

DOES THE GLOBAL NORTH STILL DOMINATE WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZING? A NETWORK ANALYSIS FROM 1978 TO 2008*

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Over the last century, women increasingly transcended national boundaries to exchange information, build solidarity, and bring change. Accounts suggest that as women's international presence expanded, the types of women who participated also shifted. During the first wave of women's movements, White Western women dominated, but over time women of the Global South increasingly organized themselves. Yet we do not know whether North-South inequalities in women's organizational membership have diminished. We collect longitudinal network data on 447 women's international nongovernmental organizations (WINGOs) and use visual tools and network measures to explore changes in the network structure from 1978 to 2008. Results suggest (1) WINGOs—while increasing in frequency—are not connecting to greater numbers of countries, (2) the North/South split in WINGO memberships does not change over time, (3) significant power differences between the North and South persist, and (4) substantial inequalities in WINGO memberships within the Global South also exist.

On my first day at the UN conference, I went to the caucus on the girl child. . . . Including sections on the girl child as a part of the Platform arose out of issues inspired, motivated, and driven by women from the Third World, especially African women and those from the Subcontinent. But who was running the first caucus on this issue? Europeans and Americans. It was frightening. With all due respect, all of us need all the sisterly support we can get, but I had to sit down and ponder how something that is primarily our issue ended up under the control of women from the West (Busia 1996: 208).

During the last century, women's international organizing has expanded dramatically. Women increasingly transcended national boundaries to exchange information and strategies, to build solidarity, and to affect change. Forming the backbone of these efforts, women's international nongovernmental organizations, or WINGOs, have grown in numbers and in reach (Berkovitch 1999b; Htun and Weldon 2012; Weldon 2006). From just a handful of associations in the late 1800s, WINGOs today number in the hundreds and they stretch to every corner of the globe (Berkovitch 1999a, 1999b; Paxton, Hughes, and Green 2006).

Women's international organizations influence both the international agenda (Berkovitch 1999b; Friedman 2003) and state gender outcomes (Htun and Weldon 2012; Ramirez, Soysal and Shanahan 1997; Towns 2010). Ties to WINGOs facilitate the diffusion of norms and standards of gender equality across countries (Berkovitch 1999b; Boyle, McMorris and Gómez 2002; Paxton, Hughes, and Green 2006; Ramirez, Soysal and Shanahan 1997; Swiss 2009, 2012; Towns 2010; True and Mintrom 2001; Weldon 2006). Transnational and regional networks of women's organizations also exert direct pressure on a variety of actors to promote social change on

* We gratefully acknowledge the support of the National Science Foundation (SES-1067218 and SES-0962034). We also thank Manisha Desai, Christine Williams; participants of the Workshop on Power, Resistance, and Social Change at the University of Pittsburgh; and editor Neal Caren and four anonymous reviewers at *Mobilization* for providing feedback on earlier drafts of this manuscript. Previous versions of this article were presented at the 2014 annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in Washington, DC, the 2013 European Conference on Politics and Gender in Barcelona, Spain, and the 2012 ISA Forum of Sociology in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

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women's behalf (Adams and Kang 2007; Ferree and Tripp 2006; Hughes, Krook, and Paxton 2015; Moghadam 2000, 2005; Naples and Desai 2002; Ricciutelli, Miles, and McFadden 2004; Tripp 2006; Wilson, Sengupta, and Evans 2006). The expansion of women's international organizing has transformed women's lives across the world.

Women's organizations are also sites of contestation. Women are far from a monolithic group: differences such as race, ethnicity, social class, and nationality form intersecting social hierarchies that affect women's power and shape their experiences, identities, and interests (Crenshaw 1991). As a result, the types of women who participate in women's organizations shape both organizational aims and strategies. Within and across organizations, differences among women may also fuel disagreements, stall activity, and splinter groups and movements (Kang 2011). In short, who participates matters.

Who has participated in WINGOs has changed over time (Antrobus 2004; Rupp 1997). During the first wave of women's organizing, White Western women dominated women's international organizations. As the second wave geared up, Western feminists maintained a privileged position within the movement as they sought to organize a "global sisterhood" and articulate a universal oppression on the basis of gender (Steans 2007). By the 1970s, however, women's organizations from the Global South began to play a larger role in the international women's movement, articulating distinct interests and issues (Berkovich 1999a). During the closing decades of the twentieth century, the four UN world conferences on women—and their accompanying NGO forums—demonstrated a growing influence of women from the Global South and further stimulated Southern women's organizing (Antrobus 2004; Desai 2005; Dutt 2000; Harcourt 2006; Joachim 2007). Several of the South-based transnational feminist networks (TFNs) emerged during this period and secured a visible and influential position in the international sphere (Helie-Lucas 1993; Moghadam 1996; Sen and Grown 1987).

Despite the increasing visibility and influence of Southern WINGOs, not all scholars are convinced that global inequities in women's international organizing are closing. Feminists from the Global South charge that international feminist networks based in Europe and North America retain privileged positions within the global feminist movement (Hawkesworth 2006; Mohanty 1991). Southern women remain embedded in local and national contexts that limit their participation and influence (Burgess 2011; Desai 2005). Consequently, Northern women may be better positioned than Southern women to create and distribute original research, generate media campaigns, and participate in the recurring diplomatic meetings that take place in Brussels, Geneva, New York, and Paris (Chisti 2002). Furthermore, the explosion of professionalized NGOs—groups that privilege activists with certain types of experience and expertise—may also give Northern women a leg up and advantage certain Southern actors over others (Alvarez 1999, 2000; Britton and Price 2014; Lang 1997). Overall, although Southern women may be active and visible at international conferences and forums, Northern women may retain organizational dominance.

In this article, we are interested in several questions related to power and inequality. Is growth in the numbers of WINGOs producing a denser and less hierarchical network of women's organizations and states, or do North/South splits in WINGO membership remain? As Southern women's organizing expands, are countries in the Global South beginning to occupy positions of power or influence in organizational networks? Or, in line with some Southern feminist critiques, do Northern countries retain positions of privilege? Is the membership network formed by Southern countries less hierarchical than the global network, or does the South exhibit its own patterns of inequality?

We investigate the answers to these questions using new, longitudinal data on 447 WINGOs founded between 1875 and 2008. We use social network analysis to evaluate the spread of WINGOs across a constant set of 124 countries between 1978 and 2008. We use network density to assess overall levels of connectivity in the WINGO network over time. We compare observed WINGO networks to hypothetical (ideal-typical) networks to assess changes in North-South divisions. We use measures of network centrality to look for positions of structural power and prestige in the network and to assess changes in the relative positions of

countries in the North and South over time. And, we employ visualization tools to map the structure of the network formed by women's international nongovernmental organizations and to display shifting patterns of inequality.

In the following sections, we provide a brief history of inequalities in women's international organizing. Then, we introduce our social network analysis approach and proceed with analysis. We close with a discussion of the implications of our findings for women's movements and women's rights around the world.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INEQUALITIES IN WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZING AND INFLUENCE

The international women's movement has struggled with issues of diversity, difference, and inclusion since its inception. During the late nineteenth century, small delegations of elite White women from Europe and North America came together in the earliest international meetings, rarely including women from other parts of the world. Groups such as the International Woman Suffrage Alliance did act to extend women's political rights outside of the West (Hannam, Auchterlonie, and Holden 2000). And during the early twentieth century, women organized a handful of international meetings in Southern cities, for example, the First International Feminist Congress in Buenos Aires (1910). But, "the flow of ideas and strategies was primarily from 'the West to the rest'" (Desai 2009: 33).

When the second wave of women's international organizing began to wage a broader fight for gender equality and women's empowerment, divides among women did not disappear. The 1970s and early 1980s provided numerous opportunities for women's organizations to come together to build coalitions across borders. The UN International Women's Year (1975), the Decade for Women (1975-1985), and the UN World Conferences for Women and parallel NGO Forums in Mexico City (1975) and Copenhagen (1980) provided occasions and spaces for North-South interactions. And, transnational feminist networks (TFNs)—groups generally recognized as being less structured, less hierarchical, and more inclusive than traditional women's international organizations—began forming for the first time (Desai 2009). Yet, women's efforts to forge transnational networks were often plagued by conflicts rooted in women's differences. Divides between women of the East and West and between women of the North and South derailed meetings and stalled action (Çağatay, Grown and Santiago 1986; Margolis 1993; Johnson-Odim 1991; Snyder 2006; Tinker and Jaquette 1987). Just as feminists struggled to articulate a "global sisterhood" grounded in women's common oppression (Morgan 1984), differences among them threatened to tear the movement apart.

The international women's movement did not crumble. Instead, the years surrounding the UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi (1985) marked a turning point in women's global organizing as Southern women founded their own organizations (Bunch and Carillo 1990; Desai 2005, 2009). Southern women, brought together by "analogous political cultural and economic conditions, shaped by shared colonial and neocolonial legacies" (Alvarez 2000: 33), founded organizations that focused on goals important to the South. In fact, of the WINGOs founded in the 1980s, more than half were headquartered in the South (Stephenson 1995). For example, two well-known and influential Southern women's organizations, Development Alternatives for a New Era (DAWN) and Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML), were founded during the mid-1980s (Moghadam 1996, 2005). Overall, scholars agree that Southern feminists have increasingly linked together through regional organizations, meetings, and networks (Alvarez 2000; Alvarez et al. 2003).

As the structural bases of Southern women's organizing expanded, so did their influence. Thinkers from the "Third World" contested "women" as a universal or common identity (Grewal and Kaplan 1994; Mohanty 1991). Southern feminists questioned the romanticized goal of a "global sisterhood" in favor of a "strategic sisterhood" that would link Southern

women and their interests together (Agarwal 1994: 9). At international conferences over the next decade, Southern activists successfully challenged Northern women's narrow conception of "women's issues" to include concerns such as economic development and colonialism and argued for the need to be "sensitive to differences arising from cultural, social, and global geopolitical locations" (Alvarez 2000; Basu 1995; Conway 2010: 152; Tinker and Jaquette 1987). Increasingly, women from the South were active at UN conferences, including on the environment (1992), human rights (1993), population and development (1994), and social development (1995) (Bunch and Fried 1996; Corrêa 1994; Desai 1999; Higer 1999). These successes culminated in the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and parallel NGO forum in Huairou in 1995. With more than 30,000 attendees from around the world, women's activism was not just international but *global* (Moghadam 1996). Diverse women were able to overcome barriers of difference to build coalitions and consensus, uniting behind a common framework of human rights (Chow 1996).¹

Nevertheless, this account—of women overcoming the challenges of transnational organizing to celebrate their differences, bridge North-South divides, and win influence in the global arena—is not without its challengers. Southern feminists point out that international women's organizations and networks based in Europe and North America retain positions of privilege within the movement (Chisti 2002). The sites of UN agencies and diplomatic meetings—places like Brussels, Geneva, New York, and, Paris—skew power toward women in the North (Chisti 2002; Hawkesworth 2006). Further, Northern women have the resources to go to meetings in other parts of the world (Chisti 2002; Estrada-Claudio 2010). For example, of the 30,000 attendees at the Beijing NGO forum, over twenty-five percent were from the U.S. alone, whereas only five percent of NGOs were from Latin America (Desai 2002; Waterman 2001). Although advances in transportation and communication have made international organizing easier (Joachim 2007), the ability to travel and to access the Internet can vary dramatically across countries. Consequently, Northern feminists sometimes end up speaking on behalf of Southern women, even in Southern venues (Busia 1996; Hawkesworth 2006).

Moreover, resource-rich Western INGOs have been shown to impose their agendas on women's groups elsewhere in the world without considering the issues and ideologies of a given locality (McMahon 2002; WICEJ 2000). As strongly stated by feminist Gayatri Spivak (1996: 2):

In fact, the North organizes a South. People going to these conferences may be struck by the global radical aura. But if you hang out at the other end, participating day-to-day in the (largely imposed) politics of how delegations and NGO groups are put together—in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka or Central Asia, say, to name only the places this writer knows—you would attest that what is left out is the poorest women of the South as self-conscious critical agents.

The NGOization process, with increasingly professionalized and formally organized NGOs, also contributes to ongoing global inequality (Alvarez 1999, 2000; Britton and Price 2014; Lang 1997). With NGOization, organizations with members who are more educated, have certain skill sets, and are able to position themselves as "experts" get more resources, giving rise to hierarchy among women's organizations (Alvarez 1999; Ewig 1999; Hemment 2007; Lang 1997; Murdock 2008; Naples 1998; Thayer 2010). As NGOization began to take hold during the 1990s, organizations in some countries were better positioned to formally affiliate with the UN and to compete for new resource flows. For example, Alvarez (2000: 48) recounts how the very notion of policy advocacy, "long considered a highly specialized skill among the Northern-based liberal NGO and INGO feminist lobbyists who perfected it, was foreign to most Latin American activists."² Overall, then, the rise of NGOization reinforced and even strengthened existing North-South inequalities in organizational memberships.

These same processes suggest we should be attentive not just to inequalities in organizing between the North and the South, but also to differences in women's international organizing within the South. Manisha Desai (2002, 2009) points out that the incorporation of Southern women into transnational networks may, in fact, be highly uneven. Some Southern countries are dominant, for example, Brazil, Peru, and Mexico in Latin America, India and the Philippines

in Asia, and South Africa, Kenya, Ghana in sub-Saharan Africa (Desai 2009). The use of international conferences and meetings as a method for organizing privileges educated, middle-class women with resources (Desai 2002). To the extent that women's organizing is middle-class, masses of women from the poorest countries may be left out of international organizing. Thus, even within Southern organizing, there may be inequalities as hierarchies reproduce to create new forms and patterns of inequality in memberships over time.

THE STRUCTURE OF WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL NETWORKS

We have suggested two narratives of the changing structure of women's international organizing: one highlighting the rise of the South and one stressing the continued dominance of the North. At present, however, researchers actually know very little about the structure of women's international organizing around the world. The largest study of the growth of women's international nongovernmental organizations (WINGOs) ends by 1985 (Berkovitch 1999a, 1999b), when most accounts suggest Southern women are just beginning to rise in influence.

How can we best evaluate the globalization of women's organizing and empirically investigate claims about persisting inequalities? One way is to conceptualize women's international organizations and the states in which they are located as a network. International organizations and their members—although organizing across national borders—are still tied to countries. Ties between organizations and countries are not evenly distributed worldwide. Some countries have just a handful of ties to women's international organizations, whereas other countries may be connected to more than a hundred distinct WINGOs. Scholarship has already acknowledged the importance of differential embeddedness by using the numbers of WINGOs in a country to predict various state outcomes related to gender (Boyle et al. 2002; Boyle, Kim, and Longhofer 2015; Bush 2011; Paxton, Hughes, and Green 2006; Ramirez, Soysal and Shanahan 1997; Swiss 2009, 2012; Towns 2010; True and Mintrom 2001). Here, we go further to argue that it is informative to consider both the overall structure of the network formed by WINGO connections to countries and also the structural position that countries occupy within that network.

Social network analysis is a relational approach, allowing us to explicitly measure which international organizations are connected to which countries and how strongly countries are connected to each other. Using these data, we are able to assess the overall connectedness of countries in the North and South. We ask: are countries in the Global South increasingly connected into the network created by women's international organizing—is a denser and more globalized network developing? Or do North / South splits in the network remain? Further, we ask: Despite overall changes in connectivity, does the Global North still dominate by holding positions of greater power in the network? Do we find evidence of inequality in WINGO memberships among countries within the South?

We do this both by presenting maps and statistics about the network, but also by using a measure of embeddedness that acknowledges that the center of the network is a more powerful position. That is, countries may occupy more powerful positions in transnational networks because of differences in the pattern of WINGO memberships. Our network analysis complements existing research on women's organizing through use of a different method. We take ideas from the transnational feminist literature and link them to particular network structures. Further, our analysis significantly expands the scope of countries, WINGOs, and time periods considered to document and understand change.

METHODOLOGY

To evaluate North-South inequalities in women's international organizing, we look at WINGOs founded between 1875 and 2008, and consider the countries tied to each WINGO.³ That means we have a set of data connecting specific WINGOs (Socialist International Women, International Federation of University Women) to specific countries (e.g., China, Sweden). We are interested in long-term structural change in the network, so we measure country membership every five years from 1978 to 2008.⁴

To collect the WINGO-country network data, we first needed to identify WINGOs. WINGOs are only a subset of all women's organizations—those with members in more than three countries that reported to the *Yearbook of International Organizations*. Similar to previous research on WINGOs and INGOs more broadly (Berkovitch 1999b; Hughes, Peterson, Harrison, and Paxton 2009), our primary source of data is the *Yearbook of International Organizations (YIO)*, published annually by the Union of International Associations (UIA).⁵ We began with Berkovitch (1999b), who used the *YIO* to compile a list of WINGOs founded between 1875 and 1985, and then supplemented and updated this list with our own search of both print volumes and the online edition of the *Yearbook*. We identified new WINGOs using the *YIO*'s subject index and by searching for organizations using terms such as “women” “women's” “feminist” etc. in their title or aims.⁶ We then collected country membership data on each identified WINGO every five years from 1978 to 2008. Data on country memberships came primarily from the print *YIO* volumes, supplemented with direct queries to the WINGOs themselves, paying particular attention to transnational feminist networks operating in the global South. Ultimately, we were able to identify 447 WINGOs, 292 of which exist and report membership data between 1978 and 2008.⁷

The *Yearbook* is not a perfect census of all international organizations. As with most data of this type, it is likely to systematically underreport certain types of groups, especially those that are small, have fewer resources, and existed for only a short time. However, the *Yearbook* should capture the most visible and influential organizations. Still, given our research questions, we must be particularly mindful of the extent to which Southern WINGOs might be more often missing from our data, especially over time. It is likely that advances in technology and efforts to improve data collection methods have improved the *Yearbook*'s coverage of Southern WINGOs in more recent years. This could advantage Southern groups in a longitudinal analysis. That is, we may be observing steeper growth in Southern WINGO memberships in our data than exists in reality.⁸

As in much cross-national research, we limit our sample to sovereign countries with a population over 1 million citizens in 2000. We also exclude countries not independent throughout our study period, resulting in a sample of 124 countries across the analysis. Thus, we exclude countries that were “born” between 1978 and 2008 (e.g., Namibia) or “died” between 1978 and 2008 (e.g., Serbia and Montenegro). Two exceptions are Russia and Germany, which we include as the USSR and West Germany through 1988 and as Russia and Germany beginning in 1993.⁹ Focusing on a constant sample of countries helps to isolate network changes that result from the expansion of women's international organizing, rather than changes resulting from variation in the geography of nation states.¹⁰

Although the number of countries is constant over time, WINGOs are entering and exiting the analysis. Consistent with the narrative of new organizational activity around the global conferences on women, most of the ecological change in the WINGO population is coming from organizational births.¹¹

Our social network analysis of women's international organizing involves the ties between WINGOs and countries. We generate two types of networks: (1) a binary network showing ties between each WINGO and its country members (a bipartite network) and (2) a weighted network showing the sum of country-to-country connections through WINGOs (an affiliation network) (Borgatti and Everett 1997; Breiger 1974; McPherson 1982; Wasserman, Faust, and Iacobucci 1994). In the affiliation networks, if individuals in countries A and B both belong to organization 1, those countries are considered connected through their shared membership (Hughes et al. 2009). The weighted affiliation network captures the reality that some countries share more WINGO ties

than others, making for a stronger network tie (often depicted in visualizations as a darker or thicker line).

There are several quantitative summary statistics that can aid us in measuring network properties, country positions within WINGO networks, and documenting change in the network. One measure of network structure is density. Network density is a measure of connectedness, calculated as the percentage of all possible connections in a network that are observed. As Beckfield (2010: 1033) explains, "It is important to note that network density (or relative density) differs from population density (or absolute density) in that network density measures the realization of possible ties, not the volume of possible ties itself. . . . This distinction is akin to that between an increase in the population of a given neighborhood—and thus an increase in the potential for interaction—and the actual realization of ties among people in that neighborhood." It is without question that the number of connections between WINGOs and states has increased over time in an absolute sense as numbers of WINGOs have grown. However, we are interested in whether or not existing WINGOs and new organizations being founded are universalizing.¹² That is, we consider whether or not WINGOs are connecting a greater number of countries over time. We present two measures of density, one calculated on the binary bipartite network and one calculated on the weighted affiliation network.

Another method is to compare observed networks to hypothetical (ideal-typical) networks. We create a hypothetical network in which the Global North and Global South retain all internal connections but connections between the North and South are removed. This hypothetical network mimics a possible world with a complete North/South divide. We calculate the correlation between the observed and hypothetical networks using the Quadratic Assignment Procedure (QAP) as implemented in *R*.

To assess the question of continued Northern dominance in the network, we measure the position of countries within the WINGO network using network centrality, generally understood to indicate a "network position-conferred advantage" (Cook and Whitmeyer 1992: 120). Eigenvectors, also called prestige scores, describe the extent to which countries are connected to other highly-connected countries.¹³ Use of centrality scores allows us to distinguish countries occupying positions of power (hubs or bridges) from countries occupying less powerful structural positions in the network (Wasserman, Faust, and Iacobucci 1994). Central states have a great deal of social power that influences the exchange of information, support, and authority (Haefner-Burton and Montgomery 2006; Ingram, Robinson and Busch 2005).

Finally, to visualize networks we use the drawing program Pajek, which employs a valued affiliation matrix to arrange the countries in two-dimensional space (Batagelj and Mrvar 1997). In those figures, each country is represented by a circle, or node, and common WINGO ties are represented by the connecting lines. To create the figures, we use the Kamada-Kawai algorithm, which pulls countries with more common ties together and pushes the least-connected countries to the periphery. One limitation of network visualizations is that, as the size of networks grow, the specifics of the network diagrams become more difficult to view in their entirety. Therefore, rather than show the full network of 124 countries, we take different slices of the full network.

Expected Changes in Network Measures

The theories discussed have different structural implications, and therefore predict different patterns of change in density, network correlations, and centrality. If the North and the South are becoming more connected, then we should see increasing density over time and significant declines over time in the correlation between the real network of ties and a hypothetical network in which the Global North and Global South are completely divided. If the Global North and South remain disconnected, then we should see steady or decreasing density over time and steady or increasing correlations between the observed network of ties and the hypothetical completely divided network. In addition, if the Global South has risen in prominence and importance through its forged solidarities, then we should see increasing similarity in the dis-

Table 1. Linking Theoretical Expectations to Network Measures

| Expectation for: | Network Density | Network Correlations (Observed vs. Hypothetical) | Eigenvector Centrality (Similarity in Scores) |
|--|----------------------|---|--|
| Appears Where? | Figure 3 | | Figure 4; Table 2 |
| Questions: | | | |
| <i>Is the Global South increasingly connected to WINGO networks?</i> | | | |
| Yes, North and South increasingly connected | Increasing | Decreasing | |
| No, persistent North-South divides | Steady or Decreasing | Steady or Increasing | |
| <i>Does the Global North retain dominance in the network?</i> | | | |
| Yes, persistent Northern dominance | | | No Change |
| No, greater North-South equality | | | Increasing |

tribution of eigenvector centrality scores across the countries of the North and South. But if the North retains its dominance, there should be little change in the distribution of power as measured by eigenvector centrality scores. These expectations are summarized in table 1.

RESULTS

The growth in WINGOs over our study period is shown in figure 1.¹⁴ WINGOs have grown significantly over the period in question, from around 140 in 1978 to over 350 in 2008. And WINGOs do connect the world in a dense web of ties. Figure 2 is a map of the network structure overlaid on geography in 2008 where darker lines indicate increasing number of connections between states relative to other connections. Although Europe is the densest region and most central in the overall network, many connections across the Global North and South, and within the Global South are also apparent. Figures 1 and 2 show a world of increasing WINGO connections and a dense web of connections across countries created by those globe. By 2008, women's international organizations had stretched to all corners of the globe.

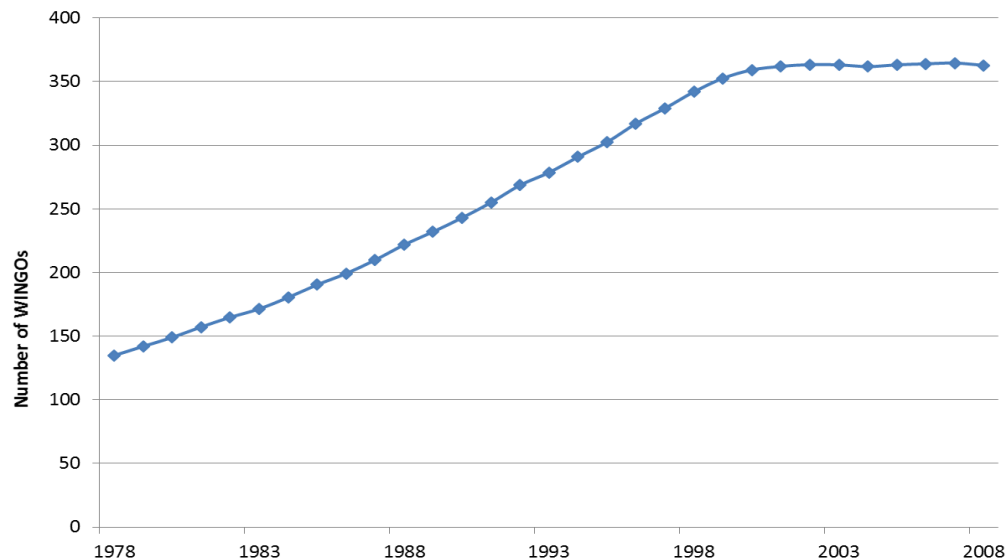
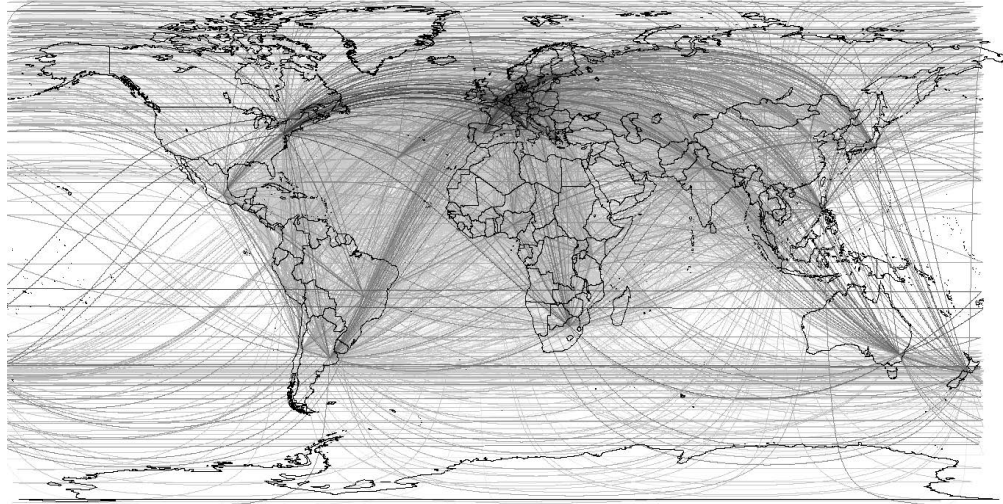
Figure 1. Cumulative Growth of WINGOs, 1978-2008

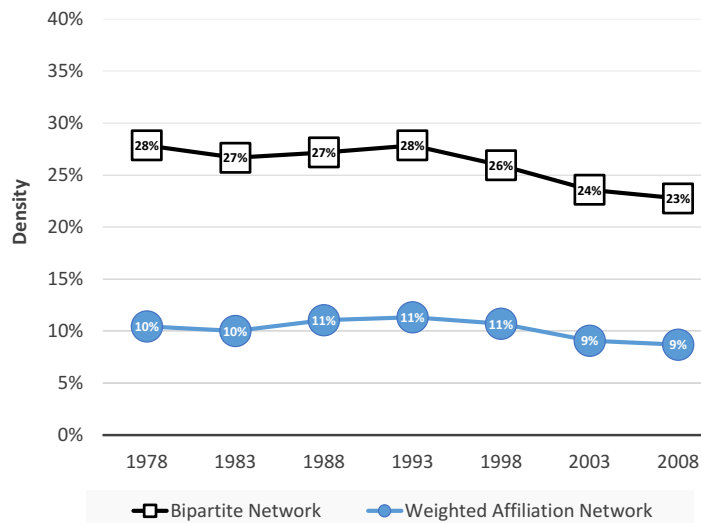
Figure 2. Country-to-Country Network through WINGO Memberships in 124 Countries, 2008



Structural Change Over Time—Density and Correlations with Hypothetical Networks

Network analysis allows us to dig deeper, beyond these fairly simplistic representations of WINGOs and their country ties, to ask about divisions in the network or inequality in the network. As discussed above, network density—a measure of connectivity in the overall network over time—allows us to assess whether WINGOs are producing a denser network over time and whether the network is integrating (increasing density) or replicating prior levels of connectedness (no change in density). Figure 3 presents global network density for all WINGOs and countries for each of our seven time points. We observe only 10.4% of all possible connections in the network in 1978. Across the fifteen years, the density of the INGO network increased slightly, peaking at 11.3% connectedness in 1993. But we do not continue to see evidence of gains. Instead, from 1993 to 2008, we observe a decline in network density. In 2008, only 8.7% of all possible ties are observed.¹⁵ Whether calculated as affiliation or bipartite network density, the pattern is the same.

Figure 3. Global Density of WINGO Affiliation Network, 1978-2008



The overall picture is one of stability—global network density hardly changed over the thirty-year period. The new WINGOs founded over time did not increase or decrease overall ties between countries. There is no evidence of increasing integration. In fact, there is some evidence that organizations founded from the late 1990s into the 2000s were less globally inclusive than in the previous decade. The results suggest that sometime in the early 1990s, the slight trend toward universalization observed early in the period halted and began to reverse. This numerical trend is consistent with the narrative story of changes in women's international organizing over time, which moved for a short time towards a global sisterhood before Southern women began forming their own groups.

We can test North/South divisions by comparing our observed network ties to a hypothetical network where the Global North and Global South retain all internal connections but connections between the North and South are removed (a complete North / South divide). The correlation between the network we observe and the hypothetical network declines slightly 1978 to 2008. In 1978 the correlation is .62. This drops slightly to .60 in 1988, to .58 in 1998, and finally to .57 in 2008. The total decline in the correlation of our observed network to a network with a complete North / South division therefore declines by approximately .05. These results suggest only a slight decrease in the extent to which we can claim the network is split along North / South lines. But ultimately there has been very little change over the thirty-year period.

Position, Power and Network Centrality

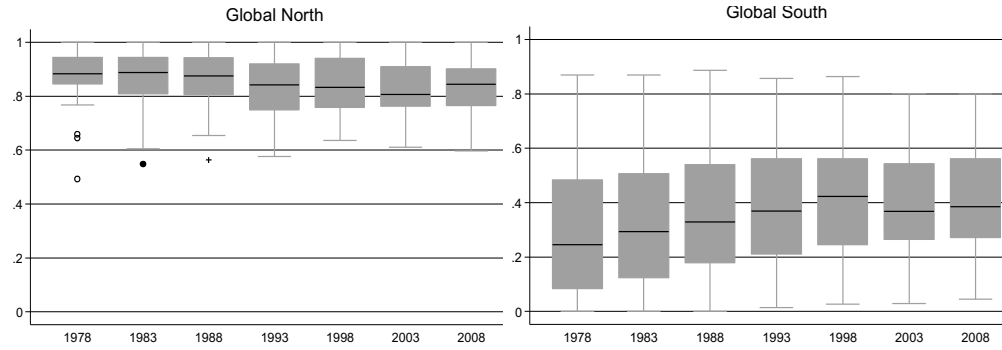
Whatever the structure of raw WINGO links between countries in the Global North and Global South, a fundamental question about inequality remains. The Global North may retain positions of dominance in the global network. Simultaneously, inequality in memberships among the countries of the Global South may persist or strengthen. Therefore, this section considers global inequalities in women's international organizational memberships. For this we use eigenvector centrality scores that allow distinctions between countries occupying positions of power (hubs or bridges) from countries occupying less powerful structural positions in the network.

Figure 4 presents variation over time in eigenvector centrality through boxplots, including one set of boxplots for the Global North and another set for the Global South. Clear differences across North and South are immediately apparent. To begin, the Global North shows consistently high levels of eigenvector centrality over the entire period, with a mean score ranging from .86 in 1978 to .84 in 2008. The variation in centrality scores in the Global North is also fairly stable with countries of the Global North generally not falling below .6 in any year (the exception is Portugal in 1978 and 1983).

In contrast, 75 percent of all country eigenvector centrality scores in the Global South are below .6 in every year. Although a few countries have achieved high centrality scores, pulling the whiskers of the boxplot above .8, average values for the Global South hover around .4 throughout the period. The Global South does show some evidence of slightly increasing integration into the network, with an increase in its mean score from .21 to .35, and with decreasing variation around those scores. But, countries of the Global South rarely achieve levels of centrality and power in the network that almost all countries in the Global North enjoy.

Another way to demonstrate persistent power differentials is to track countries in the top and bottom of the power distribution over time. Table 2 presents the top ten and bottom ten countries in the eigenvector centrality score distribution in 1978 and 2008. Looking first at the top countries, we see that all are in the Global North and that there has been remarkably little change over time. Nine countries appear in both years, with Australia moving out of the top ten over the period and Sweden taking its place. The very top of the distribution changed, with the United Kingdom holding the top position in the centrality distribution in 1978 and Germany in 2008. But their scores in other years (.98 and .96) still place them among the very top countries in terms of power and influence in the network. Overall, the pattern in the Global North is one of strong consolidation around high centrality scores.

Figure 4. Eigenvector Centrality Scores by Global North or Global South over Time

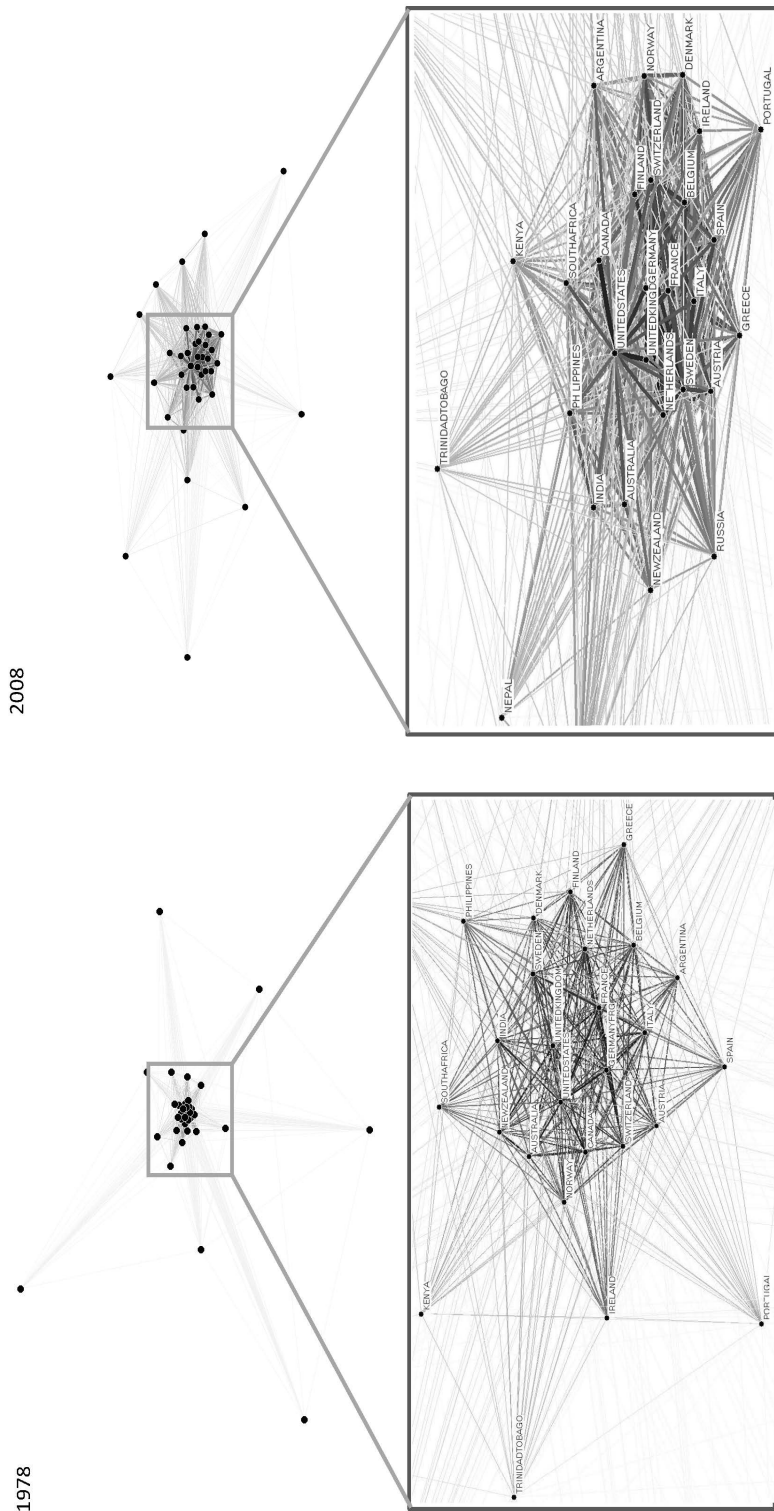


The bottom ten countries in contrast are all pulled from the Global South. Five countries—Oman, Chad, Libya, Guinea-Bissau, and Bhutan—are among the bottom ten in both 1978 and 2008. Other countries either switch out (e.g., Mongolia) or switch in (e.g., Gabon). But the bottom ten in each year is composed of countries only from the Global South. Table 2 below and figure 5 on the following page together display strong evidence of persistent power inequalities between the Global South and North.

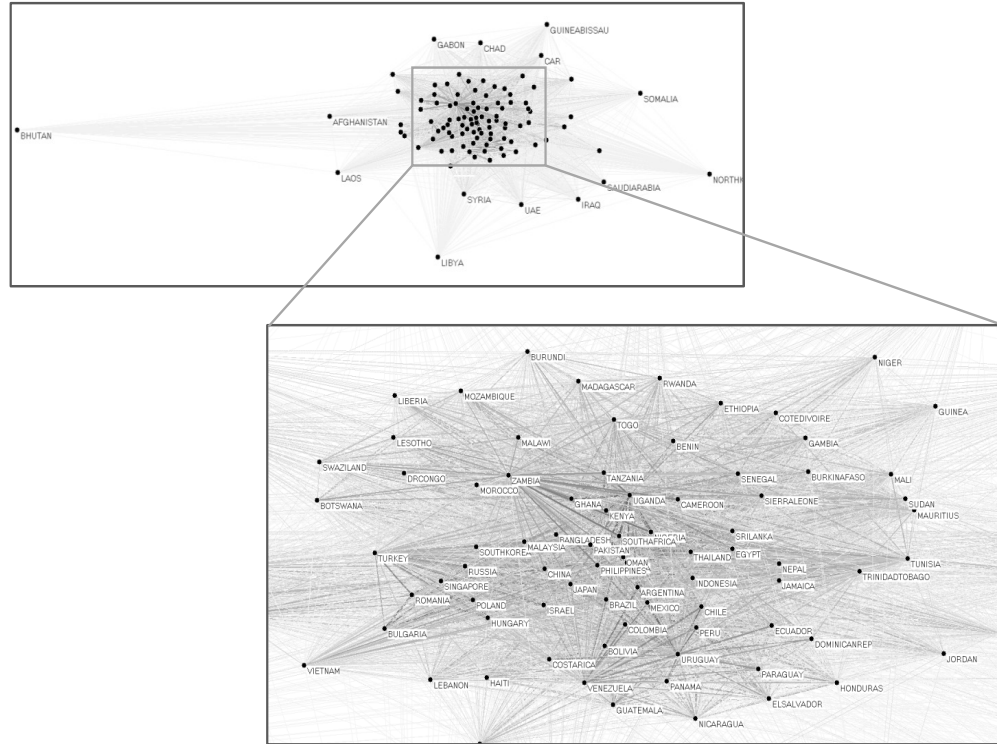
Table 2. Top and Bottom 10 Countries in EV Scores in 1978 and 2008

| | 1978 | 2008 |
|-------------------------|------|------|
| <i>Top Countries</i> | | |
| United Kingdom | 1.00 | .98 |
| France | .98 | .97 |
| United States | .97 | .94 |
| Germany | .96 | 1.00 |
| Canada | .95 | .85 |
| Australia | .93 | |
| Switzerland | .91 | .86 |
| Netherlands | .91 | .91 |
| Italy | .89 | .89 |
| Belgium | .87 | .88 |
| Sweden | | .88 |
| <i>Bottom Countries</i> | | |
| Saudi Arabia | | .13 |
| Iraq | | .13 |
| Laos | | .11 |
| Gabon | | .10 |
| North Korea | | .07 |
| Mongolia | .04 | |
| Oman | .04 | .06 |
| Chad | .04 | .13 |
| Libya | .04 | .07 |
| Mauritania | .04 | |
| Guinea-Bissau | .02 | .09 |
| Afghanistan | .00 | |
| Bhutan | .00 | .04 |
| Guinea | .00 | |
| UAE | .00 | |

Figure 5. WINGO Network Ties between 20 Countries in the Global North and 20 Randomly Selected Countries from the Global South over Two Time Periods, 1978 and 2008



Note: The figure shows network ties, created by WINGOs, for all 20 countries from the Global North and a random sample of 20 countries from the Global South in two time periods—1978 and 2008. The overall network for each time point is at the top, with the center popped out below. Darker and thicker lines connecting countries indicates more WINGO connections. Despite some indications that the network flattens over time, as the distance between countries in the center of the network and the outermost countries closes slightly, inequality between the Global North and Global South is still evident, with the North at the center and the South at the periphery.

Figure 7. WINGO Network Ties Between Countries in the Global South Only, 2008

Note: The figure shows network ties, created by WINGOs, for countries from the Global South only in 2008. The overall network is at the top, with the center popped out below. Darker and thicker lines connecting countries indicate more WINGO connections. The star pattern of the South-South network suggests inequality within the Global South.

observed in figure 5. We see a flatter and more densely connected network. However, we can still see evidence of inequality. Countries in the Global North such as Germany, France, and the United Kingdom occupy a more central position in the network (the area in the center-right section with the thickest and darkest lines) than countries in the Global South such as Brazil, the Philippines, and Nigeria (located in the center-left of the network). Even when we look at the most connected countries in the South, the North appears to occupy a more powerful position in the network. Finally, figure 7 presents the entire Global South within its own network in 2008. What is interesting here is that even when we take the Global North out of the picture entirely, we still see evidence of stark inequalities. Although the core is not as dense and tightly interconnected in the South as in the North, this final network has a structure that is not unlike the star patterns we observed in figure 5. Countries such as Brazil, Ghana, the Philippines, and South Africa occupy central positions; countries like Jordan, Niger, and Vietnam are farther from the center of the network; and countries such as Bhutan, North Korea, and Saudi Arabia occupy the periphery. Overall, we see substantial South-South inequality through WINGO memberships.

Although we see substantial evidence of inequality within the Global South in 2008, we see a slightly rosier picture when we look across time: inequality in WINGO connections across the South has decreased. Referring back to boxplots for the Global South in figure 4, we see that variation in the centrality scores of Southern countries declines between 1978 and 2008. Moreover, the median centrality score in the South is on the rise, and the least connected Southern countries in 2008 are not as peripheral to the network as they were in 1978. Overall, despite evidence of substantial North-South and South-South inequality, we do find evidence of increasing integration and decreasing inequality within the South.

CONCLUSION

Measured by movement size, geographic reach, and impact at both global and local levels, the international women's movement ranks among the most successful of all social movements (Basu 2000). One reason for this success is the movement's ability to universalize its claims—to turn “women's rights” into “human rights”—while still recognizing differences and inequalities among women. Organizers and activists have become increasingly aware of the importance of including voices of women from diverse social backgrounds and attending to the ways that gender intersects with, for example, race, ethnicity, class, and nation. Southern feminists have also articulated the need for their own spaces and organizations, places where they are able to “assume leadership, demonstrate their competences, and set their own agendas” (Hawkesworth 2006: 127-130). Especially since the 1980s, Southern women have founded such groups, forging strategic links between local activists, uniting around their shared concerns.

Taking the increasing attention to women's difference and growing numbers of Southern women's organizations as given, we still did not know how these changes impacted the global structure of women's international organizing. We laid out two distinct possibilities. On the one hand, Southern countries could occupy more prominent positions in networks of WINGOs over time. On the other hand, significant North-South inequalities could remain. Northern women may be better positioned to attend international meetings, regardless of where they take place. Further, as a consequence of NGOization, many women's international organizations have also professionalized, fueling organizational practices that privilege those with certain forms of education, experience, resources, and expertise. Consequently, Southern women's participation in WINGOs remains highly uneven, leaving Northern women organizationally dominant.

In this study, we find little evidence of greater inclusion and instead strong evidence of persisting inequalities in women's international organizing. First, rising numbers of WINGOs have not created a denser, more interconnected, global network. And, the correlation between the observed world network and a hypothetical network without any North-South ties did not significantly change over the period. Thus, WINGOs have not bridged North / South divides at a significantly greater rate than in times past. Second, we look at power in the world system and find that the most central actors in women's international organizing have not changed. Network analysis shows that countries in the Global North remain the most central and powerful in the network across the entire 1978-2008 period. It is rare for countries of the Global South to reach levels of centrality equal to those of the Global North. Increasing numbers of WINGOs have not produced North-South equality.

Structural position within social networks matters. Having ties to countries (through joint membership in WINGOs) that are more embedded in the network moves a country toward the center of the network, and likely closer to sites of both diffusion and influence. As a consequence, Northern women may be better positioned than Southern women not just to participate in the international women's movement, but to influence its direction and discourse. Overall, although Southern women may be active and visible in international fora, Northern women's organizational dominance remains unchallenged by the growing numbers of Southern women's international organizations.

The differences between the Global North and Global South that we document may stem from other global inequalities. In particular, future research needs to understand how other drivers of structural inequality in the world system, such as economic inequality and the uneven penetration of democracy, may fragment global feminism by maintaining and/or deepening the structural advantages enjoyed by women from richer democratic countries. For instance, some countries in the Global South restrict or police their citizens' formation of and participation in civil society organizations and acceptance of foreign funds (Burgess 2011); such practices may hinder Southern women's participation in WINGOs, contributing to structural inequalities in women's organizational memberships.

Professionalization of NGOs and inequalities across women in their ability gain advantage in a professionalized environment is one proposed mechanism by which economic inequalities could translate to inequalities within global feminism (Alvarez 1999, 2000). In many Southern countries, women face practical difficulties—limited time, skills, technology, and resources—that limit their participation in formal organizations and their ability to compete for international funds. To better understand this mechanism, future research could distinguish the WINGO network by indicators of professionalization, for example, consultative status at the UN.

Conversely, these findings oblige researchers to acknowledge inequalities in the WINGO network when using WINGOs to predict gender-related outcomes such as women's representation (Paxton et al. 2006), gender quotas (Bush 2011; Hughes et al 2015), gender main-streaming bureaus (True and Mintrom 2001) or abortion policies (Boyle et al. 2015). The literature typically treats WINGOs as uniform and only rarely acknowledges diversity.¹⁶ An important and potentially fruitful area for future research would be to distinguish among WINGOs to determine whether those that adopt a more intersectional approach to inequality (*e.g.*, gender and ethnicity or gender and class) are better able to overcome inequalities, demonstrate a divergent network pattern, and ultimately more easily promote positive outcomes for all women.

Removing the Global North from consideration does not remove inequality. An analysis of the Global South alone suggests significant inequality in memberships as well. As suggested by Manisha Desai (2009), the incorporation of Southern countries into international women's networks has reproduced existing hierarchies and even created new patterns of inequality. Across the entire period, we observe that WINGOs repeatedly connect to just a subset of Southern power players, creating more privileged positions for women in some Southern countries, while leaving out women in other parts of the South. Countries like Argentina, Brazil, Ghana, India, Kenya, the Philippines, and South Africa occupy more central positions than other Southern countries.

Of course, our analysis is just one way of capturing relationships between organizations and women embedded in different parts of the globe. Women from the South may play particularly prominent roles in some organizations, either as members or leaders, even in WINGOs that connect countries mainly in the North. Our data do not allow us to capture within-organization power differentials between Northern and Southern women. Neither do we have data on the vision of the WINGOs and whether they are committed to transnational solidarities. The power of the global feminist movement cannot be reduced to the number of women's organizations in existence in a given year, or even to the number of women participating from different countries. Even when WINGOs based in the South were just coming into existence, Southern women were able to influence the movement through the force of their ideas and their efforts. But, when we do focus on the global structure of women's international organizations, we find that Northern countries maintain central, privileged, and powerful positions. We should not ignore these inequalities.¹⁷

Unevenness in Southern connections to WINGOs may, at least in part, reflect a critical stance of some Southern feminists on NGOs as a tool for change. For example, Spivak (1996) has criticized feminists engaged in NGOs as the "handmaidens of global capitalism" (Wilson 2007: 20). Some Southern feminists may be choosing not to engage in WINGOs, instead preferring more localized and informal activism. However, participation in more formal organizations that align with the IGO system has benefits. As Alvarez (2000: 56) recounts about feminists in Latin America, "local activists who have learned to navigate in IGO-advocacy circles, by virtue of their international experience or recognition, often have gained greater access to national microphones and become the privileged interlocutors of domestic policymakers and international donors." Overall, NGOization "has enabled, but also profoundly constrained, critical transnational feminist projects" (Wilson 2008: 11).

Although South-South network structure is highly unequal and hierarchical, we do see evidence of declining inequality within the South over time. In particular, between 1978 and 2008, the gap between the most and least central countries in the South declined. Research suggests that international organizers have been taking steps—for example, setting targets for participation

levels from different regions and strategically using grants and subsidies—to better incorporate Southern women and limit dominance by women in the North (Estrada-Claudio 2010). If such techniques proliferate and declines in inequality within the South continue, women in the Global South may be in a better strategic position to influence the global feminist movement in the future. And given the great diversity of cultures, traditions, and perspectives in the South, broader incorporation of Southern women only stands to strengthen the movement.

NOTES

¹ Beijing was the peak of women's organizing through U.N. global conferences. In the years before Beijing, women began to face a more organized opposition from conservative, traditional, and fundamentalist organizations and governments (Pettman 2005; Slatter 2001; West 1999). By 2000 at the Beijing+5 Review, the momentum for change had dwindled (Parisi 2011; Pettman 2005). Organizations, including Southern feminist WINGOs like DAWN, expressed they no longer had faith that conferences attached to intergovernmental organizations like the U.N. provided the best avenue for pushing for global change (Pettman 2005; Slatter 2001). Some transnational feminist organizations began to operate outside of UN and other IGO-centered conferences in new spaces such as the World Social Forums (Conway 2010; Diaz Alba 2010).

² Reactions to NGOization vary by region, by country, and by individual (Jaquette 2003; Liu 2006; Wilson 2007). For example, Liu (2006) explains how Chinese feminists embraced NGOization while Indian feminists resisted it.

³ Members of WINGOs are individuals. Across WINGOs, the number of individual members varies. Some organizations have just a few members in each country, whereas other organizations report millions of members. Although it would be useful to have more detailed member information for WINGOs, this information is not available from the Union of International Associations (UIA).

⁴ We begin our analysis in 1978 after the beginning of the second wave of the international women's movement and coinciding with a sharp uptick in women's international organizing (Berkovitch 1999b).

⁵ See Boli and Thomas 1997, 1999 for details on the UIA.

⁶ This means we do not have data on INGOs that could be perceived as committed to causes of interest to women such as development or land rights that did not self-identify as women's organizations.

⁷ Many organizations that report no members between 1978 and 2008 dissolved or became inactive before our study period began. In 1978, fifteen percent of all WINGOs that could plausibly appear in the data (their founding year preceded the yearbook year) are reported as dissolved or inactive in the yearbooks. Additional dissolved organizations had been dropped from the yearbooks altogether and thus are unlisted in the years we analyzed. Of the 155 WINGOs that have no country memberships between 1978 and 2008, 53 percent were known to be inactive/dissolved per the YIO database (2012).

⁸ To investigate this intuition, we flagged all groups in our data with names linking them to the global South (for example, the Pan African Women's Organization, Asian Church Women's Conference, and Latin American Women's Network to Transform the Economy). Indeed, we find that the share of these groups that were unlisted or lacked reported membership data in the *Yearbook* dropped by ten percent between 1978 and 2008.

⁹ We opted to include USSR/Russia and West Germany/Germany because of their strategic importance in the world system. Changing this decision does not substantially alter our findings.

¹⁰ Because the WINGO network is fully relational, the network and quantitative measures of the network vary depending on which countries are included in the network. In other words, a single country's position in the network is affected by every other country in the network. In auxiliary analyses, we include all countries independent at each time point; these results are available from the authors upon request.

¹¹ WINGO deaths are not particularly common in the data. Indeed, 82 percent of WINGOs present in the 1978 network are still in the network in 2008.

¹² New WINGOs do not necessarily start out with members in a few countries. Auxiliary analysis shows that WINGOs entering the networks average between twenty and thirty country memberships in each of our time points until 2008.

¹³ We use the Bonacich (1987) eigenvector measure of network centrality, both appropriate for weighted matrices such as ours and also consistent with previous efforts to capture an actor's position in affiliation networks (Cornwell and Harrison 2004). The network country-scores are normalized so that the most highly connected country has a value of 1.0 in each time point.

¹⁴ Figure 2 presents the cumulative growth of WINGOs minus known organizational deaths. Because we collect data only every five years (and thus learn about organizational deaths intermittently), we present a five-year moving average to smooth the curve.

¹⁵ To put these numbers in context, consider a counterfactual: if all new organizations founded after 1978 had universal membership (i.e., they were connected to all countries), density would increase precipitously, reaching 89 percent in 2008.

¹⁶ For exceptions see Boyle et al. 2015 or Hughes et al. 2015.

¹⁷ Another important question is whether the patterns we observe in the global feminist network—both between and within the Global North and Global South—are unique. Processes similar to those in women's organizing could lead to North/South differences in the network of, for example, human rights organizations. Future research should consider the longitudinal network-structure of other types of INGOs.

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