

10-10-2013

# An Exploration of Crime by Policewomen

Philip M. Stinson

*Bowling Green State University*, stinspm@bgsu.edu

Natalie E. Todak

*Arizona State University*, Todak@asu.edu

Mary Dodge

*UCDenver*, Mary.Dodge@ucdenver.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/crim\\_just\\_pub](https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/crim_just_pub)



Part of the [Criminology Commons](#), and the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#)

---

## Repository Citation

Stinson, Philip M.; Todak, Natalie E.; and Dodge, Mary, "An Exploration of Crime by Policewomen" (2013). *Criminal Justice Faculty Publications*. 7.

[https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/crim\\_just\\_pub/7](https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/crim_just_pub/7)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Human Services at ScholarWorks@BGSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Criminal Justice Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@BGSU.

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

### An Exploration of Crime by Policewomen

#### Abstract

The current study explores criminal conduct by policewomen. This information is increasingly relevant as police departments hire more women, especially if the crimes committed by policewomen differ from those of policemen. News searches identified 105 cases depicting arrests of policewomen. A content analysis was performed. Findings indicate differences exist between crimes committed by policemen and policewomen, as well as by policewomen and women in general. Crime by policewomen is most often profit-motivated. Policewomen had fewer years of service and lower ranks, committed less violent crimes, and were more likely to receive suspensions for off-duty crimes compared to their male peers.

*Keywords:* policewomen, police crime, crime by policewomen, police misconduct

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

### An Exploration of Crime by Policewomen

Crime committed by police officers represents a major concern with far-reaching implications for both law enforcement agencies and communities. Police crime generates public disapproval and undermines public confidence, as citizens expect the police to serve and protect public interests. Police officers are expected to behave in a manner beyond reproach. As in all professions, however, a small number of employees fail to meet ethical and legal standards. Previous research has documented a wide variety of police crime and corruption including perjury, bribery, extortion, robbery, burglary, drug use, domestic assault, and brutality (Barker & Carter, 1994; Gorta, 2009; Kappeler, Sluder, & Alpert, 1998; McDowell, 1984; Miller & Braswell, 1985; Reiss, 1971; Roebuck & Barker, 1974; L. W. Sherman, 1981).

While much work has focused on police crime, misconduct, and corruption, few studies have analyzed the nature and extent of crime committed exclusively by policewomen. This area represents an important field of study for three reasons. First, diversity in the police force is an articulated goal of modern police departments and agencies are proactive in efforts to increase the presence of women on the job. As this continues, a deeper understanding of crimes committed by policewomen will become increasingly necessary. Second, research shows the occupational experiences of policewomen are different from those of policemen. Researchers should therefore adopt a narrow focus to identify and address whether these differences lead to variations of police crime between policemen and policewomen. Finally, police crime is a salient concern to the general public. As policewomen represent a small percentage of the total police force in most jurisdictions, crimes by policewomen may have a greater influence on the public's perceptions of the police.

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

The current study examines cases of police crime specifically involving policewomen. The information will establish a framework for understanding how occupational roles in a male dominated profession shape or fail to shape gender behavior in criminal activities. The research adds to extant literature by focusing on crimes committed by policewomen and offering comparisons of crimes by policewomen and policemen—an area largely neglected in empirical work. We explore the nature of crime by policewomen in the United States through a content analysis of news articles reporting the arrests of nonfederal law enforcement officers. Data were collected in real-time throughout years 2005-2007. Police crime in this research is defined as (a) those criminal offenses, (b) committed by sworn law enforcement officers with the general powers of arrest by virtue of their employment, (c) at the time the offense was committed, and/or (d) at the time of their arrest. The data explore (1) the criminal offenses charged against each arrested officer, (2) type of law enforcement agency employing the arrested officer, (3) their victims, and (4) collateral adverse employment outcomes imposed against arrested officers. The next section reviews scholarly literature associated with police crime and gender-based distinctions in law enforcement.

### **Literature Review**

Sworn officers in state and local law enforcement agencies take an oath of office to be above reproach both on- and off-duty, obey all laws, and show integrity in all aspects of their lives. As a result, prior research has attempted to classify and understand the nature of police corruption (illegal abuse of authority), police misconduct (breach of department policy), police crime (criminal activity), and their correlates. The current study focuses exclusively on police crime. The following review summarizes existing data on the nature of police crime in the United States, followed by a discussion of research on the similarities and differences of male

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

and female police officers. The final section describes the impact of gender on police crime, though relatively few studies have analyzed criminal activity committed by female officers specifically.

### *The Nature of Police Crime*

Stories of police officers breaking the law attract considerable public attention and are damaging to the integrity and legitimacy of police departments (P. M. Stinson, Liederbach, & Freiburger, 2010). Information on the nature and extent of these occurrences is, however, limited and the number of sworn officers who have engaged in criminal behavior is still largely unknown (Anechiarico & Jacobs, 1996; Barak, 1995; Kane, 2007; P. M. Stinson et al., 2010; P. M. Stinson, Liederbach, & Freiburger, 2012). In general, studies show some police officers commit a variety of misdemeanor and felony offenses (Fyfe & Kane, 2006; Harris, 2010; P. M. Stinson et al., 2012). Police crime occurs in small and large law enforcement agencies located in every state throughout the United States, both on- and off-duty (P. M. Stinson et al., 2012). Early studies of police crime revealed some officers commit on-duty criminal activity, including the acceptance of bribes and petty theft (e.g., Key, 1935; Knapp Commission, 1972; Pennsylvania Crime Commission, 1974; Reiss, 1971). More recent studies found officers also commit many crimes off-duty (Fyfe & Kane, 2006; Kane & White, 2009; Mollen Commission, 1994). These crimes are more likely to be assault-related offenses, liquor law violations, statutory rape, drunkenness, pornography/obscenity offenses, certain sex offenses, and driving under the influence (DUI) (P. M. Stinson et al., 2012). Officers who are arrested for crimes committed both on- and off-duty are more likely than other officers who are arrested to receive a suspension as a final adverse employment outcome. Likewise, arrests for on-duty crimes are more likely to

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

result in an arrested officer's resignation, and arrests of officers for off-duty crimes are more likely to result in the termination of the officers' employment (P. M. Stinson et al., 2012).

Existing data on police crime predominantly depicts criminal activity committed by policemen. Research on policewomen, however, suggests their occupational experiences are different from their male coworkers. The following section summarizes this literature and underscores the need for further research examining the nature of police crime by women.

### *Occupational Experiences of Male and Female Officers*

Beginning in the 1970s, the first policewomen assigned to patrol duties reported marginalization, hostility, and harassment, as well as difficulties negotiating between feminine and crime-fighter identities (Martin, 1980). Training academies, department facilities, and department policies were not accommodating to female officers. The stories of policewomen have since evolved, yet they still report difficulties on the job (Rabe-Hemp, 2011). Policewomen often report a need to prove themselves before they are accepted as equals (Belknap & Shelley, 1992, Rabe-Hemp, 2011). They are also uniquely affected by conflict between work and family life (Grosswald, 2003). This is perhaps because women are regarded as less dedicated parents for choosing to work a full-time career (Martin, 1980), and as less effective police officers for choosing to have and raise a family (Martin & Jurik, 2007). Taken as a whole, these subjective reports suggest, while policewomen have become integrated into the profession, they have not yet gained full acceptance into the police subculture.

Some research indicates policewomen are more effective in diffusing potentially violent situations by engaging in less aggressive behavior (Bloch & Anderson, 1974; Hale, 1992; Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2005; L. J. Sherman, 1975; Sichel, Friedman, Quint, & Smith, 1978). They establish better citizen relationships and use less aggressive styles (Belknap and Shelley,

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

1992; Christopher Commission, 1991), hold higher ethical standards (Hunt, 1990; Huon, Hesketh, Frank, McConkey K. M., & McGrath, 1995; Miller & Braswell, 1992), and may be excluded from exposure to rule bending and breaking by male peers (Brown, Maidment, and Bull, 1993). Finally, scholars have found patterns of alcohol use are similar between male and female officers (Ballenger et al., 2011). While some have found policewomen are more likely to engage in binge drinking compared to male counterparts (Ballenger et al., 2011; Davey, Obst, & Sheehan, 2000), others found few or no differences (Lindsay, 2008; Mandell, Eaton, Anthony, & Garrison, 1992; F. S. Stinson, DeBakey, & Steffens, 1992). The following section reviews the limited knowledge we have on police crime by gender.

### *Policewomen and Crime*

Potential differences in crimes committed by female and male officers have been largely ignored in empirical research thus far (Violanti et al., 2011). Previous studies show male officers are more likely to be charged with serious misconduct (Timmins & Hainsworth, 1989), engage in more use of force (McElvain & Kposowa, 2008; Peak & Glensor, 1996; Rabe-Hemp, 2008a, 2008b), and are subject to more citizen complaints (Hickman, Piquero, & Greene, 2000; Waugh, Ede, & Alley, 1998). Fyfe and Kane (2006) found male New York Police Department (NYPD) officers were more likely to be fired for bribery, but found no other differences in other profit-oriented misconduct. A higher number of female NYPD officers were terminated for off-duty conduct and administrative rule breaking. Nevertheless, Kane and White (2009, 2013) found officer gender was unrelated to career-ending misconduct in the NYPD. Despite the ongoing controversies in the research literature on differences between the conduct of male and female police officers, little empirical data exist on criminal behavior by policewomen. This study provides an exploratory framework for examining the crimes committed by policewomen (as

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

measured by their being arrested) and explores in more detail the differences between crimes committed by male and female law enforcement officers.

### **Method**

This study is an exploratory and descriptive examination of criminal conduct by policewomen. Data were collected as part of a comprehensive study on police crime. The larger study was designed to locate cases reported in the news media in which sworn officers had been arrested for one or more criminal offenses. The primary information source was the Internet-based Google News<sup>TM</sup> search engine and its Google Alerts<sup>TM</sup> email update service. Google News is a computer-generated news site aggregating news articles from more than 50,000 news sources (Bharat, 2012). The Google News search engine can be used to query any of those source news publications.

### ***Data Collection & Coding***

Data were collected daily in real time from January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2007. Google Alerts searches were conducted using 48 search terms. The Google Alerts email update service sent a message whenever the daily searches identified a news article in the Google News search engine matching any of the designated search terms. The automated alerts contained a link to the URL for the news articles. The articles were located, examined for relevancy, printed, and archived for subsequent coding and content analyses. Articles located typically included information about the arrested officer(s), offense(s) charged, victim(s), employment sanctions, and/or the disposition of the criminal case. In many instances, Google Alerts also located articles reporting on events occurring after an officer's arrest, including court proceedings (e.g., plea bargains, trial verdicts, sentencing information, and appellate court opinions) and/or subsequent arrests of the same officers in different criminal cases.



## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

After the universe of news reports was identified, the case-related information was recorded using a five page 110 variable coding instrument. Data were coded on (1) the arrested officer, (2) each of the criminal charges filed against the officer, (3) the officer's employing agency, (4) victims, and (5) criminal case outcomes as well as collateral adverse employment outcomes. The unit of analysis for this study is criminal case.

Criminal offenses charged against officers were coded in two ways. Each offense charged initially was coded using the data collection guidelines of the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) as the protocol for each offense category (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000, pp. 21–52). Several non-NIBRS offense categories were added to the coding instrument following a pilot study because officers often were arrested for criminal offenses not included in the NIBRS. These are indecent exposure, online solicitation of a child, criminal deprivation of civil rights, destroying or tampering evidence, perjury and false statements/reports, vehicular hit and run, obstructing justice, official misconduct (including official oppression and violation of oath), and violation of protection orders. In some cases, the criminal charges filed against an officer failed to accurately reflect the nature of the criminal acts described in the narratives of the news articles analyzed, suggesting preferential charging decisions were made as a professional courtesy to some of the officers who were arrested. Coding also placed each case in five general types more accurately depicting the true nature of officers' crimes as being violence-related, sex-related, drug-related, alcohol-related, and/or profit-motivated.

Coding of content was completed by one of the authors. Additional procedures were undertaken to ensure reliability of the data. One of the most widely accepted tests of reliability for content analyses is the percentage of agreement test, where the percentage of agreement

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

among two or more coders is calculated (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005). A second coder was employed to independently code a random sample of about 5% of the total number of cases ( $n = 106$ ). The overall level of simple agreement (97.2%) between the two coders across the variables established an acceptable degree of reliability (Riffe et al., 2005). Data for the 110 variables recorded on the coding instrument in each case were inputted into SPSS for quantitative analyses.

### *Strengths & Limitations of the Data*

This methodology produced data on police crime that would be difficult to obtain using other methods. There are no official data or comprehensive statistics available on the phenomenon of police crime (Anechiarico & Jacobs, 1996; Barak, 1995; Kane, 2007; P. M. Stinson et al., 2010). This research compliments existing studies in the “newsmaking criminology” tradition (Barak, 1988, 1995). Newsmaking criminology “refers to the conscious efforts and activities of criminologists to interpret, influence, or shape representation of ‘newsworthy’ items about crime and justice” (Barak, 2007, p. 191). Studies in newsmaking criminology most commonly involve the analyses of news content to gain knowledge about the nature of crime-related media coverage, but news content can also provide valuable information on the nature of the criminal behavior underlying the media coverage (e.g., Denton, 2010; LaFree, Yang, & Crenshaw, 2009; Morris, 2010). The news reports provided an unparalleled amount of information on a large number of crimes committed by police officers, including those by policewomen.

There are four primary data limitations. First, the research is constrained by the content and quality of information provided on each case in the news articles. The amount of information on each case varied, and data for some of the variables of interest were missing in

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

some cases. Second, the data are limited to cases involving an official arrest. Data on cases of police crime failing to come to the attention of law enforcement or prosecutors or failing to result in arrest were unavailable. Third, these data are the result of a filtering process that includes the exercise of discretion by media sources. Media sources exercise discretion in terms of both the types of news stories covered and the nature of the content devoted to particular news stories (Carlson, 2007). Consequently, media cases chosen for coverage introduce a level of bias on what types of cases receive attention, particularly related to gendered stereotypes. Research suggests, however, media coverage of officer misconduct is consistent with official police records of the events (Ready, White, & Fisher, 2008) and law enforcement agencies are not effective in efforts to control media accounts of officer misconduct (Chermak, McGarrell, & Gruenewald, 2006). Fourth, the relatively small number of cases involving policewomen who were arrested is because only about 12% to 15% of sworn officers are women (Langton, 2010). Low expected cell counts and unequal marginals in contingency tables limit the ability to generalize statistically significant bivariate associations regarding the crimes of policewomen.

### **Results**

The news search identified 2,119 criminal cases of 1,746 sworn law enforcement officers who were arrested during the years 2005-2007. Some of the officers were arrested more than once, and some of the officers had multiple cases with more than one victim. The arrested officers were employed by 1,047 nonfederal law enforcement agencies representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Of these, 105 (5.0%) criminal cases involved 96 policewomen who were arrested. One arrested policewoman had five criminal cases (with five separate victims of sex crimes), another had three criminal cases (three burglaries), and three arrested policewomen each had two criminal cases (one of whom was arrested on two separate dates for

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

different drug crimes, one was arrested for two robberies, and the third had two assault victims). The remainder of this section is organized into two parts. The first part provides descriptive statistics on the crimes committed by policewomen as well as bivariate comparisons of off-duty crimes and on-duty crimes of policewomen. The second part provides bivariate comparisons between the crimes of policewomen and the crimes of policemen.

### *Crime by Policewomen*

Table 1 provides data on the cases of policewomen who were arrested including descriptive statistics on the arrested officers and their employing law enforcement agencies. The majority of cases involved crimes committed while off-duty (61.9%). Most of the policewomen arrested held nonsupervisory ranks (92.4%) in patrol and street-level positions (i.e., officers, deputies, troopers, and detectives). Over half of the policewomen were ages 28-43 (55.3%) at time of their arrest with under 12 years of experience (54.3%) as a sworn law enforcement officer. Most were employed by a municipal police department (63.8%) or a sheriff's office (27.6%), although some were employed by a special police department (3.8%) (e.g., park police department, school district police department), county police department (2.9%), or a primary state police agency (1.9%). Almost half of the policewomen arrested were employed by a law enforcement agency located in the Southern region (46.7%) of the United States, and almost a fourth in the Northeast (23.8%) or Midwest (23.8%). Only a few were employed by agencies located in the West (5.7%). They were employed in 29 states, with the highest number of policewomen arrested employed by law enforcement agencies in Pennsylvania ( $n = 10$ , 9.5%), New York ( $n = 9$ , 8.6%), Tennessee ( $n = 9$ , 8.6%), and Ohio ( $n = 7$ , 6.7%). Over half of the policewomen were employed by a large police department (53.3%) with 250 or more sworn personnel.

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

<<<<< Insert Table 1 about here >>>>>

Table 2 presents the cases in terms of the most serious offense charged. DUI is the most serious offense charged most often ( $n = 17, 16.2\%$ ), followed by aggravated assault ( $n = 13, 12.4\%$ ), simple assault ( $n = 10, 9.5\%$ ), and drug crimes ( $n = 9, 8.6\%$ ). Another offense often charged against policewomen is the catchall offense of official misconduct ( $n = 16, 15.2\%$ ), but is not the most serious offense charged in any of these cases. Official misconduct is sometimes used in lieu of a specific offense and at other times charged as an additional count when a crime was committed by an officer in her official capacity. In terms of more broad offense categories, the policewomen were most often arrested for crimes profit-motivated ( $n = 40, 38.1\%$ ), followed by crimes violence-related ( $n = 37, 35.2\%$ ), alcohol-related ( $n = 22, 21.0\%$ ), drug-related ( $n = 13, 12.4\%$ ), acts of family violence ( $n = 11, 10.5\%$ ), and/or sex-related ( $n = 5, 4.8\%$ ) offenses.

<<<<< Insert Table 2 about here >>>>>

Adverse employment and collateral outcomes were also examined. About half (49.5%) of the policewomen were suspended from their law enforcement jobs as a result of being arrested, and a quarter of the women lost their jobs (24.7%) through termination (13.3% of all cases) or resignation (11.4% of all cases). Several of the policewomen were reassigned (7.6%) within their law enforcement agency as a result of being arrested. There was collateral fallout within employing agencies in some of the cases as a result of a policewoman's arrest. In some instances, news articles mentioned there was a cover up or scandal (12.4%) relating to the arrest. In other cases, there was discussion in news articles that an arrested policewoman's supervisor was disciplined or reassigned (9.5%) to another position as a collateral outcome of the arrest. News articles reporting the arrest of women officers in eight (7.6%) of the cases mentioned the

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

police chief in the agency employing the arrested officer was under scrutiny because of the officer's arrest.

Bivariate chi-square associations for duty status are reported in Table 3. Duty status is dichotomized into a binary variable where 0 = *off-duty at time of commission of the crime(s) resulting in the officer's arrest*, and 1 = *on-duty at time of crime(s) commission*. Policewomen were more likely to be arrested for an on-duty crime that was drug-related, sex-related, profit-motivated, and/or acts of police sexual violence, as opposed to other types of crimes. Off-duty crimes were more likely to be alcohol-related offenses, as opposed to other types of crimes. Policewomen were more likely to resign their employment in the aftermath of an arrest for an on-duty crime, although they were more likely to be suspended for a period of time as a result of being arrested for an off-duty crime. In terms of agency fallout resulting from a policewoman's arrest (1) her supervisor was more likely to be disciplined and/or reassigned, (2) her chief more likely to be under scrutiny reported in a newspaper article about the arrest, and (3) discussion of a cover up and/or agency scandal in wake of the arrest was more likely to be reported in a news report, if the officer's crime was committed on-duty.

<<<<< Insert Table 3 about here >>>>>

### ***Comparing Crime by Policewomen and Crime by Policemen***

Additional analyses were conducted to explore similarities and differences between policewomen and policemen who were arrested. Bivariate chi-square associations are reported in Table 4 as to gender of arrested officers and their employment rank, agency type, offense characteristics, and victim characteristics. Policewomen were more likely to be assigned to patrol/street-level positions (women:  $n = 97$ , 5.6%; men:  $n = 1,634$ , 94.4%), whereas policemen were more likely to be assigned line/field supervisory positions (women:  $n = 6$ , 2.1%; men:  $n =$

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

278, 97.9%) or agency management positions (women:  $n = 2$ , 1.9%; men:  $n = 102$ , 98.1%). In terms of rank, the policewomen arrested were also more likely to hold street-level ranks (i.e., patrol officer through sergeant) (women:  $n = 103$ , 5.2%; men:  $n = 1,862$ , 94.8%), whereas the policemen arrested held administrative ranks (i.e., lieutenant or above) (women:  $n = 2$ , 1.3%; men:  $n = 152$ , 98.7%). The arrested policewomen were more likely than the policemen who were arrested to work for a sheriff's office than any other type of nonfederal law enforcement agency.

The policewomen were more likely than the policemen to be arrested for a profit-motivated crime including fraud-related arson, embezzlement, false pretenses, welfare fraud, shoplifting, and stolen property offenses, whereas the policemen were more likely to be arrested for a sex-related or violence-related crime, as well as for acts of sexual violence. The arrested policewomen were less likely to be arrested as a result of a citizen complaint being the method of crime detection compared to policemen. Characteristics of the arrested officers' victims revealed policewomen are more likely than the policemen to have a victim who is also a police officer and less likely than the policemen to have a victim who is a child.

<<<<< Insert Table 4 about here >>>>>

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

One longstanding gender pattern of crime appears to hold true for female law enforcement officers. The crimes committed by arrested policewomen are more likely to be profit-motivated/economic crime than are the crimes committed by arrested policemen. This trend is found in other types of occupational crime committed by female employees such as bookkeepers, bank tellers, or administrative assistants who may experience occupational and/or economic marginalization (Daley, 1989; Forsyth & Marckese, 1995). Profit-motivated crimes by

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

women—particularly crimes involving embezzlement and false pretenses—stand out as criminal offense categories in which females equal or exceed the number of males arrested. The FBI's Uniform Crime Report reported 51% of embezzlement and 41% of the larceny-theft arrests in 2008 involved a female suspect (U.S. Department of Justice, 2009). In the present study 65% of the profit-motivated arrest cases were job-related inasmuch as the crimes occurred while the policewomen were on-duty and/or involved some aspect of their law enforcement status in the commission of the crimes. It is unclear whether the findings in the current research are reflective of marginalization, increased opportunity, or other unidentified factors. Regardless, it is apparent criminal behaviors of policemen and policewomen are inherently different, indicating a need for further research to help departments understand these offenses and develop strategies to react to and prevent them in the future.

The idea that marginalization is related to policewomen criminal behavior is supported by the results related to position and career tenure. The current research shows the arrested policewomen have fewer years of service and are working at a lower rank. One explanation may be that female police crime is motivated by financial insecurity related to the lack of promotional opportunities. Past research has shown female officers feel it is necessary to take extra steps to advance and gain acceptance in the police profession (Archbold & Schulz, 2012; Belknap & Shelley, 1992). Some policewomen, who feel ostracized from the male police subculture, may also seize at criminal opportunities at earlier stages in their careers than male coworkers.

The current findings and previous research suggest misconduct related to alcohol consumption is high for both female and male officers. Alcohol is an especially important factor in crimes committed while off-duty for both groups. While the current study has found a number of differences in the nature of crimes committed by policemen and policewomen, both male and



## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

female officers face similar experiences and stressors on the job. The finding is consistent with others indicating few or no differences between drinking behavior of male and female officers (Lindsay, 2008; Mandell et al., 1992; F. S. Stinson et al., 1992). Alcohol usage is a commonly recurring factor for off-duty arrests of officers and may indicate both groups are susceptible to negative consequences of the stressful profession, although there is little research addressing potential alcohol-related spillover effects of police work into officers' personal lives (Violanti et al., 2011).

Agency responses in term of adverse employment outcomes appear to vary by gender. Policewomen were more likely to be suspended from their jobs for off-duty crimes than policemen. The opposite occurs for policemen, who are more likely to be suspended for crimes committed on-duty. Organizational reactions to the treatment of women may be tied to the notion of being "outside the feminine role," or female officers may be held to a higher standard than their male counterparts for the off-duty crimes resulting in their arrests. This finding supports previous research showing policewomen often are required to perform at higher levels and work harder to prove themselves compared to male peers (Martin, 1980; Parsons & Jesilow, 2001; Rabe-Hemp, 2008b; Wertsch, 1998). The data suggest women still face gender discrimination in policing. It is likely the differences between agency reactions to male and female police crimes indicate a lack of standardized departmental policies when faced with police criminal behavior. Future quantitative studies should attempt to more thoroughly compare agency reactions to male and female police crimes utilizing a larger sample of crimes committed by policewomen.

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

The socialization of police officers and authoritarian nature of policing may account for some forms of police crime, though gender differences need further research (see also Kane & White, 2013). Past research has shown women commit fewer and less serious crimes, and are generally less violent than men (Belknap, 2007; DeLisi, 2002). The most common crimes by women include sex offenses, larceny-theft, drug offenses, fraud, forgery, and embezzlement (Belknap, 2007). We find, however, a large percentage of crimes committed by policewomen involve violence-related behavior (35.2%). This is perhaps explained by noting the cases in this study consist entirely of individuals deviating from the gender norm by selecting a male-dominated, violence-oriented career. Additional findings—crimes by policewomen are more likely to be profit-motivated (38.1%), and or/alcohol-related (21.0%), rather than drug-related (10.5%) and/or sex-related (4.8%)—suggest additional research is warranted to expand our knowledge on the relationship between gender, police misconduct, police crime, and motive.

Future qualitative work should focus on a more comprehensive and detailed narrative of what societal, occupational, and individual level factors influence misconduct. A more in-depth understanding of the complex dynamics of police crime may contribute to risk identification to help decrease the number of incidents through early intervention measures. Law enforcement agencies throughout the United States have implemented the use of early intervention systems to help identify officers at risk (Harris, 2010, 2012; Walker, Alpert, & Kenney, 2000; Walker & Alpert, 2004). The goal of early intervention—which can reduce problems on- and off-duty—is to change behavior through deterrence and education and may be helpful for female officers who experience higher levels of stress in efforts to maintain their positions in a male-dominated occupation.

References

- Anechiarico, F., & Jacobs, J. B. (1996). *The pursuit of absolute integrity: How corruption control makes government ineffective*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Archbold, C. A., & Schulz, D. M. (2012). Research on women in policing: A look at the past, present and future. *Sociology Compass*, 6, 694–706. doi:10.1111/j.1751-9020.2012.00501.x
- Ballenger, J. F., Best, S. R., Metzler, T. J., Wasserman, D. A., Mohr, D. C., Liberman, A., ... Marmar, C. R. (2011). Patterns and predictors of alcohol use in male and female urban police officers. *The American Journal on Addictions*, 20, 21–29. doi:10.1111/j.1521-0391.2010.00092.x
- Barak, G. (1988). Newsmaking criminology: Reflections on the media, intellectuals, and crime. *Justice Quarterly*, 5, 565–587. doi:10.1080/07418828800089891
- Barak, G. (Ed.). (1995). *Media, process, and the social construction of crime: Studies in newsmaking criminology*. New York, NY: Garland.
- Barak, G. (2007). Doing newsmaking criminology from within the academy. *Theoretical Criminology*, 11, 191–207. doi:10.1177/1362480607075847
- Barker, T., & Carter, D. L. (1994). A typology of police deviance. In T. Barker & D. L. Carter (Eds.), *Police deviance* (3rd ed.). Cincinnati, OH: Anderson.
- Belknap, J. (2007). *The invisible woman: Gender, crime, and justice* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Belknap, J., & Shelley, J. K. (1992). The new lone ranger: Policewomen on patrol. *American Journal of Police*, 12(2), 47–75.
- Bharat, K. (2012, September 22). F. S. Stinson turns 10 [Web log post]. *Google News Blog*. Retrieved from <http://googlenewsblog.blogspot.com/2012/09/google-news-turns-10.html>
- Bloch, P. B., & Anderson, D. (1974). *Policewomen on patrol: Final report*. Washington, DC: Police Foundation.
- Brown, J., Maidment, A., & Bull, R. (1993). Appropriate skill-task matching or gender bias in deployment of male and female police officers? *Policing and Society*, 3, 121–136. doi:10.1080/10439463.1993.9964662
- Carlson, M. (2007). Order versus access: News search engines and the challenge to traditional journalistic roles. *Media, Culture & Society*, 29, 1014–1030. doi:10.1177/0163443707084346

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

- Chermak, S. M., McGarrell, E., & Gruenewald, J. (2006). Media coverage of police misconduct and attitudes toward police. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 29, 261–281. doi:10.1108/13639510610667664
- Christopher Commission. (1991). *Report of the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department*. Los Angeles, CA: City of Los Angeles.
- Daley, K. (1989). Gender and varieties of white-collar crime. *Criminology*, 27, 769–794. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.1989.tb01054.x
- Davey, J. D., Obst, P. L., & Sheehan, M. C. (2000). Developing a profile of alcohol consumption patterns of police officers in a large scale sample of an Australian police service. *European Addiction Research*, 6(4), 205–212. doi:10.1159/000052047
- DeLisi, M. (2002). Not just a boy's club: An empirical assessment of female career criminals. *Women & Criminal Justice*, 13, 27–45. doi:10.1300/J012v13n04\_03
- Denton, E. (2010). International news coverage of human trafficking arrests and prosecutions: A content analysis. *Women & Criminal Justice*, 20, 10–26. doi:10.1080/08974451003641321
- Forsyth, C. J., & Marckese, T. A. (1995). Female participation in three major crimes: A note on the relationship between opportunity and crime. In M. S. Das & V. K. Gupta (Eds.), *Feminine role in global society* (pp. 127–132). New Delhi: M. D.
- Fyfe, J. J., & Kane, R. J. (2006). *Bad cops: A study of career-ending misconduct among New York City police officers*. (NCJ No. 215795). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.
- Gorta, A. (2009). Illegal drug use by police officers: Using research and investigations to inform prevention strategies. *International Journal of Police Science & Management*, 11, 85–96. doi:10.1350/ijps.2009.11.1.112
- Grosswald, B. (2003). Shift work and negative work-to-family spillover. *Journal of sociology and social welfare*, 30(4), 31–56.
- Hale, D. C. (1992). Women in Policing. In G. W. Cordner & D. Hale (Eds.), *What works in policing: Operations and administration examined* (pp. 125–142). Cincinnati, OH: Anderson.
- Harris, C. J. (2010). *Pathways of police misconduct: Problem behavior patterns and trajectories from two cohorts*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Harris, C. J. (2012). The residual career patterns of police misconduct. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40, 323–332. doi:10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2012.06.010

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

- Hickman, M. J., Piquero, A. R., & Greene, J. R. (2000). Does community policing generate greater numbers and different types of citizen complaints than traditional policing? *Police Quarterly*, 3, 70–84. doi:10.1177/1098611100003001003
- Hunt, J. (1990). The logic underlying police sexism. *Women & Criminal Justice*, 1(2), 3–30. doi:10.1300/J012v01n02\_02
- Huon, G. F., Hesketh, B. L., Frank, M. G., McConkey K. M., & McGrath, G. M. (1995). *Perceptions of ethical dilemmas: Ethics and policing*. Payneham, South Australia: National Police Research Unit.
- Kane, R. J. (2007). Collect and release data on coercive police actions. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 6, 773–780. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9133.2007.00485.x
- Kane, R. J., & White, M. D. (2009). Bad cops: a study of career-ending misconduct among New York City police officers. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 8, 737–769. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9133.2009.00591.x
- Kane, R. J., & White, M. D. (2013). *Jammed up: Bad cops, police misconduct, and the New York City Police Department*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Kappeler, V. E., Sluder, R. D., & Alpert, G. P. (1998). *Forces of deviance: Understanding the dark side of policing*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.
- Key, V. O. (1935). Police graft. *American Journal of Sociology*, 40, 624–636.
- Knapp Commission. (1972). *Commission to Investigate Allegations of Police Corruption and the City's Anti-Corruption Procedures: The Knapp Commission report on police corruption* (p. 283). New York, NY: Braziller.
- LaFree, G., Yang, S.M., & Crenshaw, M. (2009). Trajectories of terrorism: Attack patterns of foreign groups that have targeted the United States, 1970-2004. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 8, 445–473. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9133.2009.00570.x
- Langton, L. (2010). *Women in law enforcement, 1987-2008* (No. NCJ 230521). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Lindsay, V. (2008). Police officers and their alcohol consumption: Should we be concerned? *Police Quarterly*, 11, 74–87. doi:10.1177/1098611107309564
- Mandell, W., Eaton, W. W., Anthony, J. C., & Garrison, R. (1992). Alcoholism and occupations: A review and analysis of 104 occupations. *Alcoholism: Clinical and Experimental Research*, 16, 734–746. doi:10.1111/j.1530-0277.1992.tb00670.x
- Martin, S. E. (1980). *Breaking and entering: Policewomen on patrol*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

- Martin, S. E., & Jurik, N. C. (2007). *Doing justice, doing gender: Women in legal and criminal justice occupations* (Second.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McDowell, C. P. (1984). *Criminal justice: A community relations approach*. Cincinnati, OH: Pilgrimage.
- McElvain, J. P., & Kposowa, A. J. (2008). Police officer characteristics and the likelihood of using deadly force. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 35, 505–521. doi:10.1177/0093854807313995
- Miller, L. S., & Braswell, M. C. (1985). Teaching police ethics: An experiential model. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 10(1), 41–54. doi:10.1007/BF02888875
- Miller, L. S., & Braswell, M. C. (1992). Police perceptions of ethical decision-making: The ideal vs. the real. *American Journal of Police*, 11(4), 27–46.
- Mollen Commission. (1994). *Commission to Investigate Allegations of Police Corruption and the Anti-Corruption Procedures of the Police Department: Commission report: Anatomy of failure: A path for success*. New York, NY: The City of New York.
- Morris, R. G. (2010). Identity thieves and levels of sophistication: Findings from a national probability sample of American newspaper articles 1995-2005. *Deviant Behavior*, 31, 184–207. doi:10.1080/01639620902854969
- Parsons, D., & Jesilow, P. (2001). *In the same voice: Men and women in law enforcement*. Santa Ana, CA: Seven Locks Press.
- Peak, K. W., & Glensor, R. W. (1996). *Community policing and problem solving*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Pennsylvania Crime Commission. (1974). *Report on police corruption and the quality of law enforcement in Philadelphia*. Saint Davids, PA: Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Crime Commission.
- Rabe-Hemp, C. E. (2008a). Female officers and the ethic of care: Does officer gender impact police behaviors? *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 36, 426–434. doi:10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2008.07.001
- Rabe-Hemp, C. E. (2008b). Survival in an all boys club: Policewomen and their fight for acceptance. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 31, 251–270. doi:10.1108/13639510810878712
- Rabe-Hemp, C. E. (2011). Female forces: Beauty, brains, and a badge. *Feminist Criminology*, 6, 132–155. doi:10.1177/1557085111398471

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

- Ready, J., White, M. D., & Fisher, C. (2008). Shock value: A comparative analysis of news reports and official records on TASER deployments. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, *31*, 148–170. doi:10.1108/13639510810852620
- Reiss, A. J. (1971). *The police and the public*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Riffe, D., Lacy, S., & Fico, F. G. (2005). *Analyzing media messages: Using quantitative content analysis in research* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Roebuck, J. B., & Barker, T. (1974). A typology of police corruption. *Social Problems*, *21*, 423–437. doi:10.2307/799909
- Schuck, A. M., & Rabe-Hemp, C. E. (2005). Women police: The use of force by and against female officers. *Women & Criminal Justice*, *16*(4), 91–117. doi:10.1300/J012v16n04\_05
- Sherman, L. J. (1975). An evaluation of policewomen on patrol in a suburban police department. *Journal of Police Science and Administration*, *3*, 434–438.
- Sherman, L. W. (1981). *Study of ethics in criminology and criminal justice curricula* (No. NCJ 087788). Chicago, IL: University of Illinois at Chicago Circle, Joint Commission on Criminology and Criminal Justice Education and Standards.
- Sichel, J. L., Friedman, L. N., Quint, J. C., & Smith, M. E. (1978). *Women on patrol: A pilot study of police performance in New York City*. New York, NY: Vera Institute of Justice.
- Stinson, F. S., DeBakey, S. F., & Steffens, R. A. (1992). Prevalence of DSM-III-R alcohol abuse and/or dependence among selected occupations: United States, 1988. *Alcohol Health & Research World*, *16*, 165–172.
- Stinson, P. M., Liederbach, J., & Freiburger, T. L. (2010). Exit strategy: An exploration of late-stage police crime. *Police Quarterly*, *13*, 413–435. doi:10.1177/1098611110384086
- Stinson, P. M., Liederbach, J., & Freiburger, T. L. (2012). Off-duty and under arrest: A study of crimes perpetuated by off-duty police. *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, *23*, 139–163. doi:10.1177/0887403410390510
- Timmins, W. M., & Hainsworth, B. E. (1989). Attracting and retaining females in law enforcement: Sex-based problems of women cops in 1988. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, *33*, 197–205. doi:10.1177/0306624X8903300304
- U.S. Department of Justice. (2000). *National Incident-Based Reporting System: Data collection guidelines*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Justice Information Services Division.

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

- U.S. Department of Justice. (2009). *Crime in the United States, 2008*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Justice Information Services Division.
- Violanti, J. M., Slaven, J. E., Charles, L. E., Burchfiel, C. M., Andrew, M. E., & Homish, G. G. (2011). Police and alcohol use: A descriptive analysis and associations with stress outcomes. *American Journal of Criminal Justice, 36*, 344–356. doi:10.1007/s12103-011-9121-7
- Walker, S., & Alpert, G. P. (2004). Early intervention systems: The new paradigm. In M. J. Hickman, A. R. Piquero, & J. R. Greene (Eds.), *Police Integrity and Ethics* (pp. 21–35). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Walker, S., Alpert, G. P., & Kenney, D. J. (2000). Early warning systems for police: Concept, history, and issues. *Police Quarterly, 3*, 132–152. doi:10.1177/1098611100003002001
- Waugh, L., Ede, A., & Alley, A. (1998). Police culture, women police, and attitudes towards misconduct. *International Journal of Police Science & Management, 1*, 288–300.
- Wertsch, T. L. (1998). Walking the thin blue line. *Women & Criminal Justice, 9*(3), 23–61. doi:10.1300/J012v09n03\_02



# CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

**Table 1. Cases of Policewomen Arrested: Offender & Agency Characteristics (N = 105)**

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>		<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Offender Characteristics			Agency Characteristics		
Duty Status			Type		
Off-Duty	65	61.9	Municipal Agency	67	63.8
On-Duty	40	38.1	Sheriff's Dept.	29	27.6
Function			Special Agency	4	3.8
Patrol & Street-Level	97	92.4	County Agency	3	2.9
Line/Field Supervisor	6	5.7	State Agency	2	1.9
Management	2	1.9	Region		
Age			Northeast	25	23.8
20-27	15	14.3	Midwest	25	23.8
28-35	32	30.5	South	49	46.7
36-43	26	24.8	West	6	5.7
44-51	6	5.8	Full-time Sworn Personnel		
52 or older	4	3.9	1-9	11	10.5
missing	22	21.0	10-49	16	15.3
Years of Service			50-99	14	13.3
0-5	26	24.8	100-249	7	6.7
6-11	31	29.5	250-499	12	11.4
12-17	11	10.5	500-999	10	9.5
18 or more years	4	3.8	1,000 or more	34	32.4
missing	33	31.4	missing	1	1

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

**Table 2. Policewomen Arrest Cases: Most Serious Offense Charged ( $N = 105$ )**

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
driving under the influence	17	16.2
aggravated assault	13	12.4
simple assault	10	9.5
drug/narcotic offense	9	8.6
burglary	5	4.8
false pretenses	5	4.8
shoplifting	5	4.8
forcible fondling	5	4.8
embezzlement	4	3.8
robbery	3	2.9
weapons offense	3	2.9
false report/false statement/perjury	3	2.9
arson	2	1.9
bribery	2	1.9
counterfeiting/forgery	2	1.9
theft from building	2	1.9
obstructing justice	2	1.9
other offenses	13	12.1

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

**Table 3. Bivariate Association of Policewomen Arrest Cases & Duty Status at Time of Crime (N = 105)**

	Off-Duty		On-Duty		$\chi^2$	df	p	V
	n	%	n	%				
Case Offense Characteristics								
Drug-related	4	30.8	9	69.2	6.099	1	.014	.241
Profit-motivated	14	35.0	26	65.0	19.834	1	<.001	.435
Sex-related	0	0.0	5	100.0	8.531	1	.003	.285
Police Sexual Violence	0	0.0	5	100.0	8.531	1	.003	.285
Alcohol-related	21	95.5	1	4.5	13.284	1	<.001	.356
Embezzlement	1	14.3	6	85.7	7.212	1	.007	.262
Employment & Agency Outcomes								
Resignation	3	25.0	9	75.0	7.825	1	.005	.273
Suspension	38	73.1	14	26.9	5.453	1	.020	.228
Supervisor Disciplined/Reassigned	1	10.0	9	90.0	12.627	1	<.001	.347
Chief Under Scrutiny	0	0.0	8	100.0	14.072	1	<.001	.366
Discussion of Scandal / Cover Up	2	15.4	11	84.6	13.615	1	<.001	.360

## CRIME BY POLICEWOMEN

**Table 4. Bivariate Comparison of Policemen & Policewomen Arrest Cases (*N* = 2,119)**

	Policewomen Cases		Policemen Cases		$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>V</i>
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%				
Gender of Arrested Officer	105	5.0	2,014	95.0				
Officer Characteristics								
Rank by Organizational Function	2	1.9	102	98.1	8.448	2	.015	.063
High Rank (Lieutenant & above)	2	1.3	152	98.7	4.714	1	.030	.047
Agency Characteristics								
Agency Type: Sheriff vs. Other	29	9.0	292	91.0	13.366	1	<.001	.079
Offense Characteristics								
Arson	2	18.2	9	81.8	4.107	1	.043	.044
Embezzlement	7	12.3	50	87.7	6.674	1	.010	.056
False Pretenses	8	11.1	64	88.9	5.997	1	.014	.053
Welfare Fraud	1	100.0	0	0.0	19.19	1	<.001	.095
Shoplifting	5	50.0	5	50.0	43.287	1	<.001	.143
Stolen Property Offenses	4	13.8	25	86.2	4.876	1	.027	.048
Profit-motivated	40	7.7	481	92.3	10.872	1	.001	.072
Sex-related	5	0.9	543	99.1	25.651	1	<.001	.110
Violence-related	37	3.5	1,022	96.5	9.599	1	.002	.067
Police Sexual Violence	5	2.0	251	98.0	5.572	1	.018	.051
Crime Detected by Citizen Complaint	44	3.2	1,320	96.8	24.31	1	<.001	.107
Victim Characteristics								
Victim is a Police Officer	10	15.9	53	84.1	37.418	1	<.001	.164
Victim is a Child	3	0.8	354	99.2	7.669	1	.006	.074