

Chapter Nine

WOMEN IN SMALL TOWN AND RURAL POLICING

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In Canada, policing has generally been a white, male occupation. This has been particularly true of the Canadian federal force, the symbol of the nation -- the R.C.M.P. By the later decades of the twentieth century, however, significant changes were made to the gender and racial composition of the force. Rather than being forced by the Supreme Court to abandon exclusive policies which effectively denied members of ethnic, racial and religious groups entrance into the R.C.M.P., the force took the initiative on such internally divisive issues as the wearing of turbans by Sikh and braids by Canadian first nation peoples. Recruitment preferences now target greater equity with respect to gender and race.

In 1965, there were 190 police officers who were women in Canada. This was a scant 0.6% of the total number of police officers. For the next quarter century, the strength of police forces in Canada grew substantially, from 30,146 officers in 1965 to 47,713 ten years later. During this decade the number of female officers tripled to 562 (Statistics Canada 2004). Almost all of these officers worked in municipal departments because it was not until 1974 that the RCMP broke a century-long tradition when the first female members were recruited. In September, 1974, the first 32-member all-female RCMP troop began training in Regina, graduating in March 1975. Initially, a target of 20% was projected by the Commissioner, to be reached by the turn of the century. This goal has been reduced and the hope now is that the proportion of women in the force can be doubled by that time.

By 1990, 3,573 women policed Canada, 6.4% of all officers and this expansion continued. By 2004, 16.5% of all police officers were female (9, 897 compared with 50,009 males (Statistics Canada 2004). In 2004, Nova Scotia ranked below only Quebec in having the lowest proportion of female officers, 12.3% (198 of 1,615 officers). According to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Halifax Regional Police included 46 women (11.4%) while Cape Breton Regional Municipality had none (out of 169 officers); five women were listed in 2002. Examining the small municipalities in Nova Scotia, women were relatively rare in the independent police forces, with 10 women and 142 men (6.6% female); the towns that were policed by RCMP contracts had a considerably higher proportion of women (10 out of 62, or 16.1%); this was about the Canadian average (Statistics Canada 2004).

Policing is very much a heavily studied occupation. Over the last several decades, many aspects of the work of women in policing have come under social scientific scrutiny. In this chapter I intend to sketch briefly the history of recruitment of women in policing, emphasizing the differentiation of police roles or functions and the drive of women towards integration. Despite the small numbers of police officers in the Valley overall, and more particularly the small number of police women, I believe some of the data derived

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from this small sample is deserving of attention in its own right and, in the context of changes overall, is instructive in depicting the changes in policing discussed within the terms of Community-based Policing. In addition to the lengthy ethnographic phase of the project, from which many observations derive, in-depth interviews were conducted with six female constables. The results of these interviews are integrated into the discussion that follows.

The first police matron was appointed to the Toronto Metropolitan Police Force in 1888, while the first police woman was appointed in 1913. The Matrons were required to be available for searching female prisoners and therefore were required to live close to the police station. Police women supervised dance halls, dealt with female prisoners, and performed "duties that their sex enables them to discharge with peculiar advantage." By 1969, there were about 200 female police officers in Canada. The next decade, however, as elsewhere in Europe and the United States, was marked by the gradual transformation of the role assigned to women in policing. In Toronto in 1975, police women still patrolled in skirts and carried shoulder bags. Until 1975, they were unarmed. (The skirts were discontinued in Toronto in the 1980s) (Blue Line Magazine, May 1989, pp. 7-8, 17). The majority of female officers were assigned to the Women's Bureau, where they performed traffic duty, searched female prisoners and juveniles did general patrol work and acted as decoys. While women broke into urban policing first, in Toronto in 1989 there were only 385 women in a police force of 5,621 officers (Dueck 1989: 6, 16). The next main breakthrough was acceptance into national and provincial policing.

In 1974 the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had been an all- male force for 101 years. In September of that year, however, the first female recruits commenced their six-month training at the Depot in Regina (Department of Labour, 1974: 457). Concern was expressed over the uniform, which was expected to consist of "modified versions of the famous RCMP scarlet tunic, complete with breeches, boots, and flat-brimmed stetsons" (:457). Troop 17, the first group of female Mounties, were given the same training as male recruits. Time magazine described the graduation ceremony as follows: "The 30 women ... smartly went through their passing-out parade, dressed in navy blue, visored pillbox hats, scarlet tunics, narrow navy blue serge skirts, beige pantyhose and navy blue pumps" (17 March 1975: 11). In the beginning, police women carried purses (shoulder bags) in which they carried their firearms and ammunition. This was highly impractical for routine police work, and was replaced by the standard leather belt (which, policewomen say, makes them look short).

In May, 1974 another break-through had occurred when 15 women were accepted into training for the Ontario Provincial Police, which had been exclusively male for 65 years. According to the Labour Gazette, they were to "be treated equal to and paid the same as male constables". The women, who were to be equipped with revolvers, clubs and handcuffs, would also "receive extra physical training with the emphasis on self-defense" (Department of Labour, 1974: 457-458).

One main theme emerges from this review of the history of policing. Female police

were accepted into municipal city policing long before they were accepted into the R.C.M.P. In this longer history, there was a struggle, led by police women, towards integration. At first, working out of the Women's Bureau, tasks for female officers were highly gender specific. Through their initiatives, women won a place in most aspects of policing although, as might be expected, they continue to be largely excluded from the higher levels of management. This change in tasks was accompanied by changes in the uniform, from "feminine" to "functional", closely resembling the male officers' uniform.

MINORITY POLICING IN THE VALLEY

The focus of this chapter is on the experience of female constables as an occupational minority; however I want to raise the issue, briefly, of the experience of other minority members as a point of departure. Upon informing one police women in the R.C.M.P. that a local town had recently hired a black officer as a temporary replacement, she commented that now he would learn what it was like to be a woman. By that she meant that he would experience the same sense of being "different", particularly with respect to the response of the other police officers and of the community. People would look at him in restaurants and on the street, as representing an anomaly. From observations, limited as they are given the paucity of visible minority recruitment, there are some interesting parallels and differences in the experiences of black and woman officers in the area.

The Annapolis Valley is not particularly multi-cultural. There are, however, some visible minorities, a small black community and two federal reservations designated for First nations (Mi'kmaq). At the beginning of the research on CBP in the valley, there were no native constables and there was only one black officer serving in the R.C.M.P., in the Digby Detachment. His presence was given public display in 1991 when he served as part of the RCMP escort for the Annapolis Valley pageant. This presented a positive image for the force in its drive to recruit members of minorities.

There is a brief history of visible minorities in municipal policing in the valley. The first black officer was hired in the 1980s in one small town. However, he did not last through his probation period. While he was apparently let go without cause because the department was dissatisfied with his performance, it was also suggested by a male constable in the town that the town "wasn't ready" for a black officer.

Late in 1989, another Valley town was interviewing to hire two additional constables. Among the applicants was a black officer, a graduate from the Atlantic Police Academy. The former cadet applied for the position and was short-listed. According to one senior member of the Department: "We really wanted [this officer]; we really wanted a coloured here." During the interview part of the assessment, he continued, the former cadet was obviously nervous and gave minimal answers. Consequently, "We gave him a break to compose himself". This potential recruit, however, was not hired to a permanent position. In 1991, following the loss of another officer to a disability, he was hired as a

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temporary replacement in the town but subsequently found a full-time job with a police department in another town.

In this same town, there is some consciousness of the issue of race. The Board of Police Commissioners asked for a report on the Department's response to the recommendations of the Marshall Inquiry to see how the Department measured up by these criteria. In the late 1970s and early 1980s there were serious allegations about racism in the town police force. One officer, for example, was particularly known to use racist language and to have a hatred of blacks. His dog was named "nigger", indicating his attitudes publicly. With this kind of history a police force sensitive about its image would tend to want to have a different picture painted of current practices. The Department subsequently reviewed the recommendations of the Marshall Inquiry and made a report to the Board favourable to the hiring of minorities. Since there was a small black community in the area, it is inevitable that there will be some overt racism -- in that town soon after the racial disturbance in downtown Halifax in the summer of 1991, an altercation involving clear racism occurred locally. Ultimately, two black youths were charged with assault causing bodily harm and aggravated assault. The issue which sparked the fight was clearly race; nevertheless, the official police position was that it was not a racial incident, just a fight.

Officers from the town tended to treat the black recruit differently from the way they treated female police officers. He was more clearly defined as one of the boys and, other officers claimed, racial slurs from the public were not tolerated. Unlike sexist comments and jokes, in my experience, police officers did not make racist slurs and jokes in his presence. The same was clearly not the case for sexism. A more protective attitude was adopted respecting the black recruit -- who was part of the brotherhood of policing -- and a more competitive attitude taken to the women.

This should not be taken to suggest that racist attitudes are not present among the other officers and racist remarks were occasionally directed at suspects or trouble-makers in the town. One member in particular had a reputation for being anti-black and for opposing the black cadet's application. However, again, there is much greater tolerance for overt prejudice against women. In a promotional routine, this same officer gave exceptionally low marks to the only female candidate. These observations, however, should not overshadow the progress in professionalization and progressive recruitment policies which have been made in the town.

The history of women in policing locally does not go back any further than that of blacks. Female officers have been present in the Annapolis Valley since the early 1980s. In New Minas (RCMP), about twenty women have served in the detachment. At the time the study originated, there were a few female officers in the smaller detachments. Kingston, for example, had one serving female member (the second in that detachment). In Bridgetown, the only female member was the first woman to serve in that detachment. There was also a female member in Digby (to the West of the Valley) and one in Windsor to the east. There were, then, a few female officers posted to RCMP detachments, but

they represented fewer than 10% of the members. This proportion was even less in small town policing. In the towns of Hantsport, Wolfville, Kentville, Berwick, Middleton and Annapolis Royal, there was only one full-time female officer (out of a total complement of about 40). Two towns had hired female officers as summer replacements (one town once and the other two times) but not as permanent members. The MPD at Middleton, for example, applied for a 52-week federal funding programme to hire a female officer, after assuring the Commission that they did not intend to add another permanent member to the force. When the application was not approved, the department hired a part-time constable who was a woman for the period of May to September (McGahan 1989 #13: 9).

In another valley town the Chief seriously considered hiring a woman, and in 1990 two women were interviewed for a full time position. In the middle 1980s, a woman police officer had been hired for summer replacement work. Her husband was also a policeman. At one time, it was the hope that the male (husband) could be hired full time and this would then mean the bonus of having the woman in town and able to fill in when necessary.

Ultimately, neither of the women interviewed in 1990 was hired -- one withdrew her application because she expected to be re-engaged by the RCMP. There was a feeling that the town was not ready for a woman officer (a position communicated to me by the departmental secretary/dispatcher, a woman). What makes a town not ready involves two factors. One is public acceptance. There is certainly no evidence of this in that particular town or elsewhere in the valley that this is a serious problem. The second concerns the attitudes of the males in the department. In this respect, the acceptance level is low, although it is justified on different grounds. One member, for example, essentially argues on religious grounds that the job is not suitable for women -- it is not their place. The usual ideology, however, stresses the necessity for the exercise of physical force. Given only one model of policing small towns, it is understandable that women might not always be regarded as appropriate to this model. There are two fallacies here, of course. One is that women cannot police in this traditional manner. The second fallacy is that the traditional style is in itself appropriate. It is significant to note that in the town, there is not even the rhetoric of community-based policing, the style which was supposed to modify the police practice in a more democratic, community-oriented direction, emphasizing different skills and intervention techniques. Ultimately, the recruitment of female police officers is evaluated by male officers negatively in two ways. While they expect female members to conform to the more traditional style of policing, they hold that it is particularly unsuited to women. On the other hand, they might be more agreeable to women in policing if specific gender-based tasks were allotted to them, although this would be accompanied by the view that this is not "real" police work, and certainly is deserving of lower status and pay. Most of the officers were most opposed to any attempt to transform the policing style, or even methods which appeared to challenge it, and associated this with female recruitment

Altogether, then, in the Valley proper, at the time of the study, there were eight

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full-time women police officers. During the course of the study, numerous observations, discussions and formal data gathering was undertaken, and the women officers were included in all phases. In addition, male officers were also posed questions which were parallel to those asked the female officers. It is upon this data base that this report is anchored, including focused in-depth interviews.

POLICE WOMEN IN THE VALLEY

Recruitment

In the 1980s, during the initial enthusiasm for community-based policing and minority recruitment, the R.C.M.P. devised a target of 20% female members to be achieved by the end of the century. This was put into practice by a campaign to induce women to join and by a point scheme which gave women (and visible minorities) an advantage over males applying. A similar advantage was given to university graduates; it was not solely an issue of gender recruitment. Over time the expectation was that the character of the force would change somewhat. It would be more representative of and responsive to the wider community, and be more acceptable as a "profession". Female members admit that there was a definite "preference" for females in recruitment. According to one woman, there was a definite preference because of her gender. "This was based on the idea of my being part of a minority and there were only 7.2% females in the force while they were trying to get 20."

This policy has resulted in a back-lash among present male officers. It is seen, inevitably, by men as reverse discrimination. Male officers tell prospective recruits that if they are Caucasian and male, they should forget their application. This conservative response is also directed at minority members, less specifically in terms of the typical evaluation made of women that they don't belong in the force, and more directed at the changes the force has voluntarily undertaken (under compulsion of the Charter and Human Rights arguments) to modify its regulations to accommodate such minority groups as Sikhs and members of the First Nations, as well as being directed at university graduates who are perceived to be inferior compared to the "street-smart" cop.

As a consequence of this divisiveness, the R.C.M.P. made some changes, particularly, in their recruitment policy. Previously, the initial application meeting, background check, and intensive interview occurred first, and this was followed by a physical. Now the force has re-vamped the physical test, placed it as the initial step in the recruitment process, and required the applicant to pay for it. This is not intended to make the test more difficult for women, but to the extent that women indicate that the physical test is one of the most difficult parts of the process, it is likely to have the effect of discouraging those less attuned to such training. It is not women, or university graduates these measures are necessarily designed to discourage, but certain types of women and graduates. As detachment recruitment officers indicate, they can tell whether someone

will make a good recruit the moment they walk in the door -- the process is heavily weighted towards the acceptance of certain stereotypically advantaged males -- and females who can match this standard. In sum, it is not that there is an attempt to limit female recruitment, only that there is an attempt to be more selective along certain more traditional police lines.

Training

While the R.C.M.P. conducts both co-educational and single-gendered troop training, the female officers interviewed trained in all-women troops. (Town police women have trained in a provincial academy in a troop of 20 men and two women). The instructors at Regina were mostly male -- although there was one woman instructor for some, though not all of the female members. This policy is changing and there was a move within the force to recruit women to the position of instructor. Again, this move was severely criticized by male members because it entailed what were seen as relatively early promotions to the rank of corporal and, hence, was again viewed as reverse discrimination. Within the force, promotions constitute the chief preoccupation of the members in terms of practices within the bureaucracy. There are now a number of female instructors at Regina. One member thought that there had also been a change in the practices of male instructors: "The RCMP has changed its attitude a lot since women first got in. Even the instructors out there now, most of them, or a lot of them, have been in the force since females were.... A lot of these guys have gone through training with females that are instructing out there so, to them, we are just as much a part of the force as they are."

One member trained under the first female instructor to be posted to Regina. She said that this instructor had been transferred from doing "federal work", essentially drug investigation and enforcement, but had been assigned to teach human relations. "She was telling us how to go and advise next of kin, how you do a suicide, how you approach somebody whose been sexually assaulted, yet she had never done it herself. She was just reading it out of the book. But we did have, a couple of times, a couple of guys substitute who had been out in the field for ten years and I found that their lectures were something that sank in, that you could really grab on to. She would have been really great in federal work if she had been doing that, undercover work, drug work. They just put her in the wrong course." When asked about this mis-assignment, the member did not know why they put her in the course but did not think it was because of her gender "because there were a few other male instructors around who were placed in the wrong courses."

Asked whether there were any different standards expected of male or female troops, one woman said: "There wasn't with our troop I think, but we do know that troops that came after us were talking to girls that graduated after me, they were expected to do less than what we had done, so I think it depended on the instructors and the individual troops.... There was a set standard you had to meet. Some instructors would make you

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surpass it and others would make you just meet it." In the experience of another member, "Physically, females had to prove themselves over and above what the males did." Another woman said that she heard that the standards were different from year to year. "The year I went through everything was supposed to be equal so that's how I was treated." Between the standards for men and women, "were what we call the Cooper's test, it was a one and a half mile run. You had to do it three times in the six months and each time you were expected to do it better. The males were expected to run it a little bit faster than us. And, as far as weight training, we lifted 2/3 the amount of weight. But that is it as far as anything else, swimming, for example. [It was] just because of their physical build. None of us argued with it, that it was discriminatory. You just had to look at those guys when they left, at their muscles. I said 'I'm glad you're lifting all those weights and not me.'"

Transfers

As a national force, the R.C.M.P. has had a philosophy of relatively frequent transfer of personnel. This is connected to their style of legalistic policing, represents their intention to police impartially, and emerges from their model which is based on an occupying army. It also contradicts, to a degree, the stated philosophy of community-based policing. In addition, the policy of frequent and distant transfers poses an additional problem for women. It is another example where equal treatment is, in fact, unequal given the position of women in society. Female members who are married or in a committed relationship with a male are not as mobile as either single members (male or female), or married male members. Given the distribution of economic power, it is relatively common for wives to follow husbands in their occupational migrations. It is uncommon for husbands to follow wives. Transfers are entirely in the hands of staffing. Members can indicate certain preferences, but they cannot necessarily receive the location they want when transfer comes through, nor can they expect to receive a transfer upon their request.

Several of the female officers in the study area were affected by this problem of restricted mobility. The R.C.M.P. allows members to apply for a leave of absence without pay. Members on such a leave may return to their detachment, or take the risk of moving to another location and then applying to staffing in the new area in the hopes that they can be posted to a convenient opening. It is to the advantage of the receiving Division to re-employ the member because they do not have to pay what would otherwise be generous moving allowances. It is disadvantageous to the original detachment which may not receive an additional member to replace the member on leave of absence. Consequently, the remaining members would have to shoulder a heavier work load. In larger detachments, the work is more easily distributed. In smaller detachments, the effect is usually measurable and other members have a source of resentment. The leave of absence applies 30 days after application. Once the member is gone, and is technically

no longer a member of the force, it is likely that the position will be filled, but this can take six to eight months. Transfers are more troublesome now for the force than in the past because of undertakings to protect the interests of home owners. Since it is frequently female members who make use of this leave of absence without pay provision, it provides another basis for male prejudice and discrimination. As such, it is not warranted. Other members -- mostly male -- have taken leaves of absence to return to University for a year causing the same disruption in the detachment. This is seen as enhancing his (or her) career and is not felt with such resentment. In addition, resentment is reserved for those members who obtain a study leave to attend university, who have their tuition paid by the force and remain on full salary while studying. Again, this is evaluated differently. Taking advantage of force programmes to enhance your individual career is seen as understandable and even laudable. But a woman's motivation to maintain a family relationships is seen as gender specific and is devalued.

Over time, the RCMP has become more sensitive about transfers. For female members, maintaining family is often a significant motivating factor. Typically, women have a tradition of sacrificing their careers to maintain relationships with men who have been transferred. The RCMP, however, typically did not regard this as a reason for accommodating a request by a female member for a transfer to a specific location. That left them with the option of resigning and seeking work in the new location, or, if possible, of rejoining the force.

Women officers also receive further gender-based criticism from other male members because of another national policy of the force. Members who become pregnant are routinely assigned light duties and then receive a maternity leave, during which time the detachment generally is unable to replace the officer. This makes women, especially pregnant women, subject to all sorts of negative gossip among male members in the detachment. Clearly, women on the job are going to be pregnant at certain times of their life cycle. This has been used by many male members as an excuse to support the claim that women have no place in policing. They will be unavailable at certain times, while pregnant they will be unable to perform regular duties (especially those involving potentially violent situations), and will be re-assigned to "light duties" in the detachment. Again, the claim is that the cost of this pregnancy, and the subsequently mandated maternity leave, puts an undue burden on the other members of detachment. Pregnancy is seen as an avoidable occurrence, as the result of choice. Therefore, by becoming pregnant you are choosing to exploit the force (by utilizing a programme you have every right to use), sluffing off your duty, and imposing heavier burdens on your fellow officers.

The point is that it is the female nature of the leave which is at question. On the other hand, most types of on-the-job disability, including extended periods (up to two years) of light duty in the detachment which men receive result from accidents playing sports, particularly hockey. This is seen as accidental, as a natural result of playing sports (which the force encourages), and must be taken in stride by the other male members. This kind of generous allowance is not extended to pregnancy which is seen as neither

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accidental, nor masculine; not somehow natural

Job Assignment

Traditionally, as the review of the history of women in policing has demonstrated, there were stereotypical notions of what types of police work were appropriate and what types were inappropriate for men and women. In the words of one senior member: "Women are better with women and children. In some cases some are better at interviewing certain criminals. Men, though, tend to be better at interviewing more hard case criminals such as rapists." On the other hand, women are "more apt to be sympathetic to victims of sexual assault, whether it involves women or children." This is because, he added, "males still believe that sexual assault is the female's fault."

One of the key areas which women have been perceived to be particularly appropriate has been in interviewing women who have been victims of sexual assault. Among males, this is seen as an individual rather than a gender-specific question. Some men, then, were seen as highly sensitive to victims, easy to talk to, and as appropriate to work with female victims and children. Others, usually those who most typically fit the traditional image of the macho male cop, were seen as absolutely inappropriate. The issue is not seen by men, generally, as one in which the victim may identify more closely with the female officer or perceive the male officer as representing more her violator than her recourse. The exception, then, for one female member is in the situation of sexual assault "where a woman may want to talk to another woman." For another officer, the difference comes "when you get into child sexual abuse and stuff like that; kids tend to relate better to females than males, as well as sexual assaults, females tend to relate better to females, because in a sexual assault a male has done this to the female." Another constable agreed: "I think when it comes to interviewing females on sexual assaults, I found that females tend to open up a little bit more. And also young kids." She related the following:

"I just interviewed a seven year old girl for about an hour about an assault that had taken place on her. We talked for about an hour. There was a social worker there as well. After we had spoken the social worker took me aside and said "I can't believe how relaxed she was with you and how good you were with her. I know we've had problems in the past with some of the guys coming on a little too strong, not all of them. It is difficult to sit down and talk about something like that to a total stranger." "There's one lady up in training. She was putting on a couple of courses; she was from a sexual abuse clinic. And she came in and there was a troop of guys there. And she called one guy up to the front and she said `now, I want you to tell everybody in this room all about your last sexual experience, every detail'. And of course he turned all colours of the rainbow, and she said: `There,

now you know how it feels when a woman who has been assaulted has to sit down and tell all you guys everything that happened. And when they tell us they have to tell everything, every detail." So communication is better for a female. "Sometimes I have been told it may be a good idea for me to go in there and speak to her, but sometimes egos run a little bit wild, and they wouldn't want you to think that I'm giving this to you because we think you are good at it or might get farther or do a better job at it."

Not all the women interviewed adopted this line completely. According to a female member: "I don't think there are any jobs more appropriate for either gender. I think that both can do the same job." However, she added that it is "not this way because of the way it has been viewed." In the words of another female member, there were no jobs more appropriate to one gender than the other: "There was a time when I'd have said yes, with young offenders, working with children, working with rape victims, but I think that's all changed. I think the men are coming around, being as well educated in the field..., how to be more sensitive. And women are breaking into more fields, like tactical areas and things like that. So I don't think so." Another member commented: "A lot of people think that there are, a lot of people think that women can be better at utilizing, say, sexual assault training. I'm not so sure that is true. I think that most people think that because most sexual assault victims are female and they figure that females can relate better to females, but I've seen a lot of men handle sexual assaults a lot better than women." She then qualified her answer by asserting that "if you were to average it out, women might excel a little better in that. I'm not sure there are many men that can do equally as well." This is put another way by a male officer, who said that "there is a tendency, I've seen it on this department, that [the female member] would get the child abuse situations. They hear the word 'social services' and they think [police woman]."

Another constable commented on the perception that men might be more comfortable with women when discussing personal things: "That would work, maybe, on your sexual assault interviews, that would probably be true, because a lot of people feel that a man would tell a woman that he has violated another woman but to tell another man would be humiliation, so he is not comfortable with another man. He would be ashamed." On the other hand, a female officer suggested that men may be more effective interviewing suspects in other kinds of criminal cases:

"where you are dealing with somebody in a robbery or a break and enter, or something, I would tend to think that men maybe have the upper hand on women ... because we have been brought up in a society where men have always been the authoritative figure more so than women, so I think they tend to be more intimidating than if a woman walked into a room to interview someone. Mind you, I've seen women with very good interviewing techniques, but I think on the whole, men probably are more comfortable

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with it and get better results just because of their presence. It is pretty hard when you get a petite, say 5 foot 4, pretty female officer to go in and appear menacing to a six foot two goon sitting at a table. It is pretty hard for her to portray that sort of image, whereas you get a five foot four male officer, he might have a big, booming voice, or maybe his eyes, or something, but when you take a pretty feminine sort of person it is pretty difficult for them to appear intimidating to someone who is much larger than them. If we wanted to all be men, we would all be born men. It is nice to keep the separation between women and men."

If responding to sexual assaults is perceived by some as especially appropriate for women, aggressive situations are regarded as more suitable for males. As one Chief put it, "Men are better at responding to tavern calls where men are fighting." One female officer commented that "in fights, men don't want to be pushed around by a woman. They would rather have a man to talk to and feel that they can identify with because they are a man talking to another man." Her general point of view was that "all jobs are of equal appropriateness. But men are more effective at their jobs because most cases involve males where 90% of males commit offenses. Here is this identifying of a man with another man idea. Also, the older community would rather have male officers." In one particularly violent domestic assault she investigated, where an alcoholic husband was beating up his wife, she commented: "He hated women in general but thought of me as an officer rather than a woman." In this view, women have nothing special to bring to an aggressive situation and, essentially, they are usually less effective than males.

As another woman argued, men would be better in aggressive situations. "When I came here, my trainer was about 6 foot 3, about 230 pounds, so when I ever showed up to a fight with him, somebody took one look at him and said `No'. Sometimes it can help. Just because of their size and their strength." Men, then, are more aggressive and stronger and better at physical confrontations.

This, however, is only half the standard answer. It does reflect the more traditional role of policing, with its emphasis on the masculine advantages of strength and aggressiveness. On the other hand, it has consistently been held that women exercise a "calming" effect on violent situations. One female member commented: "They are finding with studies down in the States that partners of female officers are less likely to get killed or hurt in violent situations."

The alleged "calming effect" of women police officers was attributed to a couple of things. It was alleged by some that the "calming effect" was caused by male chauvinism, that men had been socialized not to hit women and therefore were unable to react aggressively in the situation. While one male constable thought that "it all depends on the type of individual -- a male can have just as good a calming effect depending on how he portrays himself", he added that "in bars, and fights and complications on the street, females have a calming effect. It takes the guy aback, because he says `I'm not going to

fight with her because she's a woman".

One female officer claimed that the men "would call me just as much as they would call a male. They have in the past. I've been told, actually, that they would prefer to have me for back up rather than some of the younger guys. I think it has to do with, through the experience and everything, I've gotten a good reputation around here. I'm not the type to go into a situation and fly off the handle and start something. I think it also takes people a little bit by surprise when I walk in the door because they aren't quite sure what to do. There are guys out there who, there's no glory in striking a female, that's the way they've been raised. You can't brag to your buddies that you hit a police officer and then they find out it was me the next day, you know."

The other part of the standard response was that women were better communicators. One female member commented that "the females were a little bit better at talking especially in situations where somebody has been assaulted, or hurt, or something like that. Even with drunks. I have even noticed it out here, in the field, I have yet to be struck by a drunk person, or anything like that. Not everyone, you still have to watch your back, but a female has more of a calming effect in situations like that. Most men tend to be much more aggressive. If there is a fight somewhere, if there is a drunk somewhere, `O K lets go in there and shake some bodies or beat some heads together. I find that is more something the guys are going to start getting into. Most of the guys around here are pretty good. They realize that there are two of us and there are fifteen of them, don't be foolish and get something started, but they still more aggressive than I would be in the situation."

Female officers tend to rate their verbal abilities as among their most positive attributes. In the words of one female officer, her strongest point was her

"ability to talk my way out of things, with the public. At bar fights or at situations where people don't want to listen to anybody when you get there or they don't want to come with you when you arrest them.... I know that in those situations I am not going to win a fight, generally..., so I resort to talking a person into the car, or talking the situation down to a calmer level, or whatever. I think I have gotten pretty good at that because I have never been in a fight, I have never had to wrestle somebody into a car. It might take me two minutes longer to get somebody in the car, but I get them in there and I am in one piece and they are in one piece. Going into domestic situations I feel confident that I will be able to talk somebody down, at least out of a volatile situation into a dangerous situation where you can buy time while other people showed up. I think that is my strong point, being able to persuade people to do what I want them to do."

Describing her skills in communication as her fundamental strength, a female constable added:

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"I've had a few good chuckles with some of the drunks I brought in. ... You have to have a good attitude with them. Always let them think you are not looking down on them. It makes all the difference. They know it, even when they are drunk, they know how they are being treated, and if you're going to be pushing them around, or grabbing them or pushing them up against a wall and all that kind of stuff, it doesn't go over very well with anybody. And they do remember it.... They know that if they're going to be treating me bad, then they're going to be getting the same kind of treatment, but first and foremost I give them a chance and go from there."

If the female officer can exert a calming effect, the aggressiveness of the male officer can be detrimental to the situation. One female constable commented: "I think its both changing, but I think sometimes men take the more physical approach and the women often times will take a more emotional sort of approach, a little less aggressive and a little more cautious. But the men go in, they are kind of aggressive enough, like this is, bang, bang, bang. You have to expect this to some extent." In the words of another female member:

"I've been to a domestic, generally when you go on a domestic and there is a male and a female that attend, the female takes the wife and the male takes the husband, because I guess they think you can relate better to the wife and the husband, probably being the aggressor, then is more matched up to his physical equal being the male police officer. But I have been in domestic situations where the male police officer and the husband were just going head to head and were going to get into a fight and so we switched, and as soon as I started talking to the husband, he calmed down and there was absolutely no problem, and the wife calmed down as soon as she started talking to the man, so in certain situations I think the people, there are a lot of old school men out there still, who believe that you don't hit a woman, so lots of times it is an advantage to have the woman handling the man in a violent situation because they won't strike the woman but if it was a man they would strike the man. Their upbringing would prevent them from striking a woman. So in a lot of violent situations a woman can be a definite advantage. I'm not sure if it is a calming effect or communication. I've found that most of the circumstances I've dealt with it has been the upbringing of the man -- you don't hit a woman. A male police officer can be bringing a violent male prisoner in and be having a hard time booking him into cells and I've been called back, and they have turned him over to me, and I just say `Sit down, shut up, and put your stuff on the table', and they just say `Yes ma'am' and they'll do it. The man will just watch and ask,

'Why did he do that?' They'll fight with you because your his equal, but with me, we're not equal, so...."

One woman member also suggested that there is a perception females might be better suited to forensic or identification section work: "The identification section would benefit from having women in it because it is very detailed work. Once you examine a scene, then you have to go back and get everything ready for court purposes, and so on, and it is a very detailed type of work, and they feel women are better with more detailed, calculated work; they are more meticulous." In her mind, however, "it doesn't make much difference. If a person is interested in that field they are going to do a good job."

Given the gender-specific assumptions about the suitability of women for certain tasks performed by police officers (such as interviewing sexual assault victims) as well as for men (for example, in some potentially violent situations such as fights in the bars), it is likely that actual job assignments would reflect these differences. First, women would be assigned differentially to certain types of female-oriented complaints, and second that men would be dispatched to aggressive situations or prefer to have men back them up in such situations. I got transferred off one shift, and my shift supervisor fought to keep me because he wanted a female on his shift, because he liked the advantages, like, if you arrested a female you had someone to do a search on them, and different complaints, it came in handy to have a female and male relationship.

As one male officer suggested, from what he has heard, in some places such as Halifax PD, women get treated as second class citizens rather than equally with respect to job assignments. There was considerable anecdotal evidence among male officers that this had been the case in the past, especially when female officers first started working in detachments. According to one Sergeant, he always made sure that a woman was not working alone on a night shift. Furthermore, the female officer would not be called for violent confrontations. In fact, the preference would be to call in an off-duty male officer to respond to a violent confrontation, such as a bar fight, rather than rely on the female. The women interviewed all tended to be young. They did not report such gross forms of discrimination as suggested by some male officers from their recollection. Differential assignments still involve the more traditional feminine work of dealing with crimes against women.

A typical response, then suggested that they were not given different job assignments except "once in a while, if there is a case where they'd like a female, like a person asked for a female in an assault case. But not treated any differently in work assignments, as such." Another woman also argued that job assignments were the same, although she noted that this had not always been the case. The different early in her career she attributed to her inexperience: "When I was on detachment I was getting the same type of files the guys were getting. When I first got here I wasn't getting anything serious because I just didn't have the experience at the time. It was experience. We have two new recruits here now and I see it with them too. So it wasn't anything to do with the

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gender."

She had worked on occasion with one of these two new recruits, a male and related this incident: They pulled over a truck and the male approached the driver very aggressively and was eliciting from him a response in kind. She had to step in, basically take over the stop, and the driver calmed down right away and cooperated. She attributed it to the recruit's inexperience and claimed that she had taught him some of the practical aspects of working with the public.

Given the increase in the reporting of sexual assaults, and the tendency to assign these disproportionately to women, there may be a quantifiable as well as qualifiable difference in job assignments. One female officer noted that, "if anything, I am probably given more job assignments. There are many cases involving sexual assaults with females and I am handed these cases. These cases are very involved." Another officer added:

"Where I did most of my service prior to coming here, the shifts that I worked on were very good and there was no discrimination when it came to job assignment. You worked certain areas and if it was happening in your area -- but the only time there was a discrimination was when it was a sexual assault they would generally tend to call me even though it might not have happened in my area, they would tend to call me to talk to small children, or rape victims, more so than having the man, the policeman that was handling that area, do it."

"They assume that the man wouldn't want to do it and that they should have a woman doing it, where lots of time I'm sure the man would have been just as capable and maybe would have looked forward to the experience if they hadn't done one before, just to see what it was like. But that sort of came down to personality of the person running the shift. On some shifts they did and on others they didn't. So it was just sort of a personal preference sometimes with your shift boss. On the average, no, there wasn't much discrimination. Not with me anyway. But with some of the other girls that worked there who maybe weren't as well liked, or didn't work as well, or something, they would be a little more apt to steer away from giving them something that was major, because they were unsure if they could handle it. But they made this distinction if it was a man too. Some men didn't get certain duties because they were not as adept at handling them. So it worked both ways, I think."

Back-Up

One practical way that subtle discrimination works, as mentioned above, would be the tendency to call for male assistance in the case of a request for back-up, and to not call on the female officer who was working. "A male constable offered this comment: "If I

knew that the individual involved was violent, and there was a male and a female working, you might have the tendency to call the male, if the guy has the potential there for a really violent situation". "It's only natural", he explained.

One female officer agreed that the men would most likely call another male for back-up in an aggressive situation. "But it all depends on who is there. Some of the guys don't have the know-how or experience to deal with situations and because of this there is a tendency to call male back-up. Even in a domestic dispute there would probably be no difference." They do this because, "They need the bulk of the manpower. With another man there is the idea of intimidation and people will react to this and calm down." Women, she agreed, "seem to have a calming effect. But many men won't deal with women. There is this mothering instinct and also men don't feel as intimidated by females."

Another female officer commented: "Where I was at before, I didn't find any difference. They would just call, and you would just show up, and I don't think anyone, that I worked with before, hesitated on me coming as their back-up. I'm sure it does happen. We had some male police officers that were a lot smaller than I was, so they were glad to see the larger image."

The question of differential response in the case of back-up is more pressing in larger departments than in small towns or small detachments where there just isn't the manpower to discriminate. An officer in a small detachment commented: "Here they don't have a choice. No, they call you. I'm fortunate in that way. Here they see me as ... and equal in a situation, but here they really don't have the choice."

Basically in a small department, one senior officer said, "You go with who you have", whether a male or female, "if they are in the area or in the zone working". However, it would be his hope that a male member would come in that situation. On the other hand, "There are situations where he wishes a female was along. He subscribed to the notion that women tend to have a "calming effect", "and the ability to reason with less hostility", but does not think that this "enough reason to have them in violent situations unless they are gutsy". He added that more female officers may reduce the number of complaints of police brutality "because men don't want to admit that a woman roughed them up."

Over-protectiveness of Male Officers

Part of the standard discussion on male officer attitudes to female officers is that they react to the presence of the police women in an over-protective manner and not as an equal. This is generally attributed to male upbringing and the remnants of chivalry. It is also held to be threatening to the safety of the male officer. On the one hand he has to be concerned about the safety of the police women; on the other hand, he does not have an adequate back-up to protect his safety. Two issues are involved here. One is the attitude of protectiveness; the other is the question whether it actually makes a difference

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in the field.

One Police Chief had experienced these feelings. His experience was that he hired a cadet for the summer who was female. He did it to boost the town police image. He felt it was good for the town. Some shifts she had to work on her own and he said he constantly worried about her and her safety because, as he put it, of the mentality in the community about women. Now that he looks back on it, he said, he feels that there was no need to worry and that she was very capable.

A male constable commented that this protectiveness is real, but "It doesn't get in the way." However, "you have it in the back of your mind. I think you take a second look at certain situations and how to approach them, because, physically, you have to realize that, you know, some women are really strong and obviously, unless they have a black belt or something like that, they can't handle a six foot guy who just came out of the [tavern]." He thought that, when he worked with the police woman on his shift, that he was "usually the one that steps in first, and maybe that's because, in the back of my mind, I'm subconsciously thinking well, I've got to make the first move. I don't think we've ever tried it where [the female member] dumped the guy first." The female member in question, however, drew a slightly different conclusion. The offending male usually makes the first move and usually directs it at the male member present.

A female officer thought this over-protectiveness could occur, "but it depends on how the female portrays herself and how the man feels about being over-protective. But I don't think it happens very often." Another police woman said that she had accused a male member of being over-protective. He replied "that he wasn't and had I been a man he would have acted in the same manner, and he said that "You are being just too sensitive; you're scared that the guys are going to think that you're not doing the job well enough, that you're sluffing things off, so you come back with that." Similarly, another female member who found that male members told her to await back-up before entering a domestic situation, realized that this was just standard policy, and the same advice was given single males in the same situation.

In another female officer's view, such attitudes are waning. "I think that's changing a lot too. Some men do [act over-protectively], but I think it's their own personal thing, like I don't think it is because of the woman. I think it is because of the way they were brought up and the way they feel about it, I think it is something they have to handle in their own situation, and that can be dangerous. So in cases like that is the guy's problem, I don't think it is the female officer's. But that's going to change more and more as the attitudes change in the force. As you get older you get more used to working with females."

In the case of women working in the same detachment, shift schedules have them working on different watches rather than together. With assumptions about female and male strengths and weaknesses, many officers believed that the best partner combination would combine a man and a woman. In larger urban departments, women are sometimes paired as partners. One male constable said that such an arrangement did exist out west,

but he added: "there were always males around, so I think in police work you do need a man around at certain times. The every-day police work you do here, you don't need a man all the time but just on the off chance a situation happens, you do, although that could be the protectionism coming out."

On the other hand, one police woman thought that it would be a good idea to have a female partner: "It would be nice to have another female because it would be good to discuss some things with her and get a different point of view. There is this image men carry with them and you get tired of it."

A more common view asserted that: "Working with another female wouldn't bother me, but I think we are more effective when we are teamed up male and female rather than two females.... But then, two males are better at a bar fight probably than two females; two females may be better at a women's rights demonstration, or something like that. There are always situations in which two of this or two of that is going to be better, or one of each, so....You would probably find out in the area you are policing which combination works out best." Similarly, "You're more versatile with another male partner because it is just having that advantage, maybe, of both. But other than that I don't think there is a whole lot of difference. It can take someone aback still, at times, but especially when you are working in a small town like this."

Another police woman found that a bigger problem was the tendency of males to compare female officers. While male officers constantly compare each other in terms of character and ability, she said, they rate women officers more on whether they have a pleasing, friendly personality. They compare one woman to another; they compare men to a standard of good police work. Men fit in by being one of the boys; women who try to be identical are not usually accepted. Her argument was that it was preferable to be compared to the best standards of policing than to be identified as a "female". Asked if she would like to be one of the boys? she replied: "No, I wouldn't. I like being a female. I've told them: `I'm a police officer, but first and foremost I'm a woman. I don't want to be beer guzzling and cigar smoking, and everything like that. I don't think you have to lose your femininity in this job. There are females who go out of their way to try to deny that they are feminine.... I think you will find that is one of the reasons a lot of the guys will want to look after you, protect you, because if you give off that image that you are still a woman, it is just a natural instinct for guys."

Aggressiveness is not valued in police women but is rather seen as negative. What is meant by aggressiveness, however, may be defined as situational. As we will see below, various police women have different strategies for coping with the strains of working in a male establishment.

Relations with Male Officers

Males have consistently been shown to have negative attitudes to female officers. In order to survive in this environment, different strategies are employed. The main way

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that such attitudes can be put into practice involves various forms of harassment. Basically, women are in a more powerless position. They are not accepted as equals, and therefore have to endure the daily grind of negative comments, put-downs, innuendo and sexist comments. While one member said that she was "treated the same both in and out[side]" the detachment, and added that she did not feel that the male constables wanted to test her in any way, she also noted that "you have to fit in. You can't be too distant or aloof." Furthermore, there "is this image that a female must fit. She can't be too pretty because then the men are all talking about the good-looking broad, and she can't be too ugly. She also can't be overweight because of the comments that will be made about her weight, and she can't be too butchy or too feminine."

The main form of harassment, she added, "come in jokes which are female oriented. There are jokes against females or gays, most are comments about females in general. Some men will say things which have double connotations and you get tired of this." "All of the harassment is all in fun." As another officer remarked: "Oh, you're always getting jokes but you have to brush them off, it's your typical biased bull shit." This represents one standard response -- to deny the seriousness of the events and therefore to deny the necessity of confronting them.

One police woman said: "The [male officers] make some statements. There is this thing where the female must prove herself over the male. Recruits are recruits, but a female recruit is different. She stands out, she can't hide as opposed to men where there are so many of them." One strategy was to see teasing and joking as only teasing and joking, and "sluff it off" or let it "roll off your back". Some would try to "give as good as you get." On the other hand, some took all the teasing to heart and felt undermined by it. "The guys felt like they were always walking on eggs around her."

Sometimes the prejudice is clearly overt. Most female members have encountered male officers who explicitly deny them the right to work in policing. "With one fellow, his idea of woman was that they should be home, barefoot and pregnant. And so he took every opportunity to remind you of that. And if you had made an error or had not completed something properly he would have the opportunity to remind `you don't belong in this job because if you did you wouldn't have made this mistake, you would have done this, you would have done that. Women should not be in the police profession." Interestingly, the negative attitude of this officer had been pointed out initially to the female officer by men in the detachment: "it was male members who came to me and the other girl and said, `Beware of him, he does not think that you belong here, and he will take any opportunity of any screw up or goof up or whatever that you might make to himself look good and to make you look even worse than you should have been."

While one police woman thought it was "pretty good" in her detachment, it was rough in the beginning: "It was a big thing when they found out that I was coming from Ottawa. Nobody in the detachment wanted me here because they heard all the bad stories about other female members and those were generally the only kind of stories that were circulating about female members. But they had their mind made up. But when I

got here I just showed them that `Listen, I'm just here to do my work, if you don't like me that is your problem. I haven't given you any reason not to like me and you just go from there, and that is why it has just worked out."

While one female officer reported that one of her supervisors had come "right out and he told me, he said `He doesn't believe in women in the force, I'll get no help from him, and basically that was it", most supervisors were described as recognizing the advantages of having women on the shift. According to one woman, "My immediate supervisor is good that way. He's worked more with females before and he's good that way.

None of the women said that she was treated differently inside or outside the department. Observationally, however, there was a difference in response. Basically, the defensive posture of sluffing off the comment or attempting a wise reply was the usual way of handling the matter. However, if a civilian, a complainant or offender, was present in the detachment, than the harassment would elicit a more serious verbal objection. The issue here was the degree to which the female officer's authority was undermined in the eyes of the public. Clearly, the comments bit more deeply than the "water off the back" approach indicated, but in most circumstances the woman was not in a strong position to express her annoyance. This goes back to the perception that assertive women are defined as aggressive, regarded by male officers as a negative trait in women.

Women officers who have suffered harassment have at time gone public with their complaints. Most women interviewed placed a premium on, initially, trying to resolve the matter in the detachment: they "should deal with it in the detachment. They can get satisfaction within by going to the sub-rep. It is individual people who are the problem and you must deal with them." Another woman added: "There is always someone in your detachment that you can complain to and if you complain to them and it continues and nothing is done about it then there is another step up you can go, you can go to the next step, and if nothing is done about it, you have a representative, a division rep.... Their position is, when we haven't gotten satisfaction from a complaint we have against our outfit, they are to take it to the limit for us. So I think if the Division Rep didn't do his job when it got to that step and you still haven't received satisfaction, then maybe you don't have much choice but to go outside the force. I think nowadays our force does make efforts to solve things within themselves. They don't like us going public. And I think in all fairness to them we should follow the chain of command. If we're not satisfied with the action the chain of command gives us, just like any other job, then you go outside." If "you go through the process and eventually you have to go outside you're complaint outside then becomes much more valid and people pay more attention to it because you've gone through the channels and you've got no satisfaction and you had no alternative."

Another police woman thought it was situational: "I've known women who kept it inside the department and have succeeded in making a bit of a difference or a change, then I have known others that have lost jobs or not accepted jobs and have had to go

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outside the department to Human Rights Commissions and things like this to have action taken, so, I think it is pretty much up to the discretion of the police officer and if it calls for going outside then that is the action they have to take, but most of the time I prefer to see anything like that handled inside, of course you would, if it could be handled reasonable, people wouldn't go out."

One of the factors affecting the acceptance of police women in a department or detachment involves the response of the wives of the police men. There is supposed to be a tendency for there to be jealousy between wives and police women. Male members tend to attribute any problems to the wives. One Valley Chief agreed that a problem between wives and female members does exist, but he attributed it to the personalities involved. For another male constable, "Well, I think if that is a problem it is because the guy's wives that don't trust their husbands. It is not that they don't trust the female officers, they don't trust their husbands." Some wives were reported to have complained that their husband's female partner spends more time with him than they do and share more. At parties, female and male members can talk "shop", excluding wives (and non-member husbands). One female member claimed, however, that her field trainer in her new detachment was chosen on the grounds that his wife was not the jealous type.

Along these lines, a difference was reported in the experience of the female officers depending on their marital status. One female member reported that she was more likely to be invited to events when the male officers' wives were there. "When you are married", she said, "You are more accepted by the spouses of the male officers. When I was single I was not at all accepted by the wives."

Community Relations

Some of the same attitudes which surface in the detachment are also held by members of the community. According to one female member, "I'm accepted pretty well by the community. When I first got here, as I said, I was the first female officer in the detachment and nobody knew how to take me. Is she going to be really mean, or is she going to be a push-over, or what. But I've got myself a pretty good reputation around here, the only thing is being that I am a female officer and single, I'm gossiped about an awful lot. If they don't hear something, they are going to make it up."

In the view of another police women: "A lot of the older people still hold the view that women don't belong in police work and unfortunately that comes out every now and then, to a certain degree. But it is changing, especially for women in the community, they are very positive and responsive. It's coming around, but it is still surprising to some extent, a lot of the attitudes that are around. For example, one old gentleman, said, "Why would you want to go into police work -- its no place for them, they shouldn't be in there."

Some members mentioned relationship difficulties. "There are problems because of the community's view of you" claimed another woman. "Guys feel intimidated by you

unless they are established in their field of occupation. You can't go out with ordinary guys because they might have some friends with negative influences, and you can't trust anyone. There is some problem with socializing because you find out things that aren't necessarily right in line with your job. You can't date just anyone because there is the chance that you are compromising your job. A woman also can't give the image that she is partying too much. Rumours spread quickly, so you must watch yourself." On the other hand, another female member mentioned that socializing with male members was also problematic. She seldom "hangs around" with the other members", she said, "because if you're going to maintain any kind of professionalism, you don't want to be going out with a lot of policemen."

Uniforms

The last issue I wish to discuss may be regarded as more symbolic, but it helps express the point being made. As noted in the history of women in policing, the uniform worn by the female officer has evolved overtime from one clearly designed to be feminine rather than functional to one which is functional and indistinguishable from the male uniform. This is a natural consequence of integration and is generally supported by male officers who hold that there is, really, only one type of real police officer and the more that women can come to imitate male officers -- however imperfectly -- the better. One senior officer believed that the uniforms should be the same. He felt that women in skirts would be ridiculous, it would inhibit their performance.

In the words of a male constable, uniforms "shouldn't be different; a police woman's uniform has to be just as functional as a male's uniform. I mean, a female can't go around wearing a dress and expect to get in a big ruckus, have guys whistling at her as she walks down the road."

He went on to suggest that, if the uniforms were different, then there would be expected to be differences. In other words, differences in the uniform would suggest different and unequal occupational roles. In the RCMP, the shift has come from more "feminine" dress uniforms to regular RCMP issue. Similarly, there have been a diminishing of the differences in the standard, working uniform. This has come about because, in part, of the demands of women for integration. As one member put it: "The females over the years have wanted to wear the same thing. We've said to them, listen, when we started out 15 years ago the females were actually carrying purses with the guns and their bullets in them. And we said, 'What use is that?' If somebody steals your purse then they also have your gun. So females have been pushing to get things the same. They said, 'Listen, we're going through the same training, were out there in the police cars, and doing the same work, and our lives are on the line just the same way their's are.'" "We've just got the news that females will be getting the stetsons this year. The only ones that had them up to now was the Musical Ride, now everybody's going to be getting them. I'm happy with it, and a lot of the females are too, and most of the guys don't mind, but there

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are a couple of guys, even in this office, who've been in for 20, 25 years, who think that only the guys should get boots, that's tradition, and that's all there is to it." Change has come about through struggle against considerable male resistance.

This was not the only view that emerged from the interviews. Another police woman expressed her concern that, although women apparently were pushing for these changes, there may be some draw-backs. For example, hair regulations may be more strict. More importantly, she was concerned about the changes in dress uniform. The women had, until recently, worn a red blazer instead of a tunic, a skirt instead of breeches and did not wear riding boots or stetsons. This more feminine dress uniform has recently been replaced by a male uniform. She indicated that she had liked the differences in dress uniforms so that people would see "that there are two men marching there and two women. Once the women put the male uniform on ... what a lot of the girls think was going to be good..., they will be sorry about, eventually. I am sorry because once we dress up in a man's uniform people are going to look at us and say well, there is a batch of men." In the Musical Ride now, she noted, there are two females, but you would "be hard pressed to find the two females". In her view, the change in uniform was symbolic of a more profound change in the force: They have gone back to a traditionally male outfit, from the point of view of the public. "Now we are being male oriented, male dominated again." "I still want people to recognize me as a woman. I am a woman. I think we need the distinction between men and women. There is always going to be a distinction in real life, so why not in police work." She was less concerned about regular uniforms at work, because "we have to have a uniform that is suitable for doing the job. I'm not too crazy about pockets in the front of my shirt. They say, oh, well, you can carry a pen.... If I was flat-chested, sure, I'd carry a pen, but, its serious...but, a lot of the girls like the shirts because they look just like the men's. I don't want to look like one of the men; I'm not a man." By changing the dress uniforms, "they are taking away our female identity, they are making us all like men. The whole problem when females first joined the RCMP in 1974 was that it was a traditionally male-dominated profession, and by taking us back and putting us all in men's uniforms we are going back to a traditional, male dominated profession. I would personally like to have seen, maybe have our female uniforms revamped a little bit to make them a little more in line with the men. Our jackets are quite a bit different.... but still left the skirt. The girls look impressive when they are in long skirts and red serge.... I don't think they should take it away from us."

CONCLUSION

These interviews and observations are meant to draw attention to the contradictory nature of the struggle for integration. The claim for equal treatment has come in tandem with the limitation of the opportunity to change policing overall.

The feminization of policing encompasses both the increase in the proportion of women at all levels of the police forces, but also a change in the traditional style of

policing. These two goals are, to a degree, independent. But they can also be seen as mutually dependent, and it is this kind of integration which has the most progressive potential.

Despite significant improvements, women in policing in Canada continue to represent an occupational minority in a male-dominated profession. Policing is male-dominated in a number of senses. Being over 83% male is only part, albeit a very significant part, of the issue. In another sense, policing has been organized in what may be descriptively termed a very "masculine" way. This is true not only of the military style training, rank structure and discipline, but also in the dominant, aggressive policing style. Masculine virtues such as size, strength, aggressiveness and the ability to intimidate were premium qualities in a police career. It is a very non-traditional type of occupation for women and women working as police officers have entered a largely male, masculine and what is equally significant, blue-collar, occupation.

This essay emerged from a comparative study of policing in Canada focusing on the evolution of a community-based policing model in urban settings. One object of the study was to situate new style urban policing in the context of rural and small town policing, the latter of which could be taken to represent a traditional model of community policing, in contrast to the bureaucratic and military fire-wagon policing of large urban forces.

By and large, community-based policing has been the new "buzz word". Community-based policing is more than a philosophy, the latest ideological gimmick of a bureaucracy out to protect and enhance its image in the quest for organizational growth and survival. Practically, it involves organizational changes in the structure of the bureaucracy and of decision-making within it, in the relations with the public, in policing style, and not least of all in recruitment.

Ultimately, though, the question is how much more than ideology is community-based policing? In this chapter, we explored the extent to which this question can be addressed by discussing the situation of women in policing -- an occupational minority. There are many factors which have contributed to the growth of women in policing -- however modest it has actually been -- of the proportion of women in policing. Clearly, women are breaking into all non-traditional fields. They have their own agenda, their own reasons. Furthermore, women have not been content to play second-fiddle in these occupations, but have continually pushed the frontiers, challenged prejudices and demanded full integration rather than segregation in duties which have been supposedly gender specific and assumed to be more appropriate for women.

It is not community-based policing which has caused the greater tendency to recruit women, or other minorities, into the blue or yellow striped force. Nevertheless there is an affinity between this change in recruitment and community-based policing. Simply put, the traditional image of policing is rightly conceived as being macho, aggressive, detached -- in a word, masculine. The attributes traditionally attributed to women in policing are more consistent with a community-based policing approach which, at least in part of its manifestation, emphasizes negotiation, victim services, crime

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prevention, and public relations -- the soft, peace-keeping, mediation aspect of police work -- in a word, feminine. At the very least, as "old school" policemen see it, women don't belong in "real" (traditional) police work. Given the traditional differentiation of proper police women's work from police men's work, women would appear more suited to the more contemporary approach.

If this is the case, however, and if community-based policing is, ultimately, a "buzz word", a style, a temporary swing in the social barometer towards a kinder, gentler police force, then traditional images, styles and recruitment practices ought now to be reappearing. This would suggest fewer women rather than more. As suggested above, however, the move into non-traditional occupations is widespread and the initiative for this change is outside the control or influence of the police bureaucracy. It is more autonomously generated. In a climate of demands for the actualization of guaranteed equality rights, it should be expected that female recruitment will grow, and more concern will be taken to ensure retention of female officers. The R.C.M.P., for example, has revised its national goal of having 20% woman by the end of the decade to about 14%. This would still represent a doubling of the proportion.

The key point, however, is that it is not only a question of quantity -- how many women -- but also of quality, in the sense of the type of female police officers who are recruited and socially constructed. Despite some traditional distinctions in the role of police men and women, and in the way that police men and women exercise the many aspects of the police role, a return to more traditional policing will mean a homogenization of the differences, ultimately it will mean the "integration" of women into masculine policing. It could have been more -- it could have contributed to the re-construction of the traditional policing in the direction of community participation and ultimately control.