

Females in Policing: Strides and Future Challenges in a Male-Dominated Profession

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INTRODUCTION

Women have been in policing for over 150 years and, despite strong resistance by those within the male-dominated field and public opinion, have challenged traditional and stereotypical perceptions of “authentic” police officers; women have used their talents and abilities in policing to prove their capacity as viable police officers (Price, 1996). In more recent decades, the numbers of women entering policing have increased. Swanson, Territo, and Taylor (2008) reported that women now make up about “14.3% of sworn law enforcement positions among municipal, county, and state law enforcement agencies with 100 or more sworn officers” (p. 559). Unfortunately, a recent article appearing on the policeemployment.com website reported that females in smaller departments “hold less than ten percent of law enforcement positions” (Women in law enforcement, 2009, para. 5). Reinforcing these statistics, current literature states that women are “very much underrepresented in law enforcement agencies” (Anderson, 2003, p. 19). Women *are* being accepted more within the field, but only to an extent. Price (1996) asserted that both affirmative action practices and structural changes in laws have helped increase the number of females in law enforcement. Nevertheless, the path to gender integration in the field of policing is still being fought in everyday situations and several issues still exist within policing because of the attempted gender integration. Subtle discrimination, whether police departments realize it is such or not, seems to be more prevalent than a department outright denying a female a job, which has contributed to the resistance. This literature review and research study, however, will point out the many strides of females in policing since their inception and discuss the obstacles females in policing still face.

LITERATURE REVIEW

History

Women have been in some form of policing for more than 150 years; however, they were initially restricted to social service roles out of which they were not allowed to be promoted. The official website of the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) (2008) reported that some of the earliest females in the field served as “matrons” or “workers,” who were employed in prisons and penal institutions to care for female prisoners (Women in the LAPD, para. 2). These matrons first appeared in policing positions as early as 1845 in local jails and were a long way from being considered viable employees for real police work (Thistlethwaite & Wooldredge, 2010). Other early positions for female police included “clerical, juvenile, guard duty and vice work” duties, where they were forbidden from performing “basic patrol duties” (Price, 1996, para. 5). These positions were not what would be normally considered real police work (meaning what *male* police officers typically would be assigned to do), creating a division within the department from the onset of women’s existence in the field. Not only that, but these early female police officers received lower wages and, at the same time, were also required “to meet higher standards for police employment” (Price, 1996, para. 5). Perhaps these higher standards would ensure the low numbers of women in the field, keeping it predominantly male and using females only where it seemed to be advantageous. Additionally, Anderson (2003) reported that female police officers did not have any procedures in place to be promoted, limiting their roles even further. These types of practices set the tone for inequality in the field, not only in hiring females for limited positions but also setting different standards and wages for males and females (Price, 1996).

In 1905, the first female *officer*, Lola Baldwin, was hired by the police department of Portland, Oregon (Thistlethwaite & Wooldredge, 2010). Thistlethwaite and Wooldredge indicated that Baldwin was given the responsibility of protecting Portland's young women, perpetuating the social worker role, rather than a police officer role. It was not until 1910 that the first woman *police officer* with arrest powers, Alice Stebbins Wells, was appointed (LAPD, 2008, Women in the LAPD, para. 1). This feat, however, was not the end of gender inequality in policing. Wells, when presenting her badge to obtain a free ride to work on the trolley as all police officers were afforded, was informally accused by the conductor of misusing her husband's identity because he did not believe the badge was hers (LAPD, 2008, Women in the LAPD, para. 3). This incident demonstrated that women were not recognized as bona fide agents in the field of policing. Even after Wells' and other female police officers' achievements in policing, females were still excluded from patrol work 55 years later; females were still assigned (or restricted) to social work, clerical, and dispatch positions (Thistlethwaite & Wooldredge, 2010). Anderson (2003) reported that although women were present in law enforcement they were placed in "women's bureaus" that "operated separately from the rest of the police department," denying them full equality with their male counterparts (p. 5). Even worse, women were given full police powers, *but* were limited in using them (Anderson, 2003). From the beginning, women were underestimated in their abilities, restricted from holding certain responsibilities, and prohibited from full participation in the field.

Despite reluctance to allow female police officers with authentic power into the field, by 1968, the Indianapolis Police Department became the first department to assign two female officers to the patrol unit "on an equal basis with their male colleagues" (Lonsway, 2000, p. 2). This turning point in the development of modern policing began the assignment of males and

females on an equitable basis. Johns (1979) reported that women police officers stepped out of their long-established positions “as guardians of morals and youth and [were] given a status equal to that of the patrolman” (p. 33). With this, the erosion of gender-based positions began, yet, some positions today are still primarily, if not almost exclusively, male-dominated; however, one must understand that this phenomenon is not completely or necessarily occurring by design. Nevertheless, Horne (1994) noted this milestone carried on into the 1970s when more departments followed Indianapolis’ lead by assigning women to patrol duties. During the mid- and late-1970s the “gender gap” started to close in police positions (Swanson, Territo, & Taylor, 2008, p. 559). This did not signify, at any rate, that these women were met with open arms. Conversely, many of the first female patrol officers withstood feelings of “distrust and hostility” (Horne, 1994, para. 37).

Recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of females in policing

Until 1972, female and male officers were chosen by separate criteria for employment. Martin (1989) reported that the 1972 amendments to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 guaranteed, under law, equal opportunity in the policing field for state and local government employees. Martin noted this as a critical juncture in the abolition of discriminatory personnel policies pertaining to the hiring and promotion of females in the field. Government regulations and laws afforded women with an opportunity to perform jobs and demonstrate they were competent enough to accomplish these jobs successfully (Horne, 1994). Martin (1989) reported that voluntary and court-ordered affirmative action programs also have added to the recruitment, application, entry, and representation of females in policing. She reported that agencies with court-ordered affirmative action plans showed that females constituted 21% of their applicants, agencies with voluntary affirmative action plans indicated 17% were females, and agencies with

no affirmative action plan indicated females constituted 13% of applicants. A correlation between the presence/absence of affirmative action plans and the proportion of women in supervisory positions has also been made from these figures. Martin (1989) reported that those agencies with court-ordered affirmative action were shown to have higher percentages of women in supervisory positions than both those with voluntary and no affirmative action plans. Martin also suggested that if the selection procedures at that time in the late 1980s continued, women would ultimately make up one out of five police personnel. At current rates, however, women will find it hard to reach “an equal hiring rate to their male counterparts” if practices do not change (Anderson, 2003, p. 8). Nonetheless, Martin (1989) asserted, changes made in applicant height and weight criteria have also helped level the field for females in policing, increasing the number of eligible females. She added that fewer than 4% of municipal departments still employed minimum weight and height standards by 1986. Martin claimed that making weight proportional to height for all police officer applicants and use of physical fitness tests by police departments became the adopted standards soon after.

Another effective tactic used to get more females into policing and retain them is the implementation of consent decrees. These court-ordered consent decrees mandate law enforcement agencies to specific courses of action in regards to hiring and/or promoting women in law enforcement (Anderson, 2003). She contended that without such decrees the number of women in law enforcement would be uncertain and that the decrees have resulted in some of the biggest gains for women in law enforcement. Anderson asserted that law enforcement agencies with consent decrees have “substantially higher” numbers of females represented within the agency (p. 17). Evidently, the use of consent decrees appears to have worked when put into action. Anderson’s statement is especially noteworthy because she reported that when consent

decrees expire “the pace of progress for women slows” (p. 18). Moreover, Anderson suggested that the “slow pace of increase” of females’ entrance into large police departments “has stalled or even possibly reversed” (p. 8). As long as the decrees are in effect they will ensure an increase in women police officers. It appears safe to say that once the consent decree ends, the numbers of hired and/or promoted women most likely will drop. More agencies should employ this type of strategy in order to increase numbers of females in their departments. Anderson even went so far as to claim that the use of consent decrees was the reason behind “marginal gains women have made in policing” (p. 19). Using consent decrees can help boost and stabilize the numbers of females in policing so they can be on the road to equalizing their numbers with the males; without such decrees the numbers of females entering/remaining in policing will stagnate.

Although policies and standards began changing in the 1970s to level the playing field for females entering law enforcement, Martin (1989) found there was still a “virtual exclusion [of females] from upper level management” (p. 3). A 2001 study by the National Center for Women in Policing reported that in large police agencies, women held “only 7.3% of Top Command law enforcement positions, 9.6% of Supervisory law enforcement positions and 13.5% of Line Operations positions” (as cited in Anderson, 2003, p. 15). Almost a decade later women are still trying to break into higher ranking positions. Anderson (2003) has suggested that this exclusion could be due to police departments’ “subjective nature of evaluations,” which would leave the promotion of females entirely up to those in higher ranking positions, who are most likely males (p. 22). If these males hold traditionally negative attitudes toward females in policing, they will allow personal bias, not a candidate’s work history, to make the decision for or against promotion.

Additionally, Martin (1989) noted this near absence of higher ranking females may be a result of females not being in policing as long as males. Being so far behind males' achievements in policing, women have to "catch up," starting at the bottom, and try to make headway into the upper echelons of policing. Felperin (2004) claimed it is even harder for women police officers to move up the ranks because "they often lack the necessary role models or mentors" to do so because of the fewer numbers of women in policing (para. 5). Furthermore, Felperin noted that it was not until 1985 that the first female police chief, Penny Harrington, was appointed in Portland, Oregon, even though females had been involved in some form of policing for almost 150 years at that point in time. As long as women police officers do not see other higher ranking women officers, like Penny Harrington, it seems less likely that they would take promotional tests if they exist in the first place, that is.

Felperin (2004) explained that another reason females are not moving up in the ranks is because they do not take the promotional examinations due to prioritizing their personal or family relationships. Society has traditionally associated women with domestic functions, so when it comes to choosing between a career and the family, the family typically takes priority. If a woman were to take a promotion she might have longer hours and more projects on which she must focus – taking time away from the family. With the balancing of family roles, however, more females will be able to pursue a career without having to sacrifice one or the other. For these reasons, Harrington, Besser, McAnney, Terman, Smeal, and Spillar (1998) asserted, women remain "virtually absent from the decision-making ranks and positions of authority," diminishing the consideration that women are capable of performing effectively in these positions (para. 16).

On the positive side, as indicated by Anderson (2003), research studies have found that female officers in supervisory positions are “better educated and demonstrate a superior management style” (p. 23). Studies have shown repeatedly that female police officers can effectively, if not exceedingly, perform the same positions as their male counterparts. Women in policing have been known to use different styles of policing from the traditional types, which makes them more suitable for new-age management styles. As society and its needs change, so, too, does the way that situations need to be handled. In 2003, Anderson (2003) reported that the National Women and Policing found that women police department managers were “more flexible, self-confident, proactive and creative than the men, who were found to be more authoritarian and prejudice,” revealing the benefits of women in higher ranks (p. 23).

Benefits females bring to policing

One of the major benefits that females have brought to policing is their use of communication/interpersonal skills. Through these skills females in policing have made great strides in being recognized as contributing members to the field of policing. Lonsway (2000) described that one of the advantages of women in policing is that they are less likely to use excessive force: “A good cop knows how to defuse the situation by talking it out” (p. 4). This quote displays that “a ‘good cop’ uses communication skills” – in both situations that need to be deescalated and in everyday encounters with citizens (Lonsway, 2000, p. 4). This measure, as supported by research, insinuates that women make “good cops” (Lonsway, 2000, p. 4). Lonsway noted that these communication skills are especially important since most of police work involves interaction with the community, in which most of the encounters only involve service or noncriminal functions.

Females exhibiting good communication skills are excellent candidates for professions that focus primarily on dealing with the community. An article that appeared on the policeemployment.com (2009) website quoted Houston Police Chief Elizabeth Watson saying “intelligence, communication, compassion, and diplomacy” are required in modern police departments (Women in law enforcement, para. 4). For those reasons, the article on policeemployment.com recognized that females make “strong candidates for the many police departments that prize intellectual aptitude over physical prowess” because they possess these desirable traits (Women in law enforcement, para. 4). These traits are imperative to possess when interacting with the community. Without compassion and diplomacy, citizens will not trust law enforcement officers to make compromises and decisions about how to protect the community and serve justice in an effective and safe way. On The Learning Channel’s 2009 television series, *Police Women of Broward County*, the four featured women police officers do just this in playing the roles of mediators, counselors, therapists, consolers, and advisors and gain the trust and confidence of the citizens in order to help them through their problems, regardless of what the problems are (Rader & Forman, 2009). The alternative of communicating, rather than using physical force, is preferred to diminish possible violence and to “maintain composure in situations of conflict” (Lonsway, 2000, p. 4).

Lonsway (2000) also remarked that female police officers not only have demonstrated “more reasoned precaution” than their fellow male police officers, but female officers also “increase this tendency in their male partners” (p. 4). This suggests that women manifest good reasoning skills instead of relying only on physical abilities to defuse situations. This is beneficial to police departments so that aggressive measures are not taken when they are not warranted, resulting in more calm and peaceful resolutions that police officers try to defuse.

Lonsway's quote also suggests that females have a positive effect on their male counterparts by noting the increased likelihood of male partners to adopt their female partners' modern and alternative-style skills. The resulting phenomenon helps improve policing styles and techniques by using different and more contemporary approaches for a society that has changed since the beginning of policing. As has happened in the past, different approaches in policing (as well as other fields in the criminal justice realm) have changed throughout the years, and the "increased caution" that women have demonstrated may help bring about a new era of policing styles and techniques.

Other studies, like that of Gerber (2001), also agreed with the fact that males have "decreased aggressiveness" when partnered with females (p. 146). She claimed that this "decreased aggressiveness" can be especially beneficial to police departments and their communities so as to create better relationships *within* the police department itself and *between* the police department and the community. Gerber (2001) further asserted that male police officers have been observed as being "less aggressive and less likely to precipitate violent confrontations with civilians" when they work with female police officers rather than with male police officers (p. 146). Less aggressive and violent officers are not likely to produce officer safety problems; instead they create positive environments where information can be peacefully and rationally collected because aggressive tactics are not used in dealing with incidents. By partnering male and female police officers together, the females are able to exercise a different way of thinking and type of "power" that causes males to behave less aggressively. Women exercise this power through "verbal aggression...by nagging and complaining" and gain influence in making decisions when partnered with men (Gerber, 2001, p. 58). Gerber noted that female police officers' use of verbal aggression, unfortunately, acknowledges their lower status

and that, essentially, the male police officers still have the last say in decisions. At the same time, the verbal aggression does not challenge the males' leadership, but it *does* give the females some influence in decision-making, therefore making the male police officers less aggressive and less violent. One female police officer, in Gerber's research, even noted that her "presence with her male partner help[ed] to de-escalate potentially troublesome situations," giving credence to the practice and importance of male-female partnering in policing (p. 47).

As noted previously, hiring police officers (whether male or female) with good communication and interpersonal skills benefits the police department and the community. Women are good candidates to seek and recruit since they have demonstrated their ability to use communication and interpersonal skills in lieu of physical force or intimidation. This is clearly worth mentioning considering lawsuits against police departments that involve the use of excessive force. An article appearing on the policeemployment.com (2009) website asserted that several studies have even reported that female police officers "are 'substantially less likely' to be involved in citizen complaints about the use of excessive force than males" (Women in law enforcement, para. 6). Increasing the number of female police officers could result in fewer civil actions against the police department, since male police officers "are more than eight times more likely to be reported for using excessive force than their female counterparts" (policeemployment.com, 2009, Women in law enforcement, para. 6). This statistic demonstrates the necessity of hiring candidates that are less likely to commit actions that result in lawsuits. Because women are less likely to use excessive force they should be actively recruited in order to reduce lawsuits and improve relations with the community. Lonsway (2000) insisted that overlooking any resources that reduce excessive force claims would be detrimental to a police department that wants to truly serve its community.

Lonsway (2000) also asserted that police departments can expect better cooperation with their communities by hiring women who have exhibited the desired communication and interpersonal skills. This is particularly beneficial when the rapport between the community and police department has deteriorated. The community can observe how the police department operates and how the aspiration for a better relationship does exist. This can be shown by sending out women officers who have exercised these communication skills and responded with words instead of fists and guns to especially sensitive or potentially dangerous calls. Noting this, female police officers also have been more favorable to community-oriented policing (COP) approaches. Since COP stresses “communication and cooperation with citizens as well as informal problem solving,” rather than physical force, it is no wonder that female police officers are more likely to implement COP than male police officers (Lonsway, 2000, p. 5). Lonsway went on to claim that female police officers generally “possess better communication skills than their male counterparts and are better able to facilitate the cooperation and trust required to implement a community policing model” (p. 2). It can be assumed that having women police officers with these attitudes and skills will develop higher levels of cooperation between the police and the community. Harrington and colleagues (1998) reported that having increased numbers of women police officers would “increasingly improve the public image of law enforcement agencies as well as have a positive impact on police-community relations” (para. 13). It is necessary, therefore, to hire candidates who possess skills that will promote COP approaches. Since females have been shown to be more inclined than their male counterparts to employ and reinforce COP approaches their recruitment should be increased so that both the community and the police department can benefit. Lonsway (2000) argued that if traditional policing continues to serve as the model for policing, new and alternative ways of policing, like

using communication and interpersonal skills, will fall on deaf ears and be unutilized in the environments where it is needed the most to improve relations.

Another benefit of hiring and retaining women officers is that they have been shown to be involved in less misconduct on and off the job (Lonsway, 2000, p. 5). A 1974 study by Bloch and Anderson showed male police officers “were more likely to be involved in misconduct than female [police officers]” while on the job, off-duty, and at the academy (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 12). Realizing this is important not only for public image issues, but also in maintaining the integrity of the police department to hire police officers that will work toward doing things in the correct manner as the department requires. Bloch and Anderson’s (2010) 1974 study also found that males were more likely to be “involved in ‘serious unbecoming misconduct’ (i.e., giving false statements to a police official or being arrested for disorderly conduct while off-duty) and mild misconduct (i.e., sleeping during a police academy class or not completing an assignment)” (p. 113). In that study, new women officers were only found to be late to work. Misconduct reflects badly on the department and, many times, makes headlines because these officers are supposed to be upholding the law (not violating it) and performing their job in a way that is most conducive to serving the community. Because women are involved in less misconduct cases they also are more likely to receive more favorable performance evaluations and fewer citizen complaints, once again demonstrating the need for women in policing.

Performance evaluations and effectiveness of females police officers

Effectiveness of female police officers has been questioned since their existence in policing. Despite unfavorable views by males, women in policing have proven time and time again that they can be just as effective, if not more, than males at their jobs. A 1973 study in Washington, D.C. by Bloch and Anderson found that females and males performed similarly

while on patrol (as cited in Swanson et al., 2008). Swanson, Territo, and Taylor (2008) also found that “carefully selected and carefully trained females can be as effective as police officers as carefully selected and carefully trained males” (p. 560). This suggests that police officers of *either* sex that are meticulously selected and trained properly should be able to perform effectively. Additionally, a 1974 study by Bloch and Anderson (2010) found that the gender of the police officers: did not influence officer attitude toward citizens, was not related to an officer’s ability to respond to threatening citizens, nor had any influence on citizens’ behavior. When comparing the quality of arrests by male versus female police officers, there was no difference found in conviction rates; the only difference in arrest charges was at what stage of the criminal justice process the case was dropped or dismissed – male police officers’ arrest charges were typically dropped later in the process, while female police officers’ arrests charges were dismissed immediately (Bloch & Anderson, 2010). Bloch and Anderson’s 1974 study further reported that no differences were found between male and female police officers in regards to taking care of injured and distressed people, general competence, and ability to respond to violence. They also reported that both male and female police officers received high levels of citizen satisfaction – in which several citizens said their experiences with female police officers improved their general attitudes toward females. This finding is very promising since the community is also coming to terms with women being viable police officers. Bloch and Anderson (2010) were able to conclude that women police officers “performed equally well as men and should be hired on the same basis,” providing solid findings that should quash any doubts of women police officers’ effectiveness (p. 114).

Even though these findings illustrated females as successful police officers, the debate over whether females are able to perform effectively the functions of a police officer remains a

constant in the field of policing. Despite what naysayers believe about women being unable to successfully carry out a police officer's duties, women police officers have been able to demonstrate their abilities within the field to invalidate these beliefs. Martin (1990) has contended that females are capable of performing the job and are effective members of policing because "they have risen to all ranks, including chief" (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 1). This displays women's ability to successfully and effectively perform their jobs, resulting in promotions to all ranks in policing. Not only have female police officers been able to satisfactorily perform their duties, but a 1974 study by Bloch and Anderson noted that female police officers have done so while achieving comparable outcomes in handling similar calls as males (as cited in Horne, 1994). This study also found that women police officers equally shared workloads when they worked with a partner (as cited in Horne, 1994). Female police officers have consistently shown they can carry out the same functions as male police officers and do it at equally adequate levels. These studies have indicated that sex should not be an automatic determinant of effectiveness or ineffectiveness.

Moreover, female police officers have received similar ratings to male police officers. A significant study by Lawrence Sherman (1975) found that female police officers have both paralleled males' performance evaluations from supervisors and received comparable levels of citizen satisfaction (as cited in Horne, 1994). Sherman (1975) conducted his study in St. Louis County, Missouri, in a suburban police department. He included 16 female officers and a comparison group of 16 male officers who went through the academy with the 16 female officers. Sherman addressed the question of whether women officers were "able to perform as well as men" officers on general patrol in a suburban, one person motor patrol setting (p. 438). His study found that "women can do the job" and perform one-person patrol duties as well as

men in a suburban setting, which had never been studied before (p. 435). Sherman's findings were important because they "increase[d] confidence in the reliability of the previous findings and it permit[ted] generalizations from the urban Washington and New York settings to suburban police forces" (p. 434). Women were also found to be accepted more by citizens as their presence increased in policing. Citizens reported that domestic quarrels and service calls were better handled by policewomen than policemen. This refuted male officers' belief that "the public would refuse to accept them [women]" (p. 436).

Other studies were also conducted in order to further confirm the positive evaluations of females in policing. Although there were a few differences in female and male police officer performance in a study conducted by Sichel and colleagues in 1975-1976, it was found that the two groups had similar performance evaluations (as cited in Horne, 1994). Goethe (1991) conducted a study of the Tampa Police Department which indicated that male and female police officers did not differ significantly "in the number of: self-initiated patrol incidents handled, assigned patrol incidents handled, reports written, arrests made, [or] Internal Affairs complaints received" (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 20). It appears that similar handling of duties has resulted in equal effectiveness, which explains the comparable performance evaluations that male and female police officers are receiving. Another study in Vermont conducted by Bartol, Bergen, Volckens, and Knoras (1992) revealed that there were "no differences in overall job performance" as a result of supervisors similarly rating female and male police officers "on all 11 performance measures" (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 29). All these similar performance evaluations validate that female police officers perform as effectively as their male counterparts. On the whole, it is evident that women have demonstrated unequivocally that they can carry out the functions of a police officer.

Despite what males' attitudes may be about females being unable to hold their own physically or pass training qualifications, the female police officers of the 2008 television series *Female Forces* on The Biography Channel and the 2009 television series *Police Women of Broward County* on The Learning Channel constantly demonstrate they are up to par with "the boys" (Glynn, Reed, & Greif, 2008; Rader & Forman, 2009). On *Female Forces*, Officer Julie Lardino went to Redman training and passed it successfully (Sheridan, 2008c). She admitted it was hard, but it is a hard task for anyone. Officer Lardino also had to qualify to be able to use a shotgun and even though she failed her first attempt she took some constructive criticism from her colleague and was able to qualify successfully (Sheridan, 2008a). Additionally, in another episode, the women police officers of Naperville Police Department were required to go through holster training, reloading, and moving when they pulled their guns out of the holsters (Sheridan, 2008f). Their instructor, Candy, noted how well all the women were able to complete the training, but would still correct the women if they made mistakes, helping them learn survival and shooting techniques. Just like male police officers, these female police officers were trained the same and were equally versed and capable in their training. These females train just as hard as the males because they perform the same job and have a responsibility in protecting their community just as much as the males, as well as protecting their own lives in certain situations.

The women police officers on *Police Women of Broward County* have shown they, too, are able to handle all the real life intensities while performing their jobs (Rader & Forman, 2009). Detectives Murillo and Penoyer are excellent examples of the female police officers keeping up with their male counterparts, as well as exceeding them. In one scene Detective Murillo prided herself on being able to run long distance and catch a suspect, and in another scene Detective Penoyer was able to scale a fence with no problem (Murphy, 2009f). Both of

these female police officers have demonstrated they are also able to hold their own when effecting arrests – being just as aggressive and authoritarian as the male police officers. These women police officers, along with the other two featured women, simply do not take “no” for an answer.

Furthermore, the women police officers of the Broward County Sheriff’s Office also keep up with field training and stay on top of their qualifications (Rader & Forman, 2009). Detective Bower was shown in one episode to keep up with her firearms qualifications even though she was no longer a street police officer (she specializes in sexual abuse and elderly abuse cases) (Murphy, 2009b). On another episode, Detective Penoyer was shown to be staying fit and was completing an obstacle course just like all of her male counterparts, displaying that she can also triumph (Murphy, 2009e). Detective Murillo also demonstrated her ability to effectively pass tactical training for firearms along with her male coworkers (Murphy, 2009b). She noted that Sergeant Mark was tough on her, not because she was a woman, but because he wanted her to succeed. Detective Murillo even said that she felt like she was 100% one of the guys whenever she trains with them. She also added that the “tough Anna” would have to be ready at any time for the day someone pulls a gun on her and sticks it in her face – and bullets do not discriminate based on sex. She has to be ready no matter what; just because she is a woman does not mean that she has to be any less concerned about her safety or think she can slide through any situation scratch-free. Essentially, she and the other female police officers have to stay on top of their game, just as any other police officer – male or female.

Detectives Murillo and Penoyer train not only so that they can perform effectively, but they do so in order to show, through their performances, that they can do all the same things that males do, even if they are women. Detective Murillo said she likes working out with the guys

because they keep her up to speed, and if they can do it so can she (Murphy, 2009h). She noted that if she was going to be part of their unit she had to be one of them and take the challenges just like the guys, because for what they do every day they *all* need to be like that. She does not want anyone treating her differently because she is a female, because she will back up her male counterparts just like they would for her. Detective Murillo even said she might work a little harder than the males and that the only difference is that at the end of the workout she goes to the women's locker room (at least there is one). All of these statements, however, also indicate that there is still a lack of complete acceptance of females by males and that females have to constantly prove themselves to remain recognized as true police officers. Detective Murillo also noted that she believes that any female who puts her mind to something can do it, implying that females can accomplish the same things as their male counterparts, and that she is aggressive and competitive (Murphy, 2009g). Detective Penoyer also is shown training and she noted that it is imperative to be fit in policing (Murphy, 2009e). She also noted that she has to be able to fight for her life, necessitating the training (Murphy, 2009i). Detective Penoyer said she wants to be the toughest, fastest, and stronger and wants to prove that she is able to do all the same things males can do (again, implying a rejection of female police officers on some level). She then said that she is no different than the guys because she still "kicks ass and takes names," but just does it with nail polish and lip gloss (Murphy, 2009h). Finally, she even compared herself to a Jack Russell Terrier, saying that she is not afraid to jump into anything, even though people think she is just a little blond girl who cannot take on anyone (Murphy, 2009d).

Sherman's 1975 study also found that females were "equally effective as their male counterparts in handling calls with violent citizens" (as cited in Swanson et al., 2008, p. 560). The females' performances in these types of service calls were determined to be no different than

the males' performances. Sherman's study found that women officers were found to be equally effective as men officers in dealing with distraught and angry citizens. In some situations, women police officers have even been found to deal with violence cases more effectively (discussed in the following paragraphs). The women officers, however, were found to have "a different style of policing compared to men" (Bloch & Anderson, 2010, p. 116). Bloch and Anderson (2010) reported that their 1974 study found that female police officers made fewer traffic stops and arrests and they were less aggressive than their male counterparts. Sherman's study also conducted citizen satisfaction surveys in which citizens disclosed that they felt women police officers "tended to be more receptive to citizen needs" (as cited in Bloch & Anderson, 2010, p. 116). This is a key component to mention because it is vital that the police department keep its citizens' needs at the forefront of its concerns. It is a good investment to recruit women to improve police-community relations. Also, hiring women officers will result in the community's needs being addressed on a timely basis, which will improve citizen's lives.

Along with successfully handling situations with violent citizens, another benefit that females bring to policing is their effective responses to crimes of violence against women. Lonsway (2000) reported that violence against women "represents the single largest category of calls to police departments" (p. 2). Harrington and colleagues (1998) asserted that these cases account for approximately 50% of all calls. Incompetent reactions to violent crimes against women do nothing but discourage victims from reporting them in the future, perpetuating the crime and letting it go unnoticed by law enforcement officials. Recognizing this highlights the importance of hiring more female police officers. Lonsway (2000) found that the effective handling of these calls by women police officers helped battered women improve their self-esteem; battered women were also found to be more apt to remove themselves from abusive

relationships after being helped by the women police officers. If that is the case, having more female police officers respond to these types of calls might reduce the number of calls, not because the battered women are afraid to report them but because they have left these abusive relationships after the help they received from the female police officers. Lonsway reported that a 1985 study insisted that female police officers helped bring about these changes by showing “more concern, patience, and understanding than their male colleagues” (p. 6). This same study found that the battered women helped by female police officers rated both “the police response as more helpful than those without such [female police officer] contact” and “the performance of female officers more favorably” (p. 6). Female police officers appear to handle these calls at a better rate than male police officers. If the public demands more police officers with the skills to deal with these cases and women are those people, it is in the police department’s and community’s best interests to encourage the hiring of more women police officers to effectively deal with this issue.

Deputy Cooper on *Police Women of Broward County* is a laudable example of a police officer effectively attending to violence against women calls. She admitted that she hates domestic disturbance calls and said she deals with them on a daily basis (Murphy, 2009h). However, she helps victims as much as she can, sympathizes with the women, gives them advice, loves to help people, and is glad it is her job. She admitted she has no remorse for the perpetrators and wants to ensure that justice can be served. Deputy Cooper always makes sure that she is very detailed in her reports. She knows how domestic violence can affect a family because she has observed it in her extended family and intends on recounting exactly what has happened. Deputy Cooper said that she can relate to the victims (mostly females), not because she herself has been abused, but because she knows how relationships should work since she is

married. She tries to relate herself to the victims and show them that they can find something out there better than what they are experiencing (Murphy, 2009d). Deputy Cooper said she feels when she can relate to people they become more receptive and tend to listen to and understand her more in how she is trying to help them. She tries to be a mediator, using her own experiences in life, to get to the bottom of the situation and help people fix their problems. She said that communication is the key and that any female victims need to communicate with their significant others in order to try to fix the situation, just like she does with her husband, even if it means the victim and the perpetrator break up. As can be seen through the dedication of Deputy Cooper, there are obvious benefits to having women police officers respond to these types of calls. One also has to remember that the department's female police officers may be on calls they have been dispatched to in their own beats or otherwise occupied; it would not be fair to pull them off their own dispatched calls to go to dispatched calls of violence against women.

Nevertheless, bearing in mind that the vast majority of violence against women is perpetrated by males, recruiting more females still appears necessary. Harrington and colleagues (1998) reported "as many as 40% of male law enforcement officers commit domestic abuse" (para.12). This number is both astounding and numbing, as these are the people that are supposed to help deter or resolve this sort of behavior and crime. Lonsway (2000) reported that hiring more female police officers could result in a reduction of cases being handled by male police officers who have committed these crimes (not to say that females could not as easily be perpetrators). If a male police officer were to go to a domestic violence scene he might be more likely to side with the male perpetrator if he himself has done the same thing. Condoning this behavior and not charging the perpetrators may lead victims to believe it is hopeless to report such crimes, continuing the occurrence of the crime. Not only is this a bad image of the police

department's officers, but, as Lonsway (2000) asserted, it can lead to court proceedings against the police department for failing to "properly handle domestic violence" (p. 6). Moore (n.d.) even noted that women are "prone to work well with domestic violence victims" (para. 4). This is not to imply, however, in any way that male police officers cannot effectively respond to violence against women calls, that all male police officers perpetrate these acts themselves, that female victims would not want to speak with male police officers, or that these types of cases are only "women's work." Nevertheless, it has been proposed that if more women are present in police departments, the community's members "are more likely to be represented with regards to their needs as victims" (Anderson, 2003, p. 13). This indicates that it is imperative to have diversity within a department in order to have the demographics of the community represented and taken care of equally.

Moreover, evaluations in law enforcement agencies in Washington, D.C., St. Louis, New York City, Denver, Newton, Massachusetts, Philadelphia, California, and Pennsylvania have found that female patrol officers have demonstrated they are just as competent, capable, and successful as male patrol officers (Lonsway, 2000). Additionally, Lonsway (2000) reported no significant differences observed in recent research between female and male police officers in: "their activities or productivity on patrol; their commitment to law enforcement organizations; their response to violent confrontations; and their performance evaluations received both at the academy and on the job" (p. 3). Furthermore, some studies even found that female police officers excel beyond male police officers. One study arrived at the conclusion that "female police executives were ... more flexible, emotionally independent, self-assertive, self-confident, proactive, and creative than their male counterparts" (Lonsway, 2000, p. 3). Females are not

only *as* qualified as males to be in law enforcement, but in some instances female police officers actually *surpass* male police officers in their abilities in the field.

Challenges to females in policing

One of the initial challenges females have had to face in policing is the scarcity of other females in the male-dominated field. Milgram (2002) stated in her article in *The Police Chief* that the majority of women have expressed concerns as recent as 2002 over the fact that they believe policing is not a suitable career because of the lack of women role models. Milgram posted several recruitment strategies utilizing the Internet, since it is an inexpensive way of reaching thousands of applicants nationwide, to spread the word to more women that policing is a viable career for them. Milgram noted that featuring biographies and photos of a department's female police officers has been an outstanding way to recruit other female applicants. Milgram asserted it is important to have female police officers featured on a website's main page because if only males are featured a potential female applicant is more likely to ignore the recruitment information. Another reason why there is a scarcity of women in policing is because of the "strongly weighted veterans preference; stringent physical agility requirements; and a reduction, especially in smaller departments, in the number of new hires made at any given time" (Milgram, 2002, para. 28). These initial challenges can be overcome through the use of the Internet; the only problem remaining, Milgram noted, is having someone constantly update the information on the site to continue to attract more female (and even male) applicants.

Physical challenges are another considerable hurdle the majority of women police candidates have to face, seeing that physical agility tests, as reported by the National Center for Women and Policing, are required for almost 90% of law enforcement agencies (policeemployment.com, 2009, Women in law enforcement). Lonsway (2000) postulated that

those who possess other valuable abilities/skills that are not strength- or endurance-related will be weeded out during the physical examination portion of the hiring process because traditional policing focuses on physical strength and abilities. It is good to have physical abilities when the situation warrants their use, but most encounters with the community are service-oriented and not physically oriented. Additionally, physical strength has never been found to be connected to one's "ability to manage successfully a dangerous situation" (Harrington et al., 1998, para. 6). Felperin (2004) has noted that the number of women applicants is declining because women are often "screened out of the selection process early on, as a result of certain entry level tests that favor upper body strength" (para. 4). Being so, some departments have actually dropped the physical agility test and the article on the policeemployment.com (2009) website reported that these departments have 45% more females on the police force than those departments with physical agility tests. The article also noted that opponents believe eliminating physical agility tests lowers standards because all police applicants are not performing at equal levels of strength. Supporters of eliminating the physical agility tests believe that original tests are unfair because all candidates are tested on the standards of *male* aptitude, regardless the sex of the applicant. Luckily, most tests have changed to adapt to the different bodies of males and females; however, this does not mean that the barriers have been completely conquered.

Not only do females have to overcome the *actual* barrier of not being as physically able as males, but, as Horne (1994) reported, they also have to face male attitudes that oppose females being police officers just because males *believe* that females have "lesser strength" and that females' "smaller physical size" are the only things that matter (para. 32). Horne noted that a 1990 study by Martin showed one-half of fellow male police officers believed their female counterparts were not physically strong enough to effectively perform patrol duties, one-third of

the males also felt that females called for other officers' assistance (back up) more often, and a sizeable amount of the males did not want females as back up. The males just did not believe that the females on the police force could be as effective in their jobs – solely based on physical characteristics and abilities. The women on *Police Women of Broward County*, however, have shattered these stereotypes by scaling fences, successfully effecting arrests, outrunning their male counterparts and catching fleeing suspects, commanding suspects' obedience to orders, and jumping into scuffles with the rest of the police officers (Rader & Forman, 2009).

On the contrary, Horne noted the 1988 research findings of Balkin found that females jeopardized traditional sex roles and identities by performing jobs customarily “identified with strength, masculinity and courage” (para. 24). So when females are, in fact, able to physically keep up with the males they threaten these “deeply rooted views” (Horne, 1994, para. 24). It seems that the male ego, in many cases, does not want the female competition because it threatens masculinity as it has been traditionally defined. Then, if a female were to physically perform in a superior way it would challenge the machismo and power of a male to effectively perform a job that is commonly viewed as masculine. Either way, it seems like female police officers will be criticized for being too weak or too strong – they just cannot win.

Probably the biggest challenge/pressure that females in policing still face is acceptance, especially by their male peers. Harrington and colleagues (1998) reported that male attitudes and behavior are the largest barriers “to increasing the numbers of women in policing” (para. 5). Although women have experienced better reception in the past few decades there are still those who do not find women to be viable police officers in any way, shape, or form. Price (1996) wrote that females still faced the challenge of being unaccepted “by their male peers, their supervisors, or their own police departments” as recent as 1996, even though females have been

present in policing for over 150 years (para. 3). Harrington and colleagues (1998) even reported that a “clandestine organization” of male police officers – “Men Against Women” – exists within the LAPD (para. 7). They reported the purpose of this group is to “wage an orchestrated campaign of ritual harassment, intimidation and criminal activity against women officers” (para. 7). Negative attitudes (and actions) like these by male police officers exacerbate the problem with females who already question whether they are good enough candidates to be police officers and whether they want to endure this type of harassment. Price’s (1996) research has made note of males: expecting females to fail (Brookshire, 1980), doubting females can compare to males in job skills (Bloch & Anderson, 1974), not seeing female officers as performing “‘real’ police work” (Melchionne, 1976), and continuing myths about females’ “lack of emotional fitness” (Bell, 1982) (para. 7). A 1990 research study by Hunt claimed that male police officers dreaded the thought of females uncovering departmental or personal secrets about police violence and corruption, creating reluctance to females joining the police department (as cited in Price, 1996).

The *public’s* acceptance of women police officers, however, has been more welcoming and positive in recent years. Price (1996) contributed this acceptance to the fact that women “police have been seen more frequently on the street on patrol and in uniform” (para. 4). Since women police officers are now visible, the impact of their presence can be felt by the community. The more the public deals with female police officers, gets to know them and sees that they perform well, the more likely the public is going to accept these female police officers as assets to the department and community. Although males in general (not necessarily male police officers) have still conveyed negative attitudes toward female police officers (they are, however, more positive than past attitudes [Martin, 1990]), a study by Balkin (1988) found the public showed “positive acceptance of female officers” (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 24). This

does not mean, however, that it is anywhere near a complete level of acceptance. It appears that although males' views have been changing to more positive views of female police officers, the public is more accepting of female police officers – probably because more female police officers means a better representation of the female population in the profession. Horne (1994) noted that “society as a whole has changed” and “sex-role stereotypes have become blurred,” culminating in greater acceptance of women as viable candidates for police officers (para. 63). Unfortunately, males' acceptance will probably take longer to come full circle just because the policing field has been a male-dominated field for the majority of its existence. Since the women's liberation and feminist movements in the 1960s and 1970s, the public has seen the entrance of many females into different professions and policing is just another one of them that the public has more recently accepted with open arms.

This is not to say that there is absolutely no acceptance of females in policing by any males. Hostility toward female police officers does exist, yet there has been an increased acceptance by male police officers in the past years, especially since the 1970s. In 1988, Balkin surmised that new breeds of males appearing in the policing field, who have new values, would be more likely to accept female police officers (as cited in Horne, 1994). As a result of this new breed's existence, Martin (1990) also said newer male police officers are more supportive, compared to those in the past, of female police officers (as cited in Horne, 1994). This is a very positive factor for women who want to enter policing. Horne's research reported that since 1976 male police officers have changed their attitudes and opinions toward female police officers, have been more agreeable to working with female police officers, and more have found them as acceptable partners. She also cited male police officers' acceptance of female police officers' overall aptitude and that male police officers viewed females as “equal participants in work and

family life” (para 52). This change in attitude is what is needed to encourage more women to enter and remain in the field and work together with males as a team, not separate entities based on sex category, to serve the community. Since the 1970s, males’ negative attitudes have greatly changed to more supportive and positive ones, and Horne’s research even illustrated that over 80% of male police officers accepted female police officers as members of policing.

Nonetheless, it has been posited that the creation of government regulations and laws are potential reasons for this increase in acceptance (Horne, 1994). Nevertheless, resistance of females entering the field of policing still exists, despite more accepting male mentalities nowadays, and complete gender unification is yet to come.

Still, other negative attitudes, especially by males, have existed even though research has shown females to be just as effective when performing their jobs. McGeorge and Wolfe found in their 1976 study that only 18.1% of male police officers “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that female police officers make as good police officers as males (as cited in Bloch & Anderson, 2010, p. 117). Johns’ 1979 study of 116 female and male undergraduate criminal justice students in the School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University involved the use of a questionnaire that was “taken from interviews with police officers about women in policing” to discover the students’ extent of agreement or disagreement with the statements (p. 33). This study reported males as believing “females should be given limited police responsibilities,” but the males also believed female police officers should still be “subject to the same selection requirements as men” (as cited in Bloch & Anderson, 2010, p. 117). This seems unfair because if women are required to go through the same selection requirements, they should be able to participate in an equal fashion. Although this study was over 30 years ago, its results are resonating because there are still males who agree with these statements even though several

studies have reported the benefits that female officers bring to policing. A 1982 study conducted by Golden analyzed 134 male criminal justice majors and found that they questioned a female police officer's ability to perform many police duties (as cited in Bloch & Anderson, 2010, p. 117). Bloch and Anderson (2010) also found that negative attitudes by male police officers were displayed in their behavior, including subjecting female police officers to hostile work environments, sexual jokes, harassment, pornography, and unwanted sexual advances. It is important to note these older studies because many of their findings on negative male attitudes toward females in policing can be seen today. It is no wonder that many women are not jumping into a policing career with studies reporting these incidences through the decades. Women may never be able to reach their full potential because they are not given the chance to prove themselves or they feel a need to remove themselves, from these offensive environments because it is not worth the degradation, humiliation, and hostility.

Sexual harassment and sexual/gender discrimination are other pervasive problems in the field of policing that go along with negative attitudes that women have been forced to endure, as is demonstrated by the following research study results. A 1990 study by Martin revealed that two-thirds of the 70 women police officers in the study (from urban departments that were sampled from a mail survey of 446 municipal police departments that served populations of 50,000 or more and all state police departments) had "reported at least one instance of sex discrimination and 75% reported sexual harassment on the job" (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 37). Furthermore, a 1992 study by Bartol and colleagues indicated that 53% of the 30 females in the study said they were sexually harassed by supervisors or male officers (as cited in Horne, 1994). These studies point out that sexual harassment still existed no matter how much people tried to hide it, deny its existence, or how much they may claimed to be accepting of women

police officers. A 1995 suit filed against the NYPD by a woman police officer displayed how pervasive this problem was at the time: “over a ten-year period, claims were that she endured sexual explicit comments, centerfolds tacked to her locker, and pornographic movies in the station’s lounge” (Anderson, 2003, p. 12). In another 1995 suit against one of NYPD’s top uniformed officials, another woman police officer said “she was told she would suffer professionally if she filed charges against officers who subjected her to abuse” (Anderson, 2003, p. 12). These last two examples note both the frustration of being subjected to discrimination and the threat of losing one’s job if this discrimination were to be reported. Anderson (2003) asserted that “management is ultimately responsible for the harassment in the workplace if they are aware and do nothing to take correct action” (p. 10). If correct action is not taken, suits can be filed for up to millions of dollars, costing the department punitive damages and a loss of respect in the community. Effectively addressing this pervasive problem will rid the department of much hostility created between males and females and of those police officers (male *or* female) who commit these acts. Addressing this problem will also allow the department to funnel its funds into protecting and serving the community, rather than using it to pay out complainants because of in-house fighting and harassment.

Other studies have shown that sexual harassment and sexual/gender discrimination are not unique to only some departments, but may even exist on a statewide (and even nationwide) basis. A 1993 study conducted by the Statistical Analysis Center on women police officers in Florida found that the women experienced several different components of sexual harassment (as cited in Horne, 1994). One-third of the targeted 3,790 females responded to the self-administered delivered survey forms. Sixty-one percent of these females believed they experienced sexual harassment at least once (most commonly being inappropriate sexual or

gender comments) and 40% said they “dealt daily with sexually oriented materials or jokes” (yet 50% felt it was given appropriate attention) (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 35). These high numbers appear to suggest an absence of written sexual harassment policies. Of the respondents, however, 82% said their departments had written policies and 41% said formal training on sexual harassment was also provided (as cited in Horne, 1994, para. 35). Lonsway (2000) reported multi-departmental studies have found that sexual harassment was experienced by 63% to 68% of women police officers. It is obvious that females in policing endure much hostility because of their sex at the hands of their male counterparts. This problem can plague any police department and can exist in covert or overt ways. Additionally, it can be committed by one of the department’s police officers or occur systematically. This problem demands the attention of management in addressing the problem to eliminate it at all levels.

What makes sexual harassment and sexual/gender discrimination an even worse problem is that male police officers may not consider the things they say or do as sexually inappropriate. A research study conducted by Horne in 1994 found that male police officers indicated that they were not aware of the existence of sexual harassment in their departments, while the females reported being completely aware of it. Horne also found that many more female police officers reported overhearing “sexually derogatory remarks directed at women or noted that women face unwanted sexual advances,” whereas the males did not report as many (para. 66). Perhaps a logical answer to this phenomenon would be that the male police officers do not perceive certain statements, words, or actions as harassment and, therefore, do not pay heed. This is extremely frightening for women who may be traumatized by the constant and daily barrage of sexually oriented comments and actions they may endure. This could also make women more cynical, especially when dealing with male community members, since they expect nothing but the worst

from them because of their experiences within their department. The harassment and discrimination endured by these female officers could lead to a prejudice of all males. This may result in the female officer not doing her best to protect and serve all the community members, meaning male citizens, because of past negative experiences with males. If male police officers were properly educated about what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual/gender discrimination female officers' subsequent traumatization by and cynicism toward all males could be avoided. Subsequent disciplinary action would then be required to ensure that violations would not be taken lightly. It has been suggested, therefore, that increasing the number of women in policing would "bring about change in policies and procedures" in order to address the problems of sexual harassment and sex discrimination (Lonsway, 2000, pp. 2-3).

Another type of sex discrimination not based in sexual harassment is one regarding the use of body armor (vests) and uniforms solely in men's sizes. It is obvious that the bodies of males and females are physically different, requiring different clothing and vests that contour the shape of the body. Since policing is a male-dominated profession it is likely that uniforms and vests typically would be in men's sizes. Women's bodies, however, are not the same as men's bodies and require uniforms and body armor that fit differently, yet remain comfortable, flexible, and safe. On The Biography Channel's television series *Female Forces*, vests were a main issue with the women police officers (Glynn, Reed, & Greif, 2008). One officer, Lisa Burghardt, said that in her 22 years on the department she never had a vest that contoured to her body (nor did she know of any other woman officer in her department that had such a vest that contoured to that officer's body) (Sheridan, 2008a). She said that the original vests basically made the women look like "big burly girl[s] with no boobs" (Sheridan, 2008a). In that particular episode all the female police officers were thoroughly measured for new vests that would be tailored

specifically for females' bodies; the vests were modified versions of the males' vests. Officer Tammy Spencer-Hale even noted that she never remembered being measured that much for the old (male version) vests – which highlights the differences of males and females that need to be accounted for when purchasing vests. Officer Burghardt even added, “We’ve come a long way – from no contour to one that’s specifically fit for our bodies. We’re really excited.” Officer Jennifer Johnsen said the new vests did not make it feel as if she were restricted. Another woman police officer noted that it was nice for the women not to have to force themselves into men’s clothing (and vests) that did not fit them. All the women were excited and felt good in their new vests and looked forward to using them. They were all happy with the flexibility and comfort, as well as safety and extra protection, provided by the form-fitting vests. Providing a seemingly insignificant device, like a form-fitting vest, can help female officers be able to perform their job effectively. At the same time the female officers will be able to keep themselves safe, just like the male officers. No matter how small it sounds, this change made a difference.

Returning to negative male attitudes toward females being police officers, males also have been seen as demeaning the role that female police officers can perform. Gerber (2001) noted that one sergeant made the following comment about two women officers working together: “You’re going to let those two little girls work together? They could get themselves killed out there; this isn’t Kansas” (p. xxii). This sergeant did not see the two women police officers as “good cops,” as Lonsway had asserted, but rather as ineffective and in need of protection. Gerber claimed many supervisors, like this sergeant, prevented two females to work together, and, as a result, teamed females with male police officers instead (not so that she could help him perform in a less aggressive way in this case, but rather to avoid female-female

partnering). A 1974 male patrol officer attitude study done by Bloch and Anderson found that males did not think female police officers were as capable as the males at patrol duties (as cited in Horne, 1994). Johns (1979) noted that some males think that females should not be used at all in patrol functions. A prime example of this is of a female police officer, Dana Higbie, who was quoted in the *New York Newsday* as saying her boss once told her she was going to stay inside because her boss needed someone to type and that “women are *born* with typing skills” (as cited in Gerber, 2001, p. 1). Her boss felt that a woman should perform clerical functions, not be assigned to street patrol. One woman police officer quoted in Gerber’s book said that the police department kept the women inside more than on street patrol and saw them more as secretaries than police officers. This female police officer noted that this “makes you feel incompetent” (Gerber, 2001, p. 65). These negative attitudes create feelings of powerlessness and inability in some women police officers. Another female police officer noted that a male in uniform is seen as “a cop,” but a female in uniform is seen only as “a woman” (Gerber, 2001, p. xiii). A different female officer even said “males are more domineering” and that males are “sure and assertive,” possibly implying that females do not possess the latter good qualities (Gerber, 2001, p. 1). As a result, some female police officers do not consider themselves as “real cops” and also view themselves as being of lower status than males, discussed in depth in the following paragraphs. Women police officers begin to internalize the stereotypes as true, presumably falling into these stereotypes and creating self-fulfilling prophecies by acting in accordance with them.

Another challenge that females in policing face is that females are perceived to be in lower-status positions in comparison to males. Gerber (2001) noted that females in male-female police officer teams “are almost always the subordinates” because males are given higher

statuses, therefore, awarding them more influence in the decision-making process (p. xvi). She wrote that sex category – not skills – is the main determinant in who gets to exercise more power and influence in mixed-sex groups. In the case of a male-male team or female-female team, Gerber continued, the senior police officer would act in a dominant/assertive way and exercise more power and influence, while the junior police officer would be the accommodating officer and act in a more expressive way. This “status model” holds that the status of the police officer affects the behaviors that are associated with whichever status each occupies (Gerber, 2001, pp. 1-2). In a male-female team, the male always has the “superior status,” since the salient status characteristic is sex category, not experience/seniority, regarding performance and task competence (Gerber, 2001, p. 19).

Gerber said one reason males hold this high status is because males “are overrepresented in positions of high status in our society” and “‘male-typed’ traits reflect processes associated with high status” (p. 2). Conversely, females “are overrepresented in positions of low status” and “‘female-typed’ traits reflect processes associated with low status,” suggesting any female police officers will be immediately grouped in a position of low status because that is what is expected (Gerber, 2001, p. 2). Geis, Brown, Jennings, and Corrado-Taylor (1984) confirmed this belief in the study they conducted on 128 males and females who viewed commercials where “female and male actors portrayed high- and low-status roles in TV commercial scenarios” (p. 4). The study had three “traditional versions” of the commercials (male as dominant and female as submissive) and three “reversed-sex versions” (female as dominant and male as submissive) (p.5). The 128 subjects then had to make “personality attributes to each character on five sex-stereotypic dimensions, e.g., ‘dominant-submissive’” (Geis et al., 1984, p. 1). The study found that both males *and* females in high-status roles were rated as more masculine and males *and*

females in low-status roles were rated as more feminine (as cited in Gerber, 2001, pp. 8-9).

Regardless of the police officer's sex, low-status roles are classically regarded as feminine and high-status roles are typically regarded as masculine.

Perpetuating this high- and low-status theory is status characteristics theory, which alleges "men have higher status than women in our society" (Gerber, 2001, p. 3). Gerber reported that this theory claims that "when a man and woman work together, the higher-status man assumes a more directive role and behaves in an assertive way" while the "woman enacts a more supportive role and behaves in an accommodating way" (p. 3). Stereotypes are developed in which males are seen as having instrumental qualities (high-status) and females as having expressive qualities (low-status) when people observe the high-status role of males and the low-status role of females; these stereotypes are reinforced through constant observation of such interactions. Moreover, people typically see an "established power order" when observing male and female relationships and "assume the two sexes are characterized by the dispositions associated with that order" (Gerber, 2001, p. 22). Males in policing, Gerber asserted, are constantly seen in a position of power because of relationships that males and females have in *society*, like that of a husband and wife or that of a male boss and a female subordinate, in which the females are typically in the lower-status role. People naturally assume that the high status of males and low status of females will translate into males and females holding the same types of positions in policing.

Compounding this theory, Gerber (2001) noted, are the unfavorable evaluations women (and even men) receive from observers when they "manifest characteristics deviating from gender related norms" (p. 11). She asserted that those who violate the gender related norms are seen as less competent and unlikeable, essentially forcing a female (or a male) to stay in her (or

his) expected status. Gerber wrote that males might be teased if not in the high-status position, and females might experience hostility and sexual innuendos (i.e., about their sexual orientation) if they are in the high-status position. Gerber reported that some studies suggested that women police officers “need to exhibit some feminine qualities in order to be considered competent,” further perpetuating the expectation of women to “stay where they belong” in order to be seen as adept (p. xix). It should also be noted, however, that males still have the “opportunity to enact both high- and low-status roles” because most patrol teams are male (Gerber, 2001, p. xix). Gerber claimed that males have “fewer restrictions” placed on them when enacting a high- or low-status role because they can be in either role when in a male-male team and will not be seen as bending gender norms when one male police officer is in the lower-status position, because that is what is expected of the junior police officer (p. xix). Nevertheless, because policing is a masculine-typed occupation, males are constantly expected to perform better than females, regardless of seniority or education, reinforcing the high- and low-status roles even more.

Unique stressors to females in policing

Historically, women police officers have had to deal with many other stressors that are unique to only women in the male-dominated field. Swanson, Territo, and Taylor (2008) found that it is true that both male and female police officers have to “overcome [their] doubts about [their] own ability to perform [their] duties effectively” (p. 560). Females, however, have endured additional stresses that males in law enforcement do not have to face when choosing this career. Swanson, Territo, and Taylor also reported that female police officers have had to conquer societal preconceptions that females are “the ‘weaker sex’ in every respect,” while male police officers are simply accepted as they are (p. 560). Not only that, they added, but women who choose law enforcement careers have had to deal with the stresses of receiving little to no

support from their significant other, male companions, friends, and family members. A 1982 study by Glaser and Saxe has also found that when women tried to balance work and family life they had “an inability to work 15-hour days and still maintain a household,” which is a stressor most men do not have (as cited in Swanson, Territo, & Taylor, 2008, p. 561). Sinha (2009) reported that retired Captain Marian Bass of the Buffalo Police Department also noted that a frequent predicament for women police officers is lacking the capacity “to balance their personal and professional lives,” which is discussed in detail in the following paragraphs about pregnancy and motherhood (The unique problems women police officers face, para. 2). Captain Brass went on to say that a women police officer is also “expected to be a good wife and mother” (Sinha, 2009, The unique problems women police officers face, para. 3). This feat, however, can be very difficult when the female is expected to fulfill both roles in a full-time manner. Captain Bass noted that “family disputes and divorce issues” as well as feeling “guilty about their absence from home” can be a result of this, leading to extra stress at home (Sinha, 2009, The unique problems women police officers face, para. 3). This could very well affect one’s abilities in the field because of the added stress, which can be even tougher on females because of the nature of the issue. These societal and familial pressures are just two aspects of unique pressures that women in policing have had to endure.

On The Learning Channel’s 2009 television series *Police Women of Broward County*, one of the woman police officers, Deputy Shelunda Cooper, is married with no children to a police officer in a different department, J.C., and exemplifies the struggle of keeping a balance between her work and home life. However, Deputy Cooper has noted several times that she and her husband have a great relationship because he understands what she is going through every day since he is in the same line of work; a support system many female police officers do not

have. Deputy Cooper noted she appreciates her relationship with her husband, especially since she has seen so many marital problems on domestic disturbance calls (Murphy, 2009d). Even though Deputy Cooper's husband is in the same profession she still finds it hard to make time to see him, even for a few minutes, in passing. In one episode, Deputy Cooper received a call from her husband who wanted to bring her hot chocolate, but on her way to meet him she got a call and had to essentially put him on hold (Murphy, 2009d). Deputy Cooper's attempt to be a good wife shines through as she tries to balance their home life and work life. Being in such a demanding profession makes it difficult for Deputy Cooper to keep a 50-50 balance and be able to devote equal amounts of time to her work and her husband.

On The Learning Channel's 2009 television series *Police Women of Broward County*, the other three of the four featured police officers of the Broward County Sheriff's Office, Detectives Julie Bower, Ana Murillo, and Andrea Penoyer, are all mothers and also display the tug-of-war between work and home life (Rader & Forman, 2009). Detectives Bower and Penoyer are single mothers and Detective Murillo is married to a husband who is frequently out of the country working, essentially performing the life of a single mother (Rader & Forman, 2009). Detective Murillo's three-year-old son, Anthony, is a handful in himself. She noted he is raring to go the minute he awakes and opens his eyes. She said she has "a million things to do" in order to get him ready in the morning. She has to cook, wake her son up, bathe him, feed him, and get him off to the babysitter's house (and then has "a million things" to do once she gets to work) (Murphy, 2009b). Detective Murillo then noted that she wished there were 36 hours in the day so she could get all her home life in order as well as complete all her tasks at work. Detective Bower expressed the same challenge, saying that she has to work all week, but that is not the end of it – when she gets home she has to clean the pool, mow the lawn, and take care of

her son Dominic, among other things (Murphy, 2009a). She then noted that she does not even get one second to sit down and “do nothing.”

Detective Penoyer is also shown in repeated episodes as having to try to balance her personal and work life, being able to speak only for a few seconds to a couple minutes with her son, also named Dominic, before having to hang up because she has a call to go to. In one episode, Detective Penoyer’s son Dominic calls her while she is at work, thinking she was going to pick him up, but she could not because she had to “take bad guys to jail” (Murphy, 2009b). In another episode, Detective Penoyer was going to get off late from work because she and her partner had to arrest a suspect and generate a report, and she noted that her son Dominic was now in bed and she would not be able to kiss him goodnight, help him with his homework, or do all those things that mothers should be doing (Murphy, 2009h). Detective Murillo also expressed that her long hours steal precious family time away from her, but that when she comes home and takes off the “cop hat” and puts on the “mamma hat” and sees her son Anthony, her problems go away (Murphy, 2009e). She noted Anthony is sometimes up after midnight when she gets home and she tries to play with him for a few minutes and spend time with him because those moments are precious to her. There is a challenge for all three mothers to make sure their sons are receiving the right amount of attention, care, and love they would like to give them. Detectives Bower, Murillo, and Penoyer try their hardest to make a living to provide for their children, but in the process they end up sacrificing much time with them.

These three women police officer mothers then try to use the knowledge and abilities they have gained through their careers to help instill values in their children and be good role models for them. Through her hard work, Detective Penoyer said she hopes to teach her son to be tough, a hard worker, have a good soul, and be a good man – even if she is not always with

him (Murphy, 2009c). Detective Murillo expressed the same sentiment in saying there was nothing better than being a police officer, being a mother, and being a role model for her son (Murphy, 2009c). Detective Murillo went on to say that she wanted to go into a career where she could be a role model for her son where he could see that she is doing the right thing and teach him to do the right things in life, too. Detective Bower also has taught her son good values through her line of work, and in one episode went to his school to teach the children about how to keep themselves safe (especially from child predators since she is a sex crimes detective) by telling them they should remember their first and last names, addresses, phone numbers, and parents' names in case anything should happen to them so they can get home safely (Murphy, 2009e). These three officers epitomize the fight to balance their home and work lives by integrating what they have used in their work life into the lives of their sons, as many females in any profession might do, but there are noted differences since policing is a male-dominated profession.

The women police officers of the Naperville Police Department (NPD) on The Biography Channel's television series *Female Forces*, expressed similar feelings of trying to balance their personal lives (including their children) with their careers (Glynn et al., 2008). One of the woman police officers, during a bowling outing with the NPD women police officers and their children, said "We don't do a good job in law enforcement in making time for our hobbies and things like that. You actually have to try to have a personal life – you have to force yourself to do it" (Sheridan, 2008g). Another officer, Tracy Nance, took her female coworkers out with her to buy shoes and noted that she is a busy person and does not really have much time for herself, but that it was fun going out with the girls (Sheridan, 2008h). These are two incredible examples of how hard it is to maintain the rigors of the policing career while keeping a personal and social

life to keep one's life balanced. Something as simple as going out to buy shoes becomes a big outing when it consumes even just an hour of one's time that could be used on the job or doing job-related things.

Erin Gibler, a 10-year veteran of the NPD, works with the juvenile unit and also works with girls at a training academy where she coaches softball (Sheridan, 2008b). Erin's husband noted that she is the most driven person, and said she works 50-60 hours a week *and* coaches softball outside of work. Erin said she is able to make a good bond with the girls; she said she is able to be a good role model for the girls with her profession as a police officer and that she has to be strong-willed as a woman. She added that she hopes to teach the girls to stand up and be strong women, be aggressive, and work as hard as they can to get what they want. Erin is a commendable case of a female police officer being able to perform her job effectively and successfully while still making time for a hobby outside of her career. If all female police officers were able to do this and be able to devote enough time to all the activities they would like, there would not be such a challenge in balancing personal and work time. Balancing one's life is hard in any profession, but because of the rigors associated with policing, it is different than most jobs. The constant overtime and training can be enough to make one say "enough" and give it all up in an instant.

On *Police Women of Broward County*, the four female police officers are also shown to try to make time for other things outside of work, when the chance arises (Rader & Forman, 2009). Detective Penoyer noted that she does not have many opportunities to go out with her friends and/or son, but when she has a chance to go to the beach she goes as often as she can with them (Murphy, 2009h). She said it is very hard to coordinate her personal life with her work schedule. In one episode she got off work late (passed normal store hours) and had to

scramble around looking for a 24-hour store in order to buy materials for a costume she needed to make for her son for school (Murphy, 2009e). Had she been in a typical “9am to 5pm” job, the stores would not have been closed and she would have had more time to help her son.

Detective Murillo said that whenever possible, she always tries to multitask – one way she does this is by going to the park with her son and working out at the same time to keep up her physical fitness, integrating her personal and private life outside the job (Murphy, 2009i). Both Detective Murillo and Deputy Cooper have also expressed the importance of going to church to pray for their safety in their line of work, which helps relieve them of stress and prepare them for the next week. Each always tries to make time for church, and Deputy Cooper even noted that there was no way on earth that she would be in law enforcement if it were not for God (Murphy, 2009i).

Detective Bower also noted that she always tries to make time to take her son Dominic to one outside activity each week since her time is limited (Murphy, 2009i). She chose to watch her son participate in karate classes – fulfilling her desire to watch and spend time with him, as well as provide him with ways to defend himself if the situation arose. Detective Bower said that being a mom and being with her son was the best thing that ever happened to her – she loves it and said there is nothing better than that.

Pregnancy and motherhood

Female police officers have been found to leave the policing field at a higher rate and for different reasons than male police officers. Martin (1989) noted that one of the reasons is the policies and procedures (being forced to resign temporarily or permanently from position, being forced on light duty without the consultation of a physician, receiving little maternity leave time after delivery, weapon taken away, etc.) put in place regarding pregnancy and maternity leave. Some women are told if they become pregnant they had better find a new job; others are told

they have minimal time for maternity leave. Although some male officers have had issues with taking enough parental leave time, it is not as noticeable when compared to females who are typically considered the primary caregivers. Since women are the primary caregivers they must rearrange their personal and professional lives in order to find time for taking care of their children as well as work. Policies like being forced to resign (temporarily or permanently) from a position and being forced on light duty before it is required highly discourage females from having children when they want to both have a career and be a mother. Policies like these force women officers to choose children or a career. Lack of positive policies such as allowing female officers to take most of their maternity leave after delivery or allowing the female officers to consult with their physicians to determine when light duty should be considered also discourage female officers from becoming pregnant or disclosing their pregnancy. From the previous paragraphs it can be seen exactly how difficult it is to balance a family, a personal life, and a career in this line of work.

Becoming pregnant (or being a mother already) while employed is something unique to women police officers. Pregnancy not only becomes an important concern and responsibility in a woman's personal life, but it also affects the woman police officer's career and her ability to retain her job. Moore (2003) reported that "a large number of qualified female officers leave law enforcement after becoming pregnant or giving birth" and that these female police officers feel unwelcomed "in the profession once they become pregnant" (para. 1). In earlier times, many female police officers would basically be shelved into positions off the street once their pregnancy became known. This is no longer the case – at least it is not supposed to be. Some places, as Moore (2003) has noted, are making progress in giving women the option of choosing light duty from the onset of their pregnancy, or staying on the streets until it is physically

impossible to do so (which is decided with the physician's consultation). One such department is the San Diego County Sheriff's Department (SDCSD), which defined someone on light duty as "any employee with a medical restriction(s) which prevents her from performing one or more of the Essential Job Functions of their class" (Moore, 2003, para. 3). Not every department is progressive like this one, which adversely affects the entrance of women into the department if they know the department does not have pregnancy-friendly policies. Some progressive agencies with pregnancy-friendly policies, however, go so far as to offer some or all of the following: "adequate maternity leave, light duty assignments, maternity uniforms and body armor, deferral of in-service training, continuation of benefits and seniority credits while on leave, and flexible schedules upon return to work" (Kruger, 2006, para. 6). Nonetheless, Sam Marcossion of the Brandeis School of Law in Kentucky explained that women police officers cannot be forced into unwanted leave or light duty if they are fully capable of continuing their jobs (Moore, 2003). Forcing women police officers to do so could be the basis for a pregnancy discrimination claim.

Discussing the issue of pregnancy discrimination is something that females have to deal with primarily at the executive levels of law enforcement agencies and at the federal level. According to the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA), "discrimination on the basis of pregnancy constitutes a type of sex discrimination" (Moore, 2003, para. 9). This is something that is grounds for a lawsuit that executives of the police department need to be aware of and address. The PDA does not, however, require employers to afford "light duty assignments, leave time or even health insurance coverage to pregnant employees" (Moore, 2003, para. 10). It only allows benefits, such as these, to be available to pregnant employees if they are offered to other officers for other conditions. For example, if an employee is offered a light duty assignment

because of an illness or injury, then pregnant officers may also use the condition of pregnancy as grounds for being afforded light duty (Moore, 2003). Essentially, Kruger (2006) noted, an employer must “treat pregnant women as well, or as poorly, as it treats other temporarily disabled employees” (para. 4). Basically, employers do not have to go above and beyond what police officers in comparable situations receive – all employees have to be treated on an equal basis only when it requires leave, medical attention, and so on. Kruger also said the PDA was devised “to guarantee women the basic right to participate fully and equally in the workforce, without denying them the fundamental right to full participation in family life” (para. 3). Marcossou said that if light duty is not afforded to anyone, pregnant officers can, at least, be covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act (Moore, 2003). Balancing a career and motherhood is hard enough as it is, and departments that make such lifestyles impossible are not contributing to the list of careers in which women might want to partake and have as their dream jobs. Departments that discourage motherhood while employed may be losing some of the best human capital they could ever have.

Becoming pregnant on the job and embracing motherhood while still wanting to be the exemplary employee in policing is a very difficult task from the minute a woman police officer finds out she is pregnant. Cowan and Bochantin (2009) conducted a study researching the effects of becoming pregnant in a male-dominated work environment. The study found the following: pregnancy and motherhood were framed as a “risky business[es],” pregnancy was framed as a “crime and/or illness” by law enforcement agencies, mothering abilities were “(de)valued depending on sphere,” and “balancing work and life [was] an impossibility” (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 22). This study illustrated the constant issues female officers must consider when becoming pregnant or being a mother in the policing field. Cowan and Bochantin

concluded that pregnancy “can signal the end of the woman’s career” (p. 23). Other studies by LeBeuf and Mclean (1997), Price (1996), and Williams (2000) supported Cowan and Bochantin’s claim because they reported that being pregnant or “womanly” in a masculinized profession can “have detrimental effects on a woman’s career” (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 23).

In Cowan and Bochantin’s study, a woman officer, Janice, even said when she revealed she was pregnant the department told her “they were not going to hold [her] job” (p. 26). Some have even considered pregnancy an illness, furthering the notion that it is something that adversely affects one’s work ethic and ability to continue working in an effective manner, which some consider grounds for termination. Some negative stereotypes that pregnant officers face are being perceived as “less competent, less committed to their work, less dependable, more irritable, and less promotable” (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 23). These negative attitudes toward pregnant officers only push more and more females away from the field or force them to hide their pregnancies in fear of reprisal. Hiding a pregnancy is disadvantageous to the pregnant officer for health and safety reasons and to the department for liability issues. Additionally, pregnant officers have to work even harder than male officers who do not have to consider the physical toll of pregnancy on the body, on top of already trying to prove themselves just because they are females, because they have to overcome the perception that they are useless and a liability to the department. Cowan and Bochantin (2009) noted some women police officers opted to do “what was necessary to keep their jobs or were contemplating leaving the profession all together [sic],” noting the dilemma within the officer of choosing between each sphere of her life (p. 29).

Pregnant officers also experience departmental discrimination in other ways. Pregnancy naturally heightens femininity, which is negatively viewed in such a masculinized profession, because of the natural changes in a female's body. Polisar and Milgram (1998) noted that one way pregnant officers experience discrimination is through the lack of "uniforms and equipment in dedicated women's sizes" (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 23). Pregnant officers cannot fit into standardized uniforms (which some departments have only in men's sizes to begin with that are not form-fitting to the woman's body as noted earlier), especially in later trimesters, leading some to suggest letting pregnant officers wear their own clothes or having a maternity uniform and body armor available for them. This may, however, be construed as singling females out because they need "special" uniforms. To require pregnant officers to fit into the standard uniform would be not only ludicrous, but it would not be beneficial to effectively carrying out their job because of the discomfort they would be in. Police officers must be provided with uniforms that allow for movement that is required on the job, and if this is missing they will not be able to perform all their functions successfully – whether it is a male or female.

Another discriminatory practice involves maternity leave, which is said to demand "a disruption in a woman's time and energy spent on out-of-home work" (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 24). Pregnant officers shift focus from being just an employee to an employee with a baby on the way, calling for a division of time between the department and parenting. What adds to this is that many pregnant officers are essentially forced "to take most of their leave before they have the baby and are left with very little once the baby is born" (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 27). This further compromises the woman police officer's position that is at stake in the department because she is unable to come to work not only after, but *before* she is due, taking away valuable manpower that could still be utilized until the physician and pregnant

officer decide she needs to come off the street for safety reasons. The officer is essentially seen as abandoning her position to take on the endeavor of motherhood and “choose” one over the other. The pregnant officer cannot be the star employee and the star mother at the same time because of this expectation of choice in one over the other.

Childcare is another issue when it comes to pregnant officers. Women are typically seen as the primary caregivers and coordinating childcare in this profession can be a whole task in itself because of the nature of the hours of operation of a police department. Cowan and Bochantin (2009) noted that “nontraditional hours” and “shift work” cause problems for women police officers with children, since they “have the lion’s share of care-giving responsibilities” (p. 24). Female police officers often have to choose to stay in lower positions (declining promotions) because the hours are more conducive to normal childcare hours – this prevents their own advancement up the career ladder. This can be viewed on *Police Women of Broward County* when Detective Murillo has to get up early on a daily basis to get her son ready and prepare him to take him his babysitter’s house (Rader & Forman, 2009).

The topic of pregnant officers and firearms is another issue. Because of lead in the gun ammunition, there is much debate over female police officers using or training with the guns for extended periods of time. Some agencies, however, even go so far as to “remove arrest powers and previously issued firearms from pregnant officers” (Czarnecki, 2003, para. 31). If a police officer’s arrest powers and weapon are taken away, not only is she put at risk, but the safety of any others surrounding her in a situation is also compromised if a suspect may need to be neutralized by gunfire and arrested but the officer has no means to do so. One could reason that removing a firearm from a police officer is comparable to taking away a fire hose from a fire fighter – it is just not done. This is not to say that firearms are the only way of protecting

oneself, but if the situation warrants it, the lack of it could be fatal (just like a fire fighter might not fight fires every day, but when he or she does, he or she needs the fire hose in order to do so.) Confiscating the firearm from the pregnant officer greatly removes the pregnant officer from any sense of a normal continuance of her position, as well as puts others in potential danger.

Being a pregnant officer has other physical harms that could limit her ability to carry out duties. For example, Czarnecki (2003) noted several risks to the health of an unborn baby (and officer), including but not limited to: exposure to lead (from ammunition), noise pollution (from gun shots), chemical hazards, drug exposure, physical tactical training, contact with prisoners, custody of suspects, assaults, and working night work and shift work (associated with preterm birth). Pregnant officers and those with children have to acknowledge that their choice to become mothers is a “risky business” – becoming pregnant could cost the officers their job and staying on the job could cost the officers their lives and affect their children (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 26). Not only is there a focus on the women police officers’ chance of losing their job, but there is also the dangerous aspect of working in the line of duty that could claim a mother from her child(ren). One of the women police officers in Cowan and Bochantin’s (2009) study, Kelly, expressed her concern: “I am a mother. What kind of mother am I that I have to worry about dying every night? How can I put myself in harm’s way?” (p. 26). She and other female police officer mothers are mindful of the danger they put themselves in that not only could affect their own lives but the lives of their children as well. Cowan and Bochantin (2009) identify this internal tension as the woman police officer’s desire to be both an ideal officer and an ideal mother, that results in the “impossible balancing of work with the rest of life” because of the nature of the work (p. 28).

Detectives Murillo and Penoyer on The Learning Channel's television series *Police Women of Broward County* expressed these exact sentiments about impending dangers they face every day, which could rob their sons of their mothers (Rader & Forman, 2009). Detective Murillo said she prays every day that she will be able to come home to her son (Murphy, 2009b). In one episode, Detective Murillo and other officers came into contact with a suspect who had Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) and she expressed that her number one priority was safety because all she wanted to do was go home to her family (Murphy, 2009a). In this instance Detective Murillo could also put her family at risk if she were to contract MRSA and bring it home to them, so she made sure she took precautionary measures to avoid contraction – she thought less of her own safety, and more for the safety of her family. Detective Penoyer, who lost her mother nine years ago at the age of 17, does not want her son Dominic to be in the same position as she (Murphy, 2009c). Detective Penoyer noted that she has a very unpredictable schedule and works a lot, but still tries to make some special moment with her son so that he would have a memory of her if anything would ever happen to her – referring to all the dangers she faces every day to make a living for her and her son – whether it is simply spending time with Dominic or going to one of his Little League games. Deputy Cooper says that her police officer husband, J.C., has similar feelings of those impending dangers for her, as he knows the field intimately. She has said that her husband calls her during her shifts to make sure she is okay, noting the constant concern of whether Deputy Cooper will return safely to her husband every night (Murphy, 2009f). The struggles these females go through in order to fulfill both their dreams of motherhood and/or being a wife and of successful careers show that females in policing still battle these problems, despite being in policing over 150 years and having

legislation passed to equalize their opportunities to both fully participate in the field and maintain a home/personal life.

Finally, women police officers who are mothers receive mixed messages from their departments regarding their mothering abilities. In some ways, Cowan and Bochantin (2009) indicated, when mothering abilities were applied to the job in order to accomplish something, the female police officers were valued and praised. For example, if the female police officer's abilities come in handy when dealing with domestic violence, rape, child abuse cases, or anything in which the female perspective of a mother may be required, the department will positively regard the use of those skills. Detective Bower on *Police Women of Broward County* is a sex crimes detective and in one episode she was interviewing a female victim who claimed she was raped by a couple (Murphy, 2009c). Detective Bower said the "motherly thing" comes into play in these types of situations and she said she must be nurturing and reassuring. In this case, her "motherly thing" was a good thing to use because it benefited something that was related to her job in order to obtain information from the victim – her mothering abilities are valued in this sense. When the officer's mothering abilities are employed to resolve a situation it is valued, however, when the same officer uses those skills and their "personal mothering role gets in the way" those same abilities are devalued (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 28). Cowan and Bochantin concluded that women police officers can only use the "token role of 'mother' while on the job" when it is beneficial to the department and does not impart her own personal life into the picture (p. 28). If there is deviation from the "'proper' role of a female officer" in the workplace the female police officer will most likely be chastised for her attempted integration of her personal life in her every day duties (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009, p. 28). This

creates a tension between who the woman police officer is when she tries to transfer the abilities from one sphere of her life to the other, while trying to maintain the role of mother.

Unique reasons why females leave the field of policing

Aside from pregnancy and motherhood, female police officers also have been found to leave the policing field for other unique reasons that differ from male police officers. Lonsway (2000) cited some reasons that females leave as having “problems with co-worker gossip, training, lack of promotional opportunity, administrative policies that disadvantage female officers, and pressures to demonstrate their competence beyond what is expected by their male colleagues” (p. 7). With such reasons it is no surprise that women do not see policing as a viable career. Why go into a field that not only does not accept women, but that also fosters a hostile environment if a woman should happen to enter it? Of course no profession is without its faults and not all professions foster such practices, but it is a stark reality females still have to face when choosing this career. Moore (n.d.) also cited sexual harassment and “the department’s refusal to recognize physiological differences in uniforms, training and practice” as factors in higher turnover rates of females (para. 6). Obviously, males do not have to worry about all these issues; therefore, females leave policing at a higher rate and for completely different reasons than males.

Moreover, a 1981 Schwartz and Schwartz study discovered that women police officers have had to deal with receiving little or no support from within their organizations, as noted above, which is a major stressor for women that could lead to higher turnover rates (as cited in Swanson et al., 2008). Swanson, Territo, and Taylor (2008) found that organizational stressors included the absence of assistance programs particularly for females, little support from supervisors and management, and receiving harsher treatment than males in the organization. A

1983 study by Wexler and Logan also pointed out the lack of role models that female police officers had to look to for guidance as another stressor (as cited in Swanson et al., 2008).

Without proper guidance from other females who have undergone these same stressors and pressures, newer female officers will be set up for failure if the expectation is that males and females are completely alike and that they operate and think the same way. Wexler and Logan's study found additional stressors in individual and official harassment toward women police officers, and their study determined that "questions about the women's sexual orientation, refusal to talk to the women, and blatant anti-women comments" were some of the individual types of harassment (as cited in Swanson et al., 2008, p. 561). Included in the official types of harassment were "having no separate locker rooms and being physically locked out of the police station" (Swanson et. al, 2008, p. 561). Stressors within the organization like these are difficult to change since many of them stem from the traditional outlook on policing as well as personal outlooks from the members of these organizations.

Recent studies and status of females in policing

Although female police officers have had to, historically, deal with additional types of stress (some of which end in females leaving policing altogether), Swanson, Territo, and Taylor (2008) noted that current research from two Florida studies (each featuring one department) has shown a growing change in this phenomenon. In these two research studies (two departments in total) all female patrol sergeants and patrol officers were surveyed. The female officers were matched to a sample of male officers by rank, years of service, and age. The subjects in the two departments totaled 56 people. The study's findings showed that females no longer "experience stresses unique to them," and that comparable levels of stress are actually experienced by both male and female personnel (Swanson et al., 2008, p. 562). One reason for this is because law

enforcement is becoming accepted as a viable career for females, therefore, creating the disappearance of “personal stressors associated with negative attitudes from family and on many cases high ranking female [sic] or from men they are dating”* (Swanson et al., 2008, p. 562). Another reason could be that there are more “high ranking female role models” that other female police officers can look to for guidance in their agencies (Swanson et al., 2008, p. 562). As changes in beliefs are made and as the number of females in policing increases, the stressors that females and males experience become more equalized. Additionally, because males and females are taking “more equal roles in family raising,” as Swanson, Territo, and Taylor noted, female police officers do not have the stress *as* much as they used to in trying to fulfill the dual role of being both a full-time mother and a full-time police officer (p. 562). The start of the balancing of domestic roles in the family has helped women get closer to accomplishing both roles without having one role or the other completely overtake the other. However, as noted in the abovementioned paragraphs about pregnancy and motherhood, women are nowhere near complete balancing of the roles.

Female police officers have faced and still face many obstacles in policing, yet have made many strides in policing as well. Despite widespread resistance of their entry into policing, females have forged on into the unknown and hostile territory. Women police officers have been met with both bitterness and resentment, but have demonstrated time and time again that they are willing to perform and capable of performing all the required functions of a police officer. Women police officers have exhibited open-mindedness, have shown to be effective in their performances, and have displayed physical, mental, and psychological strength in their ability to deal with all kinds of job-related calls. Although female police officers have achieved all this, complete acceptance and integration into the field of policing is still unaccomplished.

*This author interpreted “on many cases high ranking female” as “in many cases high ranking females” based upon the context of the sentence/paragraph.

However, with the observations and recommendations provided in this literature review, supported by the numerous examples of the everlasting strong will of females to enter and remain in the field, the field of policing can work toward equality in hiring, retention, and promotion practices of females. Without the cooperation of both sexes in the field this feat will remain nothing but an unrealized dream of the many that yearn for gender integration in the field.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to explore the current status of women's roles in policing as related to specific issues they may face and the strides they have made. Before approval was sought by the Institutional Review Board (I.R.B.) of Aurora University (A.U.), the principal investigator successfully completed the web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participation," required by the National Institutes of Health (N.I.H.) Office of Extramural Research, in February 2009 (see Appendix A). Approval of this human research study was then granted by the I.R.B. of A.U. in March of 2009 (see Appendix B) after the principal investigator submitted documents to the I.R.B. of A.U. regarding the purpose of the research study, a description of the research, the procedures to be followed, the consent form to be provided to the interviewees (see Appendix C), and the interview questions to be provided to the interviewees (see Appendix D). All seven interviewees consented to the interviews and they were informed of the study's purposes, the risks (which were none), the benefits, and how confidentiality would be protected. This study utilized qualitative research methods through the use of in-person interviews. Semi-structured in-person intensive interviews (qualitative research method) were chosen over a self-administered survey method (quantitative research method) in order to obtain a more thorough exploration into the perspectives of current female law enforcement officers (Bachman & Schutt, 2008). The qualitative research method allowed for in-depth information to be obtained through open-ended question-and-answer sessions (Bachman & Schutt, 2008). In-person interviews allowed for a greater understanding to be gained by the principal investigator and they also provided a platform for sensitive topics, perspectives, and personal experiences to be examined (Bachman & Schutt, 2008).

The in-person interviews consisted of initial demographic questions and 18 open-ended interview questions. Interviews were conducted separately and confidentiality was ensured by using the responding officer's rank only to identify the officer surveyed; no interviewees' names are published in this research study. When the principal investigator obtained verbal consent, audio tape recorders were used in order to be transcribed verbatim for a full response and quoting purposes. If consent was denied, hand-written notes created by the principal investigator during the interview were used for data collection. As each of the 18 questions was asked during the interview, additional probing questions that the principal investigator thought were appropriate were asked. This also allowed for more open discussion and expression through in-depth responses that initially were not asked. As well as adding questions, some questions were left unanswered if the responding officer felt uncomfortable responding to the question. Open-ended questions allowed for interviewees to respond to each question in a unique and individual way. In-person interviews, as opposed to telephone interviews, allowed for the principal investigator to observe the demeanor and actions of the responding officer to pick up on nonverbal communication cues that also add to the interviewees' responses. Locations for each of the interviews were suggested by the principal investigator, but the final decision was made by the officer surveyed in order to achieve the most convenient and comfortable setting to conduct the interview.

The seven responding officers were selected for this study through a snowball sampling method of personal contacts and acquaintances, and through the contacts and recommendations of acquaintances. Snowball sampling involves identifying one member of the population and speaking to him or her, then asking him or her to identify others in the population, then asking those identified individuals to identify others in the population, and so forth (Bachman & Schutt,

2008). This was used in order to obtain a variety of responding officers from different departments who would be able to provide a variety of experiences, opinions, and examples. The officers surveyed were sworn female police officers from small- to mid-sized police departments in the southwestern Chicagoland area. The seven responding officers were interviewed individually in May, June, and July of 2009 for 15-45 minutes.

RESULTS

Sample

A total of seven sworn female police officers from six police departments in the southwestern suburbs of Chicago participated in the study. Two of the departments were university campus public safety (CPS) centers, one department employing 16 male and female officers (one interviewee) and the other, 21 male and female officers (two interviewees). One CPS center employed two females (one sworn) and the other employed three females (two sworn).

The remaining four departments consisted of municipal police departments. Two of the police departments employed an average of 300 personnel (sworn and nonsworn), one employing 38 sworn females and the other 15 sworn females. The other two police departments employed 24 and 51 personnel (sworn and nonsworn), respectively, one employing six sworn females and the other two sworn females, respectively.

The officers' ranks were as follows: two CPS officers (university), two sergeants (one university, one municipal), two patrol officers (municipal), and one commander (municipal). The interviewees' years in law enforcement at the time of the study ranged from 14 months to 24 years. All officers surveyed were white, non-Hispanic.

Analysis

The seven females interviewed were asked 18 questions, some of which included subquestions. These 18 questions were later divided into five categories for analysis purposes: challenges, discrimination, perceptions, strides, and personal lives. These categories revealed what the majority of the interviewees believed and/or experienced, any patterns in experiences

and/or beliefs shared among all the interviewees, and individual beliefs and/or experiences. The respondents' answers to the 18 questions will be discussed below.

Challenges (Questions 2, 3, 4, and 16)

When the interviewees were asked about the challenges that female police officers face in law enforcement, three responded with challenges in regards to one's physical abilities and/or appearances. One of the university CPS officers said there are physical challenges for female officers. The Peace Officer Wellness Evaluation Report (POWER) test, the physical agility test used in the police officer hiring process in Illinois, has four different physical agility tests (sit ups, bench press, sit-and-reach, and a 1.5 mile run) each applicant must pass (see Appendix E). The test requirements differ depending on a person's age and sex. Three of the four requirements are greater for males; the exception is the sit-and-reach (applicant must stretch legs out parallel to the floor and put them together in front of his/her body and reach a designated number of inches passed the tips of his/her toes). She noted definite size differences between females and males, meaning that females are not typically as large as males, perhaps altering the way a situation may result (meaning whether a female officer would be physically able to control a situation if the suspect is larger than she is, determining the outcome in detaining the suspect or not). One of the officers from one of the larger municipal departments said that female police officers "probably aren't the greatest at strength, for the most part." This officer did state, however, that she has had some female partners that had "phenomenal" strength and that they were stronger than some of the males. Yet, as noted in the literature review, one's physical strength has never been tied to one's ability to effectively handle dangerous encounters with the public.

The commander interviewee from one of the smaller departments asserted that some people have reservations about females hired as police officers because of their abilities that are “usually due to physical characteristics.” The commander affirmed, however, that “any officer is apprehensive about getting into physical altercations” and that as long as the female (or even male) officer is trained well she (or he) should be able to “overcome that physical limitation.” In the literature review it was noted that Swanson, Territo, and Taylor (2008) mentioned Sherman’s 1975 study, where it was found that carefully selected and trained female officers could be as effective as male officers that were carefully selected and trained, as the commander is referring to here. Despite all training a female officer may receive, the commander did attest that female officers are “very naïve if [they] think [they] have the same physical abilities as a male officer.” That being said, alternative tactics – like communication, assessing the situation carefully, and using pressure points, as some of the respondents mentioned – can be utilized that employ methods that do not rely on physical force or as much physical force. The commander respondent stated that even male officers would be looking to use alternatives if they assess that the situation deems them necessary. It seems more likely, therefore, that the situation and the tactics the officer has in his/her arsenal dictate the results of the encounter.

Three of the other four officers surveyed spoke about problems that males in general and male officers have with females being police officers. One of the university CPS officers and an officer from a smaller municipal department both said female officers are not taken “seriously” (as if female officers are not able to hold their own and that they can be “talked over,” meaning being manipulated easily) and males do not think females should be police officers. The municipal officer said respect must be gained so males do not think they can talk and walk over the female officers. The sergeant from a larger municipal department said “women in the

workplace” is a great challenge because some males feel insulted by having female bosses because of their egos; the male officers do not “appreciate” female bosses because the males may feel insecure by or resentful of having a female superior. She also noted some people have problems with female officers who want to have both a career and children. She noted that one female officer at her department bowed out of a promotion because it meant she would go to the midnight shift and miss time with her middle school-aged children. Many people did not accept that she was a police officer *and* a mother; many of these people in her life assumed that being a police officer should be all that she was to identify with in life, not being a mother, too (meaning being a police officer should be her one and only priority). The sergeant noted that once females in “*any* profession” leave their jobs to have children they are seen as less viable candidates and receive extreme criticism. Finally, the university CPS sergeant said females are challenged with having to react without thinking. She said in another question that thinking before reacting is an advantage but she then qualified it saying it is also a disadvantage because sometimes action is needed before anything else if the situation requires it.

When asked about what stereotypes exist concerning females in policing, the majority of the officers interviewed said that a physical stereotype existed regarding what a “real” (or effective) police officer should look like in order to be viewed as a successful and viable police officer. The university CPS sergeant stated there is a stereotype that female police officers are weaker, incapable of handling certain situations, and not physically fit. An officer from one of the smaller municipal departments also said some people think female officers cannot do as much physically as male officers. She noted that people think physical aspects are grounds for why females should not be police officers. The commander interviewee also agreed and said the

biggest stereotype is that females are not physically able to handle the job, but qualified that by adding that good training can help overcome any real physical inability.

An officer from one of the larger municipal departments noted that she typically gets along with her coworkers, but when male rookie officers come on the job they have looked at her and basically told her she would not be able to do anything (basing her physical abilities on appearances). She has even had some coworkers try to protect her and move her aside when it came to physical altercations with citizens, which has offended her. She said “until I show you I can’t do something, then don’t act like I can’t do it.” One of the university CPS officers also noted this stereotype about how the typical police officer “should” look: a big, male police officer. She noted that the “look” of a police officer was something difficult to overcome when people have certain perceptions of what they expect when a police officer comes to the scene, especially if it has to do with some sort of physical encounter. The CPS officer implied that the size of an officer would affect citizens’ perceptions of how effectively the officer could handle a suspect. For example, if a smaller female officer comes to the scene where a male (especially a bigger male) is causing a disturbance some citizens may believe the female officer will not be able to physically control the situation. These physical stereotypes can be extremely difficult to overcome with people who are stubborn to change their perceptions of what an effective officer can look like.

There were also some additional negative stereotypes the responding officers noted. The university CPS sergeant said some people think females are too sensitive and emotionally connected, implying that police officers should not be so sensitive and emotional; rather, emotionally secure and rational. The sergeant from one of the larger municipal departments and one of the university CPS officers asserted that there is a stereotype that female officers are

lesbians. The university CPS officers added that female officers either are seen as the “girly girls – the hot stripper type” or “butch/manly.” Along the lines of being more “manly,” the sergeant from the municipal department maintained her father and other males she has stopped in traffic stops said she (and probably other female officers) has “penis envy.” She said there was a stereotype “that women that were police officers wanted to be men.” To combat that, the sergeant said females “are mothers, [they] are daughters, [they] are lovers, [they are] wives” and that females play those roles “in an effort to smash those [and other] stereotypes.”

Although most of the responses about stereotypes were negative, a couple of the officers surveyed did report some positive stereotypes about females. The commander interviewee said female officers “bring a different perspective” which is “good for the public.” She also said that females are perceived as being able to “relate to a different sector” and serve different demographics within the community. The commander also noted that females are regarded as good communicators. One of the officers from a smaller municipal department also said that females are seen as better communicators (than males). She also claimed that females are seen as being “more sincere” and “understanding.” Along with that she said female officers are seen as “role models to female juveniles.”

When inquired about unique stressors that exist for females in policing no majority opinion was found. The university CPS sergeant answered “I don’t know about unique, I would just say that fitting in” was a stressor. One university CPS officer responded that “making a name for yourself in a positive way” is a unique stressor. The other university CPS officer noted pregnancy, especially when no light duty is offered, is a unique stressor. An officer from one of the larger municipal departments answered that harassment of females that are “very good looking” could cause stress because the female officers could be seen as “easy targets” by the

male officers. An officer from one of the smaller municipal departments noted that becoming emotionally attached to cases, especially when it is with a female or child, is decidedly stressful. The commander interviewee noted that the perception from the public is the biggest stressor. She noted that as the first female to be hired to the department she currently works at, she had a unique experience because the community at that time was older and not as accepting of her as the younger community is now. The sergeant from the municipal department listed several stressors: working full time and having “to tell your family that you’re just not going to be available on the days that you work 12 hours” (her shift hours), sleep deprivation, the fact that an officer can die any day, missing holidays and family functions, the complexity of spending leisure time with civilians who do not understand the life of a police officer, and the difficulty in dating. Perhaps the years of experience, life experiences, and the interviewees’ departments caused them all to have different answers. Whatever the reason, there are several different types of stressors that impact females in policing.

When questioned about the greatest pressures to females in policing the majority (n = 4) claimed it was peer acceptance. One of the university CPS officers claimed peer acceptance is one of the greatest pressures, saying that some females always want to be accepted, while some others do not really care. The officer from the smaller municipal department said that peer acceptance is hard at first, especially since it is something that must be earned. In her case, the male officers were easy on her since they were not used to female police officers, and came to respect and accept her after seeing how she performed. The university CPS sergeant said her promotion to sergeant was a change for her, in which she became part of the command staff and had to gain acceptance as an authority figure and boss from those who once considered her a “sister” because they worked side by side. The commander interviewee noted “it’s tough as a

female to never get to be in that inner circle ... you can come awfully close to being part of that group, but, unless you're one of the guys you're just never going to break that circle." This last statement epitomizes what females in policing encounter when trying to fit in with their fellow officers. Working in an environment where acceptance is not felt can turn a person away from the job and perhaps adversely affect performance.

In addition to peer acceptance some of the officers also noted other pressures they have experienced. Some of them cited trust issues with their peers, partner(s), and/or the community as another pressure. The other university CPS officer asserted that approval by the community is her greatest pressure because people look at her and think she is not old enough to be a police officer, some sort of "Charlie's Angel," or an "uneducated, untrained little girl." One of the officers from a larger municipal department said the ability "to prove yourself to the officers" is the greatest pressure. The sergeant from the larger municipal department noted the greatest pressure as the "ability to do it all" (be a mother, a police officer, a wife; have a personal life; etc.). She said "we [female officers] want to do it all. We want to have it all. We want to be viable employees, but we also want to have a personal life and we want to do both well." She said females want that "perfect balance" in their lives and should never take their job or personal lives too seriously. It is safe to say that several pressures exist for females in policing depending on each person and their experiences.

Discrimination (Questions 10, 11, 13, and 14)

On the whole, when inquired about any experiences or observations of females being assigned to social service roles or excluded from "forbidden units," there was no overwhelming feeling that females were assigned certain duties only or particularly excluded. Price (1996) defined forbidden units as "off-limit assignments for women or assignments where women

experience extra harassment, presumably to encourage them to transfer out” (para. 18). One of the university CPS officers and the officer from the smaller municipal department both noted that anyone goes to calls in small departments because, as the university CPS officer said, “it’s not a luxury you can afford” to send certain officers to certain calls. The other university CPS officer did note, however, that when a female suspect needs to have a pat-down search performed on her a female officer is always called for liability purposes, regardless of what beat she may work. An officer from a larger municipal department said a real hassle was when female sexual assault victims were sent to female officers because of the “compassion part” of the job, even if the assault happened in another officer’s district. She said a lot of the time the victims actually would have preferred to talk to a male officer. The commander interviewee noted that early in her career she was always called in to sit with any female runaway as the “babysitter,” even though “policy [didn’t] state it ha[d] to be a female.” She also would be sent by her superiors to the hospital for sexual assault situations, even though there was a nurse at the hospital, but she realized the sensitivity of the situation. She maintained she was only sent because she was a female; it was inconvenient and a hassle because these calls took time away from her other duties.

As for “forbidden units,” none of the officers said any females were outright forbidden from any unit. Most females either never put in for the position or were happy where they were. The sergeant from the larger municipal department actually said her captain did not want her to take a job in the juvenile department because he “didn’t want to make it seem like [she] only got the job because [she] was a woman,” not because he did not want her to have that specific job for any sexist reason. An officer from one of the larger municipal departments was the only responding officer to say that one female had made it into a Special Operations Group but then

had so many conflicts with her coworkers while in it that she had to resign from that assignment. Overall, any social service role seems to be assigned for liability issues, and not because the males wanted to prevent female officers from infiltrating any special assignment or because they wanted females only in certain departments. By liability issues, it is meant to reflect the use of a female police officer when a female suspect is being patted down (or babysat) so that a male police officer who initiated the stop (or is detaining or sitting with a female suspect) will be less vulnerable to accusations of handling a female inappropriately; therefore when a female suspect is in custody a female police officer would be called in to perform whatever action in order to prevent any sort of accusation toward one of the male police officers.

Regarding any systematic discrimination, it appears that, for the most part, females viewed their sex as something that has mostly *helped* them. The university CPS sergeant and the officer from the smaller municipal department both said they have neither experienced nor observed systematic discrimination. Three officers said being a female may have actually helped them in their career because of “quotas.” Because of the need for more females, they were chosen over other males on the eligibility lists even if the female applicants’ scores were not as high as the male applicants’ scores. One of them (a university CPS officer) did state that some females did use their sex as a crutch, saying they did not obtain a certain position simply because they were females. Another one of them (the other university CPS officer) maintained she has seen some discrimination but after a while it is just accepted as “that’s the way it is.” She also noted that many female sergeants and commanders did not appear to obtain their positions in “legitimate” ways.

The third officer (from a larger municipal department) claimed it can be helpful to be a female but it is also “still not the best to be a female.” In certain instances she has noted that not

many females – or none at all – get into certain car details. These car details consist of “easy jobs” like only doing traffic enforcement (“zebra cars”) or being in a two-officer unit looking for gang members “hanging around” (“Lincoln cars”); these “easy jobs” typically never get late calls and the officers are always able to leave work on time. The commander interviewee claimed that she thinks some males probably said she “was given special treatment” because she was a female. She said those males were most likely the ones she had “beaten out on several occasions,” not because she was a female. The sergeant from the larger municipal department noted there were probably times where being a female hindered her advancement and that there were probably many times where female officers thought they did not have the same or as many opportunities as males. The sergeant did say, however, that right now “is really a good time for us [women]” and that the “door is wide open for women in law enforcement.” Once again, different departments and experiences determine whether or not any systematic discrimination is present.

When asked about the ease or difficulty for females to move up in the ranks, no majority answer was found. Considering two of the officers surveyed are sergeants and one is a commander, it is not impossible for females to attain higher ranking positions. The university CPS sergeant was the only female officer in her department at the time of her promotion and she was on the department for two and a half years before being promoted to sergeant. She said she believes it is harder in other departments, however, because there is something to prove when an officer is a female (although she did note she has to prove herself on a daily basis, but it is nothing she is not capable of accomplishing and willing to do to perform her job effectively). The commander asserted she “was very goal-driven” and “knew what [she] wanted.” She stated she never felt her “being a female prevented [her] from getting to where [she] wanted to be.” As

for the other female officers in her department, she has only seen one group of career development sheets and none of the females put in for any promotions or different positions. She insisted they are all very happy where they are and has not heard any of them express wanting to go further up in the ranks in their careers. The sergeant from the larger municipal department said she believes moving up in the ranks has more to do with being a good candidate, not whether the officer is a female or male. The sergeant said “civil service is unusual” because of all the testing, so *anyone*, male or female, would have to “jump through a lot of hoops.” Civil service jobs typically involve several tests that only occur periodically and anyone applying for a civil service job (firefighter, postal worker, police officer, etc.) will have to complete all tests successfully in order to move to the next level. Once a portion of the testing process is failed the applicant must start all over again at a different department because eligibility lists (that are created from those applicants that passed all portions) for departments typically last 18 to 24 months. The only way an applicant may reapply at that same department from which they failed is when the eligibility list expires and the process starts all over again. The commander said this testing process is difficult, but it makes it fair for all as well.

The rest of the officers interviewed also had differing perceptions on the ability of females to move up in the ranks. The officer from the smaller municipal department is only the second female ever to be hired in her department, and the female officer before her was a sergeant and she never heard any negative things said about her or her being promoted. One of the university CPS officers said there are no ranks at her current department. There are no different positions among the officers (officer, sergeant, lieutenant) so no differentiation (or rank) is used; the officers are all referred to as “public safety officers.” The only possible discrimination she has observed personally is her female best friend who has worked in another

municipal department for five years and has put in for Breath Operations four times, but not received it; rookie officers who have been there for a year, however, have put in for the same position and have received it (the responding officer did not indicate if they were male or female rookie officers). The other university CPS officer said she also noticed few or no females in the upper ranks at the different departments for which she has worked. She has not noticed any problems with females being able to rise in the ranks, but the times when the females have not been able to receive a promotion they used being a female as a safety net or excuse for their inability to get promoted. She also said at one of her previous departments it was “who you knew” and not how well you could test (she did say, however, that the practice was changing at that particular department). An officer from one of the larger departments expressed the same sentiment that an officer has to be in the “clique” to get promoted. She said it is hard for both females *and* males who are not in the so-called cliques. She claimed “if you’re on that same trail with those people, they’ll pick you. That actually happens a lot.” In these last two cases one’s sex did not matter, only one’s connections.

When questioned about physical differences in the make-up of males and females, some of the subquestions revolved around any discrimination the females might face because of those differences. When asked about the POWER test, most of the females did not believe it was discriminatory. Some did indicate, however, that they have heard males say (or believe other males have claimed or thought) the test discriminates against *them* (the males) because three of the test’s four qualifications for the fitness entrance requirements (sit-ups, bench press, and 1.5 mile run) are higher for the males. The males think the test should be equal for all since females have said they want to be equals with males. The interviewees, in response to males’ claims, cited proven differences between the male and female body and different abilities are the reasons

for these “accommodations,” which require the females to perform three of the fitness entrance requirements at lower qualifications. One of the university CPS officers claimed “it’s been physically proven that males run better, have bigger lungs, and larger legs, so females can’t ‘win.’” One of the officers from a larger municipal department said she does not think it is discrimination, rather a “fact of life” that females have physical differences that would limit their abilities. This “fact of life” would then require lower qualifications on the POWER test (however, at the academy males and females participate in the same physical training regimen). By no means does this indicate that females do not have to be just as well-trained as male officers. Many of the officers surveyed noted there are alternative tactics like pressure points, self-defense, ground fighting for females (which utilizes more leg strength), and verbal communication, that females can use when having to physically control a situation, rather than having to use only their fists and upper body strength. These alternative tactics compensate hand-to-hand fighting/physical abilities and lead to resolving the issues without injury, or few injuries, that they deal with on different calls (domestic calls, hostile suspects, unruly crowds, etc.). As one of the university CPS officers put it, “physical strength isn’t everything or even necessary all the time.” Considering most of policing involves service functions, physical agility/abilities should not be the only focus of a police officer’s abilities. When physical strength has been necessary, however, the officers all said they have been known to “hold their own” and “make do with what [they’ve] got.”

Perceptions (Questions 5, 8, 9, 15, and 17)

When questioned about perceived difficulty of adapting to or “infiltrating” into the predominantly male profession of policing, most of the officers interviewed (n = 5) expressed that it was hard. The university CPS sergeant said it was a “difficult challenge,” despite that

more people now are accepting of females in policing. She noted there is still the older generation of officers who see females as weak and incapable of handling the job. The other sergeant at the larger municipal department maintained it is easier now to adapt, but when she first became an officer 24 years ago it was “really tough” and females were not accepted. For example, she almost had her job taken away from her at one point for being pregnant. One of the university CPS officers noted that the ability to adapt or “infiltrate” depends on the department and she was able to adapt at a smaller department fairly easy. However, it was at the state police department where she said it was impossible to be “one of the guys.” She was never invited out to places by the male officers and the male officers on her department did not talk to her at work. The commander interviewee noted a similar situation in which a female could be “one of the guys, never one of the boys,” meaning she could have close and good relationships with the male officers, but she would never be included in some things solely because she was a female. She said females just cannot be included in everything. The other university CPS officer said in the corrections field it was very hard for her to adapt and it took her about six months to fully adapt to the field of corrections. Because of that experience, she then had an easier time adapting when she went to work for a municipal police department. Perhaps if she would have started in the policing field she might have had the same difficulty.

Although the commander interviewee said females could never be included in some things, she did say, however, that her department is unique. Because her chief set the tone for equal treatment of male and female officers 18 years ago when the commander interviewee was hired, all the females hired thereafter have been able to adapt particularly well. In her experience, being the first female on the department and having her chief support her completely even though she was a female officer (which was atypical 18 years ago when she was hired), she

and her fellow female officers were able to infiltrate into the department because her chief was intolerant of discrimination on the basis of one's sex. Even though the females were able to infiltrate easily into the department, they had more difficult times on a personal level bonding with the male officers. Only two other officers said it was absolutely easy to adapt/infiltrate into the department – one officer from a smaller municipal department and one officer from a larger municipal department. The officer from the smaller department said she and the other female in her department were hired at the same time and were roommates in the academy, so she had someone going through the experience with her. She said her department is “pretty good” and she and the other female officer “were taken under the other officers' wings” after their academy graduation. Also, she has been in predominantly male jobs before so it was not difficult for her to adapt to the male-dominated profession of policing at all. The officer from the larger police department was in the cadet program for two years before being hired at her current department 17 years ago and had a “very easy” time adapting when she was hired. This officer had an easier time adapting at this point since she “already had a great rapport and respect from a lot of people there” because they saw her work ethic as a cadet. The last two officers appear to have adapted more easily than the others because of their prior involvement in male dominated fields and/or policing, as well as the other university CPS officer who was in corrections before becoming a police officer.

When asked about male attitudes toward females in policing, there was a mixture of answers among the responding officers. Both the university CPS sergeant and one of the other university CPS officers said they have experienced a few problems. They noted that the older generation of officers seems to have more negative perceptions of females and does not think females belong in policing; however, it was also noted that times are changing slowly and the

sergeant asserted “it’s getting better.” The commander interviewee and an officer from a smaller municipal department both regarded their experiences as being free from negative attitudes. The commander said her experiences may be unique because she was the first female commander and the lower-ranked officers respected her because she was so goal-driven; she has never had nor observed any problems. The other officer also insisted she has not heard any negative comments by male officers. She said the male officers treat her and the other female officer like they are their little sisters and try to protect them. She maintained, however, she still has to prove herself to show she can stand up for herself since the male officers take on that “big brother” role. The officer at one of the larger municipal departments reported no issues regarding attitudes toward females. She said there are both females *and* males that cannot perform the job well, and everyone has their own niche. Because every department has its own politics, the officer added, she could not designate any attitudes as being projected toward males or females just because they were a particular sex.

Two of the officers, one university CPS officer and the other a sergeant from the larger municipal department, claimed they have seen more negative attitudes toward females. The university CPS officer said she has observed “a lot of negative things” and has “always had one person in each department that has negative attitudes.” She personally has had bosses and two supervisors express negative attitudes. She asserted that male officers do not think females should be in policing and that “the bosses make it known” (although she did not indicate how), and that female officers just “have to learn to deal with it.” She did say, however, at the officer level there are not as many negative attitudes because each person has to rely on his/her partner because they are equals. The sergeant from the larger municipal department said, although things have gotten better for females in policing, she still sees males that mistreat females

because she thinks the males are intimidated by female officers. Because male officers “find it disrespectful to have a woman tell them what to do,” said the sergeant, they treat them badly. She has noticed several male officers talking to their female significant others on the phone and has seen how they yell at them and belittle them; the sergeant has realized she has “to deal with th[ose] attitude[s].” She has recognized these males come in with “opinions formed” and she has to make them understand they have to respect her because she is their boss, but not necessarily like her personally. Each of the officers surveyed has had different experiences and perceptions, so it is difficult to say that all male officers perceive female officers as one way or another, or have certain attitudes toward the female officers.

When asked about female attitudes toward other female officers, the results were just as varied. The university CPS sergeant said she feels accepted by the other female in her department. An officer from the smaller municipal department also maintained she feels accepted by the only other female in the department and has actually “built a close relationship” with her. The sergeant from one of the larger municipal departments said she thinks there is more of a female camaraderie than negative attitudes. She claimed they support each other, have healthy competition, and do not have “catfights.” An officer from one of the larger municipal departments said she can understand where there would be competition between females, or even catfights, but she has never observed it. If anything, she has observed some females, whom she called “the hotties,” who are more apt to receive assistance from some of the male supervisors, which could potentially cause ill will among the female officers because of the special treatment. Surprisingly, two of the officers, the commander and the officer from the smaller municipal department, said they believe there is more “drama” among the male officers, but did not indicate what might be the cause of the drama.

The commander interviewee maintained that she believes female officers do not bond like male officers. Even though she reported no catfights or cutthroat behavior among the female officers for different positions and/or special details or responsibilities, she said she has noticed that the females just do not have that same connection as the males. She did express, however, that all the females get along and have no issues with each other. But both university CPS officers argued they have observed females being more competitive and cattier among themselves. One said she actually gets along with the males better and if there is only one female (meaning her), she only has to compete with herself and not worry about being in competition with another female, which she said can get “dirty.” The other officer said she has noticed there are two types of females in policing: those who hate other female officers and want to compete with other female officers, and those who have the attitude that all the females have to stick together. She did say, however, her biggest competitor (another female officer) ended up being her best friend. Once again, each female officer has her own unique experiences that make it difficult to make generalizations.

When the officers interviewed were asked about which duties they perceive to be performed better by females, the majority (n = 5) answered that females are better able to communicate and talk things out to resolve situations. At the same time, however, almost all of these five interviewees said males are not incapable of using communication skills and performing equally with the females. Nonetheless, the university CPS sergeant did say females do tend to assess a situation more and talk things out, and not just go “balls to the walls” (like male officers) in reacting. Both of the other university CPS officers and an officer from a smaller municipal department perceived females as performing better when it came to communication, but one of the university CPS officers also noted that life experiences of both

males and females may affect the way one performs certain duties. An officer from one of the larger municipal departments asserted no difference seen between male and female performance and that males perform just as well, for example, with children. The sergeant at the larger municipal department noted both males and females can do some things better than their counterpart, which “allow them to do the job very adeptly.” She claimed males are natural fighters because they “box with their dads” and females have the attribute of talking and using communication skills. Since there is a time to use physical tactics and a time to use interpersonal tactics, both males and females have instances where they can use their natural abilities. The commander and the officer from the smaller municipal department both agreed that males probably perform better when it comes to the physical aspect of the job. The commander said females probably give “more attention to detail” than males. With effective training, males and females can, however, perform at similar rates and perform different duties (performing traffic stops, controlling a scene, maintaining evidence, writing reports, patrolling beats, administering first aid, etc.) effectively.

When asked if females are perceived to be more or less authoritarian/aggressive or too “sympathetic” and “emotional” the majority (n = 6) of the responding officers said they think people regard females as too sensitive and not aggressive enough. Some said females are actually as sensitive as the situation requires. The university CPS sergeant said she believes females “are a little more sympathetic and they take their time asking questions, they ask them [the victims] if they need anything.” She said males ask “about the who, what, when, where, why, how” and want all the “information they need to gather,” whereas the females “go a little further into it and make sure that person is comfortable” and “see if they need us to call anybody for them.” She noted that males regard this assessment and thinking during the situation as a

detriment because males believe an officer just needs to “go, go, go, react, get it taken care of.” The sergeant from the larger municipal department expressed a similar idea in that females try to understand and assess the situation better. She said females are able to “understand relationships well,” which is a benefit because “much of what [the police] deal with has to deal with interactions between human beings.” In order to resolve the situation, the sergeant insisted, an officer must understand human relationships and be able to sort out the situation by using those interpersonal skills and attending to the needs of the people involved.

Both of the university CPS officers agreed that females have been seen as too sympathetic and not aggressive enough. One of them said some females are not aggressive enough when responding to domestic calls for service. The commander agreed, saying some females are too sensitive and perceived as “meek and mousey and can’t handle [themselves].” The other university CPS officer said she was called an “inmate coddler” because she has sometimes been “sympathetic to jail inmates” because she “truly feels sorry” for them. The officer from the smaller municipal department also claimed it is hard to be aggressive with suspects, especially juveniles, because she felt sorry for the situations the juveniles were in because she knew the situation was most likely caused by the parents. She said there is either an “instinct to be a nurturer or there may be that instinct to first take care of business *before* you nurture.” On the contrary, one of the university CPS officers said she is sometimes seen as too harsh. The commander also agreed with this, saying if a female officer is too aggressive she is perceived as a “bitch.” The commander asserted that males “have that happy medium” where they can be “so sensitive to their [the victim’s] needs” or they can be aggressive just because they are males. Overall, it appears females are perceived to be on one or the other side of the spectrum: too sensitive or too harsh.

Strides (Questions 1, 6, and 7)

In relation to advantages females bring to policing the majority (n = 5) of the officers surveyed regarded communication as one of the best tactics an officer can use during an encounter with citizens. An officer from one of the smaller municipal departments asserted that communication is a good tactic to utilize in calls with females and juveniles. It would seem so especially with juveniles because they would need to see role models using communication to help them in their own lives. The commander contended that if a female officer knows her weaknesses she can overcome them through communication. Such weaknesses could include having less upper body strength or not being aggressive during possible physical or otherwise dangerous calls (both which pertain to physical abilities). By using verbal communication the commander is able to defuse situations and reduce the instances in which citizens and/or police officers are hurt. She said “females are very good communicators” and that verbal communication is “probably the best characteristic that a female brings.” Along with communication skills, one of the officers from a larger municipal department noted females’ willingness to listen was also important, which is part of communication. If an officer is not willing to listen or does not have good listening skills, he or she will not be able to communicate effectively.

Communication assists the officer in handling a given or any situation better and being better equipped to help resolve the community’s problems. By using communication instead of only physical tactics, the officer (male or female) displays a desire to establish some kind of understanding between the officer and the citizen, leading to a resolution of the problem. Because communication involves an exchange of feelings, thoughts, and knowledge, the two parties will be able to try to straighten out the situation without jumping to conclusions and

making the situation worse. It seems logical to assume that citizens would be able to resolve the situation positively and satisfactorily if a police officer possesses good communication skills, which is good for the community and boosts the positive image of the police department. Given that the commander noted female officers as possessing good communication skills, it would be in police departments' best interest to hire more females who demonstrate this desire to create some kind of relationship to defuse the situation at hand.

Two of the officers, a university CPS officer and the sergeant from one of the larger municipal departments, said the ability to talk one's way into or out of a situation is a benefit. The sergeant from the larger municipal department said "we [female officers] are not as likely to get in a physical confrontation with people because we talk – that's what we do. We talk our way into or out of anything." She did say, however, the female officers in her department "are never shy to jump into a physical fracas" or "take it up a notch" when necessary. The sergeant said females can defuse situations, get to the heart of the matter, and resolve things through their words. Other advantages female officers were said to bring were being outgoing, friendly, patient, sensitive, and sympathetic; assessing situations along with thinking before reacting; bringing diversity, different views, and different ways of handling situations; being fixers, helpers, doers, and multitaskers; and not taking the job in order to be on an ego trip, but to perform a public service.

When the officers interviewed were asked about females' special qualities and/or attributes the majority of them (n = 5) answered, "communication." One of the university CPS officers said "females can talk people down and talk their way out of situations." She also noted females do not really fight, but instead communicate to defuse situations. She also said males are more hands-on than females, which can be a disadvantage for the department because of

lawsuits and complaints against the officers using these tactics. As stated before, communication skills aid the department in various ways. The commander interviewee noted that if she is “a smooth talker” she can talk her way out of any situation because she can talk sense and be “fairly articulate.” Communication appears to be the best asset females bring to policing, which is a positive alternative to resolving situations.

The responding officers also noted several other special qualities and attributes female officers in general bring to policing. The university CPS sergeant affirmed that females “take that extra second to think about something before any situation,” have “level head[s],” and do not let their adrenaline get the best of them. An officer from one of the larger municipal departments also said the “quality of parenting” is important. This can be used both with children and older citizens who sometimes need guidance from those with parenting abilities. Along with that, the sergeant from one of the bigger municipal departments noted that being able to educate the community and interact with the community are good qualities to have. She noted that “kicking ass and taking names” is only good when it is appropriate, but noted that it is even better if she “could use something to change the way you think and the way you react next time.” Being patient, compassionate, being a “fixer” (of people and situations), and not taking themselves seriously were also noted as good attributes. One of the university CPS officers noted several things a female police officer must possess to be able to get by in the policing profession, such as: needing a thick skin and not being too sensitive, taking a “lot of crap” because one is a female, needing a “sick and perverted sense of humor,” and not being offended by swearing or little things. All of these qualities/attributes are exceptional ones to have in a profession that demands so much of its officers. Because females appear to possess all of these qualities, it is good to hire them in order to improve police-community relations and resolve

problems in alternative ways with better results. These qualities/attributes have helped boost females' image and the extent to which the citizens see them as effective and viable police officers.

When the interviewees were asked about positive messages female officers send to the community, the majority of them answered that female police officers are role models and/or that female police officers can do the same things as male police officers. A couple of the other officers interviewed also noted that females help create good impressions of the police department to the community and that female officers are capable of accomplishing anything. An officer from one of the smaller municipal departments noted that her department has not had many female officers and that when the community notices there are female officers they "think it's awesome." In this case, females really do send the message that they can do anything that males can do, even break into a male-dominated profession and effectively handle the job. The university CPS sergeant expressed that female officers do not necessarily handle situations better than male officers, but that they handle them differently. The alternative ways of handling things help the community realize that the police are open-minded to resolving situations in a variety of ways. One of the university CPS officers asserted not only that "females can do anything males can do," but that "in certain instances females can do things better" than males. The commander interviewee claimed her department is very unique because both her female and male officers perform at equal levels of sensitivity and it does not matter (in her department) what sex a person is that determines his or her effectiveness in handling situations. She gave an example of how her male officers went to a call and noticed the family had no Christmas tree or gifts, so the officers "finagled" a Christmas tree for the family and bought gifts for the children – something she noted that people would typically think a female might notice. These feelings, however, may

differ from officer to officer and department to department depending on the circumstances that each person has experienced.

Regarding being role models, the responding officers noted they are big role models to children. One of the officers from the larger municipal departments said she was a part of the Domestic Violence Reduction Unit and said the younger kids would look up to her (a female officer) and think “Aw, she’s a policeman, how cool is that?” She asserted that girls especially grasp the concept that if they see a female officer they can do it, too. The sergeant from one of the larger municipal departments said female officers send “good role model images to children” and, especially, to girls. She asserted she always tells the girls that they can be whatever they want in life if they “want it badly enough.” The sergeant voiced that she “cannot help but try to indoctrinate every child” with the message that “the police are your friends.” She noted that “teenagers hate the hell out of [the police],” so it is imperative to send good messages to the whole community to help them realize the good that the police do for them. She noted how female officers are leaders and that they are professional, approachable, and educated. Additionally, she maintained she recognizes that people’s eyes are always on her and that she and other officers must think before acting because everyone has camera phones now and can record every little thing the officers do. If the officers were to act irrationally, they would send bad messages to the children, the ones who need to see the most positive ones so they can maintain those same good impressions of the police throughout their lives. Being good role models not only helps children trust the police, but also the entire community. Having more positive role models like female police officers aids in the positive messages sent out to the community.

Personal lives (Questions 12 and 18)

When the officers surveyed were asked about how their significant others, families, and friends felt about the interviewees' decisions to become police officers, they answered that their loved ones were supportive for the most part, but still had reservations. Some of them said their loved ones expressed concerns about the dangers of the field and did not want anything to happen to them; some responding officers stated their loved ones were worried and were scared for the interviewees' safety. One university CPS officer said her family feels more at ease when she has worked street patrol than when she has worked in corrections. This officer claimed there is more control in corrections than out on the street, and said her family just does not "understand the way it works." An officer from one of the smaller departments said her parents wished she would have gone into teaching instead of being a police officer, but that they still supported her decision to become a police officer because they wanted her to be happy. Even after she failed the police tests her parents kept telling her to keep trying because they loved her. A sergeant from one of the larger municipal departments cited that her parents told her to do what she wanted and so she became a Pre-Med student. Later she told her parents she wanted to be a police officer instead and her parents said "Yeah, no way" at the beginning, but eventually supported her decision to become a police officer. After being a police officer for 24 years, her parents have become very supportive. Her children are likewise very supportive and proud of her and the job she does.

Additionally, the majority of the officers interviewed actually have loved ones/significant others who are either in the criminal justice field (state police, municipal police, and corrections) or are familiar with the field (civilian worker in a police department and military) and, consequently, are very supportive and receptive of the decisions they have made. The

commander interviewee's best friend and best friend's daughter actually love the idea of someone being an officer; yet, they do not like how it interferes with daily life and vacations. Two of the officers surveyed, however, noted that they had significant others at one point in time that completely opposed their decisions to become police officers. A university CPS officer said that she once dated a man who wanted to be a police officer, but he was too young and hated that she was going to become a police officer before him. She maintained that this man did not support her while she was in the academy and that he "bitched and moaned." Another one of the officers from one of the larger municipal departments said she was once engaged to a man who could not handle her being hired on as a police officer and as a result they ended up breaking up. Some of the officers interviewed also voiced that dating life is very difficult, especially when the men are not police officers because of ego issues with females being in a typically male-dominated profession and having an authoritative position. The respondents also said that female officers are not viewed as ladylike as males think females should be, causing more dating problems.

When the interviewees were asked about pregnancy and motherhood, the answers varied as to whether they have seen or experienced any adverse effects related to the health issues. One of the university CPS officers was actually pregnant at the time of the interview and said she had not personally been adversely affected because her department had some positive changes regarding pregnancy policies. She said she was able to be on light duty and help out with paperwork and projects. She did note, however, that one of her past chiefs said she was no longer considered an officer as long as she was pregnant and on light duty. She did also say that she had heard bad comments about her from other police officers in her department (she did not indicate whether they were male or female). Another one of the university CPS officers claimed

she would have kids by now, but she does not because of “police work,” by which she meant the issues with her prior and current departments because they viewed pregnancy and motherhood as something that interfered with performing her job. She even said she was trying to leave her current department so she could find another department that offers good insurance and light duty. She reported pregnancy is essentially something “bad” by other officers and their superiors because pregnancy takes time away from performing one’s job because the female officer cannot stay on patrol the entire duration of her pregnancy (reducing manpower); maternity leave is eventually required, which the employer must provide. The officer said pregnant officers in some of the corrections fields are forced to resign. The university CPS sergeant, who is a mother, said she has never had a problem with pregnancy or motherhood issues at her department and would have another baby if she wanted; however, she has heard that officers and police personnel in other departments have said that pregnant officers should “suck it up.”

One of the officers from one of the larger municipal departments declared that her department has a general order for light duty and a pregnant officer legally cannot be forced onto light duty solely by the department; the officer only goes onto light duty once her physician has told her to do so. She reported that one pregnant officer had been forced off street patrol once her pregnancy was discovered, which the officer could have technically pursued (but did not) as discrimination under the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, (PDA), which falls under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The PDA guarantees “women the basic right to participate fully and equally in the workforce,” which this department violated because no doctor’s statement was submitted regarding an inability to work on the part of the pregnant officer (Kruger, 2006, para. 3). This pregnant officer, as some other pregnant officers have done, tried to keep her pregnancy a secret because of fears of being taken off the street, being labeled a weak officer, or no longer

being considered an officer. Two of the university CPS officers noted that sometimes it is believed (either by themselves or others) that pregnancy is used as a crutch or an excuse to get out of doing work. Some pregnant officers have used pregnancy as an excuse to call in sick, get out of walking around, or not do something just because they are pregnant. In this case, the pregnant officers become a hindrance to the department and help perpetuate those stereotypes that all pregnant officers are a weakness to the department.

The sergeant from one of the larger municipal departments, who has been a police officer for 24 years, expressed that the female police officers of her generation have paved the way for the female police officers coming on the job now. She noted her superiors tried to take her and another pregnant officer's guns away over 20 years ago when they were pregnant, and they also tried to fire her. She said this was not tolerated by the female officers, so they fought for the female officers to keep their guns, and the sergeant was able to keep both her gun and her job. Perhaps the department could have been viewed as trying to protect the pregnant officers by taking away their guns, but the way the sergeant phrased it did not seem like it was for that reason. The sergeant even claimed there was no light duty positions for pregnant officers because the department claimed there was nothing for the pregnant officers to do. The sergeant declared, however, that this was not the case for injured officers, who were able to work "in records as desk officers, pretty routinely." She said the only way all these problems were resolved was because they were taken to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) for review. Consequently, she and her fellow female officers smoothed the path for her sisters in law enforcement to have children, families, and personal lives; she and her generation have made it easier for present day female police officers to "have it all." She asserted that in the

present day she is lucky to have a department that is now supportive of the pregnant and mother officers.

The commander interviewee noted an opposite experience with her department. Being the first female police officer in her department and not having any children, the commander did not have any adverse experiences. She constantly noted the uniqueness of her department and said none of the female officers “had ever had a light duty position” in her 18 years at the department. The department’s community service officer was pregnant at the time of the interview, the department’s liaison officer had been pregnant twice, and civilian employees have also been pregnant and they were all treated in the same manner as any male officer who needed time off or a light duty position. She did assert, however, that several of the male officers were “routinely” on light duty. In her case, all officers with any health issues, mostly circumstances of severe illness in her department’s case, “were given the utmost sensitivity.” The commander even said that in the past year two of the *male* officers took extended leaves of absence because their wives were pregnant. She said the males actually “take more time [for parental leave] than the women who have babies.” The commander’s situation is unique from several departments because she noted her chief set the tone from the beginning of her policing career essentially stating “Yes, she’s a female, but she is an officer first,” and that was the last to be said of it. All officers, whether male or female, pregnant or not, were treated equally.

Essentially it appears to depend on the time (which decade and/or during any reforms) these female police officers were hired, by which departments they were hired, and what the situation was in each department in regards to female police officers (if there were any female police officers, how many female police officers there were, were any female police officers pregnant, etc.) to observe the type of experiences they have had regarding health issues like

pregnancy. Times and policies have changed and it looks as though pregnant officers have an easier time in the present day with health issues, but this is not to say that all prejudice and discrimination has ceased. As one of the university CPS officers noted, there is still the possibility for a pregnant officer to lose her job because her pregnancy is seen as an “illness” or as affecting one’s work ethic. Being pregnant or a mother not only affects the female officers on a professional status (whether they are allowed to retain their jobs during and after pregnancy), but it also affects their ability to balance their home and professional lives while still devoting adequate time to each sphere of their lives. These female police officers noted how many obstacles had and still have to be fought in order to integrate pregnancy leave and motherhood into policing.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Discussion

The information and research compiled in this paper provide readers information on many issues concerning females in policing, including but not limited to: stereotypes of female officers, female officer adaptation into a male-dominated profession, male and female attitudes toward female officers, sex discrimination, physical obstacles to and of female officers, and health issues specific to women (pregnancy and motherhood). The research and study findings presented encapsulate several aspects about females in policing that few research papers and studies have done in the past; most research papers and studies have focused only on one or a few aspects of females in policing. The extensive research of literature on the increase and advancements of females in policing is supported by the recent television shows and this study. The present research study on the current status of women is beneficial to observe the strides that women have made in the field. The findings of the present study, along with the material from the two discussed television shows, are advantageous since most extensive research that exists is more than two decades old.

Without a doubt, female police officers have come a long way since their days as matrons in jails. The literature review revealed that female officers have risen to all ranks in policing and continue to forge on into the world of policing. This was evidenced by the different positions held by the surveyed officers, which included positions as university public safety officers, patrol officers, sergeants, and a commander. The present study demonstrated how female police officers' positions in modern day policing have continued evolving throughout the past few decades. The three responding officers who have been in policing for over 15 years have certainly seen and experienced the course that females have had to take in regards to changing

pregnancy policies and procedures, being the only female officer on the department, and experiencing negative attitudes by older generations of male officers. For example, the sergeant from the larger municipal department spoke of her female coworker's and her struggle over 20 years ago to retain their guns and jobs after becoming pregnant. Since then, most police departments do not outright fire pregnant officers, but that is not to say the pregnant officers do not face discrimination through negative comments about becoming pregnant. The sergeant noted how pregnant officers do not face such harsh obstacles since she and her fellow female officers have paved the way for pregnant officers, but the fight for complete eradication of discrimination of pregnant officers has not emerged. As for being the only female officer in a department, none of the respondents were the only females in their departments. Still, some of the smaller departments only had one or two other female officers besides the responding officer. Two of the municipal interviewees from the two large municipal departments, both of which employed over 300 officers, also noted relatively small numbers of sworn female officers; if there were larger numbers of females in the department it was because they occupied civilian jobs (these females were not police officers). This confirms the "slow pace," as noted in the literature review, of fully integrating female officers into police departments. More females still hold nonsworn/civilian jobs than sworn/officer jobs in police departments.

The officers surveyed, however, have seen how much was gained in terms of the continuing fight for equalizing treatment between male and female officers. Some of the responding officers indicated feeling a better camaraderie with their male counterparts. Some of the females even indicated they would rather associate with the males because they are just able to get along better with the males. Some of the officers surveyed said another female in the department signified unwanted competition. The responding officers also said they felt more

accepted by the community (although not completely accepted by all of the people in the community). One of the officers from a small municipal department said she has heard female citizens say they believe it is “awesome” that females are now employed in the police department. Another officer from a larger municipal department said she has been able to become a role model for children, especially younger girls, resulting in more acceptance as a female in policing. The commander interviewee said the younger community is more accepting than the older community she met when she first became an officer, a phenomenon noted in the literature review. Most of the interviewees indicated more accepting communities, but not all community members accept female officers.

Regarding pregnancy and motherhood, most of the officers interviewed seem to have more positive views toward being able to have children and maintain their careers in law enforcement. Some of the officers said they were not afraid to have children (or more children), but others still expressed some concern with the pregnancy policies their police departments had (or lacked). One officer in particular wanted to leave her current department because the pregnancy policies were not as “friendly” as she wished they would be. The pregnant responding officer, however, said that she was able to take a light duty position and found a passion for conducting research and creating different projects for her superiors. In her case, she had a positive experience with the light duty offered to her. Three of the four respondents have children (two of which became pregnant while employed at the department). The sergeant from the large municipal department noted her struggles with her superiors who did not approve of her (or her coworker’s) pregnancy. Since then, however, the EEOC has handled such discrimination cases in favor of the pregnant officers. This notes the dynamic status of pregnant officers as being accepted more often than not in the field of policing. The fight for better light duty

positions and maternity leave (or even having these two programs offered at all) still occurs day to day.

As the attitudes of each generation changes, so, too, have the attitudes of the family members, friends, and significant others of female police officers. The younger responding officers did note some initial hesitation from loved ones about their decisions to become police officers, but because females in policing are becoming more accepted, loved ones are becoming more accepting of them as well. As with any potentially dangerous job, the officers surveyed reported their families' concern for the officers' safety. This is positive in the fact that the officers' loved ones did not say that women are not supposed to be police officers; they were just genuinely concerned for their safety. The officers' loved ones did not reject the officers' decisions to become police officers because they were women, but for other reasons such as safety concerns and hectic schedules. This indicates that support systems are positive in their approval of the women's decision and encouragement of telling the officers surveyed that they can do anything they want. Policing *is* still male-dominated, but it is not forbidden to women. Overall, the study findings do convey that small, but positive, steps for females in policing.

Even though these positive findings exist there are still many barriers female police officers face. Regarding promotional tests, female officers need to be encouraged to take promotional tests if they (the females) feel they are able to do so, especially by other higher ranking officers. This can be especially hard for females who are some of the first female officers in their departments, seeing that they have no female role models and have to break the glass ceiling by being promoted in supervisory positions. The commander interviewee and the university CPS sergeant are perfect examples of not having higher-ranking female officers in their department, but still forging on to attain higher positions. Once in those higher ranks,

female officers can try to prove false any doubts about their effectiveness in decision-making positions, as well as be positive visible role models for other female officers. These two women, along with the other sergeant from the larger municipal department, have helped other females see that there is a possibility to be promoted as long as the officer makes the effort to obtain the position. Then those promoted female officers can defeat stereotypes, put in motion better ways to recruit females, and add diversity to decision-making positions. Of course, females first have to be present in the field in order to make these strides, and that alone can be a challenge in itself.

In order to apply for promotions or accept them, females have yet another challenge they still face today, as was evidenced by the research study, the literature review, and The Learning Channel's television series *Police Women of Broward County*, in regards to pregnancy and motherhood. Female officers have to think constantly of the two spheres of their lives, which they both love dearly – their careers and their personal lives (which may include friends, a significant other, and children). To choose one is to sacrifice the other; this was heard in the words of one of the university CPS officers who said she would have children by now if it were not for all the demands of police work. The three officer mothers featured on *Police Women of Broward County* also showed their difficulty with making time for their sons. The officers who are mothers are many times unable to make time for their sons because they are working to support their families. The sergeant from the larger municipal department noted that one of her coworkers would have become the first female lieutenant at her department, but declined the promotion because it meant she would have to work the midnight shift. She had children in middle school and declined the promotion because her children were more important than her profession. Departmental and domestic (in the home) changes need to take place so that both family and work life can be balanced for female officers. Departments can better serve their

female employees by allotting more maternity leave and creating pregnancy- and motherhood-friendly policies. The hours and rigors of the field have taken their toll on females, who are typically the primary caregivers. These females try to be both mothers and police officers while also being able to serve both their children and their community. They also seek to create a positive home life by providing for their families and a positive public life by committing themselves to improving the community. The females become role models for both their children and for other citizens' children when they are allowed to participate fully in both spheres.

Females also still have the challenge of being accepted by their male peers. This rejection comes not only from the older generation of male officers, but also from the younger generation who have held fast to typical societal views of the status of women. Although more males have "come around" and are more accepting of women in the workforce, there is still not a complete reception of female officers. Male officers hang on to the fact that all females are not able to physically perform at the same levels as males. The females on *Police Women of Broward County*, although they appear accepted by their male counterparts, still conveyed that they have to prove themselves to the males to show they are just as able to do anything as the males. As one of the officers from the larger department stated, some younger officers thought that she was not "going to do anything" when it came down to getting into a physical confrontation with hostile and/or violent suspects. She would, in turn, prove herself and "jump right in" to whatever fight there is. The responding officers in this study, however, said they have had both good and bad experiences with male officer attitudes toward female officers. By no means do females have the comfort of being *completely* accepted in the field by their fellow coworkers.

Nevertheless, some female officers do not let these challenges and barriers stop them from continuing their careers. As many of the officers surveyed noted, verbal communication is their “weapon of choice” when on the job. The majority of the interviewees were adamant in the fact that the utilization of verbal communication is their greatest contribution to policing. This helps move away from traditional reactive policing and toward modern policing tactics like community-oriented policing (collaborative partnerships are forged between the community and the police). The responding officers added that they assess the situations more than male officers, resulting in better solutions to the citizens’ problems. This type of policing has changed the face of law enforcement, which has been noted in the literature review as supported more by female officers than male officers, and sparked successful movements toward using community-oriented policing across the country.

The many challenges and barriers to females in policing still adversely affect those females who want to enter the field by discouraging them or outright stopping their entrance into the field (referring back to physical agility tests that are based on male aptitudes). Still, females are entering the field, yet not at the rates one might hope or expect at this point in time when females have progressed in other fields. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (2008) indicated of the 708,569 sworn police officers in the U.S., only 84,320 (11.9%) were female; the other 624,249 sworn officers were male. More and better recruitment of females is needed in order to boost the numbers of female officers, as well as retain these female officers. Because female officers have so much to contribute to the field (communication/interpersonal skills, being role models, bringing new and diverse ways of thinking, etc.), vigorous recruitment should occur at the beginning of the hiring process and females should be sought actively throughout the community. As noted in the literature review, this can be done by using the Internet to

communicate to thousands of female applicants that certain departments are hiring. These websites also should include biographies of other female officers to attract the attention of a potential female applicant who otherwise might not have looked through the website. Once these barriers are overcome and recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of female officers take place, positive progression movement toward equal treatment of males and females will be achieved.

Limitations and future questions

Although the present study's findings indicate the changing status of female officers as being more accepted, more sought after, and as effective officers, this study should in no way be assumed to suggest the same is true for all police departments in the United States. The present study utilized a snowball sample from six agencies in the southwestern suburbs of Chicago. One of the problems with using the snowball sampling method is that "initial contacts may shape the entire sample and foreclose access to some members of the population of interest" (Bachman & Schutt, 2008, p. 100). Because the initial contacts were local residents the contacts received from them were also from local departments, limiting the geographic area in which the study was conducted. Furthermore, the use of in-person interviews is time consuming and problems in "arranging long periods for personal interviews can still be fairly complicated" (Bachman & Schutt, 2008, p. 193). Therefore, it is difficult to quickly implement in-person interviews (Bachman & Schutt, 2008). Also, a good rapport must be established in order for the respondent to feel comfortable answering the questions of the interviewer (Bachman & Schutt, 2008). If a good rapport is not established it could negatively affect the way the interviewee responds to the questions or if he or she responds at all.

Another limitation of the study is the race/ethnicity of the respondents; all of the responding females were white, non-Hispanic. Perhaps minority interviewees might have different experiences and responses. Minority females might “face additional obstacles,” such as constant racial discrimination, because of their race/ethnicity (Price, 1996, p. 2). Discrimination on two levels, gender and race, may doubly affect minority women in policing. Because some minority women are forced to face not only sex discrimination, but also racial discrimination from other police officers, their experiences and responses could vary even more than white, non-Hispanic respondents. Additionally, the present study was a small sample of only seven female officers. The present findings, therefore, cannot be generalized to larger groups of the population. Nonetheless, the present findings still point out the constantly-evolving standing of women in policing and add to the little recent literature and studies on female officers that exist.

Several questions still exist after conducting this research study. Why does discrimination of females in policing still exist even though all the information has been presented. Perhaps the fact that the civil rights movement, which helped spawn much of the equality in the professional world, is no longer as enthusiastically pursued as in the 1960s and 1970s there has been a loss of sight in achieving that equality. Also, why have more research studies not been conducted that focus on females in policing since the 1970s and 1980s (and some in the 1990s)? Perhaps it is because of a lack of funding, or a lack of desire to address (or fear of addressing) these issues further. If all these issues still exist today more research should be done on them to clarify a more recent status of females in policing. In addition, follow-up studies are needed to determine how much has changed from the original studies. Also, since this research study was conducted in a suburban area different results might exist from females in rural or urban areas. Additionally, what differences might the responding officers’ years in

law enforcement make in their responses? Perhaps those females with more experience have more negative views of the earlier years of policing because they experienced more challenges. Or, perhaps these challenges had not yet been addressed or fought. Furthermore, would the race/ethnicity of the female police officer compound any discrimination, harassment, or stress, felt by the female? Moreover, since females are said to experience more stress in policing than males, what are the rates of burnout among females and how much do these burnout rates contribute to females leaving the field?

Conclusion

Females have undoubtedly progressed in the field of policing despite the many obstacles they have faced and still endure. Given that new and alternative ways of policing, like community-oriented policing that deals more with interpersonal skills, have been emerging in recent decades it is no wonder that females are able to advance in this field because they do, indeed, possess the skills needed for this form of policing. This is not to say, however, that males do not possess these skills, too. One of females' greatest strengths is their ability to communicate verbally, as indicated in the previous studies and the findings of the present study. It is recognized that females in policing still face many challenges like pregnancy policies; balancing motherhood and a career; breaking the "glass ceiling" in different ranks, positions, and special assignments; being accepted by the policing community and society as a whole; negative stereotypes; and physical barriers, along with many others. As long as females acknowledge their weaknesses, however, they can carry on and "overcome them," as the commander interviewee stated. Without knowing one's flaws and challenges there is no way to change or address them effectively. This research study and the literature review aid in laying out many of

the challenges for females in policing so these females realize what it is they have to encounter and figure out the best ways to do so.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Certificate of Completion on “Protecting Human Research Participants” from the National Institutes of Health

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Jenny Rizo successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 02/21/2009

Certification Number: 189933

Appendix B

Approval by Institutional Review Board of Aurora University



AURORA UNIVERSITY

March 24, 2009

Dear Ms. Rizo, Dr. Walsh, and Dr. Hipp:

I am pleased to inform you that the research oversight committee of the College of Arts and Sciences has approved your proposal for research on Females in Policing; Strides and Future Challenges in a Male Dominated Profession. The approval is effective for one year from this date. If you need additional time or if you modify your study, you will need additional approval. Copies of the stamped consent form must be used in your data collection. You are responsible for retaining them for three years after completion of the study. In addition, you must report any anticipated problems or risks to the subjects or others.

We wish you great success in your project.

Sincerely,

Jane L. Davis, DVM, MS

Appendix C

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Title of the Study: Females in Policing: Strides and Future Challenges in a Male-Dominated Profession

Principal Investigator: Jenny Rizo (phone: 630-401-5746; email: jrizo01@aurora.edu)

Faculty Advisor: Stephanie W. Walsh, Ph.D. (office: Dunham Hall #215; phone: 630-844-7532; email: swalsh@aurora.edu)

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

This study examines the increasing role of females in policing; in particular, the benefits and challenges to them in the field. The purpose of the research is to add to the existing body of information regarding females in policing as well as identify issues and challenges females may face when they enter the field of law enforcement. This study will include in-person interviews of sworn female police officers in the southwestern Chicagoland area from small- to mid-sized police departments. You have been asked to participate because you meet these criteria. Your answers to the interview questions will be utilized to acquire a working knowledge of current issues, advantages, and challenges of females' roles in policing. Initial demographic questions (name, rank/specialization/certification, number of years in the criminal justice field, number of years in law enforcement, department name and size, and number of females in the department) will be asked in order to compare departments and obtained information.

WHAT WILL MY PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

If you decide to participate in this research you will be asked to provide responses to 18 questions.

The total time for the interview will be approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS TO ME?

No risks to you are anticipated from participation in this study.

ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO ME?

You will benefit from this research by contributing to the current literature, information about current occupational issues unique to women in law enforcement positions. Your information will assist law enforcement administrators who design pre- and in-service training curricula. In addition, you will assist females who are interested in pursuing careers in law enforcement by

providing information concerning the nature and extent of the issues and challenges unique to women.

HOW WILL MY CONFIDENTIALITY BE PROTECTED?

Your responses will be kept completely confidential. While there will be a publication as a result of this study, your name will not be used. Only group characteristics will be published. If you participate in this study, I would like to be able to quote you directly without using your name. If you agree to allow me to quote you in publications, please initial the statement at the bottom of this form.

WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

You may ask any questions about the research at any time. If you have questions about the research after the interview today please contact the Principal Investigator Jenny Rizo at 630-401-5746. You may also call the faculty advisor, Dr. Stephanie Walsh, at 630-844-7532.

If you have more questions, or want to talk with someone about your rights as a research participant, please contact Dr. Joan Fee, Chair, Institutional Review Board, Aurora University, 630-844-6232.

Your participation is completely voluntary. If you begin participation and change your mind you may end your participation at any time without penalty. If you withdraw from the study before the interview is completed your information will be returned or destroyed.

Your signature below indicates that you have read this consent form, had an opportunity to ask any questions about your participation in this research and voluntarily consent to participate. You will receive a copy of this form for your records.

Name of Participant (please print): _____

Signature of Participant

Date

I give my permission to be quoted directly in publications without using my name.

Signature of Investigator

Date

Appendix D

Interview Questions

Initial Demographic Questions

- 1) What is your full name?
- 2) What is your rank, specialization, or certification?
- 3) How many years have you been in the criminal justice field?
- 4) How many years have you been in law enforcement?
- 5) What is the name of the department at which you currently work?
- 6) What is the size (number of personnel) of your department?
 - a. How many sworn officers are there in your department?
- 7) How many females are employed in your department?
 - a. How many of the employed females at your department are sworn officers?

Interview Questions

- 1) What advantages do you think females bring to law enforcement?
- 2) What challenges do you think females bring to law enforcement?
- 3) What stereotypes, positive and negative, are there about females in policing?
- 4) What unique stressors exist for females?
- 5) How easy is it to adapt or “infiltrate” into a predominantly male profession?
- 6) What positive messages do female officers send to the community?
- 7) What special qualities and/or attributes do you think make females especially equipped for police work?
- 8) What are your perceptions of male attitudes toward females in policing in general?
 - a. Specifically within your department?

- 9) What are your perceptions of female attitudes toward females in policing in general?
 - a. Specifically within your department?
- 10) Have you or other female officers experienced being assigned to social service roles or excluded from “forbidden units”?
- 11) Have you or other female officers experienced or observed systematic discrimination in the field?
 - a. In the selection process?
 - b. In position placement?
 - c. In duty responsibilities?
- 12) How does your significant other and/or family feel about your career choice?
 - a. Do they have any problems or do they fully support you?
- 13) How easy/difficult is it for females to move up in the ranks in your department?
 - a. Has any female officer, to your knowledge, encountered any problems in being promoted into the upper ranks? What were they?
- 14) How might physical differences in the make-up of males and females affect different ways of approaching/handling a situation?
 - a. When or how has the physical difference between male and female bodies affected you?
 - b. What, if any, upper body strength problems have you encountered?
 - c. Does the use of the POWER test discriminate against females, or even males for that matter?
 - d. Do academy standards accommodate the physical differences between males and females?

- 15) Which duties, if any, do you think females perform better than males?
- 16) What do you think are the greatest pressures to females in policing?
- a. Peer acceptance?
 - b. Approval by the community?
 - c. Credit given where/when due?
 - d. What trust issues do you have with your partner, peers, and/or community or do they have with you?
- 17) What are situations in which females may be seen as less authoritarian/aggressive or too “sympathetic” and “emotional”?
- 18) Have health issues, such as pregnancy and motherhood, adversely affected your or other female officers’ positions in the field?

Appendix E

Peace Officer Wellness Evaluation Report (P.O.W.E.R.) Test Chart

TEST	MALE				FEMALE			
	AGE GROUP				AGE GROUP			
	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59
Sit and Reach (inches)	16.0	15.0	13.8	12.8	18.8	17.8	16.8	16.3
1 Minute Sit-Up	37	34	28	23	31	24	19	13
Maximum Bench Press Ratio (of total body weight)	.98	.87	.70	.58	.58	.52	.49	.43
1.5 Mile Run (minutes)	13.46	14.31	15.24	16.21	16.21	16.52	17.53	18.44

The above P.O.W.E.R test chart includes the qualifications, set by the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, for the physical agility portion of several departments' police tests administered in Illinois. Each individual must meet the qualifications for the four tests in order to enter any Illinois certified police academy; any applicant not meeting all four standards will not be allowed to enter the academy. In order to determine what each applicant must complete, the applicant must find his or her age group in the appropriate column (whether male or female).

The *sit and reach test* consists of stretching out ones arms to touch the toes or reach beyond the toes from a sitting position.

The *one minute sit-up test* consists of bent leg sit-ups, in which the applicant's fingers must be interlocked behind his or her head or neck.

The *one repetition maximum bench press test* is calculated by taking the applicant's body weight and determining the percentage that must be lifted according to the sex and age of the applicant. For example a 25-year old male must lift 98% of his total body weight. Only one repetition must be completed and the bar must touch the applicant's chest before being pushed up.

The *1.5 mile run test* consists of a timed run in which the applicant must run the 1.5 mile track according to the time allotted for his or her age group.

Source: Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board (2009). Peace Officer Wellness Evaluation Report (P.O.W.E.R.). Springfield, IL.