

EXCAVATING THE LABOUR DISPUTE DATA FROM STATISTICS CANADA: A Research Note¹

Linda Briskin

Social Science Division/School of Women's Studies, York University,
Toronto, Canada

with Kristine Klement

Doctoral Candidate, Social and Political Thought Programme,
York University, Toronto, Canada

As a result of restructuring and globalization, Canadian workers face deteriorating conditions of work, loss of jobs to low wage regions, dismantling of social programs, decreases in the social wage and a discursive shift to radical individualism. Have these changes shifted the understanding and practice of worker militancy? Have the gender-specific impacts of the 'new economy' politicized women workers in particular, especially those in the public sector, and brought them to the forefront of resistance? These are the two key research questions guiding this project.

The first step in this research has been to seek out the available Canadian statistical data which might help make visible the profile of worker militancy. This data focuses largely on strikes and lockouts (and, to a limited extent, grievances). In the Labour Force Survey [LFS] and the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics [SLID], the proxy for the larger concept of 'worker militancy' is 'labour dispute' which includes both strike and lockout. These sources help make visible the profile of the striker. The Workplace and Employee Survey [WES] differentiates 'work-to-rule, work slowdown, strikes, lockouts and other labour related actions' and offers a profile of the striker in the worker questionnaire, and a profile of the firm in the employer questionnaire. Since the actual tables from the surveys are not yet available, this Research Note has the modest goal of introducing the reader to the ways that the LFS, SLID and WES handle the issue of labour disputes.²

LABOUR FORCE SURVEY (LFS)

The Labour Force Survey was developed following the Second World War to supply information on the massive labour market changes involved in the transition to a peace-time economy. The LFS collects data on the labour market activities and demographic characteristics of the working age population in Canada. It provides employment estimates by industry, occupation, public and private sector, hours worked and much more. For employees, wage rates, union status, job permanency and workplace size are also produced. The LFS is a monthly household survey of a representative sample of individuals who are fifteen years plus (with a few exclusions such as inmates of institutions). The LFS

uses a rotating panel sample design in which households remain in the sample for six consecutive months. Since July 1995, 54,000 households have been included.³ LFS tables will make visible some of the demographic characteristics of those involved in labour disputes.

ABSENCES FROM WORK DUE TO LABOUR DISPUTES

Respondents are asked to identify the main reason for an absence from work. Question #130 refers to full-week and Question #154 to part-week absences; in both cases, one possible answer is labour dispute. Through the absence from work question, LFS has collected information on labour disputes since 1976.⁴ The number of full weeks absent from work are recorded.

The LFS Interviewer Manual indicates that labour dispute includes both a strike and a lockout. A "strike" may also be referred to by the respondent as a "study session" or a "refusal to cross the picket line". A place of work (e.g., a plant or factory) could be shut down because of a strike. Employees who are not members of the union involved in the strike might be temporarily laid off. This would not be considered a "Labour Dispute", but coded as a "Temporary layoff due to business conditions".

The LFS data is collected in the third week of each month and specifically in reference to "last week" (ie., last week were you absent all week? part week?). A labour dispute of any duration gets counted if it occurred during that week, but it is also possible that the person reporting a part week absence due to labour dispute was involved in a dispute lasting more than a week, but one which started or ended during the reference week. This means that it is not possible to infer anything from a difference between the patterns of 'part-week' and 'full-week' absence due to labour dispute.⁵ As a result, in the tables we have ordered, we have combined part-week and full-week absence.

EXCLUDING THE SELF-EMPLOYED FROM THE UNIVERSE OF THOSE INVOLVED IN LABOUR DISPUTES

Part-week absence information is collected only for employees while data on full-week absence is collected for all employed persons. This latter category includes the self-employed (with or without employees). Self-employed persons are excluded from the universe of those who might be absent part-week from a labour dispute. On the surface, one might assume that labour disputes are not relevant to the self-employed.

We queried Statistics Canada about the exclusion of the self-employed from the part-week absence question. Geoff Bowlby, Head of Analysis and Content for the LFS, explained: "In testing of the 1997 questionnaire (the current design), we found that the self-employed had difficulty responding to Q153. This is what was written in a 1995 document, *Labour force survey redesign: questionnaire development and testing*, 'For the self-employed, the concept of missing work and

working extra hours in a week seems largely irrelevant, since variation in work hours is mostly a function of the amount of work on hand. To be absent from work one must have a notion of being scheduled at work, but many of the self-employed set their own schedules. Thus, the concepts behind the questions concerning usual hours and hours away are incongruent with the experience of the self-employed respondent and this leads to both time-consuming probing on the part of the interviewer and responses of questionable validity."

Given the transformation of the labour market, the decrease in full-time employees, and the increase in non-standard employment, own-account self-employed who engage in a labour dispute may be an increasingly significant category. However, despite a desire to tease out whether the self-employed ever report full-week absence due to labour dispute, given sample size limits, we have included only 'employees' in the tables on workplace profile which are now on order.

UNION COVERAGE

It was only in 1997 that a question on union status was included in the LFS.⁶ Prior to that time labour dispute information was collected without information about union status. For 1997-2002, we had hoped to assess the relationship between union coverage and labour dispute; however, sample sizes do not permit this.

One might hypothesize that only those covered by unions would be involved in labour disputes. However, drawing on the Workplace and Employee Survey [WES], Ernest Akyeampong (2003) makes visible the use of a grievance system by those without union coverage. Although access to a grievance system was considerably higher for the unionized: 85% compared to 35% for the non-unionized, usage rates were fairly similar: 11.2% of unionized workers and 10.5% of the non-unionized. Interestingly, Akyeampong reports that "for some groups such as youth, production workers with no trade or certification, and workers in Alberta, the usage rate for non-unionized workers was much higher"(33). He also found that "approximately 61% of the employees who filed a grievance in 1999 perceived some improvement... Overall, men were more likely than women to indicate an improvement (70% versus 53%)"(34). However, perhaps counter-intuitively, "fewer unionized workers than non-unionized reported an improvement in their post-grievance situation (54% versus 68%)" (35).

Although it is beyond the scope of this research note to comment on this data, it is worth noting that registering a grievance is a form of worker militancy, and that those without union coverage were extensively involved in this activity. Although statistical data may not be available to allow scrutiny of the differences between unionized and un-unionized forms of worker militancy, it is critical not to assume that strikes and grievances both commonly associated with the presence of a union, are only a practice of the unionized.

VALIDITY OF THE DATA

Statistics Canada has indicated that a strike which continues over more than one data collection period will only be counted once in the yearly totals. However, given the focus on the reference week, it is the case that some strikes will be missed, and the profile of 'strikers' available through this data will be incomplete, except to the extent that sampling techniques compensate. However, all the data in LFS is limited in this way.

Human Resources Development Canada [HRDC] has given us their micro-data for all strikes since 1943⁷. Based on this data, one can conclude that the LFS will capture about 70.2% of strikes. The general thinking is as follows: for strikes that last one day there is a 25% probability of recording them (that is, a 5/20 possibility), for two days a slightly higher probability etc. Strikes lasting sixteen days or more have 100% chance of being recorded. Between 1976-2001, HRDC recorded 14494 strikes. Taking into account strike duration and the fact that there are sometimes more than twenty workdays in a month, LFS would capture about 10,170 strikes.

TABLES ON ORDER⁸

We have been able to order only five modest tables from the LFS, and unfortunately, given sample size limitations, none of them includes gender as a variable.⁹ Although the tables are not yet available, these tables will generate the following information about those involved in labour disputes: age, education, type of economic family (dual earner, single earner, single parent), hourly earnings, and employment form (part time/full time and private and public sector).

SURVEY OF LABOUR AND INCOME DYNAMICS [SLID]¹⁰

"The SLID was designed to capture changes in the economic well-being of individuals and families over time and the determinants of labour market and income changes... Since SLID additionally carries a broad selection of human capital variables, it is also used for studies of such topics as gender wage and earnings gaps.... The samples from SLID are selected from the monthly LFS. [They are] composed of two panels. Each panel consists of two LFS rotation groups and includes roughly 15,000 households. A panel is surveyed for a period of six consecutive years. Thus two panels are always overlapping."¹¹

Unlike the data from LFS which is collected on a monthly basis in relation to one specific week, the SLID data is collected in reference to the past year. SLID also directs its attention to race, ethnicity and immigrant status, glaring absences in the LFS. In many respects, then, this data offers considerable advantages. However, although one of the SLID's goals is to capture longitudinal changes in the economic well-being of individuals and families, the SLID only began in

1993. And its small sample size limits regional comparisons which are significant in a country like Canada which faces notable regional economic inequality.

ABSENCES FROM WORK DUE TO LABOUR DISPUTES

The absences must last a minimum of seven consecutive days including days that the respondent would not have normally worked (excluding fully paid vacation). SLID data, then, does not capture strikes of less than five workdays. For the period 1976-2001, 27.6% of strikes recorded by HRDC were between one and four workdays. Thus 72.4% of strikes would be captured by the SLID, slightly higher than for the LFS.

The SLID divides absences into voluntary and involuntary. Voluntary absences include: own illness or disability - work related; own illness or disability - not work related; parental leave [previously 'maternity leave']; caring for own children; caring for elder relative(s); other personal or family responsibilities; school or educational leave; and unpaid or partially paid vacation). Involuntary absences include: **labour dispute**; temporary layoff due to seasonal conditions; temporary layoff - non-seasonal; and new job to start in future.

The distinction between voluntary and involuntary absences is puzzling. Curiously, illness or disability are included in the 'voluntary' list. Layoffs are correctly seen as involuntary because they are outside the control of the worker; however labour disputes are also categorized as involuntary.

Labour disputes include both strikes and lockouts. Since lockouts are employer-initiated, they too would be involuntary. However, going on strike is a voluntary, democratic decision made by workers.¹² Although the categories of strike and lockout can be somewhat permeable (for example, a strike can turn into a lockout), combining strike and lock-out data, which is done in both the LFS and the SLID, obscures some of what might be learned about worker militancy, and conflates worker and employer militancy.

Labour dispute is defined in the 2003 SLID Interviewers Manual as "being directly involved in a labour dispute -- on strike, locked out, working to rule, unwilling to cross picket lines." When queried about the inclusion of 'work to rule' in this list, Gaetan Garneau, a senior analyst with the SLID team, indicated that it was a mistake and it would be removed for the 2004 survey.

SLID data on labour disputes may also be less transparent than LFS data. Garneau indicated that "In general, we try to follow as much as possible the LFS (their definitions and their concepts). Nevertheless, it may happen that through time some differences appear."¹³ One such difference relates to the instructions to interviewers about coding a work absence due to a strike of another union. In the LFS, the coding for employees who are not members of the striking union and who are temporarily laid off is "Temporary layoff due to business conditions". When queried, SLID analysts indicated that there is no such direction in the SLID manual, despite the word 'directly' in the definition of

labour dispute. As a result of this query, Garneau indicates that "we will add the notes missing to the interviewer guide for the collection of 2004." He also pointed out, "However, chances are that it may be possible that a high number of those cases (temporary layoff due to a strike from another union) have been already classified in the same category as the LFS given the fact that the interviewers who are doing our survey are the same as the ones who are conducting the LFS survey. So, when the categories are very similar, they may classify those people in the appropriate category even if there is no mention about this in the interviewer manual."

TABLES ON ORDER

Despite sample size limitations, a number of tables are on order from the SLID. These tables will offer a portrait of those involved in labour disputes in the years 1996, 1999 and 2001. In addition to age, sex and provincial breakdowns, table dimensions include economic family composition (unattached individuals, spouses with and without children and lone parents), number of earners in family, number of family members in full-time jobs, hourly earnings, earnings in relation to the minimum wage, occupation, and a derived variable which combines visible minority and immigration status. This derived variable challenges commonsense assumptions that visible minority workers are necessarily immigrants. The participation in labour disputes by Canadian-born visible and non-visible minority workers, and visible minority and non-visible minority immigrants will be highlighted. Despite its limits and inherent racism, the terminology of 'visible minority' continues to be used by Statistics Canada.

WORKPLACE AND EMPLOYEE SURVEY [WES]¹⁴

"The Workplace and Employee Survey aims to shed light on the relationship among competitiveness, innovation, technology use and human resource management on the employer side and technology use, training, job stability and earnings on the employee side. This is a longitudinal survey, so it will track the same establishments and their employees over a number of years... On the workplace side we capture data on employment, vacancies, hiring, separations, human resource practices, compensation, work organization, training, industrial relations, competition, business strategy, organization change, technology, innovation, and to a lesser extent, business performance. On the worker side, we capture technology use, training, work arrangements, employee participation, and personal and family support. This is in addition to data on education, occupation, collective bargaining, tenure, and demographics that are usually collected in household surveys....Now it will be possible to look at the associations between different practices and characteristics of firms and workers and determine better what practices lead to what outcomes."¹⁵

The 1999 inaugural Workplace Employee Survey sampled 6350 locations

and interviewed employers and about 24,600 workers in these businesses.¹⁶ The WES measures the adjustments businesses are making in the face of rapid technological advancements, new directions in public policy and global competition. The emphasis is on human resource practices, labour requirements and the interaction of employers and employees, and questions about labour actions such as strikes, grievances, complaints and disputes are included. However employers in public administration are excluded so whatever picture emerges from WES data will highlight private sector businesses.

There are two distinct questionnaires: one for the employees and one for firms/employers. Unfortunately, the questions relevant to worker militancy are not the same in each questionnaire. On the firm side, employers are asked if any of the following labour actions occurred in the last year: work-to-rule, work slowdown, strikes, lockouts and other labour related actions¹⁷. For each, there is the option to answer yes or no (question #26). Employers are also asked a series of questions about disputes, complaints and grievances (#27) which include whether there is a system in place to deal with them, who has the final authority to settle such disputes, and how many were filed in the previous year.

On the worker side, employees are asked if they have been off work in the last year due to a layoff, strike or lockout (#19). Unlike the LFS and the SLID, the data for each is collected separately. They are also asked if there is a dispute, complaint or grievance system in place, whether they have had a dispute in the last year, what mechanisms were used to address the dispute, and whether the situation has improved (#34).¹⁸

Workers are not asked about labour actions in the same detail as employers. The employee question omits reference to work-to-rule, work slowdown, and other-related actions. The fact that the employee question combines strike, layoff and lockout makes visible the emphasis on absence from work, rather than on worker resistance, and is a reminder that the survey's purpose is to support business planning.

MAKING UNIONS VISIBLE

The difference in questions about labour action in the firm and worker sides of the WES is just one of many instances where data on unions or worker militancy is obscured by question format or survey design.

The firm side asks whether the collective agreement with the largest bargaining unit defines how to deal with the following provisions: technological change, workplace reorganization, employee participation, occupational health and safety, employment equity, pay equity, job security/layoffs, contracting out, education and training and cost of living adjustments (question #25). This question refers to the agreement with the 'largest bargaining unit', but it would also be useful to know how many separate bargaining units in the firm, how many different unions and what unions; and how many workers each unit represents, the percentage of all unionized workers and the percentage of all

workers.

There are no questions on the worker side which deal with the collective agreement with the exception of question #33 which asks if workers are covered by a collective agreement. They are not asked any related questions which would highlight union activity, and at the same time let employers know more about how unions actually function for workers. For example: Has the worker ever read any part of the collective agreement? Has the worker ever attended a union meeting? Has the worker ever talked to a union staff member or an elected union representative about union or work-related matters? Has the worker ever served in a union position? Has the worker ever taken a union-education course? Has the worker ever used any union-provided services?

The way the questions are posed in the worker questionnaire also makes invisible the possible contribution of the union to support and benefit programs. For example, question #32 asks "does your employer offer personal support or family services such as childcare, employee assistance, eldercare, fitness and recreation services or other types of services?" Question #37 asks about "non-wage benefits provided by employer". The language of these questions 'does your employer offer' and 'provided by employer' makes invisible the fact that many such programs are negotiated by unions and are parts of collective agreements.

Similarly, question #56a asks whether an employer has a recruitment or career program for minority groups (and #59 for employees with disabilities). We were puzzled by the lack of reference to such a program for women. In response to a query about this absence and about how WES defines 'minority group', Carole Fraser from Statistics Canada replied, "When WES asks the respondent "Does your employer have any recruitment or career programs for minority groups?" in 1999 - 2001 only the respondent who identified himself as a group B from #55 [Arab, Black, Chinese, East Indian, Filipino, Inuit, Japanese, Korean, Latin American, Métis, North American Indian, North African, South east Asia, West Asian] is asked this question. As of 2002, the question #56a is asked to everyone. If the respondent asks the interviewer what is meant by minority group at this point in time there is no specific definition but one would lean towards ethnic group because of the 1999-2001 flow. The present definition would be whatever the respondent sees as a minority group. The survey manager will add a definition for the next wave (2005) and the Census definitions will be examined and most likely used."¹⁹

Question #18 asks about many forms of leave including vacation, paid sick leave, maternity/paternity leave; however #18d aggregates other paid leave which includes educational leave, disability leave, bereavement, marriage, jury duty and union business. As a result, a worker's involvement in unions is not made visible.

Workers are asked job (#38) and wage satisfaction (#39) but not about satisfaction levels with union, although they are asked to rate access to worker representation (e.g. member of a union, staff and professional association) in

comparison to their previous job (#X41c). In reference to training, the employee is asked the main subject of the last course completed. Among the twelve options there is no reference to union training/education although there is a space for 'other' (#25b). Although union training and education are also not included in the equivalent question on the firm side (#14a), question #14c asks about sources of funding for training. Here 'union and employee association funding' is included.

WES AND GENDER

Another curious discrepancy between the firm and employee surveys relates to gender. On the worker side, the gender of employees is recorded. However on the firm side, there is no information about sex composition of the workplace despite detailed breakdown of employees by occupation (managers, professional, technical/trades, marketing /sales, clerical/ administrative, production workers), form of employment (part-time, full-time etc) etc. Sex is clearly not seen as a relevant dimension in structuring the workplace. When queried about this absence, Richard Dupuy, head of the WES division, indicated that others had raised this concern and that in the next WES survey (2005), sex would be included on the firm side of the survey.

TABLES ON ORDER

Despite these limitations, WES tables will offer an intriguing 2001 snapshot of those involved in labour disputes and grievances, and the firms which employ them. From the worker side of the survey, tables on order will highlight:

- demographic profiles of workers: age, sex, language at work, language at home, born in Canada, descent of parents/grandparents, highest education, dependent children, family income;
- wages and benefits profile: hourly earnings, availability of personal/support family services (childcare, employee assistance, eldercare, fitness and recreation), benefits (pension plan, life insurance, dental plan), covered by collective agreement;
- work profile: occupation [managers - professionals - technical-trades - marketing-sales - clerical-administrative - production workers]; minimum education required for job; hours of work; terms of employment; covered by collective agreement; and
- employee participation: employee surveys, employee suggestion program, job rotation or cross training program, task team or labour management committee, quality or work flow team self-directed work group.

One of the stated goals of the WES is to link events occurring in workplaces and the outcomes for workers.²⁰ Data on the impact of restructuring

on worker militancy may emerge. Hopefully the following firm-side tables will reveal the impact on militancy of a variety of firm level initiatives such as markets targeted, organizational practices such as work groups, large numbers of contract or temporary workers, downsizing and outsourcing.

The following tables have been ordered which examine characteristics of firms that have experienced work-to-rule, work slowdown, strike, lockouts and other-related actions:

- profile of firms: number of workers, total gross payroll, gross operating revenue, assets owned by foreign interest, markets (Canadian, US, rest of world), competition (Canadian, US, internationally owned), main NAICS code, degree of unionization by firm and by occupational category;
- organizational practices of firms: work organization [employee suggestion program, flexible job design, information sharing with employees, problem-solving teams, joint labour-management committees, self-directed work groups], degree of unionization by firm and by occupational category;
- types of workers: full time, part time, permanent, non-permanent, off site employees, independent contractors and contract workers including home workers;
- organizational changes: organizational change [downsizing, greater reliance on temporary workers, greater reliance on part time workers, greater reliance on external suppliers (outsourcing), and business strategy (reducing labour costs and using more part time, temporary or contract workers). This table which uses a derived variable that combines 'regressive' management practices around part time and/or temporary workers might reveal the degree to which labour actions (worker militancy) are linked to certain kinds of employer initiatives associated with the new economy.

Examining the WES from the point of view of unions and worker militancy highlights significant absences in the data, and the political assumptions guiding the structure of the questionnaire. In fact, Richard Dupuy who heads the WES unit, indicated in conversation that for Wave 7, that is, the seventh year in 2005, Statistics Canada is planning a major revision of the WES. They have set up a planning team to develop new proposals. Apparently the call for more visibility for unions has been raised by many industrial relations specialists. Employers too should be interested in how workers relate to unions, and the impact of union presence in their workplace. Some employers may even understand that unions help workplaces to function better. Indeed, union co-operation is often critical to effective innovation.

CONCLUSION

The tables from the LFS, SLID or WES have not yet arrived. However, even without the actual data, the design of the surveys provides an interesting window into Statistics Canada's perceptions about unions and their relevance.

Other Statistics Canada Surveys also collect information related to union activities which would be pertinent to developing a paradigm of worker militancy. Unfortunately the way the questions are posed in these surveys bury union activity in aggregated questions.

For example, for the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating, which was a supplement to the LFS in 2000, respondents were asked to provide information on the organizations for which they volunteered and to which they made donations. The Survey relied on the International Classification of Nonprofit Organizations which groups organizations into 12 major activity groups. These groups are culture/recreation, education/research, health, social services, environment, development/housing, law/advocacy/politics, philanthropy, international, religion and finally **'Business and professional associations, Unions'** which includes "organizations promoting, regulating and safeguarding business, professional and labour interests." The fact that unions are not disaggregated from business and professional associations means that nothing about union activity can be ascertained from the data.²¹

Similarly, the quinquennial Time Use Survey of the General Social Survey [GSS] which collects detailed diary data of a respondent's daily activities does not disaggregate time spent in union meetings. So if a respondent has been involved in union activities, it is coded by the interviewer as time spend for 'professional, union, general meetings'.²²

The process of excavating the Statistics Canada surveys helps not only to reveal absences that are ideological, such as in the WES, but also ways of posing questions that prevent the significance of union activity from emerging. Perhaps unions should collectively indicate their disapproval, and request that Statistics Canada re-design its surveys to enhance the visibility of unions.

Although strikes are only one measure of militancy, they are certainly under-investigated. And despite the limits of statistical data as a vehicle for exploring worker militancy, some interesting possibilities are emerging. We await with anticipation the arrival of the tables.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The support and expertise of Leah Vosko and Krista Scott-Dixon around these surveys were absolutely invaluable to this project.

REFERENCES

Akyeampong, Ernest. (2003) "Unionization and the Grievance System." Perspectives Statistics Canada catalogue no. 75-001-XPE (Autumn): 31-37.

NOTES

- ¹ This project is part of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [SSHRC] Research Alliance on "Restructuring Work and Labour in the New Economy", Initiative on the New Economy (INE), (Principle Investigator: Norene Pupo from the Centre for Research on Work and Study, York University). I am grateful for the financial support from the Alliance. This research is also being funded by the Small Grants Programme from SSHRC (adjudicated by York University), and the Faculty of Arts at York University.
- ² In the data from Human Resources Development Canada [HRDC], the proxy for militancy is 'work stoppage'; this data highlights the strikes themselves. A research note on the HRDC data will be forthcoming in the next issue of Just Labour.
- ³ For a full listing and description of LFS variables, see the Guide to the Labour Force Survey (Catalogue no 71-543-GIE). See also <www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/3701.htm>. I would like to thank Geoff Bowlby and Jacques Ouelette from Statistics Canada for helping to clarify various issues about labour dispute data in the LFS.
- ⁴ The reasons for part-week absence include: own illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, maternity leave (females only), vacation, weather, **labour dispute**, job started or ended during reference week, holiday, working short time, other reasons. Reasons for full week absence include: own illness or disability, personal or family responsibilities, maternity leave (females only), vacation, **labour dispute**, work schedule, self-employed (no work available), seasonal business (self-employed), other reasons.
- ⁵ The HRDC data includes the workdays lost to work stoppages and offers a better data set for examining the amount of time lost to strikes.
- ⁶ Until 1995 when the Act was repealed, data on union membership was collected under the auspices of the Corporations and Labour Unions Act [CALURA]. In addition to the data now collected through LFS since 1997, HRDC also requests membership information from the unions. However, unlike requests under CALURA which had the force of law, the unions co-operate with HRDC voluntarily. Given the amount of work involved in collecting accurate information, the HRDC data might not be entirely reliable.
- ⁷ I wish to thank the Workplace Information Directorate of Human Resources Development Canada for providing us with the microdata on work stoppages in Canada. In particular, I would like to thank Manon Henry, Manager of the Work Stoppages, Labour Organizations and Collective Agreements branch of HRDC.
- ⁸ Noticeably absent from this list are tables which look at industry breakdown. HRDC uses categories from the North American Industrial Classification System [NAICS] for each work stoppage and thus will provide detailed information on industry breakdown.
- ⁹ These tables have been ordered through the Gender and Work Database. They will eventually be mounted on the GWD website <www.genderwork.ca> in Beyond 20/20 format which allows for considerable manipulation by the user.
- ¹⁰ I would like to thank Gaetan Garneau and Ginette Gervais from Statistics Canada for their help in understanding the SLID.
- ¹¹ See <www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/3889.htm>.
- ¹² When queried about the definitions for 'strike' and 'lockout' used by the SLID and LFS, Gaetan Garneau from Statistics Canada replied (email communication 20 January 2004):
STRIKE: A cessation of work or a refusal to work or to continue to work by employees in combination or in concert or in accordance with a common understanding, or a slow-down or other concerted activity on the part of employees designed to restrict or limit output. [Source: Lexicon of terms & definitions relating to personnel, Ottawa: Treasury Board of Canada: PSC of Canada 1981].
LOCKOUT: The lockout generally implies the temporary withholding of work, by means of shutting down the operation or plant, from a group of workers in order to bring pressure on them to accept the employer's terms. [Source: Robert's Dictionary of Industrial Relations / by Harold S. Roberts].
- ¹³ Email correspondence 3 Sept 2003.
- ¹⁴ I would like to thank Richard Dupuy, Carole Fraser and Tony Fang from Statistics Canada for their help in understanding the WES.
- ¹⁵ See <http://www.statcan.ca/english/survey/business/workplace/workplace.htm>>

¹⁶ The WES began in 1999. In the even years, that is 2000 and 2002, Statistics Canada did not top up the sample. They recommend using the data from the 1999 WES, or the 2001 WES which was released in July 2003.

¹⁷ Here are the definitions given to WES interviewers. Definitions supplied by Carole Fraser from Statistics Canada.

Work-to-rule: A tactic by a union to slow work down that stops short of bringing work to a complete halt.

Workers do this by following, to the smallest detail every work rule laid down by management. There may, for example, be more shutdowns of machinery to check parts, and much more time than usual spent checking out the safety of equipment before it is turned on. By using such tactics, union members are able to frustrate management, to reduce production or service sharply, and yet earn their full pay.

Dispute, complaint or grievance system: A formal system for an employee or group of employees to lodge a complaint against an employer or for a union contending that there has been a breach of the collective agreement. It can also consist of a formal complaint by an employer against a union or an employee, also on the grounds that the collective agreement has been broken.

Lockouts: A labour dispute in which the employer closes his establishment so that his employees cannot work and are not paid. Like a strike, a lockout can only follow certain legal steps after a collective agreement has expired.

Strikes: A decision by employees in a bargaining unit to stop working, following a breakdown of collective bargaining and the failure of conciliation and mediation to produce an agreement with the employer on a new collective agreement.

Work slowdowns: A tactic by a union to slow down the pace of work, without completely stopping.

¹⁸ See Akyeampong (2003) for an analysis of the WES grievance and dispute data.

¹⁹ Email correspondence 4 Nov 2003.

²⁰ See "Why have a Linked Workplace and Employee Survey?" in Workplace and Employee Survey Compendium: 1999 Data. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 71-585-XIE, 2001, pp. 5-6.

²¹ From the User Guide of the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating. For more information, go to <<http://www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/4430.htm>>.

²² For more information on the Time Use Survey of the General Social Survey, go to <http://www.statcan.ca/english/sdds/4503.htm>.