Empowered Individualism in World Culture:
Agency and Equality in Canadian Textbooks, 1871-2006*

Patricia Bromley
pbromley@stanford.edu

Stanford University

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Abstract: The sacred status of individuals is a central pillar of world culture in research on education and beyond. The intended socialization of students is increasingly to become empowered individuals that respect human equality and diversity in a globally-interconnected world. At the same time, we have little understanding of what exactly the concept of individual empowerment means or how to capture it empirically. This study builds on prior observations about the growing status of individuals by delineating the rise of two separate but related dimensions of empowerment – agency and equality – and outlining the rise of these dimensions in the Canadian educational context. To this end, it draws on a unique dataset consisting of a systematically designed coding of eighty history, civics, and social studies textbooks used in Canada from 1871 to 2006. Refining the concept of individual empowerment reveals that its manifestations are shaped by the local context, in addition to the influences that come from world culture. Overall, increasingly empowered individuals and the structures they create (often organizations and associations of various types) become key actors in national and international society. Looking to the future, if taken to an extreme, expansions in individual empowerment may lead to instances of "hyper-empowerment", where depictions and enactments of individual choice, control, and equality far outpace reasonable expectations.

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Over the course of the twentieth century the role of education in promoting citizenship and national identity has undergone a profound change. In an earlier era, schools were a primary tool for the construction of imagined national communities where citizens in the same bounded territory were conceptualized as sharing a common culture. Today, the intended socialization of students is increasingly to become empowered individuals that respect human equality and diversity in a globally-interconnected world. This increasingly sacred status of individuals is a central pillar of world culture in research on education and beyond: many studies note the growing empowerment of individuals globally (e.g. Bromley, Meyer & Ramirez, 2011; Elliott, 2007; Meyer & Jepperson, 2000). At the same time, we have little understanding of what exactly this concept means, and few cross-national measures of individual empowerment. Using the case of Canadian curricula, this study builds on prior observations about the growing status of individuals by delineating the rise of two separate but related dimensions of empowerment – agency and equality – and outlining the rise of these dimensions in the Canadian educational context. For some, such universalistic changes undermine the creation of national identity, contributing to fractionalization within a society and "a widely felt sense of crisis in citizenship" (Hébert & Sears, n.d.). For others, a celebration of diverse individuals rather than a cohesive national citizenry contributes to the creation of a more just society by promoting tolerance of minority groups and organizing around social issues. This study addresses a core issue in studies of world culture, the sociology of education, and citizenship education by examining the extent to which curricula has shifted away from the construction of a homogenous national citizenry subordinate to the state and towards a view of diverse individuals empowered as actors in their own right.

The role of individuals in society has long been a prominent concern of sociologists (e.g. Goffman, 1959; Weber, 1947). Recent work examines the growing status of individuals in the cosmos through their construction as

empowered actors, with persons taking on a sacred status (Elliott, 2007; Frank & Meyer, 2002; Marske, 1987). World culture scholars argue that a growing endorsement of individuals as central actors in modern society intensified after World War II (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000). A large number of empirical studies support arguments that the emergence of world culture after World War II emphasizes universalistic notions of the agentic, rights-bearing individual. For example, Frank and Meyer (2002) discuss the increasing centrality of the individual in both national and world societies and the expansion of roles and recognition of persons. Frank et al (1995) provide evidence of the rise of the individual as a core element of society by showing an increase in professionalized psychology worldwide, particularly among countries most linked to world culture. They argue the discipline of psychology is an indicator of scientized attention to the inner structure and behavior of the individual. Other scholars show that human rights become a core component of the contemporary world, asserting the sacred and equal status of all people (e.g. Keck & Sikkink, 1998, Koenig, 2008; Koo & Ramirez, 2009). And extensive evidence documents world cultural influences in national practices related to the empowerment of historically marginalized groups such as indigenous peoples (Cole, 2006), women (Ramirez et al., 1997), children (Boyle et al., 2007), and gays/lesbians (Frank et al., 2009). The rise of the individual in world culture since World War II is well-documented.

Of course, the emergence of modern individualism has a long history with roots in the Enlightenment and earlier, but the post-War explosion of human empowerment at the world level can be tied to two more recent phenomena (see Bromley & Meyer, 2015 for a more detailed discussion). First, there is the weakening of the nation-state. Countries were greatly stigmatized due to the evils of two World Wars; their ability to be responsible keepers of global order was greatly questioned. The nation-state lost further legitimacy and charisma as globalization undercut real and imagined national boundaries, a trend that accelerated with the collapse of communism. Immediately after the Cold War, liberal ideologies rooted in individual choice and competition had few real global challengers (although this may be changing today). Second, scientific advancements, especially in the social sciences, emerged with individuals as central actors. For example, theories of human capital and modernization emphasize the capabilities of each person

to contribute to development. The rise of scientific (including the social sciences, perhaps especially economics and management) theories assuming individual rational action and capacity for choice in part reflects the changing status of individuals. Moreover, the creation of theories of individual rationality and capability further reifies and institutionalizes the growing status of persons.

Expanding individualism in broader society contributes to parallel changes in education. In the wake of World War II, theories of human capital directed attention towards children, conceptualizing them as individuals in need of proper schooling in order to become maximally productive members of society. Thus education, justified in terms of broad ideas of individual and national socio-economic development, becomes a goal of countries around the world (Fiala, 2006; Rosenmund, 2006). Supporting and going beyond economic rationales for education, discourses such as "active learning," "lifelong learning," and the "right to learn" are increasingly articulated in the agendas of many domestic and international organizations, from Save the Children to the World Bank (Jakobi, 2009; Jakobi & Rusconi, 2009). Worldwide, student-centered emphases are on the rise in curricula (Bromley et al., 2011) and students become envisioned as active and engaged learners (Arum, 2003). And human rights education emerges as a central element in the broader human rights movement (Ramirez et al., 2006; Suárez, 2007a, 2007b).

Conceptions of individual empowerment play a central role in research on world culture; indeed, massive changes in contemporary societies are attributed to the changing status of individuals in many lines of thought. At the same time, there is little specific definition in the world cultural research tradition of what exactly it means for individuals to be sacred or how the meaning might vary over time and across contexts. Greater operationalization has taken place, however, in understanding real-world manifestations of these principles. The literature on international development, in particular, has worked to define individual empowerment as part of a normative effort to promote this status on the ground worldwide. One widely-shared conceptual framework describes empowerment as a "process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make effective choices, that is, to make choices and then to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes (Alsop, Bertelsen and Holland, 2006, p. 10). Already, then, we can

envision empowerment as a process and continuum, rather than as a fixed state. In addition, it is multidimensional. In this literature, empowerment consists of two main components: agency (the ability to make purposeful choices) and equality stemming from the opportunity structure (the context of formal and informal rules and norms within which actors pursue their interests) (Samman & Santos 2009). Thus, agency and equality are linked as the main dimensions of human empowerment. Individuals can be given equality, but without agency to make choices they are not empowered actors. Conversely, they can have agency, but outside a system of equality that allows choices to be transformed into desired actions and outcomes they are not empowered.

Following this conceptualization of empowerment as a continuum and as multi-dimensional, I empirically examine the emergence of the two core dimensions—agency and equality—in Canadian curricula. To this end, I constructed a unique dataset consisting of eighty history, civics, and social studies textbooks used in Canada from 1871 to 2006. Using a systematically designed coding of textbook content, I provide empirical evidence of substantive and pedagogical changes that reflect the expanding conception of individuals as agentic and equal. Prior studies have shown that the knowledge in official textbooks worldwide increasingly de-emphasizes the authority of the nation-state and the myth of an imagined national community in favor of a view where authority and identity rests in empowered individuals (Bromley, Meyer & Ramirez, 2011; Meyer, Bromley & Ramirez, 2010). Refining this concept of empowerment reveals that its exact meaning is evolving and is shaped by the local context, in addition to the influences that come from world culture. Changes in education have particular importance because, given the historical role of citizenship education as a tool for creating a unified citizenry, shifting emphases towards universalistic traits of individual empowerment has widespread implications for the mass socialization of students.

Data and Methods

Setting

In Canada the tensions between contradictory goals of promoting a cohesive national identity while teaching respect and equality among diverse social groups and preparing students to participate in a globalized world are extreme, making it a useful case for examining the diffusion of world culture. As in other countries, education in Canada was historically viewed as a key tool for creating solidarity with one's nation-state (Bendix, 1964; Tyack, 1974). Traditional civic education was designed to create a homogenous group of citizens participating in, and loyal to, a polity with distinct national boundaries (Galston, 2004; Langton & Jennings, 1968). Classic citizenship courses trained students in the structure of government, taught about the obligations of citizens, and transmitted areas of national pride and culture. In this view, the ideal citizenry shares a common value system and history and the purpose of citizenship education is to incorporate all citizens equally, without special group distinctions.

However, Canada has long struggled with defining a cohesive national identity as the country has been split between French and English colonial roots since its founding. In the 1970s Canada was the first country to adopt official multicultural policies, and it remains one of the only nations with explicit federal policies on multiculturalism. This policy protection of diverse groups is reflected in on-the-ground realities. In 2011, 20.6 percent of Canada's population was foreign-born, nearly double the proportion in the United States and second only to Australia among G8 countries plus Australia (Statistics Canada Website, 2015). Further, First Nations groups have self-government rights and protections found in few other countries in the world. In the midst of this diversity, in the majority of provinces students can graduate from high school without taking a course in Canadian history (Cohen, 2008). In such a complex social context, the question of what it means to be "Canadian" and how to balance diversity with national unity is one of great concern for citizens, scholars, and policy-makers of Canada (see, for example, Kymlicka, 1998, 2007 or Taylor, 1994). And in a world increasing migration and globalization, these challenges are rapidly becoming relevant for countries worldwide.

Data Collection Process

I analyze the emergence of emphases on agency and equality in social science textbooks from British Columbia, Canada (BC) over the period 1871-2006. Data collection took place in the School of Education Library at the University of British Columbia over two weeks in June 2010. The project initially aimed to examine the content of social science textbooks for a number of provinces over time, but, although this collection is one of the best in the country, the available textbooks did not provide sufficiently systematic coverage of the provinces over time. A total of 80 Canadian textbooks were analyzed by the author and three research assistants. The study also included an analysis of supporting documents such as those outlining curricular standards, the textbook creation process, teacher's guides, and provincial exams, although for brevity these materials are not included in the present paper.

Analysis Method

Each textbook was analyzed using a questionnaire designed to systematically capture textbook content related to human agency and equality. Much of the coding questionnaire was originally developed for a previous cross-national and longitudinal project, such as questions related to rights and student centrism (Bromley et al., 2011; Bromley, 2014; Meyer et al., 2010). Questions in the original, cross-national coding document were adjusted to capture discourse related specifically to Canada, such as discussions of French-speaking groups. Each indicator is described in more detail alongside relevant findings. Generally, however, measures of agency cover items such as whether students are encouraged to form their own opinion or get involved in society, and the extent to which individuals are depicted as independent of the state. To consider equality, a dichotomous measure notes whether various social categories are described as bearing special rights. The exact groups covered are: women, the elderly, racial or ethnic minorities, indigenous groups, immigrants/refugees, the disabled/special needs, and gays/lesbians. It took approximately one to one and a half hours to analyze each book. Analysts worked as a group to allow the author to directly monitor research assistants and answer questions as they examined books. A check of inter-rater reliability, where the same book was

coded by the author and a research assistant, showed an overall level of agreement of 82 percent. In addition to filling out the questionnaire, analysts selected relevant passages from the textbooks to illustrate the observed trends.

Findings

Overall, emphases on both agency and equality increase over time. As will be discussed later, the exact timing of these increases diverge somewhat from an idealized world cultural story, which would predict increases in individual empowerment in the wake of World War II. Specifically, depictions of individuals as agentic begin prior to World War II and increase steadily, whereas emphases on rights increase mainly since the 1980s. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Canada's first comprehensive constitutional document that enshrines the rights afforded to citizens, was established in 1982. Given that the largest increases on rights in textbooks follow directly after the Charter's creation, this event is assumed to be a key driver of emphases on equality in textbooks.[1] In the findings presented below, the textbook sample is divided into three periods, from 1871 to 1945, 1946 to 1982, and 1983 to 2006, reflecting key shifts following World War II and the creation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Agency

A first dimension of interest in understanding the rise of individual empowerment is the extent to which persons are depicted as agentic individuals with autonomy from the state. Table 1 shows substantive and pedagogical indicators of how the conception of individuals has shifted over time. The findings indicate that over time regular people are attributed with increasing levels of agency in society. All the measures of agency in this study increased significantly over time.

Table 1 about here. Substantive and Pedagogical Indicators of Agency over Time

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[1] Analyses not shown here (available on request) compared trends in agency and equality by splitting the periods at the creation of the Charter versus at the end of the Cold War showed no important difference for the agency measures, but the 1983 cutoff provided a better illustration of the trends for the equality data.

The first row in Panel A shows that regular individuals are increasingly depicted as central actors in social and historical events.[2] In the earliest period the vast majority of books do not emphasize regular individuals as being important figures in history or society, but this changes in the contemporary period where run-of-the-mill persons are given a prominent role.

To envision the increasing importance of regular people, consider a contrast with emphases on national leaders that are typical in older textbooks.[3] In "A Summary of Canadian History" published in 1869 for use in schools in British North America, the history of Canada is described in terms of the rule of each subsequent Governor, first in Quebec, then in Upper Canada (British) and united Canada. Each section contains a heading listing the governor's name, a description of how he came to office, and, typically, some praise for his time in office. For example, a section with the heading, "Charles, Marquis de Beauharnois, Governor, 1726," states:

The government was administered by Baron de Longueuil, a native of Canada, until the appointment of the Marquis de Beauharnois, in 1726, who held office for twenty years. He diligently promoted the interests of the Colony, and Seigneurial farms were extended along the whole distance from Quebec to Montreal…The Marquis de la Jonquière, Admiral of France, was appointed Governor in 1746; but, on the outward voyage, his fleet was intercepted by Admiral Anson and Rear-Admiral Warren. The French were defeated in the engagement which ensued, and the new Governor of Canada was made prisoner.

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[2] Specifically, the question asked, "Overall in the textbook how important are the actions of individuals (regular people, not political leaders) in shaping historical or contemporary events or solving social problems?" A zero indicated "not emphasized", a one indicated "somewhat important" and a two indicated "very important."

[3] A parallel question asked, "Overall in the textbook how important are the actions of national leaders (e.g. political or military leaders) or the nation-state in shaping historical or contemporary events or solving social problems?" Responses fall on the same zero-to-two scale, but the reverse trend occurs – there is a significant decline over time. The rise of regular individuals in history comes at the expense of official political and military leaders, who are given less prominent a role over time in civic education textbooks.

Upon the capture becoming known in France, the Count de la Galissonière was commissioned to fill the vacancy so created" (Boyd, 1860, p. 41-42).

In older books, the history of Canada is the history of official figures. Extensive emphasis is placed on the names, titles and even detailed personal descriptions of official leaders. With the exception of a few key figures, such as Prime Ministers, very few of the individuals described in such detail in these early books appear in the most recent ones.

Contemporary books avoid detailed discussion of a great number of leaders. Instead, they place increasing emphasis on the lives and actions of regular individuals. Currently-approved textbooks promote the message that students and regular citizens should be actively involved in national and international life. An exemplar of this message is found in a Social Studies textbook for tenth grade with a three-page-long section entitled "How Citizens Can Influence Government Today" (Cruxton & Wilson, 1997, p. 27-29). It discusses how to get involved through formal political channels (being informed, voting, writing to a member of parliament, speaking to a parliamentary committee, and joining a pressure group to lobby government), and also devotes an entire page to the effectiveness of peaceful demonstrations, focusing on a standoff between environmental activists and logging companies over plans to cut old growth forest in B.C. (Figure 1).

Figure 1 about here. Individual action to promote social change

Similarly, a Civics 11 textbook for eleventh grade sends a strong message that ordinary people, and especially students, can change the world. As illustrated in Figure 2, the books tells students that they are the most important human rights defenders and provides a list of ways to be involved in social change, including writing petitions, lobbying government, and fundraising.

Figure 2 about here: Ways for citizens to get involved

To the extent that regular individuals are mentioned in early textbooks, it is in their capacity as filling various fixed social roles, rather than as empowered individuals. For instance, one chapter starts with the sentences, "Reading the story of the early days of our province is like watching a moving-picture. There are three figures that constantly flit to and fro across the silver screen, those of the fur-trader, the gold-miner, and the merchant" (Anstey, 1942, p. 171).

The second and third indicators in Panel A give a sense of how much individuals are authorized to act, not just within their own country, but globally. This expansion of the realm of individual action to the international arena marks a particularly extreme form of global change, one tied directly to the declining charisma of the nation-state as a sovereign and autonomous actor. Historically, nation-states and their representatives were the most legitimate actors authorized to engage in international affairs. But with social and cultural globalization, the traditional hierarchy of global interaction has broken down, and regular individuals and the organizations they create become actively involved in global issues (Boli & Thomas, 1997; 1999).

In the earliest period of this study, pre-World War II, textbooks never depicted individuals as directly part of an international community, nor as participating in global issues through international non-governmental organizations.[4] The nation-state was the main actor empowered to engage in the international arena. In contrast, in contemporary books, individuals are routinely described as being members of a global community and international NGOs are described as playing an important role in world events. Individuals are encouraged to be involved not just in their local community, but to envision themselves as active participants in a larger world. In this sample in the earliest period not a single book mentions ideas of global citizenship (although ideas of cosmopolitanism have been around since Ancient

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[4] The two questions ask "Are international non-governmental organizations mentioned? (e.g. Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch. This includes any of the country's nongovernmental organizations that are described as working internationally.) 0=no, 1=yes" and "Does the book discuss (at least a paragraph) the individual's role as a global citizen or membership in an international (meaning global, not regional) community/society? 0=no, 1=yes".

Greece) or international NGOs (though during this time international organizations were playing a very active role in, for example, the abolition of slavery). But in the most recent period 41 percent of textbooks in the sample discuss global citizenship and 54 percent discuss international NGOs. Many of these discussions are extensive, such as an entire chapter in "Civics Today" called "You as a Global Citizen" (Watt et al., 2000). Although individuals are still citizens of nation-states, they are also imagined as directly engaged in a broader world; agentic behavior is decreasingly bounded by national territorial boundaries.

As an example, the final point in Figure 2, above, indicates that non-governmental organizations are a way for individual citizens to actively participate in society. This point is reiterated in many books, often with extensive discussions of non-governmental groups, such as Amnesty International and Free the Children. One textbook contains an entire section on Greenpeace, with an emphasis on the organization as a source of national pride and a venue for public participation. The section begins by saying, "From its origins in Vancouver in 1970, Greenpeace has become one of the largest environmental groups in the world. How do protest groups like Greenpeace influence the political system?" (Francis et al 1998, p. 248). Another book includes a unit called "The Active Citizen" with sections such as "How can citizens bring about change within the democratic system?" and "Should we change the way we elect our governments in Canada?" (Watt et al., 2000, p. vi).

In addition to changes in substance, pedagogical shifts are also linked to ideas of individual agency. A range of pedagogical changes can be attributed to student-centered or learner-centered theories of education and child development. Such approaches emphasize strategies such as developing curricula that meets age-appropriate developmental stages, 'scaffolding' concepts in a particular sequence to build knowledge, and presenting material in a way that is relevant and interesting to children. For example, in the preface of the textbook "Topical Studies in Canadian History" the author states: "Each topic, it will be observed, is first given in outline, then in greater detail. This arrangement is made, because it is especially true of students that "they can't see the wood for the trees." (Spence, 1897). Another says, "I have endeavored to tell the story of Canada simply, and to choose subjects for illustration

which would help boys and girls to understand the conditions of life prevailing in former times and in different parts of our widely-extended country" (Weaver, 1905). In a limited way a developmental approach indicates the increasing status of individuals because students are at least intended to understand material. Consider this in contrast to a much older style where students would use rote memorization to repeat sacred texts in languages they do not understand, such as initial teaching in the French language to patois-speakers in France (Weber, 1976) or Catholics memorizing biblical excerpts in Latin. But another strand of student-centered pedagogy goes even further, empowering the student as an individual involved in the active construction of knowledge rather than merely learning content.

I use two indicators of whether the pedagogical approach of the textbook envisions students as agentic: first, whether questions are open-ended and, second, whether students are encouraged to form their own opinion. Both questions relate to the choice element of agency referred to at the outset of the paper; answering open-ended questions and forming opinions require choice and decision-making, the foundations of agentic behavior. There are statistically significant increases over time in both indicators. Starting with the use of open-ended questions, in the first period there are many books that consist simply of text, with no questions whatsoever for students.[5] Those that do contain questions ask students to recount the "facts" described in the book. For example, earlier you read an excerpt describing the detailed accounting of governors of early Canada in "A Summary of Canadian History". Each chapter of the book concludes with approximately two pages of questions that test student memorization like the excerpt in Figure 3.

Figure 3 about here: Closed, Factual Questions

In contrast, the book "Civics Today" published in 2000, contains a series of highlighted textboxes labeled "Interactive Questions" throughout the entire text (rather than pushed to the end of each chapter). The questions ask things such as "Should we as 21st-century citizens have any responsibility for the present state of Aboriginal issues?

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[5] The coding document states, "Are there open questions (meaning questions without right-wrong answers that require students to form their own opinion)? 0= no questions, 1= there are questions, but none are open-ended, 2= some/a few questions are open-ended, 3= a lot/nearly all questions are open-ended."

Discuss." And "Do you believe that publicly funded schools should be extended to other alternative groups experiencing problems, or are Aboriginal students a special case? Defend your viewpoint" (Watt et al., 2000).

In the latter example of an open-ended question, students are asked to defend their viewpoint, which is also an illustration of the related indicator asking whether students should form their own opinion.[6] As with open-ended questions, early books rarely ask students to form their own opinion, but contemporary books do this extensively. In modern textbooks, many questions are open-ended, without a right or wrong answer, and students are encouraged to form their own opinions. In this way, students are endowed with the authority to participate in knowledge construction; they make choices and decisions, in contrast to rote memorization of the dominant view of history and society.

Equality

Emphases on agency, discussed above, began prior to World War II and increased significantly in both the second and third periods of the study. In contrast, emphases on rights were barely present prior to World War II and increased most sharply in the third period, as shown in Table 2. The types of rights considered include both discussions of human rights and the rights of a range of persons that could be thought of as historically marginalized in Canadian society. These categories of persons encompass race, ethnicity, or culture-based groups (such as French speakers, indigenous groups, or immigrants), as well as the poor, women, the elderly, children, gays/lesbians, and the disabled.

Table 2 about here. Substantive and Pedagogical Indicators of Equality over Time

For most groups there is a striking and significant increase in the proportion of textbooks that mention rights over time. Human rights discussions increase from no mention in the earliest period to 62 percent of books in the most recent period. The rights of women, indigenous groups, and racial and ethnic minorities also show a dramatic increase,

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[6] The exact question is "Does the textbook encourage students to form their own opinions? 0=no, 1=a little, 2=a lot."

and are all present in more than 30 percent of textbook in the most recent period. The rights of the poor, elderly, disabled and gays/lesbians also increase, although these categories of persons are only present in 8 to 11 percent of books in the contemporary period.

The rights of French-speakers also increase, but the trend of these two groups is slightly different than others because of relatively early emphases on rights. The early emphases on rights of French speakers and of immigrants (who are typically European settlers in books in the early period) show that pre-World War II, these two groups had a special place in Canadian society. In practice, oppression of many minority groups was routine, but immigrants and French-speakers were most often singled out as being entitled to some forms of rights in the earliest period. In modern textbooks, French-speakers and immigrants have lost some of this special status as they become just two of many groups that are discussed as bearing rights; so much so that today human rights, women's rights, and indigenous people's rights, are discussed most frequently.

Textbook discussions of immigrant rights are somewhat different than other groups because the trend is curvilinear. A shift in the proportion of books that discuss immigrant's rights parallels changes in the types of immigrants entering Canada over time and changes in beliefs about how immigrants should be incorporated into national society. Pre-World War II more immigrants are from Europe, and in the earliest textbooks they are described as 'settlers' rather than 'immigrants'. Settlers are envisioned as the very foundation of Canada, the group who built the country; not new arrivals to an already established nation. As we approach the Great Wars, immigration started to come more from Eastern Europe. Increase in non-white, non-European immigrants truly began after World War II. In the 1950s and 1960s, the discourse was primarily about assimilation of immigrants (and indigenous groups) into mainstream Canadian society. These groups were not singled out as in particular need of rights because the goal was to turn immigrants into Canadian citizens. But in the contemporary period, starting in the 1970s, but particularly after the establishment of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the dialogue changes completely and aims to promote and support different identities.

This assimilationist discourse also likely suppressed discussions of indigenous people's rights somewhat, and certainly the character of indigenous rights changed dramatically over this period. Indigenous right also have a different flavor than the rights attributed to other groups. Rights discourse of indigenous peoples in Canadian texts is one of the few instances of collective 'group rights'. Other categories typically can be characterized as extending individual rights to new sets of people, recognizing past marginalization. In contrast, a number of indigenous people's rights belong to the group rather than any individual within the group. For example, one textbook describes:

In 2000 the [Nisga'a] treaty was officially ratified by Parliament. In this treaty the Nisga'a were given wide powers of self-government in matters of culture, language, and family life…the government of Nunavut was given wide powers of self-government over the territory's natural resources and over the territory's education and justice systems. It was also given the ability to make laws that concern wildlife and the environment" (Watt et al., 2000, p. 100).

Over the same period, pedagogy also shifts to incorporate ideas of equality. Most directly, early books rarely encourage students to respect the opinions of others while contemporary books strongly convey it is important to respect others' opinions.[7] Just as forming one's own opinion indicates personal agency, respecting others' opinions shows awareness and acceptance of their agentic status. For example, "Civics Today" tells students that elements of democracy include respecting the rights of others, having a sense of responsibility and caring for others, and protecting the dignity of all people (Watt et al., 2000, p. 10). It also contains a section entitled "Conflict Resolution" that instructs students:

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[7] The question asks, "Does the textbook encourage students to respect the opinions of others? 0=no, 1=a little, 2=a lot."

In the school environment, students are expected to talk to one another in a respectful manner when

negotiating conflicts…In society at large, some situations require similar methods [of negotiation,

mediation, and arbitration]. (p. 11)

A final pedagogical indicator characterizes the overall narrative structure as the book on a zero to two scale

where zero indicates there is a single narrative depicted as the factual record of history, one indicates national history is

depicted as consisting of multiple perspectives, and two depicts historical narratives as socially constructed. In the

early period many books scored a zero, meaning that coders subscribed to the view that they were best characterized as

(to use the exact language from the coding document), "provid[ing] a factual record of what happened or is happening.

This textbook will tell you all about the important people and events that shaped this period of history or social issues.

Your job as a student is to learn and remember these main facts, events, and people." For example, in the preface to a

book published in 1867, one author describes their approach:

Starting out with a definite understanding of the present state of affairs, the pupil goes back to the

beginning of his country's history; and notes, step by step, how this state of affairs has been brought

about. In a work of this nature it is scarcely necessary to cite authorities." (Spence, 1897, p. iii)

In early books, the important historical and social events are considered so obvious and clear as to be

like a law of nature, not requiring expert interpretation to understand the causal sequence. In contemporary

books, however, the vast majority best fit the description (again using the exact language from the coding

document), "Different people have different histories or understandings of the past and present. The job of the

historian or social scientist is to weigh evidence critically, and through that process make conclusions. This

textbook will present conflicting accounts of historical periods or social issues. The 'correct' interpretation

depends on the evidence. Your job as a student is to evaluate the different accounts and come to your own conclusions about what happened, and what it means." For example, a grade 11 social studies text has an entire chapter on strategies for historical inquiry and urges students to view history as socially constructed:

> Like most people, you probably accept the history you read as fact – a true representation of what happened in the past. However, history is not just a series of facts; it is also a story. The version of history you read in this text might not be accepted by everyone who reads it… The drawback to a national story is that it may not be everyone's story. This is especially true in a country like Canada, with its many groups of people and points of view. (Fielding & Evans, 2001, p. 11)

Discussion & Conclusion

In an earlier era, regular people, especially students, were subordinate to the authority of formal schooling and the canonical knowledge conferred by textbooks. In the most extreme contemporary contrasts, all students are taught to be co-creators of knowledge with the text, to consider the subjectivity of narratives of history and social events, and to be empowered participants shaping national and international society. Knowledge is increasingly viewed as constructed and students are intended to critically assess historical events, form their own opinions, and respect the opinions of a growing array of others. As the view of history as a sacred thread unravels in favor of a vision of knowledge as increasingly constructed, and the charisma of nation-states gives way to the authority of regular individuals, it becomes more difficult to explicitly sustain a picture of society as consisting of groups with unequal status. This study documented two dimensions of rising status of individuals—agency and equality—although there may be other facets that could usefully be developed in future research.

Human agency alone, without widespread principles of equality, falls short of contemporary visions of empowerment. The reverse is also true; visions of equality without agency do not make for empowered humans, as in, for example, ideologies of the former Soviet Union. Along these lines, elements of agency are depicted as central to the human rights education movement, as conveyed by discourse advocating that students be educated to work "for" human rights, including developing critical thinking skills, and not just taught "about" human rights (Bajaj, 2011). Among practitioners, agentic, student-centered learning is routinely depicted as integral to promoting human rights and equality of diverse groups. For example, the National Association of Multicultural Education website (2015) states that multicultural education, "prepares all students to work actively toward structural equality in organizations and institutions by providing the knowledge, dispositions, and skills for the redistribution of power and income among diverse groups." Students are not just taught that they are inherently equal, they are also taught that they can and should actively work towards equality. In Canadian textbooks, emphases on agency increased early on, and existed to some degree even before World War II. Emphases on equality for many groups come later. Perhaps particular groups (e.g. white males from Western European countries) were empowered earlier, but the idea of all sorts of individuals as possessing both agency and equality was weak. Thus is it not until the most recent period that a more complete vision of society as constituted by empowered individuals emerges.

As noted, in Canada the rise of human agency came first, followed by the expansion of equality to diverse groups. The temporal sequence of increasing agency and then expanded equality may possibly extend to other places. In line with this speculation, prior research of global trends in textbooks starting in the 1970s showed a linear increase in student-centered emphases over time (i.e. agency; Bromley, Meyer & Ramirez, 2011), while other studies of emphases on human rights (Meyer, Ramirez & Bromley, 2010) and minority rights (Bromley 2014) show increases mainly in the 1990s. An issue for future research is to examine whether in other contexts, as in Canada, expansions in agency precede and help generate expansions in equality, or whether systematic variations exist (e.g. perhaps emphases on equality come before emphases on agency in former Soviet countries).

A limitation of this study is that it does not directly observe how the local and global are linked through concrete actions such as the embrace or resistance of world cultural principles by policy-makers, education professionals, and other stakeholders. But, by integrating these findings with core tenets of world culture research, two observations about the interplay between local and global influences arise indirectly. First, world culture is said to stem largely from Western cultural roots and spread globally in the wake of World War II (Boli & Thomas. 1997; Lechner & Boli 2008; Meyer et al., 1997). Canada, with its European roots, should be a source of world culture and, in line with this description, its textbooks have elements of the Western individualism that comes to characterize world culture even prior to World War II. In particular, emphases on agency are present before the War, although they increase significantly in the post-War period. Thus, it is plausible that Canada (itself a product of Western European influences) played a role in the construction of agentic elements of world culture as much as it was shaped by global forces. Although it was not the main focus of this study, in the course of data collection I encountered very few instances where incorporating world cultural themes were contentious in Canada. Resistance seemed to be the exception rather than the norm; indeed, the government often drove curricular reform through revisions to mandatory course content.[8] The oddity of government support for themes that undercut the charisma of the nation-state could perhaps be attributed, at least in part, to a historical affinity between Canadian cultural roots and central elements of world culture. But more research that directly examines the actors carrying and constructing world culture in local contexts would be valuable.

Second, the findings illustrate that world cultural influences do not arrive into local contexts as a complete product in the wake of World War II. In the Canadian case, emphases on agency increase steadily over time, and emphases on equality did not rise sharply until the creation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. Thus, Western influence over world culture is not a fixed matter, as cultural content itself is evolving. Within the West countries also change over time in line with global cultural trends, and global influence is mediated by national events (like the creation of the Charter). Canada grows beyond its starting point in terms of emphases on agency and expands in a new direction to include emphases on rights. Globalization, on cultural, political and economic fronts, has now had

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[8] Details available from author upon request.

decades to advance; as globalization proceeds, world culture takes on an increasingly distinct character and its origins become more distant. It expands and changes in ways that could not have been predicted simply by noting Western cultural origins. The rise of a unique world culture may make Western countries themselves increasingly subject to the world cultural pressures they helped create. Additional research examining how the content of world culture changes over time, and how countries are variably shaped by world culture over time and around the world would be of great interest.

In addition to highlighting to the multi-dimensional nature of empowerment, as well as possible temporal sequencing and geographic variation, this study speaks to the potential for constructing a new cross-national, longitudinal measure of individualism. As noted at the outset, rising individualism is thought to be at the root of many world cultural changes (Bromley & Meyer, 2015; Meyer, 2010). An excellent early study looked at the rise of psychology as an indicator of growing individualism in societies worldwide (Frank et al., 1995). Shifting now to think of agency and equality as dimensions of human empowerment opens the possibility for constructing additional worldwide measures of individualism. For example, indicators of choice in a society could speak to issues of agency (e.g. voting or prevalence of birth control) while indices of rights or economic disparity could account for the equality dimension (e.g. the Gini index or ratification of various human rights treaties). A general 'empowerment' index would be a valuable measure, both as an outcome and as an independent variable for world culture scholars.

Education is shifting away from building a sense of an imagined national community based on shared history and culture, and towards an emphasis on a general set of civic skills and values, including democracy, peaceful conflict resolution, and community involvement. The content and pedagogy of citizenship education moves from developing a unique national character towards a more universal set of values thought of as relevant and beneficial to all individuals regardless of national origin. Specifically, individuals ought to be empowered, meaning they have the capability for making rational decisions (agency) in a context that allows equal opportunity (equality). The charisma of the nation-state as a sovereign actor declines, and increasingly empowered individuals and the structures they create (often

organizations and associations of various types) become key actors in national and international society. Looking to the future, if taken to an extreme, expansions in individual empowerment may lead to instances of "hyper-empowerment", where depictions and enactments of individual choice, control, and equality far outpace reasonable expectations.

Tables

	1871-1945 (n=19)	1946-1982 (n=24)		1983-2006 (n=37)	
A. Substantive Indicators of Agency					
Imptc. of Indiv. Action (0-2)	0.47	0.79	*	1.38	****
Mention Individual Global Citizenship (0-1)	0.00	0.21	**	0.41	*
Mention Intl NGOs (0-1)	0.00	0.17	**	0.54	***
B. Pedagogical Indicators of Agency					
Open-ended Questions (0-3)	0.37	1.17	***	2.35	****
Form Own Opinion (0-2)	0.16	0.63	***	1.65	****

**** p<.001, *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1, one-tailed tests

Notes: Significance indicates t-test comparing difference between periods 1 and 2.

**Table 1. Substantive and Pedagogical Indicators of Agency over Time**

	1871-1945 (n=19)	1946-1982 (n=24)		1983-2006 (n=37)	
A. Substantive Indicators of Equality (0-1)					
Human Rights	0.00	0.21	**	0.62	****
Women's Rights	0.11	0.13		0.68	****
Indigenous Rights	0.05	0.17		0.81	****
Children's Rights	0.00	0.00		0.32	****
Rights of the Poor	0.00	0.04		0.08	
Immigrant/Refugee Rights	0.21	0.08		0.32	**
Racial or Ethnic Minority Rights	0.05	0.25	**	0.43	*
Rights of the Elderly	0.00	0.04		0.11	
Disabled/Special Needs Rights	0.00	0.00		0.11	**
Gay/Lesbian Rights	0.00	0.00		0.08	*
French-speakers' Rights	0.26	0.46	*	0.51	
B. Pedagogical Indicators of Equality (0-2)					
Respect Others Opinion	0.16	0.50	**	1.43	****
Knowledge Narrative	0.26	0.35		1.54	****

**** p<.001, *** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1, one-tailed tests

Note: Significance indicates t-test comparing difference between periods 1 and 2.

Table 2. Substantive and Pedagogical Indicators of Equality over Time

Figures
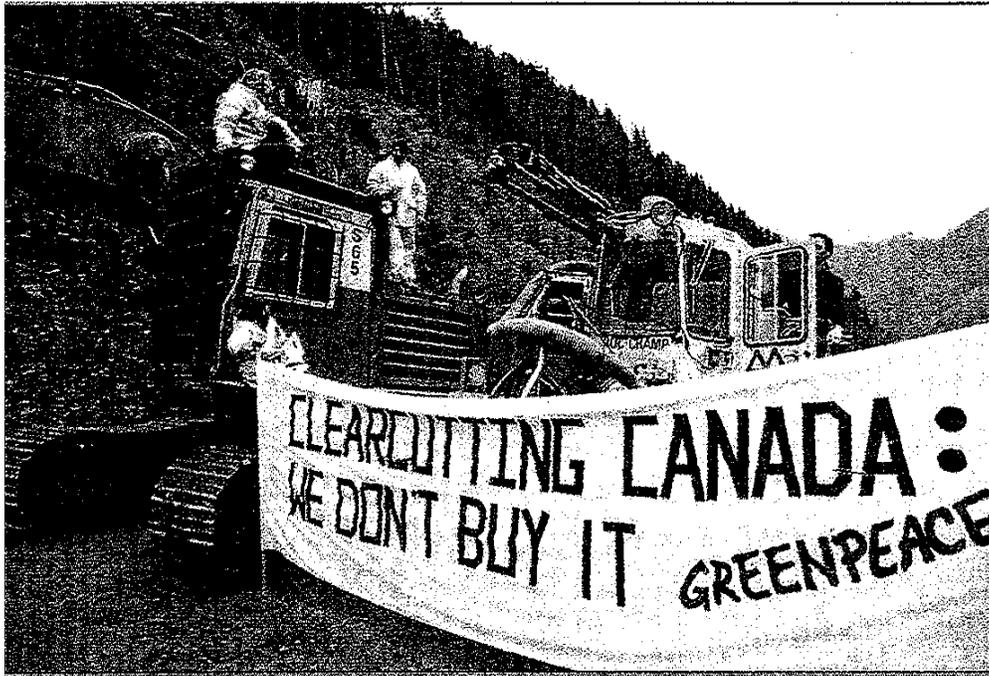
Figure 1. Individual action to promote social change
Source: Social Studies 10. Cruxton and Wilson 1997.

YOU—The Most Important Human Rights Defender

The majority of the defenders of human rights are ordinary people. They see that something is unjust and try to right it. Significant change in our world occurs at the community level. These changes are not covered in great detail by the media and are generally not led by a well-known public figure. However, the dedication of people to causes that they believe in is the most important catalyst for change in our school, neighbourhood, country, and world. In order to recognize this fact, the UN awarded a Prize in Human Rights in 1998 to "all human rights defenders."

Methods of Non-violent Action

When citizens act as groups rather than individuals, the potential for change is often stronger. It is interesting to note that students, especially in universities, have always been well represented in democratic protests throughout the world. Here are some of the ways that global citizens can promote awareness of their views and their desire for action:

- write a letter of opposition or support to an editor, politician, businessperson, or member of the media
- create a **petition**
- participate in a community/council meeting
- write and read a speech
- create a banner, song, symbol, play, children's book, cartoon, computer game, piece of artwork
- have a **vigil** or a mock trial
- organize a fundraiser
- lobby a committee or group
- organize an assembly of protest or support
- organize a teach-in, a boycott, a sit-in, a pray-in
- join an NGO, political party, community or cultural group

Figure 2: Ways for citizens to get involved
Source: Civics 11. Watt et al 2000, p. 138

QUESTIONS TO CHAPTER IV.

I. Who was the first Governor under the new régime, and when appointed? What procured his recall? Where did he die? Who succeeded him, and with what titles? What other officials accompanied the Marquis de Tracy? What regiment now came? In what year were sheep and horses introduced? What measures were taken against the Iroquois, and with what effect? Describe the French expedition against the Indians. What became of the officers of the regiment? What did the viceroy do before returning? Who was the next Governor, and in what year? What was the population in this year? What peace was concluded, and how long did it last?

II. What travels were now undertaken, and by whom? With what result? Where was a site for a fort fixed upon? Why did the Governor resign? What disease broke out among the Indians, and with what result?

III. Who followed M. de Courcelles? What fort was built, and how named? What scheme of exploration planned, and by whom? Who discovered the Mississippi? What induced La Salle to go to France? What did he effect in that country? What did he do on arriving in Canada? Who joined his expedition, and in what capacity? Describe the first vessel built in Canada. Where did La Salle establish trading-posts? What became of the Griffon?

Figure 3: Closed, Factual Questions
Source: Boyd 1869, p. 54.

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