

CONTROLLED BURN: THE GENDERING OF STRESS, BURNOUT, AND VIOLENCE
IN MODERN POLICING

by

DON L. KURTZ

B.S., Washburn University, 1997
M.S.W., University of Kansas, 1999

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work
College of Arts and Sciences

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

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Abstract

Law enforcement is widely regarded as one of the most stressful and violent professions. Officer stress is associated with a number of negative behaviors and psychological outcomes including high rates of substance abuse, divorce, and violence. Concerns over officer violence include both work-related acts, like use of excessive force or unwarranted deadly force, and non-work related violence such as domestic abuse. Despite interest in the interplay between subcultural attitudes, organizational structure, and high stress events, most research on police violence fails to address a fundamental concern--that of gender. In fact, the majority of research addressing officer stress fails to mention gender or concentrates on gender as a simple control variable. In order to examine how gender, stress, and law enforcement structures predict violent behavior among police officers, this dissertation utilizes both existing data and direct officer interviews. Findings show that law enforcement remains largely a masculine enterprise, and that gender drives images, interaction, and organizational behavior, often at the expense of both men and women officers. Stress, burnout, and use of violence by officers are not simply a response to high stress events, but are embedded in the gender structure and process of policing.

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Approved by:

Major Professor
L. Susan Williams

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Dedication

“Writing is a struggle against silence.” - Carlos Fuentes

CHAPTER 1 - Gender Theory and Police Stress

I am interested in seeing the results. I want to know the differences between male and female officers. I can see how the macho attitude of some officers affects their stress. We have women in law enforcement because we're required; we don't really want them—Police Administrator

This statement taken from field notes alludes to connections between stress and gender attitudes among police officers. The high-ranking administrator providing the statement did not present it as a literal observation; rather he offered this tongue-in-cheek assessment of masculine police attitudes after granting permission to conduct officer interviews. As is often the case, sarcasm offers a grain of truth. In this statement, one fact becomes clear: stress and burnout, like the treatment of women, reflects the entrenchment of masculinity in law enforcement.

The lay public as well as insiders regard law enforcement as one of the most stressful and violent of professions. Officer stress is associated with a number of negative behaviors and psychological outcomes, including high rates of substance abuse, divorce, and violence (Harpold & Feenster, 2002; Lott, 1995). Police violence includes work-related acts like use of excessive force, and non-work related violence like domestic violence and child abuse. Officer suicide is a particularly glaring concern for modern law enforcement, and research indicates that police officers are more likely to kill themselves than to die in the line of duty (Violanti, 1996).

Attempts to deal with officer stress, violence, and suicide generally focus on psychological, physical, or psychiatric responses to critical incidents or high stress work environments (Anderson, Litzenberger, & Plecas, 2002; Liberman et al., 2002; Loo, 2004; Mashburn, 1993; Purpura, 2001; Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). Some scholars identify a subculture of policing through which selected behaviors and attitudes influence officers' reactions to organizational and job related stress (Harpold & Feenster, 2002; Purpura, 2001). Despite interest in the interplay among subcultural attitudes, organizational structure, and high stress events, most research on police violence and suicide fail to address

a fundamental concern--that of gender. In fact, the majority of research addressing officer stress fails to incorporate gender issues. This research investigates how police violence, both outward and self inflicted, becomes embedded in an influential gender system and is not explained simply by high stress situations. This research extends the current literature, addressing a fundamental question: How does gendering shape police stress, burnout, and excessive violence?

Establishing a Problem: Stress and Burnout

A significant body of research establishes the fact that policing is one of the most stressful professions in American society (Anderson et al., 2002; Harpold & Feenster, 2002; Howard, Howard Donofrio, & Boles, 2004; Liberman et al., 2002; Lott, 1995). Research supports the fact that stress leads to a number of problems for both the individual employed in law enforcement and the policing agency as a whole (Anderson et al., 2002). A number of social scientists have drawn connections between type of stressor and negative health and behavior outcomes.

Anderson et al. (2002) studied the direct physiological responses officers present when confronted with stressful aspects of their job. Stress producing events, an aspect of daily work, routinely challenge police officers who frequently exhibit signs of psychosocial stress. Psychosocial stress results in bio-physical responses like elevated heart rate, increased blood pressure, increased muscle tension, increased acid secretion (Anderson et al., 2002) and psychological concerns like burnout and fatigue (Harpold & Feenster, 2002). The degree of stress response may vary according to the officer's assessment of the situational demands and his/her ability to deal with the circumstances (Anderson et al., 2002).

Psychosocial byproducts of stress include both short-term responses and chronic or long-term difficulties. Acute responses to stressful events are generally associated with critical incidents (Anderson et al., 2002; Liberman et al., 2002). Although many classifications of critical events appear in the literature, Liberman et. al. (2002) provides a useful conception for understanding critical incidents. These researchers borrow from the DSM-IV (Diagnostic and Statistic Manual) and describe critical events as situations when an officer witnesses or is confronted with the potential for serious injury or death. Police officers frequently face hostile citizens, but truly life-threatening events rarely occur in

policing. In fact, some research finds that danger is not a significant cause of daily stress among police officers (Hart, Wearing, & Headey, 1993). An additional component of critical incident stress requires that officers perceive the stress-inducing event as beyond their immediate control (Anderson et al., 2002).

Critical incidents can result in acute psychosocial stress that may cause any number of short-term behavioral or psychological difficulties (Anderson et al., 2002; Liberman et al., 2002), but psychiatric responses vary greatly by individual officers. Few officers develop long-term psychological problems like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression (Liberman et al., 2002).

As opposed to acute stress, chronic stress builds over time and frequently includes multiple critical incidents, encompassing such things as stressful work environments, interpersonal relationships, organizational structures, and stressors inherent to the job requirements of policing (Anderson et al., 2002; He, Zhao, & Archbold, 2002; Liberman et al., 2002; Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). Chronic stress may not immediately overwhelm the officer's coping ability, but over time it can result in negative consequences or overpower stress management skills (Anderson et al., 2002).

One consequence of chronic stress is the psychological concept known as burnout. Definitions of burnout vary widely in the literature and the concept receives the most attention from health care and human service professions (Loo, 2004). Loo describes burnout as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced feelings of personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who do 'people work'" (p156). The level of burnout among officers is not consistently clear in the literature. Some research demonstrates that police officers have similar levels of burnout to other criminal justice occupations (Loo, 2004). Other research has shown that burnout negatively affects police officers' assessment of job performance and satisfaction (Kohan, 2002; Liberman et al., 2002). Additionally, Loo (2004) found that male officers have only moderate levels of burnout while female officers show higher levels.

A number of factors directly associated with law enforcement are identified as sources of stress and burnout, including job requirements, police organizational structure, interpersonal relationships, and interactions with the public. These areas are not mutually exclusive, and stress in one area that likely aggravates anxiety in another (He et al., 2002).

From a practical standpoint, it may be difficult or impossible to dissect sources of stress into useful compartments because stress is generally viewed as a compounding problem.

Lowering stress in one area does not necessarily reduce overall stress levels. In order to process and understand burnout, several distinct conceptual sources of officer stress will be examined, including stress related to work requirements, organizational structure, and interpersonal relationships.

Work Environment and Organizational Structure

Much of the research on police stress identifies aspects of the work environment and organizational structure as stress elevators for police officers (Anderson et al., 2002; Harpold & Feenster, 2002; He et al., 2002; Liberman et al., 2002). Several work environment stressors are identified in the literature and can be typified as critical incidents. Examples of this type of event include the death of a work partner or officers having to take a person's life in the line of duty (He et al., 2002). These types of events are fairly rare in modern policing. Other stressful events include making a violent arrest, responding to a gruesome crime scene, or dealing with fatal accidents (He et al., 2002). These types of events are fairly common and can result in both acute and chronic stress (Anderson et al., 2002). Non-violent, work-related stressors include shift work, overtime, time management, paperwork, and physical requirements such as walking patrols and carrying heavy equipment. Problems of this type are more likely to compound and create chronic stress that develops over time.

Several aspects of police organizations are identified as sources of elevated stress and burnout. These factors include frustration with the criminal justice system, departmental politics and lack of departmental support, concerns with the promotional process, poor training (Anderson et al., 2002), and the bureaucratic nature of law enforcement (He et al., 2002).

The bureaucratic nature of law enforcement agencies certainly creates stress among officers. Particular concerns include the impersonal nature of the bureaucracy, distant chain of command, and lack of input into workplace rules (He et al., 2002). Officers frequently believe that their patrol decisions lack support by the departmental administration. The effect of bureaucratic structure on stress and burnout may be more pronounced in larger, complex organizations.

Militaristic organizational practices aggravate stress for patrol officers. The military-style structure of police organizations tightly controls officers by using administrative rules in contradiction to daily job discretion required by field officers (He et al., 2002). This situation creates a type of disjuncture between solutions available to field officers and problem-solving beliefs of police managers. Officers may believe that they have a limited range of solutions. Although many of the features of bureaucratic organizations detailed above are apparent in other work environments, they lead to greater stress in policing because of a perceived lack of administrative support in law enforcement. This is compounded by the fact that many officers believe the public does not support their efforts (Kop & Euwema, 2001).

The size of the law enforcement agency may also influence the potential for stress and burnout. Most research on stress and burnout focus on larger departments located in urban centers (Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). Although these findings are useful in understanding how bureaucratic structures affect officer stress, they may not be generalizable to smaller departments. In fact, smaller departments are likely to have a flatter hierarchy and should display less cognitive distance between line officers and supervisors. Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero (1998) found that officers from larger departments generally experience more stress directly related to the organizational structure, but less stress from exposure to suffering than their counterparts from smaller departments. When only patrol officers are examined, the researchers found that officers from large departments generally have greater stress across a number of variables including organizational structure, administrative arenas, public demands, fear of danger, and interactions with other areas of the criminal justice system. The researchers believe that larger departments expose officers to additional stressors in other areas because they deal with crime that requires greater interaction with the public. Therefore, it may not be the department that affects police stress, but work environmental aspects of urban law enforcement that increases stress among officers employed in these settings (Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). These findings have important implications for stress research; officers employed in larger departments may have greater organizational stress, which compounds or intensifies stress generated from other job requirements.

Interpersonal relationships

Interpersonal relationships have a significant influence on the development of stress and burnout. Interpersonal relationships refer to both personal relationships like friends and family and job-related relationships such as patrol partners or shift supervisors. A concern for policing is the interactive effect between the job requirements and family relationships. Work requirements may directly conflict with obligations at home creating stress in both environments (Howard et al., 2004). Stress generated from conflicts between home life and employment may exacerbate work-related pressures. For example, researchers have documented that “personal lives of police officers are affected by the unique nature of police work which, in turn, makes officers perceive their job as more psychologically and physically stressful” (He et al., 2002, p691). This interactive relationship may be prominent with female officers expected to maintain domestic roles as mothers, wives, and caregivers. However, this issue has not been the target of much empirical evaluation (He et al., 2002).

Research results on the benefits of family support are mixed. Some research shows that family support reduces stress among officers; however, other research indicates that social support may operate differently according to the level of stress (Anderson et al., 2002). Some research indicates that work-family conflicts can reduce job satisfaction and increase emotional exhaustion and burnout. In fact, the intrinsic rewards offered through employment in law enforcement are at their lowest when professional obligations conflict with family (Howard et al., 2004).

Peer supports within police organizations may buffer or aggravate stress and burnout. Peer influences, an exceptionally important social force in policing, are an important context for understanding police behaviors (Violanti, 1997; Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). Shared work experiences allow officers to develop a mutual understanding of work stressors that can serve as a protective factor. Additionally, acceptance of one’s peers may provide “a defensive function which allows the officer to tolerate high levels of anger, hostility and abuse” (Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998, p602).

Despite the protective factors associated with police work relations, a significant amount of research established that police peer relations frequently become a source of hostility, stress, discrimination, and cynicism (Brown, 1998; Harpold & Feenster, 2002; Martin, 1994; Miller, Forest, & Jurik, 2003). Police subculture is the focal point of this line

of research. Peer bonds within law enforcement leads to extreme secrecy and solidarity between officers further reducing alternative thinking. In fact, officers who report their peers for excessive force, violence, or substance usage may be marginalized or subjected to retaliation from others within the department (Cancino & Enriquez, 2004).

Police Subculture

The subculture of policing can have detrimental effects on an officer's psychological well-being (Violanti, 1997). The requirements of maintaining behavior that corresponds with those expected in police subculture can lead to stress. In regards to adhering to the police subculture, Violanti states, "...the police culture ultimately places the officer in a dilemma of role conflict. To be accepted by the culture, the officer must, in essence, conform to strict norms of loyalty prescribed by the group" (1997, p704).

One problem associated with strong adherence to the normative structure of policing is that officers develop inflexible methods of dealing with stressful situations (Violanti, 1997). Peer relations within policing impose limitations on emotional displays, which build up stress levels. Lennings (1997) states "...police culture inhibits the expression of emotion. Beliefs about how a police officer should behave can be very powerful, but may not be very protective following a major disruption of a person's sense of invulnerability" (p560). Research demonstrates the protective and risk factor offered by the police subculture. It is also logical to argue that police officers and administrators within the organization may have a difficult time distinguishing between positive and negative peer interactions because these grounded exchanges are part of the agency's particular culture. For this reason, many police organizations utilize citizen review boards to investigate police misconduct because investigating officers are more likely to side with their colleagues, even in cases of extreme abuse of authority.

A number of demographic variables relate to stress and burnout among police officers. These factors include age, officer rank, and length of service (Lennings, 1997). Some research has found a positive relationship between officer's age and increased stress levels (Lennings, 1997; Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). It might seem logical to assume that officers with greater rank generally have lower levels of stress because they are removed from direct contact with critical events; however, research has shown that many

police managers struggle with burnout and stress (Loo, 2004). One research study of burnout among high-ranking officers found that 34.1% of the sample of police managers were distressed (Loo, 2004). The final demographic variable linked to stress is the years of service. The number of years a person serves in law enforcement has a curvilinear effect on stress. Officers in their first few years and those close to retirement have the lowest levels of stress, while officers in the middle years of employment appear to have elevated stress (Lennings, 1997; Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998).

Problems Resulting from Stress and Burnout

Negative health and lifestyle factors generate from high stress and burnout among law enforcement officers. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) conducted a broad-based study, Project Shield, to explore the extent and consequences of police stress. Project Shield identified a number of issues relevant to the current research. First, officers admitted increased anxiety and alcohol usage within the first five years of employment. Additionally, participants reported a number of health problems linked to stress, like hypertension, insomnia, migraine headaches, and heart disease (Harpold & Feenster, 2002). Additional research shows that officers frequently employ negative coping mechanisms to deal with stress such as use of alcohol, tobacco, and physical isolation (Anderson et al., 2002; Harpold & Feenster, 2002).

Project Shield and other research highlight the negative psychological and behavioral problems resulting from stress. The psychological reactions include "loss energy or interest, including loss of sexual interest, along with experiencing pounding in their chests and feelings of impending doom. Most important, one percent of these officers considered ending their own lives" (Harpold & Feenster, 2002, p3). The negative behavior problems include substance and alcohol usage, physical assaults directed at spouses, children, or colleagues; and work-related violence (Harpold & Feenster, 2002). Stress also amplifies risk of physical illness, emotional disorders, and inter-family conflict, including significant risk of divorce (Kelley, 2005).

An emerging concern in law-enforcement stress literature is excessive use of alcohol by police officers. A study conducted by Richmond, et. al. (1998) showed that nearly half of the police officers surveyed consumed excessive amounts of alcohol. Binge drinking is a

significant problem among this population, and nearly 40% of the males and 33% of the females engage in this behavior. The researchers offered several reasons why police officers may engage in excessive drinking. First, policing is a predominantly male profession, and men tend to drink more in male-dominated industries than more gender balanced environments. Second, women attempting to fit in with their peers reported pressure to drink with their male counterparts. Third, the socialization of policing often involves discussion of violence and physical altercations, and officers utilize alcohol to lubricate these situations. Finally, drinking after shifts is a significant part of police culture (Richmond et al., 1998, p1734).

Job stress levels also influence the relationship between policing and alcohol consumption. Officers utilize alcohol as a coping mechanism during stressful times (Anderson et al., 2002; Kohan, 2002) which can lead to any number of personal problems. Addressing poor mental health among police officers, Kelley (2005) argues that police officers face “some of the highest occupational rates of stress, burnout, physical illness, alcoholism, domestic violence, divorce, shortened longevity and even suicide” (2005, p25).

Although the problem of domestic violence by law enforcement has received more attention in the last few years, little empirical evidence exists that illuminates this subject. The extent of domestic violence in police families is highly controversial and difficult to quantify (Griggs, 2004). Some research indicates that 40% of police families experience at least one incident of family violence per year, and 8% of male officer report severe violence within the home (Griggs, 2004).

Reviewing the literature on police domestic abuse, Griggs (2004) reveals the abuse by officers is more problematic than typical inter-family violence. By virtue of their training and experiences in the criminal justice system, abusive police officers present a number of unique problems. These include easy access to weapons, familiarity with the criminal justice system, connections that can be marshaled to avoid prosecution, proficiency with verbal and physical control techniques, knowledge of how to avoid leaving damning evidence, and the ability to locate wives when they are placed in protective settings (Griggs, 2004).

Officers demonstrating violent tactics in family settings utilize behaviors that they acquire through formalized training and informal behaviors observed at work (Griggs, 2004; Hodgson, 2001; Lott, 1995). Hodgson (2001) states that police officers “learn to regard

violence positively as either an appropriate means to an end or as an end in itself. Police officers will likely behave violently when the situation is conducive to their doing so” (p536). Lott argues that officers who abuse their spouses generally exhibit a number of behaviors that they observe on the job. Such behaviors include isolation, hypersensitivity, threats of violence, breaking objects, controlling behavior, and using force as a means to resolve arguments (Lott, 1995). The main point of this literature is that violent behavior at home is strongly connected to violence officers observe or learn at work. These studies suggest that the techniques used to quell domestic violence among other populations may not be effective in suppressing violence in police families.

A realistic concern for law enforcement agencies and the public is the use of force by police officers, and excessive force remains a costly problem for law enforcement agencies. The most easily measured cost of unnecessary use of violence is expenditures for legal judgment against law enforcement agencies. Mistreatment of citizens costs large police departments, particularly large departments, millions of dollars in the form liability losses. For example, the city of Los Angeles paid over \$20 million in excessive force settlements and verdicts between 1986 and 1990. New York City paid over \$44 million in a similar period. Use of force judgments have become so expensive that the Los Angeles Police Department pays out about one percent of its annual budget on excessive force judgments (Vila, 1996).

The extent of the excessive force problem is unclear because police organizations are closed systems, and loyalty and secrecy among police officers prevents accurate research (Cancino & Enriquez, 2004; Hickman, Piquero, Lawton, & Greene, 2001; Hodgson, 2001). The acceptability of street justice in urban policing, an example of inter-officer loyalty, keeps officers from blowing the whistle on violent behavior. “Street justice is used to normalize the use of illegal physical force. By normalizing this behavior, it becomes a morally and culturally accepted practice for police” (Cancino & Enriquez, 2004, p326). Speaking about the subculture of police and its relationship to the use of violence, Hodgson (2001) states:

... authoritarian characteristics as a result of socialization, training and autocratic modes of organization which subtly indoctrinate recruits. This occupational subgroup quickly learns that violence is valued and encourage under certain circumstance (p535).

Officers who do not adapt to street justice norms and utilize excessive force confront marginalization of peers. Failure to employ physical force may actually result in distrust, suspicion, and retaliation from other officers. Cancinco states “officers who are unwilling to use physical force are viewed as a danger to everyone and cannot be allowed to persist in such ways” (2004, p329). The peer pressure applied to law enforcement officers creates a problem that extends beyond a few overaggressive cops; few if any officers are willing to expose this misconduct.

Deadly force represents a highly controversial aspects of use of force by officers (White, 2002). Research on deadly force has predominantly focused on situational variables that affect officer decision making. The literature identifies three sets of variables related to deadly force: environmental, situational, and organizational (White, 2002). The variable sets closely align with those identified within the stress and burnout literature.

Environmental factors incorporate both community-level characteristics and things like policies designed to curb officer violence. A predictable environmental factor that influences deadly force is the crime rate of the officer’s patrol zone. For example, research has demonstrated a positive correlation between violent crime rates and deadly force by police (White, 2002), and found a link between levels of economic inequality and use of deadly force (Sorenson, Marquart, & Brock, 1993; White, 2002). Police officers in economically disadvantaged communities are more likely to use deadly force because of increased crime and the negative assessment of community members.

Situational aspects of deadly force events commonly concentrate on threats presented to police officer. White (2002) reports that deadly force incidents reveal that the individual shot by police possessed a weapon in three-out-of-four cases. Other research concludes that only half of all individuals fired on by law enforcement were in possession of a gun (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998). Two additional situational variables are the threat of violence toward police and citizen disrespect (White, 2002). Citizen disrespect is particularly fertile ground for this research and is examined in later chapters. Other situational variables include the victim’s actions during arrest, anticipation by the arresting officer, type of weapon involved, and amount of information available to the officer (White, 2002).

Formal and informal organizational aspects also shape the potential for deadly force (Hodgson, 2001; White, 2002). Hodgson (1998) believes that the paramilitary structure of

most police agencies encourages violence as a means for dealing with citizen disputes. The continued use of paramilitary training hinders the development humanitarian responses by police and reinforces the subculture of police. It appears that both high-stress incidents and police subcultural elements aggravate situations that lead to excessive force by police officers.

The problem of suicide by law enforcement officers garners much national attention (Violanti, 1996). Research on the risk of suicide among law enforcement officers has been mixed and becomes somewhat of a controversy in the stress literature (Violanti, 1997). Violanti's (1996) text, *Police Suicide: Epidemic in Blue*, provides both statistical and anecdotal evidence that police suicide is a significant problem, particularly in larger departments like the New York Police Department (NYPD). Other research found officers far more likely to kill themselves than to die because of work-related violence or by accidents on the job (Violanti, 1997).

Research on suicide rates conducted by USA Today and the National P.O.L.I.C.E. Suicide Foundation depict officer suicide as a noteworthy problem. One study focused on several of the nation's largest police departments or federal police agencies, finding that suicide among police officers was significantly higher than the general U.S. population (P.O.L.I.C.E.). The research also indicates that officers were considerably more likely to die by suicide than to be killed in the line of duty. The NYPD had the lowest comparative rate of suicide among police units at 15.5 per 100,000 officers, compared to around 12 per 100,000 in the general population. During this period, 87 officers died by suicide and 36 died in the line of duty. Among municipal police agencies, San Diego had the highest suicide rate per capita, an astounding 35.7 per 100,000 officers, or nearly 200% more than the suicide rate of the general population.

Some researchers, based on statistical analysis of suicide rates among officers, reject the idea that police suicide is an epidemic (Marzuk, Nock, Leon, Portera, & Tardiff, 2002). Research on the suicide rates of New York Police Department (NYPD) showed that between 1977 and 1996 only 88 officially certified suicides occurred among NYPD officers, and 22 other deaths that were consistent with suicide. This resulted in a suicide rate of 14.9 people per 100,000 in population, compared to the New York City general population rate of 18.3 suicides per 100,000. The researchers concluded that the "notion that police are at

substantially higher risk of suicide than the average individual may, in part, result in the publicity surrounding a police suicide" (Marzuk et al., 2002). The authors do acknowledge that suicide rates for police should be lower than the general population based on the psychological testing officers undergo prior to employment with the NYPD (Marzuk et al., 2002). Similar research on the suicide rates of German police officers found that the rates among officers and the corresponding age group in the general population did not differ significantly. The researchers did, however, find that police officers were disproportionately more likely to use firearms as a means of suicide (Schmidtke, Fricke, & Lester, 1999).

Methodological problems represent a major dilemma for studies on suicide among police officers. The small sample size used in some research is problematic because results are easily affected by natural fluctuations in suicide rates (Hem, Berg, & Ekeberg, 2001). Another methodological concern is the timeframe of studies addressing police suicide. For example, Loo (2004) found that studies based on research from 10-or-more-year-time spans generate significantly lower suicide rates than analysis derived from samples that covered less than 10 years.

Another serious methodological concern for police suicide research is finding an appropriate comparison population. Some research compares police suicide rates to the general population (Marzuk et al., 2002), but this analysis can be deceptive because it includes populations with mental illness which may not be comparable to working professionals (Hem et al., 2001). Police and other professions require mental health screens prior to employment which excludes preexisting psychological conditions, while this is not the case for the general population (Hem et al., 2001; Marzuk et al., 2002). Finally, Hem et al. (2001) argue that much of the suicide literature is filled with examples of misinterpretation or exaggeration of results.

Using meta-analyses, Loo (2003) examined the literature on suicide finding some evidence for elevated risk among police officers and differential rates by type of law enforcement agency. The suicide rate for regional police forces was higher than the comparison population. However, federal forces showed equal suicide rates with comparison populations, and the rates for municipal officers were lower than the control population. In comparing the three types of police organizations, they found that regional forces have higher suicide rates than federal and municipal law enforcement officers. The authors speculate that

appropriate suicide training and response programs may account for the differences among suicide rates by jurisdiction.

Using suicidal ideation as the point of reference for research illuminates the risk of suicide among law enforcement officers. Focusing solely on completed suicides fails to unearth the problems of burnout and stress, because it does not fully address potential psychological problems connected to suicide. Recent research focuses on suicidal ideation, a useful psychological risk factor, and not just suicide rates (Berg et al., 2003; Violanti, 2004). The DSM IV (1995) describes suicidal ideation as “transient but recurrent thoughts of committing suicide, to actual specific plans of how to commit suicide. The frequency, intensity, and lethality of these thoughts can be quite variable” (1995, p322).

Research by Berg et al. (2003) showed that suicidal ideation persists among a sample of Norwegian police officers. Their research found 24% of the sample felt that life was not worth living on one or more occasions, 6.4% gave serious thought to committing suicide, and just less than one percent had attempted suicide. Despite the grave nature of these findings, the researchers point out that the numbers of suicides are lower among police officers than suicides completed by Norwegian physicians, another highly stressful occupation. The researchers found a connection between suicidal ideation and problems related to job stress such as health complaints, burnout, and exhaustion.

Violanti (2004) offers additional research on suicidal ideation by law enforcement officers. His research found that exposure to certain police related work events increases the likelihood of PTSD, suicidal ideation, and excessive alcohol consumption by officers. Additionally, alcohol usage has long been associated with the risk of suicide. This may present a unique concern for police officers given the acceptability of alcohol abuse in the police subculture (Richmond et al., 1998; Violanti, 2004).

Social scientists have extensively researched the problem of police stress, burnout, violence, and suicide. This research has clearly established that officers are at risk for a number of negative behaviors including health problems, violence and psychological difficulties. Although the research is extensive, it fails to address the fundamental way in which gender relations compound problems that associate with policing. This research provides a gendered frame for police burnout, suicide, and violence in law enforcement organizations. The current research expands the psychological literature by focusing social

structural constraints and their influences on organizational dynamics and officer behavior. By focusing on gender as a major point of emphasize, the current research provides a systematic theoretical framework for behavior within police organizations.

Gender Theoretical Framework

One of the identified concerns for explaining police deviance is developing a systematic, coherent theory that appropriately accounts for variation among officers (Hickman et al., 2001). This research will demonstrate that the gendering aspects of policing contribute significantly to burnout and inappropriate use of violence by officers. Building from gender theory, this research will illuminate the relationship between gender and police psychological and behavioral outcomes. The core gender components utilized in this research include gendered organization theory, hegemonic masculinity, and the “doing gender” framework.

The concept of gendered organization provides contextual and historical understanding of police organization behavior. Acker argues:

To say that an organization, or any other analytic unit, is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not an addition to ongoing processes, conceived as gender neutral. Rather, it is an integral part of those processes, which cannot be properly understood without an analysis of gender (Acker, 1990, p141).

Clearly, from the gender framework espoused by Acker, the failure to address gender in explorations of the use of violence and suicide by police officers would leave much uncovered about this phenomenon. Law enforcement started as a masculine enterprise, and only within the past 30 years have women been allowed to pursue this career. The particular historical context of law enforcement makes these organizations strongly gendered, which amplifies the mistake of not focusing on gender.

The gendered organization framework provides a theory that extends beyond the limitations in the current police stress literature. Acker (1990) argues that the gendering of organizations occurs along five interactive and interconnected processes. The first is a division of labor by gender. Quite simply, this means that men and women perform different task within an organization. The second is the creation of images that account for, oppose, or

reinforce cultural ideas about gender. The third process explores how gender guides social interactions among people within an organization. The fourth component of Acker's theory examines how gendered organization activities shape individual identity. Finally, gender helps frame social and organizational structure and is a vital aspect of how individuals understand the practices and perceptions that dominate organizational culture. The current research will focus on three areas of gendered organizations--division of labor, images, and gendered interactions.

A second major element of gender theory related to the current research is Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity. Hegemonic masculinity refers to the idea that men dominate women on a global level, and this notion allows for differentiation between men and women. In fact, hegemonic masculinity not only establishes the gender relations between men and women, but also among men. This occurs because hegemonic masculinity establishes a dominant idea of what it means to be a man, and all other conceptions are constructed as something other than masculine. Hegemonic masculinity is not maintained by force; however, physical or economic force can be used to bolster the masculine dominance of society (Connell, 1987). In *Gender and Power*, Connell describes the relational basis of hegemonic masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity is constructed in the relation to women and subordinated masculinities. These other masculinities need not be as clearly defined --indeed achieving hegemony may consist precisely in preventing alternatives gaining cultural definition and recognition as alternatives, confining them to ghettos, to privacy, to unconsciousness. The most important feature of contemporary hegemonic masculinity is that it is heterosexual, being closely connected to the institution of marriage. . . (1987, p186)

The relevancy of hegemonic masculinity and policing is evident in several ways. First, policing is clearly a profession with an organizational structure that supports hegemonic masculinity; women, homosexuals, and nonmasculine traits are often shunned in law enforcement. Features that have been traditionally associated with what makes a good officer--fearlessness, heroic demeanor, physical and emotional strength, assertiveness and intelligence (Darien, 2002; Moore, 1999)-- are features of hegemonic masculinity. Second, policing directly connects to the use of violence and force to maintain social order; consequently, policing helps reinforce hegemonic masculinity by enforcing laws that limit

other forms of masculinity (i.e. homosexuality, sodomy). Research demonstrates that police officers, as a rule, reject alternative forms of masculinity, specifically gay masculinity (Miller et al., 2003).

The positioning of traits associated with hegemonic masculinity by their nature precludes them from being associated with femininity. For example, power and physical aggression are associated with hegemonic masculinity and therefore incompatible with emphasized femininity (Connell, 1987). The association between hegemonic masculinity and policing leaves little room for feminine traits in the daily activity of law enforcement officers. Hegemonic masculinity limits the possible response patterns officers can select when faced with stress and burnout.

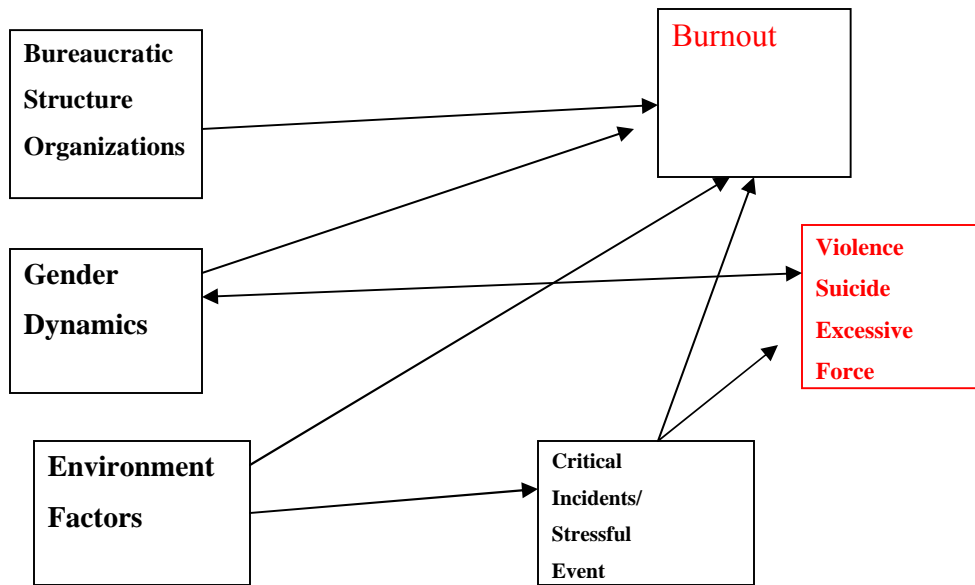
The final concept relevant to policing is the concept of doing gender as developed by West and Zimmerman (1987). Doing gender involves creating perceived differences between what is considered masculine and feminine, and then using these differences to justify gender as essential or biologically linked. This process is not necessarily a conscious decision by the actors. Doing gender involves organizing activities in a way that conveys gender and perceiving the actions of others as related to gender (West & Zimmerman, 1987). In this theoretical framework, gender is no longer a static social category, but a process used to reinforce the concept of masculine and feminine traits. Gender becomes an accomplishment and not an inherent property of an individual.

Through the doing gender process, particular behaviors, pursuits, social interactions, and social-psychological perceptions become associated with a "natural" understanding of what is masculine or feminine (West & Zimmerman, 1987). This creates situations in which behaviors are deemed as part of gender. "In one sense, of course, it is individuals who 'do' gender. But it is a situated doing, carried out in the virtual or real presence of others who are presumed to be oriented to its production"(West & Zimmerman, 1987, p168). In law enforcement, this situated doing involves expectations of how officers respond to the daily hassles or the unique situations of policing. Officers are required by both the public and other officers to react in ways consistent with the image of policing

In policing, a profession highly associated with masculine ideals, doing gender may involve accessing a number of behaviors that enhance gender displays. Violence, the use of force, controlling conduct, assertiveness, self-reliance, and other behaviors associated with a

good police officer are also ways people do gender. Doing gender and performing police activities are interconnected and mutually reinforcing behaviors that enhance common sense assumptions about police officers and the occupation's connection to masculinity.

Figure 1: Structural Model for Influences of Burnout and Violence



This research will include a multilayered, mixed methodological approach to understanding burnout, violence, suicide by officers. Figure 1 depicts a structural model of factors that influence burnout and violence in law enforcement.

Organizational structure influences both behavior of officers and the gendering of law enforcement. Larger, more bureaucratic organizations that espouse military arrangements among officers likely increase risk of officer violence and gendered aspects of policing. These organizations, generally located in urban cores, increase opportunities for officers to interact with serious crime via violent arrest and environmental factors that intensify masculine response patterns that center on the use of force.

Communities provide a rich context for understanding the problem of stress, burnout and violence. Community differences influence law enforcement agencies in a number of ways. First, police organizations primarily recruit new officers from their local community; therefore, cultural aspects of the community extend into organizational culture. Second, the size of the community likely influences organizational structure, size, and specialization of

departments. Third, the community influences the daily behavior of officers because local standards of behavior (Liederbach, 2005). Each of these factors can influence and mitigate the relationship between stress and gender dynamics in police organizations. To account for community differences and organizational factors, four police departments are included in this research. Each of these departments offers different factors that might shape gender dynamics and officer stress. Chapter three of this dissertation provides detail on the four police departments of interest.

The final area of analysis relies on the gender framework detailed above. Organizations that are resistant to female officers, espouse masculine images of officers, allow gendered interactions, and a gendered division of labor will have greater levels of burnout and use of violence by officers. Again, opportunity, situation, and environmental stressors influence this relationship. The use of violence has a reciprocal relationship with gender because using violence fortifies masculinity, and violence reinforces masculine gendering in law enforcement. The theoretical perspectives detailed in the preceding paragraphs provide a framework to analyze the problems of police stress, violence, and suicide.

Chapter 2 of this dissertation will explore prior literature on police stress and burnout, encompassing a wide net of research that addresses this phenomenon. This section will also apply a gender framework to preexisting literature. Chapter 3 details the research methodology of this study. This section includes information on the law enforcement agencies of interest, variable construction, qualitative interview schedules, and general details of each community. Chapter 4 provides a quantitative analysis of existing data from the Baltimore Police Department. Chapter 5 explores the gendered framework via qualitative interviews with officers from three departments. Finally, Chapter 6 incorporates an extended discussion and concluding thoughts on this topic.

CHAPTER 2 - Review of the Literature

Many disciplines have attempted to address the problem of stress, burnout, and violence among police officers. This review first examines the literature on reducing psychological or behavior problems that result from acute or chronic stress. Professional attempts to reduce stress in this model of treatment have focused on removing stress barriers or providing additional support for field officers exposed to high stress critical incidents. The second major area of research concentrates on the negative influence of police subculture and therefore the impact on violent behavior by officers. The final area of research focuses on the social structural context of police work and provides support for the gender theoretical framework introduced in Chapter 1.

Practice-based Research on Police Burnout and Stress

Much research on high stress in law enforcement replicates the psychological and human health literature on burnout and stress. In order to gain a more clear understanding of traditional solutions for stress and burnout, this section briefly details how this problem is customarily addressed by law enforcement agencies.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD) have become a popular treatment for individuals affected by unexpected and violent trauma in public service and health care professions. A peer oriented group intervention, CISD is guided by clinical therapists and designed to meet the needs of individuals affected by traumatic incidents. The overall goal of a CISD is to improve personal recovery from an overwhelming or psychologically taxing event (Bell, 1995; Caine & Ter-Bagdasarian, 2003). Ideally CISD interventions occur within ten days of the critical incident and are designed to reduce risk of maladaptive behavioral and psychological responses to negative events (Caine & Ter-Bagdasarian, 2003).

Solutions for police stress and burnout that center on critical incident stress debriefings and psychological counseling have several limitations. The utilization of CISD remain problematic because most officers are resistant to these interventions, and mandated attendance is undesirable (Lennings, 1997). Police officers hesitate to participate in CISD for a number of reasons. First, law enforcement officers believe that seeking help may appear un-masculine. "Some male police officers are notoriously shy in seeking professional

help for fear of being viewed as weak by fellow officers” (He et al., 2002, p699). The majority of male officers are likely to resist CISD and counseling efforts, which underscores the masculine nature of law enforcement and restricts the effectiveness of psychological counseling or CISD as an ameliorant to officer stress.

Some research demonstrates that single incident stress debriefings do not reduce stress and burnout (Padgett, 2002). Concerns about the effectiveness of CISD programs caution the use of this treatment as a singular response to traumatic events; however, it remains a possible tool in the repertoire of remedies for law enforcement officers exposed to stress. One explanation for the failure of CISD is that law enforcement administrators allow too much time to lapse from the negative event and intervention. Anderson et. al. (2002) argue that CISD should take place directly following a critical incident and departments should utilize an abridged version after all shifts. The value of CISD notwithstanding, this intervention does little to reduce the subculture of policing that helps dictate stress management techniques and acceptability of violence.

Stress researchers propose a number of ways to reduce stress and control negative behavioral outcomes that depart from simple CISD or psychological counseling. He et al. (2002) argue that increasing coping skills in law enforcement should include three core components. First, interventions must address the extent of police officers’ stress by assessing both physical and psychological stress. This assessment includes a realistic appraisal of both internal and external stressors. Second, agencies should closely monitor maladaptive coping mechanisms. Finally, interventions like peer counseling and CISD should be used when appropriate. Other stress control techniques may include stress management training and employee assistance programs (Anderson et al., 2002).

An area of concern regarding burnout to also investigate is how law enforcement interferes with normal life activities of officers. Howard et al. (2004) argue that law enforcement organizations emphasize an understanding of conflicts that arise between the requirements of policing and normal life activities. Research studies frequently focus solely on work-related variables and fail to address work-family conflicts. Family and work-related conflicts compound and aggravate stress at home and on the job. Howard et al., (2004) believe that police organizations should develop guidelines for managing work-related

conflicts in a productive manner. He et al., (2002) state the following in regards to dealing with family-work conflicts:

To ameliorate the stress associated with work-family conflict, police management should play a leading role in creating greater flexibility in accommodating police officers' professional, personal, and family needs. In more practical terms, efforts need to be made to actively solicit input from both police officers and their family members. For example, police stress training sessions targeting work-family conflicts should consider the possibility of involving both police officers and their spouses/significant others (p699).

The interrelationship between work and family domains remains an important context for understanding psychological and behavioral outcomes in high-stress occupations. Directly addressing potential conflicts between work and family may reduce the risk of stress, burnout, and violence.

Another traditional explanation for increased stress and burnout by police officers is the fatigue associated with aspects of policing--shift work in particular. Vila (1996) argues that fatigue by police officers exasperates moodiness and stress, which can lead to violent or destructive behavior. Controlling fatigue in policing is difficult because exhaustion is normalized as an uncontrollable part of the job. The researchers argue that several changes can be easily instituted in law enforcement to reduce the extent of fatigue. Suggested changes include developing community policing programs, the enlargement of personnel reliability programs, improved efficiency through the use of technology, modifying work schedules to allow for more days off between work weeks, and limiting the exposure of officer to high crime environments by adapting patrol rotations (Vila, 1996).

All conventional attempts to manage officer burnout tend to focus on either psychologically taxing events or the chronic stress generated by the daily requirements of law enforcement. Techniques to reduce negative psychological outcomes among the traditional models generally fail to address broader context of organizational characteristics and pay virtually no attention to the saliency of gender dynamics. Some research has tangentially addressed gender by noting that police officers, particularly male officers, are resistive to psychological treatments. However, most scholars and practitioners allow the importance of the gendering practices in law enforcement to escape scholarly pursuits. Any steps toward counseling must also address the subculture of policing.

Police Subculture and Officer Behavior

Many health and lifestyle problems noted among police officers are directly attributed to the subculture of policing. For example, Violanti (2004) argues that alcohol consumption is readily accepted as a coping mechanism in police culture. This may explain the prevalence of binge drinking and other problematic behaviors that center around alcohol intake (Richmond et al., 1998). Using the police subculture to explain negative behaviors among officers clearly moves beyond some of the limitations of the psychological literature.

A subculture can be described as “a segment of a culture sharing characteristics that distinguish it from the broader culture” (Lindsey & Beach, 2004, p81). Some scholars argue that law enforcement has a unique subculture influencing behaviors and attitudes among officers. Sayles (1999) believes the police subculture encompasses several identifiable traits: police officers believe they are the only real crime fighters; they tend to be suspicious and cynical; officers isolate themselves from the public; are politically and emotionally conservative; possess a bunker mentality; are extremely loyal to each other; and are excessively violent. This subculture explains some of the collective and individual behavior of law enforcement officers.

One of the common aspects of the police subculture cited in the literature is the belief that officers must restrict their emotional output. Lennings (1997) provides evidence that the police subculture requires a general disdain for emotionality by officers. Police training teaches officers to value rationality and to remain psychologically detached from their job. Additionally officers espouse rugged individualism as a coping strategy. “Rugged individualism is a component of male socialization and police culture and has implications for the process of socialization of police” (Lennings, 1997, p562). The link between controlling emotion and negative behavioral consequences may be connected to the police subculture, although this line of research closely parallels traditional psychological methods to address stress in law enforcement by focusing on individual responses.

Acquisition of the police role and the socialization process generating by the police subculture forces officers to reject emotional responses to stressful events. Violanti (1997) states that “socialization into police role begins early in training, which attempts to instill a sense of superhuman emotional strength in officers” (p701). Officer training deliberately reinforces the belief that officers are unlike the average citizen, and reinforcement of this

conception occurs through training practices that teach self-defense, firearms training, and other street survival techniques not available to a typical person (Violanti, 1997). When officers leave training academies, their attachment to the police role is well-established. Once in the field, informal police culture pressures officers to maintain the police role and corresponding behaviors (Violanti, 1997).

The acquisition of police-role orientation is associated with several problems. The police role affects an officer's ability to manage stress because signs of emotional weakness may be seen as a violation of both the police role and the subculture of law enforcement. Officers are also encouraged to adapt black or white thinking (Violanti, 1997). Black and white thinking in policing limits an officer's ability to explore alternative solutions to problems. All or nothing thinking often expands beyond work-related task and manifests in other areas of the officer's life. In regards to stress, burnout, and suicide, the police-role orientation reduces other social roles that could elevate stress and risk of suicide, and might restrict solutions for dealing burnout (Violanti, 1997).

In addition to limited resolutions for stress, the social isolation that accompanies the police role limits contact with natural support systems that offer alternatives not considered by officers immersed in the culture of law enforcement. The final result is that "the potential for suicide may increase as officers attempt to deal with distress from an all-or-nothing perspective" (Violanti, 1997, p705). Obviously police culture and socialization influences how individuals deal with anguish, further compounding the natural stress associated with law-enforcement-work environments.

The acceptability of violent behavior and the subcultural obligation of secrecy leads to law enforcement environments that foster high burnout and use of physical force (Cancino & Enriquez, 2004). Officers using violence in the presence of their peers have an expectation that their actions will remain undisclosed. In fact, an officer who reports negative behaviors by peers is viewed as deviant, and might be subjected to retaliation by peers. The author states that, "any form of peer retaliation is deemed acceptable in order to restore and reinforce normative police behavior" (p328). Even if some officers desire change, any attempt to reduce violent behavior by officers is likely ignored if the normative standards among officers are intact.

Violence and risk taking also relate to the thrill seeking orientation of police officers. The normative standard in policing pushes officers toward risk-seeking behavior. Officers that attempt to avoid perilous situations can be stigmatized as cowards and treated accordingly (Hickman et al., 2001). In the law enforcement culture, violence and risk taking are encouraged, cautious policing dejected, and violations of secrecy punished. This social context limits the manner in which change can be successfully employed in law enforcement agencies.

Police subcultures are problematic because they resist change. Attempts to control officer behavior require active participation by law enforcement agencies, and the involvement of other segments of the criminal justice system. Cancino & Enriquez (2004) believe that “prosecutors, judges and defense attorneys must act independently and proactively to curb police misconduct” (p335). Any potential for substantial change must come at the law-enforcement-institutional level so that officers are encouraged to report misconduct and are protected from the retaliation of their peers. (Cancino & Enriquez, 2004).

Attempts to alleviate police stress by changing the police subculture necessarily involves a complex process. Suggested changes designed to affect this subculture include better training for new recruits, teaching of conflict resolution tactics, and increased educational opportunities (Lennings, 1997). The value of education should not be ignored because some research indicates that officers with a college degree are less likely to engage in violence and more likely to use other dispute-resolution techniques (Albanese, 2005) Education may reduce black or white thinking by officers on the streets, thus expanding avenues for dealing with stress and burnout. Nevertheless, virtually all approaches deriving from this body of literature are individual based and fail to address the deeper social context.

One approach that escapes the individualistic trap of most literature on police stress examines the larger context of police organizations. Hodgson (2001) believes that the paramilitary structure of police organizations reinforces violence as a way to manage disputes. The majority of law enforcement organizations espouse the use of military style discipline and hierarchies. When coupled with the authoritarian peacekeeping mode of law enforcement, the potential for excessive violence is heightened. Hodgson and others believe

that an important step toward reducing excessive force by law enforcement is changing the quasi-military organizational structure. Hodgson states,

The critical examination of public police organizational practices and policies must prove to develop and foster an organizational structure that embraces an early twenty-first century management and leadership philosophy and an organizational structure that does not rely on paramilitary tradition and ideology, and therefore reduce reliance on violent practices, procedures and policies in administering the criminal justice system...(p542).

Although Hodgson's primary thesis provides a valuable baseline for a structural approach, it has significant shortcomings. The author ignores the role that gender plays in both the acceptance of violence as a means of resolving disputes and the pivotal role of masculinity in quasi-military organizational structure. Furthermore, simply changing the structure of police organizations may not address the masculine thought processes that drive acceptance of violence. Both structure and interaction play complementary roles in reinforcing masculinity in military style organizations. Any realistic hope of changing these organizations needs to address masculinized organizational behavior.

The relationship of police subculture to behavioral and social psychological development of officers is an important factor for understanding burnout and violence. This type of research offers some understanding of the problem of stress within law enforcement, but fails to extend the literature in a manner appropriate for unique ways gender influence behavior in law enforcement. Any comprehensive evaluation of officer behavior must incorporate gender dynamics.

Gendered Organization

A theoretical framework of gender is vital for understanding burnout, violence, and suicide in policing. In this section, the theoretical framework of gender from chapter one is applied to policing. Acker argues that the gendering of organizations occurs along five interactive processes. The first is a division of labor or appropriate behaviors along gender lines. The second is the creation of images that account for, oppose, or reinforce these created divisions. The third involves the actual gendered interactions among people, and is closely associated with the doing gender thesis. The fourth component that produces gendered organizations is individual identity. Finally, gender helps frame social and

organizational structure and is a vital aspect of how individuals understand the practices and perceptions that dominate organizational culture (Acker, 1990). For the purposes of this research, I focus on three areas of gendered organizations-division of labor, images, and gendered interactions.

Division of Labor

The historical context of policing clearly shows a distinct division of labor along gender lines. Within the last two centuries, policing grew from a response to increased urban crime into highly structured police departments (Wadman & Allison, 2004). Few organizations in American history have a history of gendering quite like police departments. Law enforcement established a gendered division of labor from its conception and policing is still largely regarded as "men's" work.

During the first 100 years of law enforcement in the United States, women were formally excluded from employment in law enforcement (Wadman & Allison, 2004). The first woman sworn officer was appointed in the early 20th century. Although there are conflicting accounts of who can be classified as the first female officer, most trace the early involvement of women in law enforcement to matrons (Britton, 2003; Schulz, 1995; Segrave, 1995; Wadman & Allison, 2004). The matron's duties were quite distinct from other police employees and were principally focused on caretaker duties like ensuring offenders had adequate clothing, food, and shelter (Schulz, 1995). In fact, women became involved in law enforcement as matrons because it was assumed that male officers were ill-equipped to provide for the specific needs of women and children, and women could help ease the harsh conditions of criminal confinement (Schulz, 1995, Wadman & Allison, 2004).

The use of matrons was not a voluntary measure by police departments and they were, in fact, a concession to middle-class reformers associated with the Progressive Movement. Although men involved in the Progressive Movement rejected the idea of a woman police officer, they did support the limited role of women as custodians of minor children, believing that male officers lacked the innate nurturing skills needed to care for this population (Wadman & Allison, 2004). As early as 1845, New York City appointed matrons. In 1878, Portland, Maine appointed the first full-time paid matron and New York City, Denver, and Cleveland followed suit within six years (Wadman & Allison, 2004).

Matrons developed due to the expansion of women's involvement in the public arena during the late 19th century. This resulted in the growth of the women's sphere of the public arena. Accompanying this belief in the intrinsic abilities of women was a call to public service that pushed many white middle class women into the public sector in schools, settlement houses, and police stations (Schulz, 1995). These early women officers lacked powers of arrest and more closely resembled social workers than modern police officers (Wadman & Allison, 2004; Schulz, 1995).

The introduction of women as sworn officers did not occur until 1905 when Portland, Oregon's police force hired the first women officer (Wadman & Allison, 2004). However, Alice Stebbins Wells is widely regarded as the first female police officer, appointed in Los Angeles in 1910 following a petition to the city's mayor. Although this was a significant moment in policing, she was not designated as a typical street officer like her male counterparts. Instead, she was commissioned to serve the growing population of delinquent girls. The contemporary opinion was that male officers would be too aggressive and lacked the emotional sensitivity to effectively deal with female delinquents. By 1920, no less than 146 cities employed full-time female officers (Odem, 1995; Wadman & Allison, 2004).

The movement for women police officers was not socially isolated and was part of a larger social campaign that expanded or professionalized a number of volunteer jobs. Nursing, social work, and other professions have their roots in feminist and the social reform movements of the early 20th century. The women sparking these movements were generally from upper-middle-class stock, were college educated, and worked predominately with lower and working-class clients (Schulz, 1995; Odem, 1995). Ironically, the early women officers distanced themselves from their matron predecessors, who they saw as untrained, in an attempt to garner greater acceptance from law enforcement officials (Schulz, 1995).

As women were accepted in law enforcement, many police agencies created specific divisions or units of female officers. The first female unit was established in Washington, D.C., and named the Women's Bureaus. By 1918, this section of the police department employed four full-time policewomen (all making less than male officers). This department became the corner stone for law enforcement by women, and a model emulated in other departments. The women employed by the Washington Police Department had three functions, but their overall responsibilities more closely resembled a modern day social

worker than a police officer. The first function was prevention, which involved patrolling dance halls, parks and other areas frequented by delinquents and wayward girls. Correction duties were the second function and involved the processing of first-time delinquent and female offenders, providing psychological treatment, and locating missing children. The final duty was general police work, which involved investigating and interrogating female offenders, and overseeing female delinquents as they were processed through the system (Schulz, 1995).

As women sought more mainstream roles in policing, the arrangement of separate police bureaus became problematic. Many believed organization by gender limited the functions of the female officer and ghettoized the profession. Despite these concerns, most female police officers accepted the women's bureaus as the only way to ensure that women remained in law enforcement. An additional problem involved hostility by male officers who wanted to disband women's bureaus. A particular point of contention was the fact that a woman usually oversaw the female divisions and many male officers felt that women should not be in leadership positions (Segrave, 1995).

The early roots of policing helped develop the context for the continued gendering of police organizations. Women were employed in these organizations only when it became apparent that they needed someone to do "women's work." Far from the crime fighters of the day, women officers were nurturers charged with a specific task in an organization with a defined division of labor. This early division of labor laid the foundation for the intensive gendering of policing.

Policing over the last 40 years has made some progress, but the division of labor remains a salient feature. Following World War II women began to enter law enforcement in greater numbers. Policewomen were charged with very specific gendered tasks and it was not until the 1960's that women gained greater access to all facets of policing (Darien, 2002).

In 1968 two female officers, Betty Blakenship and Elizabeth Coffal assumed normal patrol duties with the Indianapolis Police Department. They were part of an initial experiment to expand the roles of women in crime-fighting functions of policing. Within two years the department expanded the use of women in police patrols and by 1972, 8 women were working patrol. This was a profound change in the duties of female officers, but did not radically change the roles of women in law enforcement. In fact, Blankenship

and Coffal both returned to stereotypical women's role within the department by 1979 (Shultz, 1995).

In 1972, Congress enacted Title VII of the Civil Rights Act that prohibited discrimination based on sex, color, race, religion, or national origin and expanded this coverage to public employment sectors (Shultz, 1995). This effectively ended the legal exclusion of women from patrol functions and other correctional settings like prisons (Britton, 2003).

The federal government further crippled attempts to segregate women from police patrol functions with the creation of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) as part of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act (Shultz, 1995). Initially the LEAA did little to promote the use of women as patrol officers, however, the Crime Control Act was amended in 1973 and prohibited discriminatory practices by police agencies. Police departments that continued to discriminate against women and minority groups faced losing millions in federal law enforcement grants (Shultz, 1995).

The increase of women in patrol remained limited despite changes in the law. In 1971, fewer than 12 women were utilized as patrol officers. By 1974, this number increased to more than 1,000. By 1981, women represented over 5% of the sworn patrol officers (Shultz, 1995). Although many of the largest police departments resisted adding women to patrol, Philadelphia was legally compelled to appoint more female officers via a consent decree in 1976. This period revolutionized the role of women in modern law enforcement, officially moving female officers away from their positions as social workers and into a crime-fighting role more analogous to their male counterparts (Shultz, 1995).

As women began to seek access to traditionally male aspects of law enforcement, the organizational structures of the police agencies like the NYPD have made the aspects of Acker's theory more transparent. As women became detectives, they often were assigned tasks that seemed more appropriate to their skills as women and were generally assigned to investigate minor crimes or those associated with delinquent youth and wayward women (Darien, 2002). The division of labor from the early 20th century remained very much intact despite the fact that women were allowed to assume patrol duties (Martin, 1980).

The segregation of women from patrol duties remains a problem, albeit, less observable since the 1980s. Women assume patrol functions and can attain higher ranks, but

research reveals that women are frequently pigeon-holed into certain tasks associated with feminine qualities (Moore, 1999). Gender segregated labor requires to handle juvenile delinquents and female criminals successfully pushing women into the same positions held by matrons (Brown, 1998; Martin, 1996; Martin, 1990). Women are also overrepresented in domestic abuse departments. The involvement of women in domestic abuse units, initially heralded as positive movement by police agencies, is an example of how women officers get compressed into gender specific task (Westmarland, 2001).

Gender-specific behavior in law enforcement also involves assigning certain tasks to women. For example, women are frequently pulled from patrol duties and forced to deal with incidents involving women or children (Brown, 1998). Women rarely make it to upper ranks of police departments and suffer from discriminatory practices in regards to promotion (House, 1993). The interaction of race and gender frequently compounds the specialization of task. African American officers are generally forced to take the most tedious tasks, frequently associated with manual or demeaning labor (Martin, 1994).

The specialization of tasks along gender lines is rooted in the socio-historical context of policing yet it remains salient in modern law enforcement. This division of labor clearly establishes police organizations as gendered. This allows certain behaviors to continue and limits the development of alternative conduct. Additionally, this helps keep power in the hands of men further reinforcing the gender dynamic of police organizations. Acker argues that in regards to gender divisions "...men are almost in the highest positions of organizational power. Manager's decisions often initiate gender divisions, and organizational practices maintain them..." (1990, p306). This dynamic power apparent, through the division of labor, bolsters the masculine persona of policing and constrains behavioral responses to violent or stressful situations.

Images of Women Officers

According to Acker, the second interactive processing that genders an organization is the creation of images. These images "explain, express, reinforce, or sometimes oppose" the gender division of the organization. These images can come from a number of sources including tradition, popular culture, the media, and individuals within the organization.

One of the more interesting aspects of police organizations is the gendering of images. Most male officers were traditionally described in a manner consistent with Connell's (1987) hegemonic masculinity. The images of women officers are constructed along several competing lines. Popular cultural images of policewomen described them as excessively manly, masculine, or unattractive. Additionally, female officers are often required to balance their status as police officers with their image as women. This type of imagery adds to the gendering of police organizations.

One infamous example of gendered images of female officers was a 1949 article in the *Saturday Evening Post* titled, "Some Cops have Lovely Legs." Like the femininity campaign conducted NYPD during this period, this article presented female officers in a feminine and sexualized manner. The article contained images of women applying make-up and dressing in a manner that accentuated their sexuality (Segrave, 1995). In addition to these visual images, the article ran an interview with Irene Peters, the director of the NYPD's policewomen's program. Mrs. Peters described the female officers as occasionally petty, jealous, and catty prima donnas and equated these behaviors to natural feminine traits (Segrave, 1995).

Modern images of women officers within law enforcement remain centered on gender and sexuality. One image of women in law enforcement focuses on their sexual behavior and concern that they will give into their "natural" sexual drives (Britton, 2003; Brown, 1998). Britton (2003) reports this concern in regards to female corrections officers: The implication is that inmates will inevitably attempt to solicit female officers sexually, and that women will find it difficult to resist due to 'natural' heterosexual attraction. As another officer put it, attraction between men and women, 'even when the men are inmates,' is just the 'nature of the beast.' This view of sexual desire as constant and irresistible means that female officers are always positioned as potentially weaker based on their sexuality, regardless of whether they ever become involved with an inmate (p180).

A similar gender image focuses on concern that female officers are a sexual assault risk. This concern is actually a combination of two gendered descriptions of female officers. The first is the idea that women are physically weaker than men and therefore a liability in law enforcement situations. Later sections of this dissertation will address gendered image. The second part of this image is the belief that women were easy targets for sexual violence.

Martin (1996) found that some male officers believe women patrolling at night could become easy targets of sexual assaults. This conception helps male officers justify restricting the patrol roles of women and further galvanizes the gender division of labor in law enforcement agencies.

Another concern for women employed in policing is the attention given to their sexual behavior. Again, distinct images identify female officers, and set them apart from men. Martin (1998) reports that women officers are viewed as either “bikes” or “dykes.” Bikes are women officers that engage in promiscuous sexual activity particularly with male officers in the department. Dykes are lesbian officers who face harsh stereotyping and marginalization. Lesbian officers often struggle to gain acceptance in the organization and must balance intense work requirements with their sexual orientation (Miller et al., 2003). This distasteful choice of wording is not arbitrary and reinforces popular cultural views of female police officers. These images degrade women in law enforcement and justify the gendered practices of the organization.

The underlying assumption of the sexualized image is that women pursuing law enforcement careers have social or psychological defects. They are either a masculine “dyke” or oversexed “tramps.” Westmarland (2001) believes that, "stereotypes and caricatures of women officers as over sexualized or butch and terrifying throughout history of the integration of policing throughout the twentieth century reflect concerns about the changing roles of women in society" (p89). Women are gaining greater access to social arenas previously reserved only for men. Men can no longer legally bar women from entry to these areas so images dissuade them from selecting these professions. A female officer is not viewed as a heroic public servant like her male counterpart, but is seen as a “slut” or “dyke.” These powerful cultural images squeeze women out of the ranks of policing.

A reoccurring image of women officers is the belief they are weak and unable to fulfill job requirements (Brown, 1998; Martin, 1996; Segrave, 1995; Britton, 2003; Wadman & Allison, 2004). This is the most consistent image of female officers and built on cultural tradition that defines women as physically inferior. In modern policing physical altercations are infrequent; however, the concern that physical requirements for officers have been diluted to accommodate women is a salient feature. Many research projects reviewed for this paper feature views that women are incapable of handling physical attacks (Brown, 1998;

Martin, 1996; Britton, 2003; Wadman & Allison, 2004). The concern that women are too weak to function properly in law enforcement work is a direct way in which images are used to reinforce the gendered division of labor.

Addressing physical differences between the average man and woman ignores the wide range of possible differences between individuals. Every department employs men of various strength, size, and physical capability, yet the construction of images ignores this range and focuses only on a created image of the vulnerable woman. Age, injury, cardiovascular conditioning, weight, and other factors may affect the physical differences between individual men, which could affect their ability to respond to violent situations. These images are brushed aside in the context of gendered images of policing. Images of male officers describe them as physically fit and capable of responding to any violent situation, while female officers are seen as weak and in over their heads (Brown, 1998; Martin, 1996; Britton, 2003; Shultz, 1995).

An additional concern related to images is that of uniforms for female police officers. In the early days of policing, police units prohibited women from wearing uniforms that distinguished them from the general public (Segrave, 1995). Both policemen and the general public assumed that female officers should maintain a feminine appearance and that uniforms gave these women an overly masculine façade (Darien, 2002). Since women formally joined patrol ranks in the 1970s, male and female uniforms are standardized with no difference for male or female officers. This arrangement creates several difficulties for female officers. First, these uniforms are generally patterned after male body types and often appear sloppy on female officers (Martin, 1996). In regards to the uniforms of female officers Martin (1996) reports “There was a genuine sense of grievance that the women’s uniform was not properly designed for women, or thought about for practicality or comfort, unlike that for male officers who had both lightweight and warmer trousers” (Martin, 1996, p517).

Attempts at gender neutrality in uniform clothing create inequitable images. Although technically the uniforms are the same, in reality they create lasting negative impressions of female officers. Again, images foster and reinforce the gendered structure of policing. The ideal image of a police officer is decidedly male. Any divergence from this image is problematic, particularly if the change is associated with femininity.

Images construct powerful social force that reinforces the status quo in law enforcement and aids in the gendering of police organizations. These images are not gender neutral, their construction, whether deliberate or inadvertent buttress the gendered division of labor in policing.

Gendered Interactions

Acker (1990) argues that the third major gendered social structure involves interactions between individuals in an organization. Acker was concerned with how interactive process produce gendered organization through, "interactions between women and men, women and women, men and men, including all patterns that enact dominance and submission" (Acker, 1990, p306). The dynamics of interactions in police organizations are an important aspect for understanding the gendering process.

It is not necessary to rehash the entire historical context of women's movement into policing, but it is important to acknowledge the level of resentment and hostility that female officers faced. Early women officers were treated with disdain and frequently marginalized by men (Segrave, 1995). Although legal changes officially outlawed discrimination, the mistreatment of female officers continues in law enforcement (Westmarland, 2001).

Modern police agencies have not solved most of the concerns that gender these organizations. Susan Martin's comprehensive research of five police agencies found that race, class, and gender guide organizational behavior, gender interactions, and officer conduct. The interactions between men and women, between women, and between black and white individuals align with the historical context of policing as white and male. Male officers frequently discriminated against women officers, belittling their abilities or refusing to partner with them (Martin, 1994).

Race also played a significant role in the gendering process. Men either reify white women as objects of sexual desire or glorified secretaries. On the other hand, male officer view Black women as source of labor (Martin, 1994).

It suggests that experiences and perspectives are situated not only historically but within organizational and occupational contexts that vary. And, in studying an occupational or organizational setting in which both black and white men are present, it has expanded the 'three-way relationship involving white men, white women, and women of color' in which 'race and gender dynamics are played out' (Martin, 1994, p398).

Martin's research clearly indicates the gendering of police organizations.

Masculine interactions among men officers provide and additional social context for understanding gendered interactions among police officers. It is in these homogenous groups that male officers reinforce the gender dynamics of their work environment. These groups are also significant support networks for male officers and it appears that women officers do not have a similar support system. In these settings, men are free to discuss subjects that could result in negative sanctions in other settings (Westmarland, 2001; Martin, 1996). This “cop culture” develops as a shared response to organizational rules. Cop culture can be described as macho in orientation, sexist, crude, and sophomoric (Martin, 1996). Others refer to this group behavior as the “John Wayne syndrome” (Kop & Euwema, 2001). In regard to gender, cop culture is a sub-cultural understanding of how to interact in mixed company in order to remain in compliance with the “official” rules of law enforcement organizations but retain the masculine aura of policing. John Wayne was a man’s man, and when male police officers are together they can preserve their masculine patterns of interaction and subordinate female officers. As Acker points out, the interactions of an organization are about defining power. In policing, much of this power structures gendered interactions.

Another pattern of gendered interactions that is becoming painfully apparent in law enforcement is the domination of women through sexual harassment. In Martin’s (1996) research, all but two women experienced sexual harassment on the job. Sexual harassment, a noteworthy problem in departments typically dominated by men (i.e. vice, gang units, etc), forces many women to transfer to feminine areas of policing to avoid mistreatment. In Brown’s (1998) research, 70% of the female officers experienced some type of direct sexual harassment and nearly half reported this as a frequent problem. Westmarland (2001) states, “women officers are still being subjected to discrimination and harassment, partly due to traditional ‘male’ police culture which is very difficult to change” (p89). Police culture is male dominated, highly masculine, and the treatment of female officers provides sufficient evidence that it remains a noteworthy problem.

Police sexual violence has also become a topic of research in recent years (Kraska & Kappeler, 1992). Police sexual violence includes sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, and

rape by on-duty police officers. Kraska & Kappeler (1992) contend that most research on police corruption fails to address sexual misconduct and studies that have focus on this behavior have assumed that on-duty sex is consensual. The general cause of this harassment is “highly masculine organizational ideology” (Kraska & Kappeler, 1992). Police organizations tend to ignore complaints of sexual assaults levied against officers, and even officers not involved in sexual misconduct protect their peers (Kraska & Kappeler, 1992).

Sexual victimization of women is a significant form of negative gender interaction in law enforcement. The maltreatment of women reinforces the masculine persona of male officers, and this type of violence cannot be disregarded as simple acts of deviance. It is an expression of power and dominance (Websdale & Chesney-Lind, 1998). These negative gendered interactions are disconcerting considering the victimization of women occurs at the hands of individuals charged with protecting the public. Sexual violence points to a belief that police officers are “men” first and protectors of society second

The expansion of women into law enforcement created a number of situations that required an adjustment to the division of labor, images, interactions, and the identity of police officers. Despite the outward appearance of change, policing organizations are highly gendered, and dominated by masculine ideals. The gendering of police organizations remains a salient, although often ignored, concern when examining any issue related to policing including negative stress outcomes.

Doing Gender and Doing Violence

The gendering of police organizations does not entirely account for negative responses to stress. Understanding the complementary relationship between social structure and interaction provides a valuable gender framework on police behavior. The connection between maladaptive responses to stress and the gendering of police organizations maintains social interaction. Many of these maladaptive coping mechanisms are linked with an interactive process that West and Zimmerman (1987) define as “doing gender.” "Doing gender means creating differences between girls and boys, and women and men, differences that are not natural, essential, or biological. Once the differences have been constructed, they are used to reinforce the 'essentialness' of gender" (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p 178).

Stress responses observed by Project Shield and other research are not arbitrary psychological responses to demanding situations; they indicate of how gender is accomplished. The process of being a police officer involves doing gender in a masculine way; it is the epitome of a gender achievement.

Controlling emotional states is an example of accomplishing masculinity. Most boys are taught to control displays of emotion; thus, emotional control is actually reflective of men officers accomplishing gender. In fact, the proposed treatments for officer stress seem to indicate that the solution is to get officers to abandon traditional gender performances, like self-reliance and avoidance of help. Mashburn states:

It is important that officers understand that counseling can help them deal more effectively with certain life events. They must also accept the fact that receiving such help does not belittle or stigmatize them -- it is not a reflection on their ability to deal with problems. When officers realize that other colleagues experience the same types of problems, they will be encouraged to openly share their feelings with peers (1993, p63).

Mashburn fails to mention gender as a component of his argument; nevertheless the gendering process of policing is evident in the text of his statement. Police officers do gender by restricting their emotions and performing masculinity.

The problem of restricted emotion by police officers lies with the interconnection between policing and masculinity. Separating the traits of a good officer from the masculine ideal type is difficult and often results in resistance from male officers. "Male officers being told not to act in ways they traditionally associate with 'being male' and police officers, is perhaps equated with being asked not to behave as men" (Westmarland, 2001, p137). The problems of police stress responses are indicative of the overall interwoven relationship between masculinity and policing.

Violence represents another method to accomplish masculinity. Law enforcement is one of the few occupations in which violence is actually a formalized job requirement. Officers possess legal power and authority to use violence, and in some cases deadly force, in appropriate situations. An alarming aspect of police stress is the frequency in which violence becomes a resource to resolve disputes, handle volatile situations, and in extreme cases remove the officer from the situation by taking his life. Maybe the greatest concern resulting

from unmanageable stress is the unwarranted use of force on the job or in an officer's personal life.

Recently sociologists have begun to explore violence as a resource for accomplishing gender (Messerschmidt, 1997; Miller, 1998) Men marshal violence as a means of controlling others, resolving disputes, and obtaining monetary rewards. This helps explain the involvement of men in violent crime and the relative absence of women from these activities (Miller, 1998). Violence as a resource is very applicable to policing considering the fact that state sanctions officer violence in the line of duty. "Here violence is described as a 'resource for accomplishing gender--for demonstrating masculinity within a given context or situation'" (Miller, 1998, p38). Westmarland directly extends this conception to policing:

It is perhaps understandable that for some officers the use of physical violence or force is a masculine preserve. Indeed, the belief that 'fighting' and physical expressions of aggression are purely masculine attributes, which men have the right to 'use' as they are essentially male, can be observed throughout general society. However, this 'right' becomes further internalized through police cultural values, as a 'core characteristic, apparently becoming closely aligned to their occupational identity (2001, p136).

When responding to stressful situations police culture dictates a masculine response. In some cases, masculine stress reactions involve internalizing psychological or emotional reactions, in other situations officers use violence--a resource of masculinity and policing. The degree of stress may mediate the use of force by police officers. "As officers become burned out, they will display a more negative mood and consequently will perceive and interpret actions of civilians more negatively" (Kop & Euwema, 2001, p634). Negative views of the public are an important aspect of how officers select among alternative dispute resolution techniques. Officers with negative views of the public are more willing to employ violence (Kop & Euwema, 2001, p634).

Messerschmidt (1997) argues that crime is generally constructed through gendered structure, social relations, and structured action. Messerschmidt states that:

...socially organized power relations among men and among women are constructed historically on the bases of race, class, and sexual preference; that is, in specific contexts some men and some women have greater power than other men and other women. In other words, the capacity to exercise power is, for the most part, a reflection of one's position in social relationships (p9).

For law enforcement, the power exercised by male officers' manifest in violence, the negative treatment of female officers and the division of labor in policing that excludes women from certain patrol operations. All of these factors reveal the power that some men have within law enforcement.

The connection between burnout, stress, and violence is direct. Law enforcement officers are more likely to respond to stress with violence, the same does not hold true for less masculine occupations. For example, high stress is reported in the profession of education, and stress in teaching is associated with high turnover, burnout, and health problems. The link between stress and violence is not apparent in teaching (Thomas, Clarke, & Lavery, 2003). Additional, research directly comparing stress among teachers and police officers finds stress in both professions (Singler & Wilson, 1988).

The concept of violence as a resource for accomplishing masculinity also explains why women are less likely to use violence than male officers. Although women engage in violence in some situations, they generally receive little support for expressions of masculinity (Miller, 1998). Does this hold true for violence by women police officers? Research indicates that female officers are less likely to use violence as part of their job. Lonsway (2001) reports that women use appropriate force in necessary situations; however, they are less likely to use excessive force. Prussel & Lonsway (2001) also showed that women were less likely to use excessive or deadly force. This lends support to the belief that women are police officers that are more effective. In fact, *Time* magazine even ran an article arguing the women are more suited for modern law enforcement, are less likely to use force to resolve disputes, and have better conflict resolution and communication skills (McDowell, 1992). In general, the dominant cultural belief is that traits associated with femininity are incompatible with policing.

Several factors interact to create the potential for violence by law enforcement officers. As detailed in Chapter 1 and illustrated by Figure 1, these factors include elements of social structure and social interaction. The gendering of law enforcement is the component most often ignored by contemporary scholars, and the current research will expand the literature by exploring this relationship. The current research will explore the relationship between gender, police stress, and the use of violence with a focus on the following research questions.

Research Questions

Exploratory Questions:

- I. How do contemporary police officers define and perceive work-related stress and burnout? Do officers' perceptions of stress and burnout vary by organizational make-up, community served by the officers, and perceptions of administrative support?
- II. Do modern police organizations exhibit the characteristics of gendered organizations?
- III. In what ways does the community influence officers' perception of job stress and burnout? Do community factors influence the potential for violence by patrol officers?

Explanatory Questions:

- IV. Does the gendering process influence how individual officers define stress, burnout, and the acceptability of violence?
- V. How do gendered organizational structures in law enforcement agencies influence officer stress, burnout, and use of violence by officers? Does doing gender influence stress management?

CHAPTER 3 - Research Methods

In order to extend literature on burnout and violence in law enforcement the current research employs a mixed method technique. This dissertation utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data to expand research on police behavior. Neuman (2003) describes the mixing of quantitative and qualitative research in the same study as a triangulation of methods. The author states that this technique “is [a] fuller or more comprehensive” (Neuman, 2003, p139) way of examining complex research questions. The quantitative research section takes advantage of pre-existing data to provide both descriptive and explanatory findings. It is difficult to assess the theoretical framework of this dissertation through quantitative questionnaires, so several qualitative techniques are employed toward stronger understanding underlining gender dynamics and their connection to police stress.

Quantitative Methods:

To examine how gender, stress, and law enforcement social structures predict burnout and violent behavior among police officers, the current study utilizes data from *Police Stress and Domestic Violence in Police Families in Baltimore, Maryland, 1997-1999*¹ (Gershon, 2000). Data for this project was collected via a five-page questionnaire that explores officer stressors, negative health outcomes, current stress levels, level of support, and self-reported violent behavior. The data is open to academic use and available for downloading at the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) website at [www.icpsr.umich.edu/cgi bin/bob/archive?study=2976&path=NACJD](http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/cgi/bin/bob/archive?study=2976&path=NACJD).

¹ The ICPSR suggest the following citation format to be included in text as a footnote: Gershon, Robyn. POLICE STRESS AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN POLICE FAMILIES IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, 1997-1999 [Computer file]. ICPSR version. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University [producer], 1999. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2000.

Sample

The sampling procedure identified the number of sworn officers on each shift in all nine of Baltimore's precincts and their headquarters. Questionnaires were given to each officer attending roll call for each available shift. Participation was voluntary and officers working more than one shift completed only one questionnaire. Approximately 1,104 officers completed the questionnaire out of 1,200 distributed surveys; the Baltimore Police Department employs slightly more than 2,500 sworn officers.

Measures

For the purposes of this project, I utilize several sets of variables from this survey: demographic characteristics, critical event stress, psychological side effects of stress, physiological responses to stress, level of burnout, acceptability of female officers, and self-reported violent behavior. This research employs comparative cross tabulations and quantitative analysis with these variable groupings.

Demographic characteristics remain crucial within these analyses because the model proposes that gender and race expectations create structural constraints that shape how individuals respond to stressful environments. The specific demographic variables included in these analyses are sex, race, and marital status. For quantitative analysis, dummy variables represent each demographic category. Race and sex categories combine to create four groups: African American females, African American males, white females, and white males. Some research indicates that gender and race differences affect officer assignments and general behavior patterns in police organizations (Martin, 1994). Table 1 lists descriptive characteristics of the sample population. For this research, white males serve as the reference group in all quantitative analysis. Dummy variables also represent the remaining demographic variables when appropriate.

The acceptability of women in law enforcement is measured by creating two dummy variables from the responses to the following questions about female officers: Gender related jokes are often made, and the department is lenient in enforcing rules for female officers. New variables are coded as one for those respondents who agreed or strongly agreed and zero for respondents who were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed. Each of these variables is indicative of the acceptance of women within the Baltimore Police Department.

An attempt to create indexes out of these three variables was unsuccessful and latent trait factor analysis indicated that they did not load on one or more factors. For this reason, these variables are included as separate binary categories. Appendix A includes greater detail on variable construction.

Several dummy variables measure officer responses to critical events. Respondents were asked if they were “emotionally” affected or fearful of work-related stressful events. The events contained in this study include making a violent arrest, shooting someone in the line of duty, knowing the victim or perpetrator of a crime, and being the subject of an internal affairs investigation. The variable is coded as one (1) for participants who answered “Very much,” and zero (0) for those answering “a little” or “not at all.”

The survey uses several Likert-like scales to address the issues of stress and burnout. These variables appear to measure latent traits, and for quantitative analysis, indexes measure these variables. Indexes quantify physiological responses to stress, psychological difficulties, and degree of burnout. The psychological index combines eight Likert-type questions with the following responses to stress restlessness, easily crying, feelings of hopelessness, panic attacks, irritability, withdraw, depression, and emotional depletion ($A=.93$). Responses to these questions use a four-point Likert scale with possible answers ranging from never to always. The total index score can range from eight to 32. Appendix A includes additional detail on variable construction

The physiological index combines six questions assessing possible physical responses to stress ($A=.94$). These questions utilize a four-point Likert scale with possible answers ranging from never to always. The questions assess if the respondents ever experience nausea, trouble getting a breath, a lump in the throat, pains or pounding in the chest, and faintness or dizziness. The index scores range from six to 24. Again, Appendix A details coding procedures for these variables.

The burn-out index ($A=.78$) is constructed by combining the following three questions: I feel like I am on automatic pilot most times, I feel burned out from my job, I feel like I'm at the end of the rope. The possible responses ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and the combined index score can range from three to 15.

Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Logistic regression analysis are both utilized with these data based on the appropriateness of the dependent variable. OLS regression is

employed to examine variables affecting psychological stress, physiological stress, and officer burnout. Using an index as the dependent variable violates one assumption of OLS regression analysis; that dependent variables measure interval or ratio level data. However, regression models are generally robust enough to manage violations of the assumptions. Berry and Felddman (1985) state, “It is not at all uncommon that one or more of the assumptions underlying regression are violated in typical application” (p88). Dependent variables created from attitudinal responses to scaling questions have become an acceptable practice in social sciences (Schroeder, Sjoquist, & Stephan, 1986, p70; for examples see S. Shirley Feldman and L. Cris Gowen, 1989; Sean D. Hayes, Peter R.E. Crocker and Kent C. Kowalski, 1999).

The second model explores use violence by survey participants. Four questions in this survey ask officers if they have used violence in interpersonal relationships. The total violence variable is constructed from respondents who answer yes to any of four violence-related questions. Four questions in this survey measure if respondents have ever used violence against other officers, their spouse, their children, or their pets. The following question addresses the use of violence. “Have you ever gotten out of control and been physical (e.g. pushing, shoving, grabbing) with: A fellow officer, your spouse/significant other, your child(ren), or your pet(s)” (Gershon, 2000). Respondents are coded as one, and those that answer no are coded as zero. Since this dependent variable is binary, models employing this variable utilize logistic regression.

A second logistic model utilizes violence between officers as the dependent variable. Due to data limitations, this model includes only male officers. The preceding independent variables and control variables will be regressed on the violence variable. Appendix A details the coding for all the binary variables in any model. Results of quantitative analysis are included in Chapter 4.

The quantitative analysis in this research process informs qualitative approaches by providing exploratory information, a theoretical baseline of data, and a better sense of what areas to explore during officer interviews.

Qualitative Methods

The theoretical framework provided in Chapter 1 is explored in detail by performing both interviews and observations of police officers. This research involves semi-structured qualitative interviews with police from three Midwestern police agencies. The police departments targeted for this research represent departments of various sizes. In order to maintain confidentiality, the names of these departments and individual officers are changed.

The police organizations included in this research are quite reflective of their communities. Each embodies certain characteristics that shape interactions and clearly influence ideas about gender, stress, and burnout among officers. The sample of officers drawn from these three departments attempts to reflect the gender, race, and ethnic composition of each department; however, this was not completely possible. In reality, a purposive sampling technique is employed in order to seek out officers representing particular characteristics. Researchers deem purposive or judgmental sampling appropriate under any one of the following three conditions. First, the technique is warranted when the researcher needs to select unique cases because they are particularly informative. Second, researchers can use this technique to analyze people from specialized or hard to reach populations. The final situation appropriate for purposive sampling is when the researcher wants to gain in-depth knowledge about certain types of cases (Neuman, 2003, p213).

The current research on police stress and violence meets all three criteria for judgmental sampling. The unique nature of law enforcement and those employed in this profession, particularly in specialized units, requires direct selection research participants. One can also argue that police officers make up a specialized or hard-to-reach population, particularly if concerns over secrecy in law enforcement are valid. Finally, the entire purpose of this qualitative analysis is to gain a deeper understanding of the interaction between gender and officer behavior. This type of research necessitates an in-depth investigation.

According to the research literature, department size influences the amount and type of stressors experienced by officers. Most research on stress and burnout have focused on larger departments located in urban centers (Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). Although the size of the department and the community served can shape stress and burnout, the gendering of behavior in rural communities as a whole may be quite different from urban settings. In fact, some research has indicated that gendered behavior may be place specific

(Bird & Sapp, 2004) and that violent behavior in particular might be shaped by local gender regimes (Williams & Kurtz, 2006) . I have targeted police departments in communities of varying size to examine how rural and urban influences may compound with gendering aspects of law enforcement to shape officer behavior.

It is important to acknowledge several factors that influence the way officers responded to this project. Feminist theorists argue that researchers develop perspectives based on their personal development and their position within social hierarchies. These structural differences create variation in beliefs and interpretation of the world, including research findings (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004). A related theme is the idea that experience is shaped by the intersecting oppressions of race, class, and gender (Collins, 2000). These theoretical perspectives have several implications for my research. First, I hold unique positions within class, race, gender, and personal development that will facilitate and hinder some aspects of the research process. As a white, middle-class male, I might have received responses from officers that would not answer questions proffered by an African American or a woman. On the other hand, women and minority officers might have distrustful of my motives or just interpret my question differently.

My education and employment background likely influenced my reception by the officers as well. I was a Military Police officer in the United States Army and I worked for two years as a probation officer. My direct practice work in the criminal justice system surely garners a bit of trust with some of the respondents. The fact that I am affiliated with Kansas State University (KSU) might also enable a favorable reception in some communities.

I interviewed 28 officers, with interviews lasting from 50 minutes to more than an hour. Some quantitative data collects information regarding years of service, education background, and demographic variables. The sample includes seven women and 22 men. Only three of the participants are racial or ethnic minorities. However, three individuals of minority status chose not to participate in the research.

Kiowa and the Kiowa Police Department

Kiowa is the most populist city in this study, and offers diversity not found in many parts of the Midwest. United States Census Bureau estimates Kiowa's population at 360,715

in 2004. The entire population served by the Kiowa Police Department (KPD) is around 470,000. The majority of residents resided within the city's core zones, with the central part of Kiowa's population reaching 181,742 people.

According to the 2000 Census, the population of Kiowa is 72% white corresponding to 246,924 of the city's residents. African American's make up the next largest proportion of the population representing 11% of the city's total. It is noteworthy that 22,753 of the 38,845 African American residents of Kiowa live in one the city's six districts. A similar trend appears among Hispanic residents of Kiowa. About 10% of the city's population is comprised of people of Hispanic or Latino origin, but 12,250 of 33,322 Hispanic individuals reside in one of the city's districts. It appears that defacto segregation remains in Kiowa.

The Kiowa Police Department is by far the largest and most bureaucratic enforcement organization included in this research. The bureaucratic nature of law enforcement agencies can also create stress among officers. Particular concerns include the impersonal nature of the bureaucracy, distant chain of command, and lack of input into workplace rules (He et al., 2002). Since this organization is the largest and most bureaucratic, it should provide additional points of departure for this research.

The Kiowa PD organizes according to a paramilitary model with corresponding ranks and chain of command. The majority of law enforcement organizations espouse the use of military style discipline and hierarchies. As detailed in Chapter 2, this type of structure may aggravate circumstances that lead to burnout, use of force, and masculine identity among officers. For example, Hodgson (2001) believes that the paramilitary structure of police organizations reinforces the use of violence as a way to manage disputes. Given the size of KPD, it is logical to conclude that this organization's paramilitary structure resembles a true military model. The overall structure of this organization includes the Chief of Police, 3 Deputy Chiefs, 13 Captains, 39 Lieutenants, 55 Sergeants, 103 Detectives, 419 Patrol Officers, 32 officers serving in other capacities, and 144 civilian employees.

The gender breakdown of KPD reflects traditionally gender roles in policing. Few women hold higher ranks in Kiowa Police Department. Overall the department employs 201 women; however 114 of them work as non-sworn officers. The department has 52 female patrol officers and 11 detectives. Only six women officers are currently holding the rank of sergeant or higher. The highest-ranking women officer holds a Deputy Chief position. The

agency also has one female captain and three female lieutenants. With regard to race, 718 of the 827 individuals employed by the department are white.

I conducted 11 interviews with the KPD officers. Interview subjects include four women officers and seven men. This portion of the sample includes six patrol officers, three detectives, one community resource officer, and one captain.

Queens Police Department

The city of Queens is located in the Midwest and has an estimated population of 46,803. The city covers roughly 11 square miles, however, the QPD is responsible for patrolling an entire county. The Queens community offers several unique factors that influence police culture and organizational structures. Queens fits the classification of an isolated urban cluster, and is located in a highly rural state. The culture encompasses both elements of the surrounding rural community and influences related to urban culture. In particular, a major university and a significant military installation encompass the Queen's community. The population of Queens, reflective of Midwest society, is 87% white, 5% African American, 3% Asian, and 3% Hispanic.

In addition to normal law enforcement duties, QPD maintains the county jail, housed in the central law enforcement center. QPD patrols large zones; however the department is modest in size. QPD employs roughly 160 individuals with more than 90 sworn officers. QPD has 38 white women, three African American women, and four Hispanic women on staff. The department employs 113 white males, two African American males, and two Hispanic males.

Like many departments, OPD has a quasi-military structure with four divisions. QPD's divisions include patrol, investigations, support, and the jail. The department has a Director, a Deputy Director, and four Captains who oversee each of the four divisions.

The patrol division employs the majority of sworn officers who are assigned to one of three shifts. The patrol area is divided into nine zones, six of these zones are within the Queens city limits, and one patrol zone is dedicated to a local bar district. The patrol division has one captain, and three lieutenants, and each shift has two sergeants

The investigations division includes sections for domestic violence, vice, narcotics, civil processing, and evidence. The domestic violence section is a grant-funded program

employing one detective. The largest investigative unit is the vice and narcotic unit that has up to five detectives. The civil processing unit tracks civil papers and serves warrants for the entire county. This section has two sworn officers and a clerk. QPD employs one individual to track and process evidence collected for criminal prosecution.

Interviewing officers in the Queens department was a multiple-step process. The department was clearly concerned with the purpose of this research; however, the administration was mindful of the importance of university research because of frequent interaction with the local college. Gaining permission to interview officers took more than two months from initial contact QPD's administrators. The final approval required a face-to-face meeting with the director, deputy director, and all the captains.

I completed 13 interviews with QPD officers, and the sample includes seven patrol officers, two detectives, two sergeants, one lieutenant, and one captain. As with each of the other departments, few minority officers are included in the sample and only one QPD officer was a racial minority.

Monterrey

The city of Monterrey is the third community of interest for this research. Monterrey is located in the Midwest on a major interstate highway. The city has a population of roughly 7,000, and is 97% white. Like much of the Midwest, the city's population is in decline because younger residents migrate to urban areas. Monterrey is the only city in the sample to have a reduction in population over the last 10 years. According to census data, the city's population has dropped more than three percent in the last three years alone. Monterrey Community College, a fully accredited junior college, is located within the city limits.

Reflective of the city's population, the Monterrey Police Department is very small. In fact, the total number of sworn officers in the department is less than the number of officers on one shift Queens or one patrol zone in Kiowa. Monterrey has a flatter hierarchy with less distance between line officers and supervisors. Monterrey Police Department maintains a paramilitary organizational structure with a Chief, one sergeant, three corporals, and seven patrol officers. The department also employs six communications officers, four of which are full time employees. Although the city and corresponding patrol areas are small, the intersection of two major highways provides some potential for dangerous police

operations. In fact, the Monterrey Police Department boasts of having one of the largest marijuana drug busts in the history of the state.

The Monterrey Police Department (MPD), the personification of rural law enforcement, is located in center of the town. The law enforcement center houses both MPD, and the sheriff's office. The portion of the sample drawn from the Monterrey Police Department includes five white males. The Chief of Police agreed to the interview as did the second-in-command, the day shift sergeant. The remaining three officers interviewed in Monterrey served primary patrol functions in the community, but because of size restrictions of the department these officers have varied experiences in other positions. For example, patrol officers in Monterrey are required to investigate some crimes, serve as animal control, and one officer's salary is partially paid as technical support to the department.

The sample of officers drew from these departments serve quite different populations, allowing for rich analysis of the interaction between gender, stress, and burnout. In addition, the three departments offer unique case studies on how community dynamics influence stress and gendered behavior.

Qualitative Operationalization, Coding, and Limitations

The qualitative research design involved semi-structured interviews with individual officers from each department. The questionnaire used with these interviews is included as Appendix B. This instrument explored officers' perception of their work environment, including questions on gender interactions, burnout, organizational stress, work-related stress, psychological health, physical health, negative behavioral patterns, suicide, and excessive force.

The interviews utilized a flexible format style. Lofland and Lofland describe a flexible format as "a list of things to be sure to ask about when talking to the person being interviewed" (p59). This type of interviewing technique allows respondents to speak freely and lets the interviewee set some of the terms of the interview (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). This interviewing technique proved highly effective with law enforcement officers because their training instructs them to control situations. This does not mean that any subject was avoided or that respondents controlled the process. The authors described this type of qualitative interview as a "guided conversation." In regards to this research, I guide officers

through conversations related to stress, burnout, and gender. The open-ended format allows officers to describe their own perspectives using their own words.

The conceptualization and operationalization process with qualitative research differs significantly from the quantitative approach previously described. This method begins by identifying “working” themes around which the data collection and observation is centered. As the researcher collects data for themes or concepts, the researcher also allows for the development of new concepts, themes, or ideas. Quantitative operationalization requires strictly defined variables and social constructs prior to data collection or analysis. Operationalization in qualitative research frequently occurs during and even after data collection. The operationalization of qualitative data develops from theoretical ideas about a social phenomenon and utilizes an inductive process (Neuman, 2004).

Qualitative research also approaches the concepts of reliability and validity of data differently than quantitative techniques. Reliability refers to the dependability and consistency of the research. Qualitative researchers generally resist strict quantitative approaches to measure reliability, believing these techniques are overly mechanical (Neuman, 2004, p116). Qualitative researchers believe that the researcher’s relation to data collection “should be a growing, evolving process” (Neuman, 2004, p116). They accept the belief that the researcher collects the data in an evolving setting that is not easily replicated.

Validity for qualitative research involves providing a truthful picture of the subject matter. This form of research attempts to provide a fair and balanced account of the social phenomenon. To ensure validity, this research will ensure a “tight fit between . . . statements about the social world and what is actually occurring in it” (Neuman, 2004, p117). In other words, the descriptions applied to the theoretical concepts proffered in Chapter 1 are assumed to be accurate accounts of the social lives of officers within the sample.

The inductive and theory driven process of qualitative research creates the potential for misinterpretation of the data. These limitations include the concepts of provincialism, emotional reactions, hasty conclusions, and suppressed evidence. Each of these errors produces potential pitfalls to qualitative research (Rubin & Babbie, 1993).

Provincialism refers to the idea that a researcher may interpret data so that it makes sense from the theoretical position of the researcher. For example, the framework developed in Chapter 1 certainly provides theory to guide the interpretation of officers’ responses to

survey questions. Provincialism becomes a problem when a researcher misinterprets data because of theoretical predispositions (Rubin & Babbie, 1993).

Emotional reactions during qualitative research can result in the loss of analytic integrity. If a researcher reacts emotionally to observations, s/he may fail to appropriately interpret the data. Additionally, topics that relate to strongly held beliefs of the researcher might present the greatest pitfall in regards to emotional reactions (Rubin & Babbie, 1993). The current research with police officers certainly offered many examples of emotional situations. To assure the integrity of the data analysis, interview data collected during emotional situations were reviewed to ensure the theoretical focus of the conclusions. Additionally, a description of observed emotion was included in the analysis.

Hasty conclusion represents another pitfall of qualitative research. This problem is particularly noteworthy with small sample sizes. A hasty conclusion occurs when a researcher too quickly draws conclusions not supported by the information. Researchers can avoid this pitfall by evaluating all available evidence and ensuring the evaluation of the data fits the weight of the evidence.

Suppressed evidence occurs when a research fails to note situations that could challenge the driving theoretical framework. The research process frequently involves dismissing information; however, this should only include non-relevant information. Researchers can avoid this pitfall by thoroughly reviewing any information not included in the analysis and conclusions.

The qualitative portion of this research has several additional limitations and concerns specific to interviewing police officers. First, peer bonds within policing can lead to intense secrecy and solidarity among officers, limiting their willingness to discuss violence and gendered behavior. In fact, officers who report problems presented by their peers might fear retaliation from others within the department (Cancino & Enriquez, 2004). It appears that the officers in this sample were forthright and provided exceptionally candid responses, but there is no way to ensure the honesty of respondents. Additionally, the intensity of loyalty may actually change the perception of the officer. For example, defining behaviors like sexual harassment and excessive force change after immersion in police subculture. Some respondents acknowledged that their ideas of excessive force changed after becoming officers. For this reason, the wording of certain questions actually biased responses of

officers. Further, the author's position as an outsider likely influenced the range of responses by study participants. Nevertheless, the additional depth of knowledge gained by conducting these observations outweighs these limitations.

The analysis of these interviews included directly coding specific themes identified in Chapter 1, and allowing additional themes to emerge from the data. Specifically, the original research attempts to access officers' descriptions of stress, burnout, suicide, and treatment of women officers. The review of transcribed interviews and field notes results in coding according to these major themes. Chapter 5 devotes specific attention to three large themes: officer stress and critical events, specific stressors for women officers, and gendered treatment of women in law enforcement. Two additional themes noted while reviewing interviews with officers include the conflicts between administration and officers in larger departments, and the masculine techniques invoked to manage stress. In particular, the use of "war stories" represents a theme that emerged from the data.

The design of the interview schedule allows open-ended responses to questions about stress, burnout, gender dynamics, and use of force by officers. Appendix B provides a copy of the interview schedule. Section I of these interviews collected general demographic information on each interview subject. Section II focuses primarily on allowing officers to identify sources of stress, burnout, and to describe stress management practices. These open-ended questions allow the interviewer to probe additional areas based on information derived from existing literature. Section III explored interactions and factors linked to police work environments. Section IV assesses the concerns of administrative officers with a set of specific questions directed toward officers in high-ranking positions. Section V collects general information of the respondent's family background.

CHAPTER 4 - Baltimore Police Department Officer Stress, Burnout, and Violence

The Baltimore Police Department represents one of the largest metropolitan law enforcement agencies in the United States, patrolling a jurisdiction that includes over 78 square miles of land and slightly less than eight square miles of waterways. The police department, first commissioned by the state of Maryland in 1853, assumed patrol and police functions from the military in 1862 (Baltimore 2006). The department serves as an instructive site for research on police stress and burnout because of its large patrol area and urban setting rife with characteristics theoretically linked to stress and burnout. The Baltimore police department has eight patrol districts, a public housing unit, an administrative unit, and a marine unit (Baltimore 2006). The department, with a police force of more than 2,500 sworn officers, is well-suited for stress research and provides a wide range of situations related to stress and burnout in urban centers (Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998)

Data analyzed in this chapter were collected by a research team from Johns Hopkins University in collaboration with the Baltimore Police. The study, designed to explore familial violence among police officers, is referred to as “Domestic Violence in Police Families in Baltimore, Maryland, 1997-1999.” Robyn Gershon (2000) and her research team developed a five-page questionnaire to research officer stressors, negative health outcomes, current stress levels, level of support, and use of violence by police officers.

Slightly more than 1,100 officers, varying by race, gender, education, and job requirements, responded to the survey. Table 1 displays general characteristics of the survey respondents. The vast majority of respondents are white males (n=643), constituting 58% of the sample. The next largest group is African American males (n=253) who represent about 23% of the sample population. Not surprisingly, women represent the lowest proportion of survey participants, with 102 African-American women and 51 white women (women constitute less than 5% of the total sample).

Patrol officers represent the majority of respondents (n=601) and make up 54% of the sample, while 5% of the participants are high-ranking officers (n=59). Nearly 70% of officers (746) report that they are married or have a live-in partner. In keeping with the

movement to professionalize law enforcement (Wadman & Allison, 2004), the vast majority of officers in this study have some college education and more than a quarter of respondents hold a college degree. The importance of education is relevant because some research indicates that officers with a college degree are more likely to use a wide range of dispute resolution techniques and demonstrate lower levels of burnout (Albanese, 2005). Education may also reduce reliance on overly simplistic responses by street officers, thus expanding avenues for dealing with stress and burnout. In this sample, education by officers appears to be equally valued by both men and women officers. Roughly, 28% of female officers hold a college degree compared to 26% of the males.

Table 4.1: Characteristics of Survey Respondents

	N	%
Race/Gender		
African American Women	102	9.2%
White Females	51	4.6%
African American Men	253	22.9%
White Men	643	58.2%
Marital Status		
Married	658	59.6%
Live-in Partner	88	8.0%
Divorced/Separated	135	12.2%
Single	213	19.3%
Rank		
Officer	601	54.4%
Detective	144	13.0%
Sergeant	143	13.0%
Lieutenant or above	59	5.3%
Level of Education		
High School	165	14.9%
Some College	603	54.6%
College Degree	285	25.8%
Graduate School	41	3.7%

The rank and job disruption of officers in the Baltimore Police Department at the time of the survey reflects the fact that few women advance beyond simple patrol duties in

modern law enforcement (Shultz, 2005). Only four of the 59 survey respondents who hold the office of lieutenant or above are women, and 14 female respondents hold the position of sergeant. This means that roughly 12% of the women completing the survey held positions of sergeant or greater. The males in the survey appear to access better avenues for advancement within the organization. Nearly one in five male officers (19.5%) in the survey holds the position of sergeant or greater.

Stress and Burnout Among BPD Officers

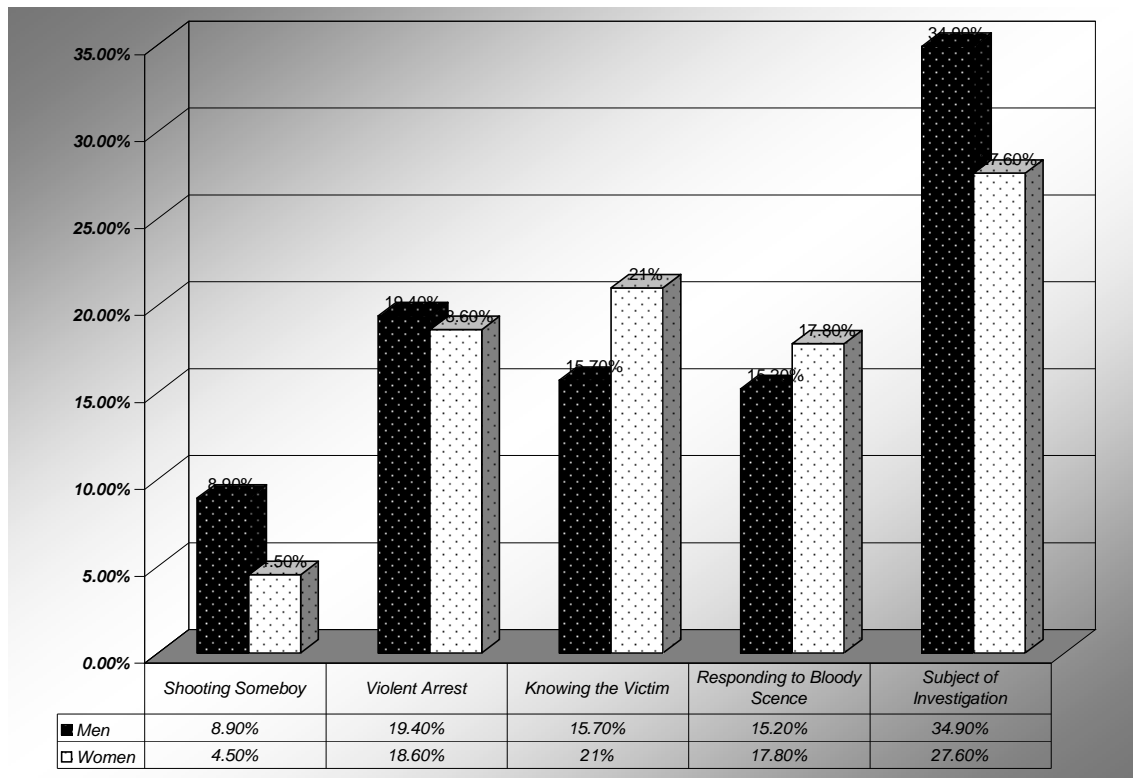
Much of the research on police stress identifies aspects of the work environment as critical to the development of stress for police officers (Anderson et al., 2002; Harpold & Feenster, 2002; He et al., 2002; Liberman et al., 2002). Research identifies several work environment stressors that Gershon included in the questionnaire. Many of these stressful situations can be typed as critical incidents. Examples of these stressful events include making a violent arrest, responding to a bloody crime scene, concern with shooting suspect, and personally knowing the victim of a crime. The survey also asked whether the respondent was under investigation by the administration of the Baltimore Police Department.

Respondents indicated how much these work-related events emotionally affected them with the possible answers ranging from very much to not at all. Figure 4.1 displays the percentage of officers who responded “very much” to the questions regarding emotional affects of work-related events.

As with the general background of police officers in Baltimore, we see in Figure 4.1 that officers’ perceptions of emotional response to critical incidents vary by gender. Men are nearly twice as emotionally affected by the fear of shooting in the line of duty. Using firearms by law enforcement officer is an infrequent practice, even in large urban center, so Baltimore respondents should have this concern. Violent arrest creates a strong emotional response for about 20% of both male and female officers in the sample. A key difference in events that cause powerful emotional affects is the response to knowing the victim. Slightly more than 15% of male officer’s report being strongly affected by knowing the victim compared to 21% of female officers. Women are slightly more psychologically influenced than men at responding to a bloody crime scene, 17% to 15% respectively. The greatest response for both men and women was the concern generated by being under department

investigation. As detailed in chapter one, many institutional factors such as departmental politics, lack of departmental support, poor training (Anderson et al., 2002), and bureaucratic processes associated with internal investigations can be expected to elevate stress and increase psychological and emotional responses.

Figure 4.1 Percent of Baltimore Police Officers “Very” Emotionally Affected by Work-Related Critical Events



Multiple questions evaluate officer burnout, stress, psychological responses to stress, officer perceptions of stress, and adaptive behaviors of the officers. Table 4.2. reports the responses to these questions. The distribution of answers varies noticeably by race and gender lines.

Black women are nearly twice as likely as all other groups to report feelings of being trapped within the last six months. This is in harmony with Martin’s 1994 research, which found that Black women are the most marginalized group within the station house and are frequently assigned the most demeaning task in law enforcement settings. White males, white females, and Black males are within 2% of each other on this question.

White females are four times more likely to report a loss of sexual interest than African American men and white male officers. Although African American women demonstrate elevated levels of loss of sexual interests, they are significantly less likely than white female to report this response. Loss of energy or interest, including loss of sexual interests has been found in other research on police stress (Harpold & Feenster, 2002, p3), although difference among race and gender categories were not primary to the analysis.

African American women report the highest percentage of lost interest in normal activities, and this percentage was more compatible with white men than the other categories. Black men and white women have similar responses to queries about acting as if nothing bothers them; however, note the great disparity between white male and white female officers. White males are 14 times more likely than white females to report that they frequently acted as if nothing was bothering them. Overall, these findings suggest that Black women may react to stress by withdrawing from normal activities, and white women lose interest in sexual intimacy. African American and white men respond to this stressful occupation by acting as if they are unaffected.

Table 4.2: Officers Displaying Negative Reactions to Stress

<u>Question:</u>	<u>Black Males</u>		<u>Black Females</u>		<u>White Females</u>		<u>White Males</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Feeling of being trapped	8	3.2	8	7.9	1	2.0	27	4.2
Loss of sexual interests	8	3.2	13	12.7	9	17.6	26	4.0
Feelings of no interest in things	8	3.2	8	7.9	1	2.0	45	7.0
Try to act as if nothing is bothering them	58	22.9	20	19.6	1	2.0	192	29.9
Hang out with fellow officers at bars	7	2.7	0	0	2	3.9	43	6.7
Thoughts of ending life	1	.03	0	0	1	2.0	3	.04

An interesting finding of this research involves responses to the statement concerning hanging out at bars with other officers. Clear gender differences appear in the sample. Roughly, 7% of white males report frequently associating with fellow officers at bars while only 2.7% of Black men report the same. White women are 42% less likely than white men to frequent drinking establishments with their peers. None of the African American women reported that they associated with colleagues over drinks.

Although this finding may not appear particularly problematic, it supports the belief that women, and minority women in particular, are excluded from certain aspects of "cop culture." These informal settings offer both a social support network for male officers and situations where male officers fortify the masculine subculture of policing. In these settings, men are free to talk about subjects that would result in sanctions if they occurred on the job (Westmarland, 2001; Martin, 1996) and engage in informal peer culture that ensures the connection of law enforcement to masculinity.

Consistent with the theoretical foundation of this paper the survey participants' beliefs regarding the acceptance and treatment of female officers varied by race and gender boundaries. Table 4.3 displays responses to key questions about the treatment of female officers and the use of violence.

White females are most likely to report that gender-related jokes are common in the work environment and 51% agreed that such jokes are repeatedly made within the department. African American women represented the second largest percentage and more than one in three African American women agreed with this statement. Roughly 28% of the African American men agreed that gender related jokes are commonplace. White males were statistically the least likely to believe that gender related jokes are common and less than one in four of these respondents agreed with the statement.

The responses to this statement are not shocking given the gendered and raced nature of interactions in law enforcement (Martin, 1994). In Brown's (1998) research 70% of the female officers experienced sexual harassment and her results are harmonious with findings in this survey. However, it is important to note that these differences reflect group-based perceptions. The respondents work and live in the same environment, but white males apparently do not experience the same awareness as others in the department reflecting what some refer to as white masculine privilege.

Another important finding of this research is the question of acceptability of female workers as equals of their male counterparts. Two questions directly address this interest and the responses differ markedly by race and gender. Over one-half of white males believe that the department is more lenient toward female officers as opposed to 27% of African American males, 7% of the white females, and less than 1% of African American women. A second question asks if female officers are held to a higher standard, and the responses showed an inverse pattern. White women and African American women were more likely to believe that standards are higher for female officers, 47% and 36% respectively. Male officers were much less likely to report that females are held to a higher standard. Only 10.7% of African American males and 3.2% of white males believed that female officers are held to a higher standard.

These data show that white males believe female officers are not treated according to their ability, and that the department is lenient on females so they can remain police officers. These findings support the theory that the interactions in police agencies are gendered and raced in a particular manner. The interactions between men and women, between Black and white officers and among women are consistent with the historical context of policing as supporting an environment based on white male experiences. In this case, white males, for the most part, seem oblivious to the sensitivities expressed by women and officers of color.

In regards to using violence as a resource, three questions ask respondents about the use of force in certain situations. Overall, the majority of respondents found the use of violence as unacceptable. Of course, it can be argued that respondents were less likely to accurately report their views in this section fearing negative sanctions. Table 4.3 displays the number and percentage of officers that agree or strongly agree that violence is acceptable or useful in three situations. The first statement measures if the officer believes it is acceptable to get physical with one's spouse or significant other if he/she is unfaithful. White men were most likely to report that violence is appropriate in this situation however, fewer than 3% agreed with this statement. White females, African American men, and African American women were slightly less likely to agree with the use of violence in these situations: about 2% of each group found violence acceptable.

Table 4.3: Respondents Who Strongly Agree/Agree to Gender and Violence Related Questions

	<u>Black Males</u>		<u>Black Females</u>		<u>White Females</u>		<u>White Males</u>		X ² Sig
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	
Question: Gender related jokes are often made.	72	28.5	37	36.3	26	51.0	155	23.7	p<.001
The department is lenient in enforcing rules for females.	70	27.7	1	0.9	4	7.8	357	54.7	p<.001
Female officers are held to a higher standard.	27	10.7	37	36.3	24	47.1	21	3.2	p<.001
It is okay to get physical if spouse/significant other is unfaithful.	5	1.9	2	1.9	1	2.0	17	2.6	p<.001
A person who refuses to have sex with his/her spouse is asking to be beaten.	5	1.9	1	0.9	0	0	9	1.4	p<.001
Getting physical once in a while can help maintain a marriage/relationship.	0	0	3	2.9	0	0	11	1.7	p<.001

The second question addressing the use of violence asked respondents if they agreed that refusing sex with a spouse or significant other was justification for using physical force. Black males were the most likely to agree with this statement, but only 1.9% of these officers viewed this behavior as acceptable, while 1.4% of white males agreed with the use of violence when spouses refuse sex. Less than 1% of the African American women and none of the white women in this survey believed that physical force was appropriate in this situation.

The last question concerning the use of violence addresses whether or not physical force with a spouse or significant other can help a relationship. African American women were the most likely to agree that infrequent use of physical force can actually help a relationship; 2.9% agreed with this statement. Among white males, 1.9% agreed that occasional violence can help a relationship. None of the African American men or white women agreed with this statement. Additionally, both African American men and African American women are more apt to report using violence with their spouse or significant other.

Four questions in this survey measure if respondents have ever used violence against other officers, their spouse, their child(ren), or their pets. The following question addresses the use of violence. “Have you ever gotten out of control and been physical (e.g. pushing, shoving, grabbing) with: A fellow officer, your spouse/significant other, your child(ren), or your pet(s)” (Gershon, 2000).

Overall, the sample is not particularly violent and Table 4.4 displays the frequency of violence by race and gender. Consistent with the theory that violence is a resource for accomplishing masculinity (Miller, 1998). African American men and white men display similar levels of violence toward their law enforcement peers. Although the survey does not address the situational context of this officer-on-officer violence, it is logical to conclude that it results from disputes between officers and the use of violence as means to resolving said disputes. African American women are half as likely as men to use violence with other officers; they are, however, two times more likely to use violence with coworkers than white women. Although each group has comparably low rates of violence in the remaining three categories, some distinctions are noted.

The highest percentage of reported violence with children and spouses is among African American women. This response was somewhat unexpected; however, post hoc analysis provides some theoretical merit for this finding. African American women are probably the primary care givers for their children in this study, which should increase the risk of corporal punishment, particularly in times of stress (Jackson, Gyamfi; Brooks-Gunn, and Blake, 1998). Additional research has indicated that African Americans are more willing to use corporal punishment as a response to certain problematic behaviors presented by their children (Whaley, 2000).

Table 4.4: Officer Self Reported Violent Behavior by Race and Gender

	Black Men	Black Women	White Women	White Men
Type of Report violence	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
With an Officer	20 (8.2)	4 (3.9)	1 (1.9)	48 (7.5)
With their Children	9 (3.7)	12 (11.7)	3 (5.8)	50 (7.8)
With Spouse	19 (7.8)	16 (15.6)	3 (5.8)	35 (5.4)
With Pets	10 (4.1)	4 (3.9)	0 (0)	66 (10.3)

Several variables measuring burnout combine Likert-type questions contained in the survey². The indexed measures relating to stress and burnout yield fewer gender differences than those demonstrated through stressful events and officer perceptions. Men and women score 14.1 and 13.7 on the psychological stress index, which does not yield a statistically significant T-test. Men and women score the largest difference on the physiological stress index: women total 9.1 compared to 8.1 for men (maximum score of 24), the only statistically significant between group means. Finally, men report only slightly elevated scores (7.9) over women (7.7) in the burnout index (maximum 15). The overall trend demonstrates remarkable similarity between men and women on stress and burnout measures

To understand the complex relationship between stressful situations and gender dynamics, the current study utilizes advance statistical techniques in the form of regression. The acceptance of women in policing, and the treatment of female officers are not generally factors included in research exploring stress and burnout among officers. Including gender questions in the current research moves beyond the traditional focus of police stress literature and further validates the theoretical foundation of this project.

A two-stage regression model examines the influences traditionally identified as stressors for police officers and variables measuring the acceptance of women. Several demographic variables reach statistical significance, demonstrating difference by groups on

² Refer to Appendix A for variable and scale construction.

psychological stress. African American and white women show slightly elevated rates of stress compared to white males. Conversely, African American males demonstrate reduced levels of psychological stress. Two background variables exert significant influence on psychological stress. High levels of family support ($b = -.893$) and a college education ($b = -.589$) reduce psychological stress. These results are displayed in Table 4.5.

The first step of this regression model is also displayed in Table 4.5 and affirms much of the traditional literature linking work-related critical incidents to psychological stress. Concerns for making a violent arrest ($b = .944$), being the target of an investigation ($b = 1.811$), and personally knowing the victim or offender ($b = 1.103$) of a criminal investigation increases the level of psychological stress. Administrative support and fear of shooting somebody on the job are not statistically significant in this model.

Table 4.5: OLS Regression Analysis for Psychological Stress

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	b	S.E.	Beta Weights	b	S.E.	Beta Weights
Black Female	.269	.191	.022 *	.937	.391	.076 *
White Female	.920	.492	.054	1.406	.508	.083 **
Black Male	-.900	.255	-.105 ***	-.626	.256	-.073 **
College	-.589	.234	-.072 *	-.471	.230	-.058 *
Admin Support	-.003	.713	-.001	-.002	.698	-.001
Family Support	-.893	.209	-.123 ***	-.832	.204	-.115 ***
Violent Arrest	.944	.264	.105 ***	.789	.259	.088 **
Shot	.315	.382	.025	.005	.376	.004
Investigation	1.811	.226	.240 ***	1.678	.225	.222 ***
Know	1.103	.228	.115 ***	1.038	.286	.108 ***
Gender Jokes				.415	.095	.127 ***
Leniency Perception				.481	.101	.156 **
N=1101	Adjusted $R^2 = .148$ $F < .001$			Adjusted $R^2 = .186$ $F < .001$		
	Std Error Estimate = 3.29767			Std Error Estimate = 3.22451		
	*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001					

Questions measuring the acceptance of women in law enforcement are significant and affect psychological stress. Gender-related jokes ($b = .415$) and the belief that the department is lenient on women ($b = .481$) are associated with increased psychological stress, controlling

for traditional predictors. In fact, the beta weights of these two variables are the second and third strongest in the model. Inclusion of these variables increases the explained variance of the model from .148 to .186, and reduces the error estimate. These findings validate the inclusion of gender dynamics in regression models and indicate that regression models without them are misspecified.

Table 4.6 provides regression results for a two-stage model treating physical stress as the dependent variable. The findings mirror the literature and are strikingly similar to results of the psychological regression equation. Both Black women ($b = .269$) and white women ($b = .920$) are associated with higher scores on the physical index. Black men ($b = -.900$) are connected with lower levels of physical stress compared to white males. All four of the variables measuring concern for law enforcement critical incidents are statistically significant, which supports previous research linking police work environments and psychophysical stress. As expected, a college education and family support have a negative relationship with physical stress. Administrative support is not significant in this regression equation.

Table 4.6: OLS Regression Analysis for Physiological Stress

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	S.E.	Beta Weights	B	S.E.	Beta Weights
Black Female	1.015	.228	.130 ***	1.170	.250	.150 ***
White Female	1.030	.312	.096 ***	1.125	.327	.104 ***
Black Male	-.448	.160	-.083 **	-.379	.164	-.070 *
College Degree	-.351	.148	-.068 *	-.317	.147	-.061 *
Admin Support	.555	.443	.036	.600	.441	.039
Family Support	-.495	.131	-.108 ***	-.476	.131	-.104 ***
Violent Arrest	.394	.166	.069 *	.346	.166	.061 *
Shot	.698	.241	.086 **	.618	.144	.163 ***
Investigation	.815	.143	.171 ***	.778	.144	.163 ***
Know	.880	.184	.144 ***	.853	.185	.140 ***
Gender Jokes				.151	.061	.073
Leniency Perception				.121	.065	.062 ***
N=1101	Adjusted R ² = .142 F < .001 Std Error Estimate = 2.09411 *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001			Adjusted R ² = .149 F < .001 Std Error Estimate = 2.08490		

Including the acceptance of women variables in the second stage of this regression slightly increases the r-square from .142 to .149. The standard error is decreased and both models yield a statistically significant F-test at greater than the 99.999% confidence level. As predicted, gender jokes increase physical stress, even while controlling for traditional stress related work events. These findings confirm that belittling women increases both psychological and physiological stress among officers. Interestingly, leniency perception variable does not reach statistical significance in this model.

Table 4.7 displays OLS regression results for officer burnout. Outcomes of this analysis support previous stress research and provide statistical evidence for influences of gendered behavior on burnout. The demographic variables in this regression display a strikingly different pattern from the two stress models. White women are less prone to high levels of burnout even though they are associated with elevated stress in the previous regressions, but African American women do not report significantly different burnout from white males. African American males exhibit the inverse relationship with stress and burnout. In the two stress models, African American males are connected with lower stress scores. In the model treating burnout as the dependent variable, African American men are associated with higher burnout. These findings suggest that women officers more readily recognize work stress and manage it prior to experiencing burnout. On the other hand, African American men may fail to initially recognize or act upon psychosocial stressors, which can fester and result in burnout.

Several independent variables in this regression model affect the variance in burnout scores. Among the work-related events, only concern for making a violent arrest remains significant in the burnout equation, although all of these variables are indirectly related to burnout because they increase psychological stress. The psychological stress index has a positive correlation with burnout; however, the physical stress variable is not statistically significant. In these regression models, physical stress is limited to indirect effect on burnout. Some literature reports that police work frequently generates conflicts within the family; in each of these regression equations family support has a negative relationship with stress and burnout indicating that among this sample high family support mediates stress and burnout.

Table 4.7: OLS Regression Analysis for Officer Burnout

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	S.E.	Beta Weights	B	S.E.	Beta Weights
Black Female	-.006	.230	-.007	.218	.251	.024
White Female	-.714	.315	-.058 *	-.505	.328	-.041 *
Black Male	.362	.160	.059 *	.460	.163	.074 **
College Degree	-.174	.147	-.030	-.130	.146	-.022
Admin Support	-.275	.457	-.015	-.249	.451	-.014
Family Support	-.480	.132	-.092 ***	-.468	.131	-.098 ***
Violent Arrest	.428	.167	.066 **	.379	.165	.058 *
Shot	.142	.240	.015	.003	.239	.003
Investigation	.265	.148	.049	.245	.147	.045
Know	-.005	.186	-.008	-.007	.185	-.010
Vic/Offender						
Physical Stress	.006	.037	.052	.006	.037	.055
Psychological	.373	.024	.520 ***	.351	.024	.489 ***
Gender Jokes				.211	.061	.090 ***
Leniency				.207	.065	.093 ***
Perception						
N=1101	Adjusted R ² = .357 F < .001			Adjusted R ² = .372 F < .001		
	Std Error Estimate = 2.06075			Std Error Estimate = 2.03719		
	*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001					

The second stage of the burnout regression further supports the importance of gendered interactions and images. The r-square in stage two improves from .357 to .372, and the standard error is reduced. In the second stage, the beta weight for the psychological stress is the largest in the model indicating that this variable has the strongest influence on burnout outcomes. In accordance with the theoretical orientation of this paper, variables measuring gendered jokes and perception of leniency are statistically significant and have a positive relationship with burnout, even after controlling for other relevant factors, including psychological and physical stress. Note the effect is compounding this relationship because these variables also increase stress among officers.

The theoretical framing of this study suggests that experiences of police officers are qualitatively different for women and men. Separate regressions by sex examine this

hypothesis³. Table 4.8 reports the regression result for burnout for both women and men. Overall, both models are significant as illustrated by the F-test and appear to account for a moderate amount of variance in burnout scores. The r-square statistic is slightly stronger for women, $r^2 = .397$; 39% of the variance in burnout is accounted for by this model. For men the r-square statistic is .374.

Psychological stress strongly correlates with burnout among both female and male officers and beta weights indicate that it is the strongest variable for both groups. Family support negatively correlates with officer burnout for both men and women, and this variable has the third strongest relationship with burnout for both groups. Different work-related events are statistically significant for men and women. For men, emotional concern over making a violent arrest is significant and ranks fourth in this model. None of the remaining work hazards has significant relations for this regression.

Results for women indicate that the only work-related significant in this model is being the subject of an investigation. In fact, this variable is the second strongest in the regression and may indicate that women have greater concern for their appearance to administrators and peers. The gender-related questions are not linked to greater levels of burnout for female officers

For male officers, burnout is positively correlated with the treatment of women in the workplace. Among male officers, the presence of gender-related jokes at work is the second strongest variable in the model and may be indicative of the relationship between masculinity, burnout, and the treatment of women. Additionally, reports by male counterparts that the department is more lenient of female officers are associated with increased burnout. This finding is important because it indicates that men are also highly affected by these negative work environments. Unhealthy work environments are destructive for everyone, not just the targets of mistreatment.

³ Several techniques are utilized to explore for possible variable interaction. Interaction variables were created to test for this effect and included in earlier models. According to Jaccard and Turrisi (2003) interaction can be tested by multiplying the possible interacting variable and creating a new product variable. The new variable is included in the model to test for significance. None of the interaction variables created as the product gender (both male and female in different regressions) and the leniency and gender joke variables resulted in significant T-tests. Therefore, these product variables were excluded in the final analysis.

Table 4.8: OLS Regression Analysis for Officer Burnout by Gender

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Women</u>			<u>Men</u>			
	B	S.E.	Beta Weigh ts	B	S.E.	Beta Weigh ts	
Black	.699	.366	.132	.459	.164	.078	**
College Degree	.001	.374	.003	-.123	.158	-.021	
Admin Support	-2.189	1.194	-.121	.149	.491	.008	
Family Support	-.876	.334	-.172	-.406	.142	-.078	**
Violent Arrest	.486	.476	.060	.494	.197	.076	*
Shot	.539	.843	.045	.005	.249	.006	
Investigation	1.142	.406	.200	.009	.157	.018	**
Know	.008	.468	.013	-.108	.203	-.015	
Vic/Offender							
Physical	-.003	.077	-.041	.009	.042	.078	*
Psychological	.332	.053	.515	.351	.027	.480	***
Gender Jokes	.006	.157	.027	.243	.066	.102	***
Leniency	.009	.195	.033	.200	.069	.084	**
Perception							
	Adjusted R² = .397 F < .001			Adjusted R² = .374 F < .001			
	N=147			N=892			
	*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001						

Logistic Regression Analysis:

The final regression models employ logistic regression because the violence variables are binary. Table 4.9 illustrates the effects of stress and gender interactions on the odds of violent behavior for all officers. Results indicate that the relative odds of violent behavior are influenced by both psychological factors and gendered interactions among police officers. In the full logistic model, none of the demographic variables or work oriented critical events shows a statistically significant relationship. As expected, psychological and physiological stress increases the odds of violent behavior by officers. Each increase in the psychological stress index is associated with a 17% increase in the odds of violence. Increases in the physical index intensify odds of violence by 9%. Gender-related jokes in this model are coupled with a 16% increase in the odds of violent behavior. Finally the belief-in-leniency-toward-women variable increases the relative odds of violent conduct by 23%. The importance of this finding cannot be ignored. The power of the gender variables is present while controlling for critical work events, physical stress, and psychological stress. Again,

gender dynamics both directly and indirectly influence the odds of violent behavior in multiple settings.

Table 4.9: Logistic Regression Analysis for Self Reported Violence

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	OR	
Black Female	.459	.323	2.024	1.583	
White Female	-.776	.503	2.377	.460	
Black Male	.052	.217	.058	1.054	
Admin Support	-.481	.611	.618	.618	
Family Support	.159	.171	.858	1.172	
Violent Arrest	-.193	.209	.855	.824	
Shot	-.164	.284	.334	.848	
Investigation	.304	.181	2.829	1.355	
Know Vic/Offender	.255	.220	1.342	1.290	
Physical Stress	.090	.044	4.189	1.095	*
Psycho Stress	.161	.029	31.332	1.175	***
Gender Jokes	.153	.077	3.999	1.166	*
Leniency Perception	.208	.086	5.894	1.231	*
N=1101					
Nagelker R² = .189 *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001					

The final regression model utilizes officer-on-officer violence as the dependent variable and is presented in Table 4.9b. Female officer-on-officer violence could not be accurately calculated using a logistic regression equation. In fact, only five women in the sample report using force with peers. None of the demographic variables in the male violence model is statistically significant. Among the work-related variable only an internal affairs investigation is significant: this variable is linked to a 94% increase in the odds of violent offending. As with each of the previous regression models, psychological stress is connected to officer behavior. Each change in the psychological index is associated with an 8% increase in the odds of violent behavior. The remaining variable of significance is the leniency perception, which increases the odds of violent behavior by 32%. Again, the increased odds of violent behavior by male officers reflect both a direct and indirect relationship with the treatment of female officers. The direct influence on violence corresponds to the relationship between the perception of leniency and violent behavior. The indirect affect occurs because gender dynamic variable increase stress, which then increases violent behavior.

Table 4.9b: Logistic Regression for Self Reported Officers Violence by Male officers

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	OR	
Black	.518	.301	2.966	1.678	
Admin Support	-.832	1.054	.622	.435	
Family Support	.223	.226	.703	1.250	
Violent Arrest	.565	.323	3.065	1.759	
Shot	-.564	.445	1.607	.569	
Investigation	.666	.279	5.698	1.946	*
Know Vic/Offender	.073	.335	.048	1.076	
Physical Stress	.055	.069	.631	1.057	
Psycho Stress	.078	.035	4.918	1.081	***
Gender Jokes	.163	.119	1.873	1.177	
Leniency Perception	.283	.133	4.499	1.327	*

Nagelker R² = .109 *p<.05; **p<.01; *p<.01**

N=943

Discussion and Limitations

The findings support prior research on negative influences of high stress work environments and critical incidents on officer psychological health (Anderson, Litzenberger, & Plecas, 2002; Liberman et al., 2002; Loo, 2004; Mashburn, 1993; Purpura, 2001; Weber Brooks & Leeper Piquero, 1998). A number of factors directly associated with law enforcement have been identified as sources of stress and burnout including job requirements, making violent arrest, police internal investigations, and interactions with the public. The current research regenerated prior findings connecting police work events with psychological stress, physiological stress, burnout, or officer violence in multiple regression models. Despite the value of these traditionally event-focused findings, the greatest contribution of these quantitative findings is the importance of gender dynamics in law enforcement work environments, underscoring the need for including gender influences in the analysis of stress and burnout among law enforcement.

Gender dynamics shape and aggravate stress among both male and female officers. Respondents' answers evidence divergent perceptions of police work environments along male/female and racial lines. Gendered interactions have two primary effects in the current

research. First, they directly increase psychological stress, physical stress, burnout, and violent behavior among those who belittle women's efforts in law enforcement. A secondary influence on burnout and violent behavior is evident because the gender jokes and leniency variables increase stress, which in turn elevates the risk of burnout and violence. Essentially, gendered influence creates a dialectical relationship that may intensify negative psychological or behavioral outcomes in multiple ways.

The perception that women are physically too weak to fulfill job requirements is a recurring theme in police organization literature (Brown, 1998; Martin, 1996; Segrave, 1995; Wadman & Allison, 2004). In Martin's (1980) ethnography about women entering law enforcement, she found even the first wave of female patrol officers believed that many of the standards were later reduced to accommodate new women joining the force. The perception of departmental leniency variable most likely encapsulates this theme in the current study.

The distribution of the leniency perception variable is markedly different according to respondents' gender with more than 50% of males believing that the department treats women favorably. In opposition to this belief, only do 8% of the women believe that the department is lenient toward female officers. In essence, men and women officers reside in the same environments yet live in different worlds. The dominant group, white males, does not have to deal with or even recognize the pejorative nature of male beliefs that the department is lenient on women. The leniency perception variable is statistically significant in all regression models, except for the physiological stress model and the burnout model for women.

The divergent responses to questions of administrative treatment of female officers could indicate that men, particularly white men, believe women are underperforming on the job. For male officers, affirmative responses to the gender perception variable supports hegemonic masculine beliefs by reinforcing the perception that women have failed to meet standards of the police role. Such beliefs facilitate the doing-gender aspects of policing among officers by establishing policing as only appropriate for men.

The link between lower acceptance of women and higher burnout and violence for male officers speaks to the power of doing gender. Attributes associated with masculinity allow few acceptable outlets for stress and burnout. Doing gender practices also exclude

women because of beliefs about their emotional states. Emotional control, a powerful gender display for males, is a masculine badge worn when facing extremely stressful events. Men displaying emotional responses to high-stress events risk the powerful stigma of weakness—the polar opposite of masculinity. Hyper-masculine self-reliance manifested in the superman mentality, sets-up male officers for failure. By not dealing with stressful events as they arise, these officers create the potential for devastating psychological consequences.

Critical incident stress debriefings and therapeutic interventions indicate that one solution to officer stress is abandoning masculine gender performances--such as self-reliance and avoidance. Mashburn (1993) believes that breaking the stigma of emotional displays is an important focal point for stress management: “When officers realize that other colleagues experience the same types of problems, they will be encouraged to openly share their feelings with peers” (p63). Mashburn’s statement ignores the strength of links between masculinity and law enforcement. Officers are surely aware that peers experience stress and have emotional reactions to critical events, but few male officers betray their gender and discuss these events in emotional terms. Women and other individuals expressing emotional reactions become the outsiders in law enforcement environments.

Ironically, men in law enforcement face negative psychological and behavioral problems because of their negative treatment of women; however, it must be noted that the women in law enforcement face the daily, direct influence of hyper-masculine behavior. Men subtly insult women officers by implying they receive favorable treatment. It is not that women have proved their merit in law enforcement; it is that the standards have been lowered to accept the “less” capable gender. Additionally, mild, or not so mild, sexual harassment in police work environments appears in the form of gender related jokes. This masculine practice directly targets women officers.

Doing gender for male officers also explains the connection between the leniency perception variable and the odds of officer-on-officer violence. Viewing violence as a resource for accomplishing masculinity (Miller 1998) explains why certain male officers might use violence to resolve disputes with coworkers. Finding violence appropriate when faced with job-related (or off-duty) disputes underscores violence as a resource. Again, officers using violent masculine displays when handling conflicts are also individuals that

likely hold beliefs that women fail to meet police standards and that departments are lenient in enforcing standards with women.

Violence as a masculine resource also explains the lack of female officer-on-officer violence in this sample. It may be acceptable for men to use violence to resolve disputes; however, violence by women may not be acceptable. While women may be tempted to prove their physical abilities by using violence, this will generally produce disapproval. This creates a double-bind for women officers.

The data collection process does not unequivocally ask officers if their work environment and interactions are hostile toward females. However, the question regarding gender-related jokes gives some indication of how women are treated in the organization. The perceptions that gender jokes are common varies strongly by sex category and is directly associated with negative outcomes in many of the regression models. The fact that women, especially white women, experience gender-oriented jokes on the job is similar to other reports that sexual harassment and maltreatment is common in police culture (Brown, 1998; Westmarland, 2001; Martin, 1996). Jokes allow male officers to assert their masculinity and belittle female coworkers under the protective guise of humor. If female officers are offended by these jokes, they may be ridiculed for lacking a sense-of-humor and further marginalized by peers. Macho officers utilize this type of interaction as additional evidence that women do not belong in policing. Given the social arrangements that shape gender oriented humor, it is not surprising that this variable is directly associated with exaggerated masculine behavior.

The gender jokes variable is not connected with negative outcomes among female officers in the burnout model or linked to violent offending among male officers. This finding was somewhat unexpected because links between gender jokes and burnout for female officers is easily understandable. Work environments wrought with crude and insensitive gender-oriented humor should increase burnout for targets of such humor. However, this phenomenon is not supported in these data. It is possible that women have learned to adjust to such behavior or that such treatment does not translate into reported stress levels. Regardless, this question remains an area for further research.

The gender-jokes variable is associated with increased burnout for male officers in spilt regression models. One could conclude that this variable is linked to burnout for one of

two logical reasons. First, burnout may be common in highly gendered work environments, which is evidenced by affirmative answers to the gender jokes questions. These officers may experience stress as a response to maltreatment of women in their department, or alternatively higher burnout may reflect a connection between masculinity and maladaptive stress management tactics. A clear distinction cannot be made in either case given the current data limitations. Again, further research on this topic is indicated.

Results from these data provide a clear framework for future study. The types of interactive and structural dynamic espoused by the theoretical orientation of this research are not easily apparent through survey data. A more detailed qualitative analysis is apt to uncover the salient aspects of the relationship between gender, burnout, and violence. A clear limitation of this research relates to data. Although these data lack strongly worded questions regarding the acceptance of women in law enforcement, the variables of leniency and gender jokes provide acceptable proxy variables. Despite the data limitations, these results appear to offer preliminary support for the theory that police burnout and violence is, in part, the result of gendered organizational structures and gendered interactions among officers. The current findings offer a springboard for a more detailed analysis of gendered behavior and its corresponding relationship to stress and burnout

CHAPTER 5: Gender and Stress in Three Midwest Police Departments⁴

Albritton (2003) argues that many of the negative traits we find most objectionable among police officers are things common in American society. Violence, bigotry, cynicism, and other negative qualities that we associate with police culture reflect general elements of American society. Expanding this logic to the current research, one might conclude that images of women officers, gender interactions, and gendered structural arrangements in law enforcement reflect similar traits of society. Further, some dispute that overall trends and types of interaction norms vary from place to place, including gender dynamics among officers. The gender dynamics in police organizations included in this research reflect, in part, norms and interpretations of gender within local communities. However, in strongly gendered organizations, and specifically in the hyper-masculinized “cop culture,” gender displays are especially pronounced, though not always in a straightforward way. This chapter explores stress, burnout, and gender dynamics observed during interviews with officers in three Midwest communities.

Interviews with officers in three departments reveal that they undoubtedly believe law enforcement is a stressful profession. Officers describe numerous types of stress that vary by gender, job title, and department. Most notably, officers describe stress as external forces to be acknowledged, but fail to recognize how stress affects their emotional or psychological health. Officers showing psychological or emotional difficulty because of work stress violate a strong masculine code of conduct and risk negative treatment by peers. The manner in which women respond to stress is complicated by their dual status as women and as officers. On one hand, it may appear appropriate for women to display emotional reactions to stress because it does not violate assumptions of how women accomplish femininity. Conversely, emotional responses are often used against women as indications that they are unfit for the rigors of patrol duties. Exceptions to this condition occur when women are utilized as

⁴ All names of officers and departments were changed to preserve confidentiality. In some cases, age, race, gender, and police department are altered to protect individuals in easily identifiable positions. In other instances, the department was simply not identified within the text.

emotional labor, either for men officers struggling with emotional difficulties or for dealing with women and children.

This chapter examines the qualitative interviews with officers in three Midwest police department. The qualitative data, coded and analyzed per the description provided in Chapter 3, provides details on three major themes that arose from interviews with 28 police officers. The first major theme examines the existence of critical incident stress, work related stress, and burnout among officers. This section allowed officer to provide detailed description of their work-related stress. Two secondary themes related to stress became apparent while analyzing officer interviews: distrust of the administration, and the additional stress placed upon women officers.

The second major theme explores the treatment of women in law enforcement. This section utilizes the gendered theoretical framework to explore the images, interaction, and gendered division of labor. Coding for this section specifically examined interview questions related to the treatment and images of women officers. This process involved examining statements related to women officers, seeking to find support for or contradiction to the gender theory framework of this dissertation. The Reinventing the Matron subheading provides the majority of qualitative data related to this theme.

The third major theme examines the stress management practices in male-dominated policing. Again, gender theory provides the theoretical structure for coding officer responses that correspond with or contradict the perspectives of doing gender, doing violence, and hegemonic masculinity. Several secondary themes related to masculine stress management developed during analysis of data. For example, the utilization of war stories to manage stress among male officer became apparent during data analysis. The section entitled Code of the Beats: Masculinity and Stress Management details the finding related to topic.

Police Stress and Critical Events in Three Communities

Most officers identified sources of stress consistent with critical events, a primary focus in police stress literature, although these events were not branded as the most significant stressor among interview participants. Concern over critical incidents varied by department size and to a limited degree by gender. Types of critical incidents described by respondents ranged from horrific car accidents to the fatal shooting of criminal suspects.

Most officers acknowledge the rarity of critical events in day-to-day police activity; nevertheless, critical events often stand out as memorable moments.

The majority of the field officers interviewed described one or more unforgettable critical event. In many cases, these officers recount emotional responses indicative of critical incident stress, but generally prefer not to portray stress responses as emotional or psychological in nature. Larry, a MPD officer, is a perfect example of this type of framing in the following passage:

The worst I can think of ...we had about a four year old girl ran over by a pick-up totally, and she was very torn-up. Having to deal with that particular one in my years was probably the worst. I have been involved in lots of other things, but I still say that was the most personally stressful. Just dealing with how badly she was torn-up... for like almost a week you could go home and couldn't close your eyes without seeing the child. Now I had other ones but that by far was the worse. I have been involved in homicides and suicides and things like that but rarely do they bother me much. That was one for like a week I couldn't sleep.

Larry describes a situation in which he experienced psycho-emotional responses to a critical event; however, the officer also reported that he does not find police work stressful and that he has never experienced negative psychological reactions to policing. In his own words Larry states, "I don't find it stressful personally. I think it is fun...I always have. I enjoy what we do and don't find many things terribly stressful." The critical incident involving a child belies Larry's belief that he does not experience negative psychological responses or work stress.

Larry's statement is indicative of contradictory statements made by many officers in the sample. Officers detail intense psychologically taxing critical events, while still refuting concerns over their psychological health. Psychological health represents an important code for police officers as individuals rigorously try to protect their psychological strength among fellow officers. Even slight hints of emotional or psychological weakness can result in "safety concerns" by fellow officers. To avoid the label of psychological weakness, officers reframe their responses to critical events rejecting psychological concerns.

Interviewees also present psychophysical stress responses to critical events, although officers frequently resist defining them as purely work related. Joe, a 29 year-old officer with QPD, exemplifies this process. Joe reported a number of physical health problems he experienced at work following a series of particularly violent arrests. Joe exclusively

patrolled the Queens' bar district where violence, albeit generally misdemeanor battery, is frequently the byproduct of alcohol-fueled disputes among college students or military personnel. Joe regularly arrests combative community members or intervenes in physical confrontations. Prior to his shifts, Joe reports he sometimes displays physical stress symptoms.

Um... Well, I feel some of those things but I don't know if they have ever been related to stress. It's never been diagnosed or anything. I know that I have noticed that my stomach will start hurting, like I will get like cramps. I don't know if it is an ulcer or what and if it is directly related to work... The stomach thing. It's not an everyday thing; I think it is just when I know something is coming. I don't feel like I know enough to say yes or no either way.

Joe, like many officers in the sample, resists classifying his physical stress as purely work-related, despite the fact that he draws connections between his physical symptoms and job. Anxiety over defining physical stress relates to ideals that require fearlessness and strength among officers. In later sections, this behavior will be directly linked to the masculine code of conduct in law enforcement. This finding is particularly important because prior research using only surveys may not detect this strong contradiction among officers and wrongly conclude that they do not experience psychological or physiological stress. Survey questions using the words "psychological" and "emotional" could strongly influence officer responses and masking underlying concerns.

Even when officers connect critical events to corresponding physical or psychological stress, they are reluctant to seek professional help. This finding is particularly important because it indicates that formalized techniques like critical incident stress debriefings and psychotherapy will be ineffective treatments in police culture. Conversely, formalized practices that require all officers to participate in therapeutic interventions may represent the only approach that will effectively reach officers. Seventeen of the officers within the sample, including three women, report that they would resist psychological counseling offered directly by the department, even following critical events. Officers report a willingness to utilize professionals not employed by their respective departments, indicating that the cops more readily fear department intervention than psychological counseling. The vast majority of respondents are willing to seek informal ways to deal with work-related emotional baggage.

Officers report a willingness to utilize wives, medical doctors, family members, religious leaders, and friends as emotional outlets rather than formal counselors or mental health professionals. Ross, a 30 year-old MPD officer, epitomizes the use of informal networks to alleviate stress. Ross was involved in a fatal shooting of a criminal suspect in downtown Monterrey. The suspect fired on crowds from a Monterrey rooftop and Ross, along with other MPD officers, quickly responded to the threat. A gun battle ensued, and the man was fatally wounded. Later investigations revealed that one of the bullets that struck the man was from Ross' service weapon. After this incident, Ross stated that, "The weeks following that I would get episodes when my chest would feel tight." Even though Ross acknowledged that he was experiencing psychophysical stress, he was reluctant to use the psychotherapists employed by the department beyond the required phone consultation. Ross justified his behavior by invoking his informal support system, "Now I don't have a problem talking to my wife, my pastor, or my doctor about situations..." In regards to formal therapeutic interventions, Ross stated that "after talking on the phone I didn't believe I needed additional help."

Many officers acknowledge reluctance to seek professional psychological help. For example, Quinton a 38-year-old veteran officer in Kiowa directly addressed this general resistance to seek professional help.

(Speaking of seeking counseling) I don't necessarily think that they are going to frown upon you. I wouldn't. It'd probably look better for them, to say hey you better get help now before something happens on the street because you have to trust that person that is next to you, but I think generally it is something that is frowned upon. It's something that is kind of...um... just like marriage counseling, a lot of people should have it but don't want to take the step to do it.

Quinton's statement articulates what many officers disclosed in their interviews: seeking professional help is generally looked down upon by informal police culture. This attitude prevails despite the fact that many respondents like Quinton believe that law enforcement officers could benefit from such treatments.

Women Officers and Stress

Women officers embody the outsider-within role in law enforcement agencies. Although women officers face much of the same kind stressful events as male officers, they

also experience unique stressors related to their positions as outsiders within the department. In Susan Martin's (1980) ethnography, early female patrol officers were frequently criticized, subjected to additional scrutiny, and generally demeaned by their male counterparts. Although such behavior may have reduced in frequency, maltreatment remains a salient source of stress for women in law enforcement.

A significant stressor for women officers is the additional strain of representing women as a category. The pressure women face by representing their entire gender was acknowledged by many of the men and all of but one women in the sample. Chloe, a female officer with KPD, described several examples of this problem for women.

One example of how women represent their entire gender involved a policewoman who went portions of her shift without carrying her weapon. According to Chloe, the officer transported a prisoner to the local county jail. Detention facilities generally forbid weapons to enter their buildings, which was the case with this situation. Per Kiowa policy, this woman placed her firearm in the trunk of her police cruiser prior to entering the jail. When she exited the detention facility, she forgot to retrieve her weapon and did not discover this error until the end of her shift. According to Chloe, this incident occurred several years before she became an officer, yet women officers within the department are frequently reminded of this woman's mistake. The error, framed as a "female mistake," illustrates how officers take individual incidents and utilize them to disparage all women within the department. Additionally, Chloe reports that several male officers have mistakenly left their weapons, including a high-ranking officer, without similar repercussions for policemen.

Incidents such as the one described by Chloe generate unique stress for female officers. Women officers face the added pressure of representing their entire gender, thus mistakes serve to discredit all women within the department. A mistake by a woman is a mistake for women. Officers within the sample describe mistakes as an inevitable part of law enforcement, yet mistakes by men do not discredit all men. For women, the fear of letting down one's entire gender surely generates stress for these officers. Women know males within the department will not look past their faults, which elevates their stress level.

Women officers are watched more closely than male officers, particularly as rookies, because of concerns that women will shy from physical altercations. Several men officers

believe this concentrated scrutiny could result in greater stress for women officers. Take the following passage from Quinton:

I think female officers are put under much more stress because they have to go out and prove a little bit more than a male officer would. . . Then again they have turn around and prove that they can get in a fight and handle themselves in any situation, like the burden that sticks with them regardless of how long they have been on.

Joe, who patrolled the Queens' bar district with the first women officer assigned this beat, believes that women in law enforcement are required to prove themselves. "I think they do . . . they might have to prove themselves where a male officer wouldn't have to."

While attuned men recognized the stress associated with constant supervision, the women officers suffer the brunt of this attention. In particular situations, women who fail to utilize violence have committed an unpardonable offense. Men failing in similar circumstances certainly garner the ire of peers; women in these instances rarely recover. Tamara states, "I know instances where male officers have taken or have not taken action where in very similar situation female officers (pause) . . . to be a female officer and not engage in a fight is basically career suicide." Colin, a 30-year-old officer, boorishly reinforces this phenomenon in the following statement, "Um, I think that there are some female officers that we have here that are scared to get their ass kicked basically just because they are little, they are non-aggressive females; they weigh 120 pounds." Violence has become a measuring stick for determining if women officers will perform up to par, and failure to use physical force, even if situations can be handled in another way, violates a very specific masculine rule of policing.

Beliefs about women in law enforcement extend beyond concerns over their ability to use physical force; women are assumed less effective as officers than their male counterparts. This standard relates to doing gender processes that see women as effective only in certain female-dominated employment sectors. Women are instantly assumed to be less worthy as officers because policing aligns with masculine ideals. Larry reflects this difficulty for women in the following statement: "...well uh they would . . . they would automatically assume she isn't as good or they would assume she ought to be doing better than she is which is the same thing." Stated another way, many policemen believe that law enforcement is men's work.

Although women have entered law enforcement for decades many men believe that women are ill equipped for policing and this attitude is reflected in how women are treated on the job. Sherry, a detective, describes this belief among her male peers. “I was the only one here for awhile and you take the brunt of everything because there are a lot of officers here who are still here who think women still don’t belong in law enforcement... (Pause) Don’t have a place in law enforcement or should only be certain things.” This outsider-within circumstance leads to greater stress among female officers. Working with peers who undervalue one’s contributions and continually hype mistakes must generate inevitable stress for women officers.

Conflicts between family requirements and law enforcement duties intensify stress for female officers. Several men interviewed for this research mentioned that shift-work frequently conflicts with family events, but women indicate that work family conflicts are particularly stressful. The most salient of these concerns for women revolves around appropriate childcare. One female detective in Queens describes this difficulty:

They could care less about your kids and taking care of your kids, about sicknesses, or school events that goes along with trying to be a decent mother. They could care less and it makes it really hard to juggle especially when you are a single mother, and I speak for all the single mothers here. They have made it hard for you for a long time.

Two additional women officers indicated that they were overly reliant on family members to care for their children. Although they were thankful for the help, at times they believe these social arrangements generated family tension.

Findings of work-family conflicts may be particularly important for understanding stress among women in policing because literature indicates work-family conflicts reduce job satisfaction and increase emotional exhaustion. In fact, rewarding aspects of law enforcement are weakest when professional obligations conflict with family (Howard et al., 2004). The current interviews point to family struggles as powerful stressors for women in law enforcement. Consequently, women endure all the critical incident and job stress of law enforcement plus the added stress generated by conflicts between police duties and family. In American society, women who fail to meet the standard conception of the mother role face a powerful stigma. Law enforcement organizations are inflexible toward parenting responsibilities, which happens to affect women more, on average. Although men may face

difficulties with family engagements and work schedules, traditionally views of masculinity espousing a “breadwinner” mentality helps men avoid being labeled as an ineffective parent during these conflicts.

An additional burden for women officers is their official and informal utilization as emotional labor. Women become formal emotional labor when police departments pull them from patrol duties to deal with certain criminal behavior or situations that call for the management of emotions. Additionally, women may be assigned to certain highly emotional cases because of gender. Such assignments include placements in child abuse and sex-offense detective units and women who are pulled from patrol duties to manage child abuse or sex cases. Women in the sample were over-utilized in these positions because of gender essentialism, which describes women as natural caregivers who can empathetically deal with victims.

On the surface, this gendered organizational behavior may appear appropriate, even judicious; however, it can prove difficult for women. Women are not necessarily drawn to assignments with sex offense or child abuse units, but departments frequently assume they are perfectly suited for these jobs. These assignments could limit advancement in other specializations or force women officers to take unwanted assignments to appease administrative personnel. This may be particularly true for women who want to advance beyond patrol. In essence, these assignments return women to roles as matrons, a theme that will be developed in later sections of this paper.

Ironically, some male officers perceive placement in sex or child abuse units as advantageous for women. For example, one Queen’s officer believes that women detectives in rape units are privileged because they work “high profile” cases. This officer believes that sex offense cases cleared by the department paint these women in a positive light for the Chief. Men believe that women are promoted quicker out of a departmental desire to place them in child abuse and sex-offense detective positions in addition to concerns voiced about EOE advancements. This results in negative assumptions that women advance because of their gender, a powerful stigma in performance driven professions.

Officers in this study describe many types of critical incidence, but death or severe injury to a child stands out as particularly stressful for law enforcement personnel. Ironically, women are expected to manage the majority of cases officers self-identify as most

stressful. Larry's insomnia and other psychological responses detailed earlier were in reaction to a child's death. Another Monterrey officer informally detailed his experience with a child crushed to death in a grain truck. These men recall these incidents as the most burdensome they could recall. If policemen find dealing with injured children stressful then it is logical to conclude that this situation holds true for women. Yet, women are expected to handle these critical events without displaying negative psychological reactions.

Stress resulting from interviewing rape and sexual assault victims may also generate additional stress for police officers. Since women frequently conduct these interviews as patrol officers or detectives assigned to sex offense units, it is logical to conclude that increases stress for women. Wilson, a Queens' patrol officer, believes this to be the case:

Then they also get a lot of times when there are females victims of any type of sexual crime, a lot of times that victim will request to speak to a female officer so those are I would imagine pretty stressful cases and interviews right there. So a lot of times they get bogged-down with those.

Women working sex offense cases also acknowledge elevated stress related to managing victims of these heinous crimes. Sherry, a Queens detective specializing in child abuse and sexual assaults, describes this phenomenon in the following passage: (Speaking of stress) "of course you do when you are out on a dead child or a suspicious death or anything you get really stressed... Then you go out on rapes and then you have all their friends and so you have spikes of stress." The stress-generating critical events for these officers are an additional concern for women officers, simply because they are more-often called upon for these assignments.

Women placed in sex offense and children's units receive limited recognition while facing maybe the most difficult critical events in law enforcement. By categorizing, at least informally, these assignments as essentially feminine, police culture has devalued the difficult work of these women and indirectly increases exposure to critical event stress. Unfortunately, men frequently discount the efforts of women working in specialized sex offense units.

Interviews indicate that women frequently become informal emotional labor for male officers. Although emotional labor was not a direct question in the current research, several women officers indicated that men within the department were more willing to discuss stressful events with women. This phenomenon was also noted in Martin's (1980)

ethnography of early women patrol officers in the District of Colombia. Tamara's story provides a perfect example of just such a situation. Tamara backed up a male officer involved in a particularly violent apprehension in which the arrested suspect died. For several days following this event, the primary officer on the scene called Tamara and relayed his emotional concerns. Tamara noted that the officer felt uncomfortable talking about this traumatic event with his male peers.

The backlash, things like that and another officer who was involved in that would call me, a male officer, and he...talked about dreams he was having about getting into a fight and the guy always going code red. Which code red and code blue are...if you code people that, they're medical; it's bad. He ended up quitting, he never recovered... he used to be a die-hard officer and he went to the fire department and now when I hear people talk about him, they say, 'you know he went crazy from that deal.'

The officer in Tamara's story illustrates both a willingness of men to utilize women when dealing with stress and the complications associated with critical stress for male officers. Tamara believes that males within the department were unwilling to support this officer when he required psychological assistance and indirectly aided in his departure from law enforcement.

Seeking safe emotional outlets following critical incidents represents a positive signal for officers distressed by these situations. Problems arise when women officers become the primary source for emotional release by their peers. Emotional labor subjects women to additional stress because of indirect exposure to critical events, and being unofficial therapeutic partners, a stressor almost never acknowledged.

While men distance themselves from emotional responses to stressful events, women in law enforcement face complications because of their dual status as women and officers. Women accomplish femininity through displays of emotion, and generally receive acceptance for this practice in American society. In policing, emotional reactions by women officer facing critical event stress may reinforce their status as women. Referring to emotional displays by women Tamara states, "I can think of the guys laughing and poking fun, but it is still more accepted or maybe even expected [than male officers]." Unfortunately, men also utilize such behaviors as evidence that women cannot handle the

rigors of law enforcement. Susan, a female detective in Kiowa, captures this difficult situation.

They notice you right away. Many (referring to men) don't even want you there so they are always looking for something. They really expect you to fail; want you to fail. You try to prove yourself, but if you handle something in a different sort of way, or if they think you are acting like a woman, what ever that means, then they are really on you.

Susan's comment illustrates this complication of roles for women. Acting like a woman contradicts acting like a police officer and vice versa. A stereotype of women officers as lesbians further complicates this relationship. Women "acting too manly" in police settings risk betraying their gender and the lesbian label. As Chloe states, "they think we're all dykes." Women are stuck in a no-win situation because of risk associated with not displaying a certain level of emotions and they endanger their status as police officers by displaying any feminine traits. The classification of women officers as lesbians certainly does not present groundbreaking research on gender relations in policing but prior application of this concern never fully implicates the stress generated by this behavior. Women within the sample recognize stress associated with constant questions about their sexual orientation, a complication simply not present for the vast majority of men.

Interviews with police officers confirm that women officers face all the job related stress and critical events associated with law enforcement plus the added challenges connected to their gender. Women officers face additional stressors because of constant surveillance by their male counterparts, by questioning their appropriateness for patrol, and by focusing on their sexual orientation. While both women and men officers experience work-related stressors, law enforcement certainly generates added stress and risk of burnout for women.

Community, Organizational Structure, and Officer Stress

Stress among the respondents also varied dramatically by urban and rural agencies. None of the five officers interviewed in the small agency identified organizational structure or administration as particularly stressful; these officers were more likely to identify individual critical events and community pressure as stressors. In opposition, nearly every

field officer and two administrative officers in Kiowa and Queens reported that dealing with administration represents their primary source of stress.

Urban law enforcement officers identify little direct community-related stress. Community stressors for urban officers in the current sample applied more directly to media scrutiny and anxiety over misrepresentations of their behavior in the field. Most notably, officers indicate that media outlets in urban areas generate the most significant source of stress for their departments. Officers in larger communities can escape work hassles and assume an anonymous posture during off duty hours.

Scrutiny by the community remains prevalent, and is a unique stressor for officers in rural or small town agencies. The informal and personal nature of rural life generates direct conflicts between community members and police officers. Reports from rural officers indicate they receive few breaks from law enforcement duties because community members only see them only as officers. Even when officers are off duty, community treatment generates an on-duty feel for rural officers because of familiarity within the community. Additionally, these officers are under pressure to use informal approaches when law violations occur by friends, family members, and prominent community members.

Instead of indistinctive mass media feared by urban officers, rural officials' interactions with community become personal and specific. These interactions can be stressful for officers in rural areas, particularly if they involve continued contact with the same community member. During interviews, Travis, a newly hired Monterrey patrol officer stated, "Some people have a tendency to bring stress out of officers but I think it's on purpose." Although Travis's comment seems straightforward and rather obvious, it does reflect the personal nature of law enforcement in small towns. The rural officers often reflect community problems in individual terms. The personal nature of law enforcement for rural officers is also captured in Larry's statement, "I am from northeast Monterrey so I lived here most of my life. I have numerous friends and family around town so from my sense I get along with the community great." Friends and family make up virtually the entire community for rural officers because of the informal and personal character of rural life.

"Um...I just...You know there's times when it is kind of stressful on the streets, but I know where those people are coming from." Joe provided the preceding quote in regards a question about law enforcement stress. This officer's comments echo those of other urban

officers who find bureaucratic police structures the most significant stressor in policing. Conflicts with administration were not mentioned as stressful by any of the rural officers, but this concern dominated respondents' comments in Kiowa and Queens. Joe further states:

I mean you don't have to sit there and wonder, 'what's this guy's angle?' Usually they don't like you and they are either pissed and drunk or both and okay now you know how to approach that, but around here sometimes you don't know. It sounds like a conspiracy theory kind of thing to me but it feels like someone might be watching me and you don't know why. Then it's like, 'what did I do wrong?' Nobody will give you a straight answer.

Many urban officers articulated fervent distrust toward administration. Officers communicate several factors influencing their distrust of ranking officials within urban departments including "double-talking" officials, selective enforcement of policy and procedures, and favoritism in assignments and promotions.

Joe's statement provides additional insight into the masculinized behavior in urban departments. This simple quote is wrought with overtures of violence, power, and control. Masculine power filters down the hierarchy of these complex organizations, controlling the behavior and thought processes of individual officers, and leaving them with continuous uneasiness. This example suggests that administrative approaches in larger departments aggravate stress and reinforce a masculinized version of power.

One particular frustration for urban officers is the difficulty in getting a straight answer from ranking officials. Patrol officers were particularly concerned that administrators change behavioral rules from one situation to another or from ranking officer to another.

I get along with certain sergeants better than others. For along time if there wasn't that person directly in my chain of command, then I felt like I had negative energy. Certain sergeants would tell me that they have supervisor meetings every month or maybe every week or something like that. He'd be like, "You are not a very well liked person around here"...Here lately, it hasn't been so bad but 1½ to 2 years ago, I was getting that pretty regular. I have the type of mentality that if you have a problem, tell me about it so I can fix it because I am not going to go around kiss someone's ass about it, but I would sure like to know how I can do better cause I don't want to be the guy someone's talking about it behind my back the whole time. So that is where it all comes from (stress). I don't know, I would deal with a thousand drunks assholes; people beating their wives or kids. I would deal with them a thousand times over than one time dealing with someone around here.

Joe provides powerful evidence that stress generated by interactions between administration and field officers is worse than street-based critical events.

Many officers in Kiowa and Queens provided critical statements about police administrative practices and its relationship to officer stress. For example, Sherry states that her greatest source of stress comes from the administration.

The administration of the department. (pause) A lot of times there seems to be no justification, no rhyme or reason for rules or policy; for actions they take. There is no consistency. They are not fair and equitable from one person to another. They don't follow their own rules. They set guidelines that everyone else has to follow yet they don't. Um... just really awful administration.

If Joe's and Sherry's comments represented isolated interviews we could easily conclude that they were just disgruntled officers. However, a litany of others provided similar statements that validate these powerful accounts. Another officer commented "with this administration it is not one thing, it's everything." A Kiowa officer reflects a similar concern: "Sometimes the politics... It's better to make friends and not do a whole lot of work than it is to go out and... ah... get into things, make cases and that really doesn't get you... recognition." Again, street-level stressors take second stage to problems generated by administrative officials.

Ironically, one high-ranking officer mentioned administration as a problem, despite the fact that only a handful of officers outranked him within the department. This officer felt that his greatest stress was "meeting the administration's expectations" because they frequently change. Additionally, this officer remarked that the "chief is a micro-manager" whose expectations of how problem-oriented policing should be conducted results in micro-management "all the way down the chain of command."

In Monterrey, animosity toward the chief was simply not present in interviews. Officers expressed their relationship with the chief in personal terms reflecting reality in small agencies. Administrative officers in rural organizations are not individuals you meet only at trainings or under adverse circumstances; they are people with whom officers regularly interact. Monterrey's Chief was directly involved in several critical incidents mentioned by officer in this community, including both of the work-related shootings. The hands-on experiences shared by patrol officers and administrators in small town law enforcement fundamentally changes the nature of their relationship

Selective enforcement of policy and procedures and unclear regulations ranks as additional administrative stressor for urban officers. Patrol officers, in particular, judge that many policies are enforced only in certain situations or with selected officers. These instances generate unclear expectations and additional stress for field officers. Certain aspects of patrol work require officers to make quick decisions with potential consequences for both the officer and citizens. Although officers believe they can “rely on training and experience,” many argue stress is amplified because the administration evaluates unpredictable field situations from a desk. Officers also indicate that a “good old boy” system shields certain individuals from having their actions questioned.

Officers believe voluminous procedures result in no-win situations for patrol personnel. Nick, a ten-year veteran of KPD, states: “...you are going to screw-up. It just happens to everybody. They have so many rules, and I guess I understand them, but everybody gets some days off [referring administrative leave]. Most of the time it’s just a mistake anybody could make.” Nick explained that the similar “mistakes”, for example not properly tagging and turning in evidence by the end of shift, could result in various outcomes depending on the day or supervisor.

An important mediating factor for bureaucratic stress is the support of sergeants, the first rung of administration, who liaison between upper portions of the chain-of-command and patrol officers. These individuals serve a strong supportive function for field officers while enforcing sometimes-cryptic administrative rules. Since sergeants have recently departed from patrol positions, they frequently understand the complicated daily work of patrol officers. Additionally, sergeants in larger department repeatedly patrol beats with street officers and provide on-site supervision for critical decisions. In this way, sergeants in larger departments have shared experiences with patrol officers similar to police chiefs in smaller agencies.

Among interview subjects, sergeants enjoyed greater camaraderie with field officers because of this increased interaction and contact. A strong us vs. them mentality persists in law enforcement along several binary categories--for example officer/offender, patrol/administration, men/women officers. In many ways patrol sergeants break binary thinking by patrol officers because they are both administrators and patrol officers. This distinction is limited to sergeants directly in the chain-of-command. Consider the following

comment by a Queens patrol officer “I get along with certain sergeants better than others. For a long time if there wasn’t that person directly above me in my chain of command, then I felt like I had negative energy.” The officer provided this statement in direct reference to administrative stress reflecting the unique and complicated position of sergeants in law enforcement. Those directly in the chain of command enjoy in-group status, while other sergeants within the organization become part of the administration out-group.

The promotion process was also identified as stressful for many officers, albeit mostly those in larger departments. Advancement procedures, strikingly similar in each department, rank officers according to scores on written exams, oral interviews (referred to as oral boards in some departments), and supervisor evaluations. Although scored items receive different weights per organizational standards, sometimes including marks for seniority, the general process is the same in all departments. After completion of formal processes, the departments generate hierarchal lists of candidates according to their comprehensive scores. For the most part, the officers interviewed had few disputes with the formal process; however, final selection for promotion generates significant tension.

The final promotion process becomes significantly more subjective generating increased tension between line officers and administrators. In rural departments, the chief selects one officer from the few eligible, promoting that individual. Rural officers report few conflicts with this process because of limited upward mobility and greater deference to seniority. Final selection among eligible officers is contentious in larger departments because the administration does not promote according to overall ranking. For Kiowa, the administration can, and often does, promote individuals ranked anywhere in the top 25% of eligible officers. Frequently, highly ranked officers are bypassed in the promotion process while lower scoring officers are advanced.

Subjective decision-making remains open to criticism and respondents were extremely disapproving of subjective elements in the promotion process. One officer even rhetorically asked: “Why even have the lists?” Officers frequently voice frustration over the final selection for promotions, indicating that officers believe the entire process is biased and designed to conceal blatant favoritism. Jill, a 33-year-old woman officer in Queens, was exceptionally vocal about promotions.

Favoritism is running rampant at [Queens Police Department] and it is all who you brown nose with, who goes to investigations. I am a little bit bitter about that because I don't kiss ass and I have been looked over, I think three times, by younger officers who I have tons more experience than they do. I'm told I don't play the game. It's called 'The Game', and the game is basically called brown-nosing.

Favoritism during promotions, whether real or imagined, sparks resentment toward police decision makers and elevates stress for officers.

Many officers suggest that gender influences the promotion process. Some officers, mostly men, believe women receive promotion because of affirmative action plans in the department. Affirmative action generates concerns when women lower on the promotion list are advanced before men with higher test scores. Officers only allude to gender being an advantage carefully constructing their words to avoid appearing sexist. A Kiowa officer referenced this point in the following statement, "I am sure some might say that whenever a female or a minority gets promoted there is always the thing that they went down on the promotional list to get them." The quantitative and qualitative data in this study finds few women in positions of power within the four police departments, so gender does not seem to advantage women overall.

In disagreement to some men officers, women believe that their departments are less likely to promote women regardless of promotional scores. For example, Chloe referenced the "good old boy system" that hinders advancement for women while connecting men to powerful administrative personnel. Chloe believes these associations develop because of informal friendships arising from interaction between men on and off the job. Some women reference beliefs that departmental promotions offer a method to maintain men in power positions. Sherry believes that women are devalued in law enforcement and that promoting women to positions of authority is not a priority with her department: "...promotion pops up and it's obvious that this place that they never, ever care for a women to be promoted. The highest-ranking woman that has ever been in this department from its inception...is a sergeant, and that was just in recent past. It's never been equitable." As with the quantitative data in Chapter 4, perceptions of men and women officers regarding the influences of gender in the work place are quite divergent.

Interviews expressed their painful awareness of the problem of stress in law enforcement, although sources of stress differed by gender, the community, and

organizational structures. Stress among urban officer centers on administrative practices, treatment by top officials, and concerns over promotional procedures. For rural officers, unique stressors result from feelings of constantly being on duty, and from requests to handle criminal behavior on an informal basis. Women face additional stress because the connection between masculinity and law enforcement results in their constant scrutiny as outsiders-within the organization. Both men and women officers in the sample were cognizant that women are generally less accepted, receiving more negative sanctions for personal failures than men. Responses indicate that this behavior persists in law enforcement agencies because femininity is still seen as incompatible with policing.

Officer Burnout

“It wears on other people. That... people just not wanting to come to work and if they are coming to work they just don’t care” – Larry.

Larry’s quote illuminates concerns officers have regarding burnout among law enforcement peers. A burned-out officer affects everybody sharing a shift and in some instances an entire department. Officers within the sample detailed many instances of officer burnout and described the social phenomenon in both attitudinal and behavioral terms.

Descriptions of burnout among law enforcement officers generally focus on officer behavior. Lack of effort and indifference toward their job embody common themes describing officer burnout. Officers experiencing burnout just collect their paychecks, lacking a true enthusiasm for law enforcement duties. Burned-out officers hide during their shift and frequently extend calls avoiding reassignment to other places. Officer descriptions of burnouts in urban departments described them as lazy and unconcerned with actively patrolling their beats.

Interviewees frequently cited a lack of self-initiated policing as a behavioral concern resulting from burnout. That is, effective patrol officers respond to dispatched calls and frequently initiate their own contact with the public. Tamara states that, “Someone who is burnt out would probably just answer their calls and sink into their obscurity otherwise.” Ross offers a similar assessment of burnouts. “They don’t want to do anything. Instead of getting involved they want to minimize their contact with the public or they hate taking calls.” Still another officer described driving past a burned-out officer in order to answer

calls in his jurisdiction. According to the officers in this sample, noticing burnouts in the profession is easy; burnt-out officers slack away from responsibility and avoid contact with the public.

Additional concern noted by interviewees about burnout is the belief that officers develop maladaptive behaviors. For instance, officers may respond to burnout with angry outburst or excessively consume alcohol. Emotional outbursts directed at the public, friends, or family is a disconcerting behavior observed among officers with burnout. Administrative officers appear particularly leery of such behavior because it may negatively affect the department as a whole. For example, Rick, a mid-level administrator in Queens, voiced the following concerns: “The way they handle, it in other words potential outburst with the public or with or taking it home to the family and taking it out on their spouse or kids.” A Monterrey patrol officer portrays these outbursts in the following manner: “They just get...you can tell they absolutely didn’t want to deal with it. They weren’t going to deal with it. They may stomp around and act ridiculous.” For many officers in the sample, the negative behaviors among burnouts did not include withdrawal from work; it involved direct, emotionally disruptive displays on and off the job and concerns over violence.

Another maladaptive behavior mentioned among burnouts involves excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages. In some ways, this particular predicament could be hard to observe because interviewees unmistakably indicate that regular alcohol consumption is accepted in police culture. In describing officer interaction during often duty hours one officer state that “alcohol is always involved somewhere.” Another officer reports “officers tend to party together or go to bars.” Still another described a “fair amount of drinking” among law enforcement personnel. Nearly every respondent within the sample provided accounts of drinking and informal peer culture that accepted alcohol. Interviewees draw some distinctions regarding “normal” drinking and alcohol consumption related to stress or burnout. On the other hand, officers were quick to point out that alcohol aggravates work difficulties. Several respondents directly linked alcohol to family conflicts and suicide.

Officers frequently framed burnout in terms of a general attitude toward law enforcement and peers. Although behavior and attitude are certainly linked, some respondents concerns with burnout focused on attitude. The attitude of burned-out officers reflects indifference toward the profession and the officer’s influence on the community.

The typical attitude of a burned out officer was described as, "...non-caring, and nonchalant, indifferent to what is going on around them." Another officer's account described burnouts as people with "a real bad attitude towards the job and the people they have to deal with." In rather colorful language, Larry argues that burnouts "run around in a real pissy ass mood about coming to work or working in general." With these comments the respondents focused on attitude rather than direct behavior of field officers

No glaring differences in gender or department size were noted among officers description of professional burnout regardless of whether this phenomenon was broached in attitudinal or behavioral terms. Men, women, urban, and rural officer utilized similar descriptions when focusing on burnout in law enforcement. Additionally, nearly ever officer in the sample provided detailed examples of officers suffering from burnout indicating a well-established problem in law enforcement. This finding does not indicate that gender has no role in officer perception or risk of burnout; rather, the influence of gender is not evident through the current interviews.

Even simple descriptions of stress, burnout, and maladaptive behaviors underscore the need for greater emphasis on gender. Interviews with law enforcement officers demonstrate that stress and burnout persists in policing. Stress among officers, as with all behaviors, beliefs, and interactions in highly gendered organizations, is complicated by gender and ideas of femininity and masculinity. Nearly every aspect of policing intertwines with gender, from judgments on how to manage stress to ideas about appropriate mannerisms for interacting with the public. Conceptions of gender also influence negative and problematic behaviors that develop regarding employment stress. In particular, gendered organizations, through social interaction, division of labor, and gendered images, influence conceptions of appropriate ways to handle typical job related stress. Having explored general ideas about stress and burnout in policing, the succeeding sections will investigate gender dynamics within law enforcement emphasizing on how gendered mechanisms influence and shape both organizational practices and individual stress responses.

Reinventing the Matron: Gendered Images, Division of Labor, and Interactions in Policing

Interviews with officers support Acker's theory of gendered organizations and further explicate ways in which images, interactions, and division of work responsibility in policing fits with the notion of a gendered environment. Findings indicate that women in law enforcement are still viewed through a gendered lens, which in turn shapes relations with fellow officers and the community. Working in this cyclical way, interactions reinforce a gendered division of labor. Images of female officers correspond to their early role in law enforcement as matrons charged with the care of female offenders and juvenile delinquents. Women officers are expected to care for children, delinquents, and female victims regardless of personal preference or individual skills, which effectively returns them to the devalued position held by matrons in early policing. The subtle interactions between officers and the belief in natural feminine instincts maintain certain aspects of patrol work as a masculine enterprise.

Women have certainly made inroads into mainstream policing. Ignoring these advancements demeans their hard-fought efforts. Yet interviews with officers confirm that women are reserved for certain police functions. Modern law enforcement agencies force women into matron roles by pulling them from patrol duties to manage juvenile offenders or by assigning women to specialized police units based on their gender. These departmental practices are founded on essentialist views of femininity and utilitarian departmental needs. In such highly gendered organizations, gendered images, gendered interaction, and the gendered division of labor empower departments to utilize women according to beliefs about inherent strengths. Gender dynamics in policing are tightly intertwined frequently reinforcing the utilization of women in a "matronly" fashion. In fact, officers' statements describing one aspect of gendered organizations generally overlap into others.

Gendered Images

Images of women in law enforcement promote gender essentialism and further influences beliefs about gender skill-sets ultimately influencing assignments. The images of policewomen generally follow one of three viewpoints, all of which influence assignments and social interaction within departments. First, many officers believe that women are naturally drawn toward cases involving women or children. Beliefs that women are inherently maternalistic, in part, justify gender-based assignments. Second, officers,

including many women, believe that women in law enforcement are naturally more empathic and sensitive to the needs of victims, particularly if these victims are children or sexually assaulted women. Officers tend to believe that women have better communication skills, which makes them more appropriate for dealing with highly emotional situations. Third, lack of physical strength (and the overall value placed on physical prowess) remains a dominant representation of women officers which operates to restrict some of their field responsibilities

Representations of women as naturally maternal represent the strongest and most consistent images of women officers among interviewees. Examples of maternalistic women focus on interactions with children—specifically the idea that women naturally protect and comfort children. Larry provides a perfect example of such beliefs in the following statement:

In fact one of the wrecks I worked. (pause) I mean I have children and I am pretty good with children but in my mind when it was going on I was concerned with dealing with everything else. The female officer was dealing with the little kid. That was just her instinct. I don't know, he was a three year old or something like that and she just calmed him down. The rest of us just got more into dealing with the hurt people. I can see an advantage with that and calming people down. I think they would have an advantage with that. Guys tend to once they get worked up, they stay worked up.

The text of Larry's statement evokes essentialist beliefs about women and provides a superlative example of how gendered images reinforce behavior in law enforcement settings. Terms like "instinct" intimate biological differences between men and women that guide behavior. In critical events, Larry believes that women are naturally inclined to deal with children while the men handle everything else. Interestingly, Larry's statement ignores human agency despite the fact that officers frequently espouse an individual-choice worldview. The statement overlooks the active choices made by the officers in this crisis. Several alternatives could account for her behavior besides natural "instincts." In fact, "doing gender" aspects of policing are more relevant in this case than so-called biological proclivities. For example, the woman on the scene may have exclusively dealt with the child because the men were focusing on other aspects of the wreck. In effect, the gendered behavior of the men might have forced her interactions with the child. Regardless of speculation about this women's behavior, interpretations of her actions spotlight gendered

images that reinforce social arrangements in policing. When male officers attend to injured children it is unremarkable, but such activity by a woman officer becomes evidence for gendered instincts.

Officers draw upon general social conceptions about women when marshalling stereotypical images of women's strengths in law enforcement, and these images persist even in departments with few women officers. Travis, a newly hired Monterrey officer at the time of his interview, provides just such a case. Monterrey has historically employed only two patrolwomen and none in the recent past. Travis's interaction with women in law enforcement is limited to relatively rare inter-agency collaboration with a female sheriff's deputy. Despite limited contact with women patrol officers, Travis has formulated strong beliefs about their contributions to policing.

Women are probably better dealing with children. Although it may also bother them more when children are hurt in accidents or abused or stuff like that. I think that it may have been useful [if] when we had a female officer on abuse calls, like child abuse or even conflicts in families.

Travis's statement suggests powerful stereotypical images of women officers that persist in policing even with limited contact between policemen and women. When departments lack women in patrol duties, the gendered images persist in situations that men equate as feminine. Gendered images of women officers exist in absence of realistic interactions or observations—but these stereotypical images are not based on real interaction in a law enforcement capacity. This dynamic suggests that changing stereotypical views of women in law enforcement could prove arduous because men officers draw these images from strong stereotypes in American culture.

Another persona of women officers describes them as emotionally sensitive and responsive to the needs of the public during psychologically taxing events. Images of women officers as emotionally sensitive and effective communicators harkens to general views of women in society. Interviewees frequently draw upon this image when accessing the skills and behaviors of women officers. Such images imply that women are naturally more effective in dealing with human emotions. Ross, a Monterrey officer, vocalizes this viewpoint, "Probably instances when there needs to be a little more emotional tactfulness, like working with a child or somebody who is suicidal. They might have an advantage." Questions about the skills of women officers yield strong images based on biological beliefs

about feminine traits. In contradiction to Ross's beliefs about women, a female officer reported no sympathy for suicide victims because of her experiences breaking the news to family members. On the other hand, some men officers in the sample describe high sensitivity in dealing with suicides. Such examples provide evidence that effectively dealing with human emotion is based on individual skills and not on gender per se.

Not surprisingly, the women in the sample share many essentialist views about particular skills that women bring to law enforcement. This phenomenon displays the power of gender dynamics in society and requisite effects on both men and women. Women, like men, frequently accept social arrangements as biological imperatives. Observe the following comments by Sherry, a detective who primarily works child abuse and sexual assault cases. "Oh absolutely! I think women, the general rule, are more compassionate, more understanding, and more articulate. Not all but as a general rule you can listen to people. We try to fix everything." Answering the same questions about women officers, Tamara offered a similar response, "...what I see with the female officers for the most part, they become more personable, I guess maybe they aren't trying to maintain an image...their people skills are better and they relate better for the most part."

Early research by Martin (1980) indicates that some women in law enforcement emphasize skills they associate with femininity as a particular niche or necessity in law enforcement. Women utilizing "female" skills may receive informal positive sanctions by men because such behavior does not threaten the general masculine aura of policing. Tamara directly addresses this by stating that women officers can communicate more freely because they are not protecting their "image." Certain actions by women during police situations are equated with their gender and not their position as officers. Since policing and masculinity invoke interlocking images, men officers displaying the behaviors associated with femininity violate both roles.

Doing femininity in police settings may also result in formal positive sanctions in the forms of promotions and assignments. Both Sherry and Tamara have specific assignments in law enforcement that require excellent communication skills. Sherry investigates child abuse cases and Tamara works as a community resource officer. These women also believe that they possess skills based on their gender, which assists in these appointments. This does not imply that these women are undeserving of their positions, merely that images of women

frequently correspond to specific assignments, particularly within larger agencies. In fact, such practices detail how gendered images reinforce a gendered division of labor, which is assessed in a later section. Men officers frequently benefit from gendered images of masculinity equating traits of strong leaders with masculinity. Consequently, men may receive promotions because of beliefs that they possess better leadership skills than women.

Among interview subjects, images of women frequently center on lack of physical stature, indicating that women are too small for certain law enforcement tasks. Interviewees framed concerns over physical strength of women officers in two interrelated fashions. First, they focused on a lack of physical size as a disadvantage and an additional stressor for women officers. Second, respondents frequently identified physical stature as advantages for men in law enforcement. Regardless of how officers framed this issue, it generates images of women as inferior and barely suitable for patrol duties.

Images of male officers that concentrate on physical strength and body size actually generate negative images of women officers. In fact, these images create a false binary of strong/weak with all men instantly receiving the positive connotations and all women viewed negatively. Take a simple statement by a Kiowa patrol officer regarding advantages for men in law enforcement, "Physical strength or if you had to control a subject. As far as decision making or ability to do the job, I don't think there is a difference." Officers in Queens and Monterrey provided similar comments. For example, Joe stated, "I think in terms of strength. I am going to put you (a woman) there fighting a three hundred pound gorilla down in (bar district)." Such thinking ignores the wide variation among men and between men and women. Surely most men officers in Queens would require back-up when arresting a violent three hundred pound man, but responses of this magnitude only focus on women officers.

The subordinate image of women officers limits their ability to generate power relations over men on the institutional level. Masculine power is exercised, namely by physical violence or threat of violence, and images of women officer do not fit with this hegemonic masculine viewpoint. The positioning of hegemonic masculine traits by their nature precludes them from being associated with femininity. This results in general belief that women cannot function in certain tasks. Note the following excerpt from Chloe's interview:

I never knew that I couldn't do something, and I say couldn't very loosely, or shouldn't be able to do something until I started this job. Um...because when I started in this particular job, I had a lot of people saying, not about me necessary, but women couldn't do some things. I have never had that outlook my entire life.

Chloe's statement reveals the effect of gendered images on the morale of women officers. Chloe's father sparked her interest in policing by reading detective fiction books to her as a young child, and she knew early in life that she wanted to enter law enforcement. To the credit of her family and educators, Chloe believed that she possessed all the requisite skills for policing. The attitude of her peers at times has caused her to question her career choice. Her self-doubt has nothing to do with her abilities; on the contrary, it reflects the power of gender dynamics in policing that continually discourage women. These sometimes-subtle forces create invisible barriers designed to dishearten women in law enforcement. Chloe's current assignment as a vice drug detective--a strongly masculine position--is testament to her continued persistence and self-assurance. Surely, these gendered behaviors have diverted many qualified women from law enforcement jobs.

The gendered image of women as physically weaker than men prevails among women officers, but women point out skills that keep them from being liabilities in patrol settings. Two particular competencies that women utilize in conflicts include specialized training and the use of verbal de-escalation tactics.

Many women officers reference their physical defense skills as a resource during violent arrest. Sara, a patrol officer in Queens, presents a nice example of women officers' beliefs about the effectiveness of defense training. "Physically, most men are physically stronger than women but if you are properly trained and you know your defense tactics, it can be a bad fight for the guy." Defense skills were a focal point for a Kiowa women resource officer, "I don't think in every fight the male has the advantage because there are times when you fight smarter." Women officers believe that their specialized defense training and quick thinking in violent situations can counteract size differentials with men, thus women are less likely to embrace beliefs that they are incapable of physically controlling male subjects.

The physical requirements in law enforcement are generally overrated. Respondents report that police dramas on television exaggerate ideas about daily patrol activity. Images

of police officers highlight beliefs that officers frequently engage in physical fights when arresting criminal suspects. Officers within the sample report that violent arrests are rare, and that the daily law enforcement tasks are somewhat “boring.” It was also clear in interviews that officers try to avoid making one-on-one arrest, and even patrol high conflict areas in pairs. Officer equipment like batons, pepper spray, tasers, and even firearms reduce physical requirements. Despite the fact the physical requirements are generally overrated, men officers still apply this concern to images of women in policing. This indicates that the images are more about demeaning women officers than true concerns about their ability as police officers.

Women officers also believe that men too quickly utilize violence in situations when verbal de-escalation techniques avert physical altercations. Sherry referenced this belief in the following statement:

I have been in many fight situations, but I feel I can talk myself out of fights and getting my ass kicked and having to wrestle someone to the ground. Some male officer, they'll just come up and plow people and the fight it on and you wouldn't need to do that because all you need to do is spend 5 minutes talking to the person. You can calm them down and get them to do what you want so it is just a different perspective, I think, from a big macho guy.

In this officer's mind, physical strength negatively influences men to rely on this behavior instead of trying non-violent tactics with upset citizens. The macho persona of men officers results in over-dependence on physical control techniques. Another woman officer in Queens describes these as “testosterone built decision;” situations when men overly use physical force as a masculine resource. A masculine police culture dictates a violent response. Stress and burnout aggravates the use of force by police officers because the more negative the officer's attitude the more likely they are to use physical force with argumentative citizens. Therefore, stress and burnout elevate violence by officers, but gendered behavior guides selection of physical force will dealing with people.

Focusing on differences between the average man and woman ignores the wide range of possible differences among men and women and between individuals. Department employ men of various physical capabilities and size, but gendered images ignore this range and only focus images of vulnerable woman officers. Physical differences among men related to cardiovascular conditioning, weight, and age are brushed aside in the context of

gendered police images. The status of men officers is elevated and through the utilization of two neatly constructed images. Images of men in police culture depict them as heroic, physically fit, and capable of responding to any violent situation. Masculine police culture envisions women as weak liabilities to departments during violent situations; women are perfectly suitable for certain feminine task, but are not appropriate for the heavy lifting. These images justify gendered division of labor in policing.

Division of Labor

Law enforcement has a distinct history regarding the gendered-division of labor persisting in modern police organizations. Earlier history documents the contentious movement of women into patrol duties. Despite legal and social changes that have advanced the cause of women patrol officers, women are still frequently limited to certain task and excluded from others. The women interviewed for this research report that they are still barred from certain police activities, such as serving arrest warrants or patrolling certain segments of the community. Women also frequently receive specific assignments believed to correspond to gender related traits.

The gendered-division of labor persists among certain tasks that remain highly masculinized or feminized. The most notable limitation among interviewees was working in certain highly masculine police functions. Serving on warrant squads and arrest teams appears as one area of policing that maintains a masculine stronghold. Several of the women officers argued they are specifically excluded from these tasks, despite request for such assignments. Administrators and supervisors marshal images of women in law enforcement that justify these practices. During an interview Sara stated, “Yes, they very rarely take a female on a search warrant; they will take a man in case something goes wrong. I have repeatedly asked Lieutenant [Name] if I could go assist on a search warrant and he always picks a guy, even when I go to him and specifically request that I want to go help.”

Administrators ignored Sara’s request to participate in raids and warrants because images of women officers fail to conform to masculine perceptions of warrant officers. The fear that something will “go wrong” represents a clear example of how gender images reinforce a gendered division of labor. Practices that limit women from certain task are completely informal and probably illegal. Sara noted that her lieutenant would find

“excuses” to exclude her from the warrant team under the auspice that the department required her elsewhere. Many positions like SWAT teams and undercover work maintain their masculine aura by finding ways to exclude women.

Exclusion from certain patrol assignments considered too rough for women provides another example of the gendered division of labor. Queens’s officers, both men and women, referenced walking patrols in the college bar district as an example of a beat that historically excluded women. Sherry specifically addressed this beat during her interview. “In the old days, I can remember you would volunteer to go the (Bar District) and they would never pick the females to go because they always wanted to pick the tough looking guys to do that stuff.” Joe who patrolled the bar district with a women officer was also aware of these exclusion. “I had a partner that walked with me in [the bar district]. She was the first female cop ever. Yet, I know for a long time that there was a lot of resistance from a lot of people because is she going to be able to fight off the 250 lb. drunk that gets into a fight.” These comments vividly illustrate the gendered division of labor that remains in policing despite the federal legislation and formal agencies policies designed to eradicate such practices. They also provide excellent examples of how gendered images generate and maintain a gendered division of labor.

The interconnection between masculine and feminine images and the division of labor is an important aspect of this research. Selecting women for gendered, regimented work reinforces the gendered images of women, and the idea that policing is men’s work. This dynamic becomes self-generating, and a powerful force in policing that continues the status quo. Women, such as Chloe, enter law enforcement believing that can complete any task; however, beat assignments based on images of men’s and women’s attributes discourage them from seeking certain assignments. Even women persistent enough to pursue law enforcement careers face continuous harassment and pressure to remain in certain positions. This reinforces the images of women officers, and encourages administrators to believe that women cannot effectively patrol certain beats. Untimely, the gendered division of labor and gendered images interact to protect masculine images of men officers, providing social structure and culture that allows for sexist interactions in law enforcement agencies.

Interactions

Gendered interactions within law enforcement are the byproduct of gendered images and the existing division of labor. Gendered interactions occur in three general ways and have a profound influence on informal police culture. First, formal interactions occur between officers as routine aspects of their job during work hours. These interactions include any aspect of behavior taking place while officers act in official capacity, and include direct face-to-face contact, shift briefings, and memos or electronic communication. Second, interactions include off-duty relations between department members. Finally, gendered interactions occur between the public and law enforcement officers when gender becomes the focal point of exchanges.

Gendered behavior frequently takes center stage during interactions between officers during work hours. These interactions occur during formal settings, but the interactions are actually highly informal reflecting the subculture of policing. Interactions convey ideas about the connection between policing and masculinity. Gender relations in policing showcase masculinity while subordinating women—essentially these interactions accomplish masculinity. Men behaving as men becomes the normal behavior, and all others groups, including women and homosexuals, must conform to masculine police norms. This masculine behavior continues despite policy, legislation, and lawsuits barring such practices.

Both men and women officers acknowledge that law enforcement work places are highly masculine. In fact, many officers used the words “guys” or “men” when talking about their employment atmosphere seemingly ignoring that women (except for Monterrey) are in their occupational environment. As one male officer stated, “I mean it’s just guys hanging out.” Comments referring to only one gender subtly address the gendered nature of police work interactions. Men expect women officer to accept their masculine behavior. Women failing to conform to this masculine subculture provide evidence for male officers’ beliefs that women are unfit for the job.

Respondents describe the police work environment as highly informal. Field officers in these three departments patrol mostly alone. Work interaction occurs prior to each shift, during joint calls, and when officers are working on cases at the station. Detectives and administrators interact in an office setting similar to most management-type positions, and have significantly more face-to-face interaction with their peers. Regardless of the position,

officers' descriptions provide significant insight on gendered interactions in law enforcement.

"I work with a bunch of men. I am the only female...my daily work environment right now is very gritty; it's not very politically correct." Chloe provided the previous statement to a simple probing statement: Describe your daily work environment for me. Although she carefully avoided words like harassment or oppressive; words like "gritty" and "politically incorrect" bring to mind negative gender based behavior. A male officer in Queens reports police interactions include "a lot of shit talking" and that officers "badger the hell" out of each other. These behaviors were not described as problematic; he believed they built camaraderie between officers. He described this phenomenon as a "locker room mentality." A locker room infers images of men sitting around interacting as men. Interestingly locker rooms are gender segregated, and the involvement of women reporters in male locker rooms has been contentious debate in the sporting world. Statements of officers reveal that on the job social interaction remains masculine in nature.

Gendered jokes and subtle harassment symbolize important gendered behavior in police organizations. It could be easy to overlook descriptions of officer behavior, describing "shit talking" and "badgering" as harmless fun. Recall that perceptions of gender jokes varied strongly in quantitative findings. Women and men experience gendered-oriented jokes quite differently. Men believe this masculine behavior as natural byproducts of friendships, frequently ignoring the demeaning and derogatory nature of this behavior. Jokes also permit men to uphold masculine police culture under the protective appearance of harmless fun. Male officers marginalize and ridicule women officers offended by joking, describing them as uptight. Additionally women cannot challenge the masculinity of their male peers even in a joking matter. Joking in police work environments is not harmless fun; it represents another powerful form of gendered interactions that protects masculine power.

Contact between officers in non-work environments represents the strongest form of gendered interactions in the current research. As within any workplace, personal relationships develop at work, and extend into the private lives of employees. During non-work hours officer freely interact, apart from the formal organizational policies that restrict certain conduct. Off-duty peer interactions frequently exclude women officers and become safe-havens for macho culture.

Women are effectively excluded from non-work peer interactions by purposeful action of men and the selection of activity designed to “naturally” eliminate women officers. Both men and women officers present strong beliefs about behaviors which occur off-duty. This fortifies gendered behavior at work. The following excerpt came from a male officer:

From what I can tell they are at least invited. You know well I’m sure they say [men officers] if your going to a titty bar you may not invite them.

This officer’s statement speaks volumes about gendered interactions in policing. He believes that women are included during most leisure activity, but also directly speaks to situations when masculine culture dictates the segregation of women. When male officers behave as “men,” women are easily excluded. Surely, visitation to a local “gentleman’s club” qualifies as an example of gender interactions that allow for men to establish power relations over women. Most examples of gendered segregation during non-work hours are more subtle.

The selection of non-work activities subtly segregates men and women officers. The exclusion of women occurs by two interrelated conditions. First, men select “masculine” settings or behave as “men” during off-duty interactions. Women may be formally or informally invited these events but may lack interest in “masculine” pursuits or perhaps women do not feel welcomed. Second, men officers rely on feminine images of women officers when selecting whether to involve women in social gatherings. Women are encouraged, and frequently participate, in after work drinking events, known as shift parties, and other gatherings like barbeques and cookouts. Men do not frequently invite women officers to social gatherings more directly associated with masculinity. Men distinguish as masculine activities like camping, poker, golf, and club shooting and do not feel obligated to invite women officers.

Men officers frequently invite women to non-work activities that focus on drinking and social interaction. Despite including women in these social gatherings, the behavior frequently remains masculine in nature. Joe provides an example of this behavior among officers in Queens. “We will invite you...So when I say yes they are included it’s because they are invited [women] and if they don’t show up, that’s on them. Yeah they are just as apt to get picked on and made fun of just like everybody else.” According to Joe, men invite women to these activities, but the men feel no obligation to adjust their behavior. So women can attend these events subjecting themselves to teasing and derogatory treatment as “one of

the guys” or they can opt not to attend. Interestingly, women officers are put on the line as “women,” yet they are expected to “take it” just like everybody else. Women must adapt to the masculine behavior or stay away; regardless the masculine nature of these events is unchanged. Women are stuck with the double bind of appearing aloof or modifying their behavior to the men.

Men frequently exclude women from non-work events that do not fit with feminine images. Interviewees regularly describe non-work interactions in terms of masculinized activities that women would not want to attend. Nate, for example, described off-duty interactions in the following statement. “A bunch of guys get together to play video games, football and stuff like that. Play cards maybe. Pretty active stuff, I think.” Ross directly references gender segregation in non-work events in his statement. “In the past it has been more so, on the guys side of it, camp-outs or gatherings at someone’s house. It often involves alcohol...” Both of these men describe events that exclude women and involve interaction that centers on reinforcing masculinity. Women are simply not viewed as appropriate for these situations, so they are excluded.

Women officers are generally aware that their male peers do not invite them to certain activities. Sherry was cognizant of direct practices that exclude women officers from male-dominated off-duty interactions.

A lot of the guys go and play poker together and the females aren’t invited. In investigations our captain has poker night regularly and we aren’t invited and that hurts our feelings. I would never go, but we aren’t included in that; we’re not part of that. I still think it’s just because they are crude or disgusting but they are like that in the office anyway.

Women, like Sherry, know they are not invited to events like poker night because the men want to act masculine and do not want to deal with negative reactions from women. During these events, men reinforce their behavior, and develop informal networks that allow policing to remain a man’s job. Ironically, the behaviors these men are “protecting” women from are frequently displayed in the workplace. In fact, the masculinized behavior developed in non-work settings spills into police work environments.

The gendered nature of non-work activities remains an important factor when understanding the development and maintenance of masculine police cultural values. Men exercise power based on gender dynamics during these non-work situations by participating

in “sexiest” behavior and the purposeful exclusion of women. Men officers interact in particular ways when women officers are not present. The exclusion of women officers allows men to reinforce the masculine persona of policing without violating organizational policy or federal laws; in these homogenous groups, men structure gender dynamics of police work environments. This “cop culture” is decidedly male and develops a shared masculine responses to organizational rules that limit doing masculinity on the job.

Interactions with the public are also gendered in a manner that devalues the efforts of women police officers, reinforcing strongly held values about policing and masculinity. Two major types of gendered public interactions are described in the current research. First, female officers interacting with the public may receive limited respect from citizens because of their gender. Second, gender becomes the bases for derogatory comments by citizens.

Many interviewees reference concerns that some citizens easily dismiss female officers. Interestingly, this belief seems more reflective of gendered images of female officers than actual events. Many men presented the general concern that citizens, particularly men, will not follow the orders of women officers. Some officers believe this makes women a “safety concern” in certain settings. The idea that citizens disrespect women officers, as with general images of women, is not entirely built true events, mirroring deep-seated beliefs about men and women. A Kiowa patrol officer provide such an example, “A suspect is going to look at them and say well she is just a little female you know and I am not really worried about them, something like that.” When pressed to describe a specific example, this officer stated “I can’t think of one off hand, but I’ve heard of it happening.”

A patrol officer whose beat covered a very rural section of Queens generally reserved for only male officers proffered another example of citizen disrespect of female officers. “Yes, this is strange. I mean the size of some officers will turn a perpetrator a little more mellow or whatever than a female officer arriving at headquarters.” Again, beliefs about women officers’ interactions with the community focus on gender, and ideas about physical limitations of women. None of the officers in the sample provided specific situations when a female officer failed to control a male subject, yet judgments about their abilities are paramount when assessing the interactions between women officers and the public. Gendered images of women officers focus on their physical size and beliefs that they are naturally passive, highlighting the relationship between gendered images and social

interaction. Male officers rely on images of women failing to maintain the authoritarian aura of law enforcement when assessing their interactions with the public. The image of women officers has more influence on interpretation of their interactions with the public than their actual behavior.

Some interviews provide evidence that women are ignored in patrol situations. In these circumstances, the public chooses to communicate with men officers regardless of the situational dynamics of the event. One officer cited this concern by saying, “I think a lot of times we will go on call and the person you talk to automatically talks to the male officer even if the female officer is the first one there.” In patrol situations when officers of equal rank respond to events, the first respondent generally becomes the lead officer. This quote argues that interactions with the community limit the ability of women officers in situations when they should naturally assume command. This dynamic even trumps rank in some situations. “The female sergeant on our shift, she’ll be there and a lot of times they will talk to me instead of her although she is the boss.” According to this statement by a Kiowa patrol officer, citizens disregard the officer’s rank and focus solely on gender. Again, beliefs about gender structure interactions with the public.

The importance of these gendered interactions with the public is less about what happens between citizens and selected officers and more about how gender influences interpretations of these circumstances. The dismissal of women officers by the public becomes another example of how interactions shape gendered images and visa-versa. Feminine images of women do not fit with the take-charge attitude of masculine policing, so officers look for examples when women fail in these situations. Surely, men officers have been disregarded at crime scenes and accidents, yet these events are never referenced because they do not reinforce existing beliefs about gender. Again, women in patrol situations create negative images of women officer cause yet another stressor for women.

Women officers may also confront exceptionally vulgar treatment by perpetrators during arrest situations. In these circumstances, belligerent citizens call upon the litany of derogatory language that focuses on female gender and utilize it to belittle these officers. Women officers face this additional disrespect because of the powerful sexist language in American culture. Men do not face comparable events because few equally derogatory comments exist for men in American society. Sara provides the following statement in

regards to her treatment by the public in Queens: “I know guys and girls that if I came up to them they say, ‘What the fuck do you want, you bitch, you are a god damn bitch’ and just throws out belligerent language...I get called a bitch and the c word and names almost on a daily basis and it just can’t bother you.” Women officers are expected to adapt to vulgar language during patrol situations. These community interactions provide yet another example of how gender becomes the focal point of arrest.

Interviews with officers confirm that gendered images, a gender oriented division of labor, and gendered interactions remain strongly entrenched in modern policing. Consistent with Acker’s theory police organizations remain highly masculine, and nearly every aspect of law enforcement preserves this social arrangement. The interactions and images detailed in this section speak to power and control. In gendered organizations, hegemonic masculinity becomes a powerful force that dictates behavior despite formal policies designed to limit this power. This social phenomenon controls stress management practices among officers, and the last section of this chapter directly connects masculine power and stress management.

Code of the Beats: Masculinity and Stress Management in Policing

I mean we are men for Christ-sake –Kiowa patrol officer

Masculinity maintains a stronghold in law enforcement agencies affecting stress management and burnout. This research establishes that policing remains a highly masculine endeavor displaying characteristics that Acker (1990) attributes to gendered organizations. Interactions, images, and the gendered division of labor remain relevant concerns in policing despite more than thirty years of attempts at gender integration. Gendered organizational behavior establishes a connection between masculinity and negative practices among officers, particularly male officers. The treatment of women, high stress, burnout, and violence is indicative of masculine organizational behavior.

Masculine social structures in law enforcement agencies leave few avenues for officers to manage the high stress associated with this career. In fact, when dealing with stress and burnout, informal police culture more readily accepts many negative behaviors—violence and excessive alcohol consumption—than psychological treatments. Interviews indicate that officers rarely address the psychological consequences of their daily work

environments, and that directly talking about these events with peers violates a strong code of conduct among law enforcement personnel. Officers, particularly men, indicate that informal police culture disapproves of emotional or psychological difficulties that arise from police work situations. The informal culture produces powerful normative standards requiring strict adherence to this code of conduct. The culture simply does not permit police officers to discuss emotional or psychological reactions to negative events with their peers. This norm leaves officers with limited opportunity to address naturally arising work stress, compounding preexisting work stress. Officers who display emotional responses risk severe negative sanctions by peers including the label of incompetence. This section will further develop this theme, apparent through officer interviews.

Fear of weakness and other unspoken rules

Several interview questions address informal ways officers manage stress. One question asked respondents if officers talk about stressful events with their peers. The overwhelming majority of interviewees do not discuss emotional responses to work stress with each other. Only four officers in the entire sample believed that officers openly talk about the emotional distress associated with work. Most officers resoundingly reject communication that addresses any aspect of emotion or psychological health. In many cases, officers directly connect this organizational behavior to masculine beliefs about the profession. In fact, the quote used to start this section was offered in response to questions concerning officers' willingness to talk about stress. In this quote, the officer relates the communication patterns among officers with masculinity. Officers fear equating their emotional symptoms with signs of weakness, in other words a failure to maintain their masculinity persona.

Officers' statements evidence police subculture restricts the range of emotion and generates a general disdain for emotionality. "As a whole mostly people keep stuff like that to themselves. It is really difficult for officer because we are taught to handle difficult situations." This comment, like many statements in this research, assumes the generic male officer because Monterrey has no women officers. This Monterrey patrol officer provides a brief synopsis how officers handle stress, and more importantly, why officers deem this behavior appropriate. Police subculture, and to a certain degree training, teaches officers to

restrict their emotional output. This practice partially serves utilitarian purposes by teaching officers to value rationality and remain psychologically detached during critical events. However, restricted emotions frequently spill into every aspect of an officer's life leaving him with little chance to express the normal emotions resulting from critical events. During these situations, the masculine subculture in law enforcement restricts appropriate psychological health. Most notably, officers do not feel comfortable talking about their stress responses with peers.

Many officers understand that the masculine nature of police work requires that they avoid talking about stress. A Kiowa officer directly connects masculinity with restricted communication patterns among male officers:

... They don't talk about it. **Why not?** It's largely a male profession and it's just not looked upon favorable for males to see a psychologist or be upset because they just worked a call. The only time I can think of that it's favorable or accepted, or not laughed and sneered about is when their working child cases, because you know most all of them have kids and so that is hitting close to home. It is understood.

Officers are unwilling to talk about stress or utilize psychological counseling because such behavior is unacceptable in the professions. The natural psychological consequences of critical events are unnaturally restricted, at least in the company of fellow officers. The rejection of emotional aspects of law enforcement demonstrates the socialization process in police subculture. Police subculture reinforces masculine beliefs that officers are superhuman and psychologically superior to the average individual. Police culture pressures officers to maintain this police role and all corresponding behaviors.

Officers strongly fear being labeled as weak by law peers, generating reluctance to describe these situations during interviews. One detective provided a noteworthy example of this apprehension during our interview. The wife of this detective survived a multiple year battle with cancer, producing obvious stress for the couple. When we reached the portion of the interview that asked about stress management practices the officer became noticeably shaken, asking questions about how the recording would be managed to ensure confidentiality. After several minutes of discussing the safety procedures, the officer asked me to stop recording the interview. This officer was uncomfortable with the idea of having recorded proof of his emotional distress even in a situation that would psychologically tax anybody. During the time, the recording was off the officer expressed concern that someone

within the department could get the tape and recognize his voice. He felt this could subject him to harassment by the administration or his peers.

Officers are keenly aware that openly discussing emotional problems with work partners can result in negative sanctions. Addressing why officers rarely talk about psychological distress, a woman sergeant in Queens stated: “You have so much at risk for an officer. Even showing minor distress is a risk to how people think about them.” Officers “risk” challenges to personal appearance, and being labeled weak by their peers. A veteran patrol officer in Kiowa addressed a similar sentiment regarding communicating stress. “You don’t want others to know.” Officers know that verbalizing stress or emotional difficulty in the work place is unacceptable. Masculine police culture does not allow even the perception of emotional weakness, and the “risk” officers speak of is, in fact, a risk of violating masculinity. Officers violating the assumptions that police are immortal, receive quick sanctions in order to reduce such behavior in the future. Sanctions include direct discomfort by officers, teasing or harassing officers displaying emotional behavior, and most notably an unwillingness to partner with distressed officers.

Officers are generally uncomfortable with emotional displays by peers representing one manner in which police culture dissuades such behavior. Instead of finding emotional support from peers, officers who directly speak about personal distress from work receive awkward responses. One male patrol officer in Kiowa states, “It’s not talked about at all. Nobody talks directly about it. It just makes everybody uncomfortable.” Officers are prepared to manage psychological concerns and emotional difficulties presented by citizens, but are ill prepared for psychological or emotional discomfort expressed by peers. The fact a police officer is not managing work stress in accordance with subcultural standards creates discomfort for peers. Surely, officers manage similar expressions of distress by the average citizen, yet the same behavior presented by an officer is problematic. In these instances, officers expressing distress violate the masculine code of conduct, which produces the discomfort among peers.

Interviewees also report teasing as a possible response to psychological displays by police officers. The teasing of distressed officers represents a subtle example of how officers enforce masculinity. Although few officers provide significant detail of the exact nature of this teasing, most referenced this behavior toward well-like officers. “It would depend on the

officer. I like to think that we have a pretty good group of officers but even with the ones we have there might be one or more that ...might do it more than others...I suppose they might get some shit from others.” Well-respected officers can recover from moments in which they display some degree of emotional distress. However, even these officers must pay the price for violating normative standards in law enforcement. In these cases, officers are made the butt of jokes or teased by their peers. A Queens’s patrol officer described such event with a peer as “playing around with him, jerking around, but nothing serious.” Banter between officers epitomizes subtle ways in which officers sanction their peers for challenging the norms of police culture. These rebukes are certainly less severe than the awkward responses described in the previous paragraph, but the general message is the same. Even minor psychological responses to stressful events represent violations to police culture.

Several officers within the sample report safety concerns as the greatest problem associated with distressed officers. Many respondents feel that officers displaying psychological difficulties because of law enforcement stress cannot be trusted in crises. Such beliefs represent the strongest possible penalty for violating the police subculture. One Kiowa officer described psychological difficulties as a violation of the “trust factor” between officers. Another officer reported that he would not “feel comfortable” working with an officer who outwardly displayed signs of stress. In fact many officers believe that individuals displaying stress generate problems in work situations. As one officer stated, “I would certainly want to keep an eye them.” Officers showing stress symptoms violate trust between officers and become a focal point in law enforcement environments.

It must be noted that seeking the help of a psychologist or other mental health professional also violates this “trust factor” generating a reluctances to seek professional intervention. Recall how strongly officers reject the psychological counseling following stressful events. Ironically, officers who attempt to converse with peers about stress are probably demonstrating a strong trust in their peers, but communicating directly about stress violates more than officer trust; it challenges masculine images of police officer.

The images of distressed officers are stirringly similar to descriptions of women officers, further establishing the connection between masculinity and stress management practices. Like women officers, images of distressed officers focus on their ability to handle crisis and utilize violence. Specific images immersed in “safety concerns” create the idea

that both women and distressed officers are inferior. These images evidence Connell's (1987) conception of hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity limits response patterns for officers by restricting the traits associated with masculinity. Policing supports the power of hegemonic masculinity by shunning any non-masculine traits. The positioning of traits associated with hegemonic masculinity by their nature excludes women and male officer displaying emotional weakness. Consequently, the images of distressed officers and women are strikingly similar because they both challenge the connection between hegemonic masculinity and law enforcement. Hegemonic masculinity reinforces power in law enforcement agencies by connecting these alternative images with inferiority as a "safety risk" for other officers. Like women officers, men presenting psychological difficulties become devalued in law enforcement organizations. Additionally, police culture subjects distressed individuals to increased scrutiny and general distrust by peers. Therefore, it appears that challenges to hegemonic masculinity, whether from women or men representing traits viewed as un-masculine, generates similar responses from the police culture.

The psychological reactions of women in law enforcement are complicated because of their dual status as women and police officers. This situation provides another clear example of double binds that affect only women officers. While men officers must restrict emotional responses to stress, gender further complicates expectations of women in law enforcement. On one hand, displays of emotion by women generally result in less negative sanctions in American society, consequently such displays may receive less direct negative sanctions by men. In policing, emotional reactions by women officer may actually reinforce their status as women, rejecting concerns that women officers are too "manly." However, men also utilize such behaviors as evidence that women are too emotionally fragile for law enforcement. Women are stuck in a no-win situation because of risk associated with not displaying a certain level of emotions, but also challenge hegemonic masculine power when expressing emotion. For women these situations provide another example of the complicated behavior expectations of women within the masculine code of conduct.

Most interviewees within the sample expressed discontent with the negative appraisal of distressed officers. Officers' statements frequently included verbiage expressing their desire for alternative treatment of struggling officers. For examples, respondents' answers to questions about the treatment of stressed peers started with comments like: "it shouldn't be

this way,” “I wish it wasn’t like this but,” and “I wouldn’t look down on them, but most officers would.” The negative assessment of officers displaying stress symptoms epitomizes how social action becomes social structure in an organization. Respondents talked about the negative sanctions applied to peers as an uncontrollable fact. These behaviors, so engrained in the police subculture and the corresponding psyche of individual officers, seem not to involve individual actors. In fact, officers seem powerless to prevent the negative treatment of distressed peers, and present no ill feelings toward the officers providing the harassment. In essence, officers ignore individual human agency in this situation, a strong testament to the power of police subculture.

The code of conduct among interviewees exposes the power of police subculture driving the individual behavior of officers. The sometimes-strict enforcement of this code restricts possible ways officers manage stress and burnout creating a difficult situation for officers. To avoid the label of weakness, distressed officer seeking psychological interventions must do so reluctantly under direct order of the department or in secrecy. The prevalence of the police subcultural code that denounces any signs of weakness and the utilization of psychological counseling places officers at risk to many maladaptive behaviors that ironically are more accepted in law enforcement settings than professional treatments.

Masculine Stress Management Behaviors

Interview subjects indicate a wide-range of behaviors connected with stress management practices within law enforcement. To the outsider, many of these behaviors appear maladaptive, indicating poor stress management by officers. Furthermore, these behaviors are compatible with masculine stronghold of the police subculture. For the most part these masculine responses eschew the emotional aspects of policing reinforcing gender dynamics and accomplishing masculinity. The following sections further examine stress management practices accepted in the police subculture. Law enforcement agencies formally denounce many of these techniques, particularly excessive alcohol consumption; nevertheless, they remain entrenched in this culture.

Communication about work-related incidents general takes the form of what officers describe as “war stories.” War stories are the most benign, albeit, highly masculine of the maladaptive techniques officers draw upon to manage work stress. The exchange of war

stories often occurs during binge drinking and other social occasions. A war story involves retelling law enforcement related critical events, often exaggerating details, in a way that highlights humor and removes emotion. The stress and psychological emotion of these events, particularly violent arrest or high-speed chases, are replaced with inflated masculinity.

During non-duty hours, talk about work seems to dominate conversation among officers, and many officers acknowledge that their social circle become restricted to just police officers. As one Kiowa officer stated, “job talk never goes away.” In these social settings, officers focus on stressful aspect of law enforcement but remain detached from despised emotional reactions. Most officers in the sample see war stories as a positive stress management tool. Observe the following statement by a patrol officer in Queens.

... we rehash these old stories, maybe in a way that is our way of coping with it. You know. Of course it's fun other then I don't know if I have ever had that sit down like, 'You know that this really messed with my head.'. I don't think anything that you might see in a dramatic scene in a movie, but yeah we talk about stuff all the time. I think people have to use humor sometimes about the stuff on their job.

This officer statement mirrors many observed among respondents in the sample. Officers retell work-related stories to manage stress.

What is important about the communication of war stories is that officers do not approach them as informal critical incident stress debriefings. War stories are completely action oriented, devoid of other aspects of these events. Observe this statement by a Kiowa patrol officer: “Yes, but I don't think that this was stressful, let's talk about it. It's more, 'do you remember that, and I hid in here,' it's more of telling what we did and things like that.” The previous statement affirms that story telling among officers focus on action, and in many cases directly avoid linking this practice to stress management. Officers know that story telling relieves stress, but labeling this practice as stress management could generate problems in police culture.

Interviewees also avoid labeling war stories as “touchy feely” events. When officer tell war stories they are reaffirming masculinity, not challenging it! A Kiowa patrol officers addresses this phenomenon in the following statement.

Yes, I think that anytime you get a bunch of people that work together outside of work, the conversation usually goes back to work. I think we a lot of times we use

that as kind of stuff to lift stuff off our chest. Obviously it is very informal, we don't hug and stuff like that.

During these events, officers are not looking to receive emotional support of peers; they are presenting displays of their own masculinity.

Officers amputate emotion when telling war stories, representing West and Zimmerman's conception of doing gender. Officers remove emotion, psychological stress, and physical responses equated as "womanly," replacing them with hyper-masculine attributes of fearlessness, heroism, and humor in the face of danger. Gender displays in war stories galvanizes the police subculture, while providing a venue for masculinity. Women in law enforcement receive limited support for telling war stories because peers challenge exaggerated arrest details proffered by women. One women officer in Kiowa described war stories as a "man thing." Additionally, it appears that communication of war stories often occurs during informal drinking events attended primarily by men.

Officers appear to utilize drinking as a stress coping mechanism. Nearly every officer in the sample provides some level of detail on excessive alcohol consumption of police officers. Volumes of prior research addresses this particular problem in law enforcement and these findings are not ground breaking. Two aspects of drinking in the current research extend the literature by providing additional support for the gender thesis of this project. First, the extent to which officers utilizes alcohol by providing an excuse to socialize among only other officers. This interaction in informal settings highlights police subculture. Additionally, these situations often occur during gender-segregated "shift parties." Second, drinking provides a protective factor for officers who become overly emotional because of work stress.

Police officers frequently socialize at shift parties, after-work drinking events, occurring at a selected officer's house. A Queen's officer describes shift parties in the following statement: "Not just bars, but you go to people's houses and have parties too. We have shift parties all the time where you go over to someone's house. You get off Sunday morning at 7 and you go to someone's house, drink beer, and have scrambled eggs." Shift parties, part of police subculture, establish an informal setting for officers to engage in behavior that might be sanctioned at work. Shift parties isolate officers from the outside

world reinforcing only the norms prevalent in police subculture. Officers harden negativity toward the public and us/them binary during shift parties.

Drinking also provides a built-in excuse for officer violating masculine norms by becoming overly emotional. An officer can more readily recover from emotional displays presented during alcohol-related events, assuming that such behavior does not frequently occur. Several respondents provided examples of officer who became exceptionally emotional because of alcohol consumption. In these cases, alcohol is the precipitating event and not stress from work per se. Unfortunately, officers may not recognize the extent of underlining psychological stress presented by officers during drinking binges. In fact, more than one officer referenced suicides that occurred by intoxicated officers.

Drinking and war stories provide subtle examples of work-related stress that manifest in other parts of an officer's life. Although these behaviors are indicative of unhealthy stress management and the masculinization of behavior among officers, they are also linked to two extremely damaging behaviors—excessive force and suicide.

Violence and Excessive Force

Respondents in the current sample provide limited indication of the extent of violence within the police culture in the three communities. Officers generally resisted describing violent behavior presented by their peers as excessive. Only five officers in the sample described known details of instances of violence by peers, and their comments suggest the underreporting of violent behavior by peers. Three of the five officers describing police violence were women, outsiders-within who may feel freer to discuss violent behaviors. Two reasons stand out for the lack of officer violence noted by interviewees: the specific language of violence related research questions and subjective definitions of violence prevalent in police culture.

After reviewing the questionnaire for this research, the Kiowa Police Department demanded that the word “excessively” precede questions of work violence. Kiowa administrators and the legal department, providing sound reasoning, felt that all police officers are violent as a routine aspect of their employment. Consequently, the department believed that questions of violent behavior should focus on excessive force, not general violence. Unfortunately, the phrase excessive force triggers specific, legalized language for

officers generating red flags and minimizing response patterns. Officers just hearing the word “excessive” frequently avoid providing any detail to these questions. The most common answer was a simple “no.”

Officers acquiring the police role redefine excessive force to correspond with the subjective definitions of law enforcement peers. A Kiowa officer described how his view of excessive changed after several years on the department. “When I first started I thought it was everywhere. Once I learned what they are doing and how to keep control...you have to control these situations.” The conception of excessive force becomes rather tautological for officers embracing the police subculture. An officer’s opinion that the force was necessary, by definition, negates and chance of this behavior being viewed as excessive force in police culture. It is this concern that produced the growth in citizen review boards that handle excessive force complaints against officers.

Provocation by criminal offenders justifies excessive violence in the police subculture. Officers accepting this behavior believe that using violence, even excessive force, directed at disrespectful and resistive offenders is part of the repertoire of actions available to police personnel. Observe Tamara’s comments in the following passage:

... there are so many different levels of excessive force and I think that lets say, there is kind of an unwritten rule but everyone knows it that if someone runs from you on a foot chase when you catch them, you kick their ass. I mean everyone knows it. So if someone runs from you on a foot chase and when you get to them they just lay down, when you catch up and they say I don’t want it and they lay down; I can’t think of many officers who would not punch them or rough them up. That’s excessive force cause it is more than what’s necessary and an officer who reported that (as excessive force to superiors) would probably be... that. People would not talk to him or her. Probably even to the point of not back them on calls.

Tamara’s statement speaks volumes about the acceptability of violent behavior among her peers. In certain instances, particularly foot chases, officer are allowed, even expected, to “rough up” the offender. Additionally, officers provide a protective network for peers presenting this violent behavior by marginalizing individuals who report this behavior.

Tamara statements highlight the difficulty in studying excessive force. Police organizations remain closed systems within complex norms and values. The behavior described by Tamara complements research on the acceptability of street justice in policing. In police culture, physical force becomes the norm in certain situations, with street justice

providing the moral and cultural standard to defy stated organizational rules. Officers are aware violent behavior breaches technical mandates of police organizations, but ignore these bureaucratic rules by focusing on informal rules developed by the subculture.

Street justice and excessive force present problems for entire departments. Distrust and suspicion frequently befall an officer who reports their peers for excessive violence or failure to apply force during situations where the subculture mandates violence. The acceptability of excessive force and obligation of secrecy directly fosters high stress, burnout, and obviously violent behavior. Officers reporting negative behaviors by peers become deviants in police settings, elevating their stress. Additionally, officers may experience elevated stress related to maintaining the secrecy of officers who violate organizational rules. This type of stress may particularly heighten during internal affairs investigations. Recall that the quantitative data linked stress and burnout to police internal investigations in every research model.

Chloe also provides evidence of a subculture that values violence. During her interview, she revealed that a well-liked Kiowa patrol officer named his night stick after the first person he struck with the weapon. During shifts, this officer frequently joked about using “Henry” on disruptive citizens. Chloe reports that this officer frequently joked about using the baton on his disgruntled peers, providing another example of humor shielding and projecting masculine ideals. Naming the nightstick after a victim utilizes a specific brand of dark humor, but also conveys the acceptance of violent behavior in police settings.

In regards to violence and secrecy in law enforcement, men generally distrust women officers. This phenomenon creates some pressure for women to prove their willingness to use violence. Tamara clearly articulated the pressure on women to prove themselves in physical altercations. Tamara emphasized the importance of violence barriers for women by describing a personal incident in her work environment. After returning from maternity leave, Tamara was assigned to midnights in one of the more violent areas of Kiowa. She believes that her new police comrades distrusted her. This treatment abruptly stopped after she utilized physical force with a drunken citizen. According to Tamara, during a walking patrol she observed a man arguing with his neighbors. She attempted to subdue the individual, but he became extremely violent. Tamara radioed for backup, as this citizen’s violence intensified. At one point, the man charged after Tamara. She evaded his bull-rush,

but in the process, the suspect tripped breaking several bones in his arm and face. By the time police backup arrived, the citizen was handcuffed and Tamara was providing medical attention. In Tamara's estimation, her treatment by peers instantly improved because they believed she broke this man's bones.

The increased trust experienced by Tamara provides another example of complicated behavior expectations for women officers. This example seems to violate the theoretical propositions offered by the violence as a masculine resource thesis. Further examination reveals that the primary esteem offered to Tamara was about trust in violent situations. She believes that her peers felt more comfortable in violent situations because they now trusted that she would not report excessive force by peers.

The final area of violence mentioned by respondents centered on violence as a means to control others. These limited descriptions of violence correspond nicely with the conception of violence as a resource of masculinity. Again, many officers indicate "hearing" of violent assaults by officers, but few respondents provide detailed examples. In the few cases in which officers provide details on non-work-related violence, respondents describe officers using control techniques learned at work during inappropriate time. In these cases, officers use violence to control others or resolve conflicts. All of the incidents mentioned by officers involved violence presented by men, indicating that violence remains a resource for masculinity among the respondents.

One interviewee provided a clear example of "violence as a resource" involving two conflicting officers during work hours. The two officers involved in this event frequently argued about management of work-related situations. During one particular shift, the confrontation between the officers escalated to physical violence. According to the interviewee, the combative officers decided to meet in the patrol garage resolving their dispute with a fistfight. Reminiscent of a schoolyard fist-fight, the bellicose officers congregated in the department's garage fighting to end their standstill to the encouragement of their peers. Although this event represents merely one incident, it is difficult to imagine another example more suited to the concept of violence as a masculine resource. Indeed, utilizing physical fights to express masculinity represents the epitomic gender display. The right to use physical force when managing disputes can be observed in connection to masculinity throughout American society, yet it is difficult to imagine many professions in

which two individuals fight at the end of a shift. The entanglement of law enforcement and violent behavior further internalizes the right to utilize physical force reinforcing the occupational identity of police officers. Surely, already expected violent behavior becomes exaggerated during high-stress situations in a subculture that accepts few, if any, less destructive avenues to stress management.

Officers presenting violent control techniques learned at work in non-employment situations provide another difficulty mentioned by interviewees. This type of violent controlling behavior further evidences the difficulty in separating the police role from normal life. This particular dilemma may present greater difficulty for male officers because of interwoven police role performances and masculinity. In essence, ones gender and job become closely aligned and difficult to distinguish from each other. Observe Sherry comments regarding off duty violence.

If I think about it a little bit, I think some of it is getting accustomed to on the job, people doing what you say and then going into a bar or something where you are not in a uniform and people don't care, and you are use to using physical force after you tell them to do something and they don't. So that just carries onto your personal life.

Even in non-police settings officers may apply control tactics learned at work, providing evidence that officers internalize beliefs always represent the law. Citizens, spouses, and others challenging the orders of off-duty officers violate behavior expectations of these officers setting up potential physical altercations. Alcohol consumption, stress, and critical events aggravate the tendency to become involved in violent behavior away from work.

There remains no doubt that policing, as a profession requires, at times, a degree of physical force. However, the problem of inappropriate violence links masculinity and police subcultural expectations in unnecessary and counterproductive ways. Over time, the intense normative standards that accept certain violent behavior erode the boundary between appropriate work-related force and excessive violence. The blurring of this boundary coupled with high-stress situations aggravates the potential for violence among police officers. Given few appropriate avenues to manage stress, the demands of masculinity exaggerate existing gendered behavior by heightening the potential for violence by officers.

Suicide

Suicide represents the final topic of interest in the current research project. Two of the three departments sampled were recently affected by officer suicide, and an interviewee in each department reported knowing an officer who committed suicide. These facts dramatically validate the negative consequences of stress in policing. In fact, an officer suicide significantly delayed interviews with one department. A suicide indirectly affected another police department because a collaborative agency, the local sheriff's department, had a deputy commit suicide just months prior to interviews. No officers in the current sample believe that they would take their own life, and only one officer reported even fleeting thoughts of suicide.

Despite the limited range of suicidal ideation, the majority of officers specify suicide as a concern in law enforcement. Respondents directly connect suicide to perceived high stress and low rewards of policing careers. Additionally, officers frequently point out other aggravating situations that enhanced work stress further generating the potential for officer suicide. These factors included home conflicts and excessive alcohol consumptions. Note the comments of this Monterrey patrol officer discussing the recent suicidal behavior in the sheriff's department: "It was family related which was part of his problem. It might have been more than the job...(another officer's name) alcohol was involved in that, but not with our guy." Although this officer does not deny that work stress influenced the officer's behavior, he generally indicates that family conflicts agitated the situation increasing the potential for suicide. A Kiowa officer also hinted to family difficulties as the driving force behind the suicide of his peer.

I am sure you heard that we had an officer take his own life. I was unaware that he was going through that type of situation. Two days before he did he told me that his girlfriend was playing mind games with him. We just kind of talked about it briefly but I had not inclination that ...that was even a factor.

According to respondents, in each of these cases of suicide personal problems influenced the officer's behavior. This provides another example of officers minimizing ideas that work-related stress is unmanageable.

Officers struggling with suicidal ideation may find it difficult to address these concerns with their peers because of fear of weakness. The fear of weakness thesis was thoroughly examined in an earlier section related to psychological health; however, suicide

represents the most severe outcome of this masculine behavior. Many officers in the sample believe that it would be difficult to trust an officer who presented suicidal thoughts. As with general psychological symptomology, officers are very critical of suicide, in part, because they frequently deal with the negative consequences of this decision. An officer in Queens addresses this sentiment in the following passage.

I don't have a lot compassion for people in suicidal things because I don't understand and I try to. Of course I try to put myself in lots of different people's position with the cases I work with...because I have been on hundreds of suicides. You look at the person, I can understand old people who are ill, I could understand that, but young people who leave their families traumatized and let their kids or family find them. It is just so incomprehensible to me I couldn't imagine someone doing that.

Suicidal officers may recognize few acceptable practices to address mental health concerns prior to choosing a lethal end. As indicated by the preceding officer's comments, law enforcement personnel could become less sympathetic to individuals presenting suicidal thought because they often manage the aftermath of these events. Officers experiencing suicidal ideation may believe that they have no acceptable prospects to address these unwanted thoughts and the orientation toward action prevalent in the police culture may generate an all or nothing mentality. In addition to limited emotional support for suicidal officers, the social isolation that accompanies this profession leaves many officers with no natural support systems. The potential for suicide may increase because officers feel trapped with limited chance of recovery. Police socialization influences the ways officers manage suicidal thinking generating the potential for increased suicide in an action-oriented profession. It also represents a double bind for police officers. Suicidal officers cannot participate in counseling for fear of being labeled as weak, and they cannot engage in the ultimate solution for their problems

Suicide, like most behavior in law enforcement, is a byproduct of masculine social structure. Interviews confirm that officers cannot openly discuss psychological consequences of work environments, particularly suicidal ideation, because talking about these problems with peers violates a strong code of conduct among officers. Officers revealing suicidal thoughts risk negative sanctions by peers, most notably a lack of trust. Conflicts arising within the home environment, one of few remaining support mechanisms for officers, may leave vulnerable officers with no place to reveal suicidal thoughts.

The current sample provides only limited information of suicide among police officers. Although each department was affected by the suicide of an officer, it remains unclear if law enforcement officers are at greater risk to commit suicide. Many interviewees admit that suicide is a problem for policing, but this evidence is far from conclusive. However, the interviews provide strong evidence that behavioral expectations of individual officers become immersed in a police subculture that generates specific beliefs about appropriate stress management practices. These stress-management practices create the potential for highly self-destructive behavior, like suicide, because officers cannot openly seek professional help or confide in peers when experiencing extreme depression or suicidal ideation. As with other maladaptive behaviors in law enforcement, it appears the risk of suicide links masculine organizational behavior to individual problems.

Summary Remarks

Interviews in three Midwest police departments provide evidence for stress among law enforcement officers. Officers in each department detail numerous critical incidents, administrative conflicts, and job requirements that generate stress for officers. Officers acknowledge job stress but carefully avoid providing evidence of psychological or emotional weakness. Officers showing psychological difficulty related to police work violate a strong masculine code of conduct and risk negative treatment by peers. The dual status of women complicates their responses to job stress. This dynamic generates a double bind for women officers who must betray one status regardless of their actions. Emotional responses by women officers support beliefs of men that women are unfit for psychological difficulties of policing. Exceptions to this condition occur when women are utilized as emotional labor.

Evidence derived from interviews with officers supports the gendered theoretical framework of this research. In particular, gendered interactions, images, and division of labor in law enforcement conform to the theory of a gendered organization. Images of female officers correspond to matrons, the early role occupied by women in law enforcement. Women officers are expected to care for children, delinquents, and female victims regardless of individual skills. The subtle interactions between officers and the belief in natural feminine instincts maintain certain aspects of patrol work as masculine.

Gendered interactions within law enforcement are the byproduct of gendered images and the existing division of labor. Gendered interactions include formal interactions occurring between officers as routine aspects of their job, off-duty relations between department members, and gendered interactions that occur between the public and law enforcement officers. Interactions convey ideas about the connection between policing and masculinity by showcasing masculinity and subordinating women.

The social structure in law enforcement directly shapes officer behavior. The treatment of women, stress management practices, officer violence, and even suicide are linked to masculine beliefs about appropriate law enforcement behavior. In accordance with Connell's hegemonic masculinity, and West and Zimmerman's doing gender conceptions, police behavior represents the by-product of masculine power in law enforcement organizations. Chapter 6 will further explore the contributions of these findings to literature on police stress and violence.

CHAPTER -6- Gender Dynamics in Police Stress Development

This research focuses on stress, burnout, and violent behavior by law enforcement officers. Existing research on police stress frequently concentrates on critical event stress, organizational structure, and psychological exhaustion as sources of self-destructive behavior by police officers. Findings of this research confirm that critical events, organizational relationships, and burnout matter in police behavior. The story, however, is far from complete. Deeply masculinized police culture, a topic rarely addressed in existing research, profoundly influences and interacts with each of these factors known to be associated with police behavior. This chapter clarifies and extends the theoretical framework for studying gendered organizations, underscoring how a particular version of gender dynamics shapes police agencies. Results of the empirical investigation provide a deeper understanding of the impact of hyper-masculinity on officer behavior and organizational outcomes, and reveal mechanisms for managing stress and burnout. In turn, this study offers suggestions for healthy adaptations to police culture, and contributes toward future academic endeavors on police stress.

Using both qualitative and quantitative approaches, this research explores stress and burnout among police officers, applying gender theory to explain how gender dynamics shape stress and burnout in police organizations. While previous research in this area primarily relies on surveys, this research utilizes officer interviews to explore connections among stress, burnout, and gendered dynamics in law enforcement agencies. The stress section delves into officers' perception of work stress, the influence of community structures on officer stress, and how organizations influence strain and management of anxiety. Directly interviewing officers significantly extends prior stress research by allowing officers to define and describe stress and burnout in their own words. In particular, the current research illuminates concerns with using psychological or emotional verbiage when describing stress responses. Although officer descriptions of stress responses correspond to clinical terms in psychological literature, officers avoid applying such labels to their own behavior. As only one example, this discovered resistance by officers underscores the need for a more dynamic view of the gendering process than is offered by Acker's theory of gendered organizations. The next section describes ways in which this study extends the

theory of gendered organizations and provides insight into how individuals participate in its maintenance.

Theoretical Considerations

A key question examines whether police departments exhibit characteristics of gendered organizations as proffered by Acker (1990). The gendered organization framework introduces a theoretical orientation that extends beyond current police stress literature, providing a systematic examination of gendered police stress. Three components of Acker's theory of gendered organizations are directly applied to police organizations in the current study. The first is the division of labor by gender, specifically that men and women perform different tasks within an organization, and that these tasks are perceived as masculine or feminine oriented. Second, the research focuses on utilization of images that account for cultural ideas about masculinity and femininity. In police organizations, these images account for organizational behavior based on gender essentialism, or biological inevitability. Employing a third component of Acker's theory, this research explores how gender guides social interactions among people within police organizations.

Acker's theory provides a framework for studying gendered organizational behavior, and law enforcement organizations fit seamlessly within the gendered organizational concept. Police organizations undoubtedly correspond to mechanisms espoused by Acker's gendered organizations, and only the military stands as an equal to law enforcement organizations in their adherence to a virtually exclusively masculinized environment. Despite the analytical merits of Acker's theory, the current research significantly extends her framework in three ways. First, this research applies Acker's concept to explain an observable phenomenon among individuals within a gendered organization—specifically management of stress. Second, the current research directly connects specific aspects of hyper-masculine organization to behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs of individuals, whether male or female. Third, the inclusion of other prominent concepts of gender theory—hegemonic masculinity and doing gender—incorporates power dynamics and infuses a more explicitly action-based element into the theory of gendered organization.

A second major element of gender theory in this research is Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, capturing the power element vital to analyzing the raw force valued

in police culture. Hegemonic masculinity establishes the gender relations between men and women, allowing for differentiation based on essentialist qualities. This idea of a ruling-type of masculinity extends Acker's theory and this research by making sense of a mandate toward physical and emotional toughness in the heavily male-dominated world of policing. Interviews with officers establish that police organizational structures support hegemonic masculinity, and non-masculine traits represent violations of police culture. Thus, hegemonic masculinity also defines relationships among men. This research demonstrates that police officers, as a rule, reject femininity but also alternative forms of masculinity. At the most extreme, this means rejecting acts or ideas even faintly perceived as connected to homosexuality, but also signs of sensitivity or perceived weakness.

The concept of doing gender as developed by West and Zimmerman (1987) represents another extension to the theory of gendered organizations. Doing gender involves creating supposed differences between men and women, and the use of these differences to justify gender essentialism. The doing gender framework adds action to the theory of gendered organizations by emphasizing the importance of everyday behavior tied to work duties. Masculinity and femininity become associated with particular behaviors, pursuits, and social interactions, thus resulting in a seemingly "natural" understanding of differences between men and women. In the current research, gender displays involve restricting emotion, using excessive force, and off-duty masculine interactions. Both men and women officers who do not perform according to the narrowly defined "doing masculinity, doing violence" script do not succeed as "real" police officers. Doing gender and performing police activities interconnect and reinforce so-called common sense assumptions about police officers and the connection of policing to masculinity.

The theoretical considerations revisited in the preceding paragraphs shape the analysis of both exploratory and explanatory questions developed prior to conducting this research. The primary exploratory questions, examined through qualitative interviews relates to how gender influences behavior in modern law enforcement. The effects of gender are widely examined in prior research, but much of this literature concentrates on the early transition of women to patrol duties. The current research employs these gender theoretical propositions, which have not been thoroughly tested through empirical evaluation, nor openly applied to police organizations.

The explanatory concentration of this research focuses on the connection between gender dynamics in law enforcement and the development of stress, burnout, and violent behavior, as demonstrated in the quantitative analysis of the Baltimore data. The project specifically delves into stress, burnout, and violent behavior by applying the gendered framework proffered in Chapter 1. In fact, gender influences intertwine in virtually every aspect of law enforcement, providing relevancy to the theoretical orientation of this project. For instance, masculine culture affects stress management and individual responses to high stress among officers. The key findings section will further explicate the importance of gender by highlighting key findings and by applying this innovative theoretical framework.

Key Findings

Both the qualitative and quantitative portions of this research identify specific factors that influence stress, burnout, and violent behavior by officers. The factors influencing stress and burnout among officer include organizational structures, critical event stress, and maladaptive stress management practices. Gender dynamics of law enforcement influence each of these traditional causes of stress and burnout. The following sections review key findings of organizational stress, critical event stress, and poor stress management practices in law enforcement. Furthermore, this gendered theoretical orientation sharpens the focus of prior research, allowing a more critical analysis of stress and burnout by officers.

Organizational Structure and Police Stress

Bureaucratic structures appear to influence officer stress and burnout in the quantitative models, and interviews provide strong statements of distrust between officers and administration in larger departments. This particular finding supports prior research indicating that larger complex police organizations generate additional stress beyond social problems associated with policing urban settings. Prior survey data fail to capture the extent of animosity toward administration prevalent among field officers in this sample, and the current study also identifies mechanisms through which bureaucratic-related stress works.

Officers employed in Kiowa and Queens provide a scorching critique of their respective administrations. Although interviews in rural settings included only four field officers, the interviewees did not present the intense contempt toward their chief that was

consistently evident in the larger agencies. Many urban officers articulated fervent distrust toward administration. A primary source of this distrust relates to “double-talking” from ranking officials. Recall Joe’s statement that “nobody will give you a straight answer” within his department. The difficulty in getting “straight answers” from ranking officials generates concerns that administrators change rules to benefit certain individuals.

Some officers imply that gender influences the promotion process and treatment by administrators because of masculine networking and off-duty interactions among officers. Interviewees reference a “good old boys” system that implicates masculine power structures. The good old boy system results in officers believing that administrators support and promote their friends to ensure that organizational practices remain unchanged. Officers seeking promotions and wishing to avoid disciplinary sanctions must learn the “play the game.” This game playing intimates favoritism within these departments, sparking powerful resentment toward police decision makers. A “good-old-boys” system implies men protecting men, thus ensuring masculine power within an organization. Perhaps just as important, the “good old boy” system protects only certain kinds of men—the fishing, hunting, and drinking buddies involved in segregated gendered interactions. This masculine social networking advantages certain men by allowing them extended informal access to administrators. Certainly, these conflicts generate additional stress for officers, but they also affect gender dynamics within the department.

Women and men officers simply disagree on how an officer’s gender influences one’s treatment within these departments. Men allude to gender being an advantage for women, but avoid applying strong language to this assessment. Recall the following statement by a Kiowa officer: “I am sure some might say that whenever a female or a minority gets promoted there is always the thing that they went down on the promotional list to get them.” Such assertions challenge not only the promotion of an individual woman, but all women promoted within the organization. Many women reference beliefs that departmental promotions offer a method to maintain masculine power within an organization. Women, in particular, thought that the department was inequitable in promoting women to positions of authority regardless of merit. As noted with the Baltimore data, women and men perceive the influences of gender on police work environments quite differently. As has been

reiterated in many other studies, one would assume that the minority group is more aware of bias, and the majority group is either unable or unwilling to recognize bias.

Gender dynamics within larger bureaucratic organizations appear to influence views of equity, and more importantly officer stress. These findings have important implications for stress research because officers in larger departments have greater related to organizational behavior, which may intensify gendered behavior.

Critical Events and Officer Stress

Quantitative findings and officer interviews suggest the prevalence of stress related to critical events. Critical events such as shootings, conducting violent arrests, and knowing the victim of a crime are directly linked to both physical and psychological stress in statistical modeling. Interview data reported displayed both psychological and physical stress resulting from critical events, supporting similar findings to the quantitative models. Despite the infrequency of these situations, the current findings strongly support the salience of critical event stress among law enforcement officers. Interviewees easily recall their high stress reactions to critical incidents, particularly events involving injury to a child.

Descriptions of psychological and physical responses to critical events extend literature on stress in law enforcement because they provide extensive detail not present in survey research. Interviewees offered strong accounts of their responses to critical events. Recall Larry's reports of stress after working a child death in Monterrey. Larry provides a telling example of psychological responses to critical event stress with the following remarks: "Just dealing with how badly she was torn-up... for like almost a week you could go home and couldn't close your eyes without seeing the child." Larry's statement provides a haunting example of the power of critical events. The torment Larry carries with him resulting from handling this child's mangled body was unmistakable, even during a short interview. Working with child victims represent one category of critical events that particularly stand out to officers. Gripping imagery provides just one example of how ethnographic interviews improve existing literature on critical incident stress. Statements such as Larry's capture emotional and psychological responses to critical events that, quite simply, survey instruments cannot similarly match.

The importance of qualitative research in capturing emotion is fairly obvious. Its role in examining a gender order is much more subtle, yet even more critical in developing a comprehensive framework and gender analysis. Identifying ways in which gender shapes the management of critical event stress represents a significant finding of this research. Prior literature on police stress fails to incorporate gender issues, at least in the interactive and structural manner provided by contemporary gender theory. This investigation demonstrates that police stress responses are embedded in a deep-seated and powerful gender system, and cannot easily be explained by just examining high stress events. This research extends the stress literature by addressing the fundamental relationship of masculine police culture to critical incident stress. Masculine police culture renders many formalized techniques, such as critical incident stress debriefings, to be highly ineffective treatment for distressed officers. This particular finding has tremendous value in regards to developing programs to contend with stress among officers.

“Doing gender” aspects of police culture appear particularly relevant to management of critical event stress. In many cases, officers redefine responses indicative of critical incident stress, preferring to remove any indication that they experienced emotional difficulties. Shortly after Larry described seeing the haunting image of the dead child, he denied experiencing any psychological difficulties from his job. Officers recount intense critical events, while still refuting concerns over their psychological health. Police culture forces officers to “keep stuff like that to themselves.” This restriction on emotional displays within police culture leaves little chance for officers to develop normal emotional health. Officers in the sample clearly articulate masculine behavioral expectations in police work, requiring officers to avoid talking about stress.

Curiously, the connection to child victims suggests a female-gendered area, even as defined by officers, but male officers quickly identify these as high stress incidents. At the same time, men officers typically refuse any counseling to deal with stress, often intimating that counseling is beyond the realm of “real men” activities. These strongly gendered findings reveal the contradictions and struggles of a gender order that sometimes disadvantages its strongest advocate—the macho “tough guy.”

The “tough guy” persona prevalent in police culture allows very limited reactions to critical events, and “war stories” provide a precise example of how officers manage stress

while maintaining their rightful place in highly masculine police culture. The exchange of war stories often occurs during binge drinking and other social settings, and involves rehashing law enforcement events. Officers replace the psychological distress and emotion naturally attached to critical events with inflated masculinity. Interviewees report that war stories are not “touchy feely,” and officers don’t “hug and stuff like that.” During war stories, officers receive the support of peers while presenting displays of masculinity. Officers remove emotion, psychological stress, and physical responses associated with femininity, replacing these attributes with expressions of masculinity. Gender displays through war stories provide an important venue for the transmission of masculine values.

Gendered images and behavior by officers, such as war stories, compounds critical event stress by restricting stress management practices to those readily accepted in the police subculture. Unrealistic masculinized images of officers create the potential for burnout, violence, and suicide because officers cannot seek professional or informal assistance. Police officers shun departmental programs offering free and confidential psychological services because they fear reprisals from peers. This masculine code of conduct directs nearly every behavior among officers, particularly men officers.

Maladaptive Responses to Police Stress

Maladaptive behaviors frequently develop among officers overwhelmed by law enforcement-related job stress. Interviews with the current sample targeted three specific attempts reactions stress: burnout, violence, and suicide. As with critical event and organizational stress, the crux of this research applies gender theory to account for the formation, aggravation, and maintenance of specific and highly gendered reactions to law enforcement stress.

Burnout represents one negative consequence of officer stress. Definitions of officer burnout vary widely, and the extent of burnout among officers is not consistently clear in the literature. The current research allows officers to define burnout according to the standards prevalent in police culture. Additionally, interviewees articulate their own explanations for the development of burnout, as well as harmful consequences of burnout for police work environments. Again, prior research, generally reliant on self-report surveys, has not allowed officers to describe their own assessment of burnout.

Interviewees describe burnout in either behavioral or attitudinal terms. Behavioral manifestations of burnout include failure to perform certain tasks and angry outbursts on the job. According to respondents, officers suffering from burnout slack away from their responsibilities and avoid interactions with the community. Officers experiencing burnout “sink into obscurity” and avoid normal law enforcement routines. Interviewees also reference emotional outburst directed at the public, friends, or family as a behavioral problem observed among burnouts. For example, Rick voiced behavioral concern in this statement: “The way they handle it, in other words potential outburst with the public or with or taking it home to the family and taking it out on their spouse or kids.” Another maladaptive behavior mentioned among burnouts involves excessive consumption of alcohol. Police culture readily accepts drinking as a customary practice. However, interviewees draw distinctions between normal drinking and alcohol consumed because of burnout. Officers keenly point out that alcohol aggravates work difficulties and is directly linked to family conflicts.

The primary focus of this research was to extend the literature on police stress by incorporating gender dynamics in maladaptive behaviors of officers. The masculine stronghold in law enforcement particularly affects burnout and other destructive behaviors. Gendered organizational conduct establishes a connection between masculinity and negative practices among officers. Masculine social structures in law enforcement agencies leave few avenues for officers to manage stress, and informal police culture frequently accepts many negative behaviors presented by stressed officers.

Excessive force, commonly linked to burnout, represents the most disconcerting behavior associated with officer stress. Findings in both the qualitative and quantitative portions of this research establish that gendered police culture directly and circuitously affects the use of violence by officers. This finding stands as an important aspect of this research because it establishes that high stress alone does not account for officer behavior. Recall Tamara’s statement that officers are expected to use violence with suspects that flee or elude officers. Police culture allows officers to “punch” or “rough up” detainees to relieve stress during these events. These findings support the conception of violence as a resource and its connection to law enforcement. Ironically, it appears that one of the major negative byproducts of stress, violent behavior, garners more acceptance among officers within the sample than receiving psychological help. Violence bolsters masculinity whereas

psychological distress involving professional help challenges the stronghold of masculinity on law enforcement. This masculine code of conduct directs nearly every behavior among officers, particularly men officers.

Interviewees directly connect the right to use violence with both masculinity and officer behavior. Officers' collective masculine identity connects violent behavior with the occupation's persona. Respondents describe instances in which men officers use force to manage suspects without exhausting alternative methods. Recall Sherry's comments that the "macho" perspective results in officers "plowing" people when verbal techniques can adequately control individuals. She described this phenomenon as differences in the "perspectives" of men and women officers, but her comments easily support the idea of violence as a resource, and one in which men officers find value in reinforcing their own standing with peers.

The dilemma of improper violence links masculinity and police cultural expectations in a needless and detrimental way. The intense normative standards, accepting of violent behavior, erode the boundary between appropriate control tactics and excessive force. The blurring of this boundary coupled with high stress situations exacerbates the potential for violence by officers. The right to utilize violence to manage "criminals" fundamentally changes officers' views on excessive force. Officers become accustomed to violence as a resource of masculinity and policing. The normalization of this behavior and acquisition of the police role allows officers to redefine excessive force to correspond with the masculine culture of law enforcement. Using Sherry's word, policing readily accepts the male "perspective" when choosing appropriate action. Stated differently by another officer, law enforcement officers have "learned what they are doing and how to keep control." This officer provided the previous quote in regards to how his views on excessive force changed after becoming an officer. Officers accepting this behavior believe that using violence, even excessive force, directed at criminal offenders is part of the repertoire of actions available to police personnel. In police culture, physical force becomes the norm in many situations.

Statements of interviewees also evidence that the masculine subculture of policing values violent behavior. Officers name nightsticks after victims, fistfight during shifts, and generally joke about violent behavior. Violence becomes more than a simple control technique: this behavior interweaves with masculine police life. This fact becomes so

ingrained in police culture that some officers have difficulty controlling violent behavior away from work; it becomes normative and thus, even expected. The intertwined nature of police role performances and masculinity may present greater difficulty in controlling violent behavior of men. Comments indicate that men officers become accustomed “to using physical force after you tell [somebody] to do something and they don’t.” Away from work, alcohol consumption, stress, and critical events aggravate these violent tendencies.

Self-directed violence, in the form of suicide, represents the final maladaptive officer behavior in the current research project. Despite the fact that two of the three departments recently dealt with an officer suicide, interviewees seemed reluctant to address this topic. From a theoretical standpoint, the reluctance of officers to discuss suicide supports the power of masculinity in police culture. Respondents frequently assessed suicide as an individual failure resulting from problems that extend beyond law enforcement.

Officers repeatedly reference aggravating situations as the true cause of peer suicides. In particular, disruptive home environments and alcohol abuse showcase the “true” triggers of suicidal events in Kiowa and Monterrey. Interviewees report that “personal problems” bring about the officer’s fatal behavior. Framing suicide as a personal failure avoids attaching any social context to individual behavior. This phenomenon provides evidence of a peculiar contradiction among respondents’ statements. On one hand, officers believe that suicide is a problem in the law-enforcement community. This belief indicates that officers support opinions that social aspects of policing influence individual behavior. Conversely, respondents quickly attached individual difficulties to each suicide within their respective departments. This particular phenomenon may relate to the protection of violence in policing, in this case self-inflicted violence. The police environment encourages violent behavior, yet when individual officers present excessive force, the overall structure is protected because the focal point of this problem is an individual officer. A similar reaction appears relevant to suicide. The police culture and organizational environment is not culpable in the world of highly-valued hegemonic masculinity; it is the unhealthy officer that failed to control his own behavior. The current interview narratives cannot support a definite conclusion regarding this speculation; nevertheless, this particular assertion could prove an area for future research.

As with general psychological weakness, suicidal officers may recognize few acceptable practices to address mental health concerns. Suicide, like most behavior in law enforcement, is a byproduct of masculine social structure. Interviews confirm that officers cannot openly discuss psychological consequences of law enforcement, including suicidal ideation, without severely jeopardizing their acceptance in the police culture. Officers openly talking about psychological problems with peers violates hegemonic masculine images of police officers. Peers sanction officers revealing suicidal ideation by applying the “safety concern” label. In general, suicide is a subject matter that officers chose to ignore, despite the relative prevalence and extremely negative results of this behavior.

Both quantitative and qualitative findings provide powerful indications that gender dynamics shape nearly every aspect of officer behavior and psychological health. In quantitative models, proxy variables for the treatment of women link stress, burnout, and officer violence. The qualitative interviews strongly affirm that police organizations remain highly gendered. Gendered images of men and women reinforce beliefs about masculinity and femininity. Most notably, officers equate specific law enforcement tasks, like making arrest and serving warrants, with masculinity. Women, irrespective of their professional training and even despite heroics, are slotted into gender-specific niches in policing that correspond to the popular cultural beliefs about femininity. Finally, gendered interactions protect and regenerate the association between policing and masculinity. The core theoretical assertions of this research are supported, and findings reveal the power of gender dynamics in law enforcement settings. The remaining sections of this chapter will explore implications and extensions of these findings.

Masculinity and Power in Police Organizations

The power of hegemonic masculinity stands out as a theoretical consideration in this research. Hegemonic masculinity refers to Connell’s (1987) belief that not only do men dominate women, but also that a ruling “tough” brand of masculinity establishes the gender relations within society. The power of images reinforces hegemonic masculinity by establishing a gendered hierarchy dominated by tough physical masculine power. As such, hegemonic masculinity not only establishes the gender relations between sexes, it also

manipulates interactions among men by subordinating alternative forms of masculinity (Connell 1987).

Hegemonic masculinity is certainly evident in the current research. Both the organizational structure and interactions among officers supports hegemonic masculinity. Women are dominated by the power of hegemonic masculinity in these police agencies. Images, interactions, and organizational behavior limit the power of women primarily because of the incapability of femininity and hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculine traits preclude any association with femininity, resulting in the general belief that women cannot function in masculine situations. Hegemonic masculinity closely aligns with heterosexual power, and also excludes homosexual masculinity from gaining acceptance.

Hegemonic masculinity also structures the power relations of individual men, particularly in connection with stress management. Interviewees report that men can display few, if any, emotional reactions to high stress events. Instead of actively dealing with the natural consequences of this stressful career, hegemonic power forces men to maintain a fearless demeanor. Interviews with both men and women described the powerful code of conduct that controls appropriate behavioral responses of distressed officers. Drinking, war stories, and violence do not threaten masculine power, and therefore are acceptable stress management practices. Most men accept hegemonic masculinity as natural, a logical conclusion given their gender and relationship between policing and masculine power, but men officers viewed this masculine stronghold on stress management as problematic. Despite concern that officers cannot present human emotion, most report a sense of powerlessness in regards to changing the treatment of distressed officers. This masculine supremacy removes beliefs about the strength of human agency, limiting demands for change from individual officers.

Officers also exercise power through physical force, a not-so-subtle example of doing masculinity. Police culture defines excessive force differently from the general public and even from stated organizational classifications of this behavior. The utilization of violence to manage disputes and handle volatile situations is about power, specifically masculine power. This power represents more than just violence directed at the victim of police excessive force; it controls the behavior of nonviolent officers by demanding secrecy and loyalty. Officers must remain complicit with violent peers, further demonstrating the power of

masculine police culture. During high stress times, such as arresting a fleeing suspect, violent power is at its zenith.

The masculine power structure in law enforcement shapes stress, burnout, and even suicide among officers. Highly stressed officers can display masculine stress responses ranging from internalizing psychological discomfort to violently acting out with detainees, spouses, or peers. Officers paint the majority of these behaviors as negative, but acceptable, even mandated, in police culture. Crying, seeking professional help, and confiding in peers violate masculine police behaviors, frequently resulting in strong sanctions by peers. Police culture primarily rejects these help-seeking behaviors because they suggest crossing-over behavior into cultural views of feminine behavior. These social arrangements in police organizations explain why risk of violent behavior increases during critical events or high stress situations. Any challenge to the authority of officers, both on and off duty, disregards masculine power, generating the potential for violence.

Power and masculinity interweave in police organizations, becoming nearly indistinguishable. Officers must project a certain image that corresponds to masculinity and popular cultural ideas about police officers. Doing gender in policing requires men to display their masculinity in distinctive and sometimes self-destructive ways. Although women also face the pressure to represent masculine ideals, power structures in law enforcement culture control women by demeaning their abilities and through their general subordination.

Difficulty in Changing Images of Police Women

Interviews provide strong indications that social structure and individual actions of policing are shaped by gender. The current study examines three components of a gendered organization--gender interactions, division of labor, and images—applying the theory to highly masculinized organizations. These gendered organizational factors strongly intermingle, resulting in difficulty in distinguishing one factor from the other. However, gendered images of women in policing appear as the clearest theoretical considerations.

Susan Martin's (1980) research on women entering law enforcement in the late 1970s found that popular cultural beliefs about women directly influenced the perception and treatment of women officers by their male peers. These women entered patrol functions in

Washington, D.C., following an organizational mandate requiring an increased presence of women in patrol capacities. For the most part, men officers viewed these women as a liability, believing they lack the physical size to contain violent offenders. Unfortunately, images of women officers have changed little in nearly thirty years since Martin conducted her research. Research findings reveal the staying power of gender specific images of women police officers. Images of women officers spotlight beliefs about their physical inferiority and ideas that women have a proclivity toward emotion. These images of female officers correspond to law enforcement tasks managed by matrons, the early predecessor to modern women officers. Matrons primarily managed juvenile delinquents, female offenders, and ill prisoners.

A gender order prevails only when supported through interaction. Men frequently generate negative images of women officers as inferior in the absence of real women or observed failures. Fears that women could falter in physical fights prevail among male officers in the sample, despite the fact that no officer could provide specific examples of women failing to arrest a violent suspect or placing others in harms way. In some cases, officers made gender specific assumptions about women despite only peripheral contact with female officers. This phenomenon illustrates the power of gender dynamics in American society and their trickle-down effect on law enforcement. Men draw upon strong stereotypes of women prevalent in American culture to assess the attributes of their feminine coworkers. However, these ideas are even more entrenched in a male-dominated environment where they find fewer challenges. This dynamic partially explains why images of women officers have changed little in three decades.

Gendered images of women work insidiously, even in imagined situations. Modern law enforcement equipment and training surely minimizes concerns that women cannot handle violent situations, yet these images remain prevalent years after women entered patrol functions. One male officer recounted the success of a woman officer in a traditionally male patrol setting, specifically the Queens Bar district, without truly challenging the image of women as physical liabilities. Focusing on the size and physical strength of women deflects concerns about physical capabilities of men officers. Departments employ men of various abilities, yet no officers in the sample reference concerns over the physical ability of men.

Envisioning women officers as inferior in certain task represents a subtle manifestation of masculine power.

Given the reciprocal relationship between images and gendered division of labor, the relevancy of masculine power is evident. Several women report exclusion from certain tasks, such as serving warrants or as members of crisis teams (commonly referred to as SWAT teams). Administrators' comments did not connect images of women to specific job assignments; however, enough officers made this association to conclude that gender remains a focal point when making assignments. The images of women may subtly justify their exclusion from certain law enforcement duties.

Does the exclusion of women from certain tasks represent misguided chivalry? Some respondents seemed to indicate that segregating women from certain assignments, like walking patrols in violent settings, is a natural manifestation of chivalry; men acting to protect women from exposure to violence. The safety of women officers—in both practice and imagery—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. Participation in warrant and SWAT teams lingers as a masculine endeavor that separates ordinary officers from the truly fearless “tough guys” of policing. This behavior safeguards masculinity in police work environments by preserving certain positions. The other side of this relationship is that masculine power also “protects” men from matronly tasks within the organization. This protective action helps preserve the hierarchy of power in police organizations, and it is particularly noteworthy given that few women advance to the highest levels of law enforcement administration. Is shielding women from certain tasks misguided chivalry? On the contrary, this masculinized decision-making is guided chivalry.

While changing the image of women officers seems an insurmountable task, this research yields some important directives for progress. On one level, infusing more women into traditional masculine sections of law enforcement appears to be a logical solution to change. However, interviews with officers illustrate a number of potential problems associated with expanding the number of women in masculinized police settings. The marginalization of women in nontraditional settings generates many hassles for women willing to explore law enforcement careers. This dynamic, in part, explains the lag in the

number of women in law enforcement compared to other conventionally masculine employment sectors, such as law and medicine. Among the current samples, no department has more than 7% women, and Monterrey has no women officers. Department administrators should more actively enforce the spirit of existing harassment rules in order to promote behavioral changes by officers. Departments should actively recruit women to these sectors, but also complement hiring efforts with support for women officers by strictly sanctioning hyper-masculine behavior designed to marginalize them.

Police departments, criminal justice educators, and American society in general must actively aid in changing negative images of women officers. Recall that negative images of women persist, with no equivalent example for men, despite countless instances of women succeeding in difficult situations. Women seeking masculine assignments face strict scrutiny and questions about their motives, sexuality, and general ability. With effort, the decidedly negative image of women officers can adapt to fit with the many accomplishments of women in law enforcement. Changing images occurs when properly supported by political and cultural power. The image of “Rosie the Riveter” stands as an example of almost instantaneous change in the image of women workers during World War II. Popular cultural images of these women changed because of direct attempts to attract them to industrial labor. As but one example, no equivalent efforts exist in criminal justice sectors. Although a campaign of the magnitude of Rosie the Riveter is hard to envision, even a scaled-back version could alter the images of women officers. As women continue to gain acceptance and prove their merits in policing, their corresponding images should improve.

Policy Implications

Designing effective policy to address stress, burnout, and violence by officers remains a difficult, but possible, undertaking. Interviews with officers provide sufficient detail on ignored policies existing in each organization. The pervasive police culture and the stranglehold of masculine power question the effectiveness of any formal organizational policy. Despite this limitation, some policies have addressed organizational behavior and influenced the police subculture. True change must address both official policies and informal practices in police organizations

Changing the gender composition of police organizations could effectively alter the police subculture by fundamentally changing gender dynamics. It is hard to imagine police organizations containing the same masculine persona with women making up 50% of the gender composition. Police behavior will be altered with a 20% or even 15% increase in women officers. Certainly, gendered behavior in white-collar employment sectors has changed with the increased presence of women in professional sectors. Even the small influx of women officers has promoted cursory changes in police culture.

Current attempts at recruitment and retention of women do not denote the potential for a significant increase of women officers in the immediate future. A full-court recruiting press could significantly alter gender dynamics and police culture. Recruiting campaigns should include several components targeting women. Public service advertising and school training programs are examples of educational programs that will potentially increase women officers. Additionally, media coverage could encourage women to seek police careers through positive television, movie, and even video game images.

Increasing the number of women in law enforcement may require several aggressive policies. One aggressive technique could offer free college tuition or student loan repayment for women seeking law enforcement careers. The federal government employs similar tactics when recruiting military personnel. Women enrolling in these programs would have a significant portion of their college expenses covered if they agree to serve a predetermined number of years as police officers. The most aggressive attempt to increase women in policing would involve legal mandates requiring a certain percentage of women. A legal mandate could connect law enforcement funding, either federal or state, to the phased changes in gender composition of police organizations. Organizations failing to employ enough women could have a significant portion of their funds withheld. These tactics appear rather aggressive, but similar strategies have worked in governing racial integration in education and the business sector. Ultimately, changing masculine law enforcement culture will increase the health among officers and entire communities.

Changing the power associated with masculine practices in law enforcement should also focus on altering aspects of police culture through individual human agency. This could occur by policies designed to reduce loyalty among officers. Although not expressively explored in this dissertation, officers indicate that secrecy and loyalty was reduced in Kiowa

and Queens because of a specific policy. The policy requires automatic termination of any officers lying to administration. Respondents in both communities provided examples of officers terminated for misleading administration by covering the misdeeds of peers. In these circumstances, officers are not required to maintain loyalty because it threatens their livelihood. This provides one example of a policy that influenced police culture.

Mandating psychological counseling following all critical events and random appointments among officers in high-stress positions might also influence stress management practices. Several departments already require limited psychological screenings following critical events. For example, Monterrey mandates a phone consultation with a psychologist for all officers shooting an offender in the line of duty. Given the disdain for therapy in the police culture, few officers receive intervention beyond the required phone interview. A more proactive policy could require several visits with a therapist following any critical event, and further require periodic therapeutic consultation for officers in high stress positions. Individual officers will certainly resist this policy; however, it will allow them to access therapy without the stigma of psychological weakness. In effect, the departmental policy becomes the justification for seeking psychological help. Interviewees' willingness to discuss their stress and burnout during the course of this research provides some evidence that officers will discuss stress. Mandated counseling may provide one avenue for change.

Extensions and Concluding Remarks

The foremost purpose of this research was to study law enforcement as gendered organizations. An expanded gender theoretical framework extends police stress literature and offers suggestions for future empirical applications. No organization in American society, save for the military, represents the clarity of gender dynamics offered by police departments. Evidence derived from interviews and statistical analysis supports the gendered theoretical framework of this research. Several contributions of this research offer extensions for both gender theory, literature on psychological health of police officers, and the sociological literature on gendered organizations. Two specific areas should be explored in greater detail in future projects. First, research should assess how officers redefine violence in police culture. Second, this study calls for a more detailed examination of joking behavior as described by officers in this sample.

Explorations of officer violence deserve further analysis in future research. I previously detailed requirements by the police departments in this study that restricted some of my findings about the use of violence. Specifically, the legal department in Kiowa required that I include the word “excessive” in questions about violence. For officers, it appears that the phrase “excessive violence” triggers descriptions of exact legal terms. In essence, I was asking if they knew of officers that should have their employment terminated for violating formal policy. This question certainly garnered restricted responses from most officers. Despite the cautionary language of this question, though, several officers provided evidence that police culture helps individuals redefine excessive force.

After transcribing interviews and coding responses, several avenues to address officer violence became apparent. One potentially fruitful area of research on officer violence might explore the shift in officers’ beliefs about excessive force. Respondents in this survey provided unsolicited statements that officers’ perceptions of excessive force change with years of employment. Directly asking officers about changes in their beliefs on excessive force might provide stronger evidence for acceptability of violence in police culture. Another approach could ask officers if the public would view certain behaviors as excessively violent. This may provide detail on the different perceptions of violence among police officers. Ultimately, a longitudinal study of police attitudes and behavior regarding violence would yield great insight into the development of norms about violence as well as potential critical points and interventions.

Another important further exploration should examine joking behavior among law enforcement officers. Gendered joke telling was evident in both qualitative and quantitative data; such joking behavior presents a perfect shield for masculinity. In qualitative interviews, jokes were readily mentioned, despite the fact that no questions directly addressed the use of humor among officers. Men officers in particular described interactions between officers as using locker room humor. Failing to anticipate or explore the exact details and verbiage of these jokes stands out as a shortcoming of my interviews. Recalling the author’s experiences in men’s locker rooms, it is imagined that demeaning words describing women’s body parts and homosexuality may stand as the centerpieces of these jokes, thus reinforcing a particular brand of hegemonic masculinity.

The power of humor seemed evident throughout my research process. Recall that I opened Chapter 1 with a quote from one high-ranking police official. This quote, made in the presence of my dissertation committee head, speaks to the use of linguistic devices to fortify particular aspects of police culture. This officer used sarcasm to reveal a truth in law enforcement—that women are still largely outsiders. Men officers in particular seem reliant on humor to protect negative intentions. Under the pretense of humor, officers are free to say just about anything they want. Humor, together with sarcasm and satire, certainly provides a protective shield for many negative behaviors.

I would like to further extend this gendered framework to police organizations in large metropolitan areas. New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore appear appropriate sites to expand the current findings. It is logical to assume that gendered displays and violent behavior are influenced by pressures in highly urban settings. These sites also represent historic venues for the struggles of women in law enforcement. Many of these cities were legally compelled to place women in patrol duties. Additional interviews provide another venue for expanding the powerful findings of this research.

This research also has implications for studying pockets of concentrated masculinity in non-law enforcement settings. Studying the attitudes and behaviors of soldiers returning from war seems an appropriate application of both my stress findings and the gender theory utilized for this research. In particular, this research venue should look at how the regularization of violence in one setting transforms behaviors, especially gendered behaviors, in another. Masculine power espoused in combat surely influences ideas about gender, particularly since women are formally restricted from combat positions in the military.

In particular, the current conflict in Iraq provides an applicable concern for the images of women soldiers. Recall the highly contested images of Jessica Lynch in the early days of the war. Initial images depicted her as a hero—fighting to her last bullet prior to her ultimate capture by Iraqi troops. However, these images were contested, replaced with feminized versions of her capture and rescue by Special Forces. Private Lynch's image, and to a degree that of all military women, remains tied to the rescuing and protective behavior of men. Certainly, the military provides countless avenues to extend the current research findings.

Finally, I would like to evaluate the views of officers in regards to changing police culture. It was not uncommon for officers to describe discontent with the treatment of distressed peers and the hyper-masculine requirements of policing, yet officers in this sample seemed to feel powerless to change this structure. In particular, one administrator reports that he does not maintain off-duty law enforcement friendships, at the behest of his wife, because of fears that these interactions will change him. Yet in this instance, a high-ranking official, who seemed well aware of the detrimental effects of a highly masculinized environment, nevertheless deferred to the power of police culture within the agency. This happened despite the fact that he possessed at least some power to force change. Focusing research on change could explore officers' beliefs about adapting police culture and, in particular, ways in which administrators can implement change. Speculation in the current research should provide additional impetus for future research and directions for change.

This research set ambitious goals, specifically to study how gender dynamics within law enforcement affects the stress management of police officers and, in turn, maintains and even values what turns out to be an often harmful culture. Qualitative interviews and quantitative models support the theoretical framework of this research and extends the way we conceive of gendered organizations. Given the strong findings of this research, a future extension of gender theory to other organizational behavior appears particularly warranted.

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Appendix A - Quantitative Variables Construction

Burnout: (Cronbach alpha=.78)

I feel like I am on automatic pilot most times

I feel burnout from my job.

I feel like I am at the end of my rope.

The possible responses range from strongly disagree to strongly agree on a five point scale.

Physiological : (Cronbach alpha=.94)

In the past 6 months, how often did you have...

nausea

trouble getting your breath

a lump in your throat

pains or pounding in the chest

faintness or dizziness

Responses to these questions use a four point Likert Scale with possible answers ranging from never to always

Psychological : (Cronbach alpha=.93)

In the past 6 months, how often did you have...

restlessness

feelings of hopelessness

panic attacks

irritability

withdraw

depression

emotional depletion

Responses to these questions use a four point Likert Scale with possible answers ranging from never to always

Coding for Binary Variables

	N	%
Support of Administration	23	2.1
Family Support	452	40.9
Gender Jokes	313	28.4
Lenient on Female Officers	453	41.0
Violent Arrest	210	19.0
Shooting	90	8.2
Investigation	370	33.5
Knowing Vic/Offender	180	16.3
Officer Violence	186	16.8

White males are the reference category for the race and gender variables, refer to Table 1 for additional information regarding race and gender composition of the sample. Gender related variables are coded 1 for strongly agree/agree and 0 for all other responses. Question about emotionally results from work events are coded as 1 for participants who answered “Very much” and 0 for those answering “A little” or “not at all.” Variable coded as 1 for any yes response to one of the use of violence questions. Refer to Table 2 for more detail on officer self reported violence.

Appendix B - Qualitative Interview Schedule

Introduction:

Hi, my name is Don Kurtz and I am a Ph.D. candidate at Kansas State. My dissertation examines the factors that influence stress and burnout among police officers. Your participation in this research will contribute to knowledge on officer stress and burnout. This information will be useful in developing better resources for officers and designing programs and policies that help reduce burnout. All identifying markers will be removed from the interview instruments. Original records will be kept in a locked, secure cabinet and will be available only to me and my dissertation chair. Your name will never be attached to the information you provide. The name of the organization and location will not be revealed. Any other potentially identifying information will be disguised so as not to reveal identity of you or your agency.

I will first ask some background information, which will be used only in aggregate analysis or averages – that is, we will be interested in how many respondents are male or female, the average age, length of experience and so on. After this first brief section, I will ask your permission to tape record the conversation simply so that I may be accurate in my reporting. The tapes will, of course, be held in strictest confidence and will be available only as a check for accuracy of statements. We can pause or discontinue the use of the recorder at any time. Do I have your permission to tape record portions of our conversation?

I. Background Information:

Consent Reference # _____

Age _____

How many years have you been an officer with your police department? _____

Previous experience in law enforcement? _____

Previous experience in other work? _____

What is your current rank?

What is your marital status?

What is your level of education?

What do you identify as your race or ethnic group?

II. Officer Perceptions of Stress and Burnout:

*****Basic background and environment*****

I would like to start by asking some questions about how you became interested in law enforcement.

Q1: Please tell me little about your background in law enforcement.

A: What initially sparked your interest in policing?

B: Has your interest in law enforcement changed?

C: Would you recommend law enforcement as a career?

Q2: Describe your daily work environment for me. *(Use probes as necessary)*

A: How do line officers interact with each other on the job? Is it formal or informal?

B: Does everyone know everyone else pretty well? Do officers socialize together or do they such each other only at work?

Q3: How would you describe what is most stressful about working in law enforcement?

Q4 Is stress in law enforcement different for male and female officers?

*****Health Issues*****

One of the concerns related to stress in law enforcement is that it could affect an officer's physical or psychological health. I would like to ask you a few questions about your health since you joined the force.

✓**Q5. Have you ever experienced physical or psychological problems that you believe are related to job stress?**

*****Definitions and Characteristics*****

One of the shortcomings in the research I reviewed for this project is the lack of a clear definition of burnout.

Q6. Describe for me the characteristics of a good police officer. *(Use probes as necessary)*

Q7. What do you consider to be professional burnout? *(Use probes as necessary)*

A: What problems would you observe with a burned-out officer? *(Use probes as*

B: How would you know one of your peers had a problem with burnout?

C: How would you know you were developing a problem with burnout?

D: Would other officers look down on an officer who experienced mental distress from work?

Q8. In your opinion, what does the public expect of a police officer in your community?

A: Does the public have realistic expectations of police officers?

*****Suicide and Psychological Responses*****

One of the concerns is that burnout in law enforcement can lead to suicidal thoughts or ideation. One of the key reasons I selected this research topic is that I would understand this potential problem and look for ways to support officers having difficulty.

Q9. Do you hear other officers talking about emotional or psychological distress attributed to their employment in law enforcement?

Q10. Have you ever thought that your employment in law enforcement has caused emotional or psychological distress in your own life?

Q11. Do you know of any officers who have seriously thought about taking their own life? How was it handled? Were they supported by other officers? What formal or informal steps were taken to resolve the situation?

Q12. Have you ever seriously thought about taking your own life? Have you had minor or fleeting thoughts of suicide? How would you handle a mental health concern like depression or suicide? What programs does your department have for distressed officers? Do you know of anybody who has unutilized these programs? Would other officers look down on an officer who attempted suicide?

III. Work Environment and Peer Interactions

Some research has indicated that certain aspects of police work environments influence stress levels among officers. I would like to shift the focus and briefly discuss the characteristics of your department. These issues may or may not affect you directly, but I am interested in your overall assessment of the general environment you work in. I will also be discussing some of the common problems associated with officers who experience burnout.

Q13. Have you known or suspected that fellow officers may have been overlooked for certain assignments because of race, gender, sexual orientation, or physical characteristics?
(Use probes as necessary)

A: What factors play a role in assignments? If favoritism is displayed, what form does it usually take?

Q14. Do you ever feel like you are less likely to get chosen for certain assignments because of who you are? (race, gender, sexual orientation, physical characteristics).

Q15. Do you feel that your administration supports officers who are in trouble? Please explain.

Q16. Are you able to talk about stressful events or personal burnout with your peers?

Q17. Do you know or suspect that an officer has become violent while on the job? Off the job? If so, what do you suspect as the cause or triggering factor?

A: How is this handled among fellow officers?

B: How would your organization formally handle these concerns?

Q18. Have you ever observed open hostility between officers? In your opinion what precipitated the problem?

Q19. Have you ever observed an officer become violent at work? How did you handle this situation?

Q20. Is there an expectation that officer handle these situations informally? Is there an expectation of loyalty or secrecy?

Q21. What would happen to an officer in your department if they reported a peer for using excessive force? (Use probes as necessary)

Q22. What steps has your department taken to reduce officer burnout?

Q23. How do officers interact with each other when they are not on the job?

Q24. Are female officers equally included in non-work peer interactions?

Q25. Do officers talk with each other about stressful events?

Q26. Can you think of instances in which a male officer has an advantage over a female officer? Can you think of instances in which a female officer has been treated differently in your department because of her gender?

Q27. Can you think of instances in which a female officer has an advantage over a male officer? Can you think of instances in which a male officer has been treated differently in your department because of his gender?

IV. Questions for Higher Ranking or Administrative Staff

My research is attempting to uncover both interactive and organizational dynamics that influence stress and burnout among officers. As a higher ranking officer within the department, you hold a unique position within your law enforcement agency. Your knowledge of both personal stress and the agencies attempts to deal with stress and problematic officer interactions is extremely important to my research. I would like to ask you some questions specific to how your agency addresses stress and burnout.

A1. What steps has your department taken to reduce officer stress and burnout?

A2. From the vantage point of an administrator, what do you consider to be the greatest source of stress for your officers?

A3. What concerns administrators the most about stress among field officers?

A4. How does the department decide shift assignments? Promotions?

A5. Does your department have an employee assistance program? How often is this program utilized? Do officers receive training about using this program?

A6. What types of training does your department offer in regards to excessive force?

A7. How would your department officially handle an officer who used excessive force? Any other proactive steps you take?

A8. How does your department handle an officer that appears to be suffering from burnout?

A9. How would your department handle a sexual harassment case?

A10. Are there any steps your department has taken to reduce conflicts between individual officers?

A11. Are there unique stressors for officers in your department or community?

A12. What distinctions can you draw between stress/burnout for field officers and for upper-level or administrative officers?

A13. Have you personally experienced stress and/or burnout at particular times in your career? Can you please tell me more about that?

A14. Do you have additional comments or insights that you think would be useful for my research?

.....
V. Additional Demographics

Education/occupation of father _____

Education/occupation of mother _____

Average annual earnings of parental household _____

Who lives in your current household? _____

Average annual earnings of current family/household _____

I want to personally thank you for your involvement in this study. I am hopeful that the assistance provided by you and your peers will advance our understanding of law enforcement stress. If you would like to receive a copy of my research findings, feel free to contact me. I do not anticipate instances of unusual risk; however it is possible that you may feel some degree of anxiety because of your participation in this study. If this is the case, please feel free to call me at my office number. I have training as a clinical social worker (LMSW) and I maintain my license in the state of Kansas. Additionally, your organization may have an employee assistance program, and I am certainly willing to help you utilize this program.