

Evolution on Rank: The Invisible Brass Barrier

Approved by Sabina Burton      Date: April 20, 2011  
Advisor

Evolution on Rank: The Invisible Brass Barrier

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Kelly S. Treece

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## **Abstract**

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Kelly S. Treece

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### ***Statement of the problem***

Prior to women being allowed into the profession of policing in the early 1900's, police officers were formally known as a group of all white male individuals who possessed the male valued traits of rationality, aggressiveness, courage, and objectivity; none of which were deemed qualities that women possessed. Gender differences in relation to policing have often brought about different perceptions of the role of the police officer (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009).

Although women have technically been employed in the policing field since the early 1900's, they have only held traditional policing duties since the late 1960's (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009). Prior to this, there were extremely limited numbers of female officers and they were assigned to duties of the social welfare nature. Jail matrons, juvenile and family disputes, sexual assaults, and clerical work was common place (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009).

As women have increased their presence in the law enforcement profession over the past three decades, their move into promoted positions has been met with trepidation. Gender plays a significant role in the aspirations of police officers regarding promotional opportunities. The mentality and substructures in place regarding male and female perceptions on female law enforcement officers are deeply rooted. The barriers of being trapped into gender-appropriate

roles are derived from both the male and female officers (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009). In a study comparing male and female promotional aspirations, the male officers indicated that they believed the female officers were treated better than the male officers were after promotion. The male officers also indicated that the female officers “appear to call in sick more than male officers” (Archbold et al., p. 298, 2010) and that they are given more opportunities. These comments coincidentally parallel a study that was conducted on the opposition of women in the military by male military personnel (Archbold et al., 2010). In order to overcome these barriers, both sexes need to evolve.

The inequalities of the male and female promotional growth opportunities are a direct result of the gender divide (Reaves & Hickman, 2002). The limited amount of promotional programs geared specifically towards female police officers, the negative effects of tokenism, and the lack of career development programs are all barriers that reinforce the bias and misconceptions that hinder female officer promotional growth (Archbold & Moses-Schultz, 2008).

### *Assumptions and anticipated outcomes*

It is anticipated that this research will show that both police department administration and officer perception play an integral role in the dynamics of the promotional growth of female police officers. By both administrative involvement and officer participation, this study will show that by implementing the recommendations set forth; the promotional rate of qualified female police officers will increase nationally.

***Methods of approach***

The main method of approach will be the use of secondary data gathered through the review of empirical, statistical, and theoretical findings. This data will provide research which will identify obstacles to promotion, as well as identify recommendations for more effective gender promotion guidelines.

***Contribution to the field***

This paper will be an educational tool for the criminal justice system, in particular police agencies, in the identification of the gender bias still present in law enforcement. This paper will identify obstacles that female officers have overcome and some that are still challenging them today in relation to both their personal and professional lives. Finally, this paper will address ways in which police agencies can identify leadership qualities in female officers and ways in which to promote female officer advancement. With the acknowledgment of gender bias and promotional barriers, both police administrations and female officers will have a better understanding of ways to overcome the obstacles, eliminate the preconceptions, and implement successful support programs.

**Table of contents**

	Page
Approval page	i
Title page	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of contents	v
Chapters	
I.    Introduction	1
A. Statement of the problem	1
B. Significance of the problem	2
C. Purpose of the study	4
II.   Literature Review	5
A. Statistical analysis of female officers in law enforcement	5
B. Gender bias and professionalism	7
C. Organizational barriers	9
D. Promotional aspirations of female officers	12
E. Effects of tokenism	14
F. Feminist leadership perceptions	17
III.  Theoretical Framework	20
A. Feminist theory	20
B. Social role theory	21

C. Social learning theory	22
D. Application of theories	23
IV. Examination of the promotional process	27
A. State and national postings	27
B. Departmental postings	28
C. Unintended backlash of promotional push	31
V. Recommendations	33
A. Elimination of tokenism	33
B. Implementation of formal mentoring program	34
C. Increased education and training opportunities	36
D. Identification of leadership qualities	39
E. Development of incentive programs	40
VI. Summary and conclusion	44
VII. References	46

## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

### *Statement of the problem*

City governments, and in particular law enforcement, have been under scrutiny from the inception of the policing era. In 1909, sociologist Leonard Fuld declared that “the character of the city government as a whole is judged by the character of the police administration” (Moses Schultz, 2004). Law enforcement is considered a guiding light in the development of the country’s morality and truth. The problem however is that law enforcement is slow to change. As the United States continues to become a nation that thrives on diversity, law enforcement falls short in the effort to evolve and change. Women in law enforcement have been decidedly left out of the equation.

Much of police work is associated with the perception of a hyper-masculine identity (Coleman & Cheurprakobkit, 2009). The mere consideration of women in law enforcement was almost unheard of until the 1960’s. At an extremely slow pace, police departments began to acclimate to women joining the force. Many were not convinced that a female officer would be able to possess and utilize the male valued traits of rationality, aggressiveness, courage, and objectivity (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009). The pace of female officer employment was so slow that today it is estimated that women account for only 12.8% of the total patrol officer population (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009).

While presently there are positive steps in the recruitment of female officers, the barriers to promotion are reflective of the obstacles that the pioneering police women experienced when joining the force in the early 1070’s. It has been more than thirty years since females have taken

equal job descriptions in law enforcement; however they still have not reached parity with their male counterparts in promotional opportunities (Montejo, 2010).

If a female officer chooses to pursue promotional aspirations, she is often faced with discrimination, harassment, and intimidation. This revolving door of impediments undermines the efforts and aspirations that female officers have in regards to promotions; and ultimately contributes to retention issues and the overall under-representation of women in law enforcement (National Center for Women & Policing, 2002). Just ten years ago asking the question *can you name any female police chiefs or sheriff's?* would have left members of the law enforcement community stumbling for an answer.

### ***Significance of the problem***

Historically, male officers resisted the equal participation of female officers in law enforcement. The female officers job descriptions were limited, their job titles were different from the men, and they were barred from competing in the promotional process on an equal level with the male officers (Moses Schultz, 2004). Female officers were classified as physically inadequate, unable to handle violent encounters, and excessively emotional. The negative attitudes of male police officers have been cited as the most difficult obstacle to overcome for women in law enforcement. In fact, one study found that 95% of male officers believed that hiring female officers was attributed solely to legal and governmental pressures (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009).

Although there have been increases in the employment of female officers in law enforcement throughout the past 30 years, at the current rate of advancement women will not

achieve parity within the profession for another 70 years (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Women are still perceived as less logical, less rational, and incapable of taking charge. These perceptions are hindering female advancement in law enforcement as many of the perceptions come from men in the organization who are tasked as their trainers, mentors, partners, and superiors (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009).

The change towards community oriented policing has become a pivotal point in diversifying law enforcement. While there have been great strides in the implementation of women in policing, there continues to be a slow rise for advancement of women in supervisory positions. It is estimated that women comprise only 12% of all sworn law enforcement positions in the United States (Reaves & Hickman, 2002). In large urban police agencies, women hold approximately 7.3% of the top command positions of chief, commander, and/or captain, and only 9.6% of the supervisory positions of lieutenants and sergeants (National Center for Women & Policing, 2002). In the smaller rural department these percentages are significantly lower. Overall, women account for only 1% of the chief positions across the United States (Archbold, Hassell, & Stichman, 2010).

Diversity in law enforcement encourages tolerance within a community. It promotes differing policing styles and brings trust and fairness to the profession. It influences community support and cooperation with the police (Hassell & Brandl, 2009). If however diversity in law enforcement does not transcend throughout the ranks, a breakdown of community relations begins to occur.

***Purpose of the study***

The purpose of this paper will be to identify what factors found the perceived negative professionalism of female officers, determine departmental influence hindering female officer promotional growth, and provide recommendations for effective female officer promotional development programs.

While many perceive that the glass ceiling in law enforcement is a thing of the past, it is still prevalent in today's policing culture. According to Margaret Moore, the director of the National Center for Women and Policing, "It's been broken, but a lot of us are still walking on the shattered glass" (Mroz, 2008, p.2). In order to eliminate the barriers that are prohibitive to advancement for female officers, both policy change and administrative initiative must occur.

## SECTION II: LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to understand the climate and workplace problems that female officers face, a thorough evaluation of the organization context in which they work must be considered. The climate of the department is dependent on the interactions of the organizations members. The context, however, is dependent on how an individual member perceives, experiences, and interprets both internal and external influences (Hassell & Brandl, 2009). The following review of current literature is divided into six parts. The first part depicts statistical analysis of female officers in law enforcement. The second part looks at the gender bias and professionalism present within policing. The third part examines the organizational barriers that female officers face regarding promotional advancement. The fourth part focuses on the promotional aspirations of female officers. The fifth part examines the effects of tokenism within the law enforcement community. The final part explores the perceptions attached to female leadership.

### *Statistical analysis of female officers in law enforcement*

The statistical data relating to women in law enforcement has historically been erroneous. Since 1997, the National Center for Women and Policing has been calculating the percentages of women involved in law enforcement, including their presentation within the ranks. This, however, has been a complex task as not every department responds to survey distribution (Moses Schultz, 2004). Percentages have been difficult to actualize in law enforcement due to the separation of calculations in large urban departments (100 or more sworn officers) and smaller rural departments. In 2001, the National Center for Women and Policing (2005)

estimated that in large agencies 12.7% of sworn officer were female. In the smaller departments however, female officers comprise only 8.1%. This creates a national average of 11.2% of women in sworn positions. Since 2001, there has not been much progress with the employment of women in law enforcement. In 2007, the FBI estimated that 12% of law enforcement officers were women (Montejo, 2010). Women of color, however, are staggeringly under-represented holding an estimated 4.8% of sworn positions (National Center for Women & Policing, 2002).

While the numbers of women in law enforcement are slowly increasing, there are significantly insufficient numbers of women in police leadership positions (Montejo, 2010). According to a 2002 study, in large departments women held only 7.3% of the top command positions including chief, commander, and/or captain (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005; Montejo, 2010). Over half of the large departments nationwide did not have any women at a supervisory level (Montejo, 2010).

Dependant on the state, educational levels varies in terms of requirements for law enforcement. For example, in Wisconsin an individual is required to have 60 college credits to qualify for certification in law enforcement (WILENET, 2010). This is below the 66 credits necessary for an associate's degree. Research indicates that women in law enforcement have higher levels of education than their male counterparts (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008; National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Evidence suggests that women are equally capable of meeting the demands of the law enforcement profession (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005).

### *Gender bias and professionalism*

Women are often judged by a different standard than men when entering a career field. Interestingly enough, gender bias in law enforcement is not restricted to a male officer's opinion of a female officer. Female officers and civilians also contribute to the biased perceptions that are prevalent today. Studies show that men are consistently rated as performing better in certain fields than women even though the work that was done was alike between the sexes. This finding is consistent regardless of the gender of the respondent (Cuadrado, 1995). Women are finding it difficult to escape the gender stereotypes that have enveloped them for centuries.

Montejo (2010) identifies what is known as the "good old boy network" (p. 389) where there is a clear division of the sexes. Within this network there is a noticeable deficiency of mentors and of education and training for female officers. The women's lack of ability to navigate within the organizational culture at an equal rate as the men hinders their ascent to higher positions (Montejo, 2010). In one study, women indicated that it was not the work, nor the community, nor their families that was the largest obstacle for them to overcome; rather it was the internal substructure of the department. The incessant antagonism and harassment of the "old boys network", which included their peers and supervisors, proved to be the most difficult (Texeira, 2002).

A female officer's perception of her experience in the organization varies dependent on the culture of the particular department and the time in which she was hired. Many women indicate that they have experienced sexual harassment, a lack of departmental support, and have felt a demeaning attitude regarding their competencies and abilities (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009). Former Chief Nannette Hegerty was hired by the Milwaukee Police Department in 1976. In an

interview, she recalls an event that occurred early in her career in which she personally arrested two men on suspicion of drug use. After bringing them to the command post, a male officer commented to the suspects, “You let that woman arrest you?” (Lindeman, 2007, p1).

Undermining then Officer Hegerty’s role as a police officer is just one example of the experiences that female officers have had to overcome. It was not until 2003 that Hegerty was promoted to the position of Chief; 27 years after she entered the field of policing. These forms of verbally deprecating comments are not uncommon. In one study, 69% of the women interviewed reported similar derogatory comments from male supervisors. One female officer stated “When I bid my shift and ended up in a different part of the city, one of my supervisors told me to be sure to bring a bottle of Midol (an over the counter medication used to alleviate premenstrual symptoms) with me” (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008, p. 58).

The perception of gender bias is not limited to the female perspective. The male viewpoint, however, is quite different than the female. In a study on promotional aspirations among male and female officers, male officers indicated that not only are female officers supported within the law enforcement organization as much as the males, they are at times given more support than the men (Archbold et al., 2010). The difference in the male and female perception is the foundation from which it was formed. It is a question of whether or not individuals are being held to the same standard.

One theme that continues to manifest is the perception that female officers call in sick more than the men do (Archbold et al., 2010). These perceptions may be exasperated by the components of pregnancy and motherhood. A hostile and discriminatory department may be

amplified when an officer becomes pregnant or is a mother. These two characteristics clearly define her as a woman in a masculine setting (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009).

### *Organizational barriers*

There are a degree of barriers that have been cited as reasons why police departments are not promoting female officers. In a survey of 800 police chiefs, 18% indicated that there were not enough women on their department to promote any of them, 13% stated that there were no promotional opportunities, 9% admitted that gender bias limited female advancement, and 6% acknowledged that women would not be accepted within their organization (Montejo, 2010). As can be hypothesized, it is the formal structure of the particular department that greatly impacts the implementation and outcome of equal opportunity employment in regards to promotions.

Bias within an organization is one of the most significant barriers that female officers face regarding promotional opportunities. Female officers are more likely to experience overt hostility and gender specific negative interactions than male officers. Female officers are also more likely to encounter group blaming, rumors, exposure to sexuality explicit jokes at their own expense, and stigmatization (Hassell & Brandl, 2009). It is the unwelcoming attitudes of male officers and the perception that female officers are less physically capable, unable to adequately handle violent encounters, and are excessively emotional that lead to these biases (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009).

It is the attitude of the male officer that creates the largest hindrance in organizational barriers. In one study, 95% of the male officer participants indicated that the hiring of female officers was attributed “solely to legal and governmental pressures” (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009, p.

520). Due to these discerning viewpoints, female officers have been stunted in their quest for advancement. One of the key components for advancement in law enforcement is that an officer needs to show growth in the form of assignments and/or previous positions in rank such as first line or middle management (Moses Schultz, 2004). The requirements of having experience prove to be difficult for many female officers.

Promotional boards look upon previous experience as a prerequisite for consideration. The problem, however, is that female officers are at a disadvantage when providing promotional criteria. The use of seniority and military experience are often disadvantageous for female officers. Fixating female officers in patrol positions or moving them too quickly or into undesirable positions limit their ability to be promoted (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Female officers have often indicated that they have been denied assignment to prestigious units such as narcotic, SWAT (special weapons and tactics), motorcycle, canine, mounted, field training officer, and special discipline instructor. These same women indicate that they can more easily obtain positions in “female oriented” assignments such as juvenile crime, child abuse, community relations, crime prevention, and domestic violence (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). These classifications based on gender stereotyping contribute to departmental failure in recognizing leadership qualities.

Stress within an organization has been cited as one of the leading barriers to promotional growth. Research indicates that stress is experienced at higher levels in female officers than in male officers. This is attributed to the lack of acceptance by male officers, the denial of needed information and gender specific equipment, mediocre alliances, and little to no support from supervisors and colleagues (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009).

Stress can be attributed to the basics in policing during the formation of new recruit behavior which then remains with an officer through her career (DeLaMater, 2008). An example of forming a stressful foundation is during the field training stages. A new recruit watches the veteran officers, which are most commonly male, and recognize that veterans appear to be unaffected by high stress incidents and show little to no emotion when handling a critical incident. An officer who does show emotion is viewed as weak and receives negative feedback by colleagues often in the form of ridicule. The new officers learn quickly that by shielding their emotions they are behaving in the proper and acceptable manner. This occurs in all areas of law enforcement from critical incidents to interdepartmental working relationships. One of the most unique problems female officers face in law enforcement is the rarely spoken about taboo of sexual harassment (Hassell & Brandl, 2009). Many female officers believe this to be a burden that they must endure in order to belong. Repressing these stressors fuel the barriers that follow the officers in all aspects of their career.

As stress continues to build, female officers become particularly influenced by its effects. It is suggested that officers who are inundated with departmental stress factors often bring the stress home (Roberts & Levenson, 2001). Not only do officers cope with the stress of organizational and management dilemmas, but they also add the exhaustion of police work itself, long hours, and undesirable shifts. The stress of role ambiguity, role conflict, lack of management support, lack of acceptance, and lack of promotional opportunity outline the internalization of police stress within the climate of law enforcement (Hassell & Brandl, 2009). For female officers, this stress combined with bias in law enforcement is overwhelming when considering promotional advancement.

### *Promotional aspirations of female officers*

Women in law enforcement face many internal challenges when considering advancement options. Research indicates that one reason women's careers fall behind their male counterparts is because they are reluctant to ask for the promotions they believe they deserve. Furthermore, many women lack the confidence that they even believe they deserve promotions and therefore perpetuate their own disadvantage in the workplace (Moses Schultz, 2004). Many female officers also look at what they perceive as the fairness of the promotional system. Oftentimes they believe that their goal is unattainable or that the process is predetermined, thus they will likely choose not to participate (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). The women who fall victim to this thinking are unwittingly contributing to the culture that creates the organizational sexism in the promotional process (Archbold et al., 2010).

Family obligations and child rearing duties tend to be the most common reasons that female officers cite as to why they do not choose to seek promotions. The perception of female officers not having the appropriate time to devote to the department due to family responsibilities is held by both female and male officers (Archbold et al., 2010). The idea that women are responsible for rearing the home while men are responsible for financial management is still prevalent today. Fewer overtime opportunities and extended childcare expenditures also contribute to the negative perceptions that female officers assign to career advancement (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). Female officers who marry and those who choose to have children often put their career advancement on hold. Women tend to have greater conflict between their personal and professional life than men (Moses Schultz, 2004). These gender substructures are only fed by the predominately male culture of long working hours and

aggressive behavior which force female officers to choose between pursuing their career goals and fulfilling their expected roles of mother and wife (Archbold et al., 2010).

Many female officers choose not to apply for a promotion because they perceive there is a lack of fairness in the system. Many women believe that if they were selected to be promoted they would have to constantly prove their worth and capability; while a man would not have to do the same (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). One study revealed that there was significantly more prejudice against female officers than male officers. Male officers were immediately accepted into the organization until or unless they demonstrated a lack of ability. Female officers, however, had to prove themselves worthy before male officers would accept them as partners within the department (Montejo, 2010). This constant scrutiny of skill and ability leads to a lack of confidence and a loss of faith in the promotional system. When the outcome appears predetermined, female officers opt out of the process (Montejo, n.d.).

Another reason female officers choose not to participate in the promotional process is the lack of female role models in supervisory positions (Archbold et al., 2010; Montejo, 2010). Without the encouragement of previously accomplished women in law enforcement, the ideology that promotional opportunities are possible becomes diminished. Women begin to doubt their own experience and qualifications. Tokenism is then introduced into the equation. The reverberations of well intentioned male supervisors encouraging women to participate in the promotional process due to their gender only further complicates and authenticates a female officers choice not to participate (Archbold et al., 2010).

Despite the negative aspects that deter promotional aspirations, many female officers choose to push past these barriers and further their careers. When considering a promotion,

studies report that 43% of female officers indicate that they would welcome the challenge of a new position. Other influences cited for participating in the promotional process are a higher salary, a better work schedule, and the prestige of the higher rank (Archbold et al., 2010). These same influences, however, were also cited as reasons why women choose not to participate. The possibility that they would receive an incompatible work schedule with their family life and an undesirable shift assignment outweighed the desire for promotion. Being married to another officer on the same department has also been cited as a reason not to pursue a promotion by female officers; however male officers do not exhibit this same rationale (Archbold et al., 2010; Livingston et al., 1996).

### *Effects of tokenism*

A token officer can be classified as the few among the many. In reference to this literature, tokens are defined dependant on gender. They are more visible than the dominant group, their differences are exaggerated, and their qualities are distorted to fit a particular stereotype (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). Female officers are one of many tokens within law enforcement. Tokens do not go out of their way to become noticed, they merely exist within a culture. The effects of tokenism, however, cause the individual to work twice as hard to have their actual achievements acknowledged and to prove themselves to other department members (Archbold et al., 2010; Texeira, 2002).

Tokenism has an overall effect on the entire organization. Female officers resent being considered for a promotion based only on gender and male officers become disgruntled at the perceived favoritism towards women. Many departments while attempting to appear progressive

in female advancement unwittingly create tokenism within the department. Female officers are often placed on display, intentionally paraded in public view, and pressured to take on duties that further segregate them from the other department members (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). Singling out female officers for public relations and encouraging them to apply for promotions with the belief that they will receive the promotion based specifically on gender creates further unwanted negative attention from male officers. Both male and female officers blame the effects of tokenism on department administrators desires to promote female officers for public relations campaigns (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). By creating the perception that a female officer will be promoted regardless of accomplishment or competency causes many female officers to refrain from entering the promotional process (Archbold et al., 2010).

To further demonstrate the token effect, many female officers indicate that they had to work harder than their male counterparts to prove their worth in the department (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). Women state that they are not considered for awards and do not receive heroic accolades as often as the male officers (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). The disrespect of the male officers and male supervisors perpetuates the token status. These attitudinal barriers experienced by women in law enforcement contribute to the disproportionately high number of women in the lowest levels of police departments.

Tokenism is not only brought on by male officers and male supervisors but by the way in which female officers define themselves. The token symbolism is compounded by the characterization of *policewomen* versus *policewomen*. *Policewomen* are female officers who want to be treated equally with the male officers. They buck against the stereotypes, are career driven, and conduct themselves with the utmost professionalism. *Policewomen*, however, use

sexual stereotypes to their advantage and accept the fact that they are treated differently (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). Interestingly, *policewomen* are viewed by male officers as more threatening and perpetuate the gender divide. *Policewomen*, however, are not career driven, happy to remain in their respective job assignment, and therefore not a threat to male officers (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). While both characterizations of female officers resent having a token status, one group of women fights the status proactively while the other fights through non-confrontational intermingling.

Tokenism also impacts the cohesiveness of work groups. Camaraderie is considered highly coveted in law enforcement. Many female officers indicate that they have little or no outside contact with their male coworkers. In a 1998 study evaluating the lingering effects of tokenism on female police officers, one female officer participant indicated that the men on her shift often go out after work for beers, however, she is never invited. Another female officer advised that she was not included on the hunting and fishing trips where many of the networking for promotions occurred. Both officers cited feeling isolated within their own shift (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008).

In departments where tokenism is highly noticeable, female officers indicate that they are unsatisfied. This feeling of isolation, decreased job satisfaction, and depression directly relates to tokenism's affect on promotional growth. Token women are more likely to want to change jobs, would not recommend their job to other women, and have significantly lower self-esteem (Archbold & Moses Schultz, 2008). Both male and female officers desire equal treatment, equal recognition, and equal promotional opportunities. Regardless of gender, only the most qualified and experienced officers should be promoted (Archbold et al., 2010).

### *Feminist leadership perceptions*

The success of an organization is pivotal on the quality of leadership regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, and political orientation. The text, *The Art of War* (c. 400 BC), describes a leader as “the arbiter of the people’s fate, the man on whom it depends whether the nation shall be in peace or in peril” (Kingshott, 2009, p. 50). It would appear that leadership traits are individual based, however, in law enforcement, as well as many other professions, that is not found to be factual. Women receive less positive evaluations than do men when participating in identical assertive roles (Wexler & Quinn, 1985).

Research indicates that women are perceived as lacking in the traits that make a good leader and will have more family versus work conflict than men do. These perceptions, however, are based on false ideologies. In the same research, it is determined that it is the male supervisors biased perception that prevents women from becoming leaders (Montejo, 2010). These biases thwart feminist leadership progression. Female leadership roles have been historically criticized by men especially in the area of motherhood. It is often believed that the role of a mother interferes with leadership, however, the role of a father does not hold the same perceptions.

Women who have children are viewed as less reliable, less committed, and less professional; all of which are necessary for leadership (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009). When introducing motherhood into law enforcement women face extraordinary condemnation as male officers and supervisors look at the profession as too dangerous for a mother. The possibility that a child could be left without a mother is unfathomable for some thus causing a backlash of negative perceptions of her priorities. Departments also view motherhood as a liability and think

that the time off for maternity leave is excessive and lacking in leadership attributes (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009).

Perceptions about female leadership in law enforcement are not limited to male officers. Even the most well intentioned civilian can influence public perception with bias. For example, an article written by Schlueb (2007) about the first woman to be appointed Chief of the Orlando Police Department is filled with bias, whether intentional or unintentional. The first sentence of the article declares that Val Demings is the first woman to lead the department, however, the second sentence proceeds to discuss her husband who was formally a chief but had retired five years prior. The article, while praising Chief Demings' accomplishments, is littered with gendered distinctions and comparisons.

While perceptions on female leadership are questionable, research on the subject matter is arguably positive. Studies show that a female police supervisor's leadership capacity is greater than that of male supervisors. Female supervisors exhibited higher levels of common personality traits that are related to supervision such as emotional independence, verbal aggression, conservatism, self-image, and seeking social roles. Males, however, scored higher in only one trait, that of persistence (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005; Wexler & Quinn, 1985).

Some feminist leadership studies reveal that women are more nurturing, caring, and sensitive to the needs of subordinates (Kingshott, 2009). They are also found to be more flexible, self-assertive, proactive, and creative (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). All of these traits are based on the foundations that form good leaders. One example of a successful use of female traits is that of former police Chief Elizabeth Bondurant who stated that

early in her career she learned to use her wits rather than physical force to attain a successful outcome (Mroz, 2008). Chief Bondurant's personal skills and tactics were winning tools in maintaining control and achieving a successful career.

Leadership is successful when four principals are followed. The first is that an individual is able to lead in a manner that influences followers. Second, there is an acceptance that where there are leaders, there are followers. Third, when confronting a crisis the leader is the one expected to develop a solution and initiate a response. Finally, a leader is an individual who has a vision and a need to initiate change (Kingshott, 2009). Regardless of an individual's perception towards feminist leadership qualities, women have all the skills, traits, and ambitions to be great leaders.

### SECTION III: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are numerous sociological theories that can be applied to the effects of gender divide and promotional opportunities in law enforcement. This study examines three theoretical perspectives and how they assist in providing a thorough explanation of why gender plays a role in career advancement. The three theories that are examined are the feminist theory, the social role theory, and social learning theories.

#### *Feminist theory*

The term feminist theory is vast in nature. There is little consensus among feminist sociologists regarding the basic theoretical questions that define the feminist theory (Saltzman Chafetz, 1997). In this study the broad definition of the feminist theory is that the “feminist theory seeks to understand how gender is related to social inequities, strains, and contradictions” (Saltzman Chafetz, 1997, p. 98). One of the many aspects of the theory is the status expectations that result from interactive relationships that are structured on gender differentiation and inequity. It is posited that males are presumably given a higher social status in group settings, therefore, affecting the gender based expectations that are assigned to women and men in mixed-sex groups. The theory indicates that both men and women perceive that men are more likely to move a group towards task achievement than a woman, especially if the task is traditionally male oriented. This is especially evident in a capitalist system. The division of many labor fields by gender feeds into a patriarchal system that each sex has a designed role that they are to fulfill (Saltzman Chafetz, 1997).

Without a set of specified guidelines that eliminates or reduces the salience of gender based performance expectations, these ideals become self-fulfilling prophecies. Women lose their self confidence, they lose their influence in group interactions and decisions, and power and prestige become an unattainable dream. Since gender based expectations are defined by the group members as legitimate, any women who chooses to counteract them will be rejected by the group as defiant and inappropriate (Saltzman Chafetz, 1997; Roberts & Levenson, 2001).

### ***Social role theory***

The social role theory posits that women are liable to be penalized for acting in ways that are contradictory to stereotypical expectations. Women are believed to be less direct and assertive than men, which lead to the belief that women are less decisive, capable, and competent than their male counterparts (Borlino & Turnley, 2003). It is hypothesized that individuals are expected to behave in ways that are consistent with their gender roles. When people act in ways that violate social perceptions, they are viewed negatively. In particular, women who use classically defined masculine leaderships styles (autocratic and/or directive) are viewed unfavorably while men who utilize the same styles are evaluated positively (Borlino & Turnley, 2003).

Frances Heidensohn, a professor and theorist of social policy, has intertwined the primary aspects of social role theory with the gendered substructures of the feminist theory. Heidensohn (1992) contends that the issues regarding the presence of women in law enforcement are largely based on the fundamentals of social control, and the sole ownership of the rights to social control (Heidensohn, 1992; Martin, 1996).

### *Social learning theories*

Social learning theories focus on the behavior that an individual exhibits and the motivations that explain why they do so. Three specific theories will be examined: Dollard and Miller's theory of approach-avoidance conflict, Rotter's expectancy value theory, and Bandura's social learning theory. A brief overview will be provided of each theory.

#### *Dollard and Miller's theory of approach-avoidance conflict*

The approach-avoidance conflict model is founded on the conflict between desire and fear. The five key assumptions of the theory are that: 1) an increase in drive will increase the need to approach or avoid a goal, 2) when given a choice between two competing responses the stronger desire/fear will prevail, 3) the penchant to approach a positive goal increases the closer the goal becomes, 4) the tendency to avoid a negative consequences also increases the closer the goal becomes, and 5) avoidance of a negative outcome is stronger than the desire for a positive outcome (Dollard & Miller, 1950; Funder, 2010).

Approach-avoidance conflict predicts that if the goal is distant then the probability to commit to that goal is highly likely; however, when the goal becomes closer the desire versus fear aspect begins to materialize and factor into an individual's behavioral pattern. While both tendencies increase as the goal approaches, the avoidance gradient is much larger than the approach (Dollard & Miller, 1950; Funder, 2010).

#### *Rotter's expectancy value theory*

The expectancy value theory is based on the idea that individual's behavioral decisions are developed not only by positive reinforcements but, by the belief of how likely the results from such behavior will be (Rotter, 1954; Funder, 2010). The expected beliefs about the reward

and punishment shape behavior more than the actual facts about a situation do. A value is assigned to each belief by an individual person altering the reality of the circumstances. A mental calculation of the possibility of reward versus the generalized expectancy of an event modifies a person's impression of reality and makes the impression more important than reality itself. Even when reinforcements or intended outcomes appear highly positive, an individual will not pursue something if the chances of success appear limited (Rotter, 1954; Funder, 2010).

### *Bandura's social learning theory*

Bandura's theory focuses on three specific categories; efficacy expectations, observational learning, and reciprocal determinism (Bandura, 1977; Funder, 2010). In examining this theory, the category of efficacy expectations is most applicable to women in law enforcement. Observational learning and reciprocal determinism, while relevant to the overall theory of behavioral learning, will not be discussed.

Efficacy expectation is the internal belief about the self and what a person is capable of achieving (Bandura, 1977; Funder, 2010). Self-efficacy can increase both motivation and performance, and heighten the belief that a person's actions effect the environment in which they function. It is the way in which a person learns to view themselves that modifies their behavior. The development of one's self efficacy is due in part to a group dynamic and how that individual perceives that others accept their competencies and limitations (Bandura, 1977; Funder, 2010).

### ***Application of theories***

Each of the theories described can be directly related to the gender divide regarding promotional opportunities in law enforcement. When examining the feminist theory, literature

dictates that female officers are defined by both their gender and their sexuality. Female officers are often classified as sluts or lesbians, depending on their physical attractiveness and their willingness to participate in the male oriented world of policing (Jones, 2003). Gender is the first and foremost defining factor when judgment is issued upon a female officer. This is characteristically different than the definitions that male officers face. While males are accepted into the profession without question until they do something unacceptable, females must prove that they can not only overcome the stereotypes of gender classification but also prove that they can do the job. As long as both sexes see themselves as different in the profession, women will be unlikely to compare their career aspirations and options to those of the men they work with (Risman, 2004; Saltzman Chafetz, 1997).

By adopting the social role theory, it can be posited that women in law enforcement have trepidation when considering promotional opportunities due to the negative repercussions that may follow when stepping outside of gender classified roles. Verbal and sexual harassment by male peers can be interpreted as ways in which women are berated and essentially shunned into gender specific categories. While women have made strides in entering the field of policing, they have met many impediments concerning their advancement in the male role of supervision (Heidensohn, 1992).

The approach-avoidance theory can be applied to women in law enforcement when considering the conflict that becomes applicable in the association of work and family. Female officers tend to experience more work-family conflict than male officers (Livingston, Burley & Springer, 1996). The association of the stereotypical feminine role of family caretaker versus the masculine role in the working world fuel inner conflict. The stress that comes with the perceived

choice a woman has to make between a successful career and a flourishing family tips the scales of desire and fear. A woman entering the policing field may feel that both goals are attainable, however, when a promotional opportunity presents itself the fear of perceived negative consequences such as no family or stress upon the family can cause her to choose one sphere instead of the original goal to have both (Dollard & Miller, 1950).

When evaluating the expectancy value theory several areas must be taken into consideration. Women in law enforcement readily have their own opinions and perceptions on how the policing profession welcomes and distances their gender. When a female officer is considering promotional advancement, the idea that the process is biased may come into play when considering available choices. Although the idea of a promotion and the prestige that comes with it are enticing, the bias that encompasses the profession is overwhelming. The strain that a female officer goes through just to apply for promotions and the slim chance that she believes she has in actually achieving a supervisory status ultimately prevents her from following through with the advancement process. Another way in which the expectancy value theory can be applied is in regards to benefits. The choice between staying in a patrol position and opting for a promotion can be as easily rationed as the size of the reinforcements. By staying in a patrol position the female officer has the positive aspects of remaining in a good shift assignment, having preferred off/vacation days, and acquiring overtime but, the negative aspects of a stalled career, less pay, and little to no voice in the organization. By applying for a promotion the female officer would have the negative aspects of more stress, family daycare issues, and potential bias from male officers about her ability to supervise but; she would also have an increase in pay, the prestige of rank, and the option of changing the atmosphere of the

organization. By applying the expectancy value theory, it is likely that the female officer would choose the option that has a more certain outcome even if the rewards were less appealing. By remaining in a patrol position, the female officer does not have anything to lose. In contrast, by applying for promotion, the female officer would have positive rewards only if she were successful. The negative feedback from male officers and supervisors for her attempt may be too difficult for her to endure (Rotter, 1954).

When considering the positive aspects of women in law enforcement attempting to close the gender divide, and striving for promotional advancement, the self efficacy theory is most relevant. Having a positive self image, and the belief that one is able and capable of accomplishing a goal, is the epitome of denigrating the stereotypes that hinder female police officer advancement. If a female officer believes in herself, she is more likely to participate in the promotional process. However, if a female officer is broken down by the obstacles that the profession of law enforcement presents and has a low self image; she will likely not participate in career advancement. Having self belief and having the support of those in the organization will propel a female officer to overcome barriers and further her career (Bandura, 1977).

#### **SECTION IV: EXAMINATION OF THE PROMOTIONAL PROCESS**

The promotional process within a law enforcement organization is dependent on individual state requirements that are necessary for a person to enter into the profession of policing. Once those requirements have been met, and a person successfully gains employment with an organization, they begin building experience and refining their qualifications. This is necessary in preparation for a promotion.

##### ***State and national postings***

Employment opportunities and promotional advancement within law enforcement organizations can be found in a multitude of facets including both state and national postings. Numerous reference materials including state sponsored websites, newspapers, law enforcement related magazines, and other such resources are available to the general public. In Wisconsin WILENET.org, a website sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Justice, is a regularly used tool by individuals looking for promotional opportunities outside of their current department. There is a designated area within the site that specifically addresses upcoming openings throughout the state. Current postings are listed by rank: Police Chief, Police Department Management, Sheriff's Department Management, Police Officer, etcetera (WILENET, 2010). An example of a national posting within similar characteristics is a law enforcement magazine and website called Policeone.com. This organization posts employment opportunities nationwide, including supervisory positions (Policeone.com, 2011). There are many additional resources that are available nationally for publication.

All of the postings have comparable qualifications and requirements that are necessary to apply for certain positions. Many require a specific level of education, a particular previous time of service with a law enforcement agency, and some want their individual state certification or the ability to possess their particular state certification prior to employment. If a person has the qualifications necessary, they can apply for the open position. Many of the application procedures involve submitting a state employment history form as well as a resume although individual states vary. Furthermore, applicants will have to participate in and pass a wide variety of testing procedures. An example of some that are listed are oral interviews, psychological profile interview, medical exam, vision exam, drug screening, background investigation, and a physical fitness/agility test (WILENET, 2010; Policeone.com, 2011). While not all of these testing procedures are required for every department, an applicant can expect to partake in many of them.

While state and national postings are helpful in generating interest for qualified individuals not currently employed by the department; many organizations chose not to use the service. Some services charge a fee to post an employment opening. Other organizations choose to only post promotional opportunities internally.

### ***Departmental postings***

Many departments have internal postings to announce potential openings in supervisory positions. Promoting from within an organization has benefits that many departments find appealing. By promoting from within, the command staff already has a working knowledge of

the individuals that apply for promotion. Personal traits and working habits that an individual possess can potentially be overlooked or go unnoticed when hiring externally.

In an examination of three departments in southwestern Wisconsin, conducted by this author, several similarities were noted. The first department, having 18 sworn personnel and no female officers in supervisory positions, uses the following procedure that when a promotional opportunity arises an email or general posting from the Chief is distributed to all sworn officers. The posting specifies the qualifications and requirements that are necessary to apply for the promotion. Interested parties must submit a resume or essay detailing interest in the position. Applicants who have the necessary requirements are then subjected to a written exam. Upon a successful passing score, the applicants then have a peer board interview followed by an interview with the Chief. The Chief of Police makes the final decision on who is promoted. The Chief is not required to take the top ranking applicant. This department does not currently post promotional positions outside of the department (Garry, Telephone).

The second department examined, having 64 sworn personnel and no female supervisors, has promotional opportunities posted by the human resources department. The posting is on an internal bulletin board and also read aloud in roll call. The posting lists the qualifications and requirements necessary to apply. Interested individuals must complete a new job application form as well as submit a resume. This is followed by a written exam that has a previously determined pass/fail score. All applicants that pass are then subjected to an interview that consists of internal members and external members of local police departments. The applicants are rated on their interview score and the top three candidates are submitted to the Chief of Police. The Chief makes the final decision, however; the Chief does not have to choose the top

candidate. The newly selected supervisor is then appointed by the Police and Fire Commission. This department does not currently post promotional positions outside of the department (Vento, Telephone).

The third department examined, having 172 sworn personnel and 2 female supervisors, has promotional opportunities posted by human resources. A paper posting as well as a posting in the human resource book is available for all employees to review. All open positions are also read aloud in roll call. Qualifications and requirements are indicated in the posting and all interested personnel must submit a resume directly to human resources. If there are not at least three interested parties in the promotion, the department will repost the position and open it to outside interested individuals. Applicants then submit to a written test, an interview conducted by an outside panel of law enforcement executives, and then scored accordingly. The top three individuals are interviewed by the Sheriff, Inspector, and Deputy Inspector. These three individuals rate the top three and the Sheriff has the final determination in who is promoted (Larson, Telephone).

As can be ascertained, many departments operate in similar manners when considering promotions. Interestingly enough, although an individual may score the highest on all aspects of the process, that person may not be the one selected for promotion. While many departments have taken measures to ensure that highly qualified individuals are participating in the promotional process, a bias still exists.

### *Unintended backlash of promotional push*

While the three departments previously discussed, and their lack of female supervisor representation, do not represent all of law enforcement it can be surmised that female officer promotional aspirations have many obstacles. While the idea to diversify law enforcement appears to be a hot topic issue, the ways in which diversification takes place can become questionable. One of the most notable unintended backlashes of diversity within law enforcement is the resurrection of tokenism. In a study on the effects of tokenism and female officer aspirations it is noted that when female officers feel that they have become tokens on their departments, they will find a way to have anonymity within the organization. The push by male supervisors and male administrative advisers for female officers to participate in promotional opportunities creates the token atmosphere (Archbold & Moses Schulz, 2008).

In the same 2008 study, several female officers vocalized their struggle with tokenism and promotions. One female officer indicated that she felt that she was “a statistic sometimes because the department focuses on how many women, not who the women are as people. I also feel singled out when it comes time for promotion. Supervisors constantly tell me that I should participate in promotion” (Archbold & Moses Schulz, p. 58). Another female officer stated that she was assigned to a police officer training program as a trainer by her male supervisor without asking for the transfer. When she advised her supervisor that she no longer wanted to participate he stated, “You can’t quit, they want female officers in some of these positions” (Archbold & Moses Schulz, p. 58). Another female officer indicated that she was advised by her Chief that she was going to do a television interview for the department. The Chief further advised her that he wanted a female officer to do the interview. She indicated that she felt the Chief wanted to

portray that he had a lot of female officers on the department and that “it wasn’t really about the diversification in the department, it was about his bragging rights” (Archbold & Moses Schulz, p. 62). Other female officers have similar complaints saying that they felt like “window dressing” for their departments and their male supervisors push for them to participate in promotions was only due to filling diversification quotas and not because of their qualifications.

Overall, the promotional process in law enforcement is much like the private sector. The most qualified candidate does not always get the promotion. Organizational influences such as favoritism, underlying diversification objectives, and bias can all attribute to the final outcome.

## SECTION V: RECOMMENDATIONS

Law enforcement officials have dealt with the perceived notion that police officers are seen as non-professionals. In order to overcome the stereotypes, professional inadequacies should be dealt with on a public level, including that of gender predispositions. There is an ongoing argument between social scientists of whether structural and technical changes or attitudinal changes must occur first in order to bring about social change (Cuadrado, 1995). It is both the structural and attitudinal barriers that contribute to the disproportionate high numbers of women in the lowest levels of law enforcement.

Measures must be taken to ensure that workplace barriers are significantly reduced to allow female officers the same experiences and opportunities that their male counterparts have. Administration is the key to these changes (Archbold et al., 2010). Current administration has the ability to change the workplace climate through management styles, supervision, training, and clear policy and procedure (Hassell & Brandl, 2009).

### *Elimination of tokenism*

Creating visible substantiation that an organization values its female officers is a key element in creating a climate of support for women in law enforcement. This can be done through aggressive recruitment (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Having a recruitment web page with women specific recruitment campaigns as well as sponsoring a police career orientation for women can be some ways that an organization constructs a positive marketing paradigm for potential female recruits. By eliminating tokenism, a department begins the pursuit of portraying a professional image to the public that it serves (Cuadrado, 1995).

Once women become more pronounced figures within a police department, they eliminate the token status that remains when there are only a few women in the agency. Creating an atmosphere of advocacy to promote female officers to supervisory positions rests with administration. Command staff members will benefit by evaluating specific leadership qualities that their female officers possess and encourage them to participate in the promotional process based on those qualities and not on diversification perceptions. Administration needs to be aware of the pressures and problems that can arise when promoting women in the department, especially if the female officer to be promoted is one of the first women that will hold rank (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Individual encouragement to participate in the promotional process should be based on qualification and experience. Without both the organizational support to value all of its officers and an agency atmosphere to promote based on qualifications serving as a foundation, female and male officers alike will identify the tokenism within the organization.

### ***Implementation of formal mentoring program***

A formal mentoring program where both male and female officers can be partnered with senior officers, and same sex supervisors, can assist in reducing feelings of isolation and potentially build favorable working experiences (Archbold et al., 2010). Mentoring programs need to be established as a support and guidance foundation for new officers. By formulating these working relationships early in an officer's career, the officer is able to integrate into the climate of the department, build their skill and proficiency, and begin the process of moving up in rank (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). How an officer is transitioned into an

agency can lay the groundwork for that officer's perception of the agency, their performance level, their willingness to participate in different functions of the agency, and ultimately their desire to achieve promotion (Heller, 2010). What must be recognized is that mentoring is the most beneficial when integrated from the top command members down. By having active mentors in all aspects of the department, and in all ranking levels, the department demonstrates that it cares about its employees and thus propels high morale and motivation throughout the agency (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005).

The benefits of a mentoring program are not only substantial for the employee but the agency as well. Mentoring programs can assist in the retention and promotion of its female officers by showing that they are valued employees within the agency (Heller, 2010; National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). The ultimate goal of a mentoring program is to cultivate a one-on-one partnership between officers that allow each individual to reach their highest potential. Departments should expect elevated job performance of those who participate, both immediately and throughout the officer's career. A department can also anticipate an improved overall working environment centered on cooperation and cohesiveness as well as increased morale among the female officers (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005).

When establishing a formal mentoring program administration should focus on a comprehensive initiative that addresses the needs of the officers at each phase of their career. While it is desirable that women mentor women, not all women will make good mentors. Also, not all agencies have women that are currently employed in a sworn position. Mentors should be selected on their expressed desire to mentor and not based on an assigned post that is not wanted. Ongoing training for mentors should be mandatory and include issues frequently faced by

women in law enforcement (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Veteran officers often set the department tone and having a voluntary partnership between administration and veteran officers ensures the success of the mentoring program (Heller, 2010; National Center for Women & Policing, 2005).

Once a female officer has established her career within the department, the mentoring program can continually provide support for her career. Mentors can continue to act as coaches, advisors, and role models throughout a woman's career especially when considering promotional opportunities (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Administration should support and encourage women in high ranking positions to make themselves available to other women on the department. By doing so, administration communicates the recognition that the agency and the profession of policing are also in transition from a male dominated context to a diverse one (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005).

### ***Increased education and training opportunities***

There is an ongoing progressive movement to increase education and training in law enforcement. This, however, is only centered on tactics and skills as related to job performance. Police officers are trained to control combative subjects, defuse difficult circumstances, and resolve high risk situations. Training should become more specific and address matters that pertain to individualism within a department and the inevitable stressors that accompany the profession (DeLaMater, 2008).

There is an immediate need to develop police training programs that do not follow the militaristic foundation (Kingshott, 2009). The paramilitary structure is based on the essence of

breaking an individual down and then rebuilding them into the agencies desired prototypes. While these techniques have worked with male officers, these same techniques have driven women away from the academy and out of the profession (Jones, 2003). Law enforcement agencies should develop and evolve with societal changes. As the essence of law enforcement changes from action oriented to community police oriented, the requirements for professional development training ought to transform from militaristic to supportive community partnerships and proactive problem solving (Terra, 2009). In this constantly changing environment, employees desire to increase their skill level and maintain a level of progressive growth in proficiency.

Female officers are in particular need of individualized training regarding promotional applicability. Expertise and a varying array of situational exposure are essential in preparation for achieving rank within a department (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Specialized units such as narcotics, special weapons and tactics, and the detective bureau all provide an officer with specific skills that they would otherwise not acquire on the patrol division. Administrators should ensure that female officers are receiving appointment into these specialized units on an equal basis as their male counterparts. Developing an objective assignment plan in conjunction with criteria for obtaining the specialized position can increase the desirability that many officers, male and female, will seek advancement in specialized units (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005).

Women only training is a new consideration on the rise in law enforcement. By catering to a specific gender a climate can be created that focuses on the problems that female officers face in comparison to problems that all officers face. The premise of this particular training is

that women are able to co-mingle and generate ideas that would otherwise be deterred with male officers present (Wexler & Quinn, 1985). Women only training addresses the unique problems facing females in law enforcement today while eliminating the inhibitions that free discussions in the presence of male officers can produce. This training, however, requires follow up by integrated training with male officers. Once women receive the support of other female officers in specialized training, they will feel empowered and ultimately seek participation in group settings. Allowing male officers into the finalized training provides insight to the men on the barriers and problems that women face; while also allowing male officers to provide feedback on how the women are perceived within the organization (Wexler & Quinn, 1985).

Training should also consider credibility and current societal trends. Training materials must be reviewed to ensure that women characters are included in police roles and incorporated in ranking positions. Training that includes members of rank should be designed to build confidence and facilitate a learning environment that includes the practical application of the knowledge learned (Wexler & Quinn, 1985). Training for all officers regardless of rank should continue throughout their career. This allows for consistent opportunities for professional growth (Terra, 2009).

There are areas of concern that should be addressed when considering training. Many law enforcement administrators believe that extensive training can lead to turnover within the department. Other administrators question the organizational loyalty of the officers who do not believe that they are rising through the ranks at an adequate pace due to their increased education and training. While these are valid concerns, a study conducted in Queensland Australia that considered the relationship between turnover and education showed no signs that there was a

relation between the two (Terra, 2009). Effective administration will strive to recognize the value of a training initiative and make a commitment to adhere to an educational and training based program for the betterment of the department.

### ***Identification of leadership qualities***

Actively searching out and identifying qualities in employees that highlight strong credentials and experience is common in policing. A study on the characteristics that separate law enforcement executives from non-executives revealed that executives rate high in critical thinking, education, and career commitment (Everts, 2001). It is suggested that these characteristics are developed during the employee's personal and professional life. By identifying these traits early in an officer's career, an agency is able to groom an individual for promotion and meet the eventual goals of the agency.

Although agencies know what they should be looking for, how they evaluate employees has come under scrutiny. There is a potential to evaluate male and female officers differently based on a supervisors expectations (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Traditional gender roles often dictate what a supervisor bases their evaluation upon. Women are frequently not given enough credit for their accomplishments and men are often given too much.

Performance evaluations are the basis for which specialty assignments and promotions are granted. Due to this, it is essential that the performance evaluation system be as unbiased and equitable as possible. There are four aspects that should be considered when implementing a fair and unbiased evaluation system. First, criteria should be established at a measurable standard regardless of gender or other defining characteristics. The criteria then should be

behaviorally anchored and evaluated on the individual officers observed performance (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Once this has been established the second aspect of evaluator training needs to be addressed. Evaluator training is essential in developing a non-discriminatory evaluation system. The evaluators are required to learn how to measure performance based on the criteria established by the organization (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). The third aspect is to have the evaluator and the employee set goals for the next evaluation period. This is a good time to assess the leadership potential in employees that exhibit leadership qualities (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). The final phase is a review of the evaluation for bias. It is crucial that a third party review each evaluation to ascertain that it was a fair and just review (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005).

Identifying leadership qualities is a collaborative between observant administrators and performance evaluations. Training supervisors on which qualities to look for in their employees will assist in identifying potential promotable employees. A culture of seeking leadership qualities in employees fosters a continued growth for the department in leadership and professionalism.

### ***Development of incentive programs***

As more women enter the profession of law enforcement, it is imperative that a form of social support be a primary structure in the employee's personal and professional life. Social support can come in many facets such as: support from a spouse and/or partner, family, friends, and coworkers (Brough & Frame, 2004). The recognition one receives from a support member regarding their personal and professional goals and achievements build morale and instill an

overall incentive to exceed. Verbal and written recognition as well as appreciation of employee achievement are reported as highly valuable by employees (Heller, 2010). These simple acknowledgments support the fundamental idea that happy employees are productive employees.

Specialized units are another way in which departments can implement incentives to employees. Support from administration in the form of specialized assignments, training, and promotion sends a message to all employees about what traits the organization values (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). The creation of innovative positions for line officers that were once positions held only by the supervisory staff also show support and belief in employees. These positions not only raise self esteem with the individual officers, they provide the critical skills that are necessary for promotions. Some innovative positions that are currently in use by departments are firearms instructor, emergency vehicle instructor, defense and arrest tactics instructor, recruiter, court officer, evidence technician, information technology officer, and many others (Heller, 2010).

Pregnancy and child care policies that emphasize fairness, flexibility, and safety are another way in which departments can create incentive for female officers to not only apply to a department; but, to remain with that department and pursue ranking positions. Many departments have a general policy on pregnancy however there are some that are lacking full comprehensive policies (National Center for Women & Policing, 2005). Departments that have never employed a female officer may only briefly cover pregnancy as a short term disability or other such short term problem. It is important for any department to recognize and address issues such as eligibility and duration of pregnancy and child care leave, light duty assignments, uniform costs and replacement, and paid leave benefits (National Center for Women & Policing,

2005). It is beneficial to the department to provide as many resources and as much flexibility as they reasonably can to its female employees throughout the pregnancy. Allowing flexible work options regarding shift assignments, part time work, and leave of absence is more appealing to potential female recruits and also to existing female employees who may otherwise choose not to participate in a promotion due to family conflict.

Another incentive for employees is a career planning system. This system is established to facilitate employee development and has four elements. The first is a self assessment where the employee recognizes and identifies their strengths, weaknesses, interests, and traits. The second is honest feedback from a supervisor regarding that employee's actual skills and abilities. The employee also learns about different opportunities within the agency. The third element is a goal setting phase where the employee sets both long and short term goals for themselves. The final part is the planning phase where the employee, with supervisor assistance, identifies how to achieve their goals (Everts, 2001). A career planning system is beneficial for both the department and the employee. Administrators become more aware of who their employees actually are and what their aspirations within the agency are. Employees benefit because they learn by both verbal and written confirmation what their goals are within the department and also identify how to achieve those goals. Employees who would otherwise lack the confidence to partake in the promotional process will now have the ability to actualize their career goals.

Incentives in departments can range from something small such as gender specific uniforms and equipment for all officers to larger scale items such as onsite child care and/or paid maternity leave. Regardless of the measures taken, providing leadership development in the form of administration appreciation and encouragement through skill advancement is essential in

providing an atmosphere where female officers feel confident in their ability to pursue rank (Cowan & Bochantin, 2009; Everts, 2001).

## SECTION VI: CONCLUSION

The police culture has been a constant source of scrutiny since its inception in America. In particular, many critics have debated the lack of diversification and the sluggish measures that have prevented minorities from entering law enforcement and obtaining positions of rank. The role of law enforcement is often classified as isolationist, elitist, misogynist, racist, and authoritarian (Kingshott, 2009). These views are in direct conflict with effective policing in society.

The future of diversification in law enforcement, specifically in relation to female officers participating and flourishing in the promotional process, is dependent on the pace of progression within the policing culture. With many of the male officers in law enforcement believing that female recruitment is attributed to legal and governmental pressure, it is easy to see that women have a difficult struggle ahead of them in achieving acceptance and parity in policing (Poteyeva & Sun, 2009). This is further documented by statistical evidence. The staggeringly low percentage of women in law enforcement combined with the miniscule numbers of women in ranking positions within agencies shows that change is slow moving.

Law enforcement organizations must design and implement gender balancing practices in the forms of recruitment, retention, and promotion for women to be fairly represented within the communities they serve. The immediate identification of the barriers that are affecting female advancement is the first step in rectifying this national problem. Structural change begins with an organizational acceptance that there is in fact an issue with diversification within policing. By

implementing some or all of the recommendations, agencies can begin the pivotal change within their own department building a foundation from which future administrators can build.

Many steps need to be taken to ensure that gender equalities are prevalent throughout law enforcement and upward mobility through promotional advancement is made available to all interested individuals in the agency. Every assurance should be taken to maintain that the process is ethical, moral, just, and fair to each member of the department regardless of gender. Identification of leadership qualities in female officers and the proper nurturing of those qualities through mentoring to further enhance female officer promotional aspirations are paramount for the successful growth of the organization, individual employees, and community members.

Diversity in law enforcement encourages tolerance, instills trust and fairness in policing, supports different styles of policing, and promotes citizen support and cooperation with police (Hassell & Brandl, 2009). While women in law enforcement do need to be encouraged to strive to further themselves professionally, this should be accomplished without forcing the under-qualified or uninspired into positions that they are not ready for. Only the qualified and experienced officers should be promoted into positions of authority, regardless of gender.

In the last ten years women in law enforcement have begun to achieve top ranking positions which have created an unintended atmosphere that the lack of promotional opportunities is no longer an issue. Between 2003 and 2004 four major cities in America appointed women as their police chiefs (Moses Schultz, 2004). While this was an unprecedented success for females in law enforcement, it clearly was long overdue. Every female officer needs to reflect and retain the encouraging and empowering words of former Police Chief Nannette Hegerty who advised all women in law enforcement to “do the best job you possibly can, and

don't ever be afraid to do something. You've got to put yourself out there. You've got to do the best job you can every single day" (Lindeman, 2007).

## SECTION VII: REFERENCES

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