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Factors Impacting Communication Among Female and Male Police Officers in Canada

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction
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in

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by

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December 2016

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For my mum, whose support means so much.

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Introduction

Policing has historically been an institution that is both dominated by men and constructed in such a way that favors and privileges masculine characteristics (Bevan and Mackenzie 2012; Chan et al 2010; Herbert 2001; Prokos and Padavic 2002). Based on past research, it is easy to make the case that police agencies are indeed gendered organizations. Women therefore have been both physically and symbolically excluded from most aspects of police work (Morash and Haar 2012; Prokos and Padavic 2002; Rabe-Hemp 2011). Acker (1990) argues that the gendering of organizations occurs in primarily through the division of labor, construction of gendered signs and symbols, and the placement of barriers that appear gender-neutral but serve to exacerbate existing inequalities (also Miller, Forest and Jurik 2003). What is missing from this body of research is an examination of how the structure, culture, and the symbols associated with police institutions not only serve to reify extant gender inequalities but can also be leveraged to benefit women and breakthrough barriers.. This paper addresses the array of adaptive strategies female police officers employ as they navigate this particular institutional venue.

Theories suggest that female officers are only able to be either women or police while at work (Jurik 1988; Martin 1980). Drawing on West and Zimmerman's (1987) 'doing gender' approach, a female officer's ability to do gender and do policing is constrained by cultural and structural factors. However previous studies find many women manage to do both simultaneously (Morash and Haar 2012; Rabe-Hemp 2009). Although research on this subject only includes samples of women, this study

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incorporates both women and men in this sample to shed light on the interactional gender dynamics and varying perspectives. Finally, unlike prior work, I also consider how occupational status, such as rank, impacts gender compliance and resistance in unique ways.

A vast majority of the literature on gender and policing thus far focuses on American police agencies, but less is known about gender inequalities in such sites in a Canadian context. My sample consists of 10 ten male and 10 female Canadian police officers. I recruited them using an online classified advertisement and snowball sampling techniques. Participants represent four different police services based in four different counties of the same Canadian province. My sample also contains an equal number of male and female participants as well as the almost equal number of senior officers and lower-ranking officers, which allow for multi-layered analysis and comparison.

In Canada, women represent 34% of all police agency employees, 57% of whom are not sworn officers (Hutchins 2014). The term "sworn officers" reflects a status as full officer, a police service employee who is given a fire-arm at work, compared to parking enforcement officers or clerical staff who work for the policing agency in other capacities (Britton 2011). Women are over-represented among civilian employees of police services and most often are given job tasks that align with notions of women's work, such as clerical staff (87% women) and communications/dispatch (76% women). Surprisingly, of the civilian employees, women were more likely to be managers and professionals (57%) (Hutchins 2014). Within the group of sworn officers, women officers in Canada represent 11% of all senior officers, or high level managers, and 22% of constables (Hutchins

2014). The number of women as sworn officers in the United States only started to grow significantly from the 1970s and beyond due to legislation and court rulings that reduced policing agencies' ability to keep women out (Britton 2011). Even though women were part of the police prior to the 1970s, they were only given a small set of jobs considered appropriate for women, such as guarding women and juvenile prisoners. As of 1972 civil rights legislation passed in America that allowed women officers access to patrol assignments (Britton 2011; Miller et al 2003). The incorporation of women in policing in Canada has followed a trajectory much the same (Hutchins 2014).

As community policing gains popularity, the police as an institution has become more engaged in public relations, problem solving, and engagement with community members (Bevan and Mackenzie 2012; Chan et al 2010; Rabe-Hemp 2009; Rosenberg et al 2008). Thus, such community policing strategy may cultivate institutional changes regarding gender. Does a shift away from traditional notions of policing alter police organizations in ways that reconfigure gender dynamics, displays and interactions in these contexts? Is there greater acceptance of women in positions of power and feminine traits in policing? In what ways are communication and styles of policing gendered?

Police Agencies as Gendered Organizations

Acker (1990: 146) describes a gendered organization as an a place where "advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine.". Her work illuminates the avenues through which organizations can be gendered: disparate divisions of labor; construction of images and symbols that

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explain and reinforce gendered expectations,; individual-level interactions between actors that enact dominance and submission; gendered components of an individuals' identity and presentation of self.; Gender is a constitutive element in these aforementioned processes that ultimately create social structure and uphold existing gender disparities (Aker 1990:147).

In addition to organizations, some content occupations are gendered. Britton (2011) asserts gender is already present within an organization and occupation, rather than something that is only brought into an organization by the workers. Britton describes three levels of gendered organizations and occupations: culture, structure, and agency. People draw on gendered images and symbols; these cultural images are also bound to gender, race, and class. Employers, workers, and clients or customers also draw on notions of who should be doing a certain job and who the worker is supposed to be both at work and at home. Organizational practices and policies that presume and reproduce gender inequality, may take the form of explicit exclusionary rules, but more often is disguised by policies that appear gender-neutral but differentially affect men and women. Ideas about appropriateness of work tasks based on workers' gender and race reflect unspoken organizational logics, which shape practices of workplaces. Finally, agency describes interactions between workers and between workers and clients, specifically harassment, which may be overt, obvious and organized or less-organized, more 'light-hearted' harassment in the form of jokes or differential treatment (shielding women from tough/unsafe job tasks). While Britton argues that context is vital to understanding gendered institutions, she reminds us that individual actors can behave in flexible and

adaptive ways, that may be undermine to the cultural construction of the occupational

expectations (2000:429). For female police officers, this means that although policing as

an institution is extremely masculine, they are able to undermine masculinity via daily

social interactions with fellow officers and citizens.

Chan et al (2010) explain that the entry of women into policing has led to intense

opposition in several major forms: first, traditional policing equates police work with

physicality, privileging male bodies over female bodies, both symbolic and real; second,

men have historically controlled law and order, so the entry of women challenges this

image; third, male officers claim that members of the public will not respect a female

officer's authority, damaging the larger public image of police. Specific to policing,

police recruitment uses tactics to exclude those they deem undesirable. These include

physical requirements to exclude women, written tests and educational requirements to

exclude black applicants and those without fluent English and American education as

well as background investigations and personal interviews, used largely to exclude gay

applicants (Miller, Forest and Jurik 2003).

Ridgeway (2011) argues that cultural and individual level biases permeate and

reify gender within organizations in ways that maintain existing gender inequality. These

biases are reflected in friend-group compositions of coworkers, managers' decisions

regarding task allotment to employees, whether prestigious or onerous, and promotions or

firing. The culture of an organization in which most actors identify as one gender is

inherently exclusive to those of another gender, the actors in the majority use gender as a

convenient basis of commonality through which they bond with and handle their coworkers (Ridgeway 2011).

Recent reforms have shaped policing in different ways, policing is largely decentralized, but three major reforms have been able to impact most police agencies across the United States: the insulation of policing from direct political control, the professionalization of the hiring and training of officers, and moving all officers under the control of the agencies' central command (Epp et al. 2014). Despite this increased focus on public accountability, police agencies still reward officers for making arrests and in doing so perpetuate crime fighting as the most important aspect of policing. Entrenched ideas surrounding masculinity and policing fuel a heightened focus on crime fighting by both officers and agencies (Bevan and Mackenzie 2012; Herbert 2001).

Gendered Interactions in Policing

West and Zimmerman (1987) theorize gender as a routine accomplishment; social actions that either reaffirm or challenge existing notions of the nature of what it is to be masculine and feminine. These 'natures' are learned socially and based on a shared culture's idealization of what being feminine or masculine means, these expectations are also rooted in social institutions (West and Zimmerman 1987). Goffman's interactionist viewpoint (1959) examines social interactions and how meaning is generated through communication. West and Zimmerman draw on Goffman's (1959) theory of dramaturgy, where one could view gender as an optional role to be performed, the extension provided by West and Zimmerman shifts gender into a central production of every interaction embedded in structures of power and inequality.

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Hegemonic masculinity can be used to understand how certain masculinities can become institutionalized within organizations, through practices and discourses (Connell 1987). Acknowledging that gender is a system of power, hegemonic masculinity sees one idealized form of masculinity privileged and those who align with the ideal receive the benefits of its power, while those who do not or cannot align with the ideal are less able to gain power (Bevan and Mackenzie 2012; Connell 1987). Prokos and Padavic (2002) find that the masculine culture of policing is not only produced and reproduced on the job, but is enforced both formally and informally through the curriculum and environment of police academies (most police officers are academy graduates). The implicit and explicit curriculum of these academies taught students to exclude women students, to exaggerate 'innate' differences between men and women more largely, and to denigrate women in general. The frequency with which 'deviant' identities among police officers - female officers, officers of color, gay officers - are harassed and ridiculed suggests that socio-cultural diversity of any kind is largely not tolerated among police (Miller et al 2003). Similarly, Holdaway argues that police culture "is not just enacted within private police territory, the police station, for example, but informs both relationships within exclusively police contexts as well as relationships with the public"(2010:86). Remmington (1983) finds that female officers became acculturated to the larger male police group, including attitudes such as distrust of the public, and generally unsympathetic demeanor. Although these women have adopted this occupational culture they are not often seen as equals or fully capable of police work by male colleagues. Indeed, due to the longstanding conformity to male standards of

policing, female officers efforts to transform police culture in any way has been stymied until fairly recently (Remmington (1983).

Women at work face a double bind where to endure the harassment makes them appear less capable, but to speak out makes them a bitch or rude (Jamieson 1995). Workers' gender identity and how they perceive their gender and work identities as complementary or competing affects gender inequality at work (Britton 2011). Martin (1980) creates a typology of POLICEwoman versus policeWOMAN. Where a POLICEwoman stresses overachievement and conformity to police subculture (at the risk of being labeled butch or lesbian), a policeWOMAN conforms to traditionally feminine roles (at the risk of being labeled weak or "pansy police"). It is clear the definition of police work as men's work, precludes women from succeeding as both women and competent officers. Jamieson (1995) describes common binds that put women in no-win situations including the femininity/competence bind. In this bind women who are considered traditionally feminine will be considered incompetent, and women who are competent, unfeminine or not real women (also Denissen and Saguy 2014). This affects female police officers, but more specifically high-ranking female police officers, as the expectations set for women require both femininity and competence, but the accepted definition of femininity precludes competence in traditional police work. Women in leadership have to reconcile contradictory expectations in order to succeed, meanwhile men are not held accountable to these same expectations. Here women are commonly labeled both abrasive and not tough enough, while also being charged with being overly emotional (Jamieson 1995). Women face heightened scrutiny and therefore may

purposely not form friendships with other tokens, isolating them both from the dominant group and each other (also Jurik 1988).

Women officers, though, do not accept this bind without resistance. When asked to compare their work performance to those performances of male colleagues, female officers tend to rate themselves higher on communication skills and building trust and rapport between police and public (Rabe-Hemp 2009). These traits differ widely from a traditionally masculine notion of the police as crime-fighting and instead reflect ideals of community policing, which may serve to legitimize more feminine characteristics of police work, whereby women officers can do gender at work in a socially acceptable way (Rabe-Hemp 2009). With the introduction of community policing practices, which do not so highly value the typical aggressive and agentic images of police officers, Morash and Haar (2012) assert that policewomen are rising in the police structure and enjoying more open channels to access varied work assignments. Similarly, Miller, Forest and Jurik (2003) assert that women officers, officers of color, and homosexual officers all develop strategies of resistance that allow them to express their marginalized identity while also highlighting their abilities to be effective police.

Recent studies of female officers and doing gender in policing do not include male participants, do not incorporate similar numbers of senior officers and lower ranking officers, or do not discuss the effects of police culture on women officers. Morash and Haar (2012) interviewed 21 women working as police officers about how their identities as women influence their work, and further how they perceive gender differences among officers either enhance or damage job performance. The sample

includes women of varying ranks, including some women in senior officer positions (an exact number is not given). The authors find that female officers do not accept the stereotypes imposed on them, but instead challenge the existence of gender differences in job performance, or where differences occur, argue women's workplace behavior is more effective. Of specific interest to this study is the participants' identification of women officers as stronger communicators, where communication is seen as a more feminine aspect of police work. Rabe-Hemp (2009) interviewed 38 female officers of varying rank and tenure about their identification with police and gender roles. The sample includes 12 'administrators' and 26 line officers. Like Morash and Haar (2012) above, respondents assert that women brought distinct assets to police work, including empathy and better communication skills. Rabe-Hemp (2009) argues that this increased focus on female officer's unique characteristics with soft skills historically has barred them from jobs considered "real police work" devaluing those tasks female officers engage in. The participants, contrary to past literature suggesting female officers identify as either police officers or women, do gender and policing simultaneously. Derks et al (2011) conducted an online survey of 63 female senior officers measuring gender identification and gender bias at work. They describe the "Queen Bee," a senior woman in a male-dominated field who has achieved and maintained success through emphasizing her differences from other women. She is both a product of gender inequality in the work place and contributes to gender disparities by blocking opportunities for mentorship and strategic alliances among women coworkers.

Methods

Doing gender and policing, as well as differences in communication and policing experience by gender has been previously studied in an American context, but has not been explored in Canada (Martin 1980; Morash and Haar 2012; Rabe-Hemp 2009). Many of the methods used in this study draw on these past American studies. In this study there are 20 participants, ten who identify as female and ten who identify as male. Participants range in age from 29 to 57 and have been working as police officers for between 3 and over 38 years. Participants were recruited through a two-step process: first, an advertisement was posted on Kijiji.ca, a Canada-wide free online classified site, soliciting the participation of currently employed police officers. Second, from the initial responses, snowball sampling was used to generate a list of further participants, in total 23 officers were contacted either via phone or email and only 3 declined to participate. All of the participants were white, except one who identified as multiracial. Participants represent four different Canadian police services based in different counties of the same major province. Unique to this study, the majority occupied senior officer positions: twelve in total, five male participants, and seven female participants.

I travelled to one of the most populous Canadian provinces and conducted 20 one-on-one interviews either over the phone or in a location of the participants' choice, usually either in their homes or within close proximity to the participant's workplace. Fourteen of the participants were interviewed in-person. The interview questions attempted to uncover male and female police officers' perceptions and experiences surrounding communication and policing more largely, but also covered narratives of

entry into policing, personal experiences as managers in a police setting, identities as police officers, and experiences of sexism in the police workplace more largely. Open-ended questions facilitated comparison between respondents, participants were also asked to generalize what they believe to be important assets for communication and police work, as well as common errors committed by themselves and coworkers. The interviews lasted between 40 minutes and 2½ hours, were digitally recorded with the participants' permission, then transcribed verbatim, and coded. Codes were both pre-set based on research questions and emergent. Following previous qualitative studies of police officers, specifically of female police officers, I used open coding to create common topics, within the topics themes were refined and finally, representative quotes were pulled to illustrate the major themes as reported by participants (Rabe-Hemp 2009).

Police officers and agencies are often closed to researchers, therefore both gaining entrée and building rapport may be challenging for an outsider (Campbell 2010; Leo 2001; Warren and Karner 2005). Even with official endorsement of the administration, police can be secretive and distrustful of researchers, this can be overcome through using a gatekeeper willing to use their social capital at work to support you (Leo 2001; Rabe-Hemp 2009). Female officers posed a unique challenge as they represent a minority within the police force as a whole, they may be hesitant to speak with researchers or distrustful of those affiliated with the police service (Prokos and Padavic 2002; Rabe-Hemp 2011; Rabe-Hemp 2009). I have a long-standing relationship with an officer working in the area who acted as a gatekeeper, helping open the door for initial contact and made this research possible. I was also fortunate to have several participants who

were interested in helping me with my research, and shared my advertisement soliciting participation with other police contacts. Specifically when interacting with participants, I found that many were very open to discussion with me and were very honest about both positive and negative experiences. As an outsider to policing, which may originally have been a hindrance, I was able to ask questions and probe details I otherwise may not have been able to reasonably ask. Additionally, as a young woman researcher, I had a unique position where some participants treated me like a daughter (as many of them had children or other relatives roughly my age). This meant that I was offered rides back to my hotel from our interview site, which although kind, were difficult to reconcile with my role as researcher. Conversely, I speculate their perception of me as non-threatening allowed me to ask questions that may have been off limits to other researchers.

Table 1. Participant Characteristics and Demographics

Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Rank/Position	Tenure (in years)
Emily	F	44	Sergeant	21
Hannah	F	40	Detective	20
Martha	F	54	Deputy Chief	34
Hilary	F	49	Senior Officer	28
Dorothy	F	48	Unit Commander	25
Alicia	F	43	Inspector	18
Suzanne	F	52	Inspector	28
Nicole	F	48	Detective Sergeant	28
Mary	F	49	Inspector	25
Ann	F	29	Primary Response Officer	7
William	M	48	Superintendent	27
Eric	M	36	Detective Constable	9
Ron	M	51	Superintendent	34
Connor	M	42	Staff Sergeant	19
Andy	M	45	Detective Sergeant	20
Alex	M	45	Sergeant	19
George	M	53	Detective Sergeant	30
Chris	M	32	Detective Constable	8
Ryan	M	57	Superintendent	31
Gregory	M	34	Primary Response Officer	3

Strategic Compliance

Descriptions of Self

Participant's identities largely revolved around their gender and occupational role. When asked to describe characteristics ideal for officers, respondents, regardless of their gender, cited abilities typically associated with traditional (masculine) models of policing. Such descriptions included labels such as analytical, logical, and hard working, and they used phrases like "tough but fair," "problem solver", and "gets things done" when referring to ideal officer conduct. While Rabe-Hemp (2009) and Morash and Haar (2012) found far greater adherence of female officers to gendered expectations of women's essentialist characteristics, describing themselves as more empathetic, and less competitive, my study suggests more uniformity across officers. This approach is a more "gender-neutral" strategy of policing where women try to emulate masculine traits, as those become the predominant marker of an ideal officer, and rewarded in the workplace. Only one female participant in the sample diverged from this trend. Mary, an Inspector, describes herself in a way more aligned with previous findings: "I think I police in a unique way. In that, I really go on instinct. I police with my heart, I think."

Contrary to Martin (1980) where officers describe their identity as a police officer as more important than their gender identity, officers in the sample described their occupational identity as one that they hide and consider peripheral to other salient identities she or he may possess. Gregory, a Primary Response Officer, describes himself as follows: "I'm not just a police officer, I'm a dad, I'm a husband, I'm a Christian, I'm a member of the community." Alex, a Sergeant, agrees: "being a police officer is what I do

and not who I am." This pattern was especially true of those officers with 15 years or more of experience. Emily, a Sergeant also prioritizes a work-life balance: "In terms of my identity [as an officer], maybe the first ten years of my career it was bit more, but now I look for opportunities and other things to fulfill that role, such as volunteering, playing sports and spending time with my children."

Uniform

Police uniforms act as powerful symbols, both for the wearer and members of the public. Johnson (2001) describes police uniforms as largely dark in color, and paramilitary in appearance. Responses to police uniforms can vary widely based on a person's previous experiences with, and assumptions regarding, the police, however people tend to rate police uniforms as powerful, authoritative, and trustworthy (Johnson 2001). Participants echo these sentiments and discuss the benefits and challenges of working in uniform when interacting with members of the public and one other. Challenges identified by officers in the sample include distrust of police by certain groups, high visibility when conducting investigative work, and for female officers, the sexism they encounter when out in public wearing a uniform. Suzanne, an Inspector, describes a recent encounter where members of the public seemed too interested in her: "The other day I was walking in the mall because I was getting a phone. [People were] Staring at me. Like *staring* at me. And I say, 'It comes in girl too.'" Suzanne's light-hearted diffusion of what she perceives as an uncomfortable position is something many female officers describe when encountering members of the public who either seemed

surprised to encounter a female officer, or when dealing with unwanted sexual comments while in uniform.

Benefits of wearing a uniform include group cohesion, being easily identifiable to members of the public, and showcasing one's occupational rank (and status). For example, Ann, a primary response officer, remarked about the status the uniform engenders among citizens and bestows unto officers: "I think the uniform has a presence itself. When you show up in uniform, people know instantly who you are." Another officer, Alicia, an Inspector, viewed the uniform as an initiation to citizens to engage in conversation: "When you're wearing a uniform, people come to you about things they wouldn't come to you about as a regular citizen. With the uniform, it's very social. You can be social with people. People like it." Ron, a Superintendent, describes bonding amongst his class as cadets at the academy: "The uniform, when I started, certainly brought the group together. It was like your first day of school. It helps the organization meld quicker and it creates a unifying force within a community." Finally, female senior officers discussed the power they could attain by wearing high-ranking uniforms, which denote their status among colleagues. Hilary, a senior officer, explains: "Officers wear white shirts, so right away people recognize that I'm an officer and not that that's a big deal but what it means is that I out-rank them. So there's a sort of protocol that should take place, whether it's in a non-verbal acknowledgement, in a room, in a meeting, or a verbal acknowledgement, 'Good morning Ma'am.'" For Hilary, who also experienced sexism in the workplace, this was an important asset of wearing the uniform.

Paramilitary Structure

The paramilitary structure within police agencies has a major influence on policing (Chappell and Lanza-Kaduce 2010). Rosenberg et al (2008) describe the ways that the adoption of community policing changes the structure of the police force itself, moving away from the existing paramilitary model. However, feminist criminologists have not yet interrogated the ways that the structure of policing perpetuates society's inequalities, nor how women subvert these structures and demonstrate agency. Many female participants had mixed feelings about the structure. Certain women considered it an "old boy's club" where female officers women continued to be excluded. Others appreciated the structure when they needed to sanction insubordinate male employees. Many describe the perception that the paramilitary structure is waning and being slowly replaced by a more corporate model of leadership. Alicia, an Inspector, describes the change from paramilitary style to more of a corporate model as uniformly positive: "The management style when I first joined, you had no say. You do what you are told because you are told to do it. It was literally 'shut up and do what I say.' I personally found that so frustrating. I often felt that I had key information for the decision-maker that wasn't even allowed to be heard." Nicole, a Detective Sergeant agrees: "I think managers now seem more compassionate and sincere and have an interested in what people have going on. I definitely noticed a shift over the years and our organization being very paramilitary. Things were very rigid and nobody showed any emotion, to now, where I think people are pretty caring about each other."

However, the paramilitary structure can, at times, work to high ranking female officers advantage. Dorothy, a Unit Commander, describes how the hierarchy can aid her management: "My preference in terms of leading, whether male or female [teams], is not necessarily to use my formal authority. That's kind of my last thing when I'm not getting what I want. I'm more of a consensus builder and an influencer. I kind of look at that, I don't know if that's a function of my gender, as to my preferable advantage, I also have no problem with saying 'That's incorrect. I want this done.'" Ridgeway (2000) argues that while most jobs are built by men to benefit men, in highly regimented roles and workplaces personal biases may be less visible due to the scripted nature of interactions and tasks. As Dorothy discusses above, others afford her certain respect and authority in her role, which helps her as a woman in a managerial role. Yet, she also experiences frequent reminders of how unusual she is as a woman in a position of power in the form of her title:

Being a female, you kind of have three options. By rank, 'Boss', and as 'Ma'am'. I had one of the officers say: 'When you get promoted to Inspector, do you want to be called Ma'am or Sir?' He said, in the military, both Ma'am and Sir are appropriate for commanding female officers. I said, 'Well, 'Sir' definitely not. I'm not that crazy about 'ma'am' either.' [Now] they would call me Boss, because being paramilitary, we call each other by title. That's kind of the format and sometimes that's how people have been brought up to show respect. I came around the corner in my old station and I kind of surprised an officer. He goes, 'Hi Miss!' I know he was reaching and I could see him thinking. But his Sergeant

saw it, and came up to me and said 'You aren't 'Miss'! You want me to talk to him?' And I said, 'Relax!' I knew what he meant.

Dorothy's anecdote highlights how even though women are making headway in their work as police officers, they still represent a workplace minority, and face unique challenges. One such challenge that emerged in the interviews was the question of what should a subordinate call a female superior officer. Some women felt that 'ma'am' was either a label that felt old-fashioned or one that didn't carry the same weight as 'sir' would. Many participants shared stories of sexist assumptions by others that led them to be called 'miss' or assumed to be the secretary to their male colleague.

Breaking Barriers

Women as Managers

As women enter police agencies in greater numbers, there are greater proportions occupying senior officer positions in Canadian police services (Hutchins 2014). My data highlights the unique struggles and practices of women who possess higher rank within this traditionally masculine gendered organization. Many participants discussed differences in management style based on gender, and contrary to the findings of Derks and colleagues (2011), women in leadership positions in police agencies tend to focus on collaboration and mentorship instead of blocking opportunities for other women's advancement. Suzanne, an Inspector describes mentorship as the most fulfilling part of her job: "I love mentoring and teaching, and now in my role I do it everyday." One officer described a routine informal breakfast gathering of women in senior officer positions. Both male and female officers agreed that women supervisors, compared to

their male counterparts, tend to rely on teamwork model rather than the paramilitary structure to manage employees. Eric, a Detective Constable, describes his boss, who also happens to be a participant: "[My supervisor], she's easier to work with. She discusses assignments, rather than just puts them on. You're still being given the assignment, but it's in a more pleasurable way. It's less 'Just do this', it's more 'Let's do this… this is why we're doing this.' Not to say my other supervisors don't do the same thing, but she does it in a more calmer, easier manner." Another male participant, William, a Superintendent explains why he thinks women are better supervisors: "In a strategic or organizational kind of situation, I worked for both and I find it most effective that women were less competitive. They were competitive in their own way. Right? They wouldn't be where they are if they didn't have some sort of drive. I see them as being able to separate the personal from the professional. Which I think a lot of men have an issue with that." Alicia, an Inspector, describes what she sees among some female managers:

> There are some women who are more collaborative in their approach. They've got that sense of, you know you're really trying to listen to people and to work with them in a way that is interesting, because as a women you can get away with more. I'd say that in a positive way. You're in a dynamic of mostly men, because men will feel a little less guarded around you, so it's a good opportunity to get more out of them. How they think and see the world. They're not going to tell their boss who has been on the job for thirty-five years, and is kind of like a dad, they feel vulnerable about certain things or their concerns about certain risks that make them seem weak. Or they might perceive it that way. They might be more

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likely to tell a woman. That and the sort of emotional read on people, I think are advantages.

The tactics women in high-ranking positions employ appear to benefit the working conditions for subordinates of both genders, while simultaneously dismantling the paramilitary, extremely hierarchical structure of police departments. Despite such advances, female senior officers continue to face challenges due to their gender. Most of my participants discussed at length sexism they have either witnessed or encountered, which still serves to block and discourage women's entrance into leadership positions. Dorothy, a Unit Commander, describes some of these barriers:

> Men and women can go to a meeting and a woman can have an idea and talk about it, but then a man can pick up on it like it's his and he gets listened to. I tell my [female] recruits sometimes: 'Hey, think about this, make sure your voice is loud as his.' But also in a way, that's respectful because you can't go '*Argh*!' because all of a sudden you're a bitch or aggressive. Sometimes, with women, we have to pick our battles, and strategically: 'Should I do this now, and if I do it will I get good results?' And sometimes you're like 'this is not my battle' and other times it's like 'Yeah.' Assumptions are drawn because of our gender. It's part of what people see. Internally, you're like 'is that my battle? Yes it is!' It's an extra layer to communication. Men always think they can do their job, whether they're qualified or not.

Mary, an Inspector, maintains that although there are harms of being categorized in negative, stereotypical ways, she does not let such inequities hinder her work: "I

generally feel that if a male speaks directly to people, they're complimented for being assertive. I think that trend is different for females. That part really saddens me and it is disappointing to me. When they characterizes females as bitches. I don't like it. But it doesn't stop me from doing what I need to do." It is unclear if her ability to still get her work done despite these labels is a function of her rank, and may hinder lower ranking women officers more than Mary.

Women as Communicators

Past studies find female officers tend to describe themselves as better communicators, more able to diffuse tense situations, and less likely to respond with physical violence than male colleagues (Morash and Haar 2012; Rabe-Hemp 2009). In my study, participants were largely in agreement, some participants described this difference as based on women's comparatively small stature, others described the differences as based on attitude, personality, or the sheer presence of a woman. Female officers argue that community members better received their communication methods than the observed communication styles of male colleagues. Previous studies do not examine men's perceptions of the abilities of female officers and the efficacy of their communication. In fact, my research uncovers that while male officers largely engage in gender-blind discourse on this topic, female participants emphasize differences by gender. Suzanne, an Inspector, attributes variation in communication to smaller stature of female officers:

> In homicide, I wondered if those men, because they were smaller,
>
> developed a different skill-set on the road. They weren't the guy who

could walk into the bar and have everybody quiet down. They were the
guy who had to talk. If they got into a fight, they couldn't win. I
developed those same skill-sets. If I was in a fight with somebody, it's
over [for me]. I learned skill-sets too on the road. I remember going to a
big, big fight in one of the university bars. Stuff was flying around. My
partner and I, both females, walked in in our uniforms and just stood
there. They stopped and looked and we were like 'No, no by all means
[continue fighting].' We were going to arrest the winner. They were just
[shocked and speechless].

Ann, a Primary Response Officer, similarly frames communication discrepancies by
gender as based on varying dispositions between the two groups, where women are less
inclined to engage in physical altercations:

I find that sometimes a female presence really kind of calms a situation down. If
you bring a female to a situation where there are a lot of guys, more than often it
tends to be less physical. I think females carry themselves differently on the job.
In my own experience, I know I don't want to get hands on someone, I don't want
situations to get physical. For me, when you have to go hands on, I'll go hands on.
But most of the time, I use communication to calm the situation, to get someone
to talk to me, instead of physically attack me. That doesn't always work, but I've
found success in calming a situation with communication.

While the above statement may appear to essentialize women and men, female officers
point out they *can* fight but choose to draw on alternative skills sets instead, like

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communication, to de-escalate volatile encounters. Hilary, a senior officer, maintains that she prefers to talk to people when first entering a new situation on a call, "whereas a fella, who has the physical upper hand, so to speak, will probably go five minutes [into the same call] and go 'oh, fuck this,' and they'll go hand on hand [fight]." Most women in the sample agreed that women tended to resort to physical violence and the use of force far less than their male colleagues.

Women and the Use of Touch

The use of force among police officers, especially the use of lethal force, is a topic of hot debate. Traditional ideals of masculinity and policing equate 'manliness' with police sanctioned use of force, aggression, and violence (Bevan and Mackenzie 2012). The use of physical touch in non-aggressive ways, such as in an extension of emotional labor, is often overlooked. Hochschild (1983) describes emotional labor as the management of feelings while at work in order to create a publicly observable display. Emotional labor has been used in connection with female police officers before, in reference to workplace norms of emotional displays embedded in police culture (Martin 1999). When asked to discuss the use of touch as a form of emotional labor connected to their work, most respondents answered in a way similar to Alex, a Sergeant: "If they're grieving or they're upset you can touch their arm or shoulder. And if they don't tend to respond to that, that's okay. They can recoil from that too, then you don't touch them." Other respondents admitted that they knew that other colleagues used touch at work, yet that the participant themselves did not use touch to engage people.

When discussing touch with participants, a connotation was not provided for the discussion. Largely participants discussed touch as a form of communication during arrest proceedings or as a manifestation of intimacy or care, especially when dealing with witnesses, families of the deceased, or children. Ann, a Primary Response Officer, explains how touch is used during an arrest: "One of the number one things, I don't know if you know but when you arrest someone you have to actual touch someone and say 'you're under arrest.' Even if it's a touch on the arm or whatever, just to let them know they're under arrest. That's what you have to do. Physical contact is an essential part of this job." Some participants acknowledged the need for touch during an arrest proceeding, but many refused to acknowledge touch at all.

Only three officers discussed the use of touch during investigative interviewing, referred to more casually as interrogations. This hesitancy to explain the exact proceedings and tactics used during interviewing echoes Leo's (2001) study of interrogations, specifically how veiled in secrecy they continue to be for researchers. In this sample, many were open to describing their verbal tactics when dealing with suspects and methods of building rapport, however, the more secret aspect was the use of touch in interviews. Suzanne, an Inspector, who had worked in homicide for many years uses touch in her work, and finds that touch was a powerful tool for her as a woman. She argued that she was able to engage in touch during interviews where male colleagues were not:

I'm touchy to begin with, I think that helps, I often have my hand on my colleague because that's who I am. It's been an advantage, being a female interrogator has

been a great advantage as an interrogator. You can use it to your way. You can act all sorts of ways. Which is awesome, you can't attract certainly, but playing the not-so bright investigator goes a long way because of people's biases, because people assume you are [stupid]. It helps. […] A lot of these kids haven't been touched their whole lives. They're 17-25, generally are our offenders, some younger, some older. Generally speaking, they're in there. A lot of these kids have grown up in an environment where being hugged or being touched is so foreign to them. I don't ever have barrier between us when we are doing an interview. I always sit in a chair with that person in a chair. I try not to have a table. When I have a table, they're stuck to the floor. I actually scoot around and bring myself closer. I'm actually knee-to-knee to them. Sometimes I have their face in my hands. It freaks them out. But like I said, some of those kids, once you hug them, you can't get them to stop hugging you. They're so hungry for human connection. […] Sometimes it doesn't work. Sometimes it works great. Like even just asking the killer to take your hand. You say, 'What could have we done in society to help you better?' I don't care. He killed a four year old. He says, 'They could have helped us, they could have given me a hand.' And I say 'I'm here. Give me your hand.' And my partner says, 'Really?' And I take his hand and hold it. I don't want to hold his hand, I want to punch him in the head, he killed a four year old. But I'm going to hold his hand and stroke his cheek because I want him to tell me. I have many killers ask me if they can hug me afterwards. It's fascinating. It's not my job to judge. A lot of those kids find themselves in that position because their lives spiraled out of control. And

honestly, it's nothing to me. Yet it's part of my job. It is part of the facade. Some of

the kids, I do feel for them. But otherwise, I don't care. […] You know when you

can get in closer. It takes a long time to inch both figuratively and physically to

move in towards them. You start out, and by the end of the interview, you're almost

right on top of them and your voice is way low. You just develop those skills. I can

touch people. I actually physically touch people. A lot of interrogators don't do that.

You get right in and close. You just develop that skill-set over just interviewing

people over and over again. And getting used to watching and patience.

In response to violence and aggression as co-occurrences of traditionally masculine

approaches to policing, Suzanne, who worked for many years as a homicide detective,

discusses touch as an approach that fits more in line with tactics used by a woman. Touch

and the use of emotional labor allow her to build relationships with the accused and build

rapport with perpetrators in ways that yield productive results.

Conclusion

Female officers engage in both acts of strategic compliance and resistance within

their workplaces. Both male and female officers provided descriptions of themselves that

align with traditional ideals of police as crime fighting and problem solving. Only one

senior female officer described herself in a more traditionally feminine, caring way, this

finding counters previous research (Morash and Haar 2012; Martin 1980; Rabe-Hemp

2009). Another mode of compliance is the wearing of a uniform, which participants

argued had both positive and negative effects on encounters with the public, however, for

senior women, the uniform also signals their rank. The paramilitary structure of policing

was acknowledged by officers as waning, being replaced by a more corporate style of leadership, which participants agreed was beneficial. The nature of the hierarchy within the paramilitary structure of policing, allows female senior officers to discipline subordinates who may otherwise question their authority based on gender biases.

Women as managers within policing is still a new phenomenon, however, both male and female officers discussed their positive experiences with women bosses, describing their focus on consensus-building, mentorship, and teamwork. However, the movement of women into senior roles is not without challenges, many female participants described sexism they have faced and continue to face in the workplace. Past research on female officers have found that they rely on gender essentialist definitions of self, and argue that women excel in more feminine aspects of policing, like communication (Chan et al 2010; Morash and Haar 2012; Rabe-Hemp 2009). I find that both female officers resist essentialist arguments regarding their communication, they maintain that they can fight, they simply choose not to, in favor of verbal resolution of conflict. Finally, unique to this study is a discussion of touch in investigative interviewing as a gendered form of emotional labor. Another contribution of this study is the incorporation of both men and women in the sample, in order to better examine interactional gender dynamics and different viewpoints. Also, unlike prior work, I examine how rank, as a marker of occupational status impacts gendered resistance and compliance.

It is clear that policing as an institution is still perpetuating gender inequality through deeply rooted traditional ideals of men as police, however, women officers are

increasingly able to be both women and officers at work due to this shift in Canadian

policing towards a more transparent and communication-focused model, which values

community engagement and service. Women officers both challenge the existing ideals in

policing, and grapple with their repercussions in the workplace. Also important to note is

that the changing face of policing is allowing both physical and symbolic inclusion of

women. As every participant argues, communication is vital to the role of policing, and

many participants describe the importance of women as communicators and police

officers. The implications are clear that police services need to continue to hire women

and promote women at even greater rates, and remove structural barriers hindering

women's access and progress.

This study is exploratory, and asks several novel questions. There are several

research questions that stem from these findings and beg further exploration and analysis.

First, it is clear that the uniform is a powerful symbol both for the wearer and for

members of the public, how do police officers who are devout members of religious

groups (such as Sikhism) and/or officers of color experience wearing a police uniform?

How do they experience police culture and the paramilitary structure of police, how does

this experience relate to the wearing of a uniform, if at all? Second, little work has been

done specifically examining high-ranking female police officers. These women have

strategies of resistance that allowed them to reach these positions in a workplace culture

fraught with gender inequality, yet these strategies and processes remain largely

unstudied. Further, the few studies that do exist too often focus on the experiences of

white, heterosexual, female officers, a clear opportunity to enrich the larger literature

with intersectional analyses. Finally, many of my participants discussed how different the landscape of policing is in Canada, as compared with the United States. How does the Canadian setting color these findings? Would the same study conducted in the United States uncover similar themes?

There are limitations to this study. The first of which is a very limited amount of racial diversity among participants. This limits the generalizability of these findings to include officers of color, based on previous research the inclusion of women of color in the sample enriches the work by contributing a wider range of experiences and perceptions (Morash and Haar 2012; Texeira 2002). Canada as a country has great diversity, and a different history of racism and inequality than that of the United States; it would benefit the work to represent more of this diversity. Second, while most of the interviews took place in-person, some were conducted over the telephone. It was clear to me that I was able to build better rapport in person, allowing the participants to ask questions of me, for us to understand tones and body language, as well as for me to probe and develop follow up questions throughout. Finally, only one Canadian province and four agencies were included in the study, thus these findings cannot be generalizeable to all police agencies, it would benefit future work to include a more diverse group of officers from different regional settings.

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