The rise of the organisational society in Canadian and U.S. textbooks: 1836-2011*

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Abstract

This paper examines how organisations have increasingly been portrayed in textbooks as solving social problems as well as contributing to national development. Findings from 527 Canadian and U.S. textbooks illustrate the rise of an organisational society during the time period between 1836 and 2011. Discussions of for-profit and non-profit forms of organisations rise early on in both countries, creating the foundation for an organisational society, which expands to incorporate global organisations in the post-World War II period. We argue that such portrayals in textbooks both reflect and legitimise the role of organisations in society, strengthening their taken-for-granted status as social actors.

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Introduction

Formal organisations penetrate all dimensions of the lives of individuals, making them a central phenomenon in the contemporary world. They exist in almost all facets of modern society, including 'politics, social class, economics, technology, religion, [and] the family' (Perrow 1991, 725). While associations and communal structures have existed for a long time, the idea of organisations as active social actors has only recently emerged. These new forms of organisations are distinct from older forms of communal associations. Modern organisations have a greater sense of 'actorhood' (Drori, Meyer, and Hwang 2006, 1) as they have purposes and goals distinct from the discrete objectives of the individuals that comprise the organisation. These organisations have the power to exert influence on individuals, communities, and society at large, as they maintain authority over their activities through relationships and coalitions, rather than solely drawing their authority from external sources such as the state or the church (King, Felin, and Whetten 2010; Lamoreaux and Wallis 2017). As such, modern formal organisations are more than just aggregations of individuals. This development of the organisation as a social actor expands our understanding of its rights and responsibilities in society. Modern organisations thus serve as the primary form through which collective functioning in society takes place, forming an organisational society.

Considering the massive power and social control modern organisations have assumed, it is difficult to imagine a world not dominated by organisations. However, 'no one talked of "organisations" until after World War II… and The Concise Oxford Dictionary did not even list the term in its meaning in the 1950 edition' (Drucker 1992, 100). Some scholars have sought to explain the expansion and legitimisation of modern organisations in terms of the self-interested actions of elites, arguing that powerful elites seek to maintain control through organisations (Perrow 2005; Coleman 1982). Yet, while certain forms of organisations affirm and exacerbate

inequalities, other forms may represent those without power. To better explain the existence and widespread expansion of modern organisations, this paper draws perspectives from organisational institutionalism, which focuses on how organisations have become deeply institutionalised as a cultural matter (Bromley and Meyer 2015). Replacing older forms of communal structures, formal organisations place individuals at the centre of both rights and actions. Modern organisations are further legitimised by scientific rationalisation, creating 'rational' models in which social activity can be formally organised. Underpinned by these world cultural principles of individual empowerment and scientisation (Meyer and Bromley 2013), education plays a central role in normalising and legitimising the 'organisational society' (Thompson 1980).

Education and modern organisations play symbiotic roles. Formal organisations emerged as a distinctive feature of modernity, and the structure of these organisations have been heavily influenced by modern schooling (Duke 2018). Education links the empowerment of individuals with greater control over a rationalised knowledge system in the world (Bromley and Meyer 2015). Education therefore may increasingly promote all kinds of organisations, including normalising organisational structures and organisations as taken-for-granted actors. Given the status granted to educational curricula as conveying legitimate knowledge, inclusion in textbooks may additionally serve to legitimise the perception of organisations as positively contributing social actors. Textbooks provide a context for understanding the role that education plays in legitimising and globalising organisations' role in society, by serving as a concrete form of educational content that reinforces and disseminates cultural norms (Terra and Bromley 2012). Our study serves as an analysis of how various forms of organisations are normalised in curricula, illustrated by their increasing inclusion in history, civics, and social studies textbooks and legitimised as positively contributing social actors. Specifically, we examine the proportions of textbooks over time that

discuss organisations as important to countries' development, as part of national or global identity and values, or as solving social problems. While the paper focuses on how textbooks positively portray organisations, this portrayal does not provide evidence as to whether organisations are, empirically, positive social actors. Rather, the data presented in this paper improve our understanding of how education has normalised and legitimised the perceived positive role of organisations in society.

Despite a massive organisational transformation of society and the incorporation of organisational actors in education, organisational perspectives are lacking in comparative education research. By blending the fields of organisation theory and comparative education, we examine the extent to which education legitimises and globalises a model of society where organisations play a central role. This paper utilises a unique data source of civic education textbooks for middle and high school students from Canada and the U.S., which show a striking rise in discussions of all types of organisational actors. Findings from 527 Canadian and U.S. textbooks support the argument that not only has there been a dramatic rise of an organisational society during the time period between 1836 and 2011, but that education systems in those countries have served to normalise and legitimise organisations as social actors. Although norms of individualism, rights, and actorhood may have originated in North America and Western Europe, they have since become globalised and claimed by diverse areas of the world, in part through their inclusion in textbooks (Thomas et al. 1987; Drori et al. 2002). Some scholars have argued that such globalisation processes retain exploitative power dynamics between more and less industrialised countries, with the latter coerced into individualistic educational practices as part of a process of Westernisation (Wallerstein 1984; Tabulawa 2003). While the scope and

causes of this diffusion is debated in the literature, this study focuses on Canada and the U.S. as cases of 'early adopters' of these global norms (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

We might expect to see differences between the two countries, given the reputation of American exceptionalism and a body of comparative studies emphasising the distinctiveness of these two countries (Kaufman 2009; Lipset 1996). But Canadian and U.S. textbooks portray a strikingly similar trend in their discussions of domestic and international organisational actors in textbooks. Textbooks in our sample mention domestic organisational actors, such as businesses and non-profits, as contributors to national development as well as sources of solutions to societal problems as early as the nineteenth century, with these trends increasing thereafter. The growing mentions of international organisational actors in both Canadian and U.S. textbooks post-World War II provide evidence of the expansion of an organisational society worldwide and expand our understanding of the roles of organisations by normalising and legitimising more types of organisational actors. In the following sections we define our propositions of interest given existing literature on for-profit, non-profit, international governmental, and international nongovernmental forms of organisations. We next describe our sample of textbooks and the coding procedures used to estimate the extent to which these textbooks discuss organisations as important social actors. After describing our findings, we conclude with a discussion of the implications for the rise of an organisational society that is both normalised through and legitimised by education.

Proposition 1: The proportion of textbooks discussing for-profit and non-profit organisations as social actors will increase over time.

We first turn our attention to textbook discussions of organisations in domestic contexts. Neither as old as the church and the state, nor as new as international organisations, the histories of businesses and non-profits can be traced back to a common corporate form in the nineteenth century. Following the American Civil War, this was split into two different forms of corporations: the for-profit and the non-profit (Levy 2016). We argue that the formalisation of these as separate types of organisations, and the consistently increasing mentions of them in textbooks, signal the normalisation of a new organisational society. For-profit and non-profit organisations have taken on greater rights and responsibilities since the nineteenth century, and as they do so, textbooks normalise this transformation in society. Furthermore, textbooks' explicit portrayal of these organisations as positively contributing social actors legitimises this transformation.

A. The for-profit (business) form

Influenced by a shared colonial history, the corporate form emerged in similar ways in both Canada and the U.S., but followed separate developments. The original corporate form in the U.S. stems from state legislatures that were initially themselves chartered by the British crown as private corporations, retaining both private and public features (Kaufman 2008; Levy 2016). During and after the American Revolution, these state legislatures, in turn, began to increasingly encourage greater diffusion of the corporate form, with the end of the eighteenth century serving as a period of ambiguity and experimentation in the structure and limits of corporate charters in the U.S. (Kaufman 2008). The nineteenth century signalled a settling and diffusion of the for-profit corporate form (Newmyer 1976), with the U.S. Supreme Court first advancing a distinction between private versus public corporations in *Terrett v. Taylor* (1815). Canada, on the other hand,

maintained the British system of restricted incorporation until the late nineteenth century, when American standards of 'freedom of incorporation' spread around the world (Kaufman 2009). Legalisation and codification marked the start of the legitimisation of business actors in both countries.

Formal administrative structures pioneered by railroads (Chandler 1977) penetrated the education sector during the first quarter of the twentieth century, with curricular and managerial reforms made to shape education more in the image of business (Callahan 1962). Businesses evolved into successively larger and more complex organisational structures, including the multidivisional structure of the 1920s, which proliferated abroad through the 1960s (Williamson 1981). In more recent decades, we have seen the growth and diffusion of multinational corporations, as well as an increasing focus on corporate social responsibility, with today's use of 'corporate' firmly identified as meaning for-profit. This latter trend is particularly interesting as it ascribes the responsibilities of citizenship to corporations. We therefore argue that businesses have become taken-for-granted social actors contributing to social and economic development, with their role as such normalised and legitimised in part through formal education structures, such as textbooks.

Our expectation is that the role of businesses and economic actors will be increasingly reflected in Canadian and U.S. textbooks according to these historical trends. Given that the for-profit corporate form appears to have formalised prior to the time period of our sample of textbooks (Newmyer 1976; Levy 2016), we expect generally high proportions of textbooks to discuss business and economic actors as positive contributors to national development, progress, and the solving of social challenges, with these trends increasing as businesses become larger and more widespread in Canada and the U.S.

B. The non-profit form

In our discussion of non-profits, we begin with reference to Tocqueville's major work, *Democracy in America* (1835). Tocqueville observes not only the U.S. but also parts of what are now Ontario and Quebec during the early 1830s (Grabb and Curtis 2010). Although not as emphasised in Canadian history, Tocqueville describes a strong commitment to free enterprise and emphasises voluntarism as a large part of both the American and English-Canadian society. Bloch and Lamoreaux (2017) amend our understanding of Tocqueville by pointing out that these North American voluntary associations were never completely independent of the state. However, these forms eventually serve as prototypes of formalised non-profit organisations. Voluntary groups included not only official organisations such as town- or city-councils, but also a vast number of organisations formed by private individuals to deal with a range of issues, including public safety, commerce, industry, morality, and religion (Tocqueville 1835, as cited in Grabb and Curtis 2010). Following the involvement of such associations into various social, economic, and political roles, non-profits became formalised as organisational actors separate from their for-profit counterparts in the late nineteenth century (Kaufman 2008; Levy 2016).

Throughout the twentieth century, professional associations, public good groups, political parties, and charitable organisations have elaborated upon the formalised non-profit structure. With a rapid increase in the number of non-profit and civil society organisations, domestic non-profit organisations have grown to employ a substantial proportion of the workforce in many countries (Bromley and Meyer 2015). Close to 20,000 new non-profits were established per year by the late 1960s and by the 1990s more than 50,000 new non-profits per year filed for tax-exempt status (Jones 2006, as cited in Bromley 2020). Non-profit organisations have also increasingly become normalised and act as responsible and actors capable of solving social problems (Pope et al. 2018). Thus, non-profits are no longer viewed as 'unproductive labour' as was once

characterised by Adam Smith of charitable work, but, instead, these organisations have greater authority, influence, sense of actorhood (Bromley 2020), and status as positive contributors to society. We expect to see a steady increase of non-profit organisations mentioned in textbooks starting prior to the twentieth century, albeit at lower rates than their for-profit counterparts.

Taken together, we argue that increasing discussions of business and non-profit organisations as domestic actors in textbooks both normalise and legitimise the birth of an organisational society in Canada and the U.S. We look to the globalising trends of organisations in the following section.

Proposition 2: The proportion of textbooks discussing INGOs and IGOs as social actors will increase over time.

Globalisation has compressed the world and intensified the consciousness of the world as a whole (Robertson 1992). Previous scholarship on social science educational content suggests that ideas of globalisation and global citizenship are increasingly discussed in textbooks over time, manifesting a world culture that emphasises interconnectedness (Buckner and Russell 2014; Jimenez, Lerch, and Bromley 2017). In light of the previous discussion on domestic actors signifying the genesis of an organisational society, we turn to international organisational actors and the trend of their mentions in textbooks over time. International organisations are relatively new forms of organisations that have increased in both number and influence since the late nineteenth century. In particular, the post-World War II growth of both international governmental organisations (IGOs) and international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs)[1] in a variety of

[1] We distinguish INGOs from non-profits by emphasising the international focus of nongovernmental organisations, which are established for a worldwide or regional cause. INGOs include organisations like Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and the International Committee of the Red Cross. We also differentiate IGOs from INGOs in that IGOs are formed by nation-states, rather than voluntary associations of individuals or organisations.

fields have far outpaced either population or economic growth in countries worldwide (Bromley and Meyer 2017). The number of INGOs rose from 200 active organisations in 1900 to over 2,000 in 1960, and nearly 4,000 in 1980 (Boli and Thomas 1999). In addition, INGOs have grown from approximately 0.1 organisation per million people in 1909 to 8 organisations per million people in 2009 (Bromley 2020). The drastic expansion of international actors signifies a process of normalisation and legitimisation of these organisations worldwide.

Many of the INGOs created at the start of the twentieth century were founded in Canada and the U.S. (Boli and Thomas 1999). The world wars also strengthened the idea of the world as a single polity, and both INGOs and IGOs have played a significant role in shaping such a world polity (Boli and Thomas 1997). The League of Nations was established as one of the first IGOs after World War I, which was later replaced by the United Nations after World War II. Rationalisation of these new international organisations elaborated a new domain of activity at the international level, requiring a greater degree of IGO and INGO cooperation (Chabbott 1999) and creating additional international organisations with specific purposes and missions. INGOs are legitimised by gaining reputation and influence in the international era, while IGOs do so by partly involving INGOs' nonpartisan character to diffuse their values (Boli and Thomas 1997).

Given this history, we expect to see more discussions of international actors in textbooks, starting in the 1910-1920s and dramatically increasing in the 1940-1950s. With the intensification of globalisation, cultural models of individual empowerment and scientific rationalisation have spread, further normalising the rationalised, agentic identities of international organisations. Under principles of universalism, individualism, rational voluntaristic authority, human purposes of rationalising progress, and world citizenship, international organisations enact and diffuse 'world culture' (Boli and Thomas 1997; 1999). In the contemporary world, transnational organisations

also act as institutions that determine the 'operating rules' for the world polity (Mundy 2007). While nation-states may act as dominant actors, international organisations increasingly play a key role in diffusing and enacting cultural models for education. In sum, these types of organisations have a heightened sense of actorhood that has accelerated with globalisation (Drori et al. 2006), which we expect to be represented in textbooks. Finally, as with our Proposition 1, we argue that textbooks' explicit portrayal of international organisations as positively contributing social actors legitimises this transformation.

Data Selection and Analytic Strategy

Our paper draws on methods from prior literature that used textbook content analyses to document the infusion of various norms and values into national textbooks as part of larger shifts in world culture. Prior cross-national analyses have demonstrated that support for human rights in social science textbooks has increased and become normalised over time (Bromley 2014; Ramirez, Bromley, and Russell 2009). Similarly, Nakagawa and Wotipka (2016) found that discussions of women and normalisation of women's rights in textbooks have steadily increased cross-nationally. In their analysis of 548 secondary social science textbooks published from 1950 to 2010, Terra and Bromley (2012) compared whether various groups marginalised on the basis of their ethnic, gender, sexual, class, and/or immigrant/refugee identities were discussed as having rights, and whether they experienced marginalisation or exclusion in their respective countries.

Inclusion in textbooks has meaningful implications for the norms and values in both national and worldwide cultures. We contribute to this literature, as well as to literature on organisational studies, by examining the timing and trends with which various forms of organisations have become normalised as taken-for-granted actors and legitimised as contributors to society in textbooks.

Selection of Textbooks and Coding

Examining Canada and the U.S. offers opportunities to explore potential nuances in the formation of political and cultural norms around organisations and social actorhood. Although liberal norms of individualism, rights, and actorhood may have originated in North America and Western Europe, they have since become globalised and claimed by diverse areas of the world, in part through their inclusion in textbooks (Thomas et al. 1987; Drori et al. 2002). While the scope and causes of this diffusion are contested in the literature, we selected textbooks from Canada and the U.S. as 'early adopters' of these norms (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

However, there are many reasons we might expect textbooks from these two countries to portray different attitudes towards distinct organisational forms. For example, in the U.S., the American Revolution set a precedent of hostility towards centralised political authority and governmental oversight, and U.S. states' encouragement of corporate charters post-Revolution also encouraged a unique level of entrepreneurial activity (Kaufman 2009). In contrast, Canada has retained its links to the Commonwealth and, in general, tolerates greater centralisation of political authority as well as state involvement in economic development and social services provision (Kaufman 2009). Though the two countries have been closely intertwined throughout history, it would be reasonable to expect that their divergent political and economic cultures are reflected in contrasting textbook narratives about organisations.

Our data draws from an original sample of 527 social science textbooks published between 1836 and 2011 in Canada and the U.S. The sample includes social studies, civics, government, history, religion, and moral education textbooks written for middle school and high school students in grades 5-13. Within Canada, the textbooks originate from British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. Within the U.S., the textbooks originate from California, New York, South Carolina, and

Texas. Textbooks were published in various parts of Canada and the U.S., though many were published in major cities like New York and Toronto. While our selection is not a representative sample, these areas were selected because they include some of the most influential publishing centres in the two countries. Table 1 describes the number of textbooks used in each country over time:

[Table 1 about here]

Textbooks were provided by Stanford University's collections at the Cubberley Education Library, Stanford Teachers Education Program Library (STEP), as well as additional Stanford library collections and participating research partners.[2] Coding procedures were developed at Stanford University through standard qualitative content analysis methods, and included piloting and inter-rater reliability testing (Jimenez, Lerch, and Bromley 2017). Textbooks were coded between June and August 2012 using a 53-question protocol designed to capture textbook background data, content topics, as well as textbooks' mentions of state and national values related to civics, human rights, and different social actors.[3]

Variables of Interest

Our study serves as an analysis of the timing and trends with which various forms of organisations have become legitimised as positively contributing social actors, illustrated by their increasing inclusion in civics and social studies textbooks. As such, we track the frequency with which textbooks in our sample discuss organisations, such as for-profits, non-profits, IGOs, and INGOs,

[2] Library collections and research partners included Abilene Christian University, Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec, McGill University, San José State University, Teachers' College Columbia University, University of British Columbia, University of Montreal, University of South Carolina, and University of Toronto.

[3] The coding document is available upon request.

as positively contributing social actors that are important to each country's development, part of national or global identity/culture/values, or solving social problems.

Coders were asked to identify a 'discussion' as including a paragraph or more. For the variable measuring 'for-profits as a positive contributor,' coders identified discussions of economic groups or companies/businesses. For the variable measuring the 'non-profits as a positive contributor,' coders identified discussions of domestic voluntary or charitable groups (i.e. not government, not economic; e.g. Boy Scouts). For the variable measuring 'international nongovernmental organisations as a positive contributor,' coders identified discussions that explicitly referred to INGOs (e.g. Amnesty International, Greenpeace). For the variable measuring 'international governmental organisations as a positive contributor,' coders identified discussions that explicitly referred to IGOs (e.g. the League of Nations, the United Nations, the World Trade Organisation). In all cases, coders used a three-level ordinal scale identifying whether the organisational actor in question was discussed as Not Important At All (0), Somewhat Important (1), or Very Important (2).

A Canadian textbook from the late 1980s provides an example of the type of language identified as portraying a given organisation as a positively contributing social actor:

> In recent years, sales of foreign-produced cars in Canada have grown. Canadians have realised that if these cars, or at least parts for them, were built in Canada, jobs would be created and the economy would benefit. In 1981 Volkswagen, a German automobile company, decided to build a parts plant somewhere in North America to supply its assembly plant in the U.S. (Clark and Wallace 1989, 244).

In this case, the textbook portrays an automaker and business actor, Volkswagen, as contributing to the domestic economy through its provision of jobs. By documenting and descriptively analysing the trends of such portrayals across our sample of textbooks, we are able to observe the

rates at which organisational actors may become normalised and legitimised as positively contributing social actors in the two countries.

Analytic Strategy

We perform descriptive analyses of our data over time, by organisation type as well as by country. We first isolate variables identifying whether or not textbooks discuss for-profit actors, non-profit actors, INGO actors, and/or IGO actors. From the original three-level scale, we pool observations for Somewhat and Very Important into a binary indicator of whether or not the organisational actors were discussed as having any level of importance. Once averaged across the sample, this variable takes on a value of 0-1 as a measure of the proportion of textbooks in our sample that discuss a given organisational actor as important to each country's development, as a part of national or global identity/culture/values, or in solving social problems. For example, an estimate of 0.7 for our variable on 'for-profits as a positively contributing actor' during a given time period would indicate that 70 percent of textbooks published during that time period discuss for-profit organisational actors as a positively contributing social actor in at least a paragraph.

We estimate the proportion of textbooks that discuss organisations in this positive framework by year, and then average these proportions across roughly each decade during our overall time period from 1836-2011. Specifically, we average the proportions by actor for the time periods from 1836-1859, 1860-1869, 1870-1879, and each subsequent decade through 1990-1999. Our final time period of interest includes textbooks published between 2000-2011.

After estimating the proportions of textbooks that discuss each individual organisational type as positively contributing social actors, we graph these proportions over time by the time periods of interest. We specifically compare trends between domestic for-profit and non-profit

actors, as well as trends between IGO and INGO actors. In doing so we are able to observe the changes in proportions of textbooks that discuss each organisational actor over time.

Finally, we pool the data for domestic actors by Canadian versus U.S. textbooks, and pool the data for international actors by Canadian versus U.S. textbooks. We compare between-country trends by decade for proportions of discussions of domestic organisational actors in Canadian versus U.S. textbooks. Similarly, we compare between-country trends by decade for proportions of discussions of international organisational actors.

Findings

Our study serves to describe the trends with which various forms of organisations have become normalised, illustrated by their increasing inclusion in civics and social studies textbooks for middle and high school students, and legitimised as positively contributing social actors. We therefore observe the overall trends of proportions of textbooks that discuss domestic and international organisational actors, by type and country, across 16 time-periods of roughly one decade each.

First, we observe changes in textbook discussions of domestic organisational actors as contributing to both countries' development, identity/values, or social progress over time. Figure 1 illustrates the trends for for-profit and non-profit organisations:

[Figure 1 about here]

As observed in Figure 1, the proportion of textbooks that discuss business actors as positively contributing to society begins and remains at a higher level than similar discussions of non-profits. Discussions of non-profits appear to begin around the 1870s, consistent with the post-Civil War demarcation between for-profit and non-profit organisations (Levy 2016). For both groups there is a fairly steady increase over time, with the increase in discussions of non-profits most noticeable

over the twentieth century. Finally, while the trends for both for-profit and non-profit organisational actors appear to mirror the other prior to the 1980s, thereafter the trends appear to begin to converge towards one another.

Next, we observe changes in proportions of textbooks that discuss international organisational actors as contributing to both countries' development, identity/values, or social progress over time. Figure 2 illustrates the trends for INGO and IGO actors:

[Figure 2 about here]

As observed in Figure 2, textbook discussions of international organisational actors first begin to emerge in the 1920s for both INGOs and IGOs. IGOs, in particular, enjoy a boost of recognition as positively contributing social actors through the 1940s, whereas INGOs are slightly slower, but still steadily increasing, in their penetration of textbooks through the 1990s. Somewhat similar to the trends of domestic organisational actors, we see a trend towards convergence in the more recent period of the 2000s.

Overall, we see textbooks increase their discussions of domestic and international organisational actors over time, in terms of the importance of these actors in contributing to both countries' development, identity, values, and/or social progress.

It is also worth noting that these trends appear similar when differentiated by country. Figure 3 illustrates trends in discussions of domestic organisational actors across Canadian versus U.S. textbooks:

[Figure 3 about here]

While U.S. textbooks appear to generally place greater importance on the role of domestic organisational actors, the trends between the two countries are fairly similar.

Meanwhile, Figure 4 illustrates trends in discussions of international organisational actors across Canadian versus U.S. textbooks:

[Figure 4 about here]

Similar to trends of domestic actors, while U.S. textbooks appear to generally place greater importance on the role of international organisational actors, the trends between the two countries are similar, with discussions increasing over time.

As a robustness check, in models not included here, we generate two new variables for whether an observation is within the first decade of our data, and for whether an observation occurs post-World War II. For domestic organisational actors, we perform t-tests based on whether observations fall within our first decade of data versus in later decades. In the cases of both for-profit and non-profit actors, there are statistically significant differences in the proportion of discussions between textbooks from the first decade and those from later decades. For international organisational actors, we perform t-tests based on whether observations fall before versus after World War II. In the cases of both actors, there are statistically significant differences in the proportion of discussions between textbooks from before versus after World War II. Finally, in regressions using discussions of organisational actors as the output variable, with country and decade as input variables, we find that a textbook's country of origin is not a significant predictor of whether an organisational actor is discussed as positively contributing to society. Collectively, these robustness checks support our findings that there are meaningful increases in the extent to which various organisational actors are discussed in textbooks as positively contributing to society over time, and that these trends are consistent across Canadian and U.S. textbooks.

Discussion and conclusion

The findings closely align with our propositions that we would see formal organisations increasingly being normalised and legitimised in discussions in textbooks. The rise in the proportion of textbooks that discuss domestic organisations as positively contributing social actors occurs earlier than the rise in discussions of international organisations, but discussions of all actors increase over time. Textbooks portray all organisational actors as positive actors in society, even though the validity of this portrayal is empirically debatable.

In the nineteenth century, for-profits were being discussed as social actors in Canadian and U.S. textbooks. Between one-third and two-thirds of textbooks included narratives about for-profit organisations positively contributing to both countries' development, to their identities, or to solving social problems. This inclusion illustrates an early commitment to incorporating business as part of national narratives. Such a commitment to incorporating for-profit organisations into national narratives became normalised as part of the historical narrative of the century. Later published textbooks would continue to refer to the roles of for-profit organisations as social actors in the 1800s. One example of this comes from a Canadian textbook published in the 1980s, which discusses what was one of the largest and most powerful companies in Canada, the Canadian Pacific Railway. The textbook states:

> The completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway made large-scale settlement of the West possible. The potential for wheat farming on the fertile Prairie lands had been recognised for some time… The CPR owned vast areas of the Prairies. It started immediately to sell many of these lands, making them available to settlers… (Bowers 1987, 212).

This is an example of the type of taken-for-granted role that textbooks portrayed for-profit organisations as playing in solving social problems and contributing to society's development during the nineteenth century. These types of examples first appear in contemporary textbooks and

then as part of the historic narratives for both countries. Textbooks continue to incorporate discussions of the role of for-profit organisations in societal development in later periods. They further legitimise businesses by discussing them as providing solutions for challenges. For an example of this type of language, a California textbook from the 1990s states: 'The President called on Henry Kaiser… Kaiser answered the President's call by building Liberty Ships at his four shipyards in Richmond, on the San Francisco Bay. At these shipyards, Kaiser workers manufactured nearly 700 ships during the war' (Armento et al. 1991, 250). This example illustrates that not only is the presence of business organisations normalised over time, but these organisations are also legitimised as providing solutions to historical problems.

Prior to the twentieth century, there were a few mentions of non-profit organisations in textbook narratives. Starting with textbooks published in 1900, we see an increase of discussions of both non-profit and for-profit organisations as positively contributing social actors, even though discussions of for-profits were already in a large proportion of the texts. These types of organisations have remarkably similar trend lines, as inclusions of for-profits and non-profits tend to rise and fall in the same historic periods. During the 1920s, both Canadian and U.S. textbooks decreased discussions of non-profit and for-profit organisations. This decline was more pronounced for the U.S., which had a larger proportion of textbooks incorporating these discussions. As both countries then entered a period of increased social welfare programs and joined World War II, we see a corresponding rise in discussions of domestic organisations as social actors. The previous example illustrates how these types of discussions could be incorporated into a national development narrative of this era. The trend of increasing discussions did not stop until the 1960s. Economic decline and changing social structures could have led to temporary decreases

in both Canadian and U.S. textbooks' discussions of non-profit and for-profit organisations as social actors in the 1960s and 1970s.

Discussions of non-profit and for-profit organisations as positively contributing social actors both generally increase over time. In the later decades of our sample, such discussions of non-profit actors are included in nearly half of all texts, and discussions of business actors occur in over 80 percent of all texts. Since the 1980s, discussions of non-profit organisations as social actors in textbooks have only been increasing. During this same period, discussions of for-profit organisations as social actors in textbooks have also increased, yet at a less notable incline, and have declined slightly in the last decade. However, discussions of for-profit organisations as positively contributing social actors remain in a large proportion of the textbooks. Inclusion of discussions of for-profits and non-profits at such a high level and from such an early period reflect a commitment to the idea that these organisational actors can support national development and/or identity, as well as provide solutions to societal problems.

After domestic organisational actors were normalised and legitimised in textbooks, we begin to witness portrayals of organisations as legitimate social actors in global contexts. Starting in 1910, we first see the inclusion of IGOs as solving societies' challenges. IGOs themselves begin appearing in this period with the establishment of the League of Nations, and their immediate inclusion in the time period's textbooks helps to legitimise both their activities as well as the very concept of them as organisational actors in the first place.

The proportions of textbooks mentioning IGOs and INGOs as positively contributing social actors rise over time. We see rising trends of such discussions during the post-World War II period, with the inclusion of INGOs only rising dramatically starting in the 1990s. By the end of the period, discussions of IGOs appear in 60 percent of textbooks, and discussions of INGOs

appear in nearly 40 percent of textbooks. The textbooks include discussions of IGOs and INGOs as positively contributing social actors in both domestic and international spheres. An example of a discussion of an INGO being portrayed as a social actor solving a domestic challenge is in a Canadian textbook from the 2000s. The textbook states: 'in 1986, the Canadian branch of Amnesty International played a leading role in opposing the campaign to reinstate the death penalty in Canada' (Fielding and Evans 2001, 439). In this example, the role of an international organisation acting within Canada is normalised as something to be accepted. The inclusion of Canadians as part of the organisation is highlighted and the success of the campaign is celebrated by stating that the Canadian members of Amnesty International were 'jubilant' (Fielding and Evans 2001, 439). Furthermore, this same example provides legitimisation for Amnesty International's actions in the global sphere, as the textbook shares that 'Amnesty's work was recognised when it received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977' (Fielding and Evans 2001, 439). These types of discussions serve to normalise and legitimise the actions of IGOs and INGOs as positively contributing social actors.

Textbooks also focus on the roles of IGOs and INGOs as social actors in global challenges. One example of this is a Canadian textbook which states that 'the U.N.'s World Health Organisation has wiped out smallpox' (Smith, McDevitt, and Scully 1996, 392). This reflects a growing commitment over the past century to the idea of a global society in which IGOs and INGOs provide ways to organise solutions to global problems. However, this same textbook states limitations to the ability of the United Nations in other avenues. While the textbook is willing to legitimise the IGO as a social actor in the international context, it also provides limitations to such an organisation's ability to act. It is possible that this tension is due to conflicts between the ideas of global citizenship and national citizenship in textbooks, which may lead to limitations for the textbooks to legitimise organisational forms in these contexts (Lerch, Russell, and Ramirez 2017).

Future research could further explore this tension between global and local norms. For example, there may be differences in textbook portrayals of IGOs and INGOs between more versus less industrialised nations.

While Canada and the U.S. have been closely intertwined throughout history, their differing political and economic cultures might have been reflected in contrasting textbook narratives about organisations. National historic narratives are shared in school systems to create collective heritage, values, and identity (Schissler and Soysal 2005). Yet, we find remarkably similar trends occurring in both countries. U.S. textbooks start incorporating domestic organisations into their narratives earlier than Canadian textbooks, but the latter rather quickly follow U.S. trends at similar rates. The consistency of these trends is further validated in our robustness checks, again illustrating the similarities between the countries. While there are historical, social, and political variations in each country, these differences are not reflected in the textbooks' discussions of organisations, suggesting that the domestic and global organisational society has been legitimised in similar ways in Canada and the U.S.

Textbooks provide a context for understanding how education can normalise organisations' roles in society, by serving as a concrete form of educational content that reinforces and disseminates cultural norms. Textbooks also socially construct and legitimise organisations as powerful and positive actors in society. While various forms of organisations have always existed as associations or communal structures, modern organisations have assumed an expanded set of rights and responsibility, forming an 'organisational society' where they serve as the primary form of collective functioning. The process of socially constructing organisations as autonomous entities has important implications for political power and policy (Schneider and Ingram, 1993). For example, the *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010) case in the U.S. extended

the right to free speech to organisations. While one can only speculate on the experiences of school children reading from these textbooks over the centuries, the legitimisation of organisations as positively contributing social actors via education systems may have contributed to their contemporary taken-for-granted status. Once for-profits, non-profits, IGOs, and INGOs appear as social actors in texts, their presence continues to expand. From 1836 to 2011, both Canadian and U.S. textbooks normalise and legitimise the role of organisations as actors in society, contributing to the powerful status they enjoy today. In this paper, we look at the instances in which organisations are particularly viewed as positive social actors in textbooks. Given increased scepticism of non-profit and philanthropic outcomes and scrutinisation of their efforts (Reich 2018; Lindsay and Stiffman 2017), an important direction for future research can examine whether textbooks shift to portray organisations as negative social actors.

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Declaration of Interest Statement

The authors have no potential conflicts of interest.

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Tables

Table 1. Number of Textbooks in the Sample from Canada and the United States (U.S.) in Each Time Period

Publication Year Time Period	Number of Textbooks from Canada	Number of Textbooks from the U.S.	Total Number
Pre-1860	6	21	27
1860s	7	12	19
1870s	9	15	24
1880s	5	19	24
1890s	9	25	34
1900s	15	22	37
1910s	13	20	33
1920s	16	36	52
1930s	13	18	31
1940s	16	19	35
1950s	20	19	39
1960s	13	22	35
1970s	16	17	33
1980s	15	15	30
1990s	8	23	31
2000+	24	16	40

Note: Although there are unequal numbers of textbooks from each country for each period of interest, our sample is still likely to be proportionally representative, as fewer textbooks were published in earlier time periods.

Figures

Figure 1. Changes in textbook discussions of domestic organisational actors in Canada and the U.S. over time.

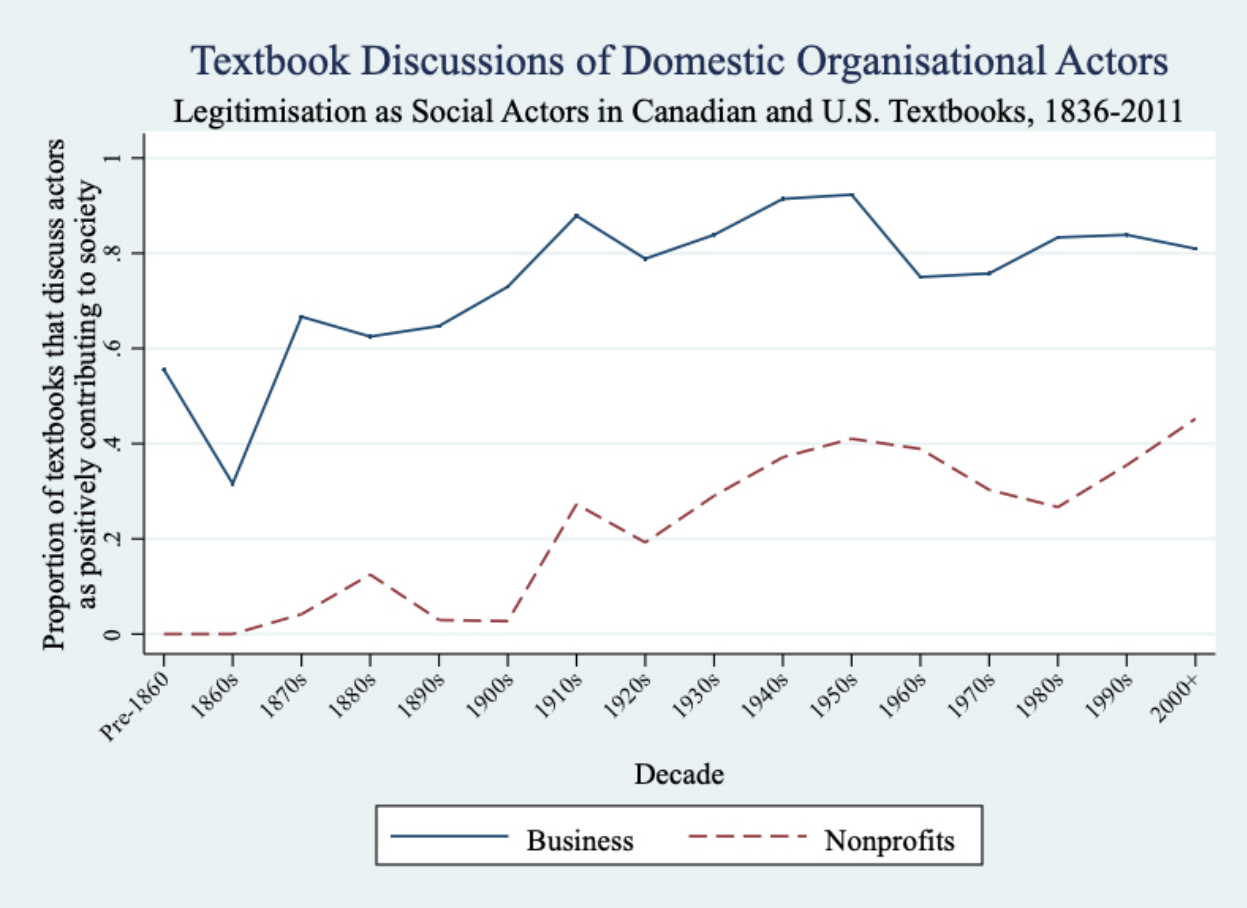

Figure 2. Changes in textbook discussions of international organisational actors in Canada and the U.S. over time.

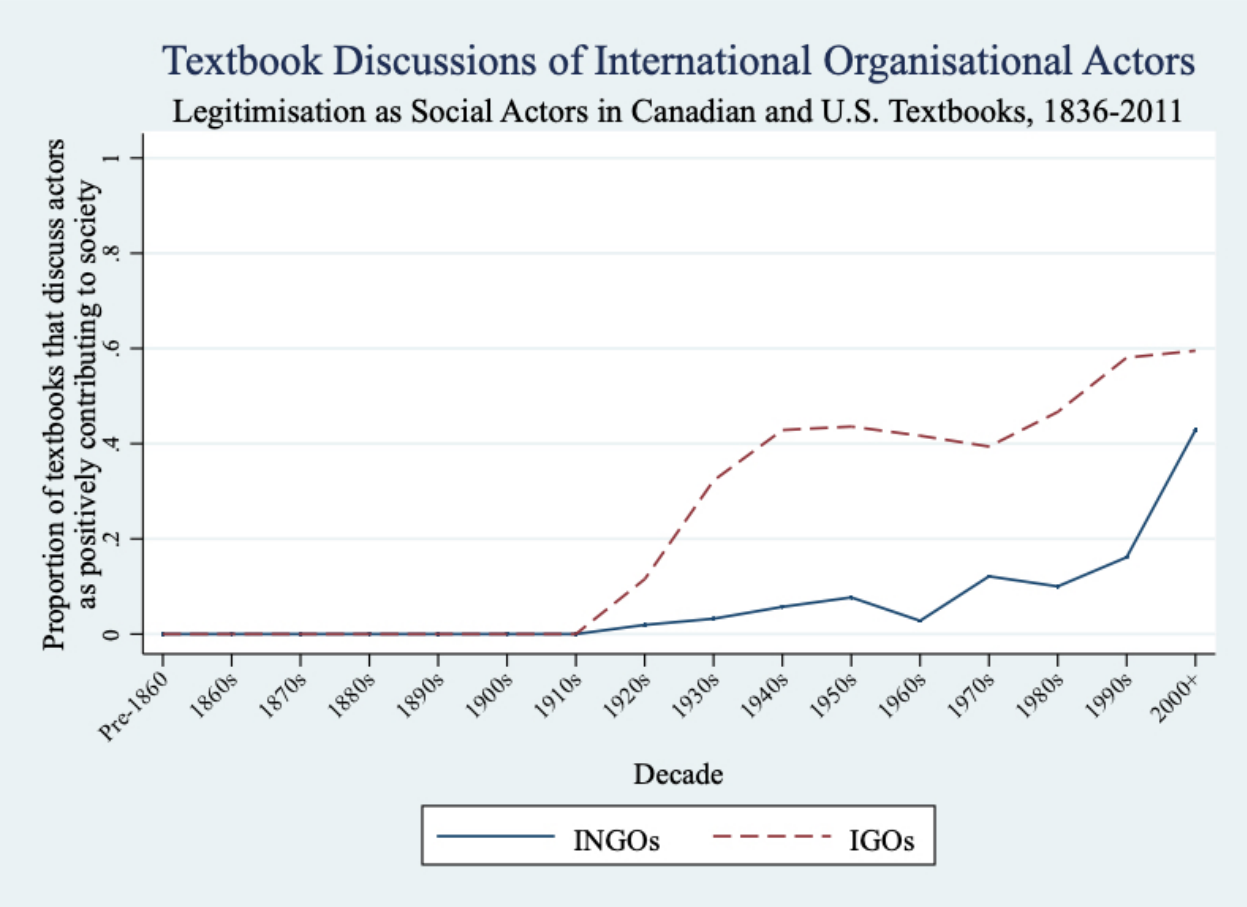

Figure 3. Differences in discussions of domestic organisational actors between textbooks from Canada and the U.S. over time.

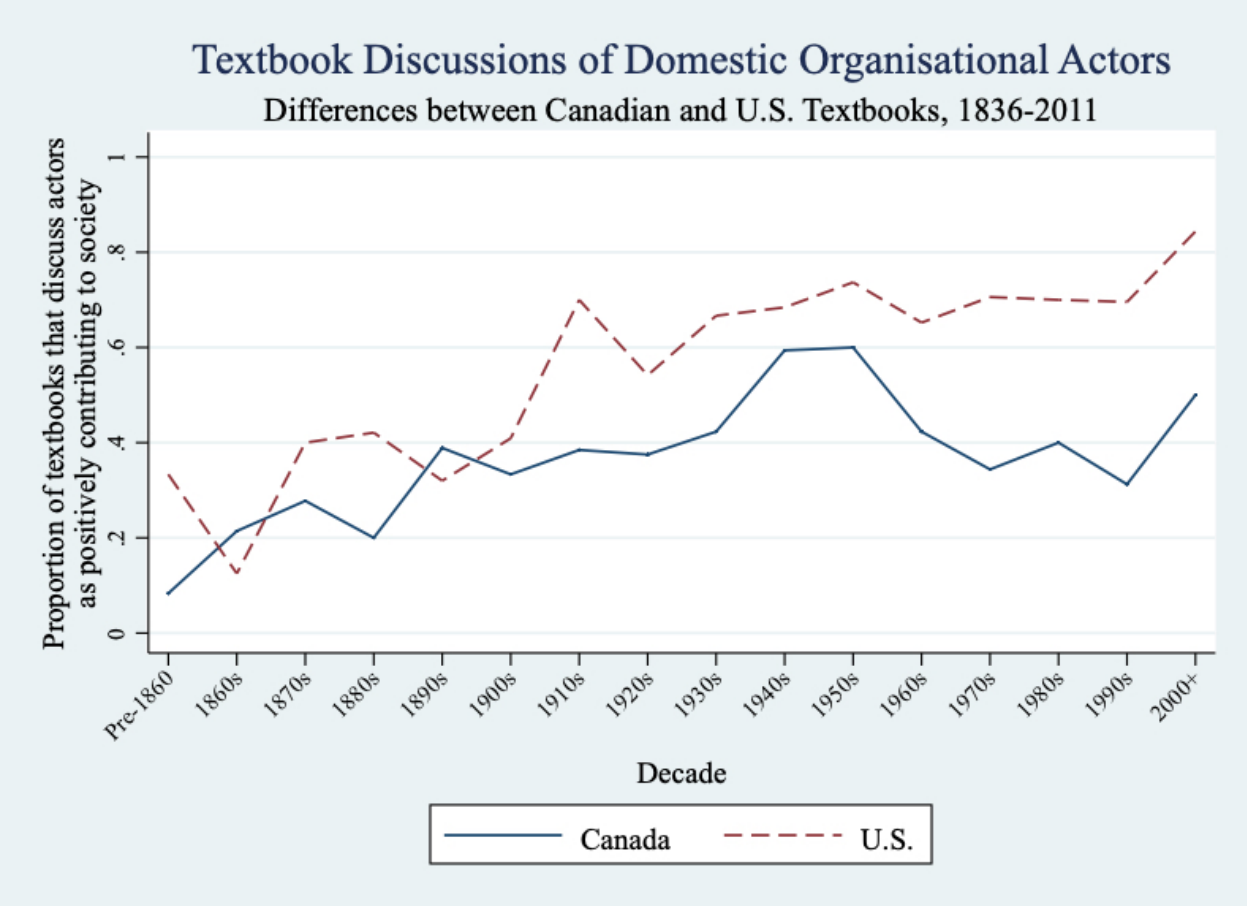

Figure 4. Differences in discussions of international organisational actors between textbooks from Canada and the U.S. over time.

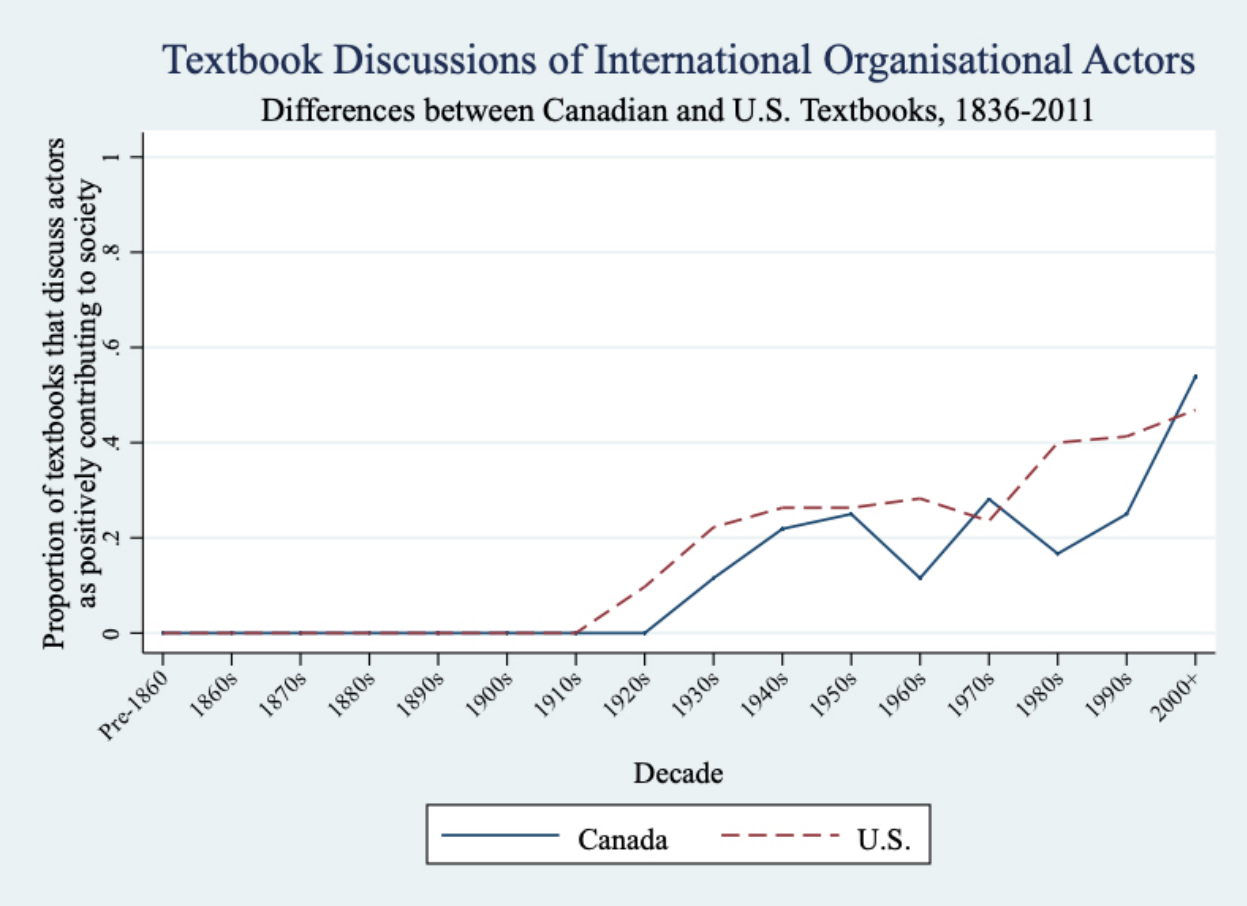

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Changes in textbook discussions of domestic organisational actors in Canada and the U.S. over time.

Figure 2. Changes in textbook discussions of international organisational actors in Canada and the U.S. over time.

Figure 3. Differences in discussions of domestic organisational actors between textbooks from Canada and the U.S. over time.

Figure 4. Differences in discussions of international organisational actors between textbooks from Canada and the U.S. over time.