

Female Police Officers in Canada: The Influence of Gender on Law Enforcement

by

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Abstract

Although females have been serving as police officers in Canada for approximately four decades, they continue to make up only a small proportion of this profession (20% in 2012, Statistics Canada, 2012). As such, national and provincial police organizations are currently employing recruitment strategies with aim of addressing this gender disparity. Despite these initiatives, the role of females within law enforcement remains complex, controversial, and limited. This study explores the issues surrounding female police officers and their contributions to Canadian law enforcement. The primary focus of the study is to identify officers' perceptions about females' appropriateness and capabilities as police officers, and to provide a current assessment of female officers' occupational experiences. Sixteen current and former police officers (female n=11 and male n=5) from various police departments in the area of Vancouver, Canada, and one female police chief from the province of Ontario, Canada were interviewed for this project. The findings of the study provide an assessment of the influence of gender on policing; including constructive polices to enhance the role and experiences of female police officers in the future.

Keywords: Female Police Officers; Gender; Law Enforcement; Gender Bias; Discrimination

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents. To my mother, without whom, I would not have followed or believed in my abilities to achieve my dreams; And to my father, who has always supported me, and provided me with the encouragement and the means to pursue these dreams. Mom and Dad, your support and positivity have saved me in so many times of darkness- and for this I am especially thankful. Your unconditional love, and belief in my potential and abilities have been requisite for every accomplishment that I have achieved so far in my life. I have undoubtedly been blessed with the best parents in the world. Thank you, I love you guys!

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List of Acronyms

ERT	Emergency Response Team
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer
NCWP	National Center for Women in Policing
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
REB	Research Ethics Board
SFU	Simon Fraser University

Chapter 1.

Introduction

The attainment of equal representation of women and men in employment has long been viewed as a desirable goal, be it across sectors of employment, occupations within those sectors or within occupational hierarchies. Its achievement is desirable for reasons of social justice and because the causes of institutional sex discrimination can best be attacked and ultimately eradicated from the inside out. (Busby, 2006, p. 44-45)

There have been continuous efforts aimed towards the achievement of gender equality in western society. Such efforts have largely focused on advancing females' opportunities and participation in the paid labour market. Consequently, gender differences in the labour market have been steadily diminishing in Canada, with females and males commonly and increasingly participating in both domestic and paid labour responsibilities (Marshall, 2006, p. 5). However, despite such transformations, gender segregation within the labour market remains. For example, females remain overrepresented in traditional "feminine" jobs (e.g., nursing, teaching), while males tend to hold higher valued "masculine" jobs (e.g., engineering, managerial work) (Ferrao, 2010, p. 21-23). More concerning is that females continue to "experience a lack of free choice and control over their career development due to barriers to both employment and promotion" (Busby, 2006, p. 43).

Barriers in employment and promotion have perhaps most consistently been identified throughout the history of law enforcement, which has resulted the number and roles of females within the profession being strictly controlled. Efforts to identify and remove such barriers have commonly been employed since the 1970s (Archbold & Shultz, 2012, p. 702). As a result, the representation of females within policing has steadily been increasing since this time. Despite these efforts, females in Canada continue to make up a small proportion of the policing profession (about 20% in 2012;

Statistics Canada, 2012). Therefore, national and provincial police organizations continue to employ recruitment strategies with aim of addressing this persisting gender disparity (Montgomery, 2012). For example, the RCMP recently specified that they will recruit “35% women in the fiscal years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, and approximately 50% thereafter until the goal of 30% female population in Force is achieved” (RCMP, 2012a, p. 10).

Despite such objectives, the role of females in law enforcement remains complex and controversial within the policing organization and the broader public. The source of this debate can be traced to enduring gender stereotypes, which are embedded, produced and reinforced within all social institutions. Females are assumed to possess naturally occurring capabilities and dispositions in opposition to those of males (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Most starkly, females are expected, according to traditional gender stereotypes, to express themselves in ways that are consistent with the conception of traditional femininity and males with traditional masculinity (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

Accepting that generalizable differences exist between male and female temperaments, values, beliefs, and related behaviours, three general perspectives have emerged regarding the impact of increasing female representation on policing: negative, positive, and neutral (no impact) perspectives (Grant, 2000, p. 54).

The negative perspective focuses on the long-standing uncertainty of whether female police officers can express “assertiveness and courage in the face of unpleasant situations” (White, 1996, p. 2) or effectively employ physicality when confronted with hostile citizens (Bell, 1982; Sherman, 1975, Morash & Greene, 1986). The belief that females cannot meet such demands is associated with the related belief that females’ involvement in front-line policing will have negative consequences, i.e., their presence will endanger themselves, their partners, and the public (White, 1996, p. 2). Research shows the acceptance of this negative perception by male police officers is common, and has further been identified as the greatest barrier for increasing female representation in the occupation (Kakar, 2002, p. 241). After all, such perceptions result in resistance to females’ inclusion in policing, and the creation and justification of covert and overt barriers for female integration into law enforcement (Kakar, 2002, p. 241).

According to more positive perspectives, females' involvement in policing is largely constructive, and even necessary for certain policing contexts. For example, some assert that female police officers typically employ a less authoritarian policing style because of their gender, and are better able to deescalate hostile situations as a result of their elevated sensitivity and interpersonal skills (Bell, 1982; Grennen, 1987; Sherman, 1975). Ultimately, proponents of female police officers stress that the "female policing style" results in the reduced likelihood of force, including excessive force, being utilized in hostile situations (Grennen, 1987). Therefore, increasing female representation in policing will contribute to increasing the public's confidence in, and acceptance and support of, police officers in general (Grennen, 1987).

The dominance of both the positive and negative perspectives, which portray male and female officers as "different", has contributed to the development and justification of formal and informal policies and practices that limit the roles of both male and female police officers. Consequently, manifestations of sex-discrimination have been identified in recruitment, promotion, and deployment of police officers, and have consistently been rationalized through descriptions of natural gender differences (Jones, 1986, p. 21). This discrimination, however, results in the modification and restriction of females to devalued roles, which consequently places females "at the periphery of policing" (Jones, 1986, p. 21). Therefore, accepting and/or acknowledging females as "different" serves to prevent the achievement of true equality for females within policing. However, it is important to understand that the existence of such sex-based "differences" within policing remains controversial.

And lastly, the neutral perspective states that female involvement in policing will have no gender-differential impact on the culture, effectiveness, or public perceptions of law enforcement (Grant, 2000, p. 55-56). This neutral effect is commonly hypothesized to occur because females involved in police work both consciously and unconsciously express themselves consistently with the concept of masculinity, as a result of their assimilation into the masculine subculture of law enforcement (Worden, 1993, p. 207). It has been asserted that females may conform to the "cult of masculinity" (Waddington, 1999) and express themselves in accordance with male gender norms in their attempts to prove their physical and control capabilities, and to justify their abilities and value

within the world of policing (Martin, 1980). Furthermore, it has been proposed that only those females, who have already dismissed the strict constrictions of gender, will pursue and become successful in a policing career. In other words, there is an inevitable self-selection dynamic occurring where only those females who express more “masculinity” as compared to the general female population, will seek a career in policing; those females who are seeking a career in law enforcement and do not express “enough” masculine qualities, will be weeded out during the officer selection process (Worden, 1993, p. 208). Therefore, according to this perspective, female officers will have similar attitudes, and express similar temperament and behaviours in comparison to male officers. In sum, increasing female representation in law enforcement will have little, if any differential effect on law enforcement.

Despite the persistence of these multiple perspectives, empirical work on gender and law enforcement remains under-researched. Very importantly, inconsistent conclusions have been reached from the limited research conducted and as such, no definite assertions on this topic can be made. This enduring uncertainty, coupled with the consistent increase of females joining the police service, illustrates the need for further research on this topic.

Therefore, this thesis was designed to gather current data on the effects of females’ involvement in law enforcement. Officers’ perceptions regarding the influence of officer gender on policing were explored using in-depth interviews. Male and female police officers from various police departments in the Lower Mainland, British Columbia (n=16), and Ontario, Canada (n=1) were interviewed. The primary focus of this research was to identify officers’ perceptions regarding females’ appropriateness and capabilities as police officers, as well as to provide a current assessment of female officers’ experiences within the male-dominated world of law enforcement. By examining such themes, this study aimed to assess the aforementioned theoretical perspectives on gender and policing, and to gain an appreciation for the current status of females within Canadian police forces.

Chapter 2.

Literature Review

Gender is a socially constructed concept, which is internalized and understood as a result of socialization practices and cultural expectations (Lorber, 1994, p. 32). Based on ones' sex at birth, specific attributes are ascribed to an individual as a means of controlling and organizing social life (Lorber, 1994, p.15.). The gender categories of "man" and woman" incorporate contrasting expectations of behaviour, dress, and speech in which females are assumed to possess and expected to express themselves consistent with the conception of femininity, and males with masculinity (See Burgess & Borgida, 1999). Specifically, femininity may be understood as those expressions consistent with qualities such as emotionality, submissiveness, communicativeness, and helpfulness, whereas masculinity reflects those expressions portraying opposing qualities such as instrumentality, domination, independence, and aggressiveness (Heilman, 2001; Lippa, 2001). The belief that these binary expressions are "naturally occurring" has shaped and provided justification for the traditional segregation of gender roles and the patriarchal structuring of western society (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 128).

A well-established gender perspective further asserts that individuals' conformity to these gender norms – or "doing gender", reinforces the legitimacy and normalcy of the sex-segregation of roles, and in turn male domination and female subservience (Connell, 1995, p. 77). Accordingly, individuals refusing to conform to society's gender constraints threaten the traditional patriarchal organization of society and male monopolization of power (Follo, 2012; Kane & Lensky, 2002). Particularly threatening are individuals involving themselves in opposing gender roles, as they explicitly demonstrate the ability of females and males to perform similarity, thereby bringing into question the

appropriateness of the patriarchal and sex-segregated organization of societies (Connell, 1995).

Unsurprisingly, consistent evidence has been collected that illustrates resistance to individuals participating within nonconforming gender roles. Most commonly, evidence of resistance to females entering traditionally defined “masculine” occupations has been discovered (Jack & Jack, 1988; Jurik & Halemba, 1984; Oakley, 2000). Such opposition can perhaps most clearly be identified throughout the history of law enforcement, due to the traditional male-exclusiveness and embraced “masculine” depiction of the occupation (Dick & Cassell, 2004).

2.1. The History of Females in Law Enforcement

Jones (1986) argues that the entrance of females into policing “threatens to undermine the masculine identity and social importance of this apparently masculine controlling role” (p. 14). Therefore, although she recognizes that “the obstacles and difficulties encountered by women attempting to enter policing on equal terms are shared with other traditionally male occupations...” Jones also states that:

...policing poses unique problems and dilemmas, not least of which is that embodied in the concept of ‘dangerousness’. The significance of the danger and violence is that it is a part of ‘real’ police work, with all the immediacy of action and this also derives from the much valued law-enforcement, order-maintaining role. (p. 14)

The existence of a unique police subculture is recognized, in which the nature and substance of police work and identity are characterized by what Waddington (1999) terms the “cult of masculinity”. This “cult” highlights and stresses the importance of hegemonic masculine expressions such as aggressiveness, physicality, and competitiveness (Silvestri, 2003, p. 42). As mentioned above, dangerous and violent calls have also been labelled as “real” police work. However, this portrayal of policing and the belief of the importance of masculine expression for police work have persisted despite the fact that the “crime-fighting” components of the profession are rare, and that the job can more accurately be described as a mundane, and a public-service occupation (Dick & Cassell, 2004, p. 65-66).

Nonetheless, the masculine image of policing results in the creation and transmission of the belief that females are less suitable for and less capable of policing. After all, the difficulties faced by females within policing primarily stem from the perception that females are unable, or less effective, at expressing the “masculine” qualities needed for conducting ‘real’ police work, e.g., the ability to control citizens, be tough, or effectively employ force (Dick & Cassell, 2004, p. 54-55). After all, these expressions are in direct opposition to dominant perceptions of how females “should” or “can” behave (Seklecki & Paynich, 2007, p.19). Such beliefs thus compose the premises of the “negative perspective” regarding the influence of females’ inclusion in policing. Under this perspective, female integration in policing is resisted due to the belief that females’ inabilities result in the threatening of officer and public safety (Martin, 1980).

Due to the widespread and unchallenged acceptance of the “negative perspective” with regard to the influence of females on policing, females were historically prohibited from participating in law enforcement (Villiers, 2009, p. 73). Furthermore, those females who initially gained access to the police profession typically entered within subordinate and restricted roles. These roles reflected traditional assumptions about sex-appropriate behaviour. For example, female officers were not allowed to carry out particular policing duties, such as arrests or patrols, because they were perceived as too emotional and delicate to effectively complete such tasks (Villiers, 2009, p. 73). Instead, female police officers were initially restricted to administrative tasks or those duties requiring “feminine” skills, i.e., duties involving women and children (Villiers, 2009, p. 73). The sex-separation of policing duties did not begin to diminish until the 1970’s, as a result of equal right movements, the implementation of legislation preventing sex discrimination in employment, and avocation efforts specific to female police officers (Archbold & Shultz, 2012, p. 702).

Although these policy changes served as primary incentives for increasing the number of females, as well as the opportunities for females within policing, they failed to establish gender equality within the profession. In fact, manifestations of sex-discrimination reflecting perceptions about the limited effectiveness and appropriateness of female police officers have consistently been identified as the largest barriers to increasing female representation in policing (Kakar, 2002, p. 241). For example,

Timmins and Hainsworth (1989) study of 541 female officers from the United States, reported that female officers continued to experience sex-based problems within their profession, which were recognized as being the direct consequences of negative and sexist attitudes held by their male colleagues. Specifically, female officers within this study reported:

...the perceived need to be an exceptional performer to gain even minimal acceptance; the pressure to give into male officers and become a “pet” or “mascot”; the tendency to brand females as agitators or troublemakers when they are aggressive about career opportunities; the constant subtle, often crude, sexist atmosphere in which they must work daily; and the perceived pressure on females to be more masculine or to adopt more masculine traits. (p. 201)

Furthermore, within contemporary forces, females continue to be vastly underrepresented, particularly within high-ranking positions, and remain the common subjects of negative labelling and unfair treatment (Seklecki & Paynich, 2007). Specifically, female officers have consistently been found to be treated differently by their colleagues and the public, have different job-related expectations placed upon them, receive less support for career development, and face unique challenges in the promotion process (Kakar, 2002, p. 239).

Such findings are highly concerning, as the unique experiences and discriminatory treatment of females within policing have been recognized as the main sources of occupational stress for female officers, contributing to female officer burn out (McCarty, Zhao, & Garland, 2007). Additionally, perceptions in relation to peer acceptance have been found to be vital for occupational success, commitment, and job longevity (Seklecki & Paynich, 2007, p. 19). Therefore, recent research identifying the persistence of sex discrimination within policing and perceptions of unequal treatment of female police officers, illustrate the existence of enduring barriers for female recruitment and retention.

Interestingly, although gender stereotypes have played a central role in restricting females’ entrance into and acceptance within policing, advocates of female police officers have also used gender-stereotypical arguments as a means of assisting in females’ access to front-line policing. More recently, such arguments have also been

used to justify demands for gender-equality in the profession. These arguments embrace a “positive perspective” in regards to the influence of females in law enforcement, and assert that female police officers improve law enforcement by instilling values associated with women and social work, and decreasing the need for violence (Bell, 1982, Grennen, 1987). This argument claims that increasing female officers on patrol will result in a reduction of use of force, excessive use of force, and increase the public’s confidence in the police (Grennen, 1987).

Arguments stressing the existence and importance of “female-specific benefits”, although motivated towards producing positive outcomes for females in policing, have contributed to continuing the differential treatment and experiences of females within the occupation. After all, such arguments highlight and confirm sex-differences in policing styles and task effectiveness. Regardless, the belief that generalizable differences exist between male and female police officers’ abilities has commonly and consistently been expressed by citizens, and police officers (Greene & Carmen, 2002; Sandifer, 2006; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007; Sichel, 1978; Vega & Silverman, 1982). Additionally, the belief that differences exist between police officers based on their gender, has recently been articulated by the RCMP, as seen within their recent “Gender-Based Assessment” (2012b); goals and strategies aimed at increasing female representation within the RCMP have been justified through the proposition that such an increase will “broaden perspectives, approaches and decision making” (RCMP, 2012b, p. i).

Despite the existence of these opposing perceptions and their potential significance, research evaluating the prevalence of such beliefs or their reality, remains severely limited. Furthermore, of those studies conducted to assess the influence of officer sex on occupational attitudes, temperaments, and behaviours, conflicting results have been produced. Thus, propositions and perceptions regarding the existence of generalizable differences between male and female police officers remain “unjustified or questionable” (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009, p. 512). In other words, “even granting a distinctive world perspective that captures feminine characteristics, it is uncertain if female officers embody these attitudes or if these attitudes turn into behaviour” (Rabe-Hemp, 2008, p.427).

Alternately, some theorists have dismissed the suggestion that female officers will express themselves consistently with traditional notions of gender, proposing a “gender-neutral perspective” to explain the influence of females within law enforcement (Grant, 2000, p. 55-56). This perspective asserts that male and female police officers will possess attitudes and display behaviours and tendencies similar to one another (Grant, 2000, p. 55-56). It is suggested within this perspective that females, who are hired as police officers, already encompass more “masculine” qualities in comparison to females within the general population, which would explain their interest in and acceptance within the police officer role (Worden, 1993, p. 208). Also, female officers may express more masculine traits, due to their conformation to the masculine subculture of law enforcement. Females may conform to the masculine demands of policing in their attempts to dissuade negative perceptions about their capabilities and belonging within the occupation (Martin, 1980).

2.2. Past Research on the Influence of Officer Gender on Policing

2.2.1. Perceptions of Females Officers’ Competency, Roles, and Abilities

Most commonly, female officers have been perceived as capable in carrying out law enforcement (Leger, 1997; Sandifer, 2006; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007). Perceptions regarding gender-specific differences in policing styles and job-related competencies however have frequently been expressed. These perceptions have reflected the widespread embrace of the previously mentioned gender stereotypes for gender-specific behaviour and personality (Rabe-Hemp, 2008, p. 433). Specifically, female officers have been commonly perceived as better able to communicate with and support citizens, and deescalate violence with interpersonal skills, yet less able to use force or perform physically (Greene & Carmen, 2002; Sandifer, 2006; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007; Sichel, 1978; Vega & Silverman, 1982).

The long-standing and widespread embrace of these perceptions has resulted in female officers being disproportionately assigned to “feminine” policing tasks (e.g.,

dealing with children, assisting victims of domestic and sexual assault; Villiers, 2009, p. 73). Grant (2000) explains the negative consequences male officers experience as a result of such gendered assessments:

If female officers perform a disproportionate share of female-typed police tasks, male officers who are perceived as particularly unskilled at “female tasks” may choose or be assigned more “male tasks,” thus depriving them of the very opportunities they may need to improve. Conversely, male officers who are adept at “female tasks” in addition to or in place of “male tasks” could find that this is not considered an asset by some of their colleagues, and could potentially be subject to negative social sanctions from fellow officers. (p. 71)

Grant (2000) further warns “gender stereotyping of police officers and police tasks does a disservice to officers of both genders and obscures the fact that all officers must be equally well prepared to respond to the same situations as a matter of sound public policy”. (p.71). Regardless of such a fact, perceptions reflecting gender-differences in the capabilities and roles of police officers and consequences of such perceptions have remained common throughout policewomen’s history (Grant, 2000).

The limited studies conducted to assess police officers’ perceptions about the influence of gender on law enforcement, consistently found that the responding officer’s gender greatly influences their perceptions on such a topic. In an analysis of the history of females within western police forces, LeBeuf (1996) concluded that although attitudes towards female officers’ capabilities and performances were found to be consistently diverse, most of the negative views that were expressed have been by males within the policing organization. For example, male officers have commonly been found to anticipate failure and express skepticism towards the job-related abilities of females, most frequently in regard to their abilities to control hostile and violent encounters with citizens (Bloch and Anderson 1974; Oppal, 1994; Sandifer, 2006).

In a recent study, differences in perceptions between male and female officers was again discovered, as female officers perceived themselves as “tough enough” for police work, that their policing abilities were effective, and that their communication was superior to male officers; male police officers continued to express concerns that female officers were not “tough enough”, and had a lower ability to complete tasks (Sandifer,

2006). Negative attitudes held by male officers towards their female counterparts, has also been found to persist within a Canadian context, as seen in the conclusions reached by The Honourable Mr. Justice Wallace T. O'Pal. As a result of his inquiry into policing in British Columbia, Canada, it was discovered that male officers continued to raise concerns about the ability of women to perform physically (Oppal, 1994).

Female officers have largely expressed positive attitudes about their job-related abilities (Sandifer, 2006). However, it has also been reported that female officers hold highly critical perceptions of other female officers' abilities and behaviours (Martin, 1979). A recent study conducted by Morash & Haarr (2011) found that female officers expressed the belief that there were fundamental female-male differences in police work, but no consensus as to what these differences were was reached. Female officers in this study also continued to defend their occupational identities by highlighting their "job performance-enhancing qualities, such as compassion, alternative standpoints, and communication skills" (Morash & Haarr, 2011, p. 19).

Officer and public perceptions on females' appropriateness and capabilities within policing have appeared to be increasingly positive. In Leger's (1997) study, it was concluded that citizens did not express concern over female officers' reduced abilities to contain violent encounters on the brink of the twenty-first century, and that overall the general public was endorsing female police officers. Similarly, recent research found that female police officers felt accepted by their male counterparts, and were also of the belief that the culture of policing had become increasingly accepting of females throughout their experiences as police officers (Rabe-Hemp, 2008).

Female officers' perceptions of their capabilities, and whether or not they experience sex-discrimination within their work, have proven to be vital in measuring officers' self-worth, commitment to their job, and job satisfaction (Brough & Frame, 2004; McCarty, Zhao, & Garland, 2007). Therefore, recent findings illustrating improvements in female officers' perceptions of their acceptance is promising in terms of increasing their representation and improving their experiences.

In sum, both public and officer perceptions on the influence of officer gender on law enforcement have consistently reflected traditional gender stereotypes. Thus, the

positive and negative theoretical perspectives of females' influence on law enforcement have most commonly been conveyed through policing studies focused on identifying individuals' perceptions of the influence of police officer gender on law enforcement.

It is important to note here however, that the majority of the research conducted to assess perceptions of police officers has been conducted within a single country and in many cases, within a single department and/or city. Further many of these studies have also utilized small and unrepresentative samples. Consequently, the breadth and comparability of these studies' conclusions are limited. In their conclusions, Flavin and Bennett (2001) also state a major concern with generalizing conclusions from gender research conducted in different nations is that "perceptions of the policing experience are shaped more by the nation within which the force is located than by the gender of the constables" (p. 79). Therefore, cross-border generalizations of gendered experiences are problematic, and country-specific research is warranted.

2.2.2. The Reality of Females Officers Competency, Roles, and Abilities

Researchers have also attempted to assess the reality of the influences of officer's gender on policing abilities. Of the studies conducted, focus has been placed on identifying potential gender-differences in policing competency, policing styles, use of force, and excessive use of force. After all, the common expectation is that if officers' act consistently with prescribed gender stereotypical behaviour and personality within policing tasks, differences between male and female officers will be most evident within these areas.

However, several cautions are warranted prior to engaging in a discussion of this research. These studies have generally produced mixed findings about the influence of officer gender in policing. Such inconsistencies may be explained by the dissimilarities between and limitations within each study, in relation to such things as the size and type of samples utilized, research methods utilized, differences in the particular variables measured, or how variables were operationalized.

Research focused on the influence of gender in policing has been difficult to conduct and evaluate, simply due to the vast underrepresentation and low number of females within the occupation (Rabe-Hemp, 2008, p. 428). Given the small number of female officers on patrol, the population available for studies assessing female police officers' experiences and performances are limited. Such underrepresentation is particularly concerning when research is focused on female officers involved in violent encounters and use of force incidents. After all, these incidents are infrequent in police work (Hoffman & Hickey, 2005, p. 149), and therefore the number of female officers involved in such instances is very low. Thus, conclusions from studies assessing this population (i.e., female police officers), especially when focused on their involvement in hostile or violent police-citizen encounters, are assumingly difficult to compare, corroborate, and make generalizations from.

Furthermore, many studies assessing the influence of gender on policing have collected their data from specific police forces, most commonly considering a single American agency (Bloch & Anderson 1974; Bartlett & Rosenblum, 1977; Hoffman & Hickey, 2005). Although such studies provide a "foundation for our initial understanding of women in policing, we must acknowledge that any singular agency or statewide study only provides specific data on that agency or region and this cannot be generalized to other areas" (Seklecki & Paynich, 2007, p. 20).

Further difficulties arise when assessing policing competency, policing styles, and the appropriateness and effectiveness of police responses, due to the complexity of police work and the uniqueness of each police-citizen encounter. Situational factors are specific to each encounter, and these differences result in differing demands for the officers involved (Pinizzotto, Davis, & Miller, 2006). Furthermore, officer(s), offender(s), and situational factors interact within each encounter, making each event highly complex (Pinizzotto, Davis, & Miller, 2006). Therefore, comparing officer action and inaction, and assessing the appropriateness of officers' decisions within different citizen encounters is extremely challenging.

Due to the issues described above, it has proven to be extremely difficult to make straightforward comparisons and reliable generalizations from the existing literature. For

such reasons, some academics have even warned against attempting to make general conclusions about officer gender and its influence on policing practices (Covington, Huff-Corzine, & Corzine, 2014; Terrill & Mastroski, 2002; Rabe-Hemp, 2008). The following discussion should therefore be read with such issues in mind.

Job Performances and Policing Effectiveness

Research conducted to assess the effectiveness and capabilities of female police officers emerged in the 1970s, as females began to increasingly partake in those policing duties previously restricted to males. The majority of the early research conducted on the influence of officer gender on policing was concerned with the overall performance of female officers. This research was largely being conducted in an effort to justify (or protest) the inclusion of females on patrol (Bazey, Lersch, & Mieczkowski, 2007, p. 185).

Several of these early gender-evaluations reported reduced abilities of female police officers. For example, female officers were suggested as being less effective at using firearms (Auten, 1989; Sherman, 1975), involved in more traffic accidents (Sherman, 1975), responsible for fewer arrests (Bloch & Anderson, 1974; Sichel, 1978) and fewer traffic citations (Bloch & Anderson, 1974). However, in a review of existing gender-evaluation research, Morash and Greene (1986) warn against the reliability of such studies' conclusions, due to biases in the researchers' interpretations, and methodological and statistical issues within these studies.

Furthermore, the majority of gender-evaluation studies conducted on police officers have alternately concluded that that quality of policing does not differ based on an officer's gender (Bartlett and Rosenblum, 1977; Morash and Greene, 1986). Additionally, females' physical "limitations" (e.g., their smaller size, reduced strength), have not found to reduce policing job performance, including the ability to arrest or control citizens (Bartlett & Rosenblum, 1977; Birzer & Craig, 1996; Townsey, 1982).

Therefore, female officers have consistently proven themselves equally capable of carrying out effective law enforcement. Interestingly then, the arguments against

female police and enduring negative perceptions about their abilities seem to have transcended in the absence of confirmatory empirical evidence.

Policing Styles and Decision Making

More recent research has shifted from justifying the appropriateness of females in policing to assessing possible differences between male and female officers in policing styles, decision-making, and use of force. As previously stated, the common expectation is that female officers will behave within their occupational role in a consistent manner with societal gender expectations. Thereby female police style, and occupational decision-making and behaviour will differ from those of their male counterparts. Specifically, it has been suggested that females “bring different talents and skills to policing which embody greater empathy and communication skills and fewer forceful behaviours” (Rabe-Hemp, 2008, p. 427).

Some studies have generated support for such an assertion. Female police officers have been found to be better able to resolve potentially violent situations with their communication skills, while male officers have been found to be more likely to react aggressively or physically within similar situations (Bloch & Anderson, 1974; Sherman, 1975). Research has also discovered that male officers have a more authoritarian presence in comparison to female officers (Bell 1982; Grennan 1987). Female officers have been determined to provide more support and display more empathy towards victims in comparison to male officers (Grennan 1987; Snortum and Beyers 1983).

More recent studies have provided further support for the idea that differences exist between male and female police officers’ policing styles and decision-making. For example, a study examining police officers’ use of force decisions in comparison to subjects’ resistance discovered that male and female officers responded differently to similar levels of resistance, with females utilizing “a narrower range of justifiable use of force options” (Bazey, Lersch, & Mieczkowski, 2007, p. 190). Another observational study within the United States, reached similar conclusions, as it was found that male police officers were more likely to use extreme controlling behaviours when interacting with citizens (e.g., threats, physical restraints). In comparison to female police officers,

males were more likely to react if they had been disrespected or if other officers were present (Rabe-Hemp, 2008).

In contrast, some studies have failed to find confirmatory evidence for the hypothesis that differences exist between male and female police officers' policing styles and decision-making. As a result of their review of the existing research on females in policing, Archbold and Schulz (2012) stated that there is convincing evidence that "male and female police officers are more similar than they are different" (p. 697). This conclusion is supported by several studies that have failed to ascertain any significant differences between male and female officers in regards to their willingness to use force, their use of coercion on citizens, or their responses to violent and hostile encounters (Grennan, 1987; Hoffman & Hickey, 2005; Paoline & Terrill 2005; Terrill & Mastrofski 2002).

Most recently, studies have also produced conflicting evidence for the suggestion that female officers are more empathetic to the needs of women and children, and more supporting of victims of crime. For example, as a result of a recent observational study analyzing police use of controlling and supporting behaviours, it was discovered that female officers were not more likely to express supporting behaviours towards crime victims (Rabe-Hemp, 2008). Additionally, a police officer's gender has recently been discovered to not influence an officer's perception of child sexual abuse, the perceived impact on the child, or the police action that should be selected when dealing with such cases (Kite & Tyson, 2004). Similarly, Jordan's (2002) research involving 48 women complainants of sexual assault, found that the complainant's perception of the responding officer's sensitivity to the sexual assault complaint best predicted victim satisfaction, regardless of that officer's gender.

Use of Force

As previously mentioned, females' willingness and ability to use the force necessary to attain control of hostile citizens has regularly been questioned. Therefore, the influence of officer gender on use of force has been examined to assess the reality of such concerns, providing reliable evidence that female officers are both willing, and

competent in using force when necessary (Grennan, 1987; Hoffman & Hickey, 2005; Terrill & Mastrofski 2002).

Further evidence to support this positive assertion, has most recently been produced as the result of Paoline and Terrill's (2005) and Seklecki and Paynich's (2007) research. In Paoline and Terrill's (2005) study, data were collected from observations and interviews of police officers from two American police departments. As a result, it was discovered that female police officers were not reluctant to use coercive force, when this force included both verbal and physical force (Paoline & Terrill, 2005). Few differences were found between male and female officers in the prevalence of such behaviours, and when comparing the explanatory factors relating to actions taken (Paoline & Terrill, 2005). Additionally, Seklecki and Paynich's (2007) survey research of 531 female officers in the United States found that 84.8% of the participants believed they were equally or more willing than male officers to use intermediate force.

The influence of officer gender on use of force, however, has also been examined to assess whether or not female police officers contribute to reduce rates of force, and excessive use of force. Providing support for this proposition, some studies have found that female officers were less likely to use force in comparison to their male counterparts (Mcelvain & Kposowa, 2008; Rabe-Hemp, 2008). It was, however, undetermined within these studies whether or not such findings were the consequence of the officers' gender, or if there was an alternative explanation (Rabe-Hemp, 2008).

The most common explanation for conclusions indicating female officers use less force, and generate less excessive force complaints, is that female and male officers respond differently within similar circumstances, with female officers relying more on communication and less on violence to defuse hostile situations. This reduces the frequency of incidents for which force is utilized and decreases the opportunities wherein officers may resort to the use of excessive force (Grennan, 1987, Worden, 1993). It has also been suggested that females may contribute to reduced rates of use of force "simply because they are women" (Rabe-Hemp & Schuck, 2007, p. 412). A female officer's presence may produce a calming effect within hostile situations and citizens

may be less likely to violence towards female officers (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2007, p. 93).

However, support for these theories is lacking. In Rabe-Hemp's (2008) study for example, although female officers were found to utilize less force, it was undetermined if this finding was a result of officer gender, differences in officer assignment, or a combination of individual and situational circumstances. Additionally, in Schuck and Rabe-Hemp's (2007) study, no evidence to support the theory that citizens use less force against female officers was discovered. Instead, it was found that more force was used against female officers in domestic calls, and yet female officers and female-female pairs continued to use less force in comparison to their male counterparts. Similarly, Pinizzotto, Davis, & Miller (1993, 1996, and 2006) concluded, as a result of their research on police officer safety in the United States, that the physical characteristics of an officer (including officer gender), does not influence an individual's decision to commit acts of violence towards an officer.

Furthermore, additional research conducted to assess the influence of officer gender and use of force has failed to discover any significant differences between male and female officers in regard to the frequency of use of coercion on citizens, or preferred responses to violent confrontations (Grennan, 1987; Hoffman & Hickey, 2005; Paoline & Terrill 2005). Terrill & Mastrofski (2002) found that male officers were no more likely to be involved in forceful encounters in comparison to female police officers. Instead, legal stimuli (e.g., resistance of suspect, safety concerns), and extra-legal factors (e.g., experience and education of officer, type of suspect) best predicted force being employed by an officer.

Inconsistent conclusions about the influence of officer gender on the severity of force used by police officers within police-citizen encounters have also recently been reported. A recent study analyzed use of force reports from an urban police department in the United States, and concluded female officers operated within a narrower range of use of force options (Bazey, Lersch, & Mieczkowski, 2007). Another study analyzed use of force by and against female police officers using survey data from a sample of police officers within the United States, discovering that female officers used less force than a

situation might normally call for, yet this tendency was not related to an increase in the likelihood of officer injury (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2007). Alternately, however, Hoffman and Hickey (2005) recently concluded, as a result of their analysis of a large U.S. police department's use of force reports and arrest data, that no significant difference in the severity of force could be identified between male and female officers. Female and male officers in this study were found to use similar levels of force, unarmed physical force, and had similar levels of weapon use (Hoffman and Hickey, 2005).

Analyses on officer gender and use of force appear to produce the most consistent conclusions regarding public complaints of excessive use of force. That is, female officers have consistently been found to generate an exceptionally lower amount of citizen complaints, and are accused less often of using excessive force (Brandl, Strohshine, & Frank, 2001; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004). Also, male officers have been found to not only be accused more frequently for excessive force, but also have been found to be involved in allegations involving higher levels of force in comparison to female officers (McElvain & Kposowa, 2004).

However, it has recently been argued that officer gender may not have as big of an influence on the frequency of citizens' complaints against the police as what has been commonly suggested. For example, a recent study found that citizen complaints against female police officers, including complaints for excessive use of force, were representative of the proportion of females within the agency being studied, with lower complaints against female officers being a reflection of this underrepresentation rather than a consequence of their gender (Bergeron, Archbold, & Hassell. 2008).

2.2.3. Summary

Perceptions regarding the duties of police officers and the masculine culture associated with law enforcement, combined with social perceptions about appropriate gendered behaviour and personality, have been the primary causes of gender-inequalities within policing, contributing to the continuation of negative and limited attitudes regarding female officers' capabilities (Grant, 2000, p.55). However, this review

has clearly illustrated that the influence of gender on police officers' occupational abilities and roles remains controversial.

Regardless, the review of the literature has shown that many continue to articulate the belief that generalizable differences exist between male and female officers, in terms of both their occupational decision-making and their work-related expressions. Perhaps most concerning is that negative perceptions by male police officers regarding females' effectiveness and appropriateness have been pervasive, despite the lack of confirmatory evidence to support these beliefs. This finding is concerning, as such attitudes have been found to be the greatest impediment for increasing female representation in policing (Kakar, 2002, p. 241).

2.3. Conclusions and Current Study

Given the existing research, identifying a generalizable impact of female involvement in policing remains an impossible task. However, reliable conclusions about the similarities or dissimilarities among male and female officers will have huge impacts on recruitment, promotion, and deployment strategies. Such knowledge may also assist in improving police-citizen relations and the nature of law enforcement. Therefore, future research is essential in order to minimize the inconsistencies and confusions that currently exist, and to progress our understandings of the relationships between gender and law enforcement.

As sex-separation of social roles continue to blur, and individuals increasingly resist the traditionally strict gendered expectations imposed upon them, it can be assumed that perceptions of "proper" gender expressions will also transform. Additionally, within policing in particular, females continue to fight for their acceptance, and demonstrate their effectiveness and value within the role of a police officer. Thus, as the proportion of qualified females' increases within police forces, making their capabilities more observable, it may be expected that perceptions of female police officers abilities and roles may also change.

Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the influence of officer gender on law enforcement. Focus was to identify officers' perceptions regarding the abilities and roles of female police officers. Female police officers unique occupational experiences were also of interest to identify. Understandings of such topics were expected to assist in an assessment of the aforementioned theoretical perspectives on gender and policing (i.e., positive, negative, and neutral perspectives), and illuminate the current status of women in law enforcement.

Chapter 3.

Methods and Sample

This study employed a qualitative methodology to assess the perceptions and experiences of Canadian police officers. Currently, the role of females within law enforcement remains complex, controversial, and limited. Therefore, this research aimed to explore the issues surrounding female police officers and their contributions to Canadian law enforcement. The primary focus of the study was to identify officers' perceptions regarding females' appropriateness and capabilities as police officers, and to provide a current understanding of female officers' occupational experiences. Ultimately, findings from the study were expected to provide an assessment of the influence of gender on law enforcement; including constructive policies to enhance the role and experiences of female police officers in the future.

3.1. Participants

In depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seventeen Canadian police officers from the provinces of British Columbia (n= 16) and Ontario (n=1). The number of years that participants had been employed as police officers ranged from 1-35 years. Most of those interviewed were of the constable rank (n=13), two were of sergeant rank, one of staff sergeant rank, and one was a police chief. Participants were active (n=15) and retired (n=2) police officers. The sections, units, and services that participants had worked in, and the roles and responsibilities they had undertaken within their professional histories were extremely diverse. Within Canadian police forces, all police officers are required to begin their careers in front-line policing, and therefore all participants had some experience in patrol.

Both male (n= 5) and female (n= 12) officers were interviewed. As this study was primarily focused on identifying the influence, roles, and experiences of female police officers, a sample composed exclusively of female officers was initially anticipated. However, male police officers were included for two main reasons. First, negative perceptions in relation to females' appropriateness and abilities as police officers have regularly been held by male police officers, which have been recognized as the greatest barrier for increasing female representation in the occupation (Kakar, 2002, p. 241). Therefore, a determination of whether or not such perceptions persist among this population was of interest. Second, as males continue to make up the vast majority within Canadian police forces, it was assumed that their perceptions continue to have the most significant impact on police officers' experiences and policing operations; thus, an appreciation for such perceptions was believed to be imperative. However, as focus of this study was on identifying the experiences and influences of an expanding female population within law enforcement, a final sample composed of approximately two times the female to male participants was deemed most appropriate.

Seven police agencies in British Columbia, Canada (Surrey RCMP, Vancouver, Delta, Port Moody, Abbotsford, New Westminster, and Metro Vancouver Transit Police), and one police agency from the province of Ontario were represented within this sample. In 2012, female representation in each of these agencies ranged from 12.7% to 22.5% (numbers rounded to nearest 10th of a decimal; Statistics Canada, 2012). Female representation in higher ranking, and managerial positions were discussed by participants as being more disproportionate within each of their respective departments; no official date for these figures could be found. However, following the 2012 Police Administration Survey, it was reported that within senior policing ranks (personnel who have obtained senior officer status, normally at the rank of lieutenant or higher, such as chiefs, deputy chiefs, staff superintendents, superintendents, staff inspectors, inspectors, lieutenants, and other equivalent ranks) females composed 9.9% of this population (Statistics Canada, 2013). Although this number represents the average of all senior ranks and all Canadian police agencies, it demonstrates the elevated disproportion of females within high-ranking positions. Taken together, such information clearly demonstrates that policing continues to be a male-dominated occupation within Canada,

and that female police officers continue to represent a minority within their occupational roles.

Pseudonyms have been used to refer to participants within the subsequent results and discussion. Replacing participants' names occurred during transcription, and was used to anonymize participant identity and to keep their responses confidential. The table below presents the pseudonym for the seventeen individuals who participated in the current study and their associated demographic and personal information (i.e., gender, years of service in policing, and their police rank).

Table 3.1 Summary of Participants' Information

	Participant Name (Pseudonym)	Gender	Years of Service	Rank
1	Dallas	Male	5	Constable
2	Kyle	Male	10.5	Constable
3	Bryan	Male	12	Constable
4	Corey	Male	19	Sergeant
5	Austin	Male	28	Sergeant
6	Lindsay	Female	1	Constable
7	Sheila	Female	5	Constable
8	Khloe	Female	6	Constable
9	Jackie	Female	9	Constable
10	Karen	Female	11	Constable
11	Megan	Female	14	Sergeant
12	Susan	Female	15	Constable
13	Shay*	Female	18	Staff Sergeant
14	Bailey	Female	25	Constable
15	Rebecca	Female	25	Constable
16	Jolene	Female	32	Chief
17	Lorie*	Female	35	Constable

* Participants are retired

It is understood that "sex" and "gender" are distinct terms within academic literature, with sex referring to a person's biology, while gender is a social construction that refers to social and cultural roles (Lorber, 1994, p. 17); however the term gender was regularly and purposefully used in place of the term sex within this thesis. This was primarily done so that the "act of sex" would not be confused with biological sex. Additionally, the use of a single term was believed to aid in the flow and clarity of the

writing. The term gender in this research therefore also refers to a person's biological sex (i.e., male or female).

3.2. Access and Recruitment

As this research involved the consideration and selection of only individuals who met certain criterion (i.e., Canadian police officers), the purposive approach of criterion sampling was utilized (Palys, 2008). Recruitment of participants occurred by emailing those individuals who met this criterion and requesting them to participate. An information sheet was attached to each email (Appendix A), which outlined the purpose of the research and the research ethics associated with the study. When necessary, follow-up phone calls were made in addition to the emails.

Contact information for participants was primarily obtained through the primary researcher's thesis supervisor, Dr. Rick Parent. Dr. Parent worked as a police officer in Delta, British Columbia for thirty years, and also has significant experience as a policing researcher and scholar. Through such experiences, Dr. Parent has made numerous professional contacts from various police departments throughout the world. He was able and willing to provide contact information (email addresses and phone numbers) for several of these colleagues/contacts. Dr. Parent obtained permission from these individuals prior to providing their contact information, to respect their privacy, and to ensure that they were open and comfortable with being contacted. Contact information for thirteen participants was gained through Dr. Parent. Snowball sampling was also utilized within these interviews to gain two additional participants, and two participants were obtained through personal contacts.

Within the interviews, participants commonly referred to their relationship with the individual who had put them in contact with the primary researcher. Such vocalizations were always positive, and portrayed the contacts as respected and trusted individuals. The primary researcher's association to these individuals thus served to ascertain credibility as a researcher and further assisted in the development of rapport.

3.3. Ethics Approval

As the current study involves human participants, ethics approval was required prior to conducting any interviews. Ethics approval to conduct five of the interviews utilized within this project was granted by Dr. Sheri Fabian based on the authority granted to her by the Research Ethics Board at Simon Fraser University (SFU). Dr. Fabian was the course instructor for Criminology 864: *Advanced Qualitative Research Methods* at SFU in the fall of 2014, the class for which these five interviews were originally conducted. It was explained to these five participants that their responses, in addition to being used for a final class project, would also contribute to a master's thesis with their permission. These five interviews were conducted with five female police officers, and involved open-ended discussions focused on participants' occupational experiences and perceptions in relation to the influence of gender on policing.

Simon Fraser University's Research Ethics Board (REB) granted ethics approval for the entirety of this project on December 11, 2014. The research was designated as "minimal risk" based on the analysis of Simon Fraser University's ethics policy R 20.01.

No permission was sought from the policing agencies in which participants are (or were) employed. This decision was primarily done for the sake of efficiency. That is, as this study was concerned with interviewing officers from multiple agencies, it would require an unnecessary amount of time to gain permission from each agency of interest. Additionally, the decision not to seek approval from the participants' respective police agencies was seen as being further advantageous in terms of the quality of participants' responses, as it has been established that "the very fact of having official approval for the research can be a difficulty when it comes to being trusted by the research subjects themselves, who may regard the researcher with suspicion as a tool of management" (Reiner & Newburn, in King & Wincup, 2008, p. 355).

3.4. Ethical Concerns

Every effort was made to protect confidentiality and anonymity of participants within this research. Interview recordings were stored in a secure location prior to and

during the transcription process. Additionally, participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms at transcription, and all identifying factors (e.g., colleagues' names, locations, police agencies) were removed from the interview transcripts to further protect participants' identities.

Adherence to strict confidentiality and anonymity measures serves to protect the participants from any backlash, or consequences that may come to them if it was discovered that they had talked to an "outsider", or articulated any information that could portray their agency or colleagues in a negative or critical light. Furthermore, guaranteeing and following such measures in social science research provides "the foundation of trust and rapport that allows researchers to gather valid data to promote understanding of the human condition, and provide the basis for rational social policy" (Palys & Lowman, 2006, p.163).

Respondents' names within this write up have not been linked to their respective police departments. This disconnect occurred during the transcription process. Such an undertaking was done for several reasons. First, this serves to better protect participants' identities and makes them less likely to be identified through their responses. Second, as permission was not sought from any police agency, it was believed to be discourteous and unethical to associate particular quotes or findings to a named agency. Finally, police officers are a very secretive and highly scrutinized population. It was anticipated that participants would be reluctant to divulge information out of a fear that it could be used against them or their police service. Therefore, their responses are not linked to their respective police agencies to minimize the possibility of guarded and limited responses being given.

A female police chief from Ontario, Canada was interviewed within this research. Concerns with respect to the confidentiality and anonymity of this individual and her responses arose within this research, given her unique rank and province of employment. These concerns were explained to the participant and several suggestions as to how she could be represented within the written results were provided. These options included: she could be given a pseudonym and associated with her province and rank, identified using her name and her department, or placed as part of a larger

population (e.g., a female officer from another province holding a managerial position). The participant voiced that she had no concerns, as she did not believe that she said anything that was controversial or that could be interpreted negatively. For these reasons she did not have a preference as to how she was represented. Ultimately, the decision was made to give this participant a pseudonym (i.e., Jolene) and associate her with her respective rank and province. It was believed that this participant's rank and province would be enticing knowledge for readers, and may also prove to be significant when interpreting the research results. Further, within the discussion on this matter, the participant stated that there are four female police chiefs in the province of Ontario. Thus, this particular decision was also believed to maintain a degree of confidentiality for this participant. Confidentiality was expected to minimize the chances of negative consequences occurring in the unlikely event that those who read the research results develop adverse attitudes, as a result of her participation in this research or as a result of their subjective interpretations of her responses.

3.5. Data Collection: Semi-structured Interviews

Seventeen in depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted for this project. It is acknowledged that by interviewing participants as a means of data collection, individual interpretations and perceptions regarding certain phenomena were collected. This focus may be critiqued based on the argument that peoples' perceptions "may not reflect objective social reality" (Jussim, 2012, p.14). However, it was recognized that although this latter statement may hold truth, an understanding of "human behaviour is destined to be trivial and/or incomplete unless it takes people's perceptions into account" (Palys & Atchison, 2014, p. 9). Furthermore, "if perceptions are real in their consequences, and if they are a major determinant of what we do, then clearly they are what we must set out to understand" (Palys & Atchison, 2014, p. 9). Therefore, although the perceptions of police officers in relation to the influence of gender on policing may not reflect the reality of such relationships, an understanding of these perceptions remains critical, as they undoubtedly impact the officers' behaviours, thoughts, and consequently, policing operations and police-citizen encounters.

The seventeen interviews conducted for this research ranged in length from 20 to 124 minutes. Each interview was exploratory in nature, and participants were asked to share their opinions, knowledge, perceptions, and experiences relating to the influence of gender on law enforcement. Interview discussions focused upon recruit training, team building, and patrol experiences. Even when officers who have been employed within a specialty section for an extended period of time were interviewed, their responses were largely based upon their patrol and recruit experiences rather than what was happening within their current or recent work environments.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen for this study, as this method allows for thick descriptions to be obtained regarding the personal perceptions and experiences of participants, and is specifically well suited for research focused on “complex and sometimes sensitive issues” (Barriball & White, 1994, p. 330). Pre-determined questions combined with the option of pursuing topics of interest as they arose, ensured that detailed responses would be elicited, while at the same time ensuring that discussions about particular topics occurred. Such formatting also ensured that subsequent comparisons between participants’ perceptions and experiences could easily be completed. See Appendices B and C for the interview schedules.

Every effort to build and strengthen rapport throughout the data collection process was taken throughout this study. Rapport “involves trust and a respect for the interviewee and the information he or she shares. It is also the means of establishing a safe and comfortable environment for sharing the interviewee's personal experiences and attitudes as they actually occurred” (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). Therefore, rapport building is critical in interview-based research to maximize the quality of data collected. For this reason the interviewer was open, respectful, and honest with participants within each interview and attempted to create a safe and trusting environment in which participants’ felt comfortable sharing their personal perceptions and experiences. Additionally, each interview began with easy, non-threatening questions relating to the participants’ professional histories, followed by questions of higher importance, and of a more personal and sensitive nature. This ordering of questions was strategically designed to assist in the development of rapport between the

interviewer and the participants, as well as to “foster a degree of commitment on the part of the interviewees” (Berg, 2009, p. 113).

Sixteen face-to-face interviews and one telephone interview were conducted. The face-to-face interviews were conducted in locations chosen by the participants, to best ensure their openness and comfort. As a result, interviews took place at coffee shops, police departments, and participants’ residences. Permission to audio-record was requested prior to conducting each interview. Only one person refused to be recorded; on this occasion hand written, detailed notes of the participant’s responses were taken instead.

Prior to the start of each interview, a printed copy of a consent form (Appendix D) was provided to each participant. Participants were asked to read the form, and if they remained in agreement to participate following this, their oral consent was requested. Oral consent was purposefully utilized in place of written consent within this study. After all, it has been indicated that written consent may turn “an exchange based on trust into one of formality and mistrust” (Israel & Hay, 2006, p.69). Further, as police officers have been found to be already suspicious towards outsiders (Paoline, 2003, p. 204), written consent would serve to confirm, and perhaps even proliferate such a feeling towards the interviewer. Therefore, the option of using written consent was believed to threaten rapport building, and subsequently, the truthfulness and depth of participants’ responses.

Five of the face-to-face interviews were conducted between October 6th, 2014, and October 28, 2014. These interviews were conducted for the primary purpose of completing a final project for a graduate class at SFU in the fall of 2014. However, it was anticipated during the planning of this project and the conduction of these interviews that the data collected would likely contribute to the primary researcher’s thesis. Therefore, the interview schedule that was used for these five interviews was very similar to the schedule utilized in the subsequent interviews conducted for this research. Ultimately, these five interviews were judged to be complementary to the current study and were utilized within this research. The remaining eleven face-to-face interviews began January 14, 2015 and were completed on February 18, 2015.

Following the completion of the sixteen face-to-face interviews with police officers in the Lower Mainland, British Columbia, the opportunity was afforded to interview a female chief of police from Ontario. In Canada there are very few females of this rank and therefore, experiences and perceptions of a female in such a position are extremely rare. Thus, although this research was initially focused exclusively on officers employed in the area of Vancouver, British Columbia, this additional interview was deemed relevant and was expected to be extremely constructive to the current study. A face-to-face interview was preferential to conduct in this instance; however, the travel costs associated with this specific method made it an impractical option. Therefore, a single telephone interview was conducted with this individual on March 6th, 2015 in order to examine her perceptions and unique experiences as a chief of police. An informed consent form was emailed to her prior to the conduction of the telephone interview. She was asked to read over this consent form prior to the interview. The same interview schedule that was used in the previous face-to-face interviews was followed, and detailed; hand written notes of the participant's responses were taken during this interview, as audio recording was deemed unfeasible.

Following each of the seventeen interviews, notes were taken regarding my experiences, opinions, thoughts, and feelings. Such an undertaking was conducted for the purpose of assisting in critical self-reflection, and to provide a means of transparency within the research process. The influence and value of this practice was most clearly demonstrated by the fact that my understandings about female police officers' perceptions and experiences, and their associations to the broader social context, significantly transformed within the course of this project. This note-taking process also proved to be of assistance in the data analysis process, as the notes helped to identify recurring themes between and within the participants' interviews.

3.6. Data Analysis

Following the completion of each interview, the fifteen audio-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim into a Microsoft Word document, and the written notes taken from the two interviews that were not audio recorded, were also chronicled using the same program. These word documents were anonymized and were stripped of all

identifying information. Although interviews were initially transcribed verbatim, the decision was later made to remove distracting (e.g., hm, um, like) and repetitive words from the transcripts. Unnecessary words were removed to avoid any disruption they may have caused when reading and understanding participants' quotations. These word documents were then reread for accuracy and uploaded into *NVivo 10*, a software program designed to assist in the organization, collection, and analysis of qualitative data.

An inductive analysis was then utilized to identify recurring themes within this project. To do this, all transcripts were carefully read in order to re-familiarize myself with their contents. Each transcript was then reread and carefully analyzed. Each word that participants spoke was considered, questions in relation to theoretical underpinnings of their perceptions and experiences were asked, and the exploration of similarities and differences within and between transcripts occurred simultaneously. All possible themes were coded into separate nodes. Transcripts were then reread with each existing node being critically examined. Nodes were restructured, combined, or abandoned at this time. Following this step, transcripts were again reread and recoded in accordance to the reformed nodes. These nodes were then scrutinized to ensure that their contents were consistent and comprehensible. These final themes are presented and discussed within the following chapter.

3.7. Summary

This chapter reviewed the methods and sample utilized within the present study. This research aimed to identify police officers' perceptions regarding the capabilities and roles of female police officers, and to provide an appreciation for females' experiences working within law enforcement. To gain such knowledge, in depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seventeen Canadian police officers. The individuals were male (n=5) and female (n=12) police officers, from the Lower Mainland, British Columbia (n=16), and one female police chief from Ontario, Canada (n=1). The number of years that participants had been employed as police officers ranged from 1 through to 35 years. The sections, experiences, and roles that these officers had been involved in within their professional histories were extremely diverse.

Prior to conducting each interview, participants were provided with information regarding the present study and their oral consent was requested. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity within this research. Following the completion of data collection, interviews were transcribed and anonymized. Using *Nvivo 10* software an inductive analysis was then used to identify overarching themes from these interviews.

Chapter 4.

Findings and Discussion

As discussed in the preceding chapter, seventeen in depth interviews were conducted with Canadian police officers to assess the influence of gender on law enforcement. The primary purpose of this chapter is to provide an examination of the main findings of these interviews. Through careful analyses of the interview transcripts, several overarching themes emerged. For ease of presenting these results, the revealed information has been arranged under two sections: (1) The roles and (in)abilities of female police officers; and (2) Female police officers' occupational experiences.

Additionally, participants' direct quotes are regularly included within the below discussion to provide clarity and substantiation, and to honour the voices of the participants. Through analysing individual perceptions of the influence of gender on law enforcement, this research seeks to uncover the current status of females in law enforcement and illuminate the impact of an increasing female presence in Canadian police agencies.

4.1. The Influence of Gender on Policing: Roles and (In)Abilities of Female Police Officers

4.1.1. Officer Competency: Hard Work Trumps All

As stated in Chapter 1, recent research conducted to evaluate police officer competency has consistently found males and females officers to be perceived equally as capable at front-line police work (Sandifer, 2006; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007). Unanimously participants within this study expressed similar beliefs. Participants articulated that the personality of an individual officer was the best predictor of their

policing capabilities. A hard work ethic was most commonly described as being the primary quality necessary for policing competency. A hard working officer was defined as one who responded effectively and efficiently within each call and duty, and one who did not avoid particular assignments or situations. The “call dodger”, “cover boy”, or “cover girl” - those officers who skip or avoid particular calls, or purposefully do not show up first to a call in order to avoid the paper work associated with being the first responder - were equated as incompetent. Examples of such perceptions can clearly be seen within the following responses given by Austin and Karen:

I've heard people say [...] oh they don't want someone as their backup. And it's more for what kind of person they are, not necessarily because it's a her; It's the person's weak, they don't do good police work. And I've seen guys and girls like that. Not very many, but you do. And everyone knows who these people are. We call them the cover boy or the cover girl. They never actually take the call, they always sort of roll up afterwards to help out. (Austin)

Typically the workhorse is going to be the awesome partner because they are going to; you know...help you get your work done and do a better job. But... just that's been my experience with... police work... if you got someone that's got a good work ethic... that's huge. (Karen)

Both Austin and Karen also dismiss the possibility of an officer's gender as a factor determining preference for a partner or a backup; they instead articulate that an officer's work ethic and “the kind of person” one is best determines such a preference. Most participants in this study also directly expressed similar beliefs. This specific finding contradicts past research, which has found police officers to most commonly prefer a male partner or backup (Carlan, Nored, & Downey, 2011; Vega & Silverman, 1982). Therefore, the above findings may in themselves provide evidence of a positive movement towards females' integration in law enforcement. After all, these findings indicate that female police officers are regularly accepted, and their overall abilities appreciated within modern Canadian policing organizations.

4.1.2. Occupational Skill Sets

Despite articulating that male and female officers are equally as competent at police work, police officers in the current study also regularly voiced the belief that

gender-based differences exist in policing. Specifically, females were regularly described as having “feminine strengths” for police work, and males as having “masculine strengths”. Furthermore, the presence of those qualities, said to be males’ strengths, were commonly described as being non-present or less present in females and thus, identified as female weaknesses. Similarly, females’ strengths were commonly equated with male weaknesses. However, despite such articulations, each participant also clarified that these “differences” were generalizations. That is, although male and female officers commonly have gender-specific strengths and weaknesses, both males and females can possess gender non-conforming skill sets: i.e., male officers can have “feminine” (dis)advantage(s), and female officers can have “masculine” (dis)advantage(s).

Feminine Advantage

Participants in this study commonly articulated perceptions that female officers had specific “feminine strengths” for police work. In particular, they cited communication skills, empathy, and comforting abilities as common strengths of female police officers. Both male and female, and senior and junior officers voiced such beliefs. An example of a response illustrative of female officers’ superior communication skills is seen in Bailey’s response:

The ability to build rapport in communication is everything in our job, you can talk yourself out of far more than you could ever fight yourself out, and women are generally better at that than men. Talking, and the patience, and bringing people down.

This response also suggests that females’ superior communication skills may assist in reducing use of force incidents, or at least police-citizen “fights”, through de-escalating hostile police-citizen encounters.

Female officers were also commonly said to be better suited for particular front-line duties in comparison to male police officers. Specifically, it was articulated that women are generally better at interviewing victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and “dealing with children” in comparison to men. This superiority was primarily said to be the result of females’ “feminine” skills (i.e., they are better able to empathize

with and comfort victims). For similar reasons, particular specialty sections (e.g., sex assaults, child exploitation) were also commonly referred to as generally “better fits” for females and were further described to be female-dominated sections.

Consistent with the above views, participants regularly discussed that a general weakness of male officers was their communication and empathy skills. Male officers were perceived as generally less able to communicate or empathize with citizens in comparison to female officers. Several participants also articulated the associated beliefs that, in comparison to females, males were commonly less effective at empathizing and comforting victims of crime, less effective at using their “verbal judo” to calm hostile situations, and too willing or too quick to use physicality within these situations.

Masculine Advantage

Alternately, males’ bigger and stronger bodies were regularly described as being a general advantage of male police officers. For example, Megan stated:

Okay well the obvious [advantage] is physical. Men are stronger physically that's, mean you can't deny that. They have muscle and so that's their one thing, is physical strength.

When those officers who expressed that physical strength was a male advantage in policing, were asked how these physical characteristics translate into an advantage for police work, it was said that a larger and stronger body would prove to be advantageous in physical or violent police-citizen encounters, particularly in hand-to-hand combat situations.

In contrast, females’ smaller and weaker bodies were regularly described as a general “weakness” of female police officers. As a result, female police officers were also commonly perceived to be less effective than males within physical police-citizen encounters. A response illustrative of such perceptions is seen in the following statement made by Bryan:

You have some men who can deal with use of force... more capably than some women just because of their... sheer size. So when you

have somebody who's 250 pounds and, you know, a big, strong guy who's... who's athletic then, you know, that's helpful in certain use of force situations. But then again, you know, you have females who are very good at use of force, because they're skilled and they're fit and they're strong. It just kind of depends on the person. But you know, there's just a natural, if you take the average male, average female, a male is usually a little bit... stronger, it just depends on the person you're talking about.

Although Bryan acknowledges within this response that both male and female officers can be effective in use of force situations, he also suggests that the size and strength of an officer is important in certain physical encounters. Therefore, as females are naturally smaller and weaker, he articulates that females will generally be less effective within use of force situations in comparison to males.

Additionally, as a result of male officers' general "strengths", they were commonly described as being more effective than females at responding to specific calls, such as bar fights and riots, due to the physical nature of such calls. Rebecca acknowledged that in most hostile encounters communication is the preferred and most appropriate "tool" used to control the situation. However, she further explains that in some cases "rationalizing" with a person is an impossible task, and that physical force is necessary:

What happens if you have someone barricaded and they have a weapon? You're not talking about force in that place, it might come to that, but you use your communication skills, and your ability to connect with the person and empathize and speak to them and try and come to a resolution with them. But when you're in a bar fight, and the guys drunk there's no rationalizing with somebody and it's, the fight's on. Do I want to have another woman there or do I want a guy who's... big and strong? Well...I'd like to have a guy there to be quite honest.

Through this response, Rebecca also portrays her preference for a male partner within bar fight scenarios, or scenarios where there are no alternatives to physicality, which she bases on the fact that male officers are "big and strong". Such a response illustrates the belief that males are superior within "fighting" situations, and that being "big and strong" is an advantage for effectively controlling physical altercations.

False Negatives and False Positives

But it's not black and white, women talk more and men fight more.
(Jackie)

Although the aforementioned “gender-differences” were commonly expressed, they were explained to not be “naturally-linked” to a particular gender, and instead were described as characteristics and skills one gender possesses more commonly in comparison to the other. In fact, within each interview, all officers who had expressed the belief that there were differences between male and female officers’ skill-sets later stated within their interviews that such differentiations were not universal. Within each of these interviews participants gave examples of situations, or individuals in direct contrast to their initial gender-based assessments. An example of such perceptions is seen in the following response given by Susan, when she was asked whether she believed male and female officers have different strengths and weaknesses within policing:

Yeah. And having worked with both right, yeah there's definitely. You know, if you want to be very...sort of obvious, males are bigger and stronger; so if it comes to something where that becomes an issue then they're bigger and stronger. Having said that, not all men are bigger and stronger than some females. And if you want to be sort of very general, females tend to have a little bit more ability to relate to people, our communication skills can be stronger. And again on that side, I've worked with some females where that's not the case, and I've worked with some males that that is the case; they are good communicators as well.

Although Susan at first identifies the existence of gender-differentiated strengths and weaknesses of police officers through her response, she also acknowledges that there are exceptions to these generalizations. She acknowledges that there are officers who act inconsistently to prescribed gender stereotypes within their occupational roles. Such perceptions were extremely common within this research.

Most frequently, officers articulated contradictory thoughts when recounting their experiences and perceptions of female officers in use of force incidents, and males in interviewing victims of crime and verbally deescalating hostile citizen encounters. Females were commonly stated to be generally better at communication, being empathetic, verbal de-escalation, and comforting and interviewing victims of crime in

comparison to male officers. However, discussions that males also possessed these “skills” and were competent within each of these tasks also occurred. Austin also directly altogether dismissed the existence of the “female” advantage in de-escalating hostile encounters, and related female officers’ de-escalation abilities to training, as opposed to the result of a “natural’ skill:

I’ve never seen the magic of the female police officer rolling in there and calming everyone like you see in the movies. I’ve seen crisis negotiators that are trained, and some are male some are female- they do that. But they are really good at that. I’ve seen first-hand females jack a situation up, like out of control and we’d have to stop stuff cause there is a small female and a big guy telling this guy she’s going to kick his ass, huge guy, and none of us could do it to him...and we had to just pull her away. I’ve seen that multiple times too. (Austin)

Furthermore, although females’ smaller bodies and reduced strength were commonly described to be a weakness in regard to the physical aspects of police work, all participants regularly explained that females could be highly capable and effective within such situations. Participants also regularly gave examples of specific female officers exhibiting “masculine” traits (i.e., strength, aggressiveness, physicality), and who were appropriately authoritative and physical in certain hostile situations. Additionally, all the female officers viewed themselves as capable, and willing to respond physically in hostile situations if and when such action is required. Participants stated that as long as females were appropriately trained in use of force, were aware of their “limitations” (i.e., their smaller and weaker size), and were not afraid to ask for back up when required, they would be effective within physical encounters.

In many cases examples of females who were perceived as overly physical or aggressive were also given. For example, Bailey who, directly following her suggestion that females were generally better able to verbally deescalate hostile encounters, stated that “at the same time you could get, there was a couple of policewomen that...could start a fight in a nunnery...”

Additionally, Rebecca voiced the perception that differences between male and female officers’ skill-sets are becoming less distinct than at the start of her career. Further, she explained that those individuals portraying gender-contradicting strengths

and weaknesses have consistently been increasing within her agency. Such an observation likely reflects transpiring societal changes that have been occurring in recent years, specifically, the “growing support for gender equality and a shift toward less restrictive views of gender roles” (Brooks & Bolzendahl, 2004, p. 106). Such reforms after all, further contribute to changing expectations and teachings of appropriate gender expression. It is important to note that if this observation is correct, it is likely that persisting arguments involving male and female officer “differences” are becoming less accurate and less appropriate with time.

Taken together, the above findings provide clear evidence that an officer’s gender does not equate with a “natural” skill set, or merit competency at a particular policing task. Thus, participants’ responses demonstrate that generalizing officer competency or skill sets based on gender is an erroneous and inappropriate undertaking. Assessing an officer’s competency, skill sets, and effectiveness within specific calls instead requires the individual evaluation of each police officer. These findings support past empirical research, which have failed to confirm gender-differences in police officer abilities and behaviours (Hoffman & Hickey, 2005; Paoline & Terrill 2005; Rabe-Hemp, 2008; Terrill & Mastrofski 2002).

4.1.3. Gender as a Policing Tool

Grant (2000) found public perceptions of police officers “reflect gender stereotypes expectations, and thus female officers have a qualitatively different impact than male officers” (p. 53). Evidence for such an assertion was discovered within this research project. There were several circumstances in which the presence of a female officer was voiced as having a distinct effect within police-citizen interactions. First, female officers were discovered to perform particular “female roles” (e.g., “the dumb blonde”, “a flirt”, “the good cop”) to gain advantages within some police-citizen encounters. Second, female officers were also discovered to experience unique benefits within undercover police work in comparison to male police officers. Third, the mere presence of a female officer and a male officer were also revealed result in different advantages within certain front-line policing calls. Finally, cultural and individual

perceptions of gender were found to result in differences in the cooperation and comfortableness that some citizens afford to male and female officers.

Role Playing: Being “a Girl”

Participants described consciously playing into societal gender expectations to gain an advantage within some interactions with the public. Officers described “performing” gender stereotyped behaviours, in order to gain compliance from citizens. That is, they acted consistently with gender norms even though such actions were not how they would “normally” behave. Specifically, female police officers described playing particular “female roles” in their interactions with citizens in order to achieve positive outcomes. For example, female officers described flirting with male citizens or playing “the dumb blonde” girl in order to gain citizen compliance.

Participants also noted that male-female partnerships performed “good cop-bad cop” for similar reasons. Male officers in these performances were always described as playing the “bad cop” through expressing assertiveness, and females the “good cop” through portraying empathy and passivity. Again, this role-playing was described to occur purposefully based on officers’ knowledge of gender stereotypes, even when such expressions contrasted with how these officers would instinctively express themselves. Jackie best articulated such a strategy:

...we can play good cop, bad cop. I can go in first and say ‘you can either deal with me and we can solve this, or deal with that guy’. And we play it off that. He could be the nicest, least physical cop.

Undercover Work

Participants reported that public perceptions of the police were further used for their advantage within their interactions with citizens. Officers within this research commented that policing remains “a man’s job”, and that female police officers contradict this dominant image. For such reasons, female officers were described as being highly effective in undercover and plainclothes work, and in some cases, even preferred over male officers for such roles. Specific situations were also articulated in which citizens disclosed incriminating or highly important information to undercover or plain clothed

female officers. Officers believed such outcomes were due to the simple fact that these officers were females, and were therefore, not believed to be police officers.

Gender Presence

Participants expressed that the presence of “large male officers” can be advantageous in certain scenarios, due to the intimidation, threat, and authority portrayed by their presence. These officers were described as being able to gain more respect and compliance from some citizens simply due to the fact that they were “large males”. Alternately, female officers were perceived as unable to portray the same qualities. Corey explains the circumstances in which public perceptions of “large male officers” can be advantageous for policing:

I have used to my advantage as a supervisor and in the course of working as a police officer...some of the extra presence that is brought by particularly large male officers to my advantage. When you are going to check people at a bar, or you're going to a bar fight, or you are going to do the bar watch gangster ejection type stuff...There is something to be said about going with, you know, a bunch of behemoth, goon looking cops, who are big, capable looking, and look like they're just not going to be messed with...Like there is a presence...in that very narrow, small application, which...does have a place and...it can be very advantageous...You know, you take a 270 pound, body building, 6"5 police officer in uniform with all his gear on and walk up to the gangster at the table and tell him that if he isn't leaving he's going to be dragged out by his ear and...be embarrassed in front of his friends so to speak. You know, you could deliver that message much better with that guy who's that big, where it may not come across [...] the same from someone who might be, you know, say 120 pounds, 5"4...different presence. (Corey)

This response illustrates that situations in which a male officer's presence would be advantageous are rare. However, it also demonstrates that “male presence” is consciously being utilized as a policing tool. Large, male officers are purposefully utilized for some calls, under the assumption that their presence improves citizen compliance. The effectiveness of this “large male presence” as a tool in such situations however has not been previously been assessed.

Several officers also described incidents where the presence of a female officer resulted in more advantageous responses by citizens. Specifically, female presence was

said to deescalate hostile situations, and decrease violent and physical altercations. This de-escalation was said to be the result of male citizens expressing chivalry and an elevated amount of respect towards female police officers. Jackie for example stated that in “nine out of ten times the guys see no glory in fighting with a woman”. Karen also articulated a similar perception:

Usually a female will deescalate a potentially, a violent situation, not always... just with their presence of a female officer. Because my dad actually said this to me: ‘even your biggest, most horrible criminal knows they don't hit a girl’. (Karen)

However, Karen further described contradictory ideas within her interview. She denied ever witnessing or experiencing situations in which a female officer’s gender resulted in assailants being less physical towards them “... I have never gotten that. Cause people they don't see you as a male or female they see your uniform.”

It was also vocalized that female officers may contribute to decreasing the number of public complaints that arise within arrest and control incidents, simply as a result of their presence. Kyle best explained this phenomenon:

I think on the one side of it, the complaint generated from the person who’s been arrested...I think there’s no way a lot of guys are going to go make a complaint that a female police officer arrested me and put me to the ground. They’ll lick their wounds you know...and then a third party complaint, someone across the street seeing this, ‘oh look at the woman arresting the male’, you know, ‘look at that’, you know, ‘it must be okay.’ (Kyle)

Bailey’s experiences, however, prove that such a possibility may not be so straightforward:

I remember driving the wagon...I was in internal investigation every week...because they said ‘that girl, it was her’. And I’m like ‘I gave him a ride home’ (laughter) right. Oh no, I beat him up right. No, I gave the old guy a ride home, right. It was nice. (Bailey)

Victim Preference and the Influence of Culture

Officers were also described as having gender-differentiated advantages in police work as a result of citizens' preferences. Such advantages most often arose when officers were assisting victims of crime. Such requests were said to occur predominately in sexual assault and domestic violence calls and were typically for female officers, although requests for male officers were also reported. A victim's preference for an officer of a particular gender was said to be uncommon, and if such requests do occur, knowledge of such a preference prior to arriving at a scene was said to be unlikely. Participants instead suggested that the respect, understanding, and empathy emulated by a responding officer(s) towards victims of crime best predicted victims' satisfaction and a victim's preference for a specific police officer.

Cultural views were also commonly discussed as having negative consequences in terms of citizen compliance. Misogynist and patriarchal views embraced by particular individuals and particular cultures were specifically said to be reflected in some police-citizen interactions and to negatively influence citizens' cooperation with female police officers. Specifically, male citizens holding such views, were explained to resist or refuse to comply with female officers, or be particularly "nasty" (Bailey) towards female police officers.

Collectively, the above findings illustrate that utilizing gender as a policing tool is not a straightforward undertaking. The situations in which an officers' gender will prove to be either advantageous or disadvantageous will vary based on the individual beliefs of those citizens involved and the situational circumstances surrounding each encounter. Further, as Corey stated, "you don't know what you're going to get on those things until you get there...it's very up in the air". Therefore, the calls in which an officer's gender will influence the outcomes of a police-citizen encounter can rarely, if ever, be known prior to arrival on scene. Nonetheless, these results illustrate that an officer's gender influences some police-citizen encounters. That is, the presence of a female or male officer can have distinctive influences within some front-line policing calls. These findings therefore support the conclusion that embraced gender stereotypes in modern society continue to result in male and female officers having different influences within some citizen interactions (Grant, 2000, p. 53).

4.1.4. Gender Segregation in Policing: “there are pink jobs and there are blue jobs...”

A “gendering” of police duties has been identified since females’ inclusion within law enforcement and has been described as being a direct consequence of the long-lasting belief that “gender-differentiated” skill-sets between male and female police officers exist (Villiers, 2009, p. 73). This research indicated that this “gendering” persists in modern police forces. Female police officers continue to be over-deployed to specific front line calls (i.e., sexual assaults), and males to alternative front-line calls (i.e., bar fights and riots). Additionally, specific specialty sections in policing also continue to be “gendered” and labelled as better suited for officers of a specific gender.

“Gendered” Deployment

Despite the aforementioned finding that an officer’s gender cannot be not equated with a “natural” skill-set or a certain advantage within police-citizen encounters, this research shows that certain front-line policing calls continue to be “gendered”. That is, male and female officers continue to be disproportionately involved in “gender congruent” jobs within policing. Males are overrepresented in “masculine jobs”, such as physical and violent front-line calls, and females in “feminine jobs”, such as responding to victims of crime.

Most commonly, participants articulated the belief that female officers continue to be assigned and over-deployed to sexual assault cases. This was most commonly explained as the result of the unchallenged beliefs held by dispatch and higher-ranking officers, that females are better suited and preferred by the victims in these cases. Several participants shared such beliefs, examples of which appear below:

There are calls in the police department, which generally get routed to female officers, and those are where a female is the victim of a sexual assault; Females tend to get those calls. Our dispatchers are the ones who allocate those calls and...I think part of that is because you want to be sensitive to the victim, you know, almost exclusively female. Putting a male in that situation, and you know it can happen where a male will take that, that report, but sometimes I think...you want to be sensitive to the person, and maybe a female shows a softer side and, and does not seem as threatening. (Bryan)

...gals get called to the sexual assaults...that's a trend and that's fine. Guys are good at it, but the perception is that women will be uncomfortable telling a male. Depending on your approach they're not going to be comfortable anyhow. (Shay)

Within these responses, both Bryan and Shay acknowledge that females are over-deployed to sexual assault calls, yet voice that this “gendering” is generally a justifiable occurrence. Participants most commonly articulated similar accepting attitudes when discussing female over-deployment to specific calls. Such acceptance was most commonly justified through the explanation that victims of sexual assault are usually female, and therefore they are more comfortable and less threatened by female police officers.

However, evidence suggests that this gender division of police work is the result of gender-bias, rather than the result of skill-matching. Although those officers who perceived the continuing over-deployment of females to sexual assault calls to be justifiable, primarily based on the argument that it was the victim's preference to have a female officer, every police officer within this study stated that such a preference did not always exist. Furthermore, research conducted to assess sexual assault victims' perceptions of the importance of the interviewing officer's gender, discovered an officer's portrayal of sensitivity, warmth, and professionalism best predicted victim satisfaction, and further, that “being female does not automatically denote possession of the key attributes required for victim interviewing” (Jordan, 2002, p.319). Several participants in the current study also directly denounced the over-deployment of female officers to sexual assault calls, based on the argument that both male and female officers have the same skills and the same training to effectively deal with sexual assault calls. The condemnation of gendered deployment to sexual assaults calls was most clearly voiced by Lindsay:

I find a lot of sex assaults do get played off, 'oh look, there's a woman, you can take this!', and you're like 'you could handle this just fine, you guys in theory have been doing this, you know, before you let women into the police department. Were you doing a bad job then? Or... were you just, you know, like what were the outcomes of those ones? You admit you're bad? Or you just don't want to do this because this is hard?'[...] I mean if there's a victim who legitimately doesn't want to speak with a male officer or vice versa I mean, there are men who get

assaulted and sexually assaulted and other things happen to them and if they are more comfortable with, you know, a guy then better to have that, have them take care of a victim... But yeah, I don't think there should be, like just based on our showing up to things, I don't think we should be pre-emptively deciding who should go based on what type of call it is. Because I mean, as we all know, we show up to calls and things change very rapidly; it comes in as a domestic assault and turns out to be something not at all. It comes in as something silly like a noise complaint and it's actually something much worse. So it's actually hard to gauge based on the little bit of information you first get when you're dispatched.

In this response Lindsay articulates that male and female officers have equal abilities for appropriately dealing with sexual assault calls. She also acknowledges that in some cases, victims have a preference for dealing with an officer of a certain gender, but this cannot be predicted prior to arriving on scene. Furthermore, she uses the dynamic and ever-changing nature of front-line calls to further support her opposition towards the pre-emptive deployment of female officers to sexual assault calls. Therefore, this study's findings support the conclusion that the over-deployment of female police officers to sexual assault calls is the result of assumptions presuming differences in male-female appropriateness for such tasks despite there being no evidence to support such assumptions.

There were also experiences and perceptions articulated by participants in this study suggesting that male officers continue to be over-deployed to violent front-line calls, such as riots and bar fights. The belief that male presence and males' physical strength provide advantages within such calls provided the main justifications for this occurrence. For example, Bryan stated that he had purposefully used "large male officers" exclusively within bar fight and "bar watch gangster ejection type" calls.

Additionally, four officers, who were interviewed from a particular police agency described a particular "incident" that had occurred in which male officers were over-deployed to a riot call. This "incident" had occurred during the Stanley Cup riots in Vancouver in 2011. Media reports of this incident stated that this police department deployed roughly 50 police officers to assist the Vancouver Police, only two of whom were female (Babic, 2012; Diakiw, 2012). Female officers from this agency stated that the females on duty that night were willing and able to go to this call, yet were not

deployed. Further, these participants stated that male officers, who held investigative roles and who were off duty, were instead called in and deployed to this particular call. A further analysis of this incident occurs later in this chapter.

“Gendered” Specialty Sections

Particular specialty sections in policing were described as being more appropriate for officers of a specific gender, and were also labelled as being dominated by a specific gender. Most consistently, sexual assault and children exploitation sections were described as being female dominated. Female overrepresentation in such sections has been consistent since females’ entrance in policing, as these sections specialize in “women’s problems”, and require “feminine skills” for effective performance (Silvestri, 2003). Participants, however, regularly described an increasing male presence within these “female- dominated” sections.

Alternately, the physical nature and masculine image of certain sections (i.e., Emergency Response Team (ERT), Strike Force, Dog Units) hold a “masculine” image and were described as requiring masculine qualities for effective performance. Participants all stated that although these sections remain male-dominated, females are able to enter and be successful in each of these sections. Further, all sections, with the exception of ERT, which currently had an exclusively male composition, had both male and female police officers.

There was some evidence to suggest that covert mechanisms are creating and maintaining these gender divisions in policing specialty sections. These “mechanisms” were most clearly seen in discussions of why certain sections continue to be male dominated. For example, Khloe stated that the Dog Section continues to be male dominated. When asked why she believed this was the case, she replied:

Exactly. No reason. And that's one where lots of females have applied. And all of a sudden now, the rules change from oh 'well now you need to own your own home because you have to be able to have the kennel for the dogs, and there, we need to come and investigate...inspect your yard, make sure your yards big enough, and your kennels big enough'. Really? Well half these other guys keep them in their truck, right? Or you know what I mean? Or a space in their basement. But...so you can't live in a townhouse or a condo...you

need a house, you know what I mean. What the hell, how can you just change the rules...' oh now we are going to make it instead of being the POPAT, which it is for some of them to pass, now you got to do some other physical test that's like ridiculous...it's almost impossible to pass'... for a guy, let alone a girl, right? But they know that. Just because it's a lot of upper body stuff right? They specifically instituted that just in the last few years because a couple females kept applying, and they didn't want anything to do with them.

Similarly, Bailey described why particular sections continue to be male-dominated:

They were making this impossible test where they kept hurting themselves and (name) was like 'what are you trying to test here? Machoism?' It's got nothing to do with whether a woman can do this job because it has no bearing on the job...I just don't think there's been anybody who wants to go to ERT. Maybe because of the job itself. Maybe there's just nobody... it's funny that we all say 'oh no women are there' but it may not be that the job itself is impossible to do. I know it's not... so it's just, I think that a lot of people want to say oh there's no women there but I think it's not necessarily that women can't do that job. I think it's that women choose to not be that engaged... Like for Strike Force, they are 24-7. Sometimes they don't come home; they go, if they got to go to Kamloops, 'see ya!'... and off they go doing their surveillance. And, and yes it's tough, but if you have the mentality for that it really doesn't matter. But I think a lot of women are like no, I, I like my work-life balance. Not me, but normal people have that life balance thing... and I look at in and I go no. In ERT they're cliquy bastards. I'm telling you. They all dress the same, they all gel their hair the same, it's really like 'oh my god', but they all go out and do the same activities, and they're very much male-oriented... and I think it's the same for Strike Force that I think it's the, and they do a lot of overtime. Those squads are so specialized that they do, there's no one else to do, that can do that work. So when there's work they have to do it, so they have to have the ability to say 'no, I'm not coming home tonight honey- take care of the kids'. Or 'no, no sorry I can't go out on the date'- or whatever, and it's more likely that men will do that. I think that's what it is...It's certainly not because women can't do that job, because I've seen, I know women who have done all of those jobs. (Bailey)

These responses show that females' (in)abilities cannot explain their underrepresentation in certain policing sections. Through the above responses, it appears that that the "masculine" image and male-domination of certain specialty sections is partly maintained and reinforced by several complex and interrelated processes. Bailey explains that the interactions and expressions of those working within

ERT may be emitting a hyper-masculine image, thereby making ERT unattractive for female officers in particular. Additionally, the nature of the work, being physically demanding with some level of danger and violence, may also serve to attract more males than females. Gender role expectations were also perceived to serve as a significant obstacle for females from entering particular sections (i.e., ERT, Strike Force). That is, as females continue to be expected to serve as the primary caretakers of their homes and children, female officers face unique challenges in their abilities and willingness to pursue time-demanding positions within policing, such as ERT and Strike Force. And lastly, the masculine image of particular sections in policing appears to also be reinforced by entrance tests (i.e., physical testing), which further favour male police officers. Bailey and Khloe both perceive some entrance requirements as unnecessary or irrelevant to an individual's abilities to do the job.

Conversely, however, other participants articulated the necessity and transferability of such standards for these specialty sections. Participants most commonly justified the current physical entrance tests for ERT. Furthermore, according to the RCMP (2001),

An ERT is a group of highly-trained RCMP members capable of employing specialized weapons, equipment, and tactics to resolve extremely high-risk situations. The potentially violent and often dynamic nature of these incidents requires a highly integrated and coordinated tactical response. ERT members, in addition to possessing advanced tactical skills, must also possess the self-discipline to function effectively in physically and psychologically stressful environments for extended periods of time.

Therefore, members of ERT are exposed to more violence and physical demanding situations in comparison to general duty police officers. Thus, the existence of high physical standards for ERT members appears both understandable and necessary.

Regardless of the transferability of the current physical requirements for ERT, physical entrance tests for this section were most commonly voiced as a significant obstacle for female inclusion within this section. Austin also supported such ideas in his discussion of why ERT remains a male-exclusive section:

Cause its fricken' hard to do. It's really hard to get in and you need a lot of upper body strength... And a lot of them aren't attracted to the work. It's hard, brutal dirty work...You know, you do get some females who are attracted to, but most...no they don't want to do it. One of my female Mountie friends said 'there are pink jobs and there are blue jobs', it's just the way life is.

Through this response, Austin describes that the “hard, brutal, dirty” image of ERT work, combined with strength testing standards, and societal assumptions of “gender appropriate jobs” together can account for females’ underrepresentation within ERT.

There was also evidence to suggest that the male exclusiveness of tactical sections in particular may also be serving to disadvantage females from promotional opportunities. Megan specifically articulated such an idea:

When I am looking for experience in what would make me competitive for further promotion one of the significant areas where I lack experience is tactical decision making, and a lot of where that comes from is being in the emergency response team, right. So that is male dominated. I mean the physical standards to get into there are very, very high. 99% of females can't do it, physically can't do it. Or don't have the motivation to get to the physical shape to go into that environment. For me I don't have that experience because I'm a female.

Therefore, the unique barriers faced by females in accessing positions in tactical teams may also result in disadvantaging female police officers as they attempt to rise within the ranks. Reasons for, and processes involved in gender divisions of labour within policing, should be the focus of future research, as the above findings provide only a brief exploration into this topic.

4.1.5. Value of Masculinity: Female Inferiority?

As described in Chapter 1, the exclusion of females from policing was historically “supported by powerful stereotypes about the nature of police work and intrinsic gendered traits. Policing was seen as requiring symbolic authority and physical force that only males could exercise” (Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013, p. 116). However, participants in this study most commonly voiced perceptions that contradicted such ideas.

As previously mentioned, physical size and strength were said to be a common “weakness” for females. However, despite verbalizing the existence of such a “weakness”, participants also regularly stated that females were generally equally as effective within physical and hostile encounters, as a result of their training, tools, or other skills (e.g., de-escalation abilities). In fact, communication and verbal de-escalation were unanimously described as the most important tools for front-line police work, and the most effective means of resolving hostile encounters. For these reasons, some participants labelled some females as superior with hostile encounters, given their “superior” interpersonal and communication skills.

Further, the majority of participants within this study who expressed the belief that the size and strength was a common “weakness” of female officers, failed to recount an experience in which their own, or their female colleagues “physical limitations” had resulted in ineffective or dangerous resolution to a violent or hostile incident. That is, despite perceiving female physical limitations as a weakness for policing operations, participants did not provide examples of how this “weakness” has manifested within their patrol experiences. Additionally, as previously mentioned, participants regularly stated that the “size and strength” weakness was not exclusive to females, but also to “smaller” male officers.

All participants acknowledged that the need for and use of force in police work is rare. Further, they articulated that hand-to-hand combat situations and physical “fights” were particularly uncommon. Within physical and hand-to-hand situations, participants stated that size and strength of an officer was a small factor to consider when assessing an officer’s effectiveness in controlling these situations. Instead, an officer’s physical fitness, policing experience, and situational factors specific to each incident were all described as necessary considerations when assessing an officer’s ability to effectively deal with physical citizen-encounters. Also, when violent or physical police-citizen encounters do occur, participants articulated that they usually have back up, and/or are also armed and trained with techniques, tools, and weapons that place them at an advantage over the assailant(s).

Despite such facts, some participants' perceptions and experiences illustrate of the belief that females are inferior in comparison to males at police work. Participants described their own perceptions reflective of female inferiority, or described that they believed some of their colleagues held such beliefs. For example, Khloe stated that some of her male colleagues view female officers as less competent within their occupational roles:

The challenging moments are really...when they think you are a dumb ass and that you don't know what you're doing because you are a female, right? There's not very many of us there right? So being junior right, like new at the job, and then, you know what I mean? You do this, you do training for this every day, I'm pretty sure I can assess a file right? Like don't, just because I am a girl, tell me I'm doing it wrong, right? And you get that a lot, right? So that is frustrating, and then almost all of management... is all dudes, and it's a boys club and it's never going to change...not there...so you always have that in the back of your mind. How do you play the game but the game isn't on an equal playing field. It's kind of great because you can't really aspire to do certain things either right, because there is kind of that monkey in the room.

Negative perceptions in relation to female police officers' abilities have been consistently identified throughout females' involvement in law enforcement and the belief that females are inferior to males at policing has primarily been justified by females' weaknesses (i.e., their smaller/ weaker bodies; Grant, 2000, p. 55). Some participants clearly expressed such beliefs. For example, responses reflecting this idea arose within interviews with Sheila and Lorie when discussing their perceptions about their agencies' affirmative action strategies:

You kind of have to look at it from a recruiting point of view, like do you hire the 30 year old white male, or the 22 year old Asian female, who looks better on paper so let's hire her, but you know what happens if she gets knocked up [pregnant], or you know... she's 5'2, 120lbs, can't really do the job? (Sheila)

I think you'd make a really big mistake if you make a police officer...a police department that's 50% male 50% female...I mean it's critical to have good women out there, really good women that do a good job. But I... just, when I look at that bad core of assholes out there, you know, I just I don't know. I would just struggle to see that. I don't know if that's the right way to go... Because of physical stuff and all that too. There's something to be said about someone walking in their uniform and you have a big boy beside you or big girl beside you, you

know what I mean.... And having said that, we, we have our other techniques that we can use but, but I just think... and I've talked to a lot of policewomen and they tend to agree... (Lorie)

Through these responses, Lorie and Sheila articulate the belief that smaller females “can’t really do the job” and that male officers make for the most competent police officers as a result of their larger size. Therefore, these participants view significant increases in female representation in police agencies as a highly concerning prospect.

Additionally, in further discussions with Lorie, she stated that as a result of gender quotas, and the increasing presence of females within her department, male police officers were becoming “more anti-women”:

I kind of get a sense of almost...an anti-women, more anti-women now than years ago. You know it’s kind of a weird, weird thing. You talk to somebody now, ‘oh God, we got too many women’...it’s kind of the sense I’m kind of picking up on...when I talk to the guys...yeah. Or guys on the road. (Lorie)

When discussing why this increased hostility may have occurred Lorie stated, male police officers “...feel like they have to overcompensate if they go to a fight call and they send like three women and one guy...so those kinds of things...” Again, such a reflection illustrates the perception that females are inferior to males at police work, due to perceptions of females’ reduced physical abilities and the related belief that they are less effective at controlling hostile or violent encounters.

4.1.6. Summary: Roles and (In) Abilities of Female Police Officers

In sum, the majority of both male and female police officers directly articulated the belief that females and males are equally capable of police work. Further, the majority of participants also perceived gender-differentiated strengths and weaknesses of police officers. Females were commonly described as having “feminine” advantages (e.g., communication skills, empathy) and disadvantages (e.g., smaller, weaker) for police work, and males as having opposing strengths (e.g., larger, stronger) and weaknesses (e.g., less able to communicate and empathize). Unanimously, however, these differences in female and male officers’ skill-sets were explained as not innate to a

specific gender. In other words, the sex of an officer does not guarantee that they will express themselves consistently with gender expectations within their occupational roles, or possess particular strengths or weaknesses.

Cultural beliefs and gender stereotypes were also demonstrated as influencing police-citizen interactions. Specifically, there are some situations in which officers differ in their abilities to gain compliance and satisfaction from citizens as a result of *those* citizens' perceptions of gender. It was demonstrated that police officers consciously use gender as a tool within their interactions with the public. They "perform gender" to attain compliance from citizens and utilize gender stereotypes to achieve further advantages within front-line police work. Officer gender was also discovered to merit further advantages, such as improving some victim's comfort. And lastly, an officer's gender was discovered to be further influential in certain situations, as a result of individuals' cultural views and beliefs regarding the status and roles of men and women in society.

The acceptance of "differences" between male and female officers (in)abilities were also demonstrated to have resulted in and justified gendered deployment in certain front-line calls (i.e., females to sexual assaults, males to bar fights and riots). This gendered deployment was interpreted within this study as an unjustified practice that continues to be overlooked within Canadian police departments. And finally, specific specialty sections were also demonstrated to be gender-dominated. Possible processes and reasons for this gender-segregation were provided.

Perhaps most concerning from the above findings, was that perceptions and experiences reflecting the idea that females' are less capable in violent encounters, and thus inferior to men at police work, continue to be accepted and internalized by some Canadian police officers. These negative attitudes were found to be held by both male and female police officers. Such a finding is particularly enlightening, as the majority of past research indicates that negative attitudes towards female police officers' abilities and resistance towards females as consequences of such attitudes, are sourced from male officers exclusively (Bloch & Anderson, 1974; Martin, 1980; Young 1991).

Interestingly, these "negative" perceptions and the consequences of such perceptions, were found to persist despite the fact that females' physical "limitations"

have not been found to reduce policing job performance, including the ability to arrest or control citizens (Bartlett & Rosenblum, 1977; Birzer & Craig, 1996; Townsey, 1982), and despite the fact that participants within this study described males and females to be equally as competent at police work. Thus, continuing perceptions of females as inferior for policing was understood as a direct consequence of the organizational culture of policing. After all, this culture continues to “promote “masculine values” which engender particular views of women, of the nature of policing and of the roles for which men and women officers are believed to be most suitable” (Dick & Jankowicz, 2001, p. 182). Regardless of the reasoning, the persistence of negative and limited beliefs regarding female police officers continues to generate and justify resistance to female integration in policing, and was also demonstrated within this study as limiting the roles of both male and females in law enforcement.

4.2. The Influence of Gender on Policing: Female Police Officers’ Occupational Experiences

As previously stated in chapter one, female police officers have faced much resistance and disadvantage in their attempts to access and integrate within policing. However, females now compose over 20% of police officers in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2012), and this number is continually increasing. Therefore, this study also sought to examine occupational experiences of female police officers to further examine the progress and current status of females within law enforcement. This section presents a discussion of female police officers’ unique occupational experiences, specifically, female officers’ experiences in regards to recruitment and promotion, officer interrelations, and survival strategies.

4.2.1. Recruitment and Promotion

Despite the continuously increasing representation of females in law enforcement, the normative image of policing is that it is a “man’s job”. Therefore, policing also continues to be commonly perceived as a more appealing career choice for males. Austin explained how such a perception persists in society, and how it impedes the attempts of police agencies to significantly increase female representation:

When I was in recruiting the bosses always say 'how come we don't have, so many female applicants?' And I said 'well once we change society's attitude towards policing then we'll have more. Me as the recruiter cannot change society's attitudes towards policing...trying to get females interested it's...if someone can figure that out the recruiter, they'll be the recruiter of the century. We just don't have a lot of females that apply, we never have.

In other words, it remains uncommon for females to perceive policing as a desirable career choice, and consequently, there is a relatively low number of females interested in and pursuing policing careers. This "lack of interest" was described by participants in this study as the most significant barrier for increasing female representation in policing. Additional barriers in the recruitment and hiring of females into law enforcement (e.g., physical entrance standards) were also mentioned within some interviews. However, future research is required on these recruitment barriers, as these topics are beyond the scope of the current study.

Effects of Affirmative Action Strategies

All the police officers interviewed, with the exception of one, acknowledged that their departments were currently attempting to hire and promote more females. Each of these officers stated that they hoped that such attempts were not resulting in the dismissal of other, more qualified applicants. However, the fear that standards have and are being lowered, and that less qualified applicants are being hired and promoted for the purpose of increasing female representation was commonly described. For example, Austin stated:

Some agencies talk about having different standards right. I've seen one person had their fitness test scores for guys and gals, and there's a 30 second difference in favour of females for fitness tests. And I ask why...'well we needed to hire females'. Well I saw that and went 'wow, that's interesting'...It wasn't an official thing, they just did it themselves. It's not allowed, and you know, guys had to get a better score in order to move on than the girls did. And I saw that, and the recruiter said 'well we had to do something to pull females through the recruiting process and get them in the system'. Well that's a way to do it. It's not what I'd call fair.

Kyle articulated similar perceptions, and further stated that gender quotas, and unequal standards are resulting in resentment towards female police officers within the organization:

Like the inspector in charge of recruiting is trying to have an all-female class at the academy. Now, water cooler chit-chat right? But I've heard that on more than one occasion that he's trying to have an all-female class at the academy. And so I look at that and think 'why?', and I think to do things like that does completely create a, it does create a sentiment of...it does create resentment...and believe it or not I think it creates resentment amongst the female police officers that are on the force as well because they have that perception that they need to be accommodated and that they deserve preferential treatment, and based on the ones I've worked with they don't need preferential treatment.

Participants commonly articulated that both male and female officers are "offended" and "resentful" towards affirmative action strategies that are perceived to be unfair or result in less qualified candidates being hired. Further participants also regularly portrayed inquisitive attitudes towards administrations' attempts to increase female representation. Consequently, negative attitudes towards those specific females being hired under "unfair" affirmative action strategies were also voiced as being common. Lorie best described the existence and rationale behind this negativity:

I think it really hurts women when you say 'oh fuck Danielle got on because they were hiring and needed women' as opposed to saying 'oh [officer name] got on right here when they just you know, made the same standards blah blah blah'. As long as the standards are the same for the men as they are for the women, and they don't make allowances to make it easier for women because it just works against us...Cause you hear stories 'oh well they're going to get on because the [agency] are hiring and they want to have all these women coming on'. So...'oh when did she get on? 2014? Oh shit, she sucks'. (Lorie)

These findings suggest that "failure to inform officers of the precise details of the plan [...], can allow counterproductive misinformation to flourish, thereby poisoning relations' between the dominant and protected groups within an organization" (Walker, 1985, p. 567). After all, participants' perceptions regarding the current workings of affirmative action strategies has caused both male and female officers to question the capabilities and belonging of females being hired under such plans. Such attitudes were

further found to result in hostility and negativity being attributed to these new female officers.

Despite the existence of affirmative action strategies, officers within this study also regularly articulated that female underrepresentation in higher-ranking positions persists and that progress to address such disparity remains slow. Shay even stated:

If I'd made it through I would have been the first female inspector in our department in the history of our organization, that's not good. That's not good, not today. Not when you have capable people.

However, it was discovered that differences in promotional opportunities could not account for female underrepresentation within these roles. After all, most participants perceived male and female officers as receiving similar promotional opportunities within law enforcement. Further, females were commonly perceived as being more successful in comparison to male officers when they pursued these opportunities. For example, Jolene stated:

I think if you are smart, highly dedicated, hard worker, you have a better chance of standing out because there are fewer females in the organization. If you're smart, hard worker, you are recognized sooner because you are being compared to the other woman not the whole platoon. (Jolene)

This "higher success rate" for female officers was exclusively sourced to current affirmative action strategies. Such findings therefore support the assertion that individuals of minority status "can see advantages of those who are "different" and thus [were] highly visible in a system where success is tied to becoming known" (Kanter, 1977, p. 382). However, this advantage also has secondary consequences for female police officers. Such consequences were clearly articulated by Jolene, who is currently a chief of police, when reflecting on her past promotions: "every time you are successful people thought it was because you were a woman not because of your work ethic". Further, Megan stated that the challenges she has faced within her current position are the result of her being a "young female":

The challenges that I face, is that I got prompted fairly early in my career. So I got promoted with just over 10 years, which is very

junior. So I'm the youngest patrol...like I'm the youngest sergeant, and I'm also a young female. So those are the two challenges that I have to overcome, which is a challenge. It is hard. So some people they have the personality where they are more willing to just go with it. Like okay you're a sergeant, I accept that you're the same rank as me, let's go. Whereas others will have their own personal opinions and say "well yeah maybe you're a sergeant but your still not good enough for me" and want to keep you out of that inside bubble. Yeah so those are two things that because of my promotion early, and because I am a young female. It's difficult. (Megan)

Therefore, females who are being promoted early in their careers and under affirmative action plans may face distinctive difficulties in gaining the acceptance and support from some of their colleagues. Additionally, experiences such as those presented above may further support the proposition stated earlier in this chapter that affirmative action and gender quotas to increase female representation are proliferating negative attitudes in regards to females' appropriateness and abilities as police officers.

Awareness of affirmative action plans occurring within her agency also caused Sheila to doubt her own merit in regard to a recent promotion:

I know there were five or six people that applied for two positions. They desperately needed a female in there because there isn't a female right now. But it was kind of like, 'okay did I get the job because they needed a female? Or did I get the job because I was one of the best candidates?' And I don't feel I got the job because I was female, I feel like, you know I was told by my sergeant, you know I did really well on the testing and everything, but at the same times its like 'well...is that really the case?' (Sheila)

Such a response supports the assertion that affirmative action strategies and negative attitudes directed at females as result of such strategies, "threaten the professional identity of these ranks by suggesting they have gained their positions not through merit but by 'having a face that fits'" (Dick & Jankowicz, 2001, p.195).

Taken together, it is apparent that although affirmative action strategies have been implemented with the purpose of increasing female representation in policing, their existence has also created negative consequences for female integration within this profession.

Increasing Females in the Upper Ranks

Regardless of the existence of affirmative action strategies, and females “higher success rates” in being hired and promoted under such strategies, females remain vastly underrepresented in all ranks in policing. As stated above, this underrepresentation cannot be explained by the lack of opportunities available for female officers. The underrepresentation of females in high-ranking positions was instead described to be a result of females’ failure to pursue promotional opportunities. Participants voiced several factors that may be contributing to such failure: females who are interested in promotion do not have enough service or qualifications to be successful in a promotional competition; females’ have outside commitments (such as family responsibilities) which make promotion an unrealistic or undesired aspiration; and females simply lack the “drive” or interest to be promoted due to the nature of the job and workload. It is important to note that these reasons for not pursuing promotional opportunities were also regularly described as similar for male police officers.

The most common reason cited for why females do not pursue promotional opportunities was due to females’ family responsibilities and their desire for work-life balance, which was viewed to be less manageable (or unmanageable) if working in such positions. However, within this study, some participants did not have children, and several female officers had children but appeared not to be constrained or disadvantaged as a result of their parental role. For example, Megan is a mother and a “young sergeant”, illustrating that her pregnancy and her parental responsibilities did not impede her ability or her desire to be promoted. The experiences of these females in relation to their abilities to balance their family and work roles may be suggestive of changing gender expectations in Canadian society. That is, females are increasingly becoming involved in professional roles outside the home, making decisions such as not having children, having children later in their lives, or sharing the parenting responsibilities with their spouse. If such possibilities prove to be true, it would also mean that family and child-care responsibilities will increasingly present a reason for male police officers not pursuing promotional opportunities. Such a possibility was supported in Bryan’s explanation for why he does not want to get promoted:

It's important that I like what I'm doing and that I have some flexibility to do things with my family. Both my kids are in high school. I like to be able to, you know, pick them up after their sports in school, or do family kind of things. So to be promoted would most likely be to go back to patrol shift where I'm working nights and four on four off, and the family time is more important to me.

Additionally, the "organizational culture" of policing was commonly described as an important factor to consider when assessing which officers are successful in promotional competitions. Shay stated

Not only do you have to look at gender, you have to look at organizational culture. Okay so it's not a black and white, where it's the boys get more or the girls get more, it's...you got to know who to tie your wagon to.

Bailey further described a subjective nature of promotional processes in the following comment:

I think that they promote people that fit a certain shape and size and attitude. [...] you look at who just promoted to Superintendent and I just shake my head...and I'm like 'are you fucking kidding me', because they pick the ones that are the exact likeness of them...and I laugh about this, because we have a HR specialist named [name] he's a civilian[...] I walk to him and I go 'what the fuck is wrong with this place' and he's like...so he kind of looks at me and I go 'what the fuck' and he goes 'I tell you what, until they stop promoting in their likeness, nothing here will change...' and I'm like 'oh that's very articulate for what I was trying to drag out of myself'. So I don't think they do, I don't have...and the problem is that they like... and it's past, it's not so much an old boys club as it's a comfort zone. It's past practice and status quo. That if you don't rock the boat too much, I'm going to go up the ladder because they're going to take their friends with them. And it just disgusts me because we cannot break out of this bad leadership, poor morale because of who's in the upper management right now.

The subjective nature of promotional processes was also not described as something that uniquely benefitted officers of a particular gender. However, it can be assumed that the current promotional processes used in policing may serve as a means of maintaining the "cult of masculinity" and preserving the "old boys club". After all, through participants' responses in relation to such a topic, it was described that those

who are responsible for promotion and hiring, most commonly promote and hire those who share the same values as themselves. As the values described to be necessary for promotion have always favoured “masculine” values (Jones, 1986), this may be evidence to suggest that policing is resistant to any significant changes to its “masculine” culture. As such, it is expected that, as a result of high ranking officers “promoting in their likeness”, increasing female representation in high-ranking positions will have little impact on the culture, values, and operations inherent to law enforcement.

4.2.2. Police Officer Interrelations

As formerly described within these results, the police culture continues to promote ‘masculine values’, which has resulted in negative and limited perceptions of female police officers to persist within Canadian police forces. Within the current study, further mechanisms to reinforce the masculine culture of policing, and to justify, and reinforce the “limited” perceptions of female police officers were discovered. Females within this study commonly articulated that female officers continue to be subjected to discriminatory treatment. Participants commonly voiced their personal experiences with such treatment, or acknowledged that they were aware of other female officers who were or had been subjected to (or “complained of”) it. Specifically, it was voiced that female police officers continue to be patronized, excluded, harassed, and subjected to sexualized work environments.

Patronization, Exclusion, and Harassment

The perception that females are unable or less able to perform physically as a result of their smaller size has been found to result in a discriminatory organizational environment within policing (Shelley, Morabito, Tobin-Gurley, 2011, p.357). Discriminatory treatment of female officers on patrol was described within this study, when such “limited capacity” perceptions were accepted and internalized by females patrol officers’ superiors. Sheila for example stated that her old sergeant did not allow her to go to particular calls by herself:

My old sergeant [name]. If you were female and going to a call by yourself, he’d be like ‘oh you can’t be going by yourself’...So there’s

kind of like this 'oh you're a female you can't go by yourself'. So there's a little bit of that, which is okay, it is what it is.

Additionally, as previously mentioned, four officers from a specific police department also described an "incident" in which female officers were blatantly under-deployed to a riot (Babic, 2012; Diakiw, 2012). The following is an explanation of the incident, provided by a male member of this agency:

...the Stanley Cup riot, and we sent, we had an allocation of officers who were ready to be deployed. We were in [city], waiting to kind of see what was going to happen...so we have about 50 officers who were staged along with the [another agency]...So we were deployed to, there were several of us who were deployed to Vancouver. I think we had 4 teams of 6, and out of those 4 teams of 6 there was 1 female. Now did it look bad? Absolutely. You know, was it done on purpose? Don't know. But when you look at who was leftover, because they still wanted to keep some people back in [city], there were a few men and mostly some females, so it looked bad. Now was that decision made to send males down because it was a riot situation and they thought, you know, that there would be a high use of force? Maybe, I'm not sure. There was an investigation done into how that was, how that took place, uh I don't know what the results of that investigation were. I know there was some females who were upset that they were not chosen to go...but you know just in that, that kind of situation, that's what was decided so, so I can see the point of view. I'm guessing... you know I'm guessing they went with people they felt comfortable sending to Vancouver that were going into that atmosphere.

A female member similarly described this "incident":

There was a moment at... when the riot was going on down in Vancouver, and one of our people...they stripped the females of all of their equipment, and sent men only. So how is that...what message are you sending? 'It's too dangerous for you.' 'Are you kidding me? Really?'... So there's a great example.

When asked if anything happened internally as a result of this "incident" this female officer further stated:

Well they tried. It just disappeared somehow...It just disappears. How does that happen? How does [agency] not send one person to the riot, not one female, not one, right? On shift that night I think there was half a dozen...yeah stripped them of all their...their masks, their batons, because a lot of these guys that they called in to do their riot

thing didn't even have their gear because they're in specialty sections right. So they're not trained for this. They don't do...they don't keep up on any of their training right? ...Cause it's just something they never use because they're in investigative roles right? They don't go out and deal with the public. They stay in their offices...'oh I need pepper spray, where would I find that?', 'Well just take hers'...So again, how do you prove it? Nothing happened, they tried, whatever....How, how does that go away? How does something like that go away! And that's just like one example of how this happens there all the time...like clearly there is a difference in our department right? Cause they don't think females are capable right? Or else they would have sent the ones on duty, just like everybody else. How is there a call out for any member available to come to a riot, like the city is being ripped a part in front of your eyes, on T.V., but you're not good enough to go? Pretty sure I got a pay-check last week. I'm pretty sure I'm still qualified, right?

Kurtz (2006) argues that excluding females from violent police work and the chivalrous treatment of female officers "reinforces the masculine aura of law enforcement by 'protecting' established images of men and women. The protection of women officers from potential violence is not truly about women; it is about preserving the power of men." (p. 146). In her above response however, the participant rejected the idea that female exclusion in the aforementioned "incident" was a chivalrous act, but rather a reflection of upper managements' lack of confidence in female officers' abilities to effectively react and perform within a riot situation. When clarifying whether this participant believed the decision not to deploy female officers to the Vancouver riot was because females are viewed as not physically capable of dealing with such a situation she replied:

Absolutely, it has to be. It's not like they have our best interests at heart, let's not get silly right. They don't care, if you don't go, they don't care, you know what I mean. No one calls you if you're off, and check 'is everything okay?' No, you're just a number.

Each female officer from this agency was upset with the decisions and actions of their management within this situation. They felt that the female officers on duty that night were willing and able to perform the tasks required of them, yet were viewed as unable or less able in comparison to their male counterparts. Further, the lack of any formal action or repercussions for those who made this deployment decision remained particularly concerning to these officers.

In comparison, the male officer's above response shows a much more a neutral position when discussing this specific "incident". He does not find fault within his response, or ascertain why females were under deployed within this situation. Instead, he states that he can "understand the point of view" of whomever made such a deployment decision, as such an incident involved high use of force. Whether this response suggests that he believes females are less capable at use of force and violent encounters, or whether not sending females was perceived by him to be an understandable chivalrous act, cannot be interpreted from this single response. Regardless, both possibilities serve negatively for female officers, through limiting females' opportunities, and reinforcing traditional notions of gender within law enforcement.

Media reports of this specific incident specifically state that "a senior female officer was in charge of selecting officers for riot duty" (Diakiw, 2012), perhaps suggesting that the gender of whomever made this potential "sexist" decision, could affect its significance. However, as Silvestri (2003) has explained,

The perception that women managers enter organizations with the intention of representing other women and their interests is naïve. This will depend on their consciousness, their reading of the situation, and their willingness to take action to address organizational inequalities. (p. 184)

Therefore, the embrace and manifestation of gender stereotypes by police officers, and particularly police leaders, as they are the ones who make and enforce the decisions and policies within police departments, serve to harm the integration and experiences of female police officers. Thus, the gender of those expressing these beliefs bears no influence on the consequences of such beliefs. Further, such a fact may in itself support the assertion that simply increasing female representation in police forces will serve little to improve the experiences of female officers or change the "masculine" culture of law enforcement. Rather, gender stereotypes, and gender norms must be actively challenged within policing organizations, so that females are seen as equally capable within violent and hostile encounters, and thus within law enforcement in general.

Other harassment experiences were also independent of use of force scenarios, as seen in the following responses:

...as you say no or that doesn't fit with my values or something like that that's because you're a c-u-next-Tuesday or blah blah, blah right? Like we have guys in there now that, 'yeah it's a great day in [city] because there's no uh...c-u-next-Tuesdays working on shift today' right? Like dude how do you say that in a briefing? How can, how can you say that. Like dude it's 2015! Like this is cool? This is okay? But like if they say that, what do you think happens behind closed doors? Right like it's just, it's ridiculous. (Khloe)

I have been harassed by sergeants. I have been called bitch several times in front of my colleagues, by one particular sergeant...That squad, even to this day has admitted to this day that they were mean to me and they would make comments about my... like you know, I went on vacation to Ireland for a couple of weeks. When I came back there were all these comments like 'oh did you get fucked by all the Irish guys? Did you bring any leprechauns back?' Like you know, like stupid, stupid stuff that was said... Things, comments about my sexuality, comments about guys I was dating...I made the mistake of sleeping with one of the guys on my squad first thing that he did next day back on shift was tell all the guys, so it became locker room story and gossip... the sergeant at that time was a different sergeant. He wasn't very nice to me either. (Sheila)

Participants also described the continued exclusion of females by their male counterparts:

Worst experience I'd say was being a sergeant on patrol when I got transferred to another shift. And what made it the worst experience was because the staff...well acting staff sergeant and the other sergeant that was on that new shift were very old school males. So they were not as inclusive, as my previous shift had been... making decisions on what was happening, information flowing coming down from management...because I was a young female. (Megan)

The discriminatory treatment of female officers, such as those occurrences described above, may be the direct results of officers' internalizations of sexist views of women, or policewomen in particular. However, regardless of the reasoning(s) for these occurrences, such experiences have been associated with higher levels of stress and job dissatisfaction for female police officers (Dick & Jankowicz, 2001, p. 183). Consistent with these facts is that each of the above experiences were described as being some of

the most challenging moments so far in these police officers' careers. Therefore, the continuing discriminatory treatment of female police officers, threatens the retention and integration of females in law enforcement.

Sexual Discourses

Like patronization, exclusion, and harassment, sexual discourses in policing have also been described as reinforcing the masculine policing culture, and de-integrating females in law enforcement (Heidensohn & Brown, 2000). Sexual discourses were described by participants within this study as being common within police officers' interactions with one another. For example, Bryan stated:

I think you're always going to find that there's going to be sexual, sexist remarks uh and they might not be... uh...they're probably, and I don't think there's ever intent uh by those you know male officers to, to, to offend, uh... a lot of the same you know comments get made by male officers to male officers. Right? There's a lot of, it's the locker room mentality.

Additionally, as previously mentioned within these findings, an officer's work ethic was described as the most important contribution to the level of respect they were afforded by their colleagues. Interestingly however, several participants also associated respect with an officers' promiscuity. This particular "respect factor" was described within this research as being related to female police officers exclusively. Khloe was one participant who clearly voiced such an idea:

There's always the gossip and the drama; 'this chick has tried to sleep with eight of these guys', right. Well how are you expected to be respected when this is how you started? So that kind of plays into it as well, right? So I know a lot of the females in our specific department have been around the block, so that's not helping their cause, right? I have nothing to do with any of that. I go home to my damn kids and my husband right. So what does it have to do with me? And I'm the one that's there first and stays late and hand in a complete file and...you know what I mean? Where, where do I catch a break right? Well I have to really rethink about what, what my future would look like there and where does it cap out at right? So that's kind of where I'm at now...what courses do I take, what areas could I be in that are safe right cause its always, always going to just be there right. (Khloe)

Within this response Khloe identifies that female officers within her department, who engage in sexual relations with their male colleagues and are perceived as sexually promiscuous, are less respected by their colleagues. Further, her response illustrates that these actions of these female officers and the associated reduction in respect as a result of such actions, are exaggerated and generalized to all female police officers. This response therefore illustrates that competency and work ethic in policing do not in themselves equate to the amount of respect an officer receives within their occupational role. Female officers may have more stringent guidelines to adhere by and false perceptions to dissuade, in comparison to male officers, in order to gain and maintain the respect of their colleagues. This finding reflects the continuation and consequences of the sexual double standard that exists in broader society; females are perceived negatively for “hooking up” and being sexually promiscuous, whereas males gain status for similar behaviours (Reid, Elliott, & Webber, 2011, p. 546).

4.2.3. Surviving as “Different”

It was discovered within this research that, as a result of females’ positioning as an “outsider” within policing, and female officers’ awareness of perceptions and arguments suggestive of their inferiority for police work, female officers are employing different strategies to assist in their survival within law enforcement. For example, some female officers expressed the necessity for female officers having to “prove” themselves, most commonly through their demonstration of particular masculine expressions (e.g., physicality, assertiveness) and their concealment of particular feminine expressions (e.g., emotionality). Evidence of “female unfriendliness” within policing was also discovered, and interpreted as a further strategy of some females’ attempts at gaining peer acceptance. And lastly, female officers were also discovered to strictly adhere to the “masculine” values (i.e., secrecy, solidarity) inherent to the police subculture, in order to survive and succeed within their occupational roles.

“Proving” Themselves

Several female participants articulated experiences and perceptions that illustrated, as a result of their minority status and their high visibility, they experience unique performance pressures. Specifically, some participants described feeling

pressure to “work harder” in comparison to their male peers in order to be accepted within policing. Several female participants also voiced their conscious efforts to “prove themselves” within their occupational roles once they had gained access to the policing profession. These efforts were undertaken within police training, and within patrol duties once employed. Shay clearly explained this pressure:

In my entire career I had to prove myself, constantly, every turn. Like, and then they say is it a boys club? Well I guess not, but it is, it still is. You just got in a world right now, and they just opened the door ever so little for you. But don't do anything to screw it up for yourself. Like... it took me a long time, but you do have to prove yourself your entire career...it's the reality. We can philosophize it to death, bottom-line it's different, it's different. You do have different strengths than the guys, you're never going to be as physical uh... you're always trying to show that you can do it.

Lindsay explained within her interview why females might feel an elevated amount of pressure to perform adequately within policing:

You kind of get painted like okay, if I'm the woman who's an idiot, everyone's going to paint all women are idiots right, whereas okay that guys a tool, and then you're like okay that guys a tool...like no ones like 'oh, all of men!' Right?...I'm sure that plays into a little extra desire to, not just for myself, be, you know, achieving and successful and capable. But yeah, I'm sure that plays a little into the extra, going the extra mile because, yeah, you do get, everyone else kind of gets painted with the same brush. If you are the one who's messing up, it's not just that you messed up its cause you know, women are bad drivers, or women are this. I'm an excellent driver! And all these things you're like 'that's not how it works guys!'

Through this response Lindsay explains that performance pressures experienced by female officers within policing are partly due to their knowledge of negative attitudes that persist within the organization in regards to females' abilities and appropriateness as police officers. She also explains that the behaviour or ability of a single female officer is used to confirm negative attitudes towards “all women”, and as a result, female officers may feel the need to “go the extra mile” to dissuade these perceptions.

Further evidence to support the fact that negative stereotyping of female police officers continues to occur was identified by this project. Generalizing was usually

described to occur following physical or use of force situations, when a female officer demonstrates that they are unable, or less able to react appropriately within such encounters. A female's failure in these situations is used to confirm pre-existing expectations that females are incapable or less capable in these particular situations. For example, within discussions of male and female officer skill sets, Dallas stated that females' "weakness" was generally their smaller size. However, when asked if he has been in a situation in which he had perceived this "weakness" to result in a less effective outcome to a police-citizen encounter, he replied:

Me? No. So I couldn't even use a...and from what you hear, it's rare. So even...even so it's rare. And when you do, it's a big thing, and people like to blow it up, 'oh, they got...its cause they're women', right?

This response illustrates that females' failures in policing, specifically in use of force incidents, are regularly interpreted as occurring because "they are women", rather than sourced to alternative, individual-level factors. Within this study, examples and perceptions illustrative of "gender blaming" for unsuccessful performances, involved only female perpetrators.

Unsurprisingly, female officers commonly stated that demonstrating their willingness and ability to use physicality and use of force within violent citizen encounters was the primary means of "proving themselves" to their male colleagues. Important to note, is that effectiveness in use of force tactics was described as being a major determinant in competency for both male and female officers. However, it was discovered that male officers are regularly assumed to be competent in such tactics, as a result of their gender. Therefore, male officers are automatically awarded the respect associated with use of force capabilities upon their entrance into policing. Alternately, female officers face a reverse onus; as females are assumed to be unable or less able in use of force, female police officers are forced to disprove such perceptions prior to being credited the respect associated with such abilities.

Khloe described her awareness of her male colleagues "limited" perceptions of female officers within her interview:

They [male colleagues] don't think we are physical enough, capable, all those sorts of things right? We go through all the same training, right? I don't understand. I still have to shoot the course of fire here. I still have to do all of my things, right? And if you can't meet a standard, have a renewal annually for it, but they don't. You know what I mean? If you want me to do the POPAT every year, I'll do it. You don't ask me to, you ask me to do it once in my life right. So once you jump through that hoop, one time, that's it. Well now you have some dude or chick that's 450 pounds, right, like what are you going to say? But it's okay for the dude, but not okay for her?

This response again illustrates that female officers face unique challenges in dissuading negative perceptions about their physical abilities. They face difficulties with “proving themselves as capable”, due to the inexistence of annual or regular physical testing. Further, there are male officers who are out of shape, but their diminished physical abilities are “okay” and not condemned by their colleagues, nor generalized to all male officers. Female officers who are out of shape or less effective, however, are used as proof that females are unable or less able at physical requirements of policing and therefore, heavily criticized.

When asked within her interview if “they” who view females as not physical enough or capable for police work, were composed of a specific type or group of male officers Khloe replied:

Higher, upper. And it starts within like, a sergeant, staff sergeant rank. I would say almost, the newer guys who you work with on shift, and you have that bond with, and you've gone and almost got killed with a couple times, have more respect when you have their back and they have your back right? And they would have maybe a better understanding than the ones that pre judge you because of your gender right? Cause there's nothing I can do to fix that right? So...yeah. But they'll find ways just to sewer you...files...and these other things. And you're just like, 'I don't understand, what could your purpose have been to do any of that', right? And they just they, they just find things, make things up to...I don't know, it's like a witch hunt sometimes, right, that's how I feel. And some get it way worse than others right?

Within this response, Khloe stated that “the newer guys who you work with on shift” are less likely to hold negative and limited capacity perceptions of female police officers. Such a response may illustrate that officers who regularly witness females' effectiveness

within front-line policing, are less likely to embrace negative perceptions of female police officers. Such a phenomenon has previously been identified (Vega & Silverman, 1982). This response may also suggest that those police officers who hold negative perceptions of female officers' abilities and appropriateness may be consciously or subconsciously identifying and highlighting mistakes and behaviours of female officers in order to conform to their expectations of female inferiority, thereby justifying their negative attitudes and discriminatory treatment of female police officers. Further, Khloe's perception that negative attitudes towards female officers' abilities and appropriateness are most commonly embraced by upper ranking officers is extremely concerning, as officers holding such positions most significantly influence policing operations, and the experiences of all police officers.

Bailey also clearly articulated the importance of her colleagues seeing her "pound the crap out of somebody", in gaining their respect and acceptance:

It truly is up to you to go out there and prove yourself. So in block two as soon as they saw me pounding the crap out of somebody I was in, and when they realized that if the shit hits the fan and you're the one that's closest and coming to help them and you're a helpful help not a pain in their ass and now a liability.

Several officers also directly voiced the perception that some of their female colleagues were purposefully aggressive or physical within police citizen encounters to prove that they were willing and capable to act in such ways. These attempts were usually criticized as being "overly" aggressive or physical, and said to result in "jacking the situation up", or "making the situation worse". Nonetheless, these actions were described as occurring due to these females' conscious attempts to gain the respect of and acceptance from their male colleagues.

In addition, female officers also specifically voiced their efforts to conceal feminine expressions within their occupational roles in their attempts to assimilate within their respective police departments. Efforts to "hide" feminine expressions primarily involved female officers' concealing their emotionality:

...I kept telling myself don't squeal, you don't want to be *the* girl!
(when hearing gunshots in training) (Jackie)

Girls when they get mad or when they get sad, they're going to want to cry. And you do not do that. You do not do that... especially your peer's man. Especially if they're guys, you do not. Like there was one time I could not contain myself, we were doing a debrief...and it was such a disturbing scenario, and I'm in this room of guys, and I just, I, I couldn't keep my crap together, and I, I started to cry over it. And I fought it and fought it and fought it, and I thought 'that is the last thing I want to do is cry in front of these guys.' (Lorie)

There was also evidence to suggest that female officers are being counselled to suppress their feminine expressions in order to "fit in". For example, Sheila, who is a relatively new police officer, described such an occurrence within training:

I was struggling with my shooting it, it got really bad to the point I'd be crying and shooting, like it was just that bad...So what the instructors had done is, at the time we had one female instructor, Sergeant [name], who was in charge of traffic, and they sent her, they sent me to go talk to her in her office. And she sat me down and then she's like 'oh what's wrong?' and I'm like 'I'm really struggling with my shooting, it's just super frustrating.' So we had a little chat. It was kind of like female officer to female officer kind of training. She's like... 'you know as a female police officer...you never let them see you cry. It's hard to do cause, you know, you're female and sometimes that's what we do. But you know what, you're just going to have to show them that you're stronger and tougher than the rest of the guys and...then you're just going to have to suck it up... How badly do you want this?'

Such responses suggest that limiting or hiding emotionality may be requisite for females' acceptance and success within policing. Further, such an idea seems to be consciously acknowledged by police officers, and reinforced and perpetuated through informal teachings.

Female Unfriendliness

Participants within this research also regularly voiced that female police officers are commonly critical and unsupportive of one other. Both male and female participants articulated such a fact, and several female participants even expressed their own perceptions illustrating that they themselves internalized such attitudes. Jolene best described the existence of this female "unfriendliness" in recounting her experiences as a female police officer:

I think we women don't bond enough, or do things together. We don't help promote each other... I don't know why woman have been doing that?...It's challenging being the only woman in a lot of rooms...like it's nice to have another woman in the room to come from your perspective...But having said that sometimes we are the worst with each other. We try to compete against each other instead of saying 'let's work together'.

These findings are similar to previous research findings that females within male-dominated roles lack “female friendliness” due to “their uncertain positioning within a masculine domain”, and through distancing themselves from other women it serves as a tool for integrating into a male dominated organization (Lewis & Simpson, 2012, p. 154). Therefore, such occurrences were interpreted as a further strategy in female officers' attempts to gain acceptance within law enforcement.

Adherence to “The Cult of Masculinity”

Despite acknowledging the persistence of discrimination, most participants regularly and clearly voiced high degrees of job-satisfaction. Furthermore, all participants expressed that they felt accepted, and respected by the majority of their male colleagues, and the majority even voiced deep affection towards their colleagues within their interviews. Discriminatory treatment of female officers was unanimously said to be uncommon, and sourced from a minority of male police officers (e.g., from “dinosaurs, “old school” males, a single officer). Further, participants regularly portrayed dismissive attitudes towards such treatment. The following response made by Karen, best illustrates such an attitude:

I remember I had this Inspector, he was a guy, and I was working for this corporal and this staff sergeant that felt a little bit differently about females in [agency]... but that is more the exception and not the rule. And having worked in private industry... you find it anywhere you go, there's always going to be discrimination against women.

Alternately, participants regularly revealed critical attitudes and resentment towards “other” female officers who complain of discriminatory treatment. Specifically, participants trivialized these complaints, or were of the view that the complainants warranted such treatment:

I feel like a lot of women use sexual harassment and discrimination as an excuse, because it is a hard job sometimes. (Jackie)

Those [females] who may not feel accepted it's not because they are female, it's because of what they're doing. I mean, I'm sure every work place has this... You have the one female who feels like she has to show off her boobs right...It's just one individual who feels the need to show off their body to feel good about themselves or to feel accepted or that's how they connect to the males in the workplace. (Megan)

...I guess she was in the elevator one day and 'one of the guys got in with me and he looked at me and went 'oh you do have a gun?' That kind of a thing. So you can see that's a, you are not level with me, you will never be accepted here, kind of attitude. But I looked at her and I thought 'I know why. Because you let them do that to you'. So I said 'give me that microphone', and I go, 'I want to know why you didn't tell him you were going to shoot him if he started to make another comment like that because you had that gun on. Why didn't you say 'if you continue on this path I'll shoot you'? Because that would have shut him the hell up. 'Um...well it never occurred to me...' , And I thought you are the author of your own demise here. (Bailey)

These responses illustrate victim-blaming and the divisionary effect that discrimination "complaints" may have on female police officers. Further, Megan's response directly supports Martin's (1996) conclusion that female police officers tend to "reproach other women, asserting that those who get sexually harassed "ask for it" through their demeanour or behaviour" (p.6).

Participants also articulated that recent harassment complaints and resulting harassment policies implemented within Canadian police agencies have served to further isolate female police officers. Specifically, these events have resulted in male officers being tentative to befriend or "joke around with" female officers, which in turn prevents the development of "friendship" and "camaraderie" between male and female officers. Perceptions reflecting such developments are seen in the following responses:

Right now is difficult because everyone is scared to say anything. It has swung way too far in the other direction, it's sickening. It affects the morale. It's a lot harder to be a part of a team if your teammates are worried about how or what they say is going to be taken. It takes longer to get to know someone, and longer to become friends with your colleagues...I've seen this change within the last 5 years probably. (Jackie)

I think the sexual harassment investigation... made people a lot more conscious... of what they were saying...a lot of the joking and stuff, it's kind of like a camaraderie, you know. It's kind of like a squad thing; it makes the team tight... But then I think it also made people more aware you know, where to draw that line. And for everyone that line is different right? So something they guys say to me, they couldn't say to another female member...Where you could say almost anything to me, and it probably wouldn't bother me, I probably wouldn't care...stuff like yelling at people, making fun of them. (Sheila)

Sheila's latter response further reveals that police officers continue to "value colleagues who take the 'canteen humour' in good part" (Dick & Jankowicz, 2001, p. 194), as she articulated the importance of being able to take and to tell jokes for the development of camaraderie. Jackie further supported such a revelation by stating that: "if you take yourself too seriously or take what other people say too serious, you are going to have a tough time [in policing]".

Interestingly, despite Sheila asserting that "you could say almost anything to me, and it probably wouldn't bother me", she expressed within her interview that her experiences with discriminatory treatment negatively influenced her occupational experiences:

I took a lot of time off. Not because I was sick, but because I was so stressed out going to work when it would make me feel like I was going to be sick. Like there was times where I'm like, 'I just want to quit, because I hate coming to work. I hate working with these guys; you know...they make my life hell. Like I know they're all talking about me, who I have slept with...the stuff that I'd done, you know?

This response is an indication that harassment of female officers contributes to the creation of hostile work environments for some female officers. Such a finding is consistent with past research, which has identified harassment and discrimination as main sources of occupational stress for female police officers (Dowler & Arai, 2008; Greene, & del Carmen, 2002; McCarty, Zhao, & Garland, 2007).

However, despite the negative influences of harassment, Sheila did not formally complain about such treatment. In fact, each female officer who described experiencing

work-place harassment or alternate forms of sex-discrimination did not state that they had taken formal action in response to such experiences.

Bailey also voiced that she had experienced harassment by her sergeant. This experience had resulted in her making the decision to not pursue promotional opportunities. The harassment she experienced contributed to the development of low self-esteem, which in part, resulted in her personal belief that she was unsuitable for promotion. Also, following her description of this particular harassment experience Bailey stated that:

I didn't want to play the harassment card... And I got some advice from a senior policewoman who said you don't want that on your back, on your record and I chose not to. And I should have, because they never learned. And his protégé never learned either. (Bailey)

Therefore, participants' responses in relation to discrimination and harassment in the workplace illustrate the continuing importance of "keeping quiet" within policing, and the value associated with secrecy and solidarity among police officers (Dick & Jankowicz, 2001; Waddington, 1999). After all, participants did not formally complain about their personal experiences with discrimination, and they were highly critical of those who did.

Together, the above findings suggest that by accepting and adhering to the "masculine" values (i.e., secrecy, solidarity, canteen humour) inherent to the police subculture, female officers are able to avoid being criticized, resented, and isolated by their peers and thus, able to survive and succeed within law enforcement. Further, these experiences illustrate officers' assimilation into the "cult of masculinity", and the power and consequences associated with its existence.

4.2.4. Summary: Female Police Officers' Occupational Experiences

Female officers experience advantages with being a "highly visible" population within policing. Specifically, skilled females were described by participants as being hired, and promoted earlier in their careers in comparison to males. This advantage, however, was also described as having negative consequences on female officers due

to the common perception that hiring and promotion are being given to unqualified or less qualified females. Affirmative action and gender quotas to increase female representation were described as recently proliferating negative attitudes held by police officers in regards to females' appropriateness and abilities as police officers.

Regardless of policies and practices aimed at increasing females within law enforcement in Canada, and the "elevated success rate" of females applying for policing careers and promotions, females remain vastly underrepresented among all ranks. Several explanations for this underrepresentation were given, most common were those related to the lack of interest females have in policing careers or in being promoted, and the difficulty or disinterest in such roles, as a result of work-family balance issues.

Furthermore, this research found that female police officers continue to be harassed, patronized, and excluded by their male colleagues, and subjected to sexualized work environments. Such treatment of female police officers was interpreted as a means in the creation and reinforcement of a masculine policing culture, and was demonstrated as contributing to hostile work environments for some female police officers.

And lastly, it was found that female police officers continue to employ strategies to "fit in" and be accepted by their peers. Female officers feel pressure to work harder and prove themselves in order to be accepted by their colleagues. Female participants voiced conscious efforts to "become one of the boys", through hiding particular feminine expressions (i.e., emotionality), demonstrating masculine expressions (i.e., physicality), and portraying "female unfriendliness". And finally, there was also evidence to suggest that by accepting and adhering to "masculine" values (i.e., secrecy, solidarity) inherent to the police subculture, female officers may best be able to survive and succeed within law enforcement. These strategies together suggest that female police officers are commonly internalizing and reinforcing male gender norms within their occupational roles, and are therefore unknowingly contributing to the maintenance of a "masculine" occupation.

Chapter 5.

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

5.1.1. Limitations

Results from this study must be understood in light of its limitations. Firstly, this study was a broad exploration of the influence of gender on policing. As there has been limited research conducted on females in policing, especially within a Canadian context, this wide-ranging approach was necessary. However, a narrower focus of the themes identified within this research would have been enlightening and would contribute to a better understanding of the processes and factors involved in police officers' experiences, perceptions, and behaviours. Future research conducted on the topic of gender and policing should limit the scope of the explorations so that a more comprehensive and detailed analysis can be conducted.

Secondly, this research explored the experiences and perceptions of a small group of police officers (i.e., 5 male, and 12 female officers). Additionally, the majority of those interviewed were from a single geographic location (i.e., the Lower Mainland, British Columbia). Budget and time restraints prevented obtaining a larger, more diverse sample. Such a sample may have provided a more comprehensive understanding of Canadian police officers' occupational experiences, and further knowledge in relation to the influence of gender on law enforcement. After all, experiences and perceptions of officers from the Lower Mainland may differ from those of other officers working in different locations and agencies across Canada.

Thirdly, findings within this project tend to reflect recruit and patrol issues. There may be different perspectives once officers leave these two areas and enter non-patrol sections. After all, the expectations and skills required within different specialty sections will be unique in comparison to front-line policing. Thus, specific questioning and focus on officers' perceptions and experiences within different specialty sections may have generated different results.

And lastly, this research is further limited as a result of the specific research method that was utilized. There is a chance that participants articulated socially desirable responses within their interviews, which would threaten the truthfulness and integrity of the research results. When interviewing police officers in particular this possibility is heightened, as police officers have been discovered to be suspicious towards outsiders (such as researchers) and largely secretive in regards to their occupational experiences (Dick & Jankowicz, 2001; Waddington, 1999). However, such censorship was deemed unlikely, as participants appeared comfortable and open within their interviews, and shared in-depth and in many cases, deeply personal information. This was apparent by the candid and lengthy interviews that occurred.

5.1.2. Future Research Directions

It is imperative that future research be conducted on females in law enforcement so that further understandings of the influence of gender on policing can be gained. Further knowledge on this topic will allow for the best strategies to be developed with aims of achieving female integration in policing and in retaining female officers. Given the results from the current study, several specific topics seem most appropriate to explore.

The officers within this study all portrayed passion towards their profession, and articulated that they felt accepted within their respective police agencies. The females' articulations of their work-related perceptions and experiences, demonstrated that many had internalized male-gender norms within their occupational roles. This may indicate that those females who are unable, or refuse to accept or conform to such norms and values, are unable to survive or succeed within policing, and that such conformity is

requisite for females' survival and success. Future qualitative research on female police officers who are less satisfied or committed to their jobs, or on females who have resigned from policing, will best allow for such possibilities to be evaluated and understood.

Additionally, discussions regarding supplementary demographic information, such as officer sexuality, ethnicity, or race did not occur within this research. Furthermore, experiences and perceptions of transgender officers did not arise. Future qualitative research should therefore be conducted on police officers of various social identities. Furthermore, research conducted to evaluate the interconnectedness and interplay of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and race on police officers' perceptions and experiences is also necessary. After all, each of these factors may significantly and uniquely influence individuals' career prospects, structural barriers, and day-to-day experiences. Ultimately, an understanding of the unique perceptions and experiences of men and women from various racial and cultural backgrounds, and LGBTQ individuals will be important in order to recognize the unique needs of other historically marginalized and oppressed groups within policing.

The majority of officers interviewed for this research were of constable rank. Future qualitative research should be conducted to assess the experience and perceptions of higher-ranking and executive level officers. Of particular interest would be to assess the perceptions of female officers holding managerial positions, as the perceptions of those holding these positions undoubtedly have the most significant impact on policing operations. Additionally, these officers represent females who have succeeded within a "masculine" occupation. Their experiences and perceptions may thus illustrate those attitudes and behaviours necessary for females being able to achieve high success within such an occupation. This research may prove to be difficult, due to the vast underrepresentation of females in such ranks. However, as Canadian police agencies are currently attempting to increase female representation within upper ranking positions, knowledge gained through such research will undoubtedly be extremely constructive.

Future research also needs to explore issues that were discovered within the current study using more specific interview questions. For example, clarification on whether issues are exclusive to recruit training and basic patrol duties or if they also transfer to specialty sections will be significant. Additionally, whether perceptions are reflections of personal experience or whether they are simply consequences of “urban legends” and storytelling will also be important to understand through future research.

Lastly, a multi-method approach to examine the influence of gender on policing may prove to be particularly illuminating. For example, observational research could be conducted to assess particular behaviours of police officers, in combination with interviews with these officers. The perceptions articulated by police officers after all, may not mirror the actuality of officers’ behaviours or the actuality of the influence of officer gender on policing. Additionally, survey research would also be beneficial, as it would allow for further insights into police attitudes and practices to be collected. This particular method would also best allow for a large and diverse sample of police officers to be utilized. Such a holistic approach would therefore provide a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of gender on law enforcement.

5.1.3. Research Conclusions

Consistent progress towards the integration of females in law enforcement in Canada is occurring, which can most easily be seen through the ever-increasing representation of females within police agencies across the country. This research also found that police officers’ perceptions in relation to females’ abilities and roles are primarily positive. Harassment and overt forms of gender discrimination were also found to be uncommon. The majority of female police officers in this study felt accepted and respected by their colleagues, and were committed to and satisfied with their careers. Therefore, it appears that the culture of policing and the experiences of female police officers have significantly and positively transformed since females’ entry into the profession.

Additionally, policies and practices aimed at increasing the representation of women among all ranks and addressing the unique needs of females continue to arise

as top priorities within Canadian police agencies; more innovative and supportive (male and female) officers are making efforts to leverage women further within Canadian policing. “Old school males” continue to retire from policing, and women are increasingly succeeding within most specialty sections and entering into leadership roles. Therefore, the future for females within Canadian policing also appears to be extremely promising.

However, the achievement of gender-equality within law enforcement has not yet occurred. This research discovered that females are still commonly perceived to have limited or inferior roles within policing, and female officers continue to face unique occupational challenges.

Specifically, this research identified that although female and males are most commonly perceived to be equally as competent as police officers, the perception that male and females bring “different” to policing also persists. Female and male officers were commonly perceived to have distinct and opposing strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, an officer’s gender was also discovered to influence some police-citizen interactions, as a result of citizens’ beliefs regarding the roles and abilities of men and women. However, it was further revealed that these “gender-differences” are not generalizable or intrinsic to a specific gender. Regardless, dominant assumptions of distinct female and male officer skill-sets continue to produce and justify gendered deployment, and gender segregation within policing. Furthermore, the valuing of masculine skills in policing was found to contribute to females being labelled by some officers as inferior for police work.

It was also revealed that females continue to face unique challenges within policing. Female officers continue to experience challenges within the promotional process, primarily as a result of affirmative action strategies. They also continue to be harassed, patronized, excluded, and subjected to sexualized work-environments. These experiences were demonstrated as being significant sources of occupational stress for some females in policing, and as continuing to compromise female officers’ occupational commitment and retention. Such occurrences were also interpreted as attempts of reinforcing and reconstructing a “masculine” policing.

Lastly, findings show that female police officers are employing specific strategies to dissuade negative attitudes that are known to persist in regard to females' appropriateness and abilities as police officers, and to gain acceptance from their peers. Such strategies include: "proving themselves" to their colleagues. This "proving" involves the demonstration of "masculine" abilities, limiting of feminine expressions, and adhering to the masculine values of the police culture (i.e., secrecy, solidarity). These strategies may illustrate the internalization and expression of male gender norms by female police officers, and thus, female officers' contributions in the maintenance of a "masculine" policing.

Ultimately, conclusions from this study best support the "neutral perspective" regarding the influence of an increasing female presence in law enforcement. Results illustrate that we must "remain sceptical (albeit not disbelieving) about claims that women bring to their beats a distinctive perspective on policing" (Worden, 1993, p. 229) and that increasing female representation will alone have a significant impact on policing operations. Nonetheless, the integration of females in this profession remains necessary, if not for any other reason, than to assist in the achievement of social justice. Therefore, it is essential that further research on females employed in policing be conducted, so that a more comprehensive understanding of their job-related perceptions and experiences may be generated. This increased understanding will allow for further improvements in female police officers' experiences to be made, and ultimately contribute to progressing females towards true equality within law enforcement.

5.2. Recommendations

The following section outlines a number of recommendations emerging from this research project.

5.2.1. Education

Results from this study may best assist in the development or improvement of policies and practices aimed at improving the recruitment and retention of females in law enforcement. Most importantly, educating police officers on the occupational-abilities of

female officers, and affirmative action strategies will best assist in decreasing the persisting negative attitudes in relation to such topics. After all, it was demonstrated within this study that such attitudes remain among Canadian police officers and have the most significant consequences for female integration in policing.

The persistence of “negative” and “limited” attitudes towards female police officers results in serious emotional effects for some female officers, and creates and justifies discriminatory treatment of female police officers. Thus, the persistence and manifestations of these attitudes continue to sacrifice female officers’ emotional health and compromise female officer job-satisfaction. Efforts to inform upon these perceptions are therefore necessary for female officers’ integration in law enforcement.

Within this research, experiences and perceptions from participants were predominately given from a general duty perspective. Therefore, it appears police officers’ experiences and knowledge gained within front-line duties determines police officers’ views on the policing occupation, and the roles and abilities of both male and female police officers. Furthermore, it appears that these early-established understandings persist and have significant consequences throughout an officer’s career. Ensuring that education on gender issues occurs and is promoted within the infancy of police officers’ careers may therefore prove to be most influential on shifting negative views and reducing discriminatory treatment of female police officers, and best assist in females’ acceptance and retention within policing.

Additionally, officers commonly held critical and negative attitudes towards the existence or workings of affirmative action strategies. Most commonly, such attitudes derived from belief that organizational attempts to increase female representation were unfair or unwarranted. Furthermore, officers commonly voiced concern that standards were being lowered, which may be resulting in less qualified applicants (both female and visible minorities) being hired. For example, in discussing his perceptions of affirmative action, Austin stated:

I’m not a fan of programs that differentiate between people for the wrong reason. And if it’s for a reason which has more to do with, see , I equate the push for affirmative action in a lot of ways, it’s more of a bit of a political standpoint than it is a functional standpoint. I’m a very

functional all sort of minded person, I've done a lot of functional stuff. And I don't think you see a lot of bias anymore, in the workplace. And so, because of that, I think people treat people fairly. But I think that all that people want on the job, and certainly all I want on the job is, I want to work with capable people. I don't really care who they are. I don't care what race they are. I don't care what gender they are. I don't care what sexual orientation they are. It does not matter to me at all; I do not care. I do care, however, how they do their job. And so if affirmative action, and I don't know the answer to this question. if affirmative action means you are going to bring in a type of person who is going to get an advantage for something other than how capable they are, say for their sex, or for the colour of their skin...or what have you...I'm not sure that's the right reason on which to hire people into a profession of this nature... and my concern would be if you are going to change it by changing intake standards you're actually going to say, in a business like ours where service at a high quality counts, if you change intake, you're actually going to say that you're going to turn away potentially better qualified candidates only for the sake of a gender equality. And that to me would be somewhat discriminatory and I don't know what place it serves in policing...

“Affirmative action is the generic term that describes policies intended to remedy the effects of past discrimination” (Tougas & Beaton, 1993, p. 255). Therefore, within policing, affirmative action strategies are required as a means of achieving social justice for females, who have historically faced exclusion and discrimination within the profession, and are necessary regardless of the possible contributions females bring to law enforcement. Furthermore, “strategies used so far to improve the conditions of women involve two broad categories. “Elimination of systematic barriers” is the first category, which aims to detect and remove barriers encountered by women in the work force. The second category, “preferential treatment”, involved numerical objectives and measures, such as giving women preference over male candidates when applying for job or a promotion, if they have equivalent qualifications” (Tougas & Beaton, 1993, p. 255).

This research shows that systematic barriers and biases do in fact remain for females in policing, and need to be addressed to assist in females' integration. Furthermore, the “preferential treatment” strategy was described as currently being used in Canadian police forces. However, the proper implementation of this strategy involves female preference over male candidates *only if they have equivalent qualifications*. Participants in the current study were wary of whether this was how affirmative action

plans were occurring in Canadian police agencies, as they commonly stated concerns that less qualified candidates were being chosen over more qualified candidates. Police agencies must ensure that only qualified female candidates are being hired and promoted, and that more qualified male applicants are not being dismissed under their affirmative action plans. Additionally, the necessity, reasoning behind, and (proper) workings of affirmative action plans must be explained to all police officers.

Such education should be provided within the police academy, and also be provided to those already employed as police officers. This education may assist in developing an understanding of the appropriateness and necessity of police departments' policies and practices aimed at increasing female representation, which continue to be perceived with resentment and uncertainty by Canadian police officers. Further, by providing officers with such knowledge, it will result in the transparency of affirmative action plans and provide oversight for those responsible for applying affirmative action strategies.

5.2.2. (Re)Addressing Females' Unique Needs

Additionally, the consideration of females' unique needs is required within Canadian police forces. The continuing failure to consider and appropriately address such needs, results in disadvantaging females in their attempts to enter, succeed, and survive, and remain within law enforcement. From this research, attention to two specific needs was evidenced as requiring the most immediate attention: mentorship and child-care needs.

The low representation of females within Canadian police agencies, specifically within high-ranking positions, also means that females attempting to access and advance within policing careers lack mentorship within their pursuits. The desire for and benefit of having female mentors was expressed by Sheila:

...well for one thing, in my agency there's very few women in positions of...in supervisory positions...it's hard to kind of have somebody to you know... model yourself after If there nobody... female there... so I kind of struggle with that. Because that is where I want to go. I want to be sergeant, I want to, you know, move up but there's no mentorship there...I wish there's, was... I really wish there was more mentorship

for women even in the lower mainland where I could go talk to a sergeant to you know, 'how do you deal with this, how are you looked at as a sergeant compared to a male...?'

Mentors provide career guidance and psychological support to their mentees (Scandura & Ragins, 1993), and due to such influences, mentorships have consistently proven to be effective in increasing individuals' occupational performances and promotions (Noe, 1988, p. 65). Additionally, mentorships may also prove a way of reducing "female unfriendliness" between female police officers and increasing occupational commitment and job satisfaction. Therefore, failure of police agencies to provide female officers with access to appropriate mentors disadvantages females in their abilities to thrive within their occupational roles. It is therefore recommended that Canadian police departments create and implement formal, same-gender mentorship programs for female police officers.

Child-care needs also require specific attention. Although child-care needs have been consistently identified as a barrier for female integration in policing, this research illustrated that adequate policies within Canadian police departments have not yet addressed this issue. Family-care issues remain the primary reason that female officers do not seek promotions, and are also a reason why females do not engage in particular specialty sections. Females are still regularly expected to take on the responsibility of primary caregiver of their children, as a result of the persistence of traditional gender expectations (Waddington, 1999). Therefore, police agencies failing to implement adequate family-friendly policies (e.g., job-share, part-time work, stable work hours), illustrates an ignorance towards female police officers' needs (Waddington, 1999), and contributes to disadvantaging females in their abilities to survive and succeed as police officers. Police agencies should therefore consider alternative or additional family-friendly policies to best allow and encourage females to consider and pursue these opportunities in policing.

Although the implementation and existence of implementation of family-friendly policies programs would undoubtedly assist in improving the experiences and representation of females in policing, the cost of such programs and policies must also be considered. The implementation of these policies and running such programs would

be extremely costly for police organizations. Currently, funds to cover such costs do not exist. Thus, the existence of these family-friendly policies and programs would also create additional challenges for police agencies and policing operations. Ultimately then, for “women’s issues” in policing to appropriately be resolved, taxpayers will need to decide if they are willing to “pay the price”.

5.2.3. Evaluation of Policies and Practices Disadvantaging Females

Finally, police agencies’ policies and practices that disadvantage females need to be examined, and have their utilities justified. Those failing to reveal necessary value must be eliminated. For example, this research illustrated that physical entrance standards disproportionally serve to deny female access to specialty sections within policing. Therefore, there is a need to re-examine the utilities of these entrance requirements. If utility in these cases cannot be proven, they should be removed or transformed.

Challenges also need to occur to the unjustifiable gender deployment practices that continue within Canadian police agencies. Gender deployment serves to reinforce stereotyped abilities of male and female police officers. This reinforcement further serves to limit the opportunities of male and female officers, and subordinate females in particular. After all, “feminine abilities” continue to be devalued within the policing profession. Furthermore, “requiring men and women to perform work that contradicts gender stereotypes can help undermine, rather than reproduce, cultural beliefs that women and men are binarily, and oppositionally, gendered beings” (Lorber, 1996, as cited in Martin, 1997, p. 476). Therefore, as police officers are highly visible within their occupational roles, their demonstrations of gender-incongruent behaviour and expression may prove to be influential in undermining prescriptive and descriptive gender stereotypes, serving to limit the behaviours and opportunities for both men and women in society.

If effectively implemented, the above recommendations would likely improve the experiences, and recruitment and retention of females in policing. However, such changes will not result in the complete integration of, or equality for females in law

enforcement. As long as policing continues to be constructed as a “masculine” job, females will face disadvantage in their abilities to survive and succeed within the occupation. For such reasons, Silvestri (2003) has argued that “a more radical and systematic critique of women in policing, and openness to feminist ideas about these issues” will be required for long-term change and improvement for females within policing (p. 185). Further she stresses the importance of developing “gender-consciousness” within policing organizations, Silvestri (2003) places primary responsibility of such a development on senior policewomen:

Senior policewomen need to take an active role and lead role in emphasizing the importance of challenging the gendered order that continues to govern policing. More specifically, they need to find a way to reach those officers, both men and women, who seem disinterested in gender issues. The challenge will also be to harness the support of those officers who might be the current beneficiaries of improved equal opportunities policies and institutional arrangements. For these officers, the battle for equality might seem to have already been won, and as a result they are less willing to engage with such issues. Senior police women’s task then is a formidable one - to make known the inconspicuous yet strongly embedded forms of gendered discrimination that officers might encounter as they rise through the ranks. (p. 185)

It has become clear through this research, however, that the action of police officers of both genders is required for gender equality to be achieved within policing. Officers have to be made aware of the practices and processes involved in policing, which serve to control the opportunities and experiences afforded to both genders. If this appreciation is gained by those within police forces, perhaps only then will a radical and systematic change of law enforcement be instigated.

To conclude, it is vital to understand that regardless of any increased understandings and improvements to female officers’ roles and experiences, progression towards female integration in law enforcement will be gradual. As long as policing continues to be constructed as a “masculine” occupation, females will continue to be disinterested and disadvantaged in accessing and thriving within the profession. After all, due to the social construction of gender, females are expected and socialized to express themselves consistently with the conception of femininity, which is in direct opposition to the masculine expressions deemed necessary to enter, survive, and

succeed within law enforcement. Therefore, achieving gender equality and female integration in law enforcement ultimately will require transformations to the masculine image and masculine culture of policing, or changes “to the pervasiveness of the social institution of gender and its social construction...” (Lorber, 1994, p. 10).

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Appendix A.

Study Information Sheet

TITLE: Female Police Officers in Canada: The Influence of Gender on Law Enforcement

INVESTIGATOR: Danielle S. Lappage, School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University.

SENIOR SUPERVISOR: Dr. Rick Parent, School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: This study aims to gain a current and comprehensive understanding of the influence of gender on law enforcement. Specifically, police officers' perceptions regarding the influence of gender on occupational experiences and policing operations will be explored. Results from this study will be reported in the investigator's graduate thesis, and may also be published in academic journal articles and books, and/or presented at academic conferences.

TASK REQUIREMENTS: You are being asked to participate in a face-to-face interview. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and it will be conducted at a location of your choosing. With your consent, the interview will be recorded. If you do not wish for this interview to be recorded, hand written notes will instead be taken.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERMISSION: It is important to note that permission to conduct this study has NOT been (and will NOT be) obtained from any police agency. I am instead approaching you independently.

RISKS: The risk to participants is minimal. There is a possibility that memories of uncomfortable, stressful, or difficult experiences will arise as you are being asked to reflect on your past occupational experiences.

Also, as I will not be going through your police agency's formal channels (in terms of ethics approval), you risk being subjected to hostility from your colleagues as a result of talking to me outside of this formal process. You may also be reluctant to divulge information out of a fear that it will be used against you or your police service. Although the likelihood of such risks are very low due to the confidentiality measures that will be strictly adhered to (which are outlined below), these are still possible risks.

BENEFITS: You will receive no compensation for your involvement within this study. However, knowledge gained as a result of your participation will contribute to the severely limited body of literature that exists regarding the influence of gender on policing. As females are increasingly becoming involved in policing, specific attention as to their influence on, and experiences within the profession is imperative. Ultimately, conclusions from this study are anticipated to stipulate changes in police training, deployment strategies, and female recruitment and retention strategies, thereby contributing to the enhancement of policing operations and police officers' occupational experiences.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All data collected in this study will be confidential. No information that may disclose your identity will be released, unless required by law.

Permission will be requested to audio record your interview on a tape recorder. If you agree to have your interview recorded, the audio file from the tape recorder will be transferred onto a USB device, and the original audio file will be deleted on the same day of your interview. Audio files will be transcribed, and transcripts will be stored on the same USB device that contains your interview's audio files. During transcription, a pseudonym will replace your name, and all other identifying factors (i.e. specific locations, other people's names) will be removed. The transcription process will be completed within a week of your interview. If you do not consent to having your interview audio-recorded, permission to take notes will instead be requested. If you consent to this alternative, notes taken during the interview will be typed up, and saved to a USB device. When typing up these notes, a pseudonym will replace your name, and any identifying factors mentioned within the notes (i.e. specific locations, other people's names) will be removed. This process will also be completed within a week of your interview. Further, once this is done, the original notes will immediately be shredded.

The USB device containing the transcripts and audio files, or notes from your interview will be placed within a locked cabinet located in a secure room at Simon Fraser University. The principal investigator, and her senior supervisor will be the only people who will have access to the data prior to its' destruction. Responses from your interview will be utilized for the principal investigator's Master's thesis, and may also be used for future publications, and/or projects. Furthermore, some direct quotes from your interview may appear in the principal investigator's final thesis paper, and may also appear within future publications, and/or projects. These direct quotes will be utilized in order to ensure clarity, and in order to most accurately portray your experiences and perceptions. It is important to remind you at this time that any quote used will be associated with your pseudonym name, and that no identifying factors, including your respective police agency, will be connected to any of your responses.

Files on the USB device (audio records/ transcripts, or notes from your interview) will be kept until August 31st, 2017. On this date, they will be permanently deleted.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW: This study is completely voluntary. You may discontinue your involvement, retract statements, or refuse to answer any question(s) without providing reason(s) and without facing any penalties for doing so.

CONTACT INFORMATION: For any questions about this research study, you can contact Danielle Lappage or Dr. Rick Parent (senior supervisor). If you have any questions or concerns regarding ethical issues or your rights as a participant in this study, you can contact Dr. Jeffrey Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics.

Appendix B.

Interview Schedule: Female Officers

-Can you tell me a bit about yourself, and why you decided to pursue a career in policing?

-Can you talk about your experience with the recruitment process? What were the best/ most challenging parts?

-Can you talk about your training experience? What were the best/ most challenging parts?

-Can you give me a brief history of your professional career?

-What have been the some of the most challenging and most rewarding moments through your career?

-What are the best parts of your job? What are the worst parts of your job?

-Do you think that male and female officers have different strengths & weaknesses as police officers?

-Any particular parts of the job and/or types of calls in which a certain gender is better suited?

-Do you perceive career development opportunities and promotion processes equal for male and female officers?

-Are there any other unique challenges we have not talked about that you have faced in your career because you are a female officer?

-Are there any unique benefits that you have experienced in your career because you are a female officer?

- Have you noticed there to be any changes to the experiences or acceptance of females within policing since you began your career?

-Do you think that increasing female representation will have any effect on law enforcement? Do you have any opinion about affirmative action that is occurring throughout Canadian police agencies?

Appendix C.

Interview Schedule: Male Officers

-Can you tell me a bit about yourself, and provide me with a brief history of your professional career?

-Based on your experiences you think that male and female officers have different strengths & weaknesses as police officers?

-Any particular parts of the job and/or types of calls in which a certain gender is better suited?

-Based on your experiences do you think male and female officers are treated & respected similarly within your agency?

-Do you perceive career development opportunities and promotion processes equal for male and female officers?

-Do you think or have you noticed any other unique challenges that female officers face in their careers because of their gender?

-Are there any unique benefits that they experience because of their gender?

- Have you noticed there to be any changes to the experiences or acceptance of females within policing since you began your career?

-Do you think that increasing female representation will have any effect on law enforcement? Do you have any opinion about affirmative action that is occurring throughout Canadian police agencies?

Appendix D.

Informed Consent Form

Should you wish to obtain information about your rights as a participant in research, or about the responsibilities of researchers, or if you consent to participate and have questions, concerns, or complaints about the manner in which this study was conducted, please contact Dr. Jeff Toward, Director, Office of Research Ethics. You may also contact Neil Boyd, Director, School of Criminology.

If you agree to participate in this study and wish to receive the results upon its completion, and/or if you have any questions regarding this project that you wish to direct at the principal researcher, you can contact her. Questions may also be directed at the supervisor of this project, Dr. Rick Parent.

You are being asked to participate in the following research study:

TITLE: Female Police Officers in Canada: The Influence of Gender on Law Enforcement

INVESTIGATOR: Danielle S. Lappage, School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University

SUPERVISOR: Dr. Rick Parent, School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: This study aims to gain a current and comprehensive understanding of the influence of gender on law enforcement. Specifically, police officers' perceptions regarding the influence of gender on occupational experiences and policing operations will be explored. Results from this study will be reported in the investigator's graduate thesis, and may also be published in academic journal articles and books, and/or presented at academic conferences.

TASK REQUIREMENTS: You are being asked to participate in a face-to-face interview. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and it will be conducted at a location of your choosing. With your consent, the interview will be recorded. If you do not wish for this interview to be recorded, hand written notes will instead be taken.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERMISSION: It is important to note that permission to conduct this study has NOT been (and will NOT be) obtained from any police agency.

I am instead approaching you independently.

RISKS: The risk to participants is minimal. There is a possibility that memories of uncomfortable, stressful, or difficult experiences will arise as you are being asked to reflect on your past occupational experiences.

Also, as I will not be going through your police agency's formal channels (in terms of ethics approval); you risk being subjected to hostility from your colleagues for talking to me outside of such a formal process. You also may be reluctant to divulge information

out of a fear that it will be used against you or your police service. Although the likelihood of these risks is low due to the confidentiality measures, which are outlined below, these are still possible risks of this study.

BENEFITS: You will receive no compensation for your involvement within this study. However, knowledge gained as a result of your participation will contribute to the severely limited body of literature that exists regarding the influence of gender on policing. As females are increasingly becoming involved in policing, specific attention as to their influence on, and experiences within the profession is imperative. Ultimately, conclusions from this study are anticipated to stipulate changes in police training, deployment strategies, and female recruitment and retention strategies, thereby contributing to the enhancement of policing operations and police officers' occupational experiences.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All data collected in this study will be confidential. No information that may disclose your identity will be released, unless required by law.

If you agree to have your interview recorded, the audio file from the tape recorder will be transferred onto a USB device, and the original audio files will be deleted from the tape recorder on the same day of your interview. Audio files will be transcribed, and transcripts will be stored on the same USB device that contains your interview's audio files. During transcription a pseudonym will replace your name, and all identifying factors that you may have voiced within your interview (i.e. specific locations, other people's names, your police agency) will be removed. Transcription will be completed within a week of your interview.

If you do not consent to having your interview audio-recorded, permission to take notes will instead be requested. If you consent to this alternative, notes taken during the interview will be typed up, anonymized, and saved to a USB device. This process will be completed within a week of your interview. Further, once this is done, the raw notes from your interview will immediately be shredded.

The USB device containing the transcripts and audio files, or notes from your interview will be placed within a locked cabinet located in a secure room at Simon Fraser University. The principal investigator, and her senior supervisor will be the only people who will have access to the data prior to its' destruction. Responses from your interview will be utilized for the principal investigator's Master's thesis, and may also be used for future publications, and/or projects. Furthermore, some direct quotes from your interview may appear in the principal investigator's final thesis paper, and may also appear within future publications, and/or projects. These direct quotes will be utilized in order to ensure clarity, and in order to most accurately portray your experiences and perceptions. It is important to remind you at this time that any quote used will be associated only with your pseudonym name, and that no identifying factors, including your respective police agency, will be connected to any of your responses.

Files on the USB device (audio records/ transcripts, or notes from your interview) will be kept until August 31st, 2017. On this date, they will be permanently deleted.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW: This study is completely voluntary. You may discontinue your involvement, retract statements, or refuse to answer any question(s) without providing reason(s) and without facing any penalties for doing so.

By verbally consenting to this research you acknowledge that you have read and understand the entirety of the above form. Stating YES indicates that you AGREE to participate in this study. If you agree to be interviewed, please also state whether you consent to having the interview audio recorded.

If you do NOT AGREE to be interviewed, please state NO at this time.

Do you consent to participate in this research study? Yes No

Do you consent to having your interviews audio-recorded? Yes No

Participant name (pseudonym only): _____

Date (yyyy/mm/dd): _____