Finally, Arnett’s (2002) optimism about globalization leading to broader identity choices is surprising, given his description of the dominant values in the forces behind globalization and the hegemonic hold that Western capitalism has on developing countries. One may argue that choices are actually narrowing under economic imperialism and its related imposition of values and lifestyles. Choices are limited especially for those without the resources and affordances to explore other alternatives or the power to uphold indigenous ways of life in self-sufficiency. Even in the United States, there is a powerful homogenizing influence exerted by the popular culture. Some psychologists consider selfhood to be in peril (e.g., Cushman, 1990), and others regard the popular culture as hazardous for the identity development of cultural creatives (e.g., Pipher, 1994). Psychologists can foster healthy identities, as long as we are willing to include moral discourse in our inquiry into identity and the effects of globalization. We can also do more in support of a truly pluralistic global society by contributing to multicultural understanding. As professionals with knowledge relevant to human development, education, community resilience, and mental health, psychologists can contribute to shaping agendas and priorities such as those identified by Marsella (1998)—as alternatives to morally questionable ones currently driving globalization.

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Globalization and Liberation: Two Sides, Same Coin?

Jesus Aros
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On December 6, 2002, the October issue of American Psychologist arrived in the Western Pacific with Arnett’s (2002) article, “The Psychology of Globalization.” Unfortunately, like most here then, I was preparing for a direct-eye passage of a super-typhoon later that week and, until rather recently, have been unable to formally respond.

First, globalization is pandemic if not variable in frequency and ratio. Hence, it narrows the range in indigenous and local thought, language, and viewpoints and, de facto, those in the “first and second worlds” too. Thrown in an ironic, if not belated, increase in awareness about the primary identities play in regard to each other, and the plot thickens. All of this appears to be accelerating, rooted in the psychological, and not just anthropological, meanings of culture and self. Indeed, we are seeing this across the globe, even in Micronesia (Arnott, 2002; Herrmans & Kempen, 1998; Pangelinan, Aros, & Morgan, in press; Rubinstein, 1995; Saleh, 1997; Sampson, 1988).

In his measured analysis, Arnott (2002) not only reveals the threats to local and indigenous identities associated with globalization but also discusses many, but surely not all, of the issues and solutions caused and afforded thereby (Sampson, 1988). Yes, globalization is quickly reducing the degrees of freedom in all of our identities, while dynamic and agentic features in our response to it speak both quietly and simultaneously to an inner decolonization, within a corresponding psychology of liberation—that is, to understand and heal (Arnott, 2002; Duran & Duran, 1995). In short, what if the psychologies of globalization and liberation are really the two sides needed for the true coin and not the one-sided counterfeit? By Jove, are we getting it?

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The Moral Dimensions of Globalization

Jeffrey Jensen Arnott
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Lisa Tsoi Hoshmand (2003, this issue) is right that my recent article on the psychology of globalization in the American Psychologist (Arnott, October 2002) mostly avoided a discussion of the moral dimensions of globalization. There were mainly two reasons for this. First, I sought to keep the focus on the psychological dimensions of globalization, especially with respect to identity issues, and addressing the morality of globalization would have been a distraction from this purpose. Morality is, of course, one of the topics addressed in psychology—pretty much everything that pertains to human life is—but the moral dimensions of globalization are not necessarily intrinsically psychological. Second, and more important, I am ambivalent and uncertain about the moral dimensions of globalization. I avoided a discussion of this issue in part because I see it as highly complicated, with arguments to be made on both sides. I thank Hoshmand for the inducement to explore this topic further.

I view some of the effects of globalization as positive. Globalization brings Western ways to the rest of the world, and there are some things about Western ways that are favorable and bring benefits. Among these goods are modern medicine, formal education, and an ethic of freedom.

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of expression. I am aware that I view these as goods in part because the West is my own culture, but I believe that these goods can be defended on their own merits. It is better to have vaccinations and treatments for potentially fatal diseases than for people to die in infancy or childhood. It is better for people to be literate than illiterate. It is better for people to be able to express their ideas freely than to be imprisoned or killed for expressing them. I am happy to defend many of the fruits of Western civilization as good things, and globalization makes these good things more widely available.

Furthermore, as I argued in the article, among the consequences of globalization is a greater range of identity choices. Although I was not explicit about the morality of this in the article, I see it as generally a good thing for people to have more rather than fewer choices for how to live and what to believe and what kind of person to be. This view may reflect, as Hoshmand (2003) asserts, “ethnocentric assumptions about...the presumed existential superiority (and implied moral superiority) of an ideology of individual freedom” (p. 814), but that would not make it any less (or more) valid. It is a view that should be evaluated on its own merits. I believe that individual freedom is generally good and that people are happier and psychologically healthier when they have at least some scope of individual freedom for their identity choices.

The influence of globalization on individual freedom for identity choices is especially notable with respect to the position of women. Women traditionally have been, in virtually all cultures and historical times, more constrained than men in their identity choices. Girls have been allowed less education than boys, and women have been allowed few potential work roles other than wife and mother along with, perhaps, agricultural work or other contributions to family sustenance. Today in the West, girls exceed boys in educational achievement at every level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002), but in most of the rest of the world, girls are still allowed less education than boys (Mensch, Bruce, & Greene, 1998). Globalization brings the West’s more egalitarian views of gender roles to the rest of the world and opens up opportunities for girls to receive more education and for women to have more choices in work, love, and leisure. Will Hoshmand, or anyone else, argue that this is a bad thing and that girls and women are better off if they remain in their traditional, subordinate role? If so, I would be happy to take the other side of the argument.

Nevertheless, I share many of the concerns expressed by Hoshmand (2003) and others about the darker side of globalization, the morally questionable aspects of it. Globalization promotes individual freedom, but that freedom often undermines the integrity of traditional cultures. As I stated in my 2002 article, many people thrive on the new freedoms brought by globalization, but for some people the result is not the exhilaration of freedom but identity confusion, a sense of belonging neither to the world of one’s parents and grandparents nor to the global culture. An increase in problems such as substance use and delinquency in formerly traditional cultures is in part a reflection of increased identity confusion. Also of concern is that multinational corporations have used the economic freedoms of globalization to move manufacturing to developing countries, where they are able to exploit labor (especially the labor of children and adolescents) without being hindered by labor laws and unions.

But perhaps the most troubling consequence of globalization is that it demolishes traditional cultural practices in the course of creating a global culture. Globalization increases the range of identity choices within cultures, but, as Hoshmand aptly noted, it decreases the variability of identity across cultures. The Inuit become less Inuit, the Indians become less Indian, the Japanese become less Japanese, and people all over the world become more like the people of the West in their ways of life and in their worldviews.

In my 2002 article, I stressed that globalization currently often results in bi-cultural identities, with one identity rooted locally and the other attached to the global culture. However, I fear that the current tendency toward bicultural identities is only a way station in the process of cultural homogenization, and that the end result of it will be one worldwide culture, with pockets of self-selected cultures. The astounding diversity that human cultures have developed in the course of thousands of years will cease to exist. This will be a tremendous loss in terms of the psychological diversity of the human species, a loss in the different possible ways of being that exist among humankind. The loss is already considerable and is proceeding rapidly every day. There is little psychologists can do about this tragedy except bear witness to it. Or should we have more faith in the human imagination, that it will continue to produce new cultural forms as it has for millennia?

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Enhancing Communication Through Visual Aids in Clinical Practice
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Smith, Best, Stubbs, Archibald, and Robinson-Nay (October 2002) suggested that graphs are a “distinguishing feature of science” (p. 749) and can be an effective method to communicate research and evidence to the scientific community. In scientific articles, combining graphs with prose, compared with using prose alone, often conveys information more clearly and expeditiously. This same phenomenon seems to hold true in workshops and lectures in the scientific community and elsewhere. In addition, with advances in computer programs and technology (e.g., Excel and PowerPoint), many people are using graphs to facilitate communication and to enhance the presentation of data. We believe that the value of graphs in psychology is not limited to hard science but can extend into the softer domain of clinical practice, where it can serve as an effective communication tool.

For example, graphs and visual aids can be useful in communicating data to professionals to help them evaluate client response to treatment. Communicating behavioral data with graphs can assist with information processing and potentially enhance clinicians’ decision-making processes.