of issues which profoundly affect all people throughout their lifespan and which are closely linked to ideas concerning identity, human dignity and freedom—the freedom of diverse forms of sexual expression without fear of coercion, violence or discrimination, as well as the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide when, where and how to do so. Thus, any approach to sexual and reproductive health that effectively promotes both emotional and physical well-being requires openness to the needs of the people it aims to serve.

As *The Journal of Global Health* begins its fourth year of publication, we are proud to spotlight undergraduate voices within these discussions surrounding sexual and reproductive health. We hope that the issues raised here spark further dialogue concerning the implications and challenges of sexual well-being and the complex ways in which they manifest within our own communities as well as in global communities.

Kelsey Roberts
Editor-in-Chief



Esther Jung

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