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Denmark and Segovich's (2012), Hyde's (2012), and Marecek's (2012) reflections on our article (Else-Quest & Grabe, 2012) further bolster the need for feminist psychology to investigate gender disparities in power. We offer a rejoinder that draws together the commonalities in our various perspectives by putting the study of structural power in a larger context. Echoing our call that "the political is personal," Denmark and Segovich suggest that it is critical to "reduce upward" and consider the importance of country and culture in the psychology of women. Collaborative relationships with the United Nations can be effective in this process. Like Hyde, we share a concern that analyses using macro-level gender equity indicators in psychology be planned and interpreted carefully; indeed, this concern motivated our writing. Moreover, we maintain that the investigation of macro-level inequities (i.e., broad structural factors) as critical to the understanding of women's psychological functioning is just one of many approaches that feminist researchers might employ. However, as with any approach, the research question should determine the method used. The question, in the example we put forth, is about identifying how structural patterns of domination and subjugation can impact women's well-being. This approach should not substitute for a culturally sensitive investigation or means by which a researcher might generate knowledge about any given culture. We are well advised by Marecek that if our aims as researchers are to generate a richer understanding of gender subjectivities and gender relations, we should design approaches that are culturally appropriate and conducted in partnership with the women for whom the work most readily applies.

Nevertheless, because of the inherent risks involved in using Western scholarship to influence women's lives on a global scale, we offer three primary considerations that may help guard against the potential for Western psychology to further legitimize structures of domination. The first consideration involves an analysis of the tensions between universal and culturally relativistic human rights, as a parallel to understanding the role of "universal" (i.e., Western) theories and scholarship. Many feminists argue, for example, that universal norms surrounding women's human rights, rather than culturally specific norms, can provide the theoretical

rationale for criticizing unjust social realities and advancing women's rights (e.g., Nussbaum, 2000). However, one could easily argue that holding standards of human rights based on Western definitions (or theories) is another example of colonial domination and an imposition on people who are capable of determining their own definitions of rights and justice (Phillips, 2002). In this example, a major consequence of conflating human rights (or theories) with Western values is that when universal categories (e.g., the right to live free of violence) are introduced by women who live and work locally within the country in question, these women are commonly accused of pandering to a Western political agenda (Nussbaum, 2000; Tripp, 2002). This reaction assumes that women are incapable of mobilizing around their own rights without Western influence; this is, of course, untrue and serves to discredit numerous movements organized around gendered justice across the globe. Furthermore, if our concern surrounds Western-based norms, it is problematic to suggest that commitment to enforcing women's rights and well-being emerges from the West when the United States has not passed the Equal Rights Amendment (proposed in 1923), nor ratified the United Nations' Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW; open for signature in 1980). What we witness instead is Western scholars writing about threats to women's well-being in the context of male domination with a focus on "international" phenomena (i.e., non-U.S.-based; Powell, 2005). This is reflected in the widely used examples of women's rights violations (e.g., veiling; female genital cutting; trafficked women for involuntary prostitution).

These examples also reflect how various countries or cultures are positioned in terms of their power in relation to the

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West. Specifically, Western countries (e.g., North American and European countries), whose status as harbingers of rights is seldom questioned, are comfortably positioned to discuss women's rights violations of countries from the Global South (e.g., Southeast Asian, Central and South American, and African countries) that are often dependent on development aid and intervention coming from the West. In this context, Western scholarship that focuses on women's issues creates a powerful dichotomy whereby the West evaluates women's well-being in the Rest of the world (Powell, 2005). The West/Rest dichotomy shields from scrutiny the cultural roots of gender inequality that are played out in women's lives. The construction of this dichotomy in Western scholarship limits a comprehensive large-scale structural analysis of what contributes to violations against women's psychological and physical health everywhere. Thus, we would like to advance the idea that psychological perspectives can assist in understanding women's well-being by shifting attention to the systemic or structural dimensions surrounding women's lives throughout the globe, where the West is no exception. As such, we see macro-level investigations using national indicators as one approach—of many—to shifting the current attention in the literature.

The second consideration for scholars to make is in asking how feminist psychologists in the West might collaborate with feminist scholars and activists outside of Western settings. "Third World" feminist scholars have suggested that in order to accelerate progress toward the gender equality proposed in CEDAW, it is necessary to embrace a culturally grounded and inclusive vision of rights and justice for women (Collins, Falcón, Lodhia, & Talcott, 2010; Fregoso & Bejarano, 2010). They suggest that, in order to improve strategies for social change, we should develop a critical consciousness and new vocabulary that include a discussion of power and dominance and that challenge unequal power relations between men and women. For example, although several theorists have traced gender-based violence to unequal relationships between women and men that are based on normalized ideologies of male dominance and female submission (Morash, Bui, & Santiago, 2000), violence against women within the United States has largely been discussed as a public *health* problem rather than as a violation of women's human *rights* (e.g., Heise, Raikes, Watts, & Zwi, 1994; Koss, 1990; Krantz, 2002). In contrast, scholars and activists throughout Latin America discuss violence against women as *femicidal violence*, a term intended to explicitly uncover the systemic nature of violence that is based on gendered power imbalances (Fregoso & Bejarano, 2010). From this perspective, violence against women is due to women's exclusion from power structures and is rooted in social, political, economic, and cultural inequalities. Viewing violence as a health issue (as is done in the United States) or as a domestic matter reinforces the political structures that perpetuate gender inequality and thus fails to recognize or guarantee the rights and well-being of women. In order to make progress on

these issues, the connection between gender inequalities in power and women's well-being needs to be investigated explicitly and globally. We see empirical investigations that generate national-level data as just one way to buttress the idea that inequities between women and men are linked to threats against women's well-being.

The third consideration surrounds how data from large-scale international studies might serve to support and facilitate the efforts of grassroots activists engaged in social change. Stemming from collaboration with grassroots activists outside the United States, Grabe learned of transnational feminism. Unlike international feminism, or the global sisterhood that fails to question the application of Western feminism to other parts of the world, transnational feminism favors a diversity of women's agency or feminisms. It focuses, in particular, on the reality that women bear a disproportionate burden of the economic and social dislocation that result from the neoliberal economic policies that characterize the global economy. Furthermore, because Third World feminists have suggested that women's experience in the Global South is inextricably linked to the systemic inequities of global power (e.g., colonialism, globalization; Lugones, 2010; Narayan, 1997; Sen & Grown, 1987), we offer the concept of *transnational intersectionality*. Intersectional approaches to the study of gender and power have made significant contributions in past decades by recognizing the multiple and simultaneous effects of ethnicity, class, and sexuality (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1995), although they are usually limited by a Western lens. Transnational intersectionality places importance on the intersections among gender, ethnicity, sexuality, economic exploitation, and other social hierarchies in the context of the empire-building or imperialist policies characterized by historical and emergent global capitalism. Thus, because understanding gender oppression at the intersection of other imbalances of power is increasingly imperative in a globalizing world, transnational feminist actors can and do make use of international data to advance local causes.

For example, in a collaborative project with social actors in the Autonomous Women's Movement of Nicaragua, Grabe (2012b) conducted oral history interviews¹ to contribute to a nuanced understanding of how intersections between gender, class, and socioeconomic positioning—within the context of an economically and politically globalized world—can uniquely drive a social movement aimed at challenging such social structures. Grabe interviewed 18 key female leaders and social activists engaged in various sectors of social change (e.g., grassroots organizers, labor organizers, health clinic workers, members of congress). The project examines how the women's movement challenges systemized social inequities that emerged from or became exaggerated by the structural readjustments of the global economy. Although the women interviewed unapologetically professed a lack of interest in international interventions and development, they keenly discussed strategies by which they could draw on international knowledge, treaties (e.g., CEDAW), and

research conducted by foreign investigators to support a movement aimed at challenging local social structures. The use of macro-level perspectives and large volumes of data within Third World women's movements has been described in detail elsewhere (e.g., Sen & Grown, 1987). In sum, research findings based on macro level—rather than focusing on individual differences or examples that have been sensationalized throughout academia and advocacy (e.g., genital cutting)—can bolster the efforts of grassroots activists who are creating local change.

For these reasons, there is great utility in developing and using macro-level indicators of power. We hope it is clear, however, that micro-level investigations of these processes would take a different approach. Namely, if the research question centers on a specified group of women, country, or culture, it can—and should be—common practice that researchers modify standardized measures for culturally normative expressions of the phenomenon under study. For example, in research Grabe conducted with Maasai women in Tanzania (Grabe, 2012a), physical discipline is widely practiced by husbands to “correct” mistakes made by their wives. This “correction” is often doled through the use of a walking stick or switch (i.e., njipijipu). As such, Grabe added this act to the battery of items on the Physical Violence subscale of the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS; Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996) so as not to overlook local forms of violence. Similarly, because hitting with a shoe may be intended to generate humiliation, as Marecek (2012) illustrates in Sri Lanka, the act could be added to the Psychological Violence subscale of the CTS intended to assess intimidation and humiliation. The larger message we wish to convey is that any given assessment requires a substantial amount of prior groundwork to be certain that there is a solid understanding of cultural or social expressions of the phenomenon under study, before an empirical investigation is conducted.

We would like to conclude by underscoring the idea that feminist theorizing can only be useful if it can provide criteria for change and modes of resistance that are not mere reflections of the situation and values of the theorizer (Lugones & Spelman, 1983). There are multiple methods available—among them, the careful use of macro-level gender equity indicators—that can move transnational feminist psychology forward and achieve this goal. Use of these methods needs to be attentive to transnational intersections and the particular social contexts from which women's experiences arise. As feminist scholars, we must ask ourselves this question: “When we speak, write, and publish our findings, who are we accountable to?” For us, our commitment is first and foremost to the women and girls with whom we work, whether in Nicaragua, Tanzania, California, or Philadelphia.

Note

1. The interviews are archived at the Global Feminisms Project, a collection of comparative case studies of women's activism and scholarship among women from China, India, Nicaragua, Poland, and the United States through the Institute for Research on

Women and Gender at the University of Michigan; <http://www.umich.edu/~glblfem/>.

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