

**Female Police Officers in the Winnipeg Police Service:  
A Case Study  
Exploring Experiences, Perceptions  
and Gender Dynamics**

by

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**Female Police Officers in the Winnipeg Police Service:  
A Case Study Exploring Experiences, Perceptions and Gender Dynamics**

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**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University  
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**CANDIDA SOUSA©2005**

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## ABSTRACT

Women entering predominantly male professions such as policing are often faced with gender-related obstacles and challenges. In order to understand why women have been resisted in policing, it is necessary to recognize the dynamics of the police culture. Policing involves an informal work-group cohesion based, in large part, on men's shared definition of their masculinity (Martin, 1980: 79). This work environment creates challenges for female police officers to break through the barriers created by male cultural norms and become integral members of the police service. To explore female officers' experiences of working in an occupation dominated by a male culture, a multiple-method case study approach was used that involved qualitative interviews with 25 female police officers of the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS), a short quantitative questionnaire on general job satisfaction levels and an analysis of relevant documents provided by the WPS. The face-to-face interviews allowed the women to express themselves freely about their perceptions and experiences as female police officers. They discussed issues that were important to them regarding how their work and personal life intermingle, including family and work issues, advancement opportunities, camaraderie among peers, gendered styles of policing and harassment and discrimination within the service. The women explore ideas of improving their workplace and share experiences which show that male cultural norms of the workplace still exist to create a chilly climate for female officers.

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## INTRODUCTION

Women entering predominantly male professions such as policing are often faced with gender-related obstacles and challenges. Although women have been officers in Canada since the early 1900s, female officers are still experiencing the negative effects of traditional attitudes of male superiority. In other words, there are various socially-embedded gender stereotypes which often play out in predominantly male occupations. These stereotypes manifest themselves in ways that are contrary to the interests of the minority group of women on the force.

In order to understand why women have been resisted in policing, it is necessary to recognize the dynamics of the police culture. Policing was created by men to enforce the laws of the state. Policing involves an informal work-group cohesion which is based, in large part, on men's shared definition of their masculinity (Martin, 1980: 79). In her study of police officers, Martin explains that, "The integration of women into police patrol work as co-workers threatens to compromise the work, the way of life, the social status, and the self-image of the men in one of the most stereotypically masculine occupations in our society" (Martin, 1980: 79).

Furthermore, police departments have adopted a paramilitary model of organization with a hierarchical and bureaucratic structure. This structure may make entry into policing even more difficult for women as the culture is exclusionary, still being shaped by and for men (Pinch, 2002: 5). Culture is learned from previous

generations, broadly shared by members and contains agreed-upon symbols that “help people create and make sense of their world” (Pinch, 2002: 5). In his study of the Canadian Forces, Pinch explains that the “traditional culture” (of military and paramilitary alike) is deemed necessary for optimizing or even maximizing effectiveness in the combat arms (Pinch, 2002: 3). Historically, traditional masculine culture has included an emphasis on aggressiveness, physical prowess, male rites of passage and other male bonding rituals. This masculine culture forms the core of social cohesion, esprit de corps and success in war-fighting largely because it is a physically and mentally male-dominated arena. Pinch (2002) goes on to explain that the traditional masculine military culture has developed in opposition to women’s roles as wives or mothers in need of protection, or as objects of chivalrous attention, romantic attraction or sexual exploitation. Since traditional war-fighting is masculine in nature, the entry of women into the culture may change it in some measurable way, which may be construed as having a detrimental effect on the cohesion and subsequent effectiveness of the group. In these terms, although women are now allowed to freely pursue policing as a career, this does not mean that their experiences in policing are free from conflicts arising from an informal male police culture.

The purpose of this study is to explore the work-related experiences of female police officers in the Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) and to examine how their experiences or perceptions are linked to gender. The study begins by locating female police officers in history as well as in contemporary times. Chapter One is devoted

to a review of female policing history, a discussion of challenges still faced by female officers, as well as exploring research that has helped guide the present study. Chapter Two discusses the methodology used in the study, including the research goals and a description of the data collection and analysis methods. Chapter Three examines the strong link between work and family which women believe they experience differently due to their gender. Here, I explore the women's family and work biographies, maternity issues and women's juggling act between work and home, and how women perceive a difference from their male peers in promotion opportunities due to family arrangements. Chapter Four explores how male culture has affected the camaraderie among the women on the force and its effects upon advancing and mentoring. Specifically, I discuss female officers' perceptions of being in competition with other females for advancement and job-transfer opportunities within the force. This chapter also deals with the women's sense of camaraderie in light of their male-dominated workplace and the debate about the effectiveness of the mentoring program for female recruits. In Chapter Five I look at the way in which working in a male culture shapes how women are perceived and sexualized by male peers and superiors, and how this is detrimental to their full inclusion as equal members of the WPS. In this chapter, the women explain their sexualized position as women in a male dominated arena, as well as their attempts at camaraderie with male peers. Gender discrimination, sexual harassment and ways in which women deal with these instances are discussed. Chapter Six explores how gender dynamics are at play regarding men and women's policing styles. I explore

the women's views regarding the genders' different modes of policing and women's views on successful policing strategies. Here, the women discuss their difficulty with having to hide their emotions and femininity in order to be seen as a contributing and serious member of the (male-dominated) police unit. The concluding chapter summarizes the research and discusses the limitations and policy implications of the study.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **WOMEN IN POLICING: WHAT THE LITERATURE TELLS US**

Female police officers face challenges stemming from being a minority in a male-dominant occupation. To study women in policing, it is necessary to understand how women have entered the police domain and what their experiences have been. Numerous studies, both historical and contemporary, have shown that women in male-dominated occupations such as policing confront difficulties such as gender discrimination, sexism and sexual harassment. Women have engaged in a long struggle simply to be permitted within the outer circles of 'male' professions. When women were allowed into these circles, typically because of political pressure, they were relegated to support roles, rather than being allowed to take part in the full range of duties. It seemed that women were forever to be 'sidekicks' to their more powerful male counterparts.

Although there is now a much higher representation of women in once male-dominated spheres such as law and medicine, this inclusion has been recent and sometimes inequitable. Males have historically framed these professions in a way that has closed the door to those qualities socially assigned to femininity, such as sympathy, understanding and sensitivity. Benoit (2000: 16) concludes that historically, social stereotypes of male superiority initially led to the legal exclusion of women from male professions. More recently, it has involved the subordination of those women who succeed in entering these spheres by limiting opportunities for advancement. Benoit (2000: 17) adds that only by studying women at work can we



know the social conditions in which women find themselves. Understanding a person's work is "as good a clue as any" to understanding the course of his or her life, social being and identity (Benoit, 2000: 17).

According to the Winnipeg Police Service's 2003 Statistical Report, the Winnipeg police force is composed of 1,074 male, and 158 female officers. Although this number has increased over the past decade, women still comprise only 14 percent of officers in this public service. What is it about policing that keeps the number of female officers so low? Historically, with the help of women's lobby groups, women have fought to gain employment in the police force. Although political barriers have been broken, some observers believe that women as a group are still not fully integrated into policing. Current research suggests that women still encounter discriminatory practices, especially with regard to their mobility and advancement and through prevailing sexist attitudes.

### **From the Past to the Present**

In Canada, women were first hired onto police forces in Vancouver in 1912, followed by Toronto, Winnipeg and Edmonton in 1913, 1917 and 1919 respectively (Linden and Minch, 1982: 6). The first two women hired in Vancouver had no training or uniforms. These women were mainly employed as prison matrons, but by 1943 were also dealing with juveniles, women offenders and victims. Female officers finally received 'women's uniforms' in 1947 and began to receive the same training as male officers in 1952. They were not, however, allowed to carry a

weapon. Not only did carrying weapons go against the ascribed female role of nurturer (not aggressor), women were not allowed on patrol, thus carrying a weapon was deemed unnecessary. In the United States, police departments had policies that discouraged the hiring of female officers, including quotas that usually limited hiring to one percent or less (Balkin, 1988: 30). The work of female officers tended to be restricted to cases involving women and children and to clerical duties, which were more in tune with the norm of women performing acceptable modes of 'women's work.'

Not surprisingly, in the 1960s women were still restricted to jobs within the doors of the police station, meaning that patrol duties were off limits to them (Linden and Minch, 1982: 6). Due largely to the efforts of women's lobby groups, government laws against all forms of discrimination were enacted during the 1960s in the United States, and in the early 1970s in Canada, which forced police organizations to ensure that women could also pursue careers in the police field. As opportunities were opening for women in policing, police departments were unprepared for them. Departments were not ready to train or recruit female officers. There were no uniforms, weapons or locker rooms for potential female officers. Inspector Lison Ostiguy (LeBeuf and Mclean, 1997: 114) explains that during her entry to the Montreal Police force in 1979, "there was no good will and open-mindedness shown on the part of the leaders of the time." She adds that the first female police were constantly required to prove themselves from both a work performance and skill standpoint. Not only does this suggest that women were

highly scrutinized by their male peers, it also suggests that because women were considered outsiders they had to prove that they were just as capable as their male peers in order to obtain some semblance of respect. Most women who had been hired by the police department were confined to the rank of constable because of the lack of opportunities offered by the police organization (LeBeuf and McLean, 1997: 8). Susan Eng (in LeBeuf and Mclean, 1997: 29) explains that in the 1980s and 1990s, women were recruited to deal with sexual assault and domestic violence. Police agencies perceived a need for women because female victims wanted the reassurance that the officers understood their perspective and concerns. By the 1980s, all women were routinely assigned to patrol duties, but even then, women were not assigned to detective units or elite squads in most areas.

Although the representation of women in policing in Canada has increased, they still comprise only a minority of the police population. According to a report by Statistics Canada (2000), there were twice as many women police officers in June 2000, as there were a decade earlier. In 1990, there were 3,573 female police officers in Canada, representing just over 6 percent of all officers. By June 2000, there were 7,658 female police officers accounting for almost 14 percent of the total. British Columbia has the highest proportion of female police officers, at almost 18 percent, followed by Ontario at 15 percent. The Atlantic provinces had the lowest female police officer representation, at 10 percent. Although representation of female officers has been on the rise, mere numbers do not reflect a change in internal workplace attitudes toward women.

### **The Question of Equality of Female Police Officers: Are Women Good Cops?**

Although decades have passed since women began entering policing, they still face challenges due to their gender that their male counterparts do not experience. Because women are still a minority in a male-dominated workplace, some female police officers continue to struggle to gain acceptance from their male co-workers. Although female officers feel as capable as male officers, many still believe they do not receive equal credit for their job performance (Worden, 1993: 212). While police work traditionally has been a male-dominated occupation, several writers argue that there is still the traditional belief that assertiveness, aggressiveness, physical capability and emotional toughness are “male” characteristics necessary to perform competently as a (male) police officer. When a woman displays these very same characteristics, she is often perceived as “cold,” “pushy” or somehow in violation of the role socially prescribed for her gender (Daum et al, 1994: 46). While a man may select a career in law enforcement without question, a woman aspiring to become an officer is viewed as unusual or inappropriate. She must not only prove that she has the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for the job, she must also prove she is as good as the prescribed *male* norm (Daum et al, 1994:46).

The obstacles these women must face reflect bias and myths conveyed by society. According to Inspector Ostiguy (LeBeuf and Mclean, 1997:115), these include the beliefs that: men are more rational and logical than women; men can deal with certain crises and tense and violent situations, while women tend to break down and feel sorry for themselves; men are capable of performing difficult tasks, while

women are merely content with doing simple routine tasks; men are active and inspire respect because of their superiority; women remain rather passive and are incapable of taking charge. In a similar manner, Price (1996:2) explains that male officers anticipate female officers failing; doubt women can equal men in most job skills; do not see female officers as doing "real" police work; and perpetuate myths about women's lack of emotional fitness. All in all, there seems to be a consensus with many female officers that the majority of male officers resist women in policing. These findings were also found in Western and Eastern Europe, Asian and Latin American countries. Female officers in these studies have also reported suffering from discriminatory treatment at the hands of many male colleagues (Price, 1996: 2; Cauchi, 1998).

Studies suggest that the successful performance by women in various policing functions prove that women are capable of performing all the tasks related to police work (LeBeuf and Mclean, 1997: 113). However, a study by Daum et. al. (1994: 46-7) conducted in an American metropolitan police department found that 42 percent of female police officers did not feel accepted by male officers, and 55 percent felt unaccepted by supervisors. Sixty-eight percent believed that they personally had to work harder than their male colleagues to gain credit for their work. Thus, female officers who encountered discrimination and inequality in the workplace have experienced a lower sense of morale and a higher sense of inferiority. Unfortunately, in this study there were no comparison data on the views

of male police officers regarding their own perceptions of acceptance on the job versus those of female officers.

In contrast, studies by Linden (1980) and Brown (1994) explore the perceptions of male officers regarding their female co-workers. In Linden's 1980 study of Vancouver police officers, male officers were asked their opinions of female officers, particularly what they thought about female officers on regular patrol duty. Findings showed that 50 percent of the male officers surveyed thought it was a *good idea* to have women as part of the patrol force, while 18.5 percent were *undecided* and 31.5 percent believed it was a *bad idea* to have women on regular patrol duties (Linden, 1980: 30). Furthermore, Linden found that 82.4 percent of male officers who had been partnered with female officers answered that it is a *good idea* to have women on patrol. Thus, male officers who had extensive experience working with female officers showed much more positive attitudes toward female police than other males in the department (Linden, 1980: 77).

In comparison, a study conducted by Brown (1994: 51) administered the Patrolman's Gender Attitude Scale to male state police officers (of various years on the force) in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. To obtain a male point of view, the male patrol officers' attitudes were investigated by using a scale of questions designed to determine overall "attitude" as well as their attitudes toward individual topics relating to interaction between males and females on patrol. Of the 280 questionnaires that could be scored, Brown found that 4.6 percent *strongly accepted* women on patrol; 27.9 percent *accepted*; 38.6 percent were *split*; 16.8

percent *did not accept* women on patrol; and 7.9 percent *strongly did not accept* women on patrol (4.3 percent were neutral). Only 31 police officers had not previously worked with women. Interestingly, in Brown's study, male minorities (Blacks, Asians, etc.) were more positive than their Caucasian colleagues toward female police officers (1994: 51). There was also a significant correlation between the officer's age and his negative attitudes toward women, as well as between time on the job and negative attitudes. The older the male, the less favourable he was toward female officers. Likewise, the greater the male officer's time on the force was correlated to a more negative attitude toward women on patrol.

### **Female and Male Modes of Policing**

Research on female officers' capabilities reveals no statistically significant differences between men and women in terms of their capabilities in physical conflicts (Brown, 1994: 50). Women have proven to be as effective as men in all facets of police work. Although earlier studies assumed women and men were different when it came to policing, little difference was found once objective observational methods and analysis of reported evaluations by supervisors were used to compare the sexes. Some gender differences have been identified by some studies, although it would appear that these findings are rather inconsistent. Some of this earlier research suggested that female officers were less aggressive, made fewer arrests and were less likely to engage in control-seeking than male officers (Balkin, 1988: 30). Part of this difference may be in role socialization, but there are

also other possibilities (Linden and Minch, 1982: 35). The lower arrest rate for women may have been due to the fact that "many arrests are the result of an overly aggressive police officer who causes a routine incident to erupt into a near-violent confrontation, thus forcing an arrest" (Crites cited in Linden and Minch, 1982: 35). Female officers were less likely to provoke this sort of violent reaction and were consequently less likely to have to make an arrest.

The first study of women on patrol was conducted in Washington D.C., in 1973 by Bloch and Anderson, followed by the St. Louis county study by Sherman in 1975 (Balkin, 1988; Sherman, 1975). These studies found that male and female police officers performed patrol work in a similar manner. Some *minor* differences noted were that women made fewer arrests and issued fewer traffic citations, and had a less aggressive policing style as compared to the men. The men were more often found to be guilty of unbecoming conduct (Balkin, 1988: 31). A study conducted by the California Highway Patrol in 1976 reported similar findings, with the conclusion that it was indeed feasible to employ women in the highway patrol, since women seemed to be performing capably (Balkin, 1988: 30). A Denver study, performed by Bartlett and Rosenblum in 1977, concluded that women were equal to and as effective as men in all categories of police work. Minor differences noted in their study were that male officers were better shots and that female officers received fewer public complaints, but took more sick time than the men. A New York study, conducted by Sichel et. al. in 1978 (Balkin, 1988: 32), concluded that female and male officers performed similarly. They were both found to use the same techniques



to gain and keep control, and were equally unlikely to use force or display a weapon. Among the differences observed in this study were that female officers made fewer arrests and took more sick time, and male officers were better shots and did more strenuous physical work when with a female partner (while two female partners seemed to share the physical work more equally). As well, citizens judged female officers as more respectful, pleasant and competent than male officers, and citizens exposed to female police tended to express a higher regard for the department. Thus, although each of these studies concluded that women and men perform their policing duties capably, the few differences noted were not consistent across the board. Recent literature (Haynes, 1993; LeBeuf and Maclean, 1997: 113; Hoffman, 2005; Boyd, 2005.) suggests that female officers are just as capable of using weapons, apprehending suspects, investigating crimes and meeting the physical and mental demands of the job as their male colleagues. Women are aggressive when they have to be and are also more patient communicators and tend to show that they care more about helping people than their male peers (Hayes, 1993).

### **Women's Visibility**

Men who are socialized with cultural values of male superiority over women, especially in the workplace, may experience anxiety when faced with competent women. Brown (1994: 51) suggests that female competence may not fit with some male officers' mode of thinking. Thus, a male officer may reduce his anxiety by distorting reality to support his view of female inferiority. His peer group of other

male officers, supervisors and administrators often support this same reality. The Washington (Bloch and Anderson, 1973) and St.Louis (Sherman, 1975) studies found predominantly negative attitudes by male officers towards female officers, related to the belief that females could not respond as capably as males in violent situations (Balkin, 1988: 32). A major reason commonly given by men is that women are not strong or aggressive enough for patrol work.

The fact that the number of female officers represent a small proportion of officers on the force may affect their workplace atmosphere. Kanter (1977) has pointed out the importance of ratios (or numbers) in understanding the behaviour of minority group members. Police departments fit into her category of skewed organizations, in which the proportion of the minority group often does not exceed fifteen percent of the total membership of an organization. Thus, she sheds light on the dynamics of minorities in organizations such as policing. She explains that some women are treated as representatives of their ascribed status category, rather as individuals. Kanter (1977: 210) suggests there are three sources of problems faced by minorities in an organization that lead to adjustment problems: visibility; contrast (or polarization); and assimilation. Since female officers are relatively rare when compared to the number of male officers, the minority of females tend to feel highly "visible" and scrutinized by the group. It is difficult to enhance one's performance while being analyzed by male officers who may be ready to criticize at the slightest opportunity. "Contrast" refers to instances when members of the dominant group (male officers) exaggerate the differences between themselves and the minority

group (female officers). For example, physical strength, or lack thereof, is exaggerated. Female officers have often reported feelings of stress and isolation due to being frequently evaluated by male standards (regarding physical strength and male stereotypical norms such as suppressing emotions) (Holdaway, 1998: 54). "Assimilation" is the process by which members of the dominant group distort the characteristics of the minority in order to fit the stereotype which the dominant members hold. This results in role entrapment for the minority group. For instance, Linden and Minch (1982: 72) note that for years, women were excluded from full participation in the police departments, often being assigned or choosing to do "inside" rather than "outside" jobs. This may have been largely due to the prevalent stereotype that females cannot survive on the streets and would be sexually assaulted if they were to be assigned to patrol duties (Linden and Minch, 1982: 72). Thus, women were not hired in great numbers, nor did they have the same pay or training, creating obstacles in obtaining promotions.

More recent studies focusing on female officers' stress found that some women leave policing due to discrimination, sexist attitudes and sexual harassment from male police officers and supervisors (More, 1992; Seagram and Stark-Adamec, 1992; Bartol et. al; 1992). The sources of police officers' stress are comparable between male and female officers with regard to experiencing tragedy and burnout; however, female officers note working in a male-dominated environment and incompatibility with male partners to be a source of stress that males did not mention (More, 1992; Seagram and Stark-Adamec, 1992; Bartol et. al; 1992). Fielding and

Fielding (1992) note that female officers are still looked upon in a negative light by male officers because of lack of physical strength and the belief by male officers that female officers are better suited to care for family than for police work. A study by Sims (2003: 286-7) reports that 76 percent of officers believe that women are just as capable of thinking logically as men (the other quarter do not agree with this statement) and 14 percent believe that there are many jobs for which men should be given preference over women in being hired and promoted. Eighty-three percent of Sims' sample (which consisted of 80% male officers) agree that discrimination against women is still a problem.

Some researchers (Vega and Silverman, 1982) have suggested that attitudes of male officers toward their female counterparts will improve the more males and females are partnered together. Sims (2003) found that time spent in contact with female officers was inversely related to overt sexism. This means that "as time spent with female officers increases, the likelihood of having negative attitudes toward women decreases" (p.291). She also found that married males had more positive perceptions of women than non-married males, which suggests that the more time male officers spend in the company of women, on or off the job, the more likely they will have more favourable attitudes toward women (Sims, 2003: 293). Furthermore, Sims (2003) adds that the more male officers experience contact with female officers, the more opportunity they have to re-examine their perception of women's policing abilities. Although longitudinal studies regarding the changing views of male officers toward female officers are few and far between, because the Winnipeg

Police Department consists of only 14 percent women, many male officers will not get the opportunity to work extensively with a female officer. Nonetheless, if the number of female officers was to rise, there is hope that positive experiences with females as partners will shed negative female stereotypes and prejudices in male officers' perceptions.

### **Job Satisfaction**

The obstacles women face in their male-dominated workplace due to their gender work to influence their job satisfaction. In addition to the reported male police officers' negative attitudes, women in policing face other challenges which play a part in their experiences on the force. These include family responsibilities, role strain at work, sexual harassment and family and maternity issues (LeBeuf, 1996: 24; Price 1996: 2). Job satisfaction is important in that it increases loyalty and motivates employees to perform well (Greene, 1989). Measuring workers' job satisfaction levels may be complex, given the many factors which affect employees' satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is the degree to which an individual feels positively or negatively about various aspects of the job. It represents the personal meaning or perceived quality of one's job and associated work experiences (Duxbury and Higgins, 2001: 18). Job satisfaction may be measured in many different ways, depending on what issues researchers wish to focus on. In his study of police officer satisfaction and implications for community-oriented policing, Greene (1989: 175) incorporated several variables he believed were important in measuring job

satisfaction of police officers. These job satisfaction measures included: (1) growth needs satisfaction (the breadth of assigned duties); (2) motivation (enthusiasm and enjoyment of the job); (3) security satisfaction (ability to control and direct one's own behaviour); (4) satisfaction with co-workers; (5) satisfaction with supervisor; and (6) pay satisfaction. Greene found that job satisfaction has different effects on officers' perceptions of community policing, depending on the type of job satisfaction being measured. As officer motivation and satisfaction with co-workers increased, so too did their perceptions of community support (Greene, 1989: 17). However, the study found that the higher the satisfaction of security in their jobs, the lower their perceptions of community support. This supports the notion that "certain officers may protect and insulate themselves from community interactions when it is felt that such contacts decrease the officer's ability to direct and control his or her actions" (Greene, 1989: 179). In other words, the less concerned with job security the officers were, the more likely they were to view the community in a supportive way. Therefore, Greene's study points out that researchers need to explore why people are drawn to police work in terms of the types of satisfaction they are seeking from the job. It is clear from this study that measuring police officers' job satisfaction is a complex issue.<sup>1</sup>

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This complexity is one of the reasons why I chose to use both a short quantitative survey and face-to-face interviews. As I discuss in Chapter Two, I was able to see how female officers view their job overall and also explore the specific challenges they overcome daily. The women's satisfaction stems not only from working with the public but from their relationships with their co-workers and superiors, and from balancing family and work responsibilities. Therefore, while I researched general measures of satisfaction in the survey, specific measures of satisfaction were obtained in the interview, in order to understand women's specific experiences in depth.

Job satisfaction may be measured by a multitude of variables deemed important to the working lives of police officers. Although past research on job satisfaction has been measured in many ways by different researchers, it is difficult to find research focusing specifically on the issue of female officers' job satisfaction. However, Fry and Greenfield (1980), Linden (1980) and Holdaway and Parker (1998) have included various measures of job satisfaction levels in their research.

Fry and Greenfield (1980: 123-126) examined attitudinal differences between male officers and female officers. Survey data on general satisfaction, job commitment, role conflict and ambiguity were obtained from 529 male and 21 female patrol officers in an American Midwest police department. The research instrument used a series of already existing general close-ended questions on job satisfaction, commitment, role conflict and ambiguity. "Role conflict" was defined as the degree of incongruity of expectations associated with a role. "Role ambiguity" was conceptualized as the lack of clarity of role expectations and the degree of uncertainty regarding the outcomes of one's role performance. Further to this, seven questions pertaining to job stress were asked, using a 5-point Likert scale. Among the findings, Fry and Greenfield (1980: 125) note that, "there is some indication that organizational factors, and not personal ones such as gender, account for satisfaction, commitment, role conflict and job stress in the workplace."

The researchers believed that the lack of significant differences may be attributed to the fact that men and women were facing similar task environments and

organizational control systems within the strict bureaucracy and chain of commands within policing. They concluded that “women who pursue nontraditional careers reject sex role stereotypes and . . . once in those positions, they have needs, motives, and values similar to men who also are in those positions” (Terborg, 1977: 658 quoted in Fry and Greenfield, 1980: 125).

Fry and Greenfield’s study may not be an accurate representation of the experiences of men and women on the force, as the participants of the study were not able to adequately communicate their experiences. The use of general close-ended questions may not have probed specific issues facing women in policing which affect job satisfaction, such as work and family conflict, perceived ability to become promoted, work relationships with other officers, etc. Fry and Greenfield’s findings seem to contradict much literature written in the area of policing, especially regarding male and female experiences of their work environment. Other research has found that men and women officers worked in very different environments within the one police department, with internal and external factors contributing to a highly differentiated, gendered structure of employment (Holdaway and Parker, 1998: 53)

In her study of Canadian employees, Duxbury analyzed over 1,000 additional comments written at the end of an extensive close-ended questionnaire on the balance of family and work and job satisfaction. She states, “Who were these Canadians talking to when they wrote their comments? Some were talking to us, the researchers. They were telling us what their lives are really like and elaborating on



issues that did not fit neatly into a five-point scale” (Duxbury et al, 2003: 73). Obtaining these voluntary comments allowed for open dialogue with respondents regarding their personal experiences of balancing work and home-life. This allowed the researchers to better understand the issues they were intent on learning. Thus, it is uncertain whether Fry and Greenfield were able to capture important experiences related to gender using their general close-ended population research instrument.

One study that incorporated questions of gender differences and job satisfaction was conducted in England in 1995 (Holdaway and Parker, 1998: 40-60). These researchers studied women officers’ experiences and perceptions of their police environment. Following a series of focus groups for men and women officers, and selective interviews with senior officers, a questionnaire incorporating topics relevant to equal opportunities and experiences of employment was given to all 411 women officers serving in the constabulary and a stratified, random sample of 561 male officers with rank and job title as sampling criteria (Holdaway and Parker, 1998: 43). Two hundred and sixty three women (64%) and 320 men (57%), respectively, completed the questionnaire. Contrary to the findings of Fry and Greenfield, Holdaway and Parker noted some significant differences between female officers and male officers. These findings pertained to differences in various aspects of preferred police work, fulfilment of aspirations, promotional differences, equal opportunities and career encouragement, and conflict between home and work. Although Holdaway and Parker’s study found a consensus of occupational values between men and women and that both greatly value the criminal aspect of their job,

the study also found that conflicts between home and work were generally sharper for female officers. Their findings also suggest that because of these conflicts, some women are excluded from full participation in the police (Holdaway and Parker, 1998: 58). This exclusion is evident in the lower prestige given to certain assignments predominantly assigned to women (assignments often having to do with women and youth). This exclusion is also evident in the Criminal Investigation Department's (CID) perceived "discriminatory and exclusionary practices that were disliked by women officers" (Holdaway and Parker, 1998: 59). Moreover, women reported having to work harder than men to achieve a parity of acceptance and had to avoid mistakes in their work for fear of criticism that women are not as able as male officers. With regards to family, significantly more women than men denied being a parent when at work. They believed that mentioning childcare commitments made it difficult to work overtime or certain shifts, that their colleagues would interpret this as evidence of unsuitability for police work (Holdaway and Parker, 1998: 53). By using focus groups and obtaining the officer's verbal narratives, Holdaway and Parker were able to break down the key issues pertaining to female and male police officers that encompass job satisfaction through actual job experiences (a method also adopted in the present study).

### **Work - Family Conflict**

Job satisfaction is greatly affected by family life. Balancing the demands of work and home often conflict and place workers in a position of having to choose between

one or the other. This strain leads to stress as the employee is being pulled by both sides to meet his/her responsibilities. Because women are still the primary caretakers of the home, they feel pulled between home and work more so than their male peers. In order to understand job satisfaction, researchers need to look at not only the immediate experiences on the job, but also how the job spills into the rest of their respondents' lives.

Duxbury (2001) has conducted research on work and family balance in the public and private sectors and small business and technology companies, for which over 100,000 Canadians have been surveyed or interviewed. Her research has shown a negative relationship between job satisfaction and work stress, work-family conflict, absenteeism and intent to quit. A positive relationship has been observed between job satisfaction and organizational commitment, marital satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental and physical health (Duxbury and Higgins, 2001: 19). Various measures of job satisfaction were used, including: satisfaction with the job in general; satisfaction with pay; work hours; work schedule; and work tasks. Duxbury also found other measures which influence job satisfaction, such as: job stress level; the extent to which the job affects family life and vice versa; organizational commitment; and role overload (Duxbury and Higgins, 2001: 3, 19). Among her findings, she states that "People who can't balance [work/life] have lower levels of job satisfaction. They are less committed to their organizations, and less loyal. They report higher job stress and they're more likely to be absent from work as well as take a higher number of days off" (Duxbury, 2001).

Stone and Lovejoy (2004: 65) studied women formerly in the labour force working in male-dominated positions and the reasons why they left. The major three reasons why women left were: work inflexibility (those working the 'mommy track' were stigmatized and did not receive promotions); the pull of children (need for good daycare and emotional needs of children); and husband's attitudes (husbands would not pick up the slack at home; that wives work was secondary to his; and husbands did not help with child rearing responsibilities).

In Hochschild's (1997) study of a large corporation (Amerco), she reported that survey after survey indicated that working families at every level in the company were strained to the limit due to trying to balance work with home-life. She states that three-quarters of women and half of men agreed that "It is hard for me to manage work and family/personal responsibilities." Furthermore, 60 percent of women and 50 percent of men said that their health suffers as a result of meeting both family and work responsibilities (Hochschild, 1997: 21).

When housework and employment are studied, women seem to bear the brunt of household chores more than their male counterparts. Hochschild (1989) studied working parents' second shift (in the home) and noted that women often devalued their paid work and that their husband's work and leisure time seemed more important than their own (p.98-109). At times, the strain between the second shift at home and full-time work led some women to quit their jobs all together. The majority of men in Hochschild's study did not share the load at home to the same extent as their wives. Some men refused outright while others "refused more

passively, often offering a loving shoulder to lean on, an understanding ear as their working wife faced the conflict they both saw as hers" (Hochschild, 1989: 7). Both husband and wife in her study saw the conflict between paid work and house work as the women's problem. She suggests, "One reason women take a deeper interest than men in the problem of juggling work and family life is that even when husbands happily shared the hours of work, their wives felt more *responsible* for home and children" (Hochschild, 1989: 7). She noticed that women had a greater sense of detail and noticed things husbands did not – the child's nails needed to be cut, the Halloween costume sewn, a gift must be purchased for a classmates birthday party, doctor appointments made, play dates etc. (Hochschild, 1989: 4-10). Women find a wide variety of things that need to be done in the home without being relegated to do them. Women spent more time taking care of household chores which are constant and repetitive tasks (washing, cleaning, cooking, tending to children's needs). Men's division of labour centered around things that were not of immediate urgency, such as mowing the lawn or repairing an appliance. Hochschild (1989: 8) also found that women perform a multitude of tasks at once – fold laundry, write shopping list, watch child, vacuum – while men more often do one thing *or* another – take the child to the park *or* cook dinner. Hochschild (1989:7) also found a 'leisure gap' in the home, where men were allocated more leisure time and women were not. During women's second shift they try to be supermom (by squeezing in as much quality time before bedtime); they redefine "needs" at home (how much time the

child should spend with the sitter or with her); and re-define personal needs (by cutting back time with friends in order to meet home demands).

Duxbury also addresses gender differences in the experiences of work-life conflict. In both her 1991 and 2001 samples, female respondents (regardless of whether or not they had children) reported higher levels of perceived stress and depression than male respondents, and mothers reported higher levels of stress and depression than females who were not parents. On the other hand, parental status was found to have little impact on stress or depression levels for the men in the sample (Duxbury and Higgins, 2001: 33).

Thus, women are still the main caretakers of the home and family unit as well as having to deal with their own employment responsibilities. Work satisfaction does not stop at work, but spills into the lives of workers. Likewise, family life affects the stress felt by workers while on the job. This struggle to juggle may be especially difficult for women who still carry the main responsibility of maintaining the family home. Some women quit work not because they do not enjoy their job, but because they are not satisfied with the way work demands create a struggle in their family life. Unfortunately, there comes a point for some women where a balance cannot be met without sacrificing one or the other.

### **Promotion and Discrimination**

Although women have gained access to positions formerly barred to them, such as policing, they are still denied full equality in the workplace, which ultimately affects

the satisfaction with their job. Gregory (2003: 1) points out that even though women can now secure powerful professional, academic and corporate positions once reserved for men, the ever present 'glass ceiling' still deters the advancement of large segments of the female workforce. He contends that sex discrimination has not been eliminated. There exists discrimination in workplace policies and practices that adversely affect women with children and pregnant women (Gregory, 2003: 1).

Perceived job discrimination is a major factor in the level of job satisfaction experienced by female officers. Price (1996: 5) found in her study that women in urban policing expressed a high level of cynicism about policing as a career and many felt anger toward their department and job. These female officers cited conflicts between working hours and personal life, lack of opportunity and advancement, as well as negative attitudes of male officers and supervisors as the main reasons for their disillusionment with police work.

Moreover, job satisfaction decreases when women experience discrimination in work assignments, promotions and recommendations for promotion. Understandably, female officers do not want to simply represent a statistical requirement forced upon the police department by the government or politicians. Female police need to be recognized as full and contributing members of the force. Inspector Ostiguy (1997: 114) reflects that the police culture is such that achievers are considered "pushy," particularly when it comes to women. Furthermore, those who stand out receive little credit. Ostiguy relays her own experience: "Whenever I was promoted they often said that these promotions were good for 'the image'

instead of crediting my skills and ability.” Likewise, Gregory (2003: 43) explains that “Personal attributes presumed necessary for higher-level positions in the business world are often seen as incompatible with personality characteristics generally associated with women.” For instance, women are viewed as nurturing and sensitive – traits not often looked upon as favourable in a male-dominated workplace. On the one hand, women are perceived as lacking the aggressiveness and dedication necessary for success; on the other hand, women who are assertive and dedicated are often viewed as overly aggressive, uncooperative and unfeminine (Gregory, 2003: 43).

Seniority plays a major role in promotion in many police departments. Due to women’s fairly small numbers and rather late entrance into policing, they have lacked the seniority required to represent a significant proportion of female officers in the higher ranks. Holdaway and Parker’s (1998:51-52) study of men and women in an English constabulary examined why men and women had not applied for promotion in the three years prior to the study. The researchers inquired as to the specific reasoning of the officers who had *not* applied for promotion (72% of men and 78% of women). The most common factor indicated by 69 percent of the male officers and 60 percent of the female officers were “content with position/undecided on the future.” Other common reasons by men and women were “unsure where I’ll end up working if promoted” (23% of men and 24% of women); “have not had time to study for exams” was mentioned by 32 percent of men and 34 percent of women. Holdaway and Parker found that: 7 percent of men and 24 percent of women stated



lack of experience; 7 percent of men and 32 percent of women mentioned insufficient length of service; 5 percent of men and 17 percent of women cited potential conflict with domestic commitments; 2 percent of men and 13 percent of women brought up difficulties in working the hours required/expected; 2 percent of men and 10 percent of women cited fear of negative comments about being selected for equal opportunity reasons rather than merit; 1 percent of men and 4 percent of women said they felt discouraged/blocked by immediate supervisor. These reasons should be placed in the context of the constabulary's promotion policy, which states that length of service and tenure are not the key determinants of promotion. In other words, this particular police service does not require long lengths of time on the force before applying for a promotion. Regardless, the dominant *informal* view held by the organization is that tenure *is* the most important qualification for promotion. Consequently, since women are fairly "new" to policing, the view that tenure is the most important determinant in promotion sustains the under-representation of women within the promoted ranks (Holdaway and Parker, 1998: 52). Also, the statistics above show that women mentioned home-care responsibilities as reasons they did not apply for promotion to a greater extent than men.

Women experience interruptions to their career that men do not experience. Stone and Lovejoy (2004: 63) explain that although the majority of women with professional degrees are working, they are out of the labour force at a rate roughly three times that of their male counterparts and overwhelmingly cite 'family responsibility' as the reason. This interruption affects their promotional

opportunities and job experience levels and for some affects their pay. Gregory (2003: 7) states that 4 percent of the highest ranking corporate officers of Fortune 500 companies in 1999 were female. Women comprise only 2.7 percent of highest-paid corporate officers but even at the highest levels of the corporate hierarchy, women are paid less than men (Gregory, 2003: 7). In fact, the average lifetime cumulative earnings of a fifty-year old woman is \$496,000, while that of a fifty year old man is \$1.1 million. Because of a lifetime history of lower pay and interruptions due to women's care-giving responsibilities, women retirees earn less than one-half the pension income of men (Gregory, 2003: 7). Thus, the cost of career interruptions are significant to women. Individually women bear them directly in the form of lost salary, or blocked or slowed advancement (Stone and Lovejoy, 2004: 64). These interruptions account for as much as one-third of the gender gap in earnings and partly explain the relative absence of women in the upper echelons of most professions (Stone and Lovejoy, 2004: 64).

In 1991 the U.S. congress created a Glass Ceiling Commission to study and recommend measures to eliminate the "artificial barriers to the advancement of women and minorities" (Gregory (2003: 10). In 1995 the commission issued a report which affirmed the continuing presence of barriers in the form of false stereotypes and perceptions held by companies. These include notions that: women do not want to work; they are less committed to careers than men; they are not tough enough to succeed in the business world; they are generally unwilling or unable to work long or unusual hours; they are unable to relocate geographically; they are unable or

unwilling to make decisions; and they are not sufficiently aggressive but instead are too passive and too emotional (Gregory, 2003: 8).

Given that companies were found to have these perceptions when it comes to women succeeding in upper levels of management, it is no wonder women's satisfaction with promotion at work is hindered. Gregory (2003:8) explains that it is difficult for women to enter a career path that will take them to higher positions when they are likely to be placed in support-staff positions, such as personnel, human resources, public relations, communications and customer service. These positions, which are fairly easy for women to get into, have no movement between staff and 'line positions' to get promotions (Gregory, 2003:8). Women are less likely during the course of their careers to be assigned to positions that lead them to senior management.

There have been measures taken by companies to be aware of the glass ceiling, although having a law in place is not enough for women to advance. Strict employee policies explain that women must be treated no less favourably than similarly situated men (Gregory, 2003:102). However, this policy does not lead to equality as long as women are the primary care-givers in the home. Gregory (2003: 102) explains that "Women must fulfill their family responsibilities while employed in a work environment designed by men with far fewer family obligations." He states that men relied on wives to mind the home while they put their efforts into their workplace. The workplace is built on male rules, especially where males dominate the work population. Women struggle to succeed at both. Strict equal

opportunity laws do not mean that women's special circumstances will change and they will be able to work comfortably at the same level as men. These policies hold "mothers to a male model of competition in which they cannot equally compete" (Gregory, 2003: 102). Thus, as long as women are primary care-givers in the home and as long as policies are built by men for men, no amount of laws or corporate policies on equal workforce participation will help because women's situations are not those of their male counterparts.

### **Sexism, Sexual Harassment and Gender Discrimination**

Sexism and sexual harassment by peers and superiors negatively affects female officers' job satisfaction. When women participate in activities considered to be gender inappropriate (such as policing), they may become targets of sexism or gender discrimination. To be more specific, sexism is the subordination of one sex, usually female, based on the assumed superiority of the other sex (Kendall et al, 2000: 340). Sexism directed at women has three components: (1) Negative attitudes toward women; (2) stereotypical beliefs that reinforce, complement or justify the prejudice and (3) discrimination – acts that exclude, distance or keep women separate (Lott, 1994 cited in Kendall et al, 2000: 340). Sexism is not a foreign experience to female police officers. In a study conducted by Wexler and Logan (1983: 48), eighty percent of female police officers reported high levels of stress arising from the negative attitudes of male officers toward female officers. The female officers experienced the same job-related stress as males (for example, dealing with the

criminal justice system and living with potential danger), but the single greatest source of stress for the female officers was the negative attitudes of male peers (Balkin, 1988: 33). These negative attitudes are manifested in many ways, but most often by asking questions about the female officer's sexual orientation, expressing blatant anti-woman comments and the refusal to even talk to female officers, even while patrolling together. One female officer illustrates an incident in her training period when her male field training officer said, "this is my personal opinion; I don't think you should be in this job. You should go home and have babies" (Wexler and Logan, 1983: 50).

*The Status of Women in Canadian Policing* (Solicitor General, 1993), a major study of women in law enforcement, looked at the police departments in Moncton N.B., London Ont., Ontario's Halton Region, and Delta, B.C., together with RCMP detachments in Burnaby and Surrey B.C. Sixty-five percent of the women who took part in the study reported there was sexual harassment in policing, but that most of it was "manageable" (Solicitor General, 1993: 151). Sexist or suggestive comments were accepted as part of the job. Researchers have found that occupations where women tend to be a minority, and where there is a male work culture (such as policing), tend to experience a higher incidence of sexual harassment (Solicitor General, 1993). Twenty-three percent of those interviewed said that anti-harassment policies were inadequate and did not precisely define what the term 'harassment' actually entailed. Eight percent of female respondents indicated that harassment was a serious problem that could be found at all levels of the rank and structure. Many

female officers refused to use the harassment policy for fear of greater persecution from management and co-workers (Solicitor General, 1993: 152). As Swiss (2004: 302) describes, some women extricate themselves from difficult situations by changing jobs while claiming other reasons for their move. The fact that women have had to accept sexual harassment as part of the job hinders attempts of true organizational integration, since it is the whistle blower who is affected by job reprisal, social rejection and peer disapproval (Swiss, 2004: 302).

The literature suggests that some male supervisors may also exacerbate the problem of sexual harassment in the workplace. Some may be unsympathetic to complaints of sexual harassment because they cannot envision the threat themselves (Brown, 1994: 51). Likewise, command staff who tell or laugh at risque jokes encourage similar behaviour in their subordinates. A captain who explains a female officer's anger or irritability on the basis of stereotyped, gender-related "illness" encourages those same views among the ranks (Thomann et al, 1994: 35). This "harmless" everyday behaviour encourages the views of women's subordination and results in intolerable working conditions for many female officers.

According to Gregory (2003: 21), sexual harassment is widespread and will more likely than not present a problem for nearly every working woman some point in their lives. Sexual harassment reflects an unequal power relationship usually between males and females, which tends to create a hostile work environment for the woman (Gregory, 2003: 21). Sexual harassment by male co-workers expresses the ancient rule that women should be sexually available to men. It reminds women that

they are not equal to men in the workplace, no matter what laws or policies apply. It means that no matter how much she works to be a contributing member of the group, a woman is ultimately defined by her body as a male possession (Gregory, 2003: 21). In male-dominated professions women are seen as sexual objects before they are seen as respected peers (Miller, 1986:59; Lemish 2004: 53; Martin, 1980: 196). Men have made roles for women of either the seductress, the princess or the mother-figure, which work to preclude women's full inclusion in male-dominated workplaces by increasing women's vulnerability and insecurity on the job (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 49; Lemish, 2004: 53; Miller, 1986: 59; Martin, 1980: 196).

Sexual joking and crude language also decrease the satisfaction of women at work and are common among police officers (Martin, 1980: 144). When men use sexual jokes about their female peers, it acts to subordinate them. Martin (1980: 144-149) explains that the joking is asymmetrical because men are permitted to joke about women's bodies, but women do not conversely joke about men since it would be seen as "crude." Furthermore, women cannot joke with the men on the same level because women are usually the butt of the jokes. Sexual joking makes the solidarity among the men stronger, while still treating the women as 'other' (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 48; Levin, 2001: 126).

The sexual jokes and language used in police departments ultimately debase women and create a chilly climate for women to work in. Derogatory language used against women construct a climate where women are not part of the team. Remlinger (2005) explains that people construct gendered identities and practice these identities

through their language. By men debasing women in jokes and everyday talk, it reinforces male power. "Gender and sexuality are theoretically interconnected. Ideas about being women and men transfer in theory to assumptions about the body and the physical practice of sex; distinctions that set women and men apart in dichotomous gender categories are based on physical body distinctions" (Remlinger, 2005: 114). In this way, language creates opposites – either men or women; either straight or gay. Men and women become opposite of each other no matter how many similarities might exist. This opposition is also felt in the division of work between men and women and what is deemed appropriate behaviour for each gender. Power and dominance are negotiated through language. Remlinger's (2005: 119) study of classroom gendered language-use found that women tend to be represented in terms of their sexuality and appearance while men were described with regard to their behaviour, intellect and attitude. She also found that language linked women and men's sexual practices. Remlinger (2005: 134) concludes that the construction of speech has an undercurrent of androcentrism, which fosters traditionally masculine values. This perspective reinforces the dichotomization of gender roles and expectations and maintains women as inferior to males.

## **Conclusion**

Research has revealed that although there are policies encouraging the full integration of women into policing, the male police organizational culture has left many female officers feeling less than fully integrated into the service. Studies



conducted by Linden(1980) and Brown(1994) show that a significant number of male officers expressed sexist attitudes toward women in policing, both in the past and the present.

The positive or negative experiences of female officers while on the job affect their overall view of policing. Studies in policing have pointed to numerous ways in which job satisfaction may be measured. In order to explore the satisfaction and gendered experiences of women in policing, it becomes necessary to incorporate specific issues or questions based on the literature on women in policing and women and work. Some of these issues include: conflicts in balancing the responsibilities of work and home-life; role strain and stress due to work; perceived job discrimination by supervisors and/or co-workers; perceived promotional opportunities; and sexism and harassment from peers and superiors.

Gender-related modes of policing, that is, whether males and females “police” differently, was studied extensively by early police researchers to explore whether female officers were as capable as male officers of satisfactory work performance. Although all studies report that women perform the same as men, there is still a perception that women do not belong in policing. This is carried over in male officers’ sexist language and jokes used to create a solidarity among males while keeping women as separate from the team. Although female officers seem to accept instances of sexism and harassment as a manageable hindrance in the workplace, to work under such conditions can lead to stress and lowered job satisfaction. Many women feel they cannot complain for fear of reprisal from their

peers or superiors. Furthermore, harassment and sexist jokes which debase women relegate them to an inferior position on the team, which ultimately affects their attempts at promotion.

Although the number of female officers has risen considerably over the past 30 years, research has illustrated that this road has been a long one, paved with obstacles. Female officers are not yet fully integrated into policing. In my study, I set out to investigate whether there are still gender challenges being faced by the women of the WPS regarding sexism, promotional constraints, gender discrimination, camaraderie issues, family and work issues and more (which I discuss in subsequent chapters) Based on the literature review, I suspected that sexism and gender discrimination still exist, but I wanted to know how this specifically occurred in the women's everyday lives and lived experiences on the force. Furthermore, giving female officers a chance to express their personal views and experiences regarding their workplace has led me to understand some of the coping strategies and dynamics of what it means to be a woman in a male-dominated profession. Before these topics are explored, the following chapter will discuss the methodology used in my study.

## **CHAPTER TWO METHODOLOGY**

This study was undertaken using a case study approach. In order to understand the challenges female police officers face in a male-dominated workplace, it was important to obtain their stories and points of view on how they perceive their environment. Bill Gillham (2000: 1) defines a 'case' as: a unit of human activity embedded in the real world; which can only be studied or understood in context; which exists in the here and now; that merges in with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw. Robert Yin (2003: 15) explains that case studies can be based on any mix of qualitative and quantitative evidence. Case studies are a main method, within which different sub-methods are used, such as: interviews, observations, documents and record analysis (Gillham, 2000: 13). In other words, in a multi-method approach, data are collected by different methods but bearing on the same issue. The present study is based on qualitative face-to-face interviews with 25 female police officers from the Winnipeg Police Service. A short quantitative questionnaire on general job satisfaction levels was also administered to each participant. As well, I obtained statistics regarding the police officers' ranks, resignation rates and female unit composition from the WPS and was given permission to use their Collective Agreement and other pertinent documentation on maternity leave and job-sharing.

Qualitative methods are especially useful in capturing people's subjective experiences. Although qualitative methods have been criticized as being 'soft' or

subjective and not based on hard-core experiments or facts (Gillham, 2000: 10), there are many positive aspects in using this technique. A powerful argument for using qualitative methods to answer questions in some settings lies in the fact that “human behaviour, thoughts and feelings are partly determined by their context. If you want to understand people in real life, you have to study them in their context and in the way they operate” (Gillham, 2000: 11). In order to study women’s experiences in policing, I explore their experiences and their perceptions *with* them. Gillham (2000: 12) explains that “How people feel, behave and think can only be understood if you get to know their world and what they are trying to do in it. ‘Objectivity’ can ignore data important for an adequate understanding.” By conducting face-to-face interviews with participants I was able to probe and prompt them for a further understanding of what they were saying. By interviewing, I was able to clarify their points of view with them to ensure I was understanding their experiences.

During the course of the interviews, the women were able to relay experiences that were crucial to understanding their perceptions of their workplace. These included experiences of maternity leave, female camaraderie within the service, perceived promotional issues, gender discrimination, modes of policing and harassment. Gillham (2000: 62) explains that, “If material is sensitive in character so that trust is involved people will disclose things in a face-to-face interview that they will *not* disclose in an anonymous questionnaire.” Therefore, I was able to obtain richer information from the women themselves rather than relying solely on answers to a survey questionnaire.

A common concern with the use of case studies is whether the answers from a few people can be generalized to incorporate a greater population. Yin (2003: 10) argues that case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to the theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes. He states that the case study's goal is to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalizations) not to enumerate frequencies. In other words, the goal is to do a "generalizing" and not a "particularizing" analysis. Therefore, using a case study to understand women in policing may not be generalized to encompass the *specific* experiences of *all* women in male-dominated spheres, but the *themes* produced from the interviews (for instance, that female officers work in an environment ruled by male-cultural norms) were similar to women in other male dominated areas, and particularly to other female officers in other police departments. My case study, therefore, deals with a select group of women and how they perceive their environment at a particular snapshot in time. Thus, although not generalizable to the general public, this study is useful for understanding the situations of these women at this time, and can also be used in the future to compare the perceptions of the women "then" and "now."

Another concern with case study research, especially those using an interview format, is the possibility of introducing social desirability and interviewer bias, potentially affecting participants' answers (Backstrom and Hursh-Cesar, 1981: 18). There is a fear that participants' may answer in ways they think are favourable to the interviewer and a fear that the researcher will analyze or read into the participants answers. Backstrom and Hursh Cesar (1981: 36) explain that, "a good research design can identify in advance our biases and inadequacies and plan ahead how to

deal with them – how to control, measure and reduce them.” Simply being aware that bias could occur made me very conscious of not leaning one way or another on any topic discussed, but to ask without expecting a certain answer. In essence, the women were the experts in the study, and my purpose was to learn from them. By being aware of my own biases, I was able to make a conscious effort not to expose them to my participants, so that they would not be influenced by what I think. Also, by using a semi-structured interview, I was able to obtain responses to the same sets of questions, so that I could compare the experiences of all female officers in the study. I also gave the women freedom to introduce other experiences I had not asked them about, but which they felt were important in understanding their situation.

To supplement the interviews, I administered a short survey to the end of each interview to obtain a summary of women’s job satisfaction. While the women’s general views about satisfaction in the workplace were positive, I found there was a lack of fit with the generally positive answers shown and the sometimes grim experiences they described in the interview. This finding suggests that although the women show an overall satisfaction with their workplace, the survey alone did not allow them to express the complexities of their experiences, which they revealed in the interview portion of the study. This reaffirms that using a survey alone would have had limited merit in understanding the women’s complex experiences in working in a male-dominated workplace. To a large extent, implementing the survey method has allowed me compare the women’s “black and white” survey answers to the rich content given to me during the face-to-face interviewing. Using the survey

tool demonstrated that surveys alone do not do justice to participants lives, but should only be used to compliment the rich information given in an interview.

As was mentioned, case studies may involve many methods of data collection, including accessing data from documents and reports. Since my interviews deal with women's perceptions and experiences, I decided it would be important to supplement their accounts with information from the Winnipeg Police Service as well. Although the WPS has very limited resources for certain data I was interested in obtaining, I was able to receive valuable information from the Winnipeg Police Association's collective agreement, from available maternity information and job sharing information, as well as numbers regarding how many women are in certain positions on the force and how many women have left the force in the past six years compared to men. Most women reported in the short survey that they had high levels of overall job-satisfaction, which could be compared to how many women have left the service recently for reasons other than retirement. It would have been useful to know reasons why officers leave, but they are not required to give a reason upon resigning. Further to this, women explained that they do not receive enough information regarding maternity leave and job sharing, thus it was important for me to understand what type of information was actually available to them. Because women also expressed that there were certain units where female officers were under-represented, I was interested in assessing this issue by obtaining these statistics from the WPS. This type of information gathering has helped to situate the women's perceptions and understand their challenges.

## **SAMPLE SELECTION**

After sending a letter to Police Chief Jack Ewatski, I was granted permission to interview female police officers of the Winnipeg Police Service. Superintendent Corrine Scott of the Winnipeg Police Service was assigned as my contact person. I thought of many different ways I could solicit the help of female officers to participate in the study, such as snow-ball sampling, or putting up a poster soliciting participants. Snow-ball sampling, however, would not allow me the level of randomness I wanted to achieve. I believed that by using snow-ball sampling, I could encounter the possibility of obtaining the views of women who were “friends” with the participants – this may mean they work in the same area, be of similar age and seniority and perhaps hold similar views on policing topics. I wanted women of many areas in policing and of varying ages and seniority. The poster method of soliciting respondents seemed to be a good choice; however, I ran into the problem of ‘where’ to put the posters so that the women would see them and respond to them and not simply pass by. Officers are not all in one building, but work in many detachments or divisions. Finally, I decided that if I could obtain a list of the officers’ names, I could perform a systematic random sampling. After discussing this with Superintendent Scott, I was given a list of approximately 150 current female officers, from which the sampling frame was drawn. The list was helpful in that it was in order of seniority, so I was able to obtain participants from varying positions on the force and of various years of service.

In using systematic random sampling, I drew a sample by taking the list of potential participants and choosing every third name on the list, with a random



starting point. In total, 82 letters were mailed out to female officers' homes (I found this to be more personal than putting it in their work mail boxes). Letters were mailed out in batches of twenty until 25 interviews were obtained. I found it more useful to obtain participants in batches, since many times our interview times and dates changed. Response rate was slow in the summer and early fall months, but increased in the winter months.

The letters sent to the officers described the study and asked for the officers' voluntary participation (see Appendix A). The letter outlined the purpose of the study, participant's rights and assurance of confidentiality. My name, personal phone number and email address were included in the letter as a means for interested participants to contact me. Messages were left on my private voice-mail, where I was the only person who had access to the messages.

Superintendent Scott prepared a cover letter encouraging the officers' participation in the study and emphasizing the importance of the study to the police service. This cover letter was included in the envelope with my letter. I was fortunate to have had permission from the Winnipeg Police Service to conduct my study quite independently from them, while still gaining enough information to contact the women on my own without anyone's knowledge of who the participants were.

## **THE INTERVIEW PROCESS**

I quickly found that trying to obtain scheduled interviews with the female officers could be somewhat challenging. Most officers worked on rotating shifts, which

often hindered their ability to make initial appointments and keep scheduled ones. The officers also had court appearances and overtime to contend with. Three more officers were interested in being part of my study, but we were never able to make contact with one another due to scheduling incompatibilities. Sometimes I had to reschedule appointments two or three times to obtain one interview. Nonetheless, I was satisfied in obtaining my goal of 25 interviews, since they were long interviews and much more specific and rich in content than I had originally expected.

Once contact was made between myself and the interested female officers, interviews were scheduled at the officer's convenience or during on-duty overlap days at the officer's choice of location. Overlap days are periods when shift schedules mean that two different shifts are on duty at the same time. Since the WPS has extra staff on duty during this time, the respondents can be interviewed without affecting police services. In order to maintain confidentiality, each respondent was assigned a number, with their corresponding names attached to a different list, kept separate from the interview information. It was necessary to keep a list of names of the women until data analysis was complete, in case there was a need to clarify a respondent's answer. Contact information was kept until a preliminary report of my study was mailed to each officer in October of 2004.

Prior to the beginning of the interview, I went over the informed consent form and requested respondents to sign it before the interview (see Appendix B). Furthermore, I assured the participants that any experience I found to be "too specific," as it could divulge the identity of an officer, would **not** be included in my quotations nor in my examples. The interviews were captured using an audio

recording device for later transcription. Officers were given the option of stopping the recording at any time, in order to relay something to me that they did not want recorded or transcribed. At the end of each interview, I wrote for myself a summary of strong themes brought forth by the officer (field notes of sorts), and how the interview went and any new and interesting points that emerged during the dialogue with the women.

In total, 25 female officers of the Winnipeg Police Service were interviewed between July 31<sup>st</sup> and December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2003. The in-person interviews each took an average of 1.5 hours to complete (with a range of one to just over two hours). The transcription phase of my study lasted from January to mid-April, 2004.

## **THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

In order to facilitate the discussion of female officers' experiences in the service, I used a semi-structured questionnaire (see Appendix C) listing topics related to female officers' experiences. In order to allow for flow from one question to another, I divided the interview into sections pertaining to their subject. Below is a brief description of the sections and why I thought they were important to discuss with the women.

**Section 1: Demographics** - These demographic questions were used to situate the women in their present stage in life and career.

**Section 2: Early Policing History** - I was curious as to how the women became interested in policing, who encouraged or discouraged them, as well as early training

experiences. This allowed the women to start their stories from the beginning of their careers as female recruits.

**Section 3: Goals / Dedication / Perceptions of Work Environment** - This section explores the satisfaction the women find at work, dedication to their work, and advancement goals.

**Section 4: Support Attainment & Mentoring Question** - These questions explore whether women feel they have support resources, and whether they believe that a mentoring program is beneficial to the female officers of the WPS.

**Section 5: Perceptions of Current Female Population within the Force** - These questions were used to understand how women perceive their current numbers, and whether or not they think it is a good or bad idea to increase the number of female officers on the force.

**Section 6: Gender Differences in Policing** - Literature suggests that men and women police differently. These questions explore whether the women think policing practices are different between genders, and if so, how it affects the sense of group cohesion between women and men.

**Section 7: Double Day - Family Life and Work** - Family life comes into play with the questions in this section. These questions explored how police work and family life are balanced. The women were also asked if they had some idea of how to alleviate some of the stress involved in this balancing act.

**Section 8: Group Cohesion** - Group cohesion is a very important part of feeling like one belongs to the whole group. This cohesion is often built by engaging in

activities with group members outside the work environment. Due to women's domestic role and responsibilities in the household, some are unable to bond in this particular way with the rest of the group. This section examined the perceived importance of extra-curricular bonding activities to the women, and what difference it may make in their workplace.

**Section 9: Personal Goals** - When personal goals, such as marriage, social life or creating and maintaining a family are interrupted or challenged by work, personal satisfaction is challenged not only in personal home-life, but at work as well. This section explored the women's future goals and whether they believe they are attainable or especially challenging given their chosen career path.

**Section 10: Final Question** - This question is important, in that I may have left out a crucial question or topic that the officer feels requires attention. This section allows the participant to relate topics regarding women in policing that I missed and which she thinks is important to note or to elaborate upon. I also gave the women the chance to call or e-mail me at home in case they thought of something after the interview they wished to discuss or have me ask their female peers about.

By using the semi-structured questionnaire as a tool to discuss female officers' experiences, the women were able to express their views and their stories and add to my research by raising issues that were important to them, such as the perceptions of camaraderie between the women on the force. As I mentioned, I asked the officers to think of questions they would like answered by their colleagues, which I also included in the interview. In some cases, I phoned the officers to ask

them the questions suggested by their colleagues, as I had already had the interview with them previous to when the questions were presented to me.

## **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

At the end of the interview, I asked the officers to fill out a short close-ended questionnaire on some elements of workplace satisfaction (See Appendix D). This questionnaire was used to supplement the information given during the interview session. As I had already explored the women's specific experiences on many topics related to their policing lives through the interview, I wanted also to obtain a general view of their satisfaction on the force. The questionnaire asked general questions on women's satisfaction with their job in general, hours of work, salary, cohesion, work assignment, stress level, and home-life versus work balance.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Questionnaire Analysis**

Given that case study methods allows the researcher to use both qualitative and quantitative methods (Gillham, 2000), I decided to incorporate both methods in my study. The short questionnaire, given to the female officers at the end of the interview, dealt mostly with general measures of job satisfaction in the female officer's workplace. Along with the data obtained from the demographics section of the face-to-face interviews, the questionnaire data was entered into SPSS, a statistical program. Once data from all the interviews were entered into the program, I was able to generate frequencies and cross-tabulations on information the women

had provided. For instance, the statistical data allowed me to compare the general job satisfaction of women who were mothers or of mothers who found it difficult to balance work and life demands. I was then able to compare these short-answers to the individual narratives obtained during the interview session. I decided to integrate the information obtained from the statistics into the main body of my analysis, rather than having a separate chapter just focussing on numbers. I consider the face-to-face interviews to be the most important part of my analysis (given the richness of the women's stories), but having some numerical statistics available allowed me to compare and contrast the data provided by the questionnaire to the rich narratives of the women's experiences.

### **Interview Analysis**

I transcribed the long tape-recorded interviews and printed them out so that I could work from the print-outs. The cassettes were subsequently destroyed. Each interview took an average of four hours to transcribe. I transcribed the women's words accurately, rather than verbatim. This allowed me to omit their "ums" and "ah's" while still capturing the women's stories. According to Kirby and McKenna (1989: 130), the general analytic design consists of how data items and groupings of data generate specific and general patterns. This is done by constantly comparing the data until sections that help describe something can be identified together (Kirby and McKenna, 1989: 130). I filtered through the transcriptions numerous times, performing content analyses and each time attaching codes to text segments and categorizing what the women were expressing. I noted similarities and differences

in opinions. From the categories, themes began to emerge from the women's stories. In doing qualitative analysis, researchers are constantly moving back and forth between data concepts and individual ideas and research explanations in order to fully describe and explain what is being researched (Kirby and McKenna, 1989: 129). Themes that guided my research began to emerge, and I again went through each transcript searching for evidence in the women's narratives of how they perceived certain dynamics of their workplace. Kirby and McKenna (1989: 129) state that particular attention must be paid to the social context which people (in this case, female officers) exist, since that is their reality. While reading the women's narratives, I made a note of similarities but also of differences in thought, where they existed. The process of filtering through the interviews and categorizing responses, themes, differences and similarities of experiences was tackled by keeping in mind the women's position on the force as being one of a female minority in a male-dominant occupation and culture.

Once the bulk of the data analysis was complete, a preliminary summary report was sent to participants in October of 2004. Yin (1984: 137-39) suggests that to add to the overall validity of the study, a draft of the case study should be reviewed by the participants. This may help in corroborating the essential facts and evidence presented in the reporting. It would have been ideal to again meet and sit down with each of the 25 officers who participated in the interview and go over the themes that emerged from their experiences, but given their very busy schedules and the time it took for me to schedule a meeting with them the first time, this was not a viable option. I chose, instead, to send them all a preliminary report of the work.



This report allowed me to share my preliminary findings with the women, and gave them the opportunity, if they so wished, to contact me either to elaborate, question or comment on the work done up to that point. Four women commented on the report and the comments were all positive. One woman simply said, "Good job on the report!" One woman commented that the report was long but informative and interesting. Another female officer emailed, "I finally took the time to read your report. I was very impressed and interested . . . and I'm glad you took the interest since I know any of this sort of research would be very outdated and it's been some time since any research has been done!" Another was very pleased with the report and shared it with her partner (also a police officer) and said it was "a real eye opener for him." Although I had hoped to hear from more officers, I know how busy they are and was happy to get some feedback. A final copy of the finished thesis will be shared with the Winnipeg Police Service's Women's Network. It is my hope that the thesis will be available to not only the participants of the study, but to all the women on the force who are interested in learning about their female colleagues' experiences in their male-dominated workplace.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

While preparing for my meetings with the female officers, I was aware of the fact that some of them may share experiences with me that are of a sensitive and private nature. Therefore, I wanted to be sure that I met the women in a private location, where the women could talk freely. It was arranged that I would have access to an unused meeting room where interested officers could meet with me, as it was close

to the Public Safety Building. I conducted interviews there when it was convenient for the officers. In other cases, for some officers who did not work close to downtown, I went to their detachments and found a quiet place within the buildings to conduct the interview. I also went to officers' homes at their request, as it was more convenient for them if I interviewed them at home. I did not conduct any interviews in public places, as I wanted my participants to be comfortable in a private setting and I wanted to be sure I could use my recording device effectively without ambient noise.

During the course of my study, it was very important to ensure confidentiality. Confidentiality means that the researcher is able to identify the responses of a respondent, especially in face-to-face interviews, but the researcher is committed to not revealing the information about their respondents publicly (Del Baso and Lewis, 1997: 163). Fowler (1995: 30), explains that protecting confidentiality includes: minimizing use of names or easy identifiers; dissociating identifiers from survey responses; keeping forms in locked files; keeping others away from completed data; and properly disposing of survey instruments. In my particular study, I did not want any of the officers to be linked with detailed experiences that could only have happened to them specifically, thus potentially giving away their identity.

The necessity for confidentiality was emphasized when two officers expressed concern that should their interviews somehow be heard by other officers or their superiors, it could ruin their chances at promotion. They feared that any comments not favourable to the police service would reflect poorly on the officer,

should their identity somehow be leaked. One officer mentioned that she knew of female colleagues who were interested in participating in my study but were hesitant to divulge personal experiences for fear of being chastised by male peers. I assured the women that I am using the information to complete my master's thesis, *not* for any study being conducted by the Service. I explained that the Winnipeg Police Service will eventually get a copy of my finished thesis, but that they would never be able to identify the officers from their quotations. I explained that only I would ever hear the recordings or be able to identify who the participants are and their specific stories, and the measures I have taken to ensure nothing is linked. Thus, I explained confidentiality with each participant and obtained written consent and had them keep a copy of the form outlining their rights as participants and my promise to keep things confidential. My contact information was on the form as well, should they decide to withdraw from the study before its completion. A simple verbal promise is not enough to convince some participants of ensured confidentiality.<sup>2</sup>

The women's concerns made me aware that some women feel they work in a volatile workplace where it is a "*dog eat dog*" world and "*if you open up a can of worms you will lose.*" I wanted my participants to be comfortable and rest assured knowing that their information will never be misused. However, their concerns did

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Reaser, Hartsock and Hoehn (1975) and Zdep and Rhodes (1977) found that participants were more likely to admit undesirable behaviour when mechanisms for preserving confidentiality were clear and had written assurances that confidentiality would be maintained (Reaser, Hartsock and Hoen (1975) and Zdep and Rhodes (1977) cited in Kimmel, 1988: 95). Other studies by Esposito, Agard and Rosnow (1984, cited in Kimmel, 1988: 96) found that written assurances to participants that their responses would be kept confidential substantially reduced the likelihood of response distortion due to socially desirable responding.

illustrate their perceptions about the competitive nature and/or chilly climate of their work environment.

Confidentiality is also needed to preserve the quality of the data collected (Kimmel, 1988: 91). I was initially worried that officers expressing concerns with confidentiality would be guarded or hesitant in telling me their experiences. I found most of the officers to be very open and willing to share their experiences, even referring to serious cases of harassment quite candidly. I told each participant that at any time she may turn off the recording device, and some did, in order to share something embarrassing or personal that had happened to them on the job that they did not want quoted for the thesis. I did not include any of these privately relayed experiences in my reporting.

At times I felt the women's experiences were too specific to quote in the body of my analysis. I feared that since there are few women on the force, a particularly detailed incident could be linked to a specific officer. Although the officers did *not* say I should *not* use their specific incidents, I felt that I could be compromising my assurance of confidentiality if I did. In this respect, I did find that some very good specific examples of harassment and gender discrimination had to be suppressed for fear that I could be identifying the officer in some way.

Also, when the women referred to a specific division they worked in, or to names of other officers or superiors, or of their family members and friends, I removed them from the transcribed text. I went as far as removing specific identifiers of officers' children as male or female, replacing the "she" or "he" with

“my child” instead, when I have used them in a quotation in my analysis. I have been sensitive to the fact that the Winnipeg Police Service would be receiving a copy of my thesis once completed, and I do not want to give any indication as to who may have participated in my study. Therefore, I have relayed experiences that were general enough to illustrate the expressions of the women, without giving away the identities of any.

## CONCLUSION

By using a case study approach, I was able to use multiple methods to explore female officers' experiences in their male-dominated work environment. For my study, I used qualitative face-to-face interviewing, a short quantitative questionnaire, as well as sources of documentation from the WPS. To obtain an in-depth understanding of female officers in their environment, I found the most valuable method was talking to them in person about their personal realities and perceptions of their workplace. By talking to them face-to-face, they were able to describe their experiences in greater breadth and depth than I could have anticipated by using my short-questionnaire or even my semi-structured interview.

Confidentiality was indeed crucial to successfully obtaining female officers to participate in the study. By assuring the participants that their identities will not be divulged and the means I took to act against this, the women were able to speak to me in a relaxed manner, without the fear of being recognized or reprimanded. Since I was a student learning from them in order to complete my thesis, they were

not threatened as I feel they would have been had I been employed by the WPS, for instance. I believe that the women were able to relay their experiences and perceptions without worrying much about censoring their own words.

Although the argument is made that case studies are not generalizable to the greater population, given that they deal with very specific instances of each participant in this particular group, I have no doubt that some of the themes that emerged from the women's experiences can be appreciated by many. Themes such as the struggle to juggle family and work, the challenge of striking a camaraderie with peers and feeling accepted, the desire to be all that you can be at work and still be a great mother or partner, the desire to get ahead in the world without negatively affecting family-life, and the need to be respected in an environment that has been resistant to women since its inception will be explored in the following chapters.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE JUGGLING ACT**

Balancing family life and work is experienced differently for men and women. Women are still the primary care givers in the home and often experience strain between the responsibilities and goals they have at work and the needs of their family and domestic life. Home-life challenges women's goals at work regarding advancement and promotion, while work-life affects a woman's second shift in the home where she is trying to catch up to her family's needs as well as her own. Oftentimes, women's struggle has led them to choose between their own goals or the needs of their family.

Policing is a male-dominated culture where female officers perceive a difference in the way men and women on the force cope with family and work responsibilities. In conducting the interviews with the female officers, it became evident that their lives have become a juggling act between their long work hours and irregular shifts and often demanding family obligations. Some women feel they must sacrifice their satisfaction in both areas in order to cope more so than their male peers.

The consequences of balancing demands of home and work affects women in various ways. When it comes to promotional opportunities, many women find it difficult to pull away from their domestic roles in order to accomplish their goals at work. They sense that their roles in the home are more demanding than those of their male peers who are more able to find the time necessary to study and prepare for

promotional opportunities. In addition to these differences, some female officers have also expressed challenges as to 'when' to have a child and often experience resentment and isolation from their peers before and after their return from maternity leave. The women question whether having a child is truly a "free choice" for female officers or a choice that must be strategically calculated so as to not disrupt the workplace.

This chapter will use the women's words in order to portray their experiences and perceptions when it comes to family and work balance (or imbalance), how family affects women's promotional opportunities and how maternity leave is experienced before and after a woman's return to work. First, I will describe the participants of my study in relation to their work, family and personal settings. This will aid in understanding the women's situations and the experiences they share.

## **FEMALE OFFICERS' BIOGRAPHIES**

In my interviews with 25 female officers of the Winnipeg Police Service, I found that understanding female officer's work, familial and personal backgrounds became an important backdrop to appreciating their experiences and stories. Participants included women who were fairly new to policing and also women who had been working as officers for a long time. At the time of the interview, the officers had worked an average of 10.4 years in the WPS. I interviewed women who ranged from one year to just over twenty years on the force, allowing me to capture a wide range of experiences and workplace perceptions.



There are many duties involved in police work and policing can be performed in the field and also behind the scenes. Women were able to reflect on their experiences with various jobs they have held within the police service. Nine officers (36%) classified their job as a desk job; fourteen (56%) did NOT classify their job as a desk job; two officers (8%) classified their jobs as both a desk job and “not” a desk job. Thirteen officers (52%) classified themselves as being on general patrol; others were working in “other” assignments. Nineteen officers (76%) reported they were of the rank of ‘constable’ at the time of the interview. Thirteen women (52%) had university undergraduate degrees and an additional 8 women (32%) had some university experience.

Questions pertaining to marital and familial status situate women in their home lives, which helps to understand how they balance work and home. Fifteen female officers (60%) reported they were married or in a common-law relationship at the time of the interview. Of these 15 women, 11 had partners/husbands who were also police officers. Ten women (40%) said they had children, and of these women they had an average of 2.3 children. The average age of the children combined was 9.8 years old, with a range from one year to just over twenty years old.

Although the women cited many different reasons why they decided to become police officers, it would seem that the majority had some kind of close proximity to police officers at various points in their lives, which helped plant the seed for the future. The average age of female officers when they started their policing career was 23.6 years old. At the start of their policing careers, the women

ranged in age from 18 to 32 years old. The top three reasons which peaked the women's interest in policing included; having family or friends who were officers (40%); having grown up seeing or looking up to police officers as role models (28%); and taking university courses had created an interest in policing (24%). Other reasons also mentioned, although to a lesser degree, were that their previous jobs were already work related to policing or justice; being active in sports and being a tomboy peaked their interest in policing; they were looking for diversity in the workplace and not a boring office job; and they simply tried out for a challenge.

In the next sections we will find that policing has indeed become a challenge to many female officers with family responsibilities. The women share their personal family and work experiences and stories of challenges in meeting their own needs as well as their family's.

## **JOB SATISFACTION AND FAMILY BALANCE**

During the course of my interviews with the women, they expressed their general satisfaction with their job as police officers. I also learned how their satisfaction is affected by their family-life. As indicated in the short questionnaire, most women are overall quite satisfied with their jobs, with 80 percent responding they were satisfied or very satisfied. Sixty percent of the women were satisfied or very satisfied with their salary, 64 percent were satisfied with the hours of work and 64 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the flexibility of the work schedule. Seventy-six percent of the women said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their present

work assignment. However, while answering “a, b, c or d” in a survey may show the *general* view of the women’s opinions, it does not show the “many shades of grey” actually experienced in their jobs and lives. While they are generally satisfied with their job, there exist areas where the women feel especially challenged due to being a minority in a male-dominated culture.

### **Family and Work**

There is a conflict between the demands of the job and demands of the home and social life, and this is felt by women in their roles as employee and home-maker. Brown (2004: 5-12) discusses the feeling of being stressed and time pressured, which has characterized much of our daily lives as the “time crunch” or “time bind.” The struggle for work and home-life balance can be conceptualized as the desire to balance work, family and leisure in ways that provide reasonable opportunities for individuals to participate in each of these life domains (Brown, 2004: 12). Given that many female officers work ten-hour rotating evening, night and day shifts, many find the time-crunch to be especially difficult. For instance, in the survey, 68 percent of the women said that their *job* sometimes or often affects their *home-life* negatively, and 24 percent of the women replied that their *home-life* negatively affected their *job* sometimes or very often. Overall, 32 percent of the women replied that they are handling the balance of home and work *very well*; 60 percent are handling the balancing act *well* and 8 percent are handling it only *fairly*.

One officer answered that she was very satisfied with her job in general, very satisfied with her hours of work and flexibility of the work schedule, but that she is somewhat unsatisfied with her present work assignment and that her job sometimes affects her home-life negatively due the long hours of her shift. Overall, however, she indicated that she is balancing home-life demands and work demands “well.”

I then looked at the transcripts of the interview with this officer and found out *how* she is dealing with her life. I also understand *why* it is that she claims to be content with the work hours and flexibility of her job, yet does not enjoy her present work assignment. I found her experiences resembled those reported by many officers who had children or various personal responsibilities. When I asked her how she is balancing her home-life responsibilities she replied:

*It's very extremely difficult. I have a young child. I sleep less than I used to. You have to be a multi-tasker and be very organized. As far as it comes to work, I am definitely not in the job I want to be in. I chose this particular job because of the hours I need as a parent. I work straight days and no shift work. And I don't have a sitter at night. I have a paid sitter that I take my child to. In that sense it's hard to find a person who is going to take my child at six in the morning and keep the child for 11 hours during the whole entire day. That's absolutely unheard of. And so I am very lucky when we have one, but I have to commute half an hour each day in the opposite direction to take my child to day-care, then to work after that. That's a struggle. I have to get up at four in the morning to come to work, work ten hours, then go to the gym to work out because you have to maintain your physical fitness, pick up my child and go home cook dinner and have her in bed for 8 p.m. for the next day. I do the cooking, cleaning, laundry and get up at 4 a.m. again. You run on three or four hours of sleep and that's extremely hard to do. And so I chose this assignment because it maintains me. I would rather be in general patrol. Even the hours aren't that bad but I have to think about my child.*

This officer indicated that she is not in the position she would like to be in because she has made concessions in order to find childcare. Luxton and Corman (2001: 50) found that women with major familial duties often forego job opportunities that require commuting long distances or irregular shift times that conflict with the domestic schedules of other family members. Although the officer would like to be in a position where she could apply for a posting she would like better, the hours conflict with her family's needs. Thus, her level of job satisfaction is compromised in order to accommodate her familial circumstances.

Although the above officer is married, she is the one who looks after the majority of childcare and household duties. Statistics Canada reports that in 2001, 23 percent of males did 15 hours a week or more of household work, while 45 percent of females reported doing 15 hours a week or more. Indeed, 43 percent of males reported doing less than 5 hours a week of household work, while only 24 percent of women reported doing less than 5 hours a week. Thus, the officer's experiences concur with the national pattern, which shows that women still do most of the household and child-rearing work compared to men.

The officer cited above also expressed the difficulty of finding a sitter who can take care of her child at night. Indeed, many female officers with children either had family members who could help them take care of their child during their long rotating shifts, or had to search high and low for a person who was willing to take the child one week in the daytime, another week in the evening and another week all night long. Given the odd shifts that the majority of officers have to work, at one

time or another they have had conflicts where the sitter was not able to take care of the child that night, and they were left struggling as to who would take their child at the last minute. Some officers do not have family members available to help support them in their childcare needs. Other officers with spouses on the police force mention that one option is to have the couple work on opposite rotating shifts in order for one of them to stay with the child. One of the problems that arises in this childcare situation is that the spouses themselves rarely interact with one another, adding to familial stress.

In 2004, Statistics Canada reported that 34 percent of women worked part-time in order to care for their child, compared to 3 percent of males. Not only does this show that women are still the primary care givers to children, it also shows that juggling for some women means cutting down on paid work. Women's responsibility for care-giving means that women's participation in the labour force has continued to be constrained in ways that men's is not, while men's participation in domestic labour is not as arduous and constraining as domestic labour experienced by women (Luxton and Corman, 2001: 49-50).

Many female officers I interviewed love their jobs, but sacrifice much in order to ease their personal lives. As another woman responded, *"I'm juggling, but I am not happy. It's tough. Even with my husband helping, I am still 'mum'."* Notice here that the officer says "even with my husband *helping*" – this suggests that she owns responsibility for the family and that her husband lends her a helping hand at times. Luxton and Corman (2001) argue that for most men the demands of paid

work are paramount, and the home is a place to rest and relax. Thus, women's capacity to take on paid work depends on their ability to make arrangements for their children and to accommodate their husband's schedule.

The fact that women perform the majority of household and child-rearing responsibilities is evident when a child or family member becomes ill. One suggestion that came up time and again with the officers was the need for family (sick or crisis) days. Although civilian staff in the WPS receive family sick days, police officers do not. An officer suggests:

*It would be nice if I had crisis days so that if my kids are sick, then people and women who are booking off sick to care for a sick child, they wouldn't have to do that. They would say I need a crisis day. They wouldn't have to burn their holiday time or their banked time to do that. We have the opportunity to work overtime and bank those hours, so that's kind of our little perk, but we still have to give up the time that we've earned to care for a sick child.*

Officers may bank overtime hours and use these in cases of family emergencies. However, some have called in sick, not because they themselves are ill, but because a child is ill and there is nobody but 'mum' to take care of them. The women reported that had they had family sick-days, they would not have called in sick. Phillips and Phillips (2000: 72) explain when family members are sick, women are much more likely to be expected to stay home to act as nurse and report in sick themselves so as not to lose wages when sick leave is available or to deflect employer criticism that the family comes before work. This in itself perpetuates a cycle where women statistically look like they are more sick than men on the job due

to the amount of sick leave they take (making employers believe that hiring women costs them more), when in actuality, many take sick-time in order to care for family, not for themselves.

Job-sharing is now possible at the Winnipeg Police Service. A job-share is a full-time position shared by two people with benefits and salary prorated (Hochschild, 2004: 325). This arrangement would mean that two constables would share one full-time position, giving them both part-time at work. This would allow some women to ease back into the work arena after maternity leave and also deal with difficult times in balancing home and work issues. Although this option is available for officers, according to the collective agreement it is up to the officer to find a person of the same rank who is willing to job-share, which may prove difficult. There is no pamphlet available for information on job-sharing and some women did not know this option existed, as they usually do not go through their collective agreement unless a problem arises. Furthermore, the job-sharing information is not listed in the main table of contents of the collective agreement, but in the back as a "Letter of Understanding" (WPS Collective Agreement 2000-2003) between the City of Winnipeg and the WPS. The women suggested that more clear-cut information be available to all officers regarding this option. Further recommendations regarding job-sharing are discussed in the Concluding chapter.



### **Family vs. Promotions**

Family life has also affected the ability of female officers to obtain promotions. In 2003, the WPS was composed of 1,074 men and 158 females. The number of female officers has risen from 1991, when there were only 55 women on the force. Along with the increased number of women in policing, women have also been promoted within the force.

Some women in the Winnipeg Police Service have been moving up the ranks, although these numbers are still fairly low when compared to men. As of 2003, there were 2 female and 16 male Inspectors (which means 1.3% of the women are Inspectors and 1.5% of men are Inspectors); there were 2 female and 79 male Sergeants (or 1.3% of the women are Sergeants compared to 7.4% of the men); and there were 10 female compared to 190 male Detective or Patrol Sergeants (or 6.3% of all women are Detective/Patrol Sergeants compared to 17.7% of men). In 2004, Superintendent Corrine Scott became the first woman to achieve the rank of Superintendent in the Winnipeg Police Service.

Women who have moved up the ranks have done so rather recently, and have had challenges along the way. Many of the women I interviewed have personal goals they wish to pursue within the WPS. Unfortunately, some of them find these goals unattainable or at least difficult to realize. Some of the women find that although they would like to be promoted to a certain position, they cannot do so. Many said that between child rearing, home-life responsibility and work, there is little time to take out the books to study for promotion and to prepare for interviews. When asked

how home affects the way women do their jobs, 30 percent of women with children say that it affected their job often or sometimes, compared to 20 percent of childless women, suggesting that women with children face even more challenges than child-free women. Those officers that *were* able to obtain a promotion agreed that it is not easy, and had they not had the support of extended family, parents and spouses to maintain the home-life while they prepared for a promotional opportunity, they would not have been able to apply. One officer shares her opinion:

*Do I want to put my family through that? The promotion process is incredibly time-consuming and draining. You basically tear yourself apart because the test ends up being the easy part and preparing for the interview is the tough part. So I mean, from a woman's perspective you think 'Gee, am I going to write this year?' because for the men it's rather simple, 'Honey I'm going to write, keep the kids away from me.' But the mom's always the primary care-giver, whether you like it or not, and the house still has to be cleaned and no one does it for you and the meals have to be cooked and you just have to learn to put one more thing on your plate.*

Another officer explains her experience while trying to write for a promotion:

*It was brutal. To study for that exam for a month and three weeks or a month to prepare for the oral presentation and it's just time consuming. Your family just gets put on hold and I'm not prepared to do that at this point. I sit and watch other people – men – they get their books, they stay here at work and study after hours because they know their wife is at home taking care of the kids and cleaning the house. My house is a mess. My partner doesn't clean the house, but that's a little thing in the big scheme of things. It's my kids. So yeah, if you're a guy and have a wife who is at home and will take care of the kids and you know they're being taken care of, then yeah, I do think it would be easier.*

These two officers reiterate the fact that spending more time than their spouses and male peers on running a household has challenged them in ways they do not see in their male co-workers' experiences. The gendered division of labour in the home charges women with 'different' duties which, in the end, often takes more time than the duties often performed by men. For example, in Mattingly and Bianchi's study (2003: 1002) of gendered divisions of labour, they found that men did not have the same difficulties balancing work and family because their households demands were quite often less intrusive and more limited. Men's household work included mowing the lawn and house repairs, which tended to be more sporadic and able to schedule. Women's work tended to be more arduous, less flexible and more likely to be interrupted, such as cooking, cleaning and laundry, which are more constant and repetitive. Although I did not ask the women outright how many more hours they spent on domestic work than their partners, the women with children often relayed that they indeed did the majority of the work in the home and that the children depended more on mothers than fathers.

Women who have children were much more likely to express difficulty in balancing home and work, to the point where they are unable to compete for promotion because, as the officer above illustrated, "*your family just gets put on hold*" and the household becomes disorderly without the constant attention from the female-head-of-household. Of the 10 women who had children in my study, 90 percent state the job sometimes or often affects home-life negatively, compared to 53 percent of childless female officers. Thus, women's personal lives are affected

to a much greater extent by work than work is affected by the women's personal lives. So, in order for women to succeed at work, they must calculate how their work goals will affect their family, especially when considering promotion, since for a period of time the main care-giver will be out of commission in the home.

While some women with children expressed how their goals at work have had to be put on hold or were very difficult to obtain because of the balancing act of family and work, other officers without children felt they have sacrificed having children to obtain those goals. One female officer explains:

*I want to have a family. I want to have a couple of kids. You put things on hold. You're out of the loop for the year, and I intend on taking the whole year. I've always wanted to have children and this job makes having that very scary. I thought I would be fine having kids after five years after I started working here. Now I am here and there's more positions open and I want to apply for them. And I don't want to tell everybody that, 'Yes I want to,' because now I have a good opportunity, but if I get in and get pregnant and take a year off then I lose that time and piss a bunch of people off. And then I think, 'What if don't get pregnant when I want to?' I've screwed myself. It's a little scary.*

It seems that with the women who do not have children and who mentioned that they would like to have children, there is much confusion as to when is the best time to have children and still have the ability to be true to their career-related goals. Canadian women are having their children later in life than a decade ago. The majority now choose to put their careers and education ahead of motherhood (Rabson, 2005). In 2003, 47 percent of Canadian babies were born to women age thirty and over, up from 39.6 percent a decade earlier (Rabson, 2005). Unfortunately,

for other officers, they feel they must decide between policing or motherhood. In either case, it is one or the other that is sacrificed. Another officer describes:

*Having kids has come into conflict. Now I'm \*\* years old and we still talk about having a child. I wanted to get into the \*\*\*\* unit. I knew that it's a . . . commitment and you can't go into it and get pregnant. You plan around that, well before or after. It costs a lot of money to train the person . . . When applying for that job, you need to know for sure that you won't be having kids. I know people are managing a home and families and this job together. I really like my job so I don't know if I am prepared to give it up and I don't know if I could do a good job at both.*

Phillips and Phillips (2000:72) explain that to minimize cost and maximize benefits, employers will prefer to hire someone who can be expected to stay in that position for a period of time and hence repay the costs of training that person. Workers who may not be able to devote the time and effort needed to stay with the job for an extended period of time are not considered as they become an expense to the employer. Knowing that by applying for the job, getting it and becoming pregnant she would feel resentment from her unit, the officer above decided to forego applying for the position she desired.

In performing the 'maternity calculation' some female officers feel they have missed out on their opportunity at motherhood due to their job. Luxton and Corman (2001: 143) explain that the pressures of coping with paid work and domestic labour affect women's decisions about whether to have children and how many they can have and still be able to work. The officer in the above quotation is not sure if she can be both a good mother and a good officer, which echoes the notion that women

should decide between one or the other – mother or worker – because both personas demand a lot of attention in order to feel successful in either. Although women are showing an interest in obtaining positions higher on the totem pole than ever before, some female officers have expressed that it is difficult on their families and on themselves when trying to obtain a promotion or to get into their desired units. Other women have obtained better, more interesting positions for themselves – but at the cost of the family-life they always wanted.

### **Maternity**

Women are a minority on the force. The women in my study said that this factor affects the way maternity issues are dealt with, since their experiences are not the experiences of the majority. Women who were thinking of becoming pregnant were confused as to maternity leave policies and procedures. Female officers who had become pregnant describe the experience as “*confusing and stressful*” because of the lack of information and also because of how the information was disseminated or explained. According to officers, the police service is still dealing with maternity ‘glitches’ (such as what happens when a woman is due for her rank increase and on maternity leave at the same time). Although decades have passed since women have entered the service, confusion still abounds. In many instances, dealing with pregnant police officers is so new that when unforeseen circumstances arise, precedents have to be set. For example, officers have had trouble understanding the protocol for a woman who is due for her Police Officers Physical Aptitude Test in

order to receive her rank increase, but who are also pregnant and may not be able to take the test.

Many female officers who have had children or who have been contemplating having children are concerned about repercussions female officers may experience while away on maternity leave and upon their return to the service. What if they are unable to get into the same position they held before maternity leave? The Police Union's collective agreement (2000-2002: 42) states that on return from maternity leave, "the member shall be placed in a position comparable to and not less than the same wages as her position prior to her commencement of maternity leave . . .". Therefore, the officer is not guaranteed the same position she held when she left to have a child. Upon her return she is placed where there is a position opening. Furthermore, what happens to an officer's status while on maternity leave? To what extent are her previous accomplishments forgotten because she is "out of the loop" for a year? An officer explains how she felt while she was on maternity leave:

*You become 'not a police person' as soon as you get pregnant or on leave. You're taking my gun away because you don't want it stored in my locker for a year, which is fine, but then you stick me for nine months in personnel where I am an over-paid secretary, and then I'm off for a year and then you put me wherever you want? It's an eye opener.*

This officer expresses her frustration that she feels useless and 'not a police person' for the time just before and after maternity leave. While pregnant, officers on patrol are put in office jobs where the life of the mother and child are out of potential harm. However, this officer reports feeling listless during a time where she

could accomplish more than just 'pushing paper.' Cohn (2000: 132) explains that working in a male-dominated profession often pushes females into situations where their talents and energies are grossly under-used and women are put into jobs that are unproductive by their very nature. He goes on to say that some women are forced into occupations where they cannot show their skills and use them for future endeavours. Such is the case for some female officers while they are pregnant and for a period of time when they come off maternity leave and are put wherever the service can use them. Indeed, some women have opted to come off maternity leave early in order to be able to choose where they would like to go (during transfer times in the Spring), rather than being at the mercy of the personnel office.

Some officers reported a change in the way their peers treat them once they have returned from maternity leave. Another officer relays her experience when she returned from having her child:

*There's such a stigma when you come back from maternity leave. I lost most of my friend co-workers when I came back. I was gone for a year and now you're totally looked at differently. You're not a policewoman, you're a mom. I wasn't invited to parties anymore. I wasn't part of the shift anymore when I came back, it totally turned around.*

Once again the female officer is made to feel that she must choose between being a mother or being an officer by her peers. The nurturing persona of "mother" is opposite to the male model of being a tough authoritative police officer. Interruptions to women's careers constitute a major barrier to female equality in the workplace. As the two officers above indicate, taking time off to have children



makes the woman feel she has to start from the bottom again on re-entry into the workforce. At times, having a child has held back a women's rank increase or job-training or opportunities central to productivity and promotion. Maternity leave provides some protection around the birth date of the child, but what do employers do after when the need is great (Phillips and Phillips, 2000: 199)? Female officers are at their employer's mercy and feel they need to re-establish who they are and what they have accomplished in order to be remembered again for promotion or when desired positions become available.

The resentment some women experience when pregnant is sometimes blatantly expressed by peers and superiors. The women relayed instances where they had heard superiors and other co-workers put-down officers who had become pregnant. When a police officer became pregnant, her shift was "*down one man.*" This caused much resentment toward not only that particular female officer on the shift, but to all officers who could become pregnant. Even the fact that the shift uses the expressions "*down one man*" and losing "*man-power*" indicates the absurdity of an officer being pregnant, since all officers *should be* masculine enough not to get themselves into that predicament. Positions left open by pregnant officers are only now being filled while the women are on leave or on light duties. This change has occurred a little too late, because feelings of resentment toward pregnant officers has already been internalized and is difficult to change. An officer shares her views:

*If women want to have babies they have a right to have them. We just don't have support or a voice. Guys think that we will be one less man on the shift. When women get pregnant they are*

*taken off their shift and put into another division, so their space is not filled wherever they left. So guys couldn't take time off because there were already two women short. Now they changed that and if they have extra man-power around they try to fill those shifts. This only started happening this year. There's a lot of resentment towards pregnant women, though.*

This officer explains that women who get pregnant are seen as a disappointment and a burden to their shift. Although, ultimately, women have the choice to have a family or not, their choices are greatly influenced by those around them. People living in families are under pressure to make the best of their circumstances by reconciling their individual interests with the collective obligations of family life (Luxton and Corman, 2001: 52). Employers reap no benefits from their workers' children; their upbringing makes no contribution to the employer's capital (Luxton and Corman, 2001: 52). So, most employers have no incentive to make special provisions for their employees who are pregnant, nursing sick or elderly family members or in any way involved with family care-giving. It is solely the worker's responsibility to provide for a family in addition to work responsibilities. Work by no means encourages or rewards caring for a family or becoming pregnant.

Another officer brings up the point that there needs to be a balance between having children and also maintaining the job one has worked hard in obtaining and that in doing so will aid in retaining the female officers already on the force. This officer suggests:

*Improve the maternity leave, because the way it stands right now, it's not bad, but when you leave there's no guarantee you'll go back to the same position. And so, there's a lot of people that are struggling with it because it's either career first*

*or family first. And it would be nice if there was more of a balance, and that you don't lose your seniority or position if you left earlier to go on maternity leave. I think that's a major issue. You hear about officers who are due for their rank increases, and because they are on maternity leave, they didn't get it. Had they known that before they got pregnant they may have planned it better. So there's things like that, that should be changed, to encourage more women to apply and to keep the women that we do have from leaving for their families.*

Retaining the trained officers already on the force is important because time and money have been devoted to those officers and, perhaps more importantly, potentially good officers are being lost. The WPS provided statistics on the number of officers who have quit the force recently for reasons other than retirement. Although officers are not required to explain their reasons for leaving, statistics show that from 1999 to 2004 the percentage of women leaving the WPS was greater than the percentage of men leaving the Service. Female officers represent a total of 14 percent of all officers on the force, but women represented 28 percent of the police officers who have left the force in the last 6 years. Although reasons are not known as to why these women left the WPS, the officer quoted above makes a valid point in saying that the service should not be losing its female officers because of poor policies and difficulties regarding maternity leave and returning to work.

To Summarize, there are many challenges faced by women on maternity leave: there is no guarantee that officers will go back to the same job position as before; officers are given the perception by peers and superiors that they must choose between being devoted to either their policing career or family; officers may or may not get their rank increase while on maternity leave; and the need to calculate when

to have a child and get pregnant is critical. In this light, women's decision to have a child is not a "free," but for many is burdened with concerns of possibly affecting work-relations and peers as well as advancing in the future. Many women with children agreed that the perception they received from their co-workers was that of *"do you want to be a mom or a police officer?"* One woman argues, *"Well, why can't I have a career in addition to being a great mom?"* She mentions that *"It's really difficult for some people to understand that women could be here and be contributing members to this police organization and still be mothers and care for their children."* Women are still the 'cog' in the family wheel. Waring (1988: 246) explains that protection of women's reproductive function is one of the primary motives behind much protective legislation for women, and the pregnant worker does indeed present a special case. She insists that it is essential that the temporary circumstances of pregnancy be treated as temporary. The reactions of employers has too often been to treat all women as if they are all pregnant all the time. This reaction, in effect, segregates some women into positions they do not like, and blocks them from positions they desire.

I asked to see what information was available for female officers who are pregnant and for those who may be thinking about it in the future. I was provided with two-and-a-half typed pages outlining who to notify and when regarding maternity leave. I was also able to obtain The Winnipeg Police Association's Collective Agreement to see what had been written about maternity leave. I compared this information to online maternity pamphlets for police officers in the

United Kingdom and found that the information provided by the WPS indeed lacked many important details. The written information given to pregnant officers should also include in the same section a description of job-sharing upon return. Along with benefits, pension payments and percentage of top-up pay, information should be included (as they have been in other police departments in the United Kingdom) that explains: what happens should an officer become ill during pregnancy; what happens to maternity leave in cases of multiple births; what must be handed back to the service before an officer leaves for maternity leave (firearm, etc.); how to maintain formal contact with the department while on maternity leave to ensure the officer is up to date when she returns; what is done regarding uniform and clothing for an expectant officer; what happens to maternity leave in cases of still-births or death of a baby; and how are promotions or rank increases dealt with while on maternity leave. Officers suggested more written information should be available for all women to *"pick up without asking for it"* at any time (such as a brochure or booklet) which describes not only detailed procedures before maternity leave, but also what is expected upon her return from maternity leave.

## CONCLUSION

It is more likely that women modify their career objectives and choices because of a combination of socialization, role-conflict and organizational and professional realities than from truly free choice (DeLaat, 1999:7). Women will not have the freedom to choose when they will have their families until their employers choose

not to penalize them for having children. Moreover, while women remain the main caretaker of the family unit, they will always be challenged in ways their male colleagues are not, regarding promotion and goal achievement. In light of this, some female officers carefully calculate when and if they can have children. Their peers and superiors have given them the perception that they must choose to be a good mother *or* a good police officer. Because both roles are demanding, peers feel that success and loyalty can only be devoted to one or the other. Nonetheless, there are female officers who believe that it is possible to balance work and family demands, albeit with some difficulty. These women believe that they have a lot to offer to both realms and indeed feel they can succeed in light of the challenges they face.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **IN COMPETITION: FEMALE OFFICERS' CAMARADERIE**

Being a female minority in a male culture does not automatically mean that the few women on the force will band together and form a close group of female friends. In fact, given that women only comprise 14 percent of police officers in the WPS, women do not get the opportunity to form friendships with many other women on the force as they are scattered into different divisions and different shifts. The majority of female officers interviewed are the token females on their shift and do not get the opportunity to work closely with many other females.

In a masculinized workplace such as policing, women find themselves pitted against one another for the scarcity of positions perceived to be open for only a certain quota of females. This perceived quota system, in effect, works against women, as they vie for jobs that only one woman will ultimately receive. Having both worked towards the same goal and being thwarted by their similarly oppressed peer, feelings of resentment may work against women's solidarity within the force.

The WPS Policewomen's Network has recently created a female recruit mentoring program, developed in order to help new recruits feel more welcome in a male-dominated workplace. Nonetheless, female officers debate whether a female-only mentoring program is helping or further hindering women from being fully accepted by their male peers.

This chapter will discuss women's camaraderie in light of their perceived competition for positions, the rather small proportion of female peers and what this

means for women's gatherings, as well as the debate over the female mentoring program and the solidarity that the Policewomen's Network hopes to achieve.

## ADVANCING – WOMEN COMPETING WITH WOMEN

The subject of promotions brought forth the perception that advancing in policing is challenged by female officers' minority status and depends on their competition with other women. Sutton (1996:3) writes that being a distinctive minority creates the potential for conflict or constraint in any situation. Being part of a small minority in such a cohesive group as the police is a further problem. For women in such an insistent masculine culture the problems are tripled. Women said things such as, *"A lot of times in advancing, it's who you know. You could work your butt off and it still wouldn't matter."* Although promotions are based on a point system, taking into account each officer's seniority, exam score and interview score, there are different perceptions about the promotion process. One officer said, *"There's a panel of people and they all score you differently. Each scores you to the way they feel. It's not like they can sit around and compare notes on it. And your exam score and your seniority really act on their own."* This officer's opinion did not seem to coincide with the majority of the women's opinions. Another officer mentions, *"Out of five spots, maybe one will be for a girl. If there are three qualified women, they will talk about the women and decide, instead of looking at their work. Maybe that happens a lot in other government jobs, but it's very apparent here."* Scarcity of positions for women has come to be effectively synonymous with competition among



women (Keller and Moglen, 1987; 34). One officer summarizes what the majority of others expressed when trying to apply for another position as well as in applying for promotion:

*If a female puts in to go somewhere, instead of just deciding based on qualifications, they say, 'Well, first of all, how many females do we already have? Because we don't want to have too many.' That's what it is. You never see them do that with the guys - 'Well just a minute, before we even get to whether this guy is a good guy, do we have too many men?' No. You never hear that with the men. You can never have too many men. And that's the first thing that happens, and I know I sound so cynical. But it seems that what they do is instead of looking at your qualifications, they look at you. And instead of looking at your qualifications and comparing which officer has done what, instead they go to the shift and they say, 'So, what do you guys think of so-and-so?' Well, since when is this a group decision? Just because the one that is the smartest and works the hardest and deserves to be there doesn't get- along with the strongest personality on the shift, and he or she says so, then all of the sudden you don't go? What the hell is that about? You know?*

Women are too often overlooked when it comes to promotion. The view, according to Waring (1988: 248), is that they do inferior work compared to men because of demands made on them by their domestic responsibilities. De Laat (1996:6) adds to this view by examining that one gender of co-workers may create an atmosphere or workplace dynamic that effectively excludes the other. She states that some men fear the entry of women into their profession will decline the prestige of the work and that they will need to clean up workplace behaviour or language.

Although all of the women I interviewed agreed that 'fast-tracking' women into higher positions is not the way to go, they also express the belief that although many women may be qualified for a promotion, there is an underlying perception that

only one woman would be accepted even if there are three or four openings. For instance, an officer explains, *"There is definitely the perception that if there are four positions open, don't expect four qualified women to get in there. Maybe one at the most."* Not only is that the perception, but due to the presumed competition for positions some women feel they are competing against the other women for the position, more so than the men. For instance, one officer explains, *"Not every section in specialty units are going to take a lot of women, so if one gets in, it's automatically, 'Oh, now I won't be able to get in until she gets out,' so then there's that awkwardness."* Another officer mentioned, *"When you get to a certain level that you can become promoted to various positions, that's when the competitiveness begins with the women."* Repeatedly, women expressed this perception about being in competition with the other female officers.

'Competition' is a Latin word for "*competitus*" which means "to strive together toward" (Longino and Miner, 1987: 2). This ideal of striving together toward a victorious end could be accomplished if everyone did their best and stimulated one another's excellence; however, given the scarcity of perceived opportunities open for female officers, competition often leads to jealousy and resentment. Time and again, women found that instead of working together with their female comrades to 'get somewhere,' they are working against them. An officer stated this opinion in plain words when she said, *"If you're putting in for robbery and homicide, you're not competing with the guys, you're competing with another female to get in there. It's very competitive."* Another officer adds that

when she finally received a promotion, *"I had very few women say 'way-to-go' on your promotion. I was surprised I didn't hear that from some of the women I had worked with in the past. I thought that they would say 'good for you.'"*

Miner (1987: 187) contends that women are conditioned to avoid external conflict and that they perceive a contradiction between personal achievement and collective success, especially when desirable positions are scarce for women. In effect, people move away from those who they feel have taken away their potential bid for success.

### **WOMEN'S ADVANCING VS. WOMEN'S CAMARADERIE**

Many female officers acknowledge that there is not as close a camaraderie among the women as they would hope. Instead, many describe the relationship between the general female police population to be *"catty and competitive"* due to the perceived lack of available positions for women on the force, as mentioned in the previous section. Due to the perceived male centred structure of advancement (only 'one' woman is needed in a department), women hinder one another's sense of camaraderie and promotional encouragement when they act against one another instead of supporting other women in obtaining their goals. The women almost unanimously agreed that *"it is important to have women in higher positions so that we have a voice"*; yet, there is still resentment when their comrades succeed in their goals due to the unofficial quota system at play.

There is a real danger in putting down a fellow-female officer's work, because as Miner (1987: 193) suggests, "... in doing so, we are drawing down a blind on all our work." She believes that women should "see each other's success as a promise of our own" (Miner, 1987: 193). Matsumoto (1987: 84) believes that an individual has a choice of how to compete in spite of what the structure of a competition might impose. Backstabbing and negative comments about other peers, especially female ones, are not constructive to women's advancement and women's solidarity.

Since the world outside policing is indeed competitive, it is no surprise that policing is no exception. The fact is that women seem to experience different, deeper and more painful forms of competition with one another than they do with their male peers. Despite the fact that some men make women the object of their daily workplace jokes, some female officers admit that, "*it is easier to get along with guys than it is with girls on the job.*" One officer reflects that:

*There are different cliques of women. Some of them are close and there is a camaraderie, and others are catty. But it's unnecessary, it really is. The cattiness is often perpetuated from a bad one time experience of another female officer. And all of the sudden this one female officer is pissed off at the one female and goes around talking about ALL females like that. And they perpetuate it and it's unnecessary. If you have a problem with one person, deal with that one person. You get one step ahead and they bring you ten steps back.*

There are other reasons for the perception of lack of female camaraderie within the WPS. Some women express that while male officers play hockey, go hunting, fishing, drinking and do many activities together, those types of activities are few and far between among the women. This may be because many women have

other responsibilities that may take them away from potential extra-curricular activities with their co-workers as a group. Mattingly and Bianchi (2003: 1004) state that women more often constrain their activities in order to be close to home; working mothers face a time-shortage more because their time in the home is limited by time doing paid work. Therefore, many find it difficult to set aside domestic tasks for leisure activity. In their study of "Gender Differences in the Quantity and Quality of Free Time," Mattingly and Bianchi (2003: 1017-1024) found that being married negatively affects women's free time more than men's. Married men experience about the same amount of quality and free time as single men. Married women have less free time than single women and even less so when they have children. Although 68 percent of the women interviewed expressed that it is very important to have a strong level of cohesion with their co-workers as a whole (and the remaining 32 percent replied that it was somewhat important), some women specifically mentioned in their interview that there is strong need for women to do things with other women. When I asked the women if there are any activities they do as a group, one responded:

*It's mostly the guys. I don't even know of any 'just girls' functions other than the yearly golf tournament. That's the only thing that we do. The guys on the days off go fishing, or hunting, or go to someone's cabin for a couple of days. And for a girl, you are invited, but more as a tag-along or you don't even get asked to go fishing or whatever. I think there should be a girl thing where we should just get together for the weekend and do something. But it's harder to get women to do stuff like that. With the guys, it's like, 'Yeah, let's go!' With women it's harder to do that for just a day, because of women*

*with families. Those that have no other responsibilities, it may be easier.*

Thus, this female officer reiterates Mattingly and Bianchi's findings, that women with other responsibilities such as family and children are often not able to add more leisure time into their already busy schedules. On the other hand, for men, their leisure time is not greatly affected if there is a female partner at home taking care of the household responsibilities while he is out.

Encouraging camaraderie and solidarity among the female officers has been promoted by members of the WPS, including Chief Jack Ewatski. Recently the Winnipeg Police Service created a Policewomen's Network, the goal of which is to facilitate the growth of women in policing and to "create a permanent entity that will identify and deal with issues specific to female officers, including recruitment, mentoring, retention and promotion" (WPS Statistical Reports, 2003:8). The Policewomen's Network has held conferences for female officers in 2003 and 2004, including various guest speakers. Although the Network was put together as a form of peer support for its female members, some officers feel that their male peers see this as encouraging preferential treatment for females. Some women mentioned that when they did get together for events, such as the policewomen's conference, they would be teased by the male officers who were not invited to the conference. A female officer explains:

*Just a few months ago we had a women's conference. All the women on the job were told they didn't have to work that day, they could come to the conference, although the men still had to work. And I tell ya, on my shift I sure had to hear it. They said,*

*'Yeah all the men are going to organize something and you're gonna have to stay and work, and we're going to take off for beers and do this and that.' Although you know, I think the women's conference was great. I don't mean that we shouldn't have it, it's just that things like that, that we are singling women out and making them go to special women's meetings. Quite understandably, that's going to cause a rift with some of the guys.*

Ross (1987: 209) explains her theory about why some men complain about women-only activities. She states that men have the entire world in which to roam and as soon as women label an event, a room or a publication, 'women only,' men scream 'discrimination' and feel left out. She adds, the 99.99 percent of the world that remains their province suddenly shrinks into the background, overwhelmed by the 0.01percent that has been declared closed to them. It is this declaration or defiance of authority that is so intolerable to men, more so than the women's only event (room or publication). Given the resentment faced by female officers by their male counterparts when they engage in female-only events, would the female officers attend if more women-only activities were planned? One officer believes that:

*Women are afraid to gather because they are going to be ostracised by the men for having gathered. The golf thing...men ask why they can't play. Do you want to come with us and hear us talk about our kids? The women are very reluctant to do anything within this organization and you won't get a very good turnout because the young girls are scared of getting singled out. They are so afraid of not being accepted.*

The officer in the above quotation suggests that when women come together they often talk about their other role as mothers, something that some women feel the need to contain when among the plethora of male officers, for fear that mothering does not fit into the everyday conversations of their male peers. Although the women have expressed that there is a need to strengthen the camaraderie between the female officers, the question still remains as to 'how' this can be done. One officer mentions, *"I think a lot of women just feel guilty because they are away for ten hours and they just think 'No they can't go. The kid has been alone with daddy the whole day.' I don't think guys have that same feeling. I think it's a mother-nature thing."*

In Smith's (2004: 388-391) article, "Men Don't Do This Sort of Thing" he discusses the idea that there is a strong ideological link between women, childcare and housework and that men believe they are not as proficient as women in this arena. Both men and women internalize the idea that women, who bear the children, are somehow more intuitive about their children's moods and needs than men are. The female officer in the above quotation shares the belief that some women do not allow themselves as much camaraderie time (as male officers) because fathers are not expected to take (as good) care of their children all day, and that mom has to come to the rescue. She also suggests it is rooted in nature. In this respect, fathers are then relieved of their 'babysitting duties' and free to pursue leisure activities without having to worry about the quality of care the children are receiving while he is not with them.



One option to encourage camaraderie among female officers might be to have activities that can incorporate women and their children, so as to not take away from the time women have with their family. Even so, would women still be teased by their male co-workers because they feel women are getting “*special treatment*”?

One woman argues:

*Who cares what the men are going to think. They'll talk about anything anyway. Even this woman's retreat – we had all the guys laugh. They say it's a lesbian thing. To be part of a woman's support thing is to be looked down upon. But if you've had a few years on, you have to have a thick skin and say, 'Whatever, I'm a part of this and that's it.'*

This officer believes that no matter what activity the women are involved in as a group, some men will always have something unfavourable to say. Miller (cited in Oakley, 1981: 40) states that dominant groups (male officers) see anything questioning the ‘norm’ as threatening; activities by subordinates are perceived with alarm. She adds that members of dominant groups are convinced that the way things are is right and good, not only for them but for subordinates as well. The officer in the above quotation expressed that to be part of female-only activities is negatively ascribed by some male peers to be part of a “*lesbian thing*” – where men are left out and where women presumably get together to ‘man-bash.’ In actuality, women-only activities are called for so female officers may meet other women on the force they would not otherwise meet on a daily basis; to build networks among the women themselves; to discuss matters identifiable to women (such as maternity, child-care, women’s uniforms, women’s accomplishments, etc.); and to ultimately foster a sense

of solidarity and camaraderie among the female officers, which is difficult to do in a male-dominated workplace.

## **MENTORING**

The issue of creating a support system and a closer camaraderie between the women may be helped with the recent implementation of a mentoring program. Mentoring is “the process in which one person is taught, guided, or coached by a higher ranking and more influential individual in order to learn from his or her skills, knowledge or expertise” (Hale, 1996: 426). In the mentoring program organized by the new WPS Policewomen’s Network, a female recruit is paired with a female officer of higher seniority. The mentoring program proved to be an interesting and sometimes heated topic among the women. Some female officers believe that their male peers see the mentoring program as women receiving ‘preferential treatment’ that the men do not receive. No doubt, in a male-dominated workplace such as policing, women may find themselves in situations where they may be the only woman on a shift, or where they lack the support of other females simply because they are not around or do not ‘click’ with them. The mentoring program matches a new recruit with a more senior female who may give advice or share her own workplace experiences. Because women are a minority on the force, they experience situations regarding harassment, maternity, family issues and balancing work and home differently than their male counterparts. In this respect, a more senior female would help shed light on these

issues and how she coped according to her own experience. A newer recruit who had been given a mentor mentions that:

*It felt weird because a lot of guys bugged us. Even the guys that I know, I told them about it and they said, 'Well, we don't get a mentor.' And I told them, 'Well, you guys don't need one.' So I was trying to explain it to them. And as soon as they hear that, they think it's just anti-male. I asked them, 'Do you want one?' and they said 'No,' and so I said 'Well, then just shut up!' They say that this job should be an equal one, and I explained to them too, that being a female and coming onto this job that is male dominated, some girls don't feel comfortable talking to guys about certain things because it's almost like a girl issue. So in that case, it's good to have a female to vent to sometimes. I think the mentoring is a good idea. I think a lot of girls are not used to working in a male-dominated place.*

DeLaat (1999: 11) explains that women have difficulty finding assistance in planning their professions and that men who are in senior positions are more likely to offer to mentor young men than young women. The female officers notice that the male officers in the department obtain informal networks of 'mentors,' or people they can bounce around ideas with or talk to over drinks after work. Delaat (1999: 11) explains that younger women may feel uncomfortable asking for mentoring from older men – and the men may be unwilling to offer mentoring because of the possible (sexual) connotations that might be placed on such relationships. Thus, young women are at a disadvantage of finding such mentoring relationships, which the Glass Ceiling Commission has determined to be critical to professional advancement (DeLaat, 1999: 11).

At times, a new female recruit is the only female in her locker-room on her shift. She may miss out on the planned activities and everyday discussions that the

men experience in their locker-room, which ultimately foster acceptance and camaraderie. Because some newer women do not yet have such informal networks, they are at a disadvantage. There are often few if any senior women that female officers' see on a daily basis who might be in a position to act as a mentor, but by matching up the two women an officer is given the opportunity. In this way new female recruits have the option, if they so choose, to obtain ideas from someone that may not already be available to them. This officer ponders whether the men would benefit from having formal mentors:

*I think it's a great program because some people need it. The guys? Well most people who get on the job know somebody on the job, and they've talked to them and approached them and talked about their experience. It wouldn't hurt to have that with the guys too. If we feel we need it, why not for the guys as well? There's more guys they can talk to amongst the class and in the department too, though.*

Some of the women believe that having the option available for men to have formal mentors as well would put less of a stigma on the women who are given the mentors in their training class. Another officer explains her views on mentoring:

*I'm not against the mentoring program, but I don't think it should be just for women – because I think we are taking a step back. Men have hockey, spongee, baseball . . . they have those outlets and go out more than women do. But you're almost taking a step back by singling out the women. If you are going to open up a mentoring program then do it for everyone, because I know some guys who that would have helped as well. It's harder for a male to ask for help than it would a female.*

Given that female officers already feel highly visible in the sea of male peers, some believe the mentoring program works to divide the women even more from the

mainstream of men, making it harder for women to be accepted into policing. This officer argues against mentoring when she states, *"What message is it feeding to men? That women need to be coddled, that they shouldn't be here because they can't take it. If they [women] can't take the academy they can't take the streets. Even if a guy never uses it [formal mentoring], at least it won't give that message that it's only for females."* By offering the program to both sexes, some women feel the strain of having a formal mentor would be relieved, even if men do not use the program because they already have informal mentors to choose from.

The topic of the mentoring program elicited debate among the women I interviewed. Women's responses to the mentoring program revealed that they were indeed divided on the topic. Of the 25 women interviewed, 14 of them had positive opinions regarding mentoring, some with the added caveat that although it is a good program it must be ensured that the mentors be *"good mentors,"* with good reputations and *"not just anybody."* Three women mentioned that it is a good program but needs much improvement. Six women were against the idea of a mentoring program, and two felt indifferent about the program. What were some of the women's concerns? As mentioned, some believe that the mentoring program is unfair because it is not presented to male recruits. Some believe that some mentors being chosen have a poor reputation and do not get along with other officers on the force, which in fact could hinder the new recruit far more than help her. Some women believe that the mentoring program is unnecessary, since they believe the women are just as capable of finding their own mentors eventually. Still, when asked

if mentoring would have been beneficial to them when they were a new recruit, 12 women said "Yes" (the mentoring program would have helped), and 11 said "No," (that the mentoring program would not have helped them as a recruit), and two were neutral or indifferent to the idea. Thus, the women seem split as to whether the mentoring program would have helped them as a new recruit, but 17 out of 25 are in favour of the mentoring program today.

The difficulty female officers have in accepting the possible aid of mentors is discussed by Niland (1996), who studied the impact of police culture on female officers in the Australian Federal Police. According to Niland (1996:8), the fact that the police persona includes the need to exercise power over others spills into the working relationships between the men and women. In fact, as Niland suggests, the use of power in an organization encourages fear and is exercised through either superior positions or superior numbers to intimidate, ridicule or belittle women officers. Niland argues that it is for this reason that female officers are reluctant to join women's networks. They are reluctant to support other women who rock the boat or make waves, and will resign rather than work part-time to cope with family responsibilities (Niland, 1996:8). Power in numbers comes down to having power over others.

For women's presence to grow stronger within the police service, more women need to enter into higher, more visible positions. Women have shown a desire to enter into these higher positions and are now just gaining the seniority to do so. Some female officers suggested that it may not only be new recruits who

should have the opportunity of obtaining a mentor. Some women expressed an interest in having a mentor available to them when they are preparing to apply for promotion. Some aspiring female officers would appreciate an accomplished female guide or mentor who can explain how they came to where they are now, and what the best approach may be for applying and preparing for interviews. In conjunction with this form of support, is the need to understand from someone first hand how they were able to cope and balance life as a woman and as a police officer with goals.

One officer suggests:

*We also need mentors in the mid-range. I'm at a range where I can start writing this year and there's so many of us who want the mentoring so we can get to different places and areas. To get into different areas, you need an established other officer to help us get established too.*

Cohn (2000: 103) believes that by a simple law of averages, some members of a minority are able to advance and use their clout to improve conditions for the rest of the minority group. The more women in higher positions, the more access women have to people who can ameliorate their situations and listen empathetically to their concerns, as most have been in the same boots. Mentoring transfers skills, knowledge and expertise between individuals. The lack of mentoring severely limits women minority's participation and achievement in organizations and the shortage of women in top-level positions makes this an even greater challenge (Hale, 1986: 426). When speaking about other female officers, one woman mentioned, "*There's 150 of them and I don't know half of them. And that's the thing. I don't see half of them. There's no real big camaraderie. There's no women's hockey team or sponge*

*hockey team. Women have other commitments. That's huge.*" Thus, although mentoring is a debated topic among the respondents, it seems that there is a need and a desire for a closer camaraderie between the women for support and networking benefits.

## CONCLUSION

With over one thousand males on the force and 150 females, it is no wonder that the women tend to feel isolated from one another at times. Officers expressed that at one time or another they were the only female on their shift and the only person in the women's locker-room while hearing the men plan activities together and increase their networks in the men's locker-room. Finding a sense of cohesiveness with other female officers may allow women to develop their own important networks; it may help them feel that they have support from co-workers and, most importantly, from other women who may understand that part of being a female officer is being a mother, a sister, daughter, girlfriend and wife. There is more to a female officer than her workplace role, these other roles and responsibilities may also affect her decisions at work. In order for women to realize a cohesive work force and find a true sense of belonging in a male-dominated workplace, women need to work together as a whole. While some women feel they are in competition with one another for scarce positions on the force, resentment only deteriorates the few successes achieved by some female officers. While it may take one woman a long time to realize her goals, working together may help obtain them with the knowledge



and support from fellow female officers. By working together, male-dominated workplaces will find that women too, are a force to be reckoned with.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SEXUALIZATION, CAMARADERIE and DISCRIMINATION**

Establishing a close camaraderie among women and men in a male-dominated workplace has its challenges. Scott (1996: 158) contends that gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power. These power relationships are perpetuated by use of derogatory language, discriminatory acts and sexual harassment directed at female officers by their male peers and superiors. Sexualizing female officers challenges their right to be fairly judged by their peers; it compromises their status and attempts at developing a meaningful camaraderie with their co-workers. Whether the harassment is blatant or quiet, done in private or in public, by peers or superiors, it creates a chilly climate for women. Treating women as sexual objects and discriminating against them helps to perpetuate a male culture where women stand in the periphery.

#### **SEXUALIZATION OF FEMALE OFFICERS**

Many female officers feel as though they are perceived as sexual objects before they are seen as officers by their male counterparts. Repeatedly, female officers referred to being labelled, joked about or teased in a derogatory way. In addition, the 'masculine language' used by males and females alike perpetuates the sense that females are outsiders and that policing is strictly a masculine endeavour.

The Winnipeg Police Association's Collective Agreement (2000-2002: Letter of Understanding No. 01-19) states that the Police Service shall be entitled to a respectful workplace and that it must be free of behaviours such as discrimination, disruptive workplace conflict and disrespectful behaviour. Disrespectful behaviour is defined as: rude comments, swearing and spreading rumours that damage reputations; actions that invade privacy, personal property or unwelcome gestures; and display or distribution of offensive printed or electronic material. Furthermore, harassment is described in the Collective Agreement as: verbal abuse; actions such as touching or pushing; comments such as jokes or name calling; displays such as posters and cartoons; or abuses of power such as threats or coercion. The Collective Agreement states that the *Manitoba Human Rights Code* prohibits harassment and discrimination related to the following characteristics: ancestry, race, ethnic or national origin, nationality, political belief, religion, family status, sex (including pregnancy), age, marital status, sexual orientation, source of income and physical or mental disability. The Collective Agreement sets out the process to be followed should the violation of a respectful workplace occur. The first step is to resolve the problem on your own by raising the issue with the other party and discussing it with them openly. The second step, should the first not be effective, is to report the issue to the officer's immediate supervisor. If the issue is still unresolved, the immediate supervisor shall report the incident to the Manager or designate who shall attempt to resolve the issue. Failure at this stage would allow the officer to file an official

grievance. Even with all these rules and procedures in place, harassment and disrespect still occur within the police service.

Miller (1986: 59) believes that our culture tends to 'objectify' people, that is, to treat people as if they were things and to treat women almost totally in this way. For female officers, being viewed and treated as sexual objects by peers supposedly sharing in a respectful professional workplace is particularly destructive. Not only is this deeply humiliating to female officers, it implies that all of one's own physical and sexual impulses and interests are presumed not to exist independently (Miller, 1986: 60). Women are seen first as "*a pretty girl*" or "*a slut-ass*" or "*hot-chick*" or "*tramp*" before they are seen as capable, intelligent and honourable officers. An officer explains instead that "*All the guys want to do is get you in bed.*" Fienman (1994:3-4) and Lemish (2004: 53) argue that the media and public have a dual perception of women: on the one side she is a 'madonna,' nurturing and loving; while on the other side of this dichotomy she is the 'whore' or tantalizing seductress available for male pleasure. Mackinnon (cited in Scott, 1996: 158) believes that "sexual objectification is the primary process of the subjection of women. It unites act with word, construction with expression, perception with enforcement, myth with reality." Some men will take the idea that females are sexual objects and treat women as those objects of desire before they give women a chance of putting forth a professional persona.

Sexual jokes, comments and language are the manifestations and expressions that female officers are sex objects. By treating them in this way, women are less

respected and therefore made inferior to their male counterparts. Miller (cited in Oakley, 1981:39) explains that the dominant group (male officers) has greatest influence in determining a culture's overall outlook, philosophy, morality and social theory. She adds that the dominant group legitimizes the unequal relationship and it then becomes 'normal' to treat women destructively and to derogate them. Identification with the dominant group allows men to continue their 'normal' pattern of subjugating female officers by treating them as sex objects. Men use sexual jokes to emphasise females' differences from their male counterparts. Debasing remarks and innuendo are employed to instill and heighten female officers' feelings of insecurity and vulnerability on the job (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 49). An officer shares, "*One girl told me that at a meeting this guy turns to her, a cop, and asks her, 'Are you a dyke? Do you eat box?' She said she was so sick of her shift she wants to get off it.*" Male officers have teased female officers and referred to them repeatedly as lesbians because they work in a male-dominated job and, in essence, 'do men's work.' Another officer remembers that years ago during her training period, she was told by a field trainer to load her shotgun "*like you are sticking your fingers up your girlfriend*" – yet another debasing sexual reference that women in policing must be lesbians if they are doing men's work. While this may have been funny to the male officers, it was degrading and intimidating to the female officer. By showing her displeasure at the comment, this officer later felt ostracized by her superiors and peers for not being a teamplayer and accepting the derogatory remark.

Many women commented that in order to be a successful female officer there is a need to have a "*thick skin*" and take the jokes and teasing that "*comes with the territory*" of working in a male culture. Levin (2001:126) explains that a direct result of men's sexual banter is to facilitate group solidarity among men to the exclusion of women. He adds that strong heterosexual joking is predicated on men being the sexual agents of jokes and females being the objects of those jokes. Women cannot participate in the same way as men in those jokes, as there would be nobody left to act as the objects. Women cannot play the same male game of sexually joking (about other females), as they themselves are a part of that minority group being objectified. Women often try not to be offended, but they do notice when they are being used as sexual objects. It is just that the majority of them are afraid to be pegged as 'not a team player' if they vocalize their opposition.

Habits of speech sustain male dominant attitudes over female officers. In fact, some women internalize these male speech patterns. Smith (1987: 86) explains that women become "alienated from their experience," which stems from the incongruence between how women experience, understand and "think" of their concrete world and the male-dominated concepts and terms that are imposed upon them. The quotations by the women in my study repeatedly point to the fact that their workplace is dictated by male-culture, even in their speech. For instance, females refer to themselves as "*I'm a good policeman,*" and "*a good-guy.*" The females use words such as "*down one man*" and having "*less man-power,*" when referring to pregnant female officers. When referring to male officers the women use

the word “*men*” or “*guys*” but when they refer to themselves, they do not use the word ‘woman’ or ‘gals’ (as in guys and gals) but the word ‘girl,’ repeatedly.

“The use of ‘girl’ in comparison to the use of ‘guy’ reflects a gender inequality in which males develop from ‘boys’ to ‘guys’ to ‘men,’ and in which females may (or may not) develop from ‘girls’ to ‘women’” (Remlinger, 2005: 123). In this sense, females have not yet developed, while their male colleagues are often in the process of evolving into more mature beings, ‘men.’ Remlinger (2005: 123) adds that certainly ‘boy’ and ‘boys’ are used, but not as frequently as ‘girl’ or ‘girls.’ Referring to women as ‘girls’ relegates them to a disempowered, diminutive, non-aggressive, less mature position. Women internalize male-cultural ideas that women are less authoritative or powerful by referring to themselves in child-like terms, as well as rendering themselves invisible when referring to themselves in male terms. Furthermore, there is no loss of prestige when females are referred to in male terms (‘you guys’ or ‘policemen’) but if you refer to a group as ‘gals’ or ‘women’— even if there is just one man in the group – it is considered wrong and insulting (Spender, 1985: 23).

In Spender’s (1985) book *Man Made Language*, she discusses how male culture has dictated speech patterns to favour males. She states that to be linked with ‘male’ is to be linked to a range of meanings which are positive and good; to be linked with females is to be linked to the absence of those qualities, to be negative and usually sexually debased (Spender, 1985: 23). One officer in my study noted:

*I am the only female on the shift and sometimes I find the language, not so much the swearing, just the "C" word gets used a lot. And everything they say has a female negative slant to it, like "bitch" and I say, why does it always have to have a female slant all the time? "Oh that was a 'whore' of a call." Why does it have to be 'whore?' If a girl goes in there and says to the guy, "do you mind?" They sit there and call you a bitch. If a guy says "stop doing that" it's okay though.*

This officer expresses what Spender suggests, that words identified as 'female' (i.e. bitch, whore) and even body parts are given negative connotations. Because women are confined to negative terms, women continue to be devalued. Spender (1985: 30) adds that some attempts have been made to modify sexist words but on their own these efforts are insufficient to reduce sexism in language. Words such as 'police officer,' 'chairperson,' 'flight attendant,' or 'fire-fighter' attempt to break away from the negative value which female words acquire by the creation of sex-neutral terms. However, while the male culture of policing has to consciously use these gender-neutral terms in order for this to occur, there is nobody to monitor the banter and joking of officers. Violent and sexually aggressive jokes that use women's words in a negative way facilitate identification of policing as a man's world. This increases the differences between the men and women, instead of allowing them to work together in close camaraderie and professionalism. Words help structure the world in which we live and thus perpetuate a world in which women are assigned a subordinate position when so many negative words carry a negative female slant.



### **CAMARADERIE WITH THE “BOY’S CLUB”**

Camaraderie with the boy’s club is complex yet necessary for female officers to succeed in their male-dominated workplace. There are many factors at play. Fitting in with male cultural norms may be difficult for some women, although they realize the importance of networking and the potential benefits promised should socializing be practised. Socially, women and men often have different tastes and interests, making connecting with co-workers outside the workplace difficult. Being aware of negative stereotyping that could be at play for women who do “go out for drinks with the guys” is also a concern while trying to form a connection with the group. Furthermore, being able to attend these socially important activities is difficult for many women with familial responsibilities and families. In all, many women feel the need to be part of the club – but the club is a ‘male club’ where one must tread carefully in order to be a member.

There has been an expressed need for female officers to establish closer camaraderie with other officers, but the need to fit into the sea of male officers has been a challenge since day one. Policing encompasses a “cult of masculinity” (Silvestri, 2004: 26) with which female officers must contend in their daily work lives. Policing embraces a sub-culture of its own, with its own norms and beliefs and ideals of strength, authority, danger, trust and brotherhood. Police departments recruit ‘like’ individuals who will ‘fit’ into their already established homogeneous group. Individuals are chosen on the basis that they could potentially do a good job

and work along with their fellow police comrades. Camaraderie is an important concept to understand in policing. An officer explains this when she says:

*I think it's being with people that understand what you do. Not a lot of people outside policing can understand that you need to unwind and vent about what happened at work that week, and it's usually done over a few drinks. I think it's very important in any job. You need to unwind and as a stress reliever. You need to leave work at work and go sit and talk about things other than work too, and get to know your staff.*

Martin (1980: 85-88) explains that there is the belief that “outsiders” do not understand the anxiety, stresses and challenges faced by police officers, making the “policing community” a group of unique individuals whose daily societal experiences differ from the world around them. These harsh experiences may create an “us against them” perception, where solidarity in the policing group becomes stronger due to similar unique and sometimes dangerous occurrences (Martin, 1980:85-88).

Female officers, being a visible cultural minority of their own on the force, are expected to somehow establish themselves into the ‘normal’ majority – that being the male police culture. If male dominance in policing creates a male culture, then so too should a minority of women on the force create a cultural minority with its own beliefs and interactions. However, because the numbers and power held by women (in higher positions) on the force are less, they not able to influence (and cannot compete with) the predominant male-culture. Rather, they feel the need to assimilate themselves into the dominant culture. One female officer explains:

*You have to be part of the boys club a little. You have to fit into this environment that we survive in. It's like survive or don't. If you don't want to be part of us, then you're not. So I think for women, they have to fit in to be part of the men.*

The actual words used by the women when referring to the police culture were “boy’s club,” “male-dominated workplace,” and even “macho work attitudes.” Cohn (2000:99) contends that when an outsider (female officer) with a distinctive culture or style comes into a work group (of all males) this threatens the interactional style of the incumbents. The men may wonder, “can we still discuss football scores?” “Can we still tell dirty jokes?” “Will she get us into trouble?” Kanter (cited in Cohn, 2000: 99) explains that majority members usually react to an outsider by “boundary heightening” or exaggerating the characteristics between the group in order to make the new members feel as different as possible. When women enter the workplace, sexual jokes and sports talk actually increase; derogatory comments are made publicly and loudly, all to test and observe how new members will react (Cohn, 2000: 99-100). If a woman plays along or is quiet, she demonstrates little opposition and actually accepts a subordinate position within the hierarchy. If she is vocal and opposes the comments, she may keep her self-respect but become an outsider (Cohn, 2000: 100).

Women have had to contend with the majority if they are going to work harmoniously with the dominant personalities on the force. When the women were asked in the short survey about their satisfaction with their present level of cohesion with their co-workers, 60 percent said they were satisfied, 24 percent reported they

were somewhat satisfied, 4 percent were indifferent, and 12 percent reported they were unsatisfied with their level of cohesion with co-workers. One particular officer who described herself as satisfied contradicted herself when she provided a fuller description of workplace cohesion in the interview:

*If you ask me about the people I work with, I'm not satisfied at all. There's too much arrogance, too much macho-ism and backstabbing. So yes, it's satisfying but I wish I could change how men and women deal with one another. I am sure it happens in hospitals and big organizations, but here, you're a woman in a male dominated field. You don't have someone who is on your side at all times, unless there's another female on your shift that can understand where you are coming from.*

Although this officer checked-off that she was 'satisfied' with workplace camaraderie in the short survey questionnaire, what she actually shows is that she 'accepts' her workplace camaraderie for what it is – macho and backstabbing – rather than being truly satisfied by it. She understands the problems that come with working in a male-dominated field and feels there is little she can do to change workplace dynamics between men and women.

Workplace camaraderie enables police members to enhance not only social relations but potentially attaining networks needed for future promotion. Strengthening camaraderie and solidarity with members is often done outside work hours. Whether these activities include participating in sports or sharing drinks at a bar, they foster relationships among police members, thus increasing solidarity. An officer describes her opinion of what it is to attend these extra-curricular activities:

*You need to know people and if people don't know you, you're nobody. You need someone to vouch for you and say that's a*

*good guy, because you went drinking with them. It's not just alcohol, but when they get to know you they trust you and know you're a competent girl as opposed to just a pretty girl.*

This officer hopes that by attending after-work activities she will be able to shed the first impression that she is a sexual object and that her peers will see her for her personality more so than her appearance. In fact, she mentions that she wants to be seen as “a good guy” or one of the group (of men) rather than being seen as a “pretty girl,” because pretty girls are not accepted as being good officers. According to the women, fostering trust and relationships with co-workers whose lives depend on one another is an important aspect of policing. Workplace camaraderie serves other purposes that work to the advantages of officers who frequent ‘after work’ activities. Networks are formed during informal gatherings and become a means by which other facets of one’s personality are revealed, even if work personalities do not mesh. By allowing another part of an officer’s personality to be seen, peers are able to evaluate personalities not only in a social aspect, but in the workplace for promotional opportunities. Making oneself visible to others is advantageous when promotional opportunities arise and one needs an already established officer to ‘put in a good word.’ This officer explains the importance of attending extra-curricular activities:

*To get anywhere here it's who you know. So if I don't know anybody and they forget who I am then they will take their friends or somebody who they know for positions later. It's important, but you don't have to go all the time, just show up once in a while sort of thing.*

Given that not everybody is interested in sports or drinking after hours, should an officer not attend these activities would it be detrimental to their standing within the group? Cohn (2000: 100) explains that having few friends at work is professionally debilitating. Most work is group-work and having friends provides networking, as information comes from people. By not being part of the group, officers are limiting themselves from valuable information and upward movement. The majority of women in the study agree that camaraderie with male officers is indeed an important part of police work if one is to be accepted, trusted and promoted to their desired position or posting.

*Oh yeah, I think it is good to socialize out of the office to talk about things and it's important on the side of things that that's how you may work yourself into other positions. I think there's a genuine importance to it, in that just to go out and kind of be with the people that you work with and that's how you become a close group and work together well. If you don't show up, and if you don't always go out and do that, you're cutting yourself out of the loop sometimes. So there's an important place on it, just by police officers in general. That's how you network and get yourself known in other positions. And that may be the case in other professions as well, too.*

Some officers describe the difference between those who make it a point of attending group activities as opposed to those who do not. For instance, one officer explains:

*Even here, I'm left out. I'm not in the changing room yapping with them before and after work. I'm not a hunter or a mechanic. There are sometimes when they talk when I just get up and walk out. See ya. I have no idea. I miss having a girl on the shift for that reason.*

Being able to fit-in creates an aura of acceptance and trust for the entire shift. One officer said that *"When you don't hang with the shift, they act differently with you."* Feeling part of the group creates greater satisfaction in the workplace and better working conditions than those who are solitary and introspective.

As in many workplaces, "shmoozing" or mingling with the group becomes an important way to climb the ladder, but for female officers there is a fine line between going out for drinks and being labelled as sexually promiscuous. In policing 'shmoozing' is done with mostly, if not all, by males. When women are invited to social outings, they may be the only female in the group and prone to male sexual jokes or teasing. When one female officer asked if she could go along with the male officers on their outing she said, *"Yeah, they said I could go with them – if I went topless."* While it may be detrimental to some women should they not attend extra-curricular activities (as it minimizes networking opportunities), it may also be detrimental if they do choose to go. For women who are the only females on their shift, female officers have explained the need for caution when going out with only male officers. An officer explains; *"I was the only girl on the shift so I never went out with the guys. Only if there's other girls on, because I didn't want to be pegged with sleeping around. There's just too much bull-shit."* Younger female recruits, who often feel the need to fit into the 'boy's club' due to their low rank and subsequent desire to be accepted by their peers, have been described by fellow female officers to be easy prey to rumours and poor reputations. As part of a male landscape, women stand out as sexual objects to the men. Men use sexual jokes

about women as a way to reinforce a highly gendered group solidarity (Levin, 2001: 125). A female officer describes the need to attend outings with the shift, but the need to be careful as a woman:

*When I first started it was important because you want to be one of the guys. Now I really could care less what anybody says about me. It's important for the younger people, and I think those young girls feel they have to do those things so they have to fit in with the guys. But even early on I made it a point not to drink in excess so you don't get labelled, because that comes very quickly with women. Guys can do it, but women can't.*

This officer explains that it is more crucial for new recruits to be wary of the labels that coincide with being sexually objectified on the job. While this officer has more seniority and feels less vulnerable than her more junior female peers (in that she has less to prove because she has already achieved a higher status than some male officers), she warns that junior officers are not as fortunate. They do not have a strong history to back them up. Female officers must be aware of their conduct while out with male peers, or face being negatively labelled by all. Thus, there is the desire for some female officers to feel part of the group and being part of the group involves social outings. Attending these social gatherings may increase networks within the group, but it may also work against a female officer depending on her demeanour while on these outings. Drinking with the men, especially if you are the only woman in a group, may cause rumours to spread, resulting in a less than favourable social standing within the group she wishes to belong.



Still, although most female officers feel the need to be involved with their shift outside working hours, many find it difficult to make time in their family schedules for socializing with their co-workers. As discussed in Chapter Three, women still have many family and household responsibilities and less leisure time than men, which limits potential interaction with peers. An officer with children explains: *"I couldn't drink my face off and then go pick up my kids. As a mummy you can't sleep all day. If you go out drinking and then you want to take care of the kids all day, what are you, crazy?"* The women noted a stark difference when it came to male officers with children being able to go out after work while female officers with children were limited by household responsibilities. For instance:

*Women don't always go. Or they may go maybe quickly and then leave, or you know, once in a while. Again, the guys have their wives at home taking care of kids and doing things. Guys don't care if there's dirty laundry all over the place. Who's worried about the dishes piled up on the counter? All those things are still very much concerns women have, as opposed to guys. And when you add that up to taking care of your kids and your work and making time just to go out after work, that's a full plate.*

As mentioned in Chapter Three, the roles of female officers are many and include being the primary care-giver and manager of household duties. Although men perform household duties, they are not as constant, repetitive and interrupted as women's reported housework (Mattingly and Bianchi, 2003: 1002). Further to this, women are the main childcare providers even when they have full-time jobs and even when fathers are around (Luxton and Corman, 2001: 49-5, Oakley, 1972: 152, Stebbins, 1988: 28-33, Phillis and Phillips, 2000: 48-49). Whereas much of

women's leisure time is spent in the home, men's leisure time is non-familial, in that it is often spent outside the home with friends, at games, playing sports or in taverns (Stebbins, 1988, 37). Therefore, female officers spend more time in the home taking care of their family and maintaining the home, as well as work irregular policing shifts. Most women are not as able to socialize with peers after work to increase camaraderie create networks as much as their male counterparts.

## **GENDER DISCRIMINATION**

Female officers shared stories of discriminatory acts that surprised and enlightened me on the difficulties women have had to face in a male dominated occupation. Discrimination and harassment sustain both male workplace power and male power to treat women as sexual objects (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 43). Sexism is the subordination of one sex, usually female, based on the assumed superiority of the other sex (Kendall et al, 2000:340). Sexism, according to Lott (cited in Kendall et al, 2000:340), contains three components: 1) negative attitudes toward women; 2) stereotypical beliefs that reinforce or justify the prejudice and 3) discriminatory acts that exclude, distance or keep women separate. When I applied this definition of sexism to the experiences of the female officers in my study, I found that many of their stories fit into these components, but also overlap one another. I learned that these acts were often exacerbated by some supervisory officers, who subsequently influenced co-workers. I further learned that the women dealt with these negative attitudes, stereotypical beliefs and discriminatory acts often by themselves. Female

officers who were new to policing as well as those who had been in the WPS for a number of years relayed that some things have changed, and explained how far they have come and that they still have a way to go before they feel equal in their male-dominated workplace.

### **Negative Attitudes, Stereotypes and Acts of Discrimination**

A large part of what makes female officers' experiences different is their 'visibility.' In a sea of men, it is easy for male officers to pick out the women and make them feel as if they are being watched simply because they are still considered an oddity. When a woman enters a male domain, she is considered deviant by her male counterparts – and since she is deviant she will be devalued, restricted and punished for it (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 43). Women become fair game for whatever abuses – verbal, physical or sexual – that male coworkers decide to dispense (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997:43). A woman in a predominantly male job will be watched and assessed as to whether she can do a job as good as the 'normal majority' – the men. A female officer mentioned, *"If you are going to screw up they [male officers] are going to first bring the attention that you're a female and then the issue, whereas lots of guys have done the same thing in the past."*

Female officers have described the phenomenon of *"being painted with the same brush,"* which is not conducive to eliminating gender stereotypes. Cohn (2000: 98-99) explains that visibility is favourable when you perform well, or a liability when you do not meet your target and everyone notices. White men (the majority)

have some control over their visibility as they can disappear into the woodwork when something goes awry. Women, on the other hand, are always on centre stage and if they fail it will be well known and impression management will be quite limited (Cohn, 2000: 98-99). One woman is not like all women, just as one man's actions are not like all other men. Yet, often when a woman has difficulty in an area, the difficulty is overemphasized and generalized to being a gender problem with ALL women. That women are a minority does not help the fact that they are watched more than the 'average Joe.' A female officer mentions that an area which causes her great discomfort due to her gender is in firearms. She explains:

*First of all, when I was in recruit class, we had a sergeant who just hated women and he yelled at us and scared the crap out of us. As you were holding a shot-gun, he would scream at you. The stress built up and built up and the guys at the firing range were just totally making fun of me, 'Yeah I told ya you couldn't shoot, you're a wimp . . .' Every time now I go for firearms, I just feel my guts are twisting. You're one female, and there might be four or five others of you and there's 20 guys and they're all watching you. So you go do the shot-gun and they just think it's a hoot because of how strong the shot-gun is and how it makes you bounce back. They think it's hilarious, so I am never comfortable with firearms. I hate to say it, but if it was all females, the stress wouldn't be there. It's just all the guys watching and they are just waiting for you to fail.*

Women expressed that the effects of being 'painted with the same brush' made their workplace difficult for them. If one woman makes a mistake, she is not the only person to feel the consequences. Other women felt them as well. If a woman fails at a task it becomes part of the workplace 'mythology' (Cohn, 2000: 102). Cohn (2000: 102) states that a woman's "under-performance provides support

for discriminatory workers who want to argue that women minorities are not qualified for high-status positions.” This, in effect, adds to workplace stress whereby women need to be perfect lest they ruin it for their female colleagues. The fact that the mistake of one puts pressure on all women is destructive in fostering positive workplace attitudes, especially among the women themselves, as it causes tension and resentment among female colleagues.

Sexist comments were heard not only from male co-workers, but in some instances the women said that it was the male supervisor in charge who discriminated against them. One woman identified how she was treated compared to how her male colleagues were treated by a certain superior at her first week of training:

*When the two male recruits talked to the superior he said, ‘Welcome aboard!’ When I was introduced to the superior he said, ‘You’re a waste of department’s money, you’re just gonna get married, we waste all the money training you and you’re probably going to leave this job because it’s not for you.’ I was told I was a waste of department’s money!*

In another interview, a female officer relayed a story when she had to call-in sick and received a derogatory comment from her superior taking the call: *“I phoned in sick one day and said I had strep throat, and he said, ‘You come down here and I’ll give you something to shove down your throat.’”* The officer went on to say that this happened years ago while she was a new recruit and still trying to fit into her workplace: *“I was only a year-and -a-half on. Do you think I was going to raise a stink? The old cops didn’t want females around and they felt they could just say*

*anything they wanted. Could you imagine what would happen if in this day and age he said that to me?"* Innuendo, insinuation and character assassination are fostered by male officers in maintaining social distance and boundaries between male in-groups and female out-groups (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 48). Furthermore, work-group solidarity is maintained when older males pass on their perceptions and sexist attitudes to younger male officers. Other female officers also mentioned recently experiencing negative attitudes and comments from superiors who told them plainly, *"We don't want broads here,"* or *"I don't like women, I don't think women belong in this job, I have no use for them."*

Still, other women mention that some supervisors seemed to want to protect the female officers instead of treating them as equally as their peers in the workplace. A female officer who has been on the force for many years mentioned:

*When I first started out I had a lot of senior sergeants who looked at me and saw their daughters, nieces or whoever. So there would be that almost desire to be protective of me. But by coddling me, it would bring the attention of the shift to me and make me that much of a target. So there were some very well-intentioned old men who wanted to protect, but it wasn't necessarily the best thing for me. But that was then.*

Workplace tension is created when superiors treat female officers differently from their male peers. Male superiors who deal with women in a guardian-like fashion only serve to decrease women's full inclusion as officers. In essence, such treatment fosters the notion that women are fragile and should be looked after. A younger officer relays:

*Sometimes the male bosses will be very sensitive to the point of going overboard with the whole, "you're a girl" thing. They'll assign a call to someone else or a two man team because they don't want to send a woman. They almost worry about women sometimes. Then there's the flip side where they think women can't handle certain types of calls. I usually tell them what I think and I go anyway.*

Because some supervisors or other male workers are protective of women in confrontations, female officers are perceived as less competent in doing work demanding physical strength (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 47) As long as such paternalism persists, women will be viewed as a liability rather than an equal worker. Another officer recalled that when she first started on the job, the supervisor would pull her aside to do special jobs in the office because she *"had the nicest penmanship."* This would cause resentment with the male officers on her shift, and subsequently caused discomfort and stress to the female officer. Another female officer reiterates this experience when she said, *"When you are the only woman on your shift it's the worst thing in your life because they expect you to do all the crap, and if you don't then they call you a bitch."* Time and again the women commented that superiors must treat the female officers with the same respect as they treat the males. Singling out duties that supposedly women "should be better at," for whatever stereotypical reason, works to increase the gender gap among employees, presenting the message that female officers cannot do police work. Thus, there are actions by supervisors which ultimately exclude women from full participation in the force.

This discriminatory exclusion is evident in the involvement of women in certain spheres of policing. One officer noted that, *"As soon as you start this job, they think women have their place; vice, youth division, and other than that – nope."*

There are certain areas of policing where women are lacking representation. At the time of the interview, one female officer reflected that:

*There are no women in major crimes. There's no women in homicide. There's no women in robbery division. There was a woman who was there for a while but she was just temporarily assigned. In robbery there was a temporary woman there, but not for lengthy periods of time. Those areas are very dominated by men and you see it. There are no permanent women in street gangs unit. In major investigations there's no women. There's women in sexual assault, and that's come a long way, but that whole sexual assault unit has evolved from the youth division, and the youth division used to be where women would go work.*

Main-streaming women into occupations deemed an extension of the home is not new with women in the workforce. Since women have moved into the labour force, they have been employed in a very narrow range of occupations that has changed negligibly throughout the past century (Phillips and Phillips, 2000: 52, 80). The majority of women continue to be employed in nursing, teaching, clerical, administrative support, personal service and trade occupations (Phillips and Phillips, 2000: 52, 194). The officer above notes that women are in the sexual assault unit due to the fact that it has evolved from the youth division – where women were channelled because of the unit's main dealings with youth and children. In fact, the majority of women in specialty units in the WPS work in the child abuse, sex crimes and child exploitation unit (now known as Investigative Services). Thirteen women



are located in this unit, whereas the Investigative Services unit (which oversees drugs, morals, organized crime, major crime and homicide) has only five women at present. Unfortunately, the statistics provided by the service did not specify how many men are occupied in these units nor if the five women work in morals, for instance, or if they actually work doing homicide investigations. The statistics do point out, however that the majority of women (60% to 70%) are located in uniformed general patrol.

Areas where women have little if no representation seem to be the areas that women want to be in the most. Areas that are viewed as prestigious (robbery and homicide) by police officers are areas commented as being populated by “old school” men who “won’t give the women the time of day.” These prestigious units are even more male-dominated and perceived as ‘off limits’ to women. These are units where maleness is seen as essential to getting work done properly, as it needs investigative intelligence, strength, brawn and authority to elicit answers from perpetrators. There is a feeling among female officers that they are not allowed in certain spheres of policing to the point where it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Areas known to be strictly a “boy’s club only” make some women feel as if it is a waste of time even trying to apply to those areas. A female officer explains:

*A couple of years ago I applied for \*\*\*\*\* but I was going to apply for robbery. And it’s typical that robbery is a male dominated unit, there have not been women in there for a long time. I went there and I asked if I applied would I be considered? And they said to me, ‘we don’t take broads here.’ Because for one, you’re not part of the team, two, they don’t think that you can be like the guys. It’s a boy’s club and I am so*

*sick and tired of the boy's club. It's so frustrating because this whole department is like that. I want to do specialty work because I am project oriented and I know how to get the bad guy. It takes a lot of work and will power but I can do it. But if you keep butting heads with people it makes you want to give up and not do it anymore.*

Officers described experiences that happened over a decade ago and recently as well. Some female officers have experienced less obvious acts of gender discrimination and others quite blatant, no matter what year they started policing or what rank they hold. As the officer above describes, even now there are strong barriers created by male staff affirming that women have their (women-friendly) place in policing. While some officers discussed that the “old school” men need to retire in order for women to be accepted into areas deemed a ‘male domain’ within the service, others have said that no matter what age the men are, they learn discrimination against women from their predecessors, thus perpetuating women’s inferiority. Some women hope that once the ‘old school cops’ have left the more prestigious units, that new progressive officers will make applying and being successful in ‘boy’s club’ units more possible. They hope that a new overtone will be created by more modern men who are interested in the contribution women can make in the predominantly male-dominated areas in the service. Nonetheless, sexism is not age specific and if predecessors influence their subordinates to discriminate against female officers, the cycle will not likely stop.

### Dealing with Discrimination

That women are not welcome in the more prestigious areas of policing is often affirmed by discriminatory comments received by co-workers and superiors. In a female officer's world, it is more tolerable to have problems with one or two male officers than to be ostracized by all. Having to transfer positions that they enjoyed or put up with acts that make them feel uncomfortable on a daily basis have been some of the things female officers have had to put up with. As unfair as it is, it seems many female officers interviewed would rather "*suck it up or transfer*," than open a can of worms that will potentially make their lives even less tolerable.

Whether these comments are in earnest or in jest, they create a "chilly climate" for female officers. One officer mentioned, "*There have been conversations about women, sexist if you will, that I wish I was not included in at times, but you go along with it anyways.*" Another officer explains, "*I mean, I can take a joke and sometimes it's funny, but at the same time I don't know a lot of offices where people make repeated comments about people's asses. But you have to take it because if you don't then they say you can't take a joke and are not a team player.*"

Conservative estimates suggest that approximately 40 percent of working women and 5 to 10 percent of males have experienced some form of sexual harassment at work (Thomann, et. al; 1994: 31). Research suggests that less than 5 percent of harassment victims report the incident (Thomann, et al, 1994: 31). Time and again female officers explained their difficulty in experiencing discriminatory or sexist acts

and not being able to discuss it with anyone for fear of being chastised or ostracised by co-workers.

Incidents of sexual harassment are significantly higher in male dominated occupations (Thomann et al, 1994: 31). Even though the population of women in policing has increased in the past two decades they still represent less than 15 percent of the national police force (Statistics Canada: 2000). Women mentioned that although they have to put up with sexist acts, they are also punished if they try to ameliorate their situation. When one officer complained to her superior about the difficulties she encountered with one male peer, her superior was less than sympathetic; *"He said, 'Well you can ruin your career by pursuing this, or you can keep your mouth shut.' If you open a can of worms, you will lose."* This superior did not help the officer in the slightest, but allowed her situation to continue until she transferred out of her position, even though it was a position she enjoyed and felt she was good at. When supervisors do not take the complaints of female officers seriously, they perpetuate their marginal position within the force by allowing discriminatory or harassing acts to continue. Another officer explained what she would do in a case where she was experiencing sexism: *"If it was really extreme I would maybe transfer or suck it up. Because if you don't suck it up, word gets out. That's the whole thing with playing good in the sandbox."* Therefore, many female officers find the need to conform to a set of norms set down by their male peers. In order to work in their male-dominated culture, women must not disrupt the way things are done, even if it is done against women themselves. Keeping the silence

prolongs the tolerance of sexism and discrimination in the workplace. Whether the discrimination is blatant or creeps up, women stay silent. Why? Simply put, if a female officer complains about a situation that has made her uncomfortable, she is thereafter labelled. One woman explains her experience in dealing with being harassed:

*I dealt with them on my own which was good. It's always better if you deal with it on your own. If you tell somebody else, it'll come out and you'll be labelled as a whiner or a 'Watch her. She can't be trusted.' Even though this shouldn't be going on, period.*

Pogrebin and Pool (1997: 51) affirm that women are reluctant to report harassment because they believe this complaint would make matters worse, actually increasing the risks of further or more serious harassment. This denies women's personal autonomy and subjugates them. Thus, in hopes of protecting their job security, female officers often accept and endure the harassment as part of the conditions of employment. Unfortunately, accepting things the way they are does not improve female officers' situation in the long-run regarding the dynamics between the women and men in the service.

## **THEN AND NOW**

Women in the Winnipeg Police Service have mentioned that they have come a long way as female officers in a male-dominated profession. While women still encounter difficulty in some areas with regard to discrimination, many senior female officers

mentioned that it is not as bad today as it was when they started policing. Twenty years ago, when there were far fewer female officers on the force than presently, resistance against women was even more blatant. A recent article on Corrine Scott, the first woman to rise to the ranks of Superintendent in the Winnipeg Police Service, mentions that Scott's "locker" was located in the janitorial closet on the fifth floor of Division 11 downtown. There were few facilities available for women at that time and the bosses who ran the department were less than welcoming (Sanders, 2004). To further illustrate this point, a senior officer reflects on when she was a young recruit:

*Guys can be quite cruel and cutting. They don't do that to me now because I have rank, so I have that ability to say 'No, you don't talk to me like that.' But when you are young and your shift calls you a slut ass . . . verbal abuse, constantly . . . sexual harassment, constantly. That we have evolved, that's a wonderful thing. 'Let's play a trick on the slut-ass because it's funny...' No, it's not. Stop it. As I matured and gained seniority, and ultimately with my rank, I noticed a huge difference.*

Although this officer believes that things are better now for her, this may be attributed to her higher rank, as she has many officers (both male and female) beneath her in the hierarchy. This is not to say that more junior officers do not experience discrimination and sexism. It is difficult for any "new guy," or the rookie on the force to try to fit in. It is even harder when that "new guy" is a woman trying to fit in. A newer recruit mentions that, "women have a hard time with this job because of dealing with harassment, and it goes on. I don't care how much people

*want to be in denial about that, it goes on.*" Thus, while some women have progressed and have had enough years in service to achieve rank and seniority over some men (and women) on the force, newer recruits still point to the fact that harassment exists. With few women being willing to complain about harassment and discrimination for fear of being chastised, sexism has gone 'underground' more now than it was years ago, according to senior officers' accounts. A senior officer mentions, *"A lot of women will tell you that they get treated equally, but that to me, is BS – it has been since day one. Now, people just watch what they say because they have to, because it's law."* This senior officer believes that things have not really changed with regards to how male co-workers and superiors perceive women, but that there are stronger sanctions if women complain about their unfair or unequal treatment now than decades ago when she first started policing. Most junior officers I interviewed, however, agreed that they would rather *"suck it up"* and put up with the abuse or transfer out of their division than go so far as to take legal action against their harasser(s). Therefore, although stronger sanctions are in place now than 20 years ago, few women are willing to take their case that far, as it is more detrimental to their reputation and career if they do. There are more women on the force today (even if they comprise only 14%) than 20 years ago, and in this respect the service is not as resistant to women in policing as it used to be. A younger officer reflects that;

*I think you have to have a thick skin. It's totally changed now. Guys are more receptive to girls coming in. I am sure it was quite harder for females getting on 15 years ago, but now*

*there's more females on the shift. It's a boys club and you have to be able to fit in. I just think you have to be open-minded that you are walking into a profession that is predominantly male.*

There is some perception that things have gotten better for women in policing, but some still believe that things have progressed at a very slow pace. One officer notes that strides have been taken only recently regarding technical issues of uniforms and equipment. The service has recently looked into obtaining guns, pants and holsters that will finally fit most women better. One officer comments:

*I do consider the fact that they have looked into the research and gotten this gun, I see that as finally a huge step in forward thinking. It used to be, well this is your gun, use it, and if you can't then you shouldn't be here. Well that's not true, maybe we need to change a couple of things. It's not the grip strength, it's ergonomics. We are not lifting someone through it that can't do it, we are giving them the equipment they need to get it done properly, and that's the difference. Three years ago we finally got ladies pants. THREE years ago or so. Well, they are still men's pants but extensively altered. Even our holsters. We are built differently than men. We are not as long in the torso, so our guns sit up higher, which makes it more difficult to draw your gun. On a man, his gun sits lower. Everything about it is different and it's about time we came up with that stuff.*

It seems that in the past, women were simply being "permitted" into the service, with no real action to accommodate their apparent differences. Something as important as an officer's gun and holster has been neglected for a long period of time. Literature reports that women were not as good at shooting as men were (Balkin, 1988: 23). Perhaps a factor in this could be that female officers had the wrong size equipment to do the job well. The officer above also mentioned that uniform pants, which one would say is a basic necessity to the job of policing, have



recently been improved for women as well. In these technical arenas, things are finally looking up.

## CONCLUSION

Senior female officers believe that discrimination and sexual harassment are still apparent but not as blatant as they were fifteen or twenty years ago. Their views are partly due to the fact that having higher seniority and higher rank lessens the amount of harassment encountered by more senior women. More junior officers believe that although they still experience sexism in various forms, it is part and parcel of working in a male dominant occupation and there is little they can do to change that without ruining their careers in the process. Even with stronger sanctions and legislation regarding women's discrimination and sexism, the women give little evidence that this is actually practised within the walls of the police service. Workplace harassment and discrimination are not only a result of women's vulnerability as tokens or as violators of occupational norms, but reflect as well the reinforced tendency of male co-workers to view women as primarily sexual objects (Pogrebin and Poole, 1997: 43). Men who get away with the unfair treatment of women will forever persevere, knowing that women would rather "suck it up or transfer" than be negatively labelled as someone the rest of the shift cannot trust. Furthermore, these negative role models pass on the perception to other recruits that it is a (male) culturally accepted norm that female officers are inferior to them.

## CHAPTER 6

### GENDERED MODES OF POLICING

Gender becomes a way of denoting 'cultural constructions' – the entirely social creation of ideas about appropriate roles for women and men. It is a way of referring to the exclusively social origins of the subjective identities of men and women. Gender is, in this definition, a social category imposed on a sexed body. (Scott, 1996: 156)

Martin (1980: 16) explains that all societies impose on the biological difference between men and women a set of cultural definitions of what it means to be male and female and establish different norms of behaviour for both. Policing has been described by the female officers in early policing studies, as well as women in my study, to be a 'boy's club' where the male role is dominant. Police officers are expected by peers and the public to portray 'male' traits. Some of these traits may be to show aggressiveness, demonstrate physical strength, command authority and fight when necessary. Female officers, on the other hand, have to go against the social norms prescribed for women to fit into the 'male' notion of what it means to be a police officer (Martin, 1980: 108). The women in my study explain what they believe to be a 'successful officer.' They perceive differences in policing styles between female officers and male officers while on the job. Some explain the ways in which a woman can 'act like a cop' and still be a woman. Others explain that they must minimize their learned femininity to belong. Society teaches girls from a very young age to be non-confrontational and frowns upon female aggressiveness and fighting – after all, such things are not 'lady-like.' Therefore, sex role norms for

women in policing become blurred. The feminine roles they grew up with are not the roles that are deemed 'appropriate' for policing. This incongruity subsequently affects the day-to-day interactions of women with their peers and the public and influences their ideas of what it means to be a successful officer.

### **FEMALE OFFICERS' PERCEPTIONS OF SUCCESS**

When I asked the women what their definition of a 'successful police officer' was, I found that the women's definitions of 'success' were similar with each other and, in particular, that a 'female officer' should portray these certain traits. The traits included being able to communicate, defuse potential violence, calm a volatile situation and act with compassion to both victims and accused persons. In other words, their definition of 'success' was also how they perceived their own policing methods. The majority of female officers interviewed perceived a difference in the way men and women police. A senior officer states:

*I think there's too much propaganda that this is a male job and that you have to be able to fight and be like a SWAT guy or be stupendous in martial arts or whatever. I think that still exists for some people. So I think they overestimate the fact that it's a dangerous place, because it's really not. But all the crime stats say that we are number one in murder, number one in crime, but you walk the streets everyday, how many times do you get accosted? I think the men should be more tolerant of people in general, particularly people who are down and out. Men need to shelve their macho image, they need to shelve their arrogance, because there's no place for it here. Like doing walk-throughs in the bars because you are going to get noticed by the women because you are in uniform, that kind of policing is a waste of my money as a tax payer, and it really doesn't get them dates. So they really need to shelve that macho image.*

This “*macho image*” was mentioned by numerous officers as a deterrent to being a successful officer. Miller (1998: 103) suggests that male officers are expected by peers and public to be aloof, suspicious, brave, objective, cynical, physically intimidating and users of force and brutality. Female officers, on the other hand are viewed as being less masterful and having a more submissive style: they are partial, subjective, gentle, conciliatory and focus on connecting with people (Miller, 1998: 103). All of these female traits, however, are in opposition to traditional definitions of policing, which is one of the reasons many people believe women are prevented from being real police officers. Nonetheless, as one female officer puts it, the police force needs “*an androgynous type of personality where you have a good blend of both male and female traits. Men need to develop their sensitivity to be able to see the other point of view.*” Across the board, the most important police trait mentioned by women in my study was the ability of an officer to communicate effectively.

*I think communication skills are by far your best tool. That supersedes physical fitness, etc. If you can communicate well with people, you will do well in this job. But you need to be able to communicate on two levels, communicating is speaking but also listening and quite often we don't do enough listening. I also think that men would think that the physical aspect of being a cop is more important and I tell you that over \*\* years I can count on just two hands how many times I have been in a brawl, not many, and not even have to include my toes...because if you can talk somebody out of a fight, you do. And I have been in fights because the macho guys are yapping their mouths when they should be listening. No. Communication is the key. All the other potential fights I could have been in were defused not because of my physical ability but my communication skills. If I only had ten fights, what did I do the rest of the time for \*\* years?*

The very traits deemed 'feminine' (i.e. to be able to use intuition to read people and communicate effectively) are those which women find breed success in a male-defined role such as policing. This, in effect, confuses the definition of being a successful traditional police officer based on authoritative brawn. Repeatedly, the female officers described experiences where they were able to defuse volatile situations without throwing any punches:

*I've enjoyed working more with the men who have an even temperament, who don't get angry as their first response. And that's more likely in men than it is in women, to be aggressive and to be dominant. And I don't necessarily think you need to be dominant to be in this job. It's actually funny because you'll deal with guys who are intoxicated, and when that dominant Alpha Male attitude comes towards them, they just react to it. And women will just walk in and try to calm things down.*

Many women explained that it was safer for them to calm a situation with their words than it was for them to provoke a fight. For instance, one officer mentions the importance of defusing fights and calming a situation given that her small frame challenges her in subduing someone physically larger than herself :

*I have to turn the guy around with my words and attitude because I don't have the size to get into his face. I do it verbally and get him to turn around my way. I may take three minutes longer but it works. We definitely police differently because we don't have the size to get into people's faces. I don't think that's a bad thing because if you get into the wrong person's face, the brawl is on and it's not worth it.*

I also asked women if they felt the public reacted to male and female police officers the same or differently. Some women explained that in dealing with the

public, female officers may receive many more sexually-directed insults than their male partners when arresting an accused person. Thus, women are not only sexualized in the workplace by peers (as discussed in Chapter Five), but by the public as well. One officer relates her worst incidents:

*I think the worst I have ever had was the sexual stuff, 'I'm going to fuck you up the ass,' Or 'I bet you blow your partner at every given moment...' It's constant. And you slam the brakes and hope their head hits the windshield. But realistically, it's that kind of stuff that you say, 'Geez if I was only a guy I wouldn't have to put up with this crap.'*

In other instances, female officers have had the opposite experience in dealing with accused people they are arresting. Martin (1980:93) explains that some male citizens adhere to a code of chivalry and this restrains them from hitting or cursing at a woman. To illustrate this point, one female officer in my study mentioned that:

*We had one guy who was just being a real dink, and we were bringing him into the station and he was kind of drunk, and as we are walking into the station, he's beakin' off about something and he turns around and he was just about to lace into me for something and then he goes, 'Oh....I didn't see you there' and from then on he was a perfect gentleman. He was on his best behaviour after that. He was swearing like a sailor and then it's like, 'pardon me ma'am, sorry ma'am.' It's funny, I just laugh.*

The socially-embedded code of chivalry, in some cases, prevented some accused males from starting fist fights with female officers, since it was “*not right*” to hit a woman and it would not make the man look any better or “*macho*” in front of the audience. This accords with the sex role stereotype which Martin (1980: 151)

discusses – that males put females into the category of “helpless maiden” while they take the counter-role of chivalrous knight. Thus, she states that female officers are viewed by some accused as the ‘whore’ who ‘blows her partner at any given moment’ and the ‘maiden’ or ‘lady’ who is polite and helpless and not a worthy fighting opponent.

Due to the small number of women on the force, female officers are highly visible to the public. Having two female police officers in a cruiser car is often rare, and those female officers who did experience this form of partnership found a difference than when being partnered with a male officer. One officer explained the difference of two female officers in dealing with the public.

*I think the public expects to see men. I think there's less of a threat when they see a female. The reputation over time is that you do a bad thing, cops are going to rough you up, that's the reputation. That's not what is prevalent now, but I think they are more relieved to see that at least there is one girl around. It's an overtone you create. If you go into a place stomping and screaming, either one of you are going to create fear and anger and anxiety. If you walk in aware but calm and comfortable and even having a laugh as you walk up, you're not really projecting a terrible image.*

This officer explains that when female officers walk into a situation, the overtone they create (thanks to socially-embedded beliefs of how a woman should act) may foster a less threatening aura than some male officers may portray walking into a situation. Some may argue, however, that this aura may be the stereotypical female trait of ‘lacking authority,’ which goes against the socially expected traits of a police officer’s role. Does this mean that women are not as effective in policing,

since they may portray less authority than male officers? Can they still do their job effectively? During the course of my interviewing, one female officer relayed an experience where an accused was resisting arrest. Both female officers pinned him down but he was withholding an arm, not wanting to be hand-cuffed. The officer simply pointed to her pepper spray and asked him, “*Do you want some of this?*” and out popped the arm. In another instance, when working with a female partner, a female officer explained how they were able to use reasoning and communication to manipulate a favourable response from those being arrested. She explains:

*I worked with a female as my partner for a year and I loved it. We worked well together, everything was smooth, there were no arguments, no driving like maniacs, everything was comfortable about it. I think that male accused realized that nothing bad was going to happen to them, they were getting arrested and by two women who were pretty easy going. The one or two times that it did happen, it was verbal judo, and I said ‘Okay, if you want to pick a fight with us, go right ahead but I’ve connection to a thousand people by this little radio on my shoulder and when I yell for help you can bet they are going to recognize it’s two girls here’ – and maybe I pulled the sexist card – ‘But you can pretty much guarantee that should I call for help, the response I get is not going to be very favourable for you.’ And he thought about that and I told him, ‘You can act like a gentleman or you can act like an ass, but if you act like an ass you’re not going to feel very good at the end of it.’*

The officer above plays on the public’s expectation that female officers are ‘maidens’ in need to be rescued when she states that should the accused not cooperate she will call upon her ‘knights-in-shining-armour’ to rescue her. In this manner, she used a stereotype in order to elicit a favourable response from the accused. Although she did not need to call for back-up, she threatens to call upon



her more 'rough and less forgiving' counterparts to subdue the accused if he resists being arrested by her and her 'easy going' partner. By using reason, psychology and wits, the female officers were able to subdue the accused without having a physical confrontation.

Some female officers in the study who had experience working with other female officers mentioned it was a positive experience. Most of the respondents (who had experience working with another female partner) felt that the most positive aspect of working with another female officer was that they normally do not instigate fights with the public as much as male partners. An officer explains:

*In a violent situation I think the guys would probably be different. The guys would rather fist-fight than just end it by spraying them. They revert back to their bar days or whatever and they think that the guy or girl they are fighting with will think they are less of a man because they use their weapons. That's my theory. You're a cop and you shouldn't be fighting with your fists. We all want to go home uninjured but they all want to fist-fight first.*

Female officers contend that being able to calm situations and reason with those involved was regarded as a great success. Some female officers mentioned that it is not the number of arrests or how many fights you are in that makes you a good officer. There are many more qualities and ways of measuring a successful officer. For example:

*Women look at the bigger picture and men are very 'arrest the criminals.' I mean I am very focussed in that too, but I also see that there are other ways, or reasons why we are here, not just to arrest the bad guys. We have to take care of kids, neighbourhoods and people and the old and the weak. I think they measure success by their arrests. When you become*

*experienced you are not so focussed on the work. You are learning how to deal with things and you don't have to arrest somebody to deal with an issue. Then a lot of things you deal with are neighbour disputes, just petty things that people can't get beyond. You won't know how many fights have been defused, etc.*

The female officers expressed that policing involves more than just brawn. To be successful is to be able to connect with people as well. Although the media portray policing as minute-to-minute high speed chases, shoot outs and one arrest after another, the fact is that much of policing has to deal with victims' calls in the aftermath of a crime. Being able to communicate effectively by listening, talking and sympathizing is often important during such calls. Admittedly, there were two women out of the 25 interviewed who mentioned that they were not too comfortable physically touching anyone, even victims, but that did not stop them from communicating and listening respectfully. One of these officers mentioned a partner she worked with and said *"She could talk to people . . . she was probably more of a hands on, put your arm around them consoling person . . . I can't do that. I can listen to people but I can't do that. Maybe because I don't have kids, I'm not as sympathetic. But she could really sympathize with people and sometimes it worked."*

That is not to say that every female officer has the same sensitivity, just as some male officers may show more sympathy than some others. The bottom line is that the female officers in the study agreed that you need not be 'touchy-feely' to show sympathy and respect. Listening and communicating can have the same effect and be constructive for all involved.

Given that men and women are socially different and can offer different perspectives in a situation, some officers feel that having a male and female team of partners offers a good balance in policing effectively. This officer suggests:

*I think there's always going to be a handful of people that are going to think that policing is about throwing down the sledgehammer or the law, sort of thing, but more often than not I think they would prefer to have male and female paired together because at some level, maybe even at an unconscious level, people respect that and see it as comforting and easier to deal with and if you would rather deal with a woman or a man, you have that option.*

Other officers mentioned that the elderly, female victims and children are more comfortable in talking to a female officer, rather than their male partner.

*When you are dealing with children and sometimes with female victims, you find yourself being less of a cop and more of a social worker type. Sometimes men can't be as, I guess, sensitive in that way. So it's a benefit to be a female, to be able to bond with somebody that has gone through something very traumatic.*

The officers discussed being able to see more into people's situations more often than their male counterparts. Smith states that given women's unique position in society, they are able to see the world from two points of view. For instance, Smith (1974: 10) writes that women experience a "bifurcation of consciousness" which on the one side they are subject to the thoughts and actions and beliefs of the world constructed by men and on the other, she is situated in "concrete practical activities in keeping things clean, managing somehow the house and household and the children in which the particularities of persons in their full organic immediacy

(cleaning up the vomit, changing diapers, as well as feeding) are inescapable.”

Thus, women experience a double vision where they attempt to meld the dominant knowledge (made by men) and the lived experiences of their everyday lives. This unique perspective holds the potential for a more complete picture of what is going on.

Having a choice of interacting with either the male or female officer not only makes the people involved more comfortable (i.e. victims or even accused), but allows for the officers to elicit actions and responses from the public in a more holistic manner, given that one or the other officer may understand their point of view.

Catching the “*bad guy*,” although described as exciting and a “*rush*” for some of the women interviewed, is only one dimension of police work. Being able to connect with victims and make them feel at ease not only defines personal success, but also leaves people with a more favourable view of the police department. Officers often mentioned that because most women are raised in society to act more compassionately, most female officers are able to relay compassion to people they come into contact with. One particular officer notes:

*We are naturally all trained to do things a certain way and there's certain information that you have to get on a call, there's certain procedure policies that you have to follow. In terms of that kind of stuff we are very much the same that way. But when you talk about the way we talk to people in general, there are some differences. I think women are more prone to actually talk to somebody and listen and discuss. Not necessarily talk like a police officer. You're more inclined to share your feelings about something about what their kid is doing and stuff like that. Whereas sometimes a male goes in, gets things and gets out,*

*kinda thing. You know, he's not willing to sit down. You don't get a lot of guys who will sit down and take someone's hand and calm them down. I think that's one of the differences that men and women have.*

This officer explains that being compassionate is opposite of what is defined as being a traditional police officer. Some women are able to use compassion to elicit favourable responses from those they arrest, but to also defuse potentially violent situations by communicating with victims. Although not all women are the same when it comes to degrees of sensitivity, many found that they were able to show authority but also use their 'feminine side' to get the job done.

## **FEMININITY**

A large factor in what prevents female officers from having full participation in their male-dominated workplace is the construction of femininity as everything opposite to men, and therefore inferior (Miller, 1998: 103). The question of 'how feminine is too feminine' was also explored during my interviews with the officers. I allowed the women to define what "femininity" meant to them, and how they use or discard it in the workplace. The definitions of femininity ranged from: wearing make-up, perfume or jewellery; having long manicured nails; having their hair styled; wearing nice clothes; looking attractive; acting emotionally; crying; being sensitive; having compassion and empathy; talking about one's children; discussing baking recipes; batting one's eyelashes or being charming; and being non-confrontational. The women discussed that they differ from men in the way they police and that their

workplace experiences are also different. They explain the way in which they deal with being 'feminine' while still being a cop. I found this conversation to be quite interesting, as women relayed experiences of what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' feminine behaviour and what feminine characteristics work to marginalize female officers in front of male peers.

Oakley (1972: 50) explains that key masculine qualities are: aggressiveness; being adventurous, enterprising; outwardly directed; and a tendency to argue or fight and self assertiveness. Women's outstanding feminine traits are: being actively sympathetic; inwardly directed; demonstrating a maternal impulse; showing tender feelings; being concerned with domestic affairs; being more tearful; more easily disgusted than males; pity the weak and helpless; emotional not objective; and prefer ministrative occupations. Sex differences in personality are traced back to childhood as they emerge very early in the process of cultural learning (Oakley, 1972: 52). Strong cultural influences, including the family, schooling, media, adult occupations and peers, push men and women into different gender moulds (Oakely, 1972: 156). Oakley (1972: 52) explains that people are aware of the opposition between masculinity and femininity and the need to conform to one ideal or other in socially visible ways. Culture decides which activity is to fall on either side of the male versus female boundary.

As much as women want to fit into policing and still use their femininity to their advantage – be it in quelling altercations or talking to accused persons and to victims – each female officer has her own definition of how far she can take her

femininity and still be taken seriously in her position. As I listened to their stories, the analogy of a person walking a tight-wire at a circus came to mind. The female officer walks a fine line of 'androgyny' that allows her to point her toes back and forth on either side of the line when she needs to be 'a little bit' feminine or a 'little masculine.' She tries hard, however, not to fully step over that line into either territory too often, for fear of its consequences. Instead, she tends (and sometimes struggles) to walk on the androgynous tight-wire, trying hard to maintain the balance and not fall over the edge and be the laughing stock of the audience watching – trying hard not to be the clown.

Martin (1980: 16) states that, as tokens, female officers face experiences which require them to adopt a variety of mechanisms to ease the stresses of their occupational situation. Some women may attempt to assimilate themselves into the dominant stream of men by maintaining a more androgynous profile, trying not to be as feminine as 'most women,' to be the exception to the stereotype of 'defenceless maiden,' 'whore' or 'mother-figure' (Martin, 1980: 16). Lake (1996: 430) explains that "there is no one discrete 'sex role' dispensed by a master dramaturge, but rather competing, often conflicting, definitions of femininity." An officer explains her confusion:

*Yeah, you do have to hide your feminine side a lot. I certainly wouldn't go to work some days and say, 'Oh these cookies I made today are so good.' I know these guys would be looking at me. You don't talk about stuff like that. It's too bad because I certainly wouldn't want to give up my feminine side for anything. I still firmly believe in being feminine. If I want to wear a little makeup to work I'll wear it and I'll wear perfume to work and I don't care what anybody says. But there's just*

*certain things you don't talk about because they'll make fun of you. You talk more about male issues in the car, I think, than you do about a female topic. Especially guys, all they talk about is sports and I don't know anything about football or baseball, so conversations in the lunch room – your input is quite minimal.*

Trying to fit into a male cultural environment creates confusion for some women. Oakley (1972: 175) contends that democratic egalitarian ideology encourages women to achieve as much as men and to be equal to them. This ideal clashes with their consequence of having a minority status. Therefore, women are being given two contradictory directions at the same time; 'Be equal' (be 'masculine') and 'Be unequal, because you are' (Oakley, 1972: 75). Some women depicted their daily struggle in trying to keep a balance between being too manly or too feminine. This female officer explains her struggle:

*I think we try our best to be feminine and look feminine and now it's coming out more, because before you had to look all tough, so women now are dolling themselves up a little bit more in the police force and I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I know guys who say, 'Oh she's a tramp.' But I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I don't think you should wear tonnes of make-up or have super long nails and things like that when you are working on the street, but I think at the same time you're a woman and should act like one. But at the same time you're in a man's world and you have to be like a man a little bit, and you have to have authority and you can't go out there in a uniform and little curls in your hair and long nails and try to be authoritative.*

The consensus among many respondents is that women who are 'too dolled up' are not good at portraying authority. The social expectation that women are



gentle, caring and nurturing is antithetical to the definition of authority. To be taken seriously, women must act more like a men:

*I think you have to be a little bit tough. Yeah, I mean, you can be caring but you can't be too soft. And I don't know that that's entirely an influence of any police department, I think that there's an expectation from the public as well. You know. They expect you to go there and take charge. And that's not to say that you can't do that being feminine, I guess, but I think you lose a little bit of the softness, I do anyway, when I come to work. You just toughen up a little bit.*

This female officer explains that acting 'tough' is a male trait which she tries to mimic while working in order to fit into the role of police officer. One of the struggles female officers noted was having to master a dual gendered personality. Balancing femininity means hiding femininity, to some women, and to act as would be expected in their (masculinized) role as an officer. This officer describes how she tries to at times minimize her femininity by looking less 'attractive' and 'dolled up':

*I think in general you want to look professional and don't want to be wearing crazy amounts of make-up or jewellery or earrings and have your hair all poofed out. You want to look professional but still look like a woman. So yeah, maybe I kinda generally try to look less feminine while I'm working, just kind of to fit into the role of a police officer. So you are treated like a professional and are not looking like a girl going out to the bar or something.*

Looking professional, as the above officer mentions, is to look less feminine and less attractive in order to quell the idea that she is looking for dates. The female officer is sensitive to the perception that she is first seen as a sexual object by her peers (as discussed in Chapter Five). Attempting to look less feminine is not only

used to portray a sense of authority in public, but as this officer mentions, she minimizes her femininity in other work related situations as well:

*I would never wear tonnes of make-up to work, or put perfume on. Girls do, but I would never do any of that because as soon as you put perfume on, well then you're trying to attract guys. And even in meeting spouses and stuff, I would never wear the latest stuff, because the wives would think I was at work trying to get their husband. So I dress down. Always did. I would dress really plainly.*

For some officers, 'looking too feminine' on the job worked against them in other ways, such as putting forth the perception that they are at work looking for men and trying to attract husbands rather than taking their job seriously. Lake (1996: 430) states that femininity also revolves around sexuality, sexual attractiveness and youthfulness. The belief is that if a female officer looks pretty or tries to look pretty by enhancing her feminine features, she is at work for other reasons than just trying to catch the 'bad guy' – she is acting as the 'seductress' using her sexuality to attract men. While some women try to 'butch up' and try to act and look less feminine, this still does not preclude them from being sexually objectified (Levin, 2001: 125). Levin (2001: 125) explains that discursively constructing even unladylike women as potential sexual objects maintains men's ability to assert themselves as masculine men. Nonetheless, females cope by trying to simulate the actions they observe men doing while on the job. Other times, they feel that using a 'feminine charm' approach would better deal with the situation at hand. For example:

*There are times when you say, I have to butch up. Sometimes you just have to suck it up and say that today I am going to be*

*as tough as nails. And some days you can use being a woman to your advantage and the guys know it and I'll admit it to anyone...there are days I have played a defensive woman, or that I am just a woman, use the fact that I am a woman to sway somebody else that I am working with because of how I think things should work out. It's an advantage as long as you do it properly. If you get caught doing it over and over again and using it, you could have a big problem and you could be in hot water. The (bad) guys really don't catch on because they still have that woman vision in their heads. So you can play it both ways depending on what situation you're in.*

When preparing for work, other women have said that you just “*have to have balls*” and put on the mask. This officer puts it plainly:

*I think all women are very strong in certain ways, if you are a woman and you have to take care of a job and kids. But to do this job, it's so different from what's normal. You have to believe that you belong in that uniform, that you do have the authority. I call it putting on my mask. When I come to work I put on my mask, and I am doing my job. When I am off the job I am the most caring and nurturing person, but when I come to work it changes. I sit in that cruiser car and I'm driving out of the station and I got my mask on and I am doing my job. And some females, I don't know if they even have a desire to have that mask on, because I don't think it's normal for females to do that – does that make sense? I think females are naturally just emotional. That's females. Off the job if I have PMS I watch a commercial on TV and I'm crying, I'm an idiot. But on the job, nothing has gotten to me. I can do that switch, but it's either in you or it's not. Put that uniform on, slap that gun on and get out there. I don't think it's natural for females to be brawling and fighting and putting people on the ground and yelling commands. That's not a natural thing for females so that 'switch' has to go off and on.*

The officer above explains the conscious necessity for females to act more like males in order to fit into the male-culture that is policing. She examines that she is allowed to show her feminine side while in the safe haven of home, but contends

that emotions and sensitivity are not part of the role of a traditional officer. Being able to switch on or off one's gendered personality in order to fit into the police role may be difficult for some women. In essence, they are going against the their childhood conditioning that it is acceptable to 'feel,' for fear of not being taken seriously by peers and by the public while wearing the police mask. The 'switch' between masculinity and femininity and androgyny requires training and thought for some women, as well as creates a great deal of anxiety in having to keep one's acquired emotions under control.

## EMOTIONS

Men are encouraged from an early age to be active and rational; women are trained (by family, schools, media, and peers) to be involved with emotions and with the feelings occurring in the course of all activity (Miller, 1986: 39). Many of the officers explained that while policing, they are unable to show the emotions they would normally express in certain traumatic situations, such as attending sudden child-deaths or being in pain due to physical altercations on the job. For many of them, they must inhibit their initial emotional response or face being ridiculed by their peers. However, eradicating so many learned female traits while on the job may prove more problematic for women in the end. One female officer explains, "*You need to stay a woman. There are too many women on this job who start to act like a man to fit in, talk like a man to fit in, and they alter their personalities without even seeing it. And those women become other women's worst enemies.*" By women

acting like men, it reinforces that femininity has no place on the force. According to Scott (1996:167), gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power. Thus, there is a double-edged sword acting here: should women act too feminine, they are not taken seriously; but if they act too masculine, then they are showing that femininity has no place in policing. Showing emotion is equal to being weak, and weakness counteracts the need for authority. This officer relays the struggle to keep her emotions in tact after a violent altercation:

*I think it's hard for women, because women are made differently and emotionally things are much higher than guys. I was covered with blood, and I'm shaking, but I can't cry . . . I can't cry . . . I can't cry . . . I started, but I sucked it up and didn't cry. I was white as a sheet and blood all over my arms. When I talk to other women that's the same too, they don't want to show that. You don't want to show emotion or damage or things that upset you because then it shows weakness to each other. It's sad to say, but that's how guys measure things.*

In cases where violence is present or when a traumatic event such as the death of a child occurs, the female officers perceive that this is when they are being watched the most by peers. They expressed feelings of being watched closely and evaluated by peers on how they handle the traumatic event. Do they cry or do they “suck it up”? One officer stated that,

*I'm very sensitive, and there are days when I feel like crying, and God help you if you cry around here. It's been brutal. Not only if you're having a bad day at home, or at work, and God knows we see ugly things, and it's like, I have felt my entire career that I cannot cry here. Not that it's appropriate to cry, either, you can't start losing it in front of people you're trying to help, but there are times where you remove yourself even, and*

*lose it after the fact, but that's still not acceptable. They [male officers] think it's weak, when they need to be doing the same thing.*

Women have been made to feel that their assets – emotion, sympathy and connecting with others – are actually liabilities (Miller, 1986: 39). Releasing tensions and emotions is incompatible to being a traditional authoritative and tough officer. The perception is that officers need to be emotionally impenetrable to deal with the everyday occurrences and traumatic events. Being able to back up your partner and being dependable goes against showing emotions and being a ‘soft’ cop. Trying to fit in with the people whose lives you depend on, and vice versa, makes it necessary for many female officers to act in ways their (male-defined) role prescribes or fear being emotionally and socially attacked by peers. One officer put it plainly when she said, “*There’s a lot of things that sometimes you just want to walk away and cry, but you don’t. That’s like a drop of blood in the shark pool.*” There are, however, women on the force who are not held by the belief that they must conceal their emotions. This officer explained:

*There have been times when I have tried to hide it but it hasn’t worked. I’ve had scenarios where I’ve cried in the office and I don’t go and hide it, whether I was having a fight with a co-worker or a colleague. I don’t want to be a guy, I’m a female and this is what I do and I am very sensitive and I am not going to try to change that to impress anybody by putting that aside. This is who I am and judge me by who I am, and I happen to be female too, so take it or leave it.*

What of these women who refuse to take on the hard core masculine policing role? What of their success as police officers? Martin (1980:190) believes that even

women are critical of women who are in 'soft' or "cushy jobs" and not out there on the street where the "real police work" is done. Officers in my study made the same distinction; that there are "mommy" roles in policing for the "feminine" female officers, and there is "real" police work for the women who are able to have more of an androgynous or more masculine working personality. This officer makes that distinction when she explains:

*There's a handful of women on this job that some are classified as doing the community stuff and patting kids on the back and hugging babies, and they are just not smart at being police. Then there are some women who are very good at doing other stuff like criminal investigation stuff, gang unit stuff, interviewing and all that. So those women tend to move around better, they 'play better in the sandbox' kinda thing. These other women don't. They are stuck in the mummy stuff, because that's the only place that they are allowed to go. The police department runs. It needs good sandbox players like me. The women who want to do the other types of jobs, mommy jobs, great, let them do it.*

For some female officers in my study, then, the more 'masculine' the position held in the department, the more prestigious it seemed. 'Mommy roles' within the police department, for those women deemed to be more feminine than necessary for the streets, are also seen as important jobs, as they make the police department run. These 'mommy jobs,' however, are not seen as doing 'real' police work, by some female officers. Instead, real police work is done on the streets and confronting people everyday on patrol, or busting drug gangs, or solving murders. Many women find themselves having to lead a life with starkly different personalities and role expectations.

*I lead almost a double life, a dual personality, I'm one way at work and I'm another way with my family and at home. I portray a different person at work because I have to, to exist here and to work here, than what I do at home. I am different at work than I am at home. It may be warped but it works for me.*

These policing roles require the perceived 'switch' from the female you are at home, to the androgynous or more masculine police officer needed to preserve police authority and get the job done.

## **CONCLUSION**

Understandably, there is a strong perception that femininity is not allowed in 'real policing.' In pursuit of the balance of androgyny, women have had to suppress their feminine looks, feminine conversations and feminine emotions in order to feel successful and accepted in the male-dominated stream of policing. In essence, coping has come down to leading a truly 'emotional' double life. This 'balancing act' adds to the challenges faced by female officers in being accepted in a male-dominated workplace, where even the women have attempted to eradicate feminine intellect as part of the job. Female officers try so hard to fit in with the dominant male 'boys club' that policing struggles to be anything other than 'masculine.' Thus, the women find themselves in a dilemma. They need to find ways in which a female officer's way of doing things is respected and seen as doing good police work, be it in the office or out on the streets. Unfortunately, their few numbers, the fact that they are sexualized in the eyes of their male peers and their constant negotiating of acceptable emotions and mannerisms makes truly fitting-in all the more difficult.



## CONCLUSION

Although political barriers have been broken, some women in this study believe that they are not yet fully integrated into policing. They still encounter discriminatory practices, especially with regard to their career mobility and advancement and through prevailing sexist attitudes embedded in the male police culture. These ongoing problems support various theories of gender and employment surrounding female minorities in a male-dominated profession. For instance, the women experience work and family imbalance to a greater extent than their male peers. Bearing children in a male-cultural work atmosphere leaves women with the perception that they are not as devoted to their career as childless officers or officers with wives at home. Women experience discrimination in the workplace with the perception that there is a quota system, or glass ceiling, in place for those wanting to enter prestigious ('male-preferred') units. Sexism is present in the form of sexual jokes, labels and blatant sexual harassment by peers. My study points to the fact that a chilly climate still exists surrounding women in policing, even after decades of female officers in uniform. This climate exists because of the male-culture which has shaped and defined what policing should be – everything that is opposite to 'women.'

In Chapter Three, the women explained the challenges of balancing a family with irregular and rotating police shifts. Their family life also affects the way in which they interact with peers and whether they are able to take enough time for

themselves to study for promotion. Because women are the primary caretakers of the family unit, many have sacrificed their promotional goals in order to maintain their family responsibilities. They perceive a difference, however, when they see their male co-workers studying for promotion while their wives are able to take care of the family unit. Maternity issues were discussed in this chapter and point to the fact that pregnant women are resented by their peers. Maternity issues also need to be resolved that keep women informed of their options. Chapter Four discussed the camaraderie and competition for scarce positions for female officers in their male-dominated position. It also explored the debate regarding the Policewomen's Network's implementation of the mentoring system. In Chapter Five, the women expressed their challenge in wanting to be part of the group of male officers, but having to tread carefully because of the constant sexual jokes and labels expressed by their peers. This chapter also discussed gender discrimination in the workplace, acts of discrimination and how women deal with instances of sexual harassment. In Chapter Six, the women's stories expressed a fear of being 'too feminine' and the need to have an androgynous personality while at work. Showing emotions is viewed as a sign of weakness and a mask must be worn to fit into the role of police officer.

The goal of this concluding chapter is to summarize the main findings in my study and suggest possible policy implications and anticipated contributions for the Winnipeg Police Service. However, before I discuss these implications, the next section will summarize some of my study's limitations.

## LIMITATIONS

This study, like all others, has its limitations. Firstly, as I discussed in Chapter Two, case studies such as this one may not be generalizable to other occupations or even to other police departments. I studied a random sample of 25 female officers from the Winnipeg Police Service regarding their gendered experiences and challenges they face in their workplace. The officers were asked to relate their stories and experiences as they perceive them, in a particular snap-shot in time. Nonetheless, I argue that the experiences related to the women in my study may be appreciated by female officers elsewhere, since they all work in a culture dominated by men. Furthermore, the themes that emerge regarding women's sexualization, maternity issues, camaraderie, promotion, harassment, discrimination and family balance may be recognized not only by other female officers, but by women in other occupations. Thus, it is not the generalization of specific findings which should give a study value, but the acknowledgment of the life themes some women share.

A second limitation of my study is the self-selection process of my participants. By using systematic random sampling I was able to solicit the participation of officers of varying ages and seniority levels in the WPS, but I was also aware that given my efforts, women ultimately had the power to select themselves into my study. I wondered why the women chose to do my study. Were they curious about it? Were they trying to be helpful? Did they have particularly good or bad experiences that could bias the outcome of my study in one way or another? I was aware of these limitations during the course of my interviews. In

fact, after each interview I noted in my field notes the feeling I received from each participant. For instance, was she particularly upset about one specific issue? Did she bring up other issues I did not think about but that were pertinent to her experiences as a female officer? Did she seem to be positive about every topic we discussed? During the course of interviewing, however, I believe that the women were able to give me both positive and negative feelings about topics we discussed. I was also content with the fact that my study attracted officers of different levels of experience. I was glad to see that my study interested all ages and seniority levels of women in the WPS, and not just new recruits or just senior ones.

A final limitation worth noting in my study is the sample size of 25 women. Initially I thought a sample size of 50 would be desirable, especially if the women did not elaborate on their stories and if interviews were short. However, as the study progressed, I found that the interviews with the officers were long and elaborate and very specific and rich in content, to the point where doing 50 interviews would have taken far too long. Although some would say that 25 officers out of approximately 150 female officers on the force is a small proportion, I feel confident that the themes that emerged from the 25 officers would not have changed had I interviewed all 150 of them. I found that after interviewing only 10 officers that main themes (regarding maternity, camaraderie with the men and women, promotion barriers, sexism and harassment, and male versus female styles of policing) were quite evident from their experiences as females in a male-dominated occupation. By interviewing 25 women

I was able to capture more examples of their experiences and the themes that emerged from them, making my study richer in content.

## **ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION**

The underlying basis for understanding female officers experiences is to comprehend that first and foremost they are women, and every perception and experience they encounter begins with that fact. Being a woman affects the way they are addressed at work, the camaraderie with their co-workers, the way they are evaluated for promotion, the way they police and the way they balance family and work.

At the executive and policy making levels of policing, there is a very limited representation of women compared to men of similar experience and seniority. The absence of women in high ranks is due to the fact that women are fairly new to policing and lack the seniority needed to increase their rank. In other cases, the women do have the seniority and skills but lack the time and resources to compete for promotion due to familial pressures and responsibilities, as well as the lack of networking it takes to obtain those positions. Also, possible evidence of gender discrimination is found in the absence of women in certain specialty units, which may have an effect on later promotion possibilities. As in Price's (1996: 4) study of female officers, the women in my study also felt that more prestigious units, such as narcotics and the street gang unit, are "off limits" to women, and where women have experienced "extra" harassment presumably to encourage them to transfer out. In these instances, discrimination and stereotyping keep female officers subordinate to

men. Although nobody will publicly admit it, the women do have the perception that women are not “appropriate” for certain “male only” units. The WPS should investigate ways to avoid typecasting men and women into what are deemed gender appropriate roles and units (Waugh, 1996: 6). Moreover, female officers have expressed the need to have more females in higher positions, so that when the need arises, there is someone who may understand their points of view from a woman’s perspective. When possible, the WPS should include women on promotional panels and provide formal training for male interviewers on non-biased questioning techniques (Waugh, 1996: 6). The fact that Winnipeg now has a female Superintendent is a step in the right direction.

The creation of the Winnipeg Police Service’s Policewomen’s Network in 2003 indicates that the WPS has realized that women have not been fully integrated into policing and that both the Network and WPS are willing to work together to understand issues faced by female officers. Although still in its early stages, the network has created a mentoring program for new police recruits. This is intended to make the transition from recruit to police officer smoother for the minority of women who enter the force. The recruits meet with and are given contact information for an experienced female officer during recruit class. The recruit will have the option of seeking out advice and using that officer as a resource that she may not already have made through informal networks. The controversy, of course, is that male recruits are not given any formal mentors. Women have been given

these mentors because women's experiences on the force are different from men and are gender related.

While male officers have many other men to discuss matters with, female officers are sometimes hard-pressed to find someone to share instances or ask questions woman to woman, particularly when just starting out. Some see the mentoring as a way to help women progress and be more prepared for questions, especially women-centred ones, that will arise during their career. Others see mentoring as dangerous, since it is offered only to the women. Female officers shared instances where they were teased by their male peers because of the mentoring program and women-centred events (even though they are few and far between). Some believe that female recruits are capable of finding their own mentors. Some find the idea progressive and are not threatened by male attitudes. Others believe mentoring makes women even more visible and needing to be coddled, which is what they try to avoid.

I recommend that the WPS monitor how the mentoring program is progressing and how it can be improved by asking the recruits and the mentors as to what changes they would like to see. Perhaps the Policewomen's Network could explore the option of having a mentor for all recruits, men and women. This would take some pressure off the women from their male colleagues, knowing that it is a universal program, not just meant to help women. Should the men in recruit class want to contact a mentor, at least the option would there. Furthermore, more senior women have asked that I inform the police service of the option of having a mentor

at the mid-range of their career, while they are preparing for promotion. The women suggested having a mentor who has already gone through the ranks. Conceivably, this mentor would support the officer interested in promotion and share ideas of how promotional interviews and exams should be approached, as well as share how they juggled family-life and the intense study period needed to succeed.

In addition, the Policewomen's Network could foster relations among the women by organizing activities such as basketball, volleyball or any other sport. These activities could also include women on maternity leave as a way to keep them involved with the organization, other than just showing up for court dates. Having a family-fun day with men and women in the organization would also help foster relations between co-workers. In the two years that the Policewomen's Network has been developing, favourable changes regarding guns, holsters, uniforms and policewomen's conferences have started to occur. As time goes on and the Network matures, I believe it will be a resource for women to tap when in need of the support they often lack.

Perhaps one serious area where the Policewomen's Network, human resources and the Union need to focus their attention is on maternity and family issues related to their members. Female officers in this study have noted the need for detailed and available information regarding maternity leave and job-sharing. Although some information is included in the Union's Collective Agreement, there have been some issues left out. I would recommend that the WPS create a booklet outlining in detail the steps needed by women who not only are pregnant, but those



who are thinking about pregnancy. In Chapter Three, I discuss recommendations which the WPS should implement with regards to a comprehensive maternity leave pamphlet for officers who are pregnant and who are also planning their pregnancy. Most importantly, the women are concerned about being placed wherever the Service deems necessary upon their return from maternity leave. The Police Union's Collective Agreement (2000-2002: 42) states that on return from maternity leave, "the member shall be placed in a position comparable to and not less than the same wages as her position prior to her commencement of maternity leave . . ." In other words, there are no guarantees that the woman will be placed in the same position she had prior to having her baby. I would suggest obtaining information booklets from other policing agencies and use these as models in developing a WPS booklet for potential mothers.

As discussed in Chapter Three, women are still the primary caretakers of the family unit and sometimes struggle to balance family life, children and work. Perhaps police departments need to find measures that are more sensitive to achieving a better balance between work and family, that can have a positive impact on productivity and troop morale (Ostiguy, 1997:115). Female officers with and without children in my study explored the ideas of creating a daycare either on site or a daycare for city workers who work rotating shifts. Of course, the question remains as to who would subsidize the daycare, where it would be built and so forth, given that the officers work in many different sites around the city. The lack of funding and physical space has been previously cited in arguing against having a

daycare. However, some officers have suggested there are other things that may be done to alleviate some of the stress of childcare and irregular shift work for males and females in the Service. Interested parties could post names as to their availability of watching over one another's children. For instance, officers on opposite rotating shifts could pool their names and contact one another to arrange days that they could watch over one another's children. One officer mentioned that it would even be helpful to post phone numbers and addresses of local 24 hour daycare facilities that could take their child at the last minute, when the need arises. Officers with family members interested in babysitting could also be contacted. Conceivably, these services would not only help the women in the service, but the men as well, who are otherwise unable to find adequate childcare at crucial times.

Job-sharing is an option available for all officers in the WPS, which may ease some people's family and work stress. However, some issues need to be addressed regarding the availability of information on job-sharing and its limitations for use. For instance, I asked women spearheading the Winnipeg Police Service's Policewomen's Network if they could provide me with a copy of the information they had on job-sharing, but all that was available was a memo explaining that two officers were now sharing a position. I then searched through The Winnipeg Police Association's Collection Agreement, and although job-sharing is not listed in the table of contents near Maternity, I did find a "Letter of Understanding" (2000-2003:1-3) between the City of Winnipeg and the WPS, which is found at the back of the agreement. It showed that job-sharing began on a trial basis on December 26,

1993. Only certain positions are eligible for job-sharing but they are not listed in the letter of understanding. It stipulates that the interested officer must find a qualified job sharer on her own and that both applicants must be employed in positions of the same rank at the time of the request and that one member must already be working in the position to be shared. It also stipulates that seniority for promotion purposes shall be accumulated based on the actual hours worked by the officer in the job sharing arrangement (p.2). Split shifts (one officer works the morning and the other the afternoon) are not allowed – full day shifts only.

Given the description of job-sharing and its stipulations, there are few women who are able to benefit from this program. A female officer mentioned that it was up to the officer to find an available person in her own unit who would like to job-share with her. At times, however, there were very few, if any, other women on their shift and not many men have shown an interest in job sharing. Indeed, the program states that an officer must find a peer employed in the same position and rank as the interested officer. Furthermore, it is unclear as to how job-sharing works for officers on patrol, if at all. Many workers are not applying for job-sharing, not only because of the lack of information provided, but as Hochschild (2004: 325) explains, for some women in male-dominated fields, one reason to work long hours or to avoid short ones is to ward off the 'evil eye' of male resentment (Hochschild, 2004: 325). Those who apply for job sharing would be going against the norm of devoting long working hours and overtime to their job, which defines the unwritten rule of being a loyal hard-worker. So, while job-sharing would be an ideal option, particularly for

officers with challenging family situations, the information on job-sharing is minimal; the possibility of finding another officer who is willing to partake in such an endeavour is minimal; and the stakes are high for experiencing resentment with peers. Furthermore, job-sharing is very difficult to organize among officers working long rotating shifts on patrol.

Another suggestion made by the officers in my study was in regards to family sick or crisis days. Female officers expressed an interest for family crisis days to be available for police officers, not just civilian staff. This would be an issue to be bargained with the union. Although officers are able to bank time and use holiday time, they feel they should not have to do so when a family member is ill or in need of assistance. Even in a situation where a father and mother is able to take care of a sick child, it is often the mother who stays home to act as nurse. Rather than calling in sick themselves, which may make it seem like women take much more sick time than men, they would be able to use a family crisis day without needing to lose their much deserved holiday or banked time.

The Police Service may also like to explore the possibility of "flexible hours" for those officers who work in offices. This would allow some officers to work the allotted hours everyday, but give them the flexibility to start (and finish) work either earlier or later depending on their family needs. The controversy that lies with the Police Service is how supportive can they be of their officers without becoming intrusive to the family unit. One could argue that they should be just as helpful and understanding to the families to the same extent that work does intrude into family

affairs. For instance, 68 percent of the women answered in their short survey that policing affects their home-life negatively. In that case, one could argue that since work is affecting family-life, work should have some responsibility of aiding their workers in this apparent intrusion. It is because work intrudes in the home, that work should take some responsibility for their members' 'struggle to juggle.'

There exists an obvious male cultural work climate in policing. Consequently, law enforcement agencies must be particularly judicious in their efforts to combat sexual harassment. Female officers are at a higher than average risk of harassment from male co-workers, who may resent their entry and or advances in the policing profession. Law enforcement is a profession in which interpersonal sensitivity, trust and respect for the rights of others are paramount. Unwelcome and offensive sexual conduct can devastate the departmental harmony, work relations and partnerships that are central to effective police work (Thomann et. al; 1994: 31). It must be noted, of course, that absence of a complaint does not mean that sexual harassment is not a problem. This is particularly true in work climates such as law enforcement agencies, where there are relatively few women and where complainants may suffer retaliation where team unity or loyalty is highly valued and rewarded. Indeed, the women in my study have described many instances of gender discrimination and harassment where they have not complained. Instead, they decided to handle the matter on their own or, in the worst of circumstances, have transferred positions. Sudden transfers do not look good on their record, considering they often cannot explain the true reason for the transfer, but they would

rather have a marred record than a reputation for not being a team-player. As some officers put it, women need to “*play good in the sandbox..*” Eliminating harassment and discrimination must start from the top, with superiors making a conscious effort of withholding derogatory comments and actions that perpetuate sexist acts and attitudes among the lower ranks. Attitudes must be kept in check and hopefully will change the way female officers are sexualized and oppressed.

In a similar vein, social scientists continually debate as to whether structural and technical changes or attitudinal changes must occur first in order to bring about change in male-dominated professions. Price (1996: 5) argues that both must occur before gender equality will be achieved. This is as true for policing as for other aspects of people’s social and occupational lives. Women have had to suppress their definitions of femininity and emotions in order to be accepted members of policing. They have internalized men’s definition of what an officer should act like and even used men’s words (policeman) in reference to themselves, which further diminishes the legitimacy of females as officers. When ‘female’ attributes of conflict resolution and empathy, rather than using force and brawn, are used in policing, they often bring about positive results for those involved (as discussed in Chapter Six). There is a need to redefine what it means to be a police officer that incorporates rather than dismisses women’s approaches to policing. In essence, diversity needs to be accepted, and this may be reinforced from the beginning during recruit class, but also by positive, accepting attitudes demonstrated by senior officers. Changes have occurred in policing allowing greater numbers of women to enter into this once all-

male occupation. However, simply opening the doors to women does not mean they will be treated equally by those within. There is a need for a conscious effort to accept gender differences. Simply sweeping gender issues under the rug has gone on long enough.

### **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

Although today's senior female officers believe newer recruits do not have to face as many obstacles in entering this once all-male profession as they did, this study still points to challenges created by their male-dominated work culture. The job satisfaction of female officers may rely on many factors surrounding women and work, such as perceptions of gender equality in work assignments and promotion, perceptions of peer support, family and work balance, and group cohesion and sexual harassment. I recommend further research is needed to probe whether policy changes over the years have had any influence on the internal police attitudes and culture, making it more conducive to women's inclusion. The information gathered in this case-study of female officers in the Winnipeg Police Service may also be relevant to other police services. One goal of this research has been to reinforce that women must be recognized as true officers, equal to their male counterparts albeit different in their needs. They must not be prejudged as being weak because they are female. The participants in this study believe that as currently constructed, the Police Service's male culture reinforces and rewards stereotypical male characteristics, such as aggression and dominance. In their workplace, female officers must be able to use

rather than excuse those attributes that are considered female, if they so wish. Female officers have felt they need to work harder in all aspects of policing in order to prove themselves and to fit into their workplace as a minority. In 1992, Deputy Chief Christine Silverberg, of the Wentworth Regional force (and later the Chief of Police in Calgary), made a strong statement when she said, "We allow average men to come into our police forces. I would like to see the day when an average woman could come into a police force and not have to be exceptional" (Corelli, 1995).



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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**  
**Letter to Respondents Requesting Participation**

Dear [Constable/Officer, etc.] \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Candida Sousa. I am a graduate student of Sociology at the University of Manitoba. I am currently completing a Master of Arts Degree. I am writing to you with regard to a study I am developing on the issue of women in policing. While several studies on this topic were conducted in the early 1980's, there is a need for more recent research.

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the work related experiences of policewomen in the Winnipeg Police Service, and how their experiences or perceptions are linked to their job satisfaction. Since women comprise only fourteen percent of the Winnipeg Police Service, it is important to understand unique issues which may affect their job satisfaction. The goal of this study is to learn from the officers themselves what they think can help increase their job satisfaction.

I hope to conduct approximately fifty confidential face to face interviews with female officers of the Winnipeg Police Service. I expect these face to face interviews to take about one hour. Participants have been selected randomly. The interviews will be conducted during working hours on overlap days and will be conducted at the Community Services building. You will be able to relate your stories and your views about certain topics concerning your work environment and satisfaction on the job. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you are not obliged to answer any question that may be asked of you. Also, if you choose to withdraw from this study, you may do so at any time, without the risk of adverse consequences.

The interview will be tape recorded using an audio recording device. At any time during the interview, you have the right to ask that the audio recording device be turned off. All the information that you provide will remain strictly confidential. The researcher will be the only one with access to the raw information collected during the interview. It will not be possible to identify any of the research participants in the final thesis report and the interview notes and tapes will not contain respondents' names. At the completion of the project, all audio tapes and other material will be destroyed. Only aggregate information will be reported. As a participant you may receive a copy of the final report upon your request.

**If you are interested in participating in this study, please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_. You may leave a voice message and be assured that I am the only person accessing these messages. I am available by email at \_\_\_\_\_@cc.umanitoba.ca . I will arrange an interview with you, during one of your overlap days, as has been approved by the Service. Any questions you may have regarding this study, or the interview, feel free to contact me or my Advisor, Dr. Rick Linden at \_\_\_\_\_.**

I hope that the research that I am proposing will prove beneficial to you and your colleagues, as well as to other women who may be interested in police work as a career. I am sure that you will find the interview very interesting as it involves topics concerning your experiences as an officer. Your participation in this study is important and would be greatly appreciated. I am looking forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Candida Sousa

## APPENDIX B

### Informed Consent Form

**Research Project Title:** "Winnipeg Policewomen: Exploring Experiences, Perceptions and Gender Dynamics of their Work Environment"

**Researcher:** Candida Sousa

**This consent form, is only part of the process of informed consent, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.**

"Winnipeg Policewomen: Exploring Experiences, Perceptions and Gender Dynamics of their Work Environment" is a thesis research project being conducted by Candida Sousa of the Department of Sociology, University of Manitoba and is a thesis requirement for a Master of Arts Degree.

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the work related experiences of policewomen in the Winnipeg Police Service, and how their experiences or perceptions are linked to their job satisfaction. Since women comprise only fourteen percent of the Winnipeg Police Service, it is important to understand issues that may affect their job satisfaction. The goal of this study is to learn from the officers themselves what they think can help increase job satisfaction.

Information for this study will be collected by means of approximately 50 confidential face to face interviews with female officers of the Winnipeg Police Service. These face to face interviews are expected to take about one hour. The interview will consist of semi-structured, open-ended questions. You will be able to relate your stories and your views about certain topics concerning you and your work environment and satisfaction on the job. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and you are not obliged to answer any question that may be asked of you. Also, if you choose to withdraw from this study, you may do so at any time, without the risk of adverse consequences.

The interview will be tape recorded using an audio recording device in order to aid in selective transcription. At any time during the interview, you have the right to ask that the audio recording device be turned off. All the information that you provide will remain strictly confidential. The researcher will be the only one with access to the raw information collected during the interview. It will not be possible to identify

any of the research participants in the final thesis report. At the completion of the project, all audio tapes and notes will be destroyed. Only aggregate information will be reported. As a participant you may receive a copy of the final report upon your request.

**Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.**

Candida Sousa - Principal Researcher. Phone number \_\_\_\_\_.  
Dr. Rick Linden - Principal Research Advisor. Phone number\_\_\_\_\_.

**This research has been approved by the Psychology / Sociology Research Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.**

---

Participant's Signature

Date

---

Candida Sousa  
Graduate Student  
Department of Sociology  
University of Manitoba

Date

## APPENDIX C

### Questions and Probes

Time \_\_\_\_\_

ID# \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1: Demographic**

1. What is your current assignment? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is your present rank? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the highest level of education attained? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How old were you when you started policing? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many years have you worked as a police officer? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your current marital status? \_\_\_\_\_  
When did you marry or become partnered? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you have any children? Y/N How many? \_\_\_\_\_ How old? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Could you describe your ethnic background? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Have any of your family members ever been police officers? Y/N ?  
Relation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2: Early Policing History**

1. I am going to ask you to remember back when you first started thinking about becoming a police officer.
  - a. When was this? How old were you?
  - b. What made you decide to become an officer?
  - c. Were there any people in particular who encouraged / discouraged you?
    - i. Who were they?
    - ii. What were the reasons?
    - iii. How did they encourage / discourage you to pursue your goals?
2. Can you tell me what your POPAT experience was like?
  - a. Did you have to pre-train? How long?
  - b. What was the degree of difficulty of the test? Why?
  - c. Does anything else in particular stick out in your mind about that day?

**Section 3: Goals / Dedication / Perceptions of Work Environment as Linked to Job Satisfaction**

3. What do you like the most about your job?

4. What do you like the least about your job?
5. What are the qualities of a successful police officer?
  - a. How can these qualities be assessed?
  - b. Do you think women and men have the same definition of what it means to be a successful officer?
6. What are your career aspirations? Choose one of the following options:
  - a. I am satisfied where I am now
  - b. I am undecided about the future
  - c. I am interested in promotion (to where)
  - d. I am interested in work outside of the Winnipeg Police Service
7. Have you ever been encouraged by anyone to seek advancement? Y/N ?  
Who?
8. Do you feel there is anything stopping you from getting a promotion?
9. Have you *always* felt that you fit in or belong in policing ?
  - a. Would you recommend police work to other women?
10. Have you ever seriously thought about quitting the force?
  - a. If yes - When was that? Why was that?
  - b. What helped you decide to stay?
11. What is your overall impression with police work? Choose one of the following:
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
  - d. Dissatisfied
  - e. Very dissatisfied

Why is that?

#### **Section 4: Support attainment & Mentoring Question**

12. Who would you go to if you needed to talk to somebody about something work related, like a problem, or something you needed to get off your chest or get some advice?

- a. Is there a formal body for dealing with such issues that you are aware of?
  - b. Would you seek out help or deal with it on your own? Why?
13. There has been some movement within the police service to create a mentoring program. This program would match newer recruits to ones with more experience on the force. The mentors would act as a source of support for the newer recruits. They would be a resource that could be tapped whenever new recruits need to talk or vent or ask for advice from another female officer who has been through many of the same experiences.

In your opinion, looking back on your policing career so far, would it have been beneficial to you to have this kind of resource, or support available? Y/N ? Explain.

**Section 5: Perceptions of current female population within the force - What does it mean for Policewomen?**

14. I would like you to think about the current number of policewomen in the WPS (about 150) and the number of policemen (about 1,050).
- a. Do you think it is a good or bad idea to have more women on the force as police officers? Why?
  - b. Do you think it is a good or bad idea to have more female supervisors or superiors? Why?
15. Does it take a certain kind of woman to be an officer?
- a. Do you believe there are certain qualities a *woman* needs to get into this line of work?
  - b. Do you believe there are certain qualities a *man* needs to get into this line of work?
16. Why do you think there are still so few women choosing policing as a career, even today?
17. What do you think needs to happen for there to be more women on the force?

**Section 6: Gender Differences in Policing**

18. As a woman in this *traditionally* male oriented career, have there been any



- situations you've felt particularly uncomfortable because you are female?
- a. How about instances where you were particularly *satisfied* because you are female?
19. In your experience in dealing with the public, are policemen and policewomen treated the same or differently by people they come in contact with?
    - a. How about during an arrest or other confrontational event?
  20. As a woman, have you ever felt that you were treated differently than your male peers by your superiors?
  21. Are there instances when you feel you have to hide your feminine side - or use it - while working?
  22. Do you think men and women differ in the way they police?
    - a. Do they have the same approach when talking to victims or during arrests?
    - b. How about in a potentially violent situation?

### **Section 7: Double Day - Family Life and Work**

23. Often, balancing home-life and work-life can be quite difficult for some people.
  - a. How demanding are your home-life responsibilities?
  - b. How well are you able to balance/juggle your home-life and work-life?
24. How does your career affect your home life?
  - a. Are you doing as much as you want to do at home, or does your work often hinder you in doing what you want?
25. In your eyes, is balancing home - life and work different for policewomen and policemen?
  - a. Does one or the other face more challenges?
26. Is there anything you think the police service can do to help with balancing the demands of work and home?
  - a. Are there certain challenges that policewomen face regarding work and home that may be alleviated?

**Section 8: Group Cohesion**

27. I often hear about officers doing extra-curricular activities together, like going for drinks, going golfing or playing some kind of group sport.
- How often are you involved in these?
  - Do you feel these get-togethers add to group cohesion? How important are they?
  - Were there ever times when you would like to have gone but were invited to these outings or even refused to go? Why was that?
  - Do you think it is harder for policewomen with children (or other family responsibilities such as elder-care) to do these types of extra curricular activities?

**Section 9: Personal goals**

28. What are your goals outside police work? In terms of family or anything else that is important to you?
29. Did you ever feel that your personal goals and policing career have or could come into conflict?

**Section 10: Final Question**

I have tried to include a lot of questions that policewomen may deal with, but as I am not an officer, I may not know what all the issues are. Is there anything I have left out that is of importance to you or to other officers, that may not have been captured in the questions?

**QUESTIONS SUGGESTED BY OFFICERS TO BE ASKED OF COLLEAGUES:**

If you were a male officer, do you think you would have been more or less respected by your peers and supervisors?

What are your perceptions of other women on the force? Is there a close camaraderie between women, or is it competitive and catty?

Have you had times when your male colleagues/superiors have made you feel "uncomfortable?"

IF CONSTABLE **LESS THAN FIVE YEARS** ASK: What do you think could help you along in your career from a common person to a constable?

**APPENDIX D**  
**Close-Ended Questionnaire**  
**Job Satisfaction**

1. How satisfied are you with your job in general?
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Somewhat satisfied
  - d. Neutral
  - e. Somewhat unsatisfied
  - f. Unsatisfied
  - g. Very unsatisfied
  
2. How satisfied are you with your salary?
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Somewhat satisfied
  - d. Neutral
  - e. Somewhat unsatisfied
  - f. Unsatisfied
  - g. Very unsatisfied
  
3. How satisfied are you with the hours you have to work?
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Somewhat satisfied
  - d. Neutral
  - e. Somewhat unsatisfied
  - f. Unsatisfied
  - g. Very unsatisfied
  
4. How satisfied are you with the flexibility of your work schedule?
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Somewhat satisfied
  - d. Neutral
  - e. Somewhat unsatisfied
  - f. Unsatisfied
  - g. Very unsatisfied

5. *How important is it* that you have a strong level of cohesion with your coworkers?
- a. Very important
  - b. Somewhat important
  - c. Not very important
  - d. Not at all important
6. How satisfied are you with your *present level of cohesion* with your coworkers?
- a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Somewhat satisfied
  - d. Indifferent
  - e. Somewhat unsatisfied
  - f. Unsatisfied
  - g. Very unsatisfied
7. How satisfied are you in your present work assignment?
- a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Somewhat satisfied
  - d. Indifferent
  - e. Somewhat unsatisfied
  - f. Unsatisfied
  - g. Very unsatisfied
8. From a scale of 1 to 7, how *stressful* would you say you find your job?
- (Not at all Stressful) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Very Stressful)
9. To what extent does your *job* effect your *home-life* negatively? (For example: Your *work* responsibilities tend to interfere with your responsibilities in the *home*).
- a. Very often
  - b. Often
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never

10. To what extent does your *home-life* negatively affect your *job*? (For example: Your *home life* responsibilities tend to interfere with your responsibilities at *work*).
- a. Very often
  - b. Often
  - c. Sometimes
  - d. Rarely
  - e. Never
11. Overall, how well do you think you are handling the balance of home-life demands and work demands? Are you handling it :
- a. Very well
  - b. Well
  - c. Fairly
  - d. Not well at all