



Building a Community-Focused Police Force: Advocating for Women Recruits, Trainees, and Officers

Setting the Context: Conflict between police and communities

- Civil unrest after the shooting of Michael Brown, 08/09/14
- Officers involved in the Eric Garner death, Staten Island, NY acquitted, 12/03/14
- Mass protests sweep the United States (NYC 12/15/14)
- President Obama signs executive order convening a task force on 21st Century Policing 12/18/14
- Ambush killing of 2 NYC cops 12/20/14
- President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing identifies building trust and legitimacy as its first pillar to improving relationships between police and the communities they serve. The report recommends increasing the number of female and minority officers. (May 2015)



Tensions continue to escalate

- Tensions between police and citizens continued to escalate in 2016, with firearm-related killings of police increasing by 56% from 2015.
- 5 Police Officers killed by sniper in Dallas, TX on 07/08/16
- President Barack Obama held a policing summit on 07/13/16 with Black Lives Matter officials, politicians, and police executives. President Obama stated, "Not only are there very real problems but there are still deep divisions about how to solve these problems. There is no doubt that police departments still feel embattled and unjustly accused. And there is no doubt that minority communities, communities of color, still feel like it just takes too long to do what's right",
- 3 Police Officers are killed by gunman in Baton Rouge, LA on 07/17/16

Communities of color and the police

- Trust in the police has been shaken by the thoroughly documented police shootings of unarmed black men (Coates, 2015; Brunson, 2007; Eilperin, 2016; Gallup, 2016; Mentel, 2012 ; Obama, 2014; President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015)
- FBI Director James Comey admitted that the FBI had no idea how many people were killed by police.
- *The Washington Post* took the charge, tallying police related deaths, and reporting that police shot and killed 986 people in 2015 and 963 in 2016.

A NEW
ADMINISTRATION

DONALD
TRUMP



What can police forces do to strengthen bonds of trust with community members?

One promising approach is to increase the numbers of women, consistently rated as more effective in the field and more trusted by the community than their male counterparts, within the ranks and the leadership of police forces (Todak 2017).

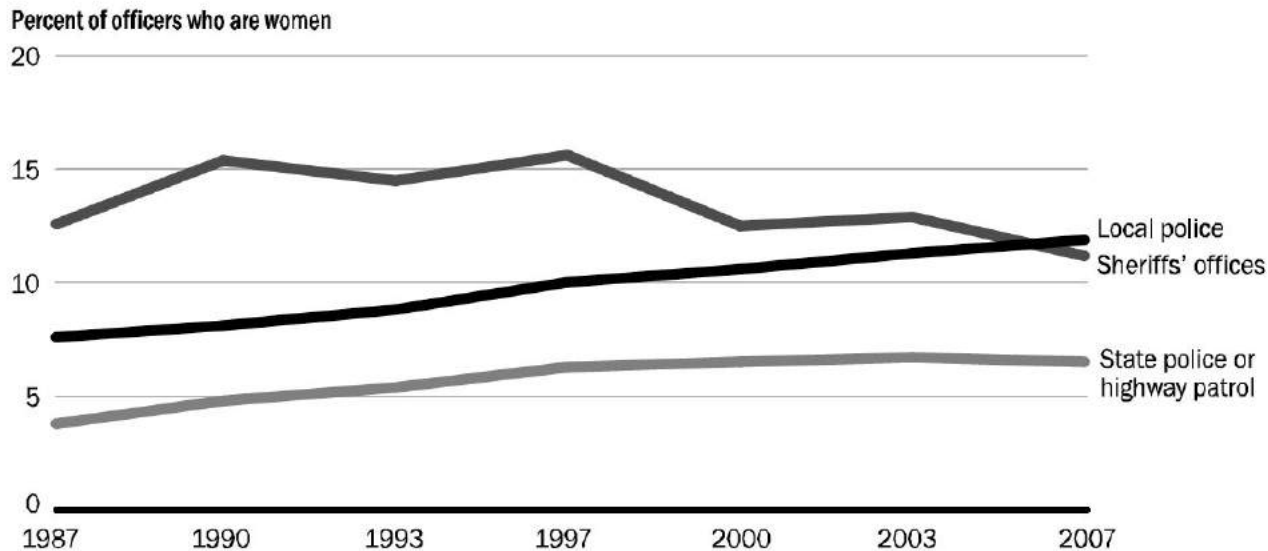


Documented Benefits of Women in the Police Force

- Use tools other than violence and force
 - Women are less likely to use force, excessive force, or be named in a lawsuit than male officers. Male officers were more likely than female officers to engage in aggression to subdue a citizen, separate citizens, or be acknowledged, recognized, or heard (Best Practices for Recruitment, Retention and Turnover of Law Enforcement Personnel 2008).
 - Male officers were more likely to be aggressive because of some quality in the citizen, such as race or socioeconomic class than female (Sherman 1975 and Greenwald 1976).
- Superior oral communication skills and higher rates of empathy
 - Women have better oral communication skills and are more empathetic than men, skills that translate into more effective practices in the field. (International Association of Chiefs of Police 2008).
- Calming effects on male partners in high stress assignments
 - Female partners have a calming effects on male partners, particularly in high stress, dangerous assignments, resulting in fewer police deaths (Johns 1976).
- Motivation to serve in an era of decreased police legitimacy
 - Women identify skills that provide solutions to the police legitimacy crisis (Todak 2017).

Figure 4.

Percent of full-time sworn law enforcement officers who are women among state and local law enforcement agencies, 1987–2007



Note: Data on state police and highway patrol agencies were obtained from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports. Data on local police departments and sheriffs' offices were obtained from the BJS Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) series.

“Percent of officers who are women”

Women in Law Enforcement, 1987–2008

Bureau of Justice Statistics, June 2010

Blumer proposes five steps in addressing a sociological problem (Blumer 1971)

- 1. The emergence of a social problem**
- 2. The legitimation of the problem**
- 3. The mobilization of action with regard to the problem**
- 4. The formation of an official plan of action**
- 5. The transformation of the official plan to an empirical implementation**

1. The emergence of a social problem

The percentage of women in policing has stagnated at 12% nationwide.

How might gender discrimination, and specifically police academy training, explain this plateau?

There is a gap in the literature regarding the pass/fail rates of women.

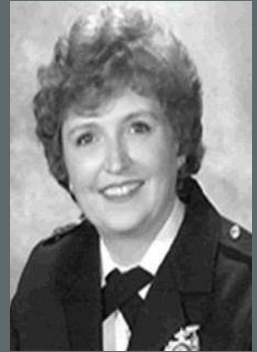
Overview: Early History of Women in Policing (Charles 1978)

- 1845: First six prison matrons hired by the City of New York.
- 1888: NY and MA made it mandatory for cities with populations of over 20,000 to hire police matrons to care for female prisoners.
- 1893: Mayor of Chicago appointed Marie Owens, the widow of a police officer, to police department's detective. She was carried on the police payroll for 30 years as a "patrolman."
- 1905: Lola Baldwin of Portland, OR was given police powers to deal more effectively and authoritatively with the problems of girls and young women.
- 1910: LAPD hires the first policewoman in the United States. Alice Stebbins Wells, a graduate theological student and social worker, addressed a petition including the signatures of 100 influential citizens and civic organizations to the city council requesting an ordinance to create the position of policewoman.

Overview: Modern History of Women in Policing

(Charles
1978 and National Center of Women in Policing)

- 1964: Via Title VII of the Civil Rights Act the Supreme Court applied the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to prohibit discrimination.
- 1972: Title VII was expanded to include public agencies, prohibiting discrimination against women in hiring, recruiting, promotions, and working conditions, on the basis of sex.
- 1985: Penny Harrington of the Portland, OR PD becomes first female police chief in the United States (1969-1986). Filed and won 45 lawsuits to protect women's rights in the police force.
- 1995: Harrington founded the National Center for Women in Policing in collaboration with the Feminist Majority Foundation in an effort to promote women in police forces, reduce use of excessive force, and strengthen community policing.



Updated Snapshot: Women in Police Force

- Women's representation in policing has stagnated for more than 10 years (Cordner & Cordner 2011), with rates increasing by a margin of only 0.05% annually (National Center for Women in Policing 2001).
- While women are better represented among large police (15%) and sheriff's departments (13%), they represent only 6% of small police and 4% of small sheriff's agencies (Langton 2010).
- Women continue to struggle to break into the command structure beyond the rank of sergeant (Guajardo 2016).
- About 3% of all police chiefs are female (International Association of Chiefs of Police 2008).
- Women largely recognize the discrimination as well as organizational and behavioral barriers they will confront in the force (Todak 2017).

The Newark Case



In 2014, Newark, NJ PD started an aggressive hiring plan to address dwindling staffing due to layoffs in 2010, and normal attrition. As classes began cycling through the academy it was noted that $\frac{2}{3}$ of the women were being dismissed due to inability to pass the physical fitness exam or resigned from the academy.

2. The legitimation of the problem

Reasons for Low Percentages of Women in the Police Force

Primary causes (Harr 2005)

- Gender discrimination
- Strain on the family
- Academy-initiated termination
 - Including gendered physical tests (Schulze 2012)
- Department-initiated termination
- Inadequate hiring and recruitment processes (Guajardo 2016)
- Cognitive dissonance

Caution

- Limited research on reasons for the resignation of women and racial/ethnic minority officers (Doerner 1995).
- Sole significant British study uncovered that Black and Asian officers were routinely excluded from participation and advancement among the ranks (Holdaway and Barron 1997) and US research reveals discrimination against African American male police (Dowler 2005). No focus on gender.

Table 1.1.--Comparison of physical measurements of women with men.

	Male	Female
Stature (inches)	67.9	63.3
Height, sitting (inches)	36.0	33.9
Span (inches)	69.9	63.0
Breathing capacity (cubic inches)	219.0	138.0
Strength of pull (pounds)	74.0	40.0
Squeeze (strongest hand) (pounds)	85.0	52.0
Swiftness of blow (feet per second)	18.1	13.4

SOURCE: Anna M. Baetjer, Women in Industry: Their Health and Efficiency (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1946), p. 7.

Reasons for Low Percentages of Women in Police Leadership

Primary causes

- Gender discrimination and department culture (Cordner & Cordner 2011)
 - Lack of male encouragement and mentorship (Bolton 2003)
 - Departmental hostility (Kingshott 2009)
 - Internalized gendered stress (Harrison 2012)
- Institutional factors (Guajardo 2016)
 - Low annual attrition rates for supervisory and command roles
 - Stagnation in number of supervisory and command positions
- Too few women situated in political decision-making positions (Guajardo 2016)
- Concerns regarding stress on family (Cordner & Cordner 2011)
- Reluctance to change relationships with peers (Martin 2004)

Qualitative Research

- Female Officers Focus Group
- Recruit Interviews

Officer Focus Group

Ranks

Two sergeants, Two detectives, Two police officers

Demographics

Two Black , Two White , Two Hispanic

Experience

Experience ranged from one year to 16 years.

Is this Normal?

No one knows. There is no US agency tracking the number of women that are dismissed or resign from a police academy.

On 11/14/17 - submitted an Open Public Records Act request to the Department of Criminal Justice of the State of NJ which oversees the Police Training Commission. The PTC establishes the standards for all police training academies in the State of NJ. The request was for the pass/fail rate for men and women for all police academy classes held from 2012 to 2017. The physical fitness standards were changed in 2015. The records will show if the change in fitness standards affected the pass/fail rates.

On 11/22/17, NJ-OPRA advised that request was overly broad and must be narrowed down or it will be denied.

11/27/17 phone call with Division of Criminal Justice was an attempt to stonewall the request, saying the request will cost "thousands". I requested an itemized bill.

11/28/17 I identify the exact public record that contains data required for this research.

12/04/17 Advised records would cost nearly \$5,000

3. The mobilization of action with regard to the problem

Social Capital Theory --"the networks, norms and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam 2000).

Grant Opportunity from OSF for Police Associations Leading 21st Century Policing



4. The formation of an official plan of action

Asset Mapping

Physical Assets

Physical assets in the community include land, buildings, transportation, and facilities that can contribute to community strengthening.

Gymnasium below SOA
Branch Brook Park
Vince Lombardi
Community Center

Economic Assets

Economic assets include what residents produce and consume in the community, in both formal and informal ways, through local businesses, or bartering and trading relationships, that can contribute.

Grant Funding
Office Space provided by SOA
Print Shop relationship
Social Media volunteers

Stories

Stories carry the memory of a community and can describe the potential of a community based on previous times as remembered by those who live there.

Focus groups were staged as informal dinners where women bonded over shared experiences

Local Residents

Local residents are those who live in the community. Residents' skills, experiences, capacities, passions, and willingness can contribute to community strengthening.

Established relationships will be “exploited”. Senior female officers will expand the WLA’s reach by bringing in their friends and peers in the agency. Guest Speakers will include respected female figures in Law Enforcement.

Local Associations

These include associations in the community primarily run by volunteers, such as athletic clubs, faith-based groups, and others that can contribute.

FOP
SOA
Bronze Shields
HLES
PAPA

Local Institutions

Local institutions are public spaces in the community such as schools, libraries, parks, and government entities, such as nonprofits.

Community Engagement Office
Rutgers University Police Institute
BetaGov
NIJ
LEADS Program
Police Foundation

Blumer proposes five steps for identifying a sociological problem:

- 1. The emergence of a social problem**
 - a. history of police women,
 - b. experiences of women in policing, workplace environment, barriers experienced (discrimination, gender bias?)
- 2. The legitimation of the problem**
 - a. literature review on topic
 - b. interviews with former recruits
 - c. focus groups with active police officers
 - d. Open Public Records Act to review Police Training Commission data on success rates for female completion of training compared to male.
- 3. The mobilization of action with regard to the problem**
 - a. Convene meeting to outline issues and generate action ideas
 - b. Recruit members to join the movement
 - c. Snowballing
 - d. Get media, union, and community group attention.
- 4. The formation of an official plan of action**
 - a. Use professional resources available for a workable action plan
 - b. Consult with active groups for best practices
 - c. Plan to include training for female applicants
 - d. Plan for women ascension track among the ranks
- 5. The transformation of the official plan to an empirical implementation**
 - a. Measure baseline statistics before implementation
 - b. Document outputs and outcomes
 - c. Evaluate progress
 - d. Adjust as needed, based on evaluation results

5. The transformation of the official plan to an empirical implementation.

Women's Leadership Academy



Our Mission





Women's Leadership

@WomensLeadPD Follows you

Tweets
157

Following
57

Followers
25

Likes
22

Following

Tweets

Tweets & replies

Media

Who to follow · Refresh · View all



Rod Downey @Fair_to_M... ×

↻ Women's Leadership Retweeted



Instagram

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Edit Profile



103 posts

47 followers

59 following

Women's Leadership Academy WLA's mission is to increase the number of women in LE careers, especially in leadership roles through sororal support and mentorship. womensleadpd.org

POSTS

SAVED

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