

Sustained and Growing Underemployment in Australia and Canada: The Truth behind Government Employment Figures

Jason Lacharite

‘[M]inimum wage is just your boss’s way of telling you that if he could pay you less, he would!’

Chris Rock, *Saturday Night Live*.

‘The hopelessness of the poor has become ordinary.’

William DiFazio, *Post Work*.

This article attempts to demystify the orthodoxy of government unemployment figures. The central argument is that ‘official’ unemployment rates are erroneous and mask the overall extent of poverty in Australia and Canada. This article also argues that while jobs are still being created they are not what anyone would classify as ‘quality jobs.’ Increases in part-time and casual employment have dominated what politicians and economists refer to as employment growth. Moreover, low unemployment rates generally reflect a biased interpretation of statistical data. What about underemployment or homelessness? What have been some of the collateral effects of increased unemployment? Has crime increased? Have the numbers of ‘welfare’ recipients increased or decreased? These questions are often overlooked and left unanswered. The following analysis will attempt to clarify just how serious the unemployment/underemployment problem is. It will try to construct a more universal and inclusive definition of unemployment to better account for what is happening in Australia and Canada.

Taken at face value, there can be little doubt that the unemployment situations in Australia and Canada are improving. Sustained economic growth since 1994 has had the positive effect of almost halving current jobless numbers — down from a peak of 11-12 per cent in 1993-94, today’s official figures hover somewhere between 6 and 7 per cent.¹ With the exception of a few insightful media bulletins, we rarely see or hear anything negative about job growth and/or employment opportunities. What is more, ‘[t]he assumption that the rate of unemployment represents the unemployed as a per centage of all working persons cannot be refuted,’² and it cannot it be argued that jobs are not being created when clearly they are. So what then is the problem?

In essence, official statistics and classifications of employment are conceptually indiscriminate. They tend to ignore things like quality pay, underemployment, homelessness, and the true number of workers who want to work more hours. Whether one is employed or unemployed is really just a matter of definition, or even the way the question is asked.³ For example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) ‘classifies an individual as employed if s/he undertook

at least one hour of paid work in the survey week or at least one hour of unpaid work on a family farm or family business.⁴ Conversely, one is considered to be unemployed 'if s/he was not employed at all during the survey week, but demonstrated that s/he was seeking a job and was available to take up employment.'⁵ Statistics Canada (StatsCan) measures employment and unemployment in a similar way, but adds that any work — hours are not specified — at a job or business during the reference week can be regarded as employment.⁶

A related methodological flaw shared by StatsCan and the ABS studies is that their survey classifications tend to be obscure and misleading. In the ABS' 1999 edition of *Social Trends*, it describes 'fully employed' as those 'people who work in full time jobs (35 hours or more per week) and those in part time jobs who did not want to work longer hours.'⁷ It is difficult to determine what the exact meaning of this definition is. Should part time workers be included as part of the 'full time' labour force? If the answer is yes, then what is the point of having a 'part time work' classification? One could argue that this is simply a clever way to artificially inflate 'real' employment figures.⁸

The fact that there are at least three statistical categories that are typically ignored or excluded from media-oriented reports and finalised government publications is also problematic.⁹ Individuals who are underemployed, those who are only marginally attached to the labour force and those who are not actively looking for work or have completely dropped out of the labour market (that is, discouraged workers having difficulties finding a full time job) are not usually calculated into total employment/unemployment figures — even though they are given secondary consideration in the final results. However, the total percentage of people not fully employed for whatever reason is significant to the extent that it puts the whole employment and technological displacement issue into perspective. It also highlights the sustained trend of growing unemployment and poverty, overshadowing economic growth. For example, the ABS reported in 1998 that only 64.3 per cent of the total active labour force were fully employed,¹⁰ whereas 35.2 per cent were either underemployed, unemployed, marginally attached or not actively looking for work.¹¹ Broadly speaking, this means that one in three Australians were not working full time in 1998, but the ratio is actually lower than this.

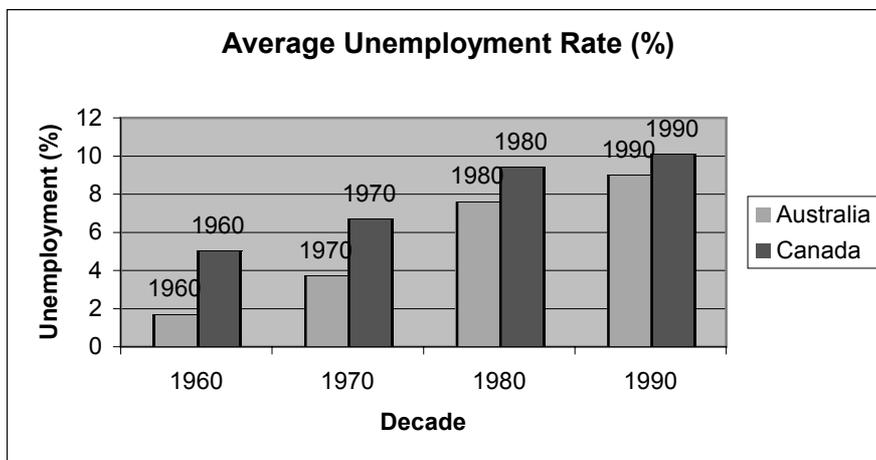
Overall, it would not be unrealistic to assume that this type of selective deployment of information is consistent with each government's desire to maintain public consent. After all, they do have to provide a certain degree of justification for pursuing largely anti-social democratic policies. Furthermore, there can be little disagreement that ABS and StatsCan employment figures tend to oversimplify the relationship between quality work and quality pay, and part time work or casual work and minimum wages. Common classifications of employment — and more specifically full time employment — need to be reformulated. Perhaps the best way to measure the changing nature of employment is to construct a classification scheme of unemployment that is less rigid and more comprehensive. A poverty index of some kind would be extremely useful, and should ideally be included in all analyses related to employment issues. Making the connection between related social phenomena like increased criminal activity and homelessness might also be helpful. For the remainder of this

article ‘unemployment’ will be used sparingly, and not as the main statistical indicator for determining the scope of joblessness and poverty in Australia and Canada. Rather, unemployment will be grouped alongside the underemployment, marginally attached, and the ‘no longer looking for work’ categories to form a meta-classification of underemployment that better accounts for trends in declining full time work, growing long term unemployment and the irreversible transition to lower paying jobs.

Since the 1960s, the total number of officially unemployed workers recorded by the ABS and StatsCan has expanded by a fairly significant margin — the duration of unemployment has also increased. Specifically, Australia has seen its average unemployment rate rise from a low of 1.7 per cent in the 1960s to over 9 per cent in the 1990s.¹² By any estimation, this is a remarkable development in jobless levels in Australia, and it represents a staggering five-fold increase in the average unemployment rate in less than four decades. Canada has not fared much better. In the 1960s unemployment averaged 5 per cent. In the 1970s average unemployment rose to 6.7 per cent, and rose again to 9.4 per cent in the 1980s. Through the 1990s average unemployment peaked at just a little over 10 per cent. Figure 1 compares the increases in average unemployment in Australia and Canada over the past forty years.

On purely statistical grounds, rising unemployment rates have only been part of the problem. There has also been a relative decrease in the number of secure, full time jobs created and maintained each year. For example, the ABS reported in 2000 that the proportion of all male employees with full time jobs decreased by 13 per cent between 1988-98, while the number of women with similar work arrangements declined by 10 per cent.¹³

Figure 1. Average Unemployment for Australia and Canada



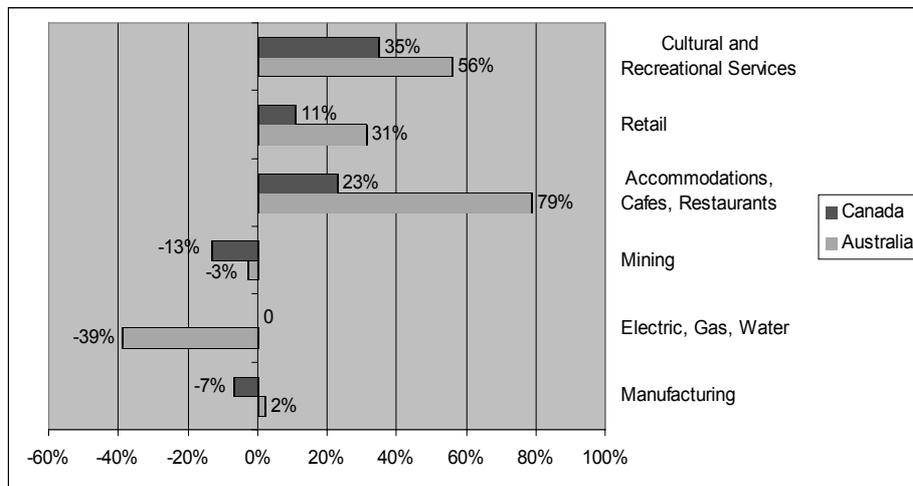
Sources: Stephen Bell, *The Unemployment Crisis in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p 3; W C Riddell and Andrew Sharpe, ‘The Canada-U.S. Unemployment Rate Gap: An Introduction and Overview,’ Centre for Study of Living Standards, 2000, www.csls.com.ca

Not surprisingly, the fastest growing areas of employment continue to be ‘low paid, part time and casual jobs in the service sector, which are largely non-unionized.’¹⁴ As Bell points out, ‘of the 1,379,000 jobs created between 1976 and 1990 in Australia, 983,000 (or 71 per cent) were in the lowest income quintile.’¹⁵ In fact, between 1988 and 1998, the total number of part time workers increased from 19.8 per cent to 25.6 per cent, while the total number of people casually employed increased from 18.9 per cent to 26.9 per cent. Taken together, those who were involved in part time and casual employment in 1998 accounted for close to 53 per cent of the total work force — an increase of 14 per cent in 10 years.¹⁶ Superficially, these numbers may appear moderately insignificant, but the data can be presented another way as well. If one considers that in 1988 full time workers represented 61.3 per cent of the total work force, but by 1998 they had dropped to around 47 per cent, it becomes clearer just how unstable the employment situation in Australia is becoming. What Australia and Canada are experiencing is an increasing and permanent shift to low paying part time work. Figure 2 cross-compares the job growth rate by selected industries for Australia (1985-95) and Canada (1986-96).

Coincidentally, service work of this kind has been universally described as insecure, subject to displacement and in some instances not economically viable. If the past is any indication of how rapidly jobs are changing, this transition will continue to reshape the employment situation in Australia and Canada, as well as employment opportunities.¹⁷

Finally, one other disturbing trend worthy of mention has been the collective increase in long-term unemployment, marginally attached workers, and discouraged job seekers in both countries. Once again, we can return to the 1999

Figure 2. Job Growth Rate by Industry in Australia (1985-1995) and Canada (1986 to 1996)



Sources: ABS, Catalogue Number: 6248.0; Statistics Canada, Labour, Employment, and Unemployment: Employment by Industry, Canada (1986-1996), www.statcan.ca.
0 denotes ‘not available’

edition of *Social Trends* to demonstrate how significant these areas of unemployment have become. According to the ABS' 1999 work profile, long-term unemployment — as a percentage of total unemployment — increased by 4 per cent between 1988 and 1998 (from 27.7 per cent to 31.6 per cent).¹⁸ Over the same period of time, marginally attached workers increased by more than 200,000 people, while discouraged job seekers increased by a little fewer than 40,000. Admittedly, these figures are highly interpretive. However, they do seem to indicate that job opportunities are disappearing, and that the unemployment situation is much broader than we have been led to believe. Indeed, since 1989, marginally attached and discouraged job seekers in Australia have increased by 76 per cent and 68 per cent respectively.

In Canada, 'hard-core' unemployment, and marginally attached and discouraged workers have had to contend with a similar shortage of opportunities. StatsCan reported in 1999 that the number of able workers not in the labour force steadily increased by almost 300,000 over a 5-year period. StatsCan also revealed that between 1990 and 1995, the incidence of low income among the population grew by over a million people. Regardless of how one analyses the data, the inescapable conclusion that can be substantiated from all of this is that there are distinctly visible patterns of underemployment and hidden unemployment developing across Australia and Canada. In both cases, despite signs of a full economic recovery beginning in 1994-95, the prospects for more quality work has not improved even slightly. Quite the opposite appears to have happened with overall underemployment increasing by a substantial amount. Figure 3 compares the incidence of low income in Canada and selected provinces between 1990 and 1999.

In sum, these trends are suggestive of further 'job transformation' and higher average unemployment rates in the future. They are also symptomatic of

Figure 3. Incidence of low income among the population living in private households in Canada and selected provinces between 1990-1995

	<i>Canada</i>	<i>Newfoundland</i>	<i>Prince Edward Island</i>	<i>Nova Scotia</i>	<i>New Brunswick</i>
Persons					
Income status – 1995	28,011,350	544,610	131,485	888,635	721,005
Low income	5,514,190	116,440	20,040	167,000	137,300
Other	22,497,160	428,170	111,450	721,635	583,705
Incidence of low income %	19.7	21.4	15.2	18.8	19.0
Income status – 1990	26,396,390	557,445	125,990	873,650	705,470
Low income	4,289,165	98,165	17,135	135,980	118,875
Other	22,107,225	459,275	108,855	737,670	586,595
Incidence of low income %	16.2	17.6	13.6	15.6	16.9

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census, Nation Tables

widespread technological changes that are penetrating deeper into what were once considered 'human-only' occupations. To be realistic however, we can only conservatively estimate what the state of employment in Australia and Canada will be in 20-30 years. A further 14-15 per cent increase in part time and casual employment over the next decade — as a percentage of the total labour force — is not an unreasonable expectation. If this happens, we could see Australia's and Canada's employment compositions change completely from one full time to one part time/casual job to one full time job for three part time/casual jobs.

Analysing homelessness, crime patterns and welfare expenditures provides a better understanding of the prevalence of our meta-definition of unemployment truly. The residual effects of fewer quality jobs highlights the growing disparity emerging in what are normally considered 'opportunity abundant' economies. It is an old and overused aphorism, but the empirical evidence does seem to suggest that the rich are indeed getting richer, while the poor are getting poorer.

Analysing social variables like homelessness, crime rates, increasing welfare outlays and the 'stay at home' generation gives one a different perspective on the extent of poverty and underemployment prevalent in Australia and Canada. More importantly, they add a degree of substance and credibility to the argument that Canberra's and Ottawa's underemployment problems are not getting any better. The logic is quite simple: if the overall employment situation is improving — as many policy analysts and advisors contend — why has there been a noticeable increase in homelessness, crime, welfare payments, and young people staying at home after university or college graduation? In other words, how can these developments be explained?

Standard government accounts of employment and unemployment are fictitious and one-dimensional. The collateral effects of growing unemployment need to be examined more comprehensively to fully understand the significance of transitional economies. We do not normally see this in annual government publications because it may be perceived as being unimportant, too complex or perhaps something best left to independent or partially independent academic institutions. This is wrong and illustrates the general level of wholesale apathy characteristic of representative governments in relation to these types of issues.

For instance, homelessness in Australia and Canada is clearly a topic of growing importance, yet it is rarely discussed as a residual problem of long-term unemployment or underemployment. Canberra and Ottawa have grossly understated the extent of homelessness in urban areas and have only recently acknowledged that the problem is much bigger than they had anticipated. In Australia, it was originally estimated that there were between 40,000 and 50,000 people living 'on the streets'. However, a 1999 ABS study conducted by Chris Chamberlain found that there were in fact about 105,000 people sleeping in tents or shacks, staying in boarding houses or government assisted accommodations. Chamberlain added that the real total could be upwards of 115,000-116,000 because his results did not include people in squats — omitted due to the difficulty of reaching them.¹⁹ Surprisingly, the ABS noted that most of the 'homeless' people surveyed were men and women aged 25-35. It also pointed out that 20,000 teenagers slept on the streets on any given night. Not only does this signify a general level of low confidence in finding a quality job, but it also highlights the

permanence of unemployment and poverty in Australian society. The Salvation Army claimed that it helped 1.1 million people in 1999 with food and clothing, shelter, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation. The Army also stated that, since 1997, it had observed a four-fold increase in the number of people looking for emergency shelter and families needing some kind of charitable support.²⁰ Similarly, the Australian Council of Social Services reported that there were 1.7 million individual claims made for social assistance last year. They also discovered that one of the central concerns for many community agencies was the need for more permanent and crisis accommodations.²¹ It is ironic that the demand for social services and charity are increasing when Australia is supposed to be in the midst of an economic boom.

In Canada, there has been very little research done on the homeless problem, but what has been done indicates a growing trend towards expanding absolute poverty. For example, in Toronto in 1997 the 'Raise the Roof' Charity (RTR) estimated that 28,000 different people used municipally funded emergency shelters at some time during the year. The RTR also noted that usage had almost doubled since 1996²² — this can be evidenced by the fact that the number of shelter beds increased from 4,000 to over 7,000 in 12 months.²³ The RTR cautioned however, that the number of people using shelters represented only a minority of the people who were homeless in the Toronto area. They suggested that '[m]ost seek other alternatives, from remaining on the streets to squatting in unoccupied buildings, wanting to avoid the conditions and regulations common to the shelters'.²⁴

There have been significant increases in homelessness in Calgary as well. In May 1996, 615 homeless people were observed in one night, while 3,800 individuals were identified over four months in 1997.²⁵ The City of Calgary also stated that there are an estimated 10,000 near homeless Calgarians living from pay cheque to pay cheque, and 130,000 working poor living below the poverty line.²⁶ It is interesting to note that Calgary has the lowest unemployment rate in the country.

Homelessness across Canada is a chronic problem that appears to be growing. The latest homeless figures from Montreal and Vancouver confirm that many people across the country suffer deeply and that many more that live in straitened circumstances. There is no real way to tell how many people are truly homeless. We can only argue with a relative degree of certainty that there is a homeless problem in Australia and Canada, and that it is becoming more critical. The other point to be made is that if these numbers were added to official unemployment rates, we would see a modest increase in the true number of people out of work.

Another major area of concern is crime. Increases in theft, armed and unarmed robberies, drug use, and physical violence give us a fairly clear indication that persistent unemployment has a causative impact on increases in criminal activity. There have been numerous sociological studies that have linked increased crime to unemployment. Steven Box's comparative study on crime and recession for example, argues that there is indeed a strong positive correlation between crime and social inequality.²⁷ Cook and Zarkin (1985) analysed time series data from 1933 to 1980 and came to some similar conclusions with regards to crime rates and the business cycle.²⁸

In Australia's case, the national crime rate has been rising steadily since the 1970s.²⁹ For example, the Australian Institute of Criminology's (AIC) numerical reports indicate that between 1972 and 1995 the average number of property crimes and robberies per 100,000 increased by 98 per cent: this represents an average increase of 728 offences per year in the 1990s since the 1970s.³⁰ The ABS also noted that the prison populations in Australia increased from 12,321 in 1988 to 19,901 in 1998³¹ — now there are almost 22,000 prisoners in custody.³² In fact, according to the AIC's latest crime statistics, there has been a significant increase in every offence category (with the exception of homicides) since 1997. Assaults (including sexual assaults) have increased by 7.5 per cent, robberies have increased by 10.6 per cent, burglaries have increased by 3.3 per cent and theft has increased by 6.5 per cent.³³

In the last twenty-eight years, Canada has experienced a similar increase in prison numbers and overall crime. Between 1972 and 1995 Canada's average number of property crimes and robberies per 100,000 increased by 37 per cent — there are now on average 375 more property and robbery offences reported to the police than there were 20 years ago.³⁴ From 1988 to 1998, Canada's annual average prison population rose 24 per cent, and there were 4,900 young people in jail on any given day in 1998 — an increase of 26 per cent since 1987.³⁵ Figure 4 compares the combined average number of burglaries, larcenies, motor vehicle thefts and robberies per 100,000 in Australia and Canada from 1972 to 1995.³⁶

These findings call into question the credibility of official employment and unemployment data. The question remains: if employment opportunities and the number of quality jobs are improving or are abundant, why has there been an increase in the general level of crime in Australia and Canada? Statistics Canada would argue that over the last five years crime in Canada has actually decreased due to economic growth, and they would refer you to their 'Uniform Crime Survey' as proof of this. The problems are that this cannot be supported empirically and the 'Uniform Crime Survey' is fundamentally flawed. Furthermore, StatsCan justice statistics do not include reports from Aboriginal communities where the incidents of violent crime, grand larceny, alcohol abuse and drug use are most common — they also tend to have a higher than average unemployment rate. StatsCan justice figures they are based on data collected from 169 police detachments across the country, but Canada has upwards of 320 individual police forces and over 199 Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Figure 4. Combined Average Property Crime Offences per 100,000 in Australia and Canada from 1972 to 1995

Combined Average Property Crime Offences per 100,000 in Australia and Canada from 1972 to 1995		
	<i>Australia</i>	<i>Canada</i>
Years		
1972-1979	740	1008
1980-1989	1202	1294
1990-1995	1468	1383

Source: Data compiled from the Australian Institute of Criminology's 'International Data on Crime' report at www.aic.gov.au

detachments ranging from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island.³⁷ How Ottawa could possibly claim that overall crime is decreasing with less than half of the total data included in annual justice surveys is astounding.

Finally, welfare outlays and the 'stay at home generation' should be discussed. Remarkably, Australia and Canada have diverged quite considerably on the issue of welfare benefits, but not in terms of the per centage of university or college graduates spending more time at home. In Australia, the most recent data confirms that there has been a staggering increase in the provision of income support payments. The longer-term trends generally speak for themselves: 'between 1966 and 1998, the proportion of the adult population (aged fifteen years and over) who were social security income support recipients increased from under 11 per cent to 27 per cent. Over this period the total number of income support recipients increased from around 900,000 to nearly 4.8 million.'³⁸ In terms of individual categories, 'Unemployment Allowances (UA)' and 'Disability Support Pensions (DSP)' made the most significant gains with the number of UA recipients increasing from 12,700 in 1965 to almost 800,000 in 1998, and DSP recipients increasing from 107,500 to 553,300.³⁹ As of June 1998, the ABS reported that 2,642,000 Australians of working age were receiving some kind welfare support payment.

Canada's income support situation is less transparent. On the one hand, direct welfare provisions have decreased, but Child Tax benefits have increased, and whether this can be perceived as a means of income support is debatable. The statistical data also shows that the nation's regional dependency on welfare has shifted from the Maritimes to the Western and Prairie Provinces. Hence, it is difficult to argue decisively that welfare outlays, as a whole, have increased since welfare subsidies are largely a provincial matter. However, there is evidence to support the claim that since the federal government started to systematically reduce welfare benefits in 1984, high poverty has increased to record levels. The Canadian Council on Social Development's (CCSD) 2000 *Fact Book on Poverty* noted that '[t]he rate of household poverty, as measured by Statistics Canada's 'Low Income Cut-Off (LICO)' point [sic] was higher in 1997 (22.4 per cent) than it was in 1989, 1981 and 1973'. The CCSD estimated that this 22.4 per cent translated into an increase of 1.3 million poor households since 1973.⁴⁰ The CCSD concluded that one of the primary reasons for a higher incidence of poverty was the failure of the labour market to provide enough jobs with living wages and benefits.⁴¹ Kevin Lee's *Urban Poverty in Canada* (2000) came to a similar set of conclusions. Based on StatsCan's census data, Lee found that between 1990 and 1995 urban poverty grew by 33.8 per cent. Lee also acknowledged that higher poverty levels were partly caused by a fundamental restructuring of the economy.⁴²

As far as the 'stay at home generation' is concerned, two studies conducted in Australia and Canada show that both countries have had similar experiences with the 'crowded nest' phenomenon. In both cases, the researchers found that 'not only that the proportion of people aged between 20 and 34 and living with their parents had increased substantially over the past 15 years, but that men were far more likely to stay at home than women.'⁴³ Predictably, they identified a lack of work and a deterioration of job security as two of the main causes for the decision to remain at home.

In all, the ABS and StatsCan often present us with conflicting data and statistical reports on employment, partly because their studies are methodologically inadequate, and partly because they are an extension of each government's propaganda mechanism. If the employment situation in both countries is continuously improving, how can there possibly be a growing oversupply of labour? Additionally, how can the obvious increase in homelessness, crime, poverty, welfare outlays (for Australia only) and the stay at home generation be explained? Cross-comparing annual reports filed by the ABS and StatsCan can only give us a superficial understanding of the importance of our meta-definition of unemployment. More in-depth research reveals that these social phenomena are quite regularly separated from progress reports on the 'state of the economy' in both nations. They are more or less side issues that appear to draw very little attention to themselves, and are rarely included within the context of bureaucratic discussions on employment and unemployment.

This article has tried to uncover the haphazard make-up of socially accepted classifications and definitions of employment and unemployment and the selectiveness of research undertaken in relation to these issues. However, it is crucial to bear in mind that this article's subtle criticisms of ABS and StatsCan studies and results does not imply an overt rejection of their findings. On the contrary, this study recognises that there is an inherent value in ABS and StatsCan statistical studies. Rather, one of the goals of this article was to establish a more integrated approach to the study of employment. Only in this way can we fully understand how significant job instability truly is.

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Jason Lacharite

- 1 For more details on Australia and Canada's unemployment situation, visit the Australian Bureau of Statistics web-site at www.abs.gov.au and Statistics Canada's web-site at www.statcan.ca.
- 2 Hans Schimd, 'Patterns of Present Unemployment', in Paul James, Walter Veit and Stephen Wright (eds), *Work of the Future: Global Perspectives*, Allen and Unwin Publishing, Sydney, 1997, p 96.
- 3 Raymond Bennett, *Applied Economics and Australian Business*, 17th ed., M M and B Book Company, Sydney, 1994, p 192.
- 4 Martin Watts, 'The Dimensions and Costs of Unemployment in Australia,' in Stephen Bell (ed.), *The Unemployment Crisis in Australia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000, p 23.
- 5 *ibid.*, p 23.
- 6 Statistics Canada, *Guide to Labour Force Survey*, 1998, www.statcan.ca.
- 7 Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian Social Trends*, 1999, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 1999, p 110.
- 8 In fact, the ABS defines many part time workers as 'traditional employees', that is those people who have ongoing 'full time' employment.
- 9 The public's main source of statistical information is news media, and people's misunderstanding of joblessness typically derives from their total reliance on government backed unemployment figures. One could argue that for time and propaganda reasons certain categories are deliberately excluded to strengthen the credibility and image of government, and job development programs. See Edward S Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1988, for a more detailed analysis on the interaction of politics and the media.
- 10 This includes individuals with part-time jobs who do not want to work longer hours.
- 11 ABS, *op. cit.*, p 110.
- 12 Bell, *The Unemployment Crisis in Australia*, p 3.
- 13 ABS, 'Employment Arrangements in the Late 1990s,' in *Australian Social Trends*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2000, p 115.
- 14 Stephen Bell, *Ungoverning the Economy: The Political Economy of Australian Economic Policy*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1997, p 111.
- 15 *ibid.*, p 111.
- 16 ABS, *Social Trends*, 1999, *op. cit.*, p 98.
- 17 The only real flaw in the 'part time/casual' job shift argument is that the empirical evidence suggests that average weekly wages or salaries are on the increase. Again, this can be considered as a misinterpretation of the aggregate statistical data. What seems to be happening is that there are a few very wealthy individuals artificially inflating increases in average weekly salaries. For example, if 10 individuals making a biweekly wage of \$500 are included into a calculation that also has 1 individual making \$5000 every fortnight, then the average biweekly wage comes out to $5,000+5,000=10,000/11=909$ or \$909 every two weeks — \$409 higher than the average biweekly earnings of our 10 poorer survey units. A case in point would be Bill Gates. He could single handedly make average annual salaries in the United States look bigger than they truly are. Kerry Packer's annual salary (if it were calculated correctly) would have a similar impact on ABS data in Australia.
- 18 ABS, *Social Trends*, 1999, *op. cit.*, p 99.
- 19 Kay Ansell, 'No place to call home,' *Monash Magazine*, Autumn/Winter, 2000, p 8.
- 20 'Homeless numbers up sharply', *Age*, 22 May 2000.
- 21 Chloe Saltau, 'Welfare agencies overwhelmed', *Age*, 10 October 2000.

- 22 This is a conservative estimate at best. The 'Report of the Mayor's Homeless Action Task Force,' claimed that between 1992 and 1998, shelter use increased by 80 per cent for youth, 78 per cent for single women, 55 per cent for single men, and 123 per cent for families. For more information or a copy of this report see www.city.toronto.on.ca.
- 23 Raise the Roof Foundation, 'How many people without housing are there?', in FAQs, 2000, www.raisetherroof.org.
- 24 *ibid.*
- 25 The City of Calgary, 'Homelessness is a problem in Calgary,' 1998, www.calgary.gov.ab.ca.
- 26 *ibid.*
- 27 Steven Box, *Recession Crime and Punishment*, MacMillan Education, London, 1987, pp 28-105.
- 28 P J Cook and G A Zarkin, 'Crime and the Business Cycle,' *J Legal Studies*, vol 14, 1985, pp 115-28.
- 29 In all fairness however, the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) does use a more comprehensive form of measurement than most other OECD nations like Canada and the United States. Typically, Canadian statistical reports on crime do not include 'victimisation surveys' in their final results. The AIC has found that the actual incidence of crime increases by between 50-100 per cent if victimisation surveys are included in finalised statistical reports. It is clearly a superior method that has not been adopted in Canada or the United States. Furthermore, the deadline for submitting data for Canadian justice reports rarely coincides with data collection in many municipal police forces. For example, in 1998 11 municipal police forces were unable to contribute data. Also, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) who are responsible for 28 per cent of crime volume, and the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) who handle 11 per cent of crime volume have never provided any data to the 'Uniform Crime Survey.' For more information on Statistics Canada's crime survey methodology please visit www.statcan.ca.
- 30 These results were compiled using data from the Australian Institute of Criminology's 'International Data on Crime' report. A copy of this report can be found at www.aic.gov.au.
- 31 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Prisoners in Australia', *Australia Now – A Statistical Profile*, 1999, www.abs.gov.au.
- 32 Darren Gray, 'More people in jail than a decade ago', *Age*, 13 June 2001.
- 33 Australian Institute of Criminology, 'Selected Crime Profiles for 1999,' 1999, www.aic.gov.au.
- 34 *ibid.*, pp 3-7.
- 35 National Crime Prevention Centre, 'Incarceration in Canada,' 1999, www.crime-prevention.org.
- 36 For the sake of simplicity, these categories have been collapsed to form a single meta-category 'property crimes'.
- 37 See the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's '2000/2001 Fact Sheet' at www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca.
- 38 Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Special Article – Income Support Payments in Australia,' in *Income and Welfare*, 2000, p 1, www.abs.gov.au.
- 39 *ibid.*, p 2.
- 40 Canadian Council on Social Development, *The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty*, 2000 (Electronic Version), 'Highlights', 2000, p 1, www.ccsd.ca.
- 41 According to the CCSD's statistical findings, from 1989 to 1997 the working age population grew 10.2 per cent while total employment grew by only 5.5 per cent. For more information, visit the CCSD's web-site at www.ccsd.ca.
- 42 Kevin K Lee, *Urban Poverty in Canada: A Statistical Profile*, Canadian Council on Social Development, 2000, www.ccsd.ca.
- 43 Chloe Saltau, 'The Stay at home Generation', *Age*, 17 February 2000.