

Preface

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SexPolitics: Reports from the Front Lines is a comparative study of the politics of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights in eight countries and two global institutions.

The work contained in *SexPolitics* has been developed under the auspices of Sexuality Policy Watch (SPW), a global forum composed of researchers and activists from a wide range of countries and regions of the world. Inspired by local and international initiatives, the SPW's mandate is twofold: to contribute to sexuality-related global policy debates through strategic policy-oriented research and analysis projects, and to promote more effective linkages between local, regional and global initiatives.

Over the past few decades, sexuality has become the focal point for political controversy and a key domain for social change. Issues such as protecting sexual freedoms and enhancing access to resources that promote sexual health are among the SPW's central concerns. The documents that are included in *SexPolitics* are based on research that has been carried out between 2004 and 2007 on sexuality and politics in Brazil, Egypt, India, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Turkey, Vietnam, the United Nations and the World Bank. These case studies

are framed, at the outset, by an introductory chapter on sexual rights policies across countries and cultures that seeks to describe some of the conceptual architecture as well as the collaborative process that was used in developing these studies, and at the end, by a cross-cutting analysis of the local and global politics of sex and reproduction that seeks to offer a preliminary analysis of at least some of the issues that emerge from a comparative reading of the diverse case studies included in this work.

Making these studies available to the general public is a key step toward sharing the wealth of knowledge generated by these analyses of sexuality and politics. Sexuality Policy Watch is releasing these findings in the format of an e-book in the hope of making them freely available to the widest possible range of concerned readers and audiences – and with the clear acknowledgment of the fact that the conditions prevailing with respect to sexuality and politics in the world and in the national settings described in this study are not just shifting rapidly but are also often threatening important gains in sexual and reproductive rights made in the last two decades. We hope that the information collected about major forces at play in the various sites investigated in this research, as well as the lessons learned from the experiences examined, may provide useful tools of analysis and inspiration for persons involved in sexual politics in many quarters of the world.

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