

Women Police Officers at NOPD: On the Job

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As of December 31, 2001, there were 263 women full-time commissioned officers at the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), out of a total force of 1,652.¹ The distribution by race and gender is presented in Table 1. As the table shows, NOPD has a higher percentage of African-American and other race/ethnicity women than is typical nationally with 12.0 percent of the total officers being African-American and other race/ethnicity females.² Said another way, of all the females on the job, over 75 percent are women of color. Moreover, NOPD achieved an African-American majority in 2001 for the first time since Reconstruction (Gambit, June 19, 2001, p. 9).

Women police officers then are no longer an uncommon sight in New Orleans. Although they represent only 15.9 percent of the force, they are nevertheless on the job and by all accounts doing a good job. This report describes a survey of all women police officers and retirees conducted in the spring of 2001. There was a two-fold purpose for the survey. First, we wanted to collect and reconstruct a history of women at the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), since no recent history exists. Second, we wanted to find out how women were doing

¹ Data are from Stephanie Landry, NOPD Personnel Office, from her 2001 Annual Report.

overall on the job. Police work is a non-traditional job for women, and in such jobs women typically are subjected to subtle and overt forms of harassment. Thus, we asked about what particular jobs they had achieved, what they liked and disliked about their work, and how they were being treated and accepted by the male officers.

In spite of the employment changes of the 1964 Civil Rights Act which prohibited hiring discrimination based on gender, it hasn't been easy for women to break into being full-fledged police officers. Based on this survey at NOPD, women still face some challenges even though they have achieved entry and promotions. For example, almost 60 percent of the women responding believe they are accepted by their colleagues, while the other 40 percent have some reservations.

The survey, a copy of which is attached to this report, was designed by the authors and pre-tested on a group of five senior women officers. With a few changes the final survey was administered with the permission of the NOPD Chief of Operations, and sent to the 263 women officers through their commanding officers. Additional surveys were sent to a listing of retired women officers, obtained from Police Office Women of Every Rank (P.O.W.E.R.), which is a police officer association. Two distributions of surveys were made in the spring of 2001, and 69 surveys were returned from women on the job, representing a 26.2 percent response rate. Another twelve surveys were returned from retired women, bringing the total sample available for analysis to 81. In addition, we conducted in-depth, follow-up interviews with 12 women, most of whom are still on the job.

² other race/ethnicity is a category used by the U.S. Government and includes Hispanics, Asians, Indians, and mixed race persons.

All police officers must complete training in the Police Academy, and are commissioned police officers upon graduation. Promotions are based on seniority and passing structured tests for each rank level up to captain. The rank structure of NOPD includes 246 sergeants, 12.2 percent of whom are women, 71 lieutenants, 15.5 percent of whom are women, and 26 captains, one (3.8 percent) of whom is a woman, the highest ranking woman at NOPD.³ There have been two female deputy chiefs in the past, and both retired several years ago.

Data on women in policing nationally were reported by the National Center for Women & Policing in their 2001 report (Lonsway, Carrington, Aquirre, Wood, Moore, Harrington, Smeal, and Spillar, 2002). Based on a national sample that did not include NOPD, the representation of women in large police agencies (defined as employing over 100 persons), was 12.7 percent, compared to 9 percent in 1990. In their entire sample, women represented only 11.2 percent of police agencies officers; while the general labor force is 46.5 female (Lonsway et al., 2002, p. 2). Moreover, women's participation has declined from a high of 14.3 percent in large agencies in 1999. The authors see this as a stalled and reversing trend partly attributable to expiring consent decrees. Women's hard-fought gains are being lost despite the overwhelming evidence that women and men are equally capable of police work (Lonsway, et al., 2002: p. 2). In addition, women were concentrated at the lowest levels of the command structure, representing 7.3 percent of the top command, 9.6 percent of the supervisors, and 13.5 percent of line officers (Lonsway, et al., 2002: p. 7). The representation of women of color nationally was quite low, representing only 4.8 percent of the sworn positions.

³ Since the survey was conducted, Captain Buczek has retired, and two new female captains promoted to administrative commands.

This report is a descriptive analysis of the 81 surveys we received, supplemented with the interviews. There are four sections, covering the major areas of the survey responses, and a fifth section which is a brief history of women at NOPD. First, we present the demographic information, with the caution that this report does not cover all the women on the job, only those who responded to the survey. Further, we had no access to those women who have left NOPD short of retirement.

Demographics:

The demographic questions covered the usual information about age, education, marital status, and number of children. Table 2 shows descriptive statistics for the full sample and three subgroups. The sub groups are defined by the time period in which the women were hired.

The first group, consisting of only ten women, includes those hired before 1976, when women applicants were required to meet the same qualifications as men, including the height requirement of at least 5 8 tall. Only two of these women were still on the job when the survey was conducted.

In 1975 a lawsuit brought to challenge the height restriction was settled and the restriction against women lifted. The second group includes 45 women hired between 1976 and 1994. The third group, those hired since 1995, contains 26 women. This time period roughly coincides with the tenure of former Mayor Marc Moriel, who is seen as being instrumental in opening NOPD to be more inclusive of all women and minorities. Caution is needed, however, in interpreting the comparisons since the first sub group is so small.

Beginning with the demographic characteristics, we see that although over 75 percent of the women on the job as of December 31, 2001, are women of color, the percentage of African-

American women in our sample is lower at 52.6 percent of the sample. The percent in the first subgroup (hired before 1976) is the lowest at 20 percent, increasing to nearly 77 percent for those hired after 1994. This reflects the overall trend of increasing participation for both men and women of color at NOPD.

Considering marital status, there are more married women in the first group, while a higher percentage of the next two groups are single. The high percentage of single women (69.2 percent) in the third group is likely attributable to their younger ages, relative to the other two groups. But it is interesting that the highest marital status category for both the second and third groups is single. The differences in average number of children are small, except for the third group, which has only 0.7 children at the average. In contrast, we see that the average age at hire increases across these three groups, with the third group having the oldest average age when first hired at 27.3 years. The same is true of years of schooling when hired, where the third group has the most schooling at an average of 14.4 years. The current years of schooling shows that every group has increased their schooling while on the job, with the possible exception of the first group where we cannot distinguish with our survey question whether they acquired the schooling while on the job or after leaving NOPD.

Attending the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, is a rare privilege, especially for women. At times, there appeared to be little if any commitment to nominating women for the opportunity. Among the few who have attended, some reported difficulties once nominated by NOPD. One example was when a female officer was denied her request to take a NOPD car to Virginia, while the men attending routinely had that privilege. Transportation during the 11-week course is not available without a car. The FBI has encouraged women's participation by not

counting women participants against the number of slots open for New Orleans. Still, we see that only 7.4 percent of the entire sample has ever attended the Academy, including only one woman in the first group, and five women in the second group (11.1 percent). None of the third group has gone, although this may be due to their short tenure since the program is for senior law enforcement officers.

Previous Experience and Family Relationships:

We asked each participant about their history of previous law enforcement work and whether they had any family members who were in law enforcement. As Table 2 shows, we found that over 13 percent of the full sample had previous law enforcement experience when they were hired at NOPD. This includes only one from the first group, five in the second group, and another five in the third group. Thus, a higher percentage of the younger women have come to NOPD with law enforcement experience. Some of these women came from the Reserve force, one came in from the Crime Lab, others had been sheriff's deputies in surrounding parishes, and one came from the police force of another city.

Having a family member who was in law enforcement seems an important predictor of a woman becoming a police officer. Nearly 50 percent of both the second and third groups have this connection. In the interviews, it was clear that a woman's family was more likely to support her career choice when someone else in the family, most likely a male, had been in law enforcement. With the first group, four of the ten women reported their family members had also been with NOPD. Moreover, each of these four women was married to a NOPD officer.

In the second group, almost 25 percent were married to another officer, and over 13 percent had a relative outside of their immediate family at NOPD. In the third group, almost 35

percent had a relative outside of their immediate family at NOPD, and two are married to police officers.

Acceptance on the Job:

Acceptance on the job is vitally important for all police officers. Not only is the majority of an officer's training accomplished through other officers, but also the safety and survival of all of them depends on mutual support and assistance. The last variable in Table 2 shows the women's responses to the question about their sense of acceptance by their colleagues. The percentage saying yes varies across the three groups and is lowest among the most recently hired group. Adding the first two response categories together (Yes, and Yes, sometimes) indicates that the vast majority of the women in every group feel accepted. The other categories-- not very much and no, not at all --account for less than nine percent of the total sample. Three women chose other as their category and wrote in sometimes as their response. Nevertheless, many women made comments after their category response, and we found the following answers typical for those who said yes, and yes, sometimes.

It doesn't matter to me who accepts me, I just do my job.

Yes, because I do my job and earn their respect.

Yes, I proved myself as an efficient, reliable officer capable of handling any assignment.

Yes, when I first came on the job the men did not accept me very well at first, but as time went on they did (hired in 1977).

Yes, I don't have a problem with men being men in so much as their language or attitude.

I have never used being female, (i.e., sleeping w/position), to get where I am. I hold up my end of the work load and don't cry or whine about it

Yes, because [we have had] equal case assignments, [and I was] seen by accompanying detectives in the unit as a fellow officer, not just a female (was assigned to sex crimes).

Yes, I enjoyed the reputation of being fair, one of the highest compliments you can get. I made my bones on the street, too, so I could see all sides (a lieutenant)⁴.

Yes, I have been privileged to work in various assignments, most of which I was the only female. My fellow officers and supervisors supported my efforts and encouraged me. I was lucky.

Others felt they were accepted by some of their colleagues, but they had some difficulties:

Yes, in some assignments. I sometimes get the feeling that other officers feel that female officers aren't physically capable of performing duties. This is indicative of the fact that in my district females are more likely to be report writing units and desk officers as opposed to being [assigned to] two (person) man units or assigned to [special] task forces, narcotics or investigations.

I didn't come on this job for praise; however I feel that the males receive far better treatment--sometimes for the same quality of work or even for far less quality i.e., reassignments to two man (person) patrol, special task forces, investigations or any specialized units.⁵

Yes, in most — [I have the] ability to work without assistance, [I have] tenure, reputation, [and] tolerance — [I have to have] a lot of tolerance for the morons and the sexists.

⁴ making your bones refers to establishing yourself as someone who could be counted on, someone who was reliable and trustworthy in all situations in short, one of the guys.

⁵ Both this and the previous respondent wrote in person when talking about two-man units. Despite the existence of women officers on patrol, the two-person units are still called two-man units, and these women pointed out the sexism of the designation.

Yes in some, some people do not have a passion to do their job and I find that those that do are lots of time the outcast. In the XXX unit hardly anyone got along.

Yes, to varying degrees, especially in the beginning. Being an African American, it was sometimes difficult to determine exactly why you were subjected to a particular behavior-- sexism or racism (sometimes both)? It was also interesting when you succeeded; other, longer tenured females resented you, too. The early years were very interesting (hire 1978).

Yes, in some assignments, [but] someone was always wanting to stab you in the back because of jealousy.

Yes, in some — I do feel accepted, but there is always going to be the one male who thinks women are not fit for this type of work, because we re too fragile (hired in 1997).

Only a few had negative things to say. Interestingly, most negative responses centered around one division narcotics, with similarities across two decades.

In narcotics, most of the men didn t feel women belonged on the job. Our assignments there didn t lend themselves to our being accepted (hire 1968)

In narcotics I was told by more than one of the supervisors that they did not want females in the unit. They stated they were not comfortable working with women (hire 1978)

Narcotics was not very easy to accept women in the unit. (1986).

Referring to other, unnamed positions or divisions:

[I felt accepted] at my own level, by 2 or 3 others; above me, by one; and with subordinates — completely.

By some, but others are openly hostile.

Yes, there is some resentment due to, length of time on the job (only 6 yrs) and gender.

Assignments:

In telling us which assignments they considered their favorites, most of the women elaborated why. In these answers, we can see several patterns. One is that while few women have been assigned to the high-profile jobs like the motorcycle unit or to mounted patrols, those who have love these jobs, even after they have left them. Secondly, the women reported favoring demanding assignments where they were challenged, and others appreciated opportunities to contribute to our citizens, such as through the COPS program. Many women articulated the importance of relationships. Therefore, their favorite assignment was their favorite because of the relationships they had with others, including colleagues on the job, supervisors, or with the public, and not necessarily the work itself. Some comments illustrating this are:

Favorite Assignments:

Patrol — had a great partner and good supervisors

Good working environment / great subordinates, excellent commanding officer and captain

Narcotics enforcement in public housing (special grant) — enjoyed my co-workers in the unit and good supervisors

Patrol — I love the people I work with. There is a lot of teamwork.

Another defining characteristic of their favorite jobs is being challenging, being in a job that demanded best of them, such as:

Homicide — opportunity to use in-depth investigative skills and thinking.

District Detectives— great rank that allows me to prove I can do the job. (1997)

Research and planning — use writing skills to direct operations of department. Able to influence future and present day operations.

As a non-ranking officer, as an investigator in the DA s office, it was very interesting; I learned a lot about the entire arrest/conviction process.

Commander, Narcotics intelligence and analysis — new unit, opportunity for creating new directives and ensuring genuine productivity.

Motorcycles, because I was the first female law enforcement officer in the U.S. to be assigned to ride solo (2-wheel) motorcycle

District commander - most challenging and I like command work.

Here are two that illustrate the rewards of both relationships and challenging jobs:

I had a good supervisor and members of [the] unit all got along well and worked together as a team. No pressure to perform, no prima donnas, and the work itself was interesting and rewarding.

Homicide — mentally challenging investigations, wonderful working relationships with co-workers.

Another category of responses shows how important doing satisfying, contributory work is to these women:

COPS (patrol work in community policing units assigned to the projects) you are able to have one-on-one conversations with the citizens in the area not pertaining to crime.

COPS — it gave me the privilege to work with the underprivileged and try to help those with little understanding of the dept; working with the children gave me great joy.

Patrol — can do the most good; and mounted — accomplished at it, always admired how effective a horse and rider team can be.

District detective - investigations — because we followed cases from beginning (on the scene) to the end (arrest or warrant).

Sex crimes — support for women during times of emotional trauma, conviction of rapists and serial rapists, work with Rape Crisis Center at Y.

Lastly, only a very few women have ever been assigned to teach at the police academy. For those who have been it was a much loved position, as were other opportunities to do similar work.

I love teaching at the police academy. Teaching is my first love; before becoming a police officer. Once in the department, I wanted to mold and guide the career- minded individual to the most exciting and rewarding career as a police officer

Police academy — I was Sgt. in charge of a class; my favorite responsibility was teaching.

I felt I was most effective on the academy staff.

DARE — because speaking is a part of my calling, it is what I love to do and in DARE I daily got to do what I love to do. I was teaching the DARE (drug education) program.

Considering the responses to what was your least favorite assignment, we found two major categories that capture most of the responses, and a third, smaller one. The first refers to the atmosphere surrounding the jobs; but unlike those above describing a supportive environment, in these cases, the atmosphere is political, hostile to women, and difficult to survive. As with responses to the questions about acceptance, the narcotics division was mentioned specifically.

Least Favorite Assignments:

(Narcotics) incredible pressure from commander, favoritism, and stressful working conditions at times.

Narcotics — I was told by more than one of the supervisors that they did not want females in the unit, they stated they were not comfortable working with women. (hire1978)⁶

District detective - because of the political atmosphere and the unfair treatment of minorities (women).

Vice — too political

French Quarter, hostile supervisor.

District Night watch — the attitudes of the rank and other officers makes it an unpleasant working environment.

Traffic Division - relegated to computer programming and fixing other supervisors mistakes. Disliked assignment because of extreme gender bias and lack of meaningful direction in general.

District patrol - because I was not offered a position other than patrol, my work went unnoticed.

The second category of least favorite assignments had to deal with the actual work itself — the content:

For about two months, I was assigned to child abuse; it was very stressful to see innocent children hurt, often in unspeakable ways.

⁶ This same comment was used with regard to being accepted on the job.

Data Entry — there were too many do s and don ts that were not job related, too much outside-of-the job hassle.

Homicide — no major interest in investigating homicides.

Public information officer — dealing with the news media and disregarded by patrol officers.

District Patrol — it was confining and going from call to call, I never got the chance to really meet and talk to people.

Commanding officer of Policewoman s Div — too restrictive, didn t like being in the office and handling paper work.

Task Force patrol — everyday proactive patrol was not for me.

Juvenile — you are a jail keeper, not an investigator.

Rape Squad — I did not like having to interview very young children or very old women who were raped.

There were five who specifically mentioned working in the French Quarter or at Mardi Gras as their least favorite assignment.

French Quarter, drunks, traffic

8th dist. — hate the French quarter

Mardi Gras — the crowds, the long hours and days, and all the drunken people who would not go home. (and her favorite is also Mardi Gras The pay is very good.)

Long hours during special events, i.e., Mardi Gras

Working Mardi Gras parades, because of weather conditions, crowds, on assignments so early, just to have to wait, wait and wait.

Finally, a few women disliked particular assignments because they were dull, uninteresting, or seen as an overall waste of their talents and training.

Research and planning — too tedious, too removed from police work.

Shoplifting detail, Canal Street, physically tedious and a lack of continuity.

Narcotics — mostly administrative work and dull.

Dispatch — I felt I had more potential as an officer and investigator, I felt wasted.

Record room — waste of talent and manpower.

The fact that some assignments showed up both as favorite and least favorite indicates the need for job assignments to match officers' skills and talents. Also, when women are routinely given the paper work and desk duties, it is not surprising that some of them are bored, regardless of what division they are assigned to.

From the interviews it was apparent that sometimes women desired the administrative assignments because of the regular hours and few weekends. There is no question that evening or night shift work can be very difficult when an officer has children, especially for women. Still, the wide variety of possible job assignments allows at least the chance that an officer can obtain more regular hours of work when needed.

In summary, this section discussed the demographic findings from the sample, showing some differences among the three sub groups. The younger women are older when hired, better educated, less likely to be married or to have children, compared to the more senior women. The younger women are more likely to be African-American and more likely to have had previous law enforcement experience. They also have the lowest percentage who reported feeling accepted by their colleagues, but only slightly lower.

Across the board, most women responded yes and yes, sometimes, to the question about feeling accepted on the job. For the full sample the percentage in both categories was 87.4 percent. And they told us yes because of good relationships and the opportunity to do their work. Those who said no or not very much were primarily unhappy with hostile environments.

From the questions about their favorite and least favorite assignments, we found several interesting patterns. The respondents' favorite assignments were chosen, it seems, for the opportunity to do challenging, interesting work that contributes to others and to have good working relationships with their colleagues and supervisors. Their least favorite assignments were ones without these qualities, that is, poor relationships in hostile, political environments, and doing dull, tedious work they saw as a waste of their talents and abilities.

The last section of this report presents a brief history of women's participation at NOPD, some of which was compiled in 1984 by Ms. Ruth Asher, the official historian for NOPD, and Lt. Carol Weigand (Asher, 1984).

History of Women at NOPD

From the surveys, interviews, many phone conversations, and the willing assistance of Ms. Asher, we constructed the following details about women on the job at NOPD.

Like most urban police departments, at the beginning of the 20th century NOPD had women as matrons, assigned to handle children, search women prisoners, and other similar duties at the central lockup. In 1918, Roseada Reynolds was the first woman commissioned as a matron and worked as a moving picture inspector (to report to the chief which movies should be censored),

and Mae Coogan worked as a matron in 1919. In the 1920s and 1930s women were also working as clerks. Antoinette A. Reynolds (known as Netsie and sister to Roseada) was hired as a clerk in 1936, and eventually commissioned as a Desk Sergeant. She retired in 1967 as commander of the Payroll Division. Other women worked as Desk Sergeants and matrons, but the majority worked the police switchboard during these years although their job title was Policewoman. All of the women, similar to the men in those days, were appointed to their positions. After the switchboard was eliminated, some of these women, such as Irene Chetta, were moved to divisions. Chetta was hired through the Civil Service Register and was the first woman to pass the entrance test, as opposed to being appointed. She was transferred to Juvenile and also worked shoplifting and vice.

By the 1940s and 1950s, women were working administrative positions in many divisions, including Verna Taminello, Zulma Harris, and Ilda Ranking in Shoplifting. Carol Lentz was doing undercover work in Narcotics, and Grace Kane was a fingerprint technician. In 1966, Verna Taminello was promoted to line Sergeant the first women ever to achieve this standing.

In 1953, Claire Olsen Reilly was hired as a Bureau of Investigations technician and worked as a job man evaluating crime scenes and collecting finger prints. However, she had to enlist the intervention of then-Mayor Morrison to get to take the exam for the technician s job. She was the first woman to attend the city s all-male Police Academy, graduating as Valedictorian of Recruit Class No. 2 in 1955. Besides being a job man, she did undercover narcotics buys, and was once assigned to the Secret Service when President Lyndon Johnson and his family were in New Orleans for Mardi Gras. After the Academy she was assigned to Vice, and she says today that it was her favorite assignment. She took the Lieutenant s exam and was promoted as

the first ever female Lieutenant in 1968. A few months later she was chosen to be the commander of a new Policewomen Division which collected all the Academy graduated women together. It was an ill-conceived idea, according to Reilly:

And the idea of the police woman division was ... if any captain or lieutenant or anybody needed a woman for a particular job, then they would call me and I had to sit in judgment, evaluate the request and decide if it was a right thing for a woman to be involved in. I never got a call. I knew this would happen. Nobody needed a woman; I mean they had needed me for certain things but, what was that-- once every 5 years? So, I hated it! So the only thing I could do with them (the women officers) was send them (to work) on Canal Street for shoplifting.

Nevertheless, this division included several women who went on to achieve promotions and success as police officers, such as Yvonne Bechet, Carol Gomon Hewlett, and Carol Lentz. Ms. Reilly became ill in 1971 and elected to retire, at which time the Policewomen Division was abolished. The women were re-assigned to office jobs in many departments, but none to patrol duties.

From the beginning of their employment, women at NOPD wore a distinct woman s uniform which consisted of a hat and jacket similar to men s, white blouses with a flat navy bow at the collar, knee-length navy skirts, and low-heeled pumps. They did not carry guns, it appears, until after several small groups of women were completing the full Police Academy training in the late 1960s. According to Carol Hewlett, who was the first female District Commander, Superintendent Giarrusso was finally convinced to put women in the same uniform as men in 1971. She used a clever argument. Given that there was a tendency to regard women as the weakest link on the job, she argued that women then should not be further handicapped by

having to wear skirts and heels. It was not until 1974 that women were assigned to patrol duties, an action which generated stiff opposition from wives of police officers who picketed City Hall in protest.

The female applicants to the Police Academy had to meet the same 5'8" height requirement as men until Linda Buczek, Jeanne McGlory and others initiated a law suit against the restriction in 1976, when it was eliminated. After this women began to apply in greater numbers.

Table 3 is a list of the women we identified as the first women to hold particular jobs as regular assignments. The list is not complete and includes job titles that have changed or have been eliminated in subsequent years. For example, Beverly Gunter was the first woman in General Assignments in 1981, which was one section of the Detective Bureau, while Linda Buczek was the first woman in Homicide in 1979. In the current structure of NOPD, the Detective Bureau has been decentralized so that each district has its own robbery detectives, homicide detectives, and so forth.

In many ways NOPD compares favorably to other larger city police departments, especially in the percentage of African-American women employed at 12 percent of the total force (see Table 1). However, with women generally at 50 percent of the population or more, there is considerable room for improvement. In conclusion, we describe some of the criticisms regarding the lack of overall success for women in policing in the United States.

Conclusion:

This report has had two purposes. The first was to describe the survey results regarding women's employment at NOPD so as to better understand women's experiences when working

in a non-traditional job. The second was to construct a preliminary history of women's achievements in specific jobs at NOPD.

From the survey we found women employed in a wide variety of positions at NOPD and generally satisfied with those jobs. Given the importance of the brotherhood in police work for safety, we were pleased to find that almost 88 percent of the women reported that they felt they were accepted, at least at times, by their colleagues. As Table 2 showed, however, the percent was slightly lower for the more recently hired women. Many women elaborated their answers with comments mostly along the lines of "when you do your job, you gain their respect." A few described negative attitudes and favoritism for the males.

Our survey asked about NOPD women's favorite and least favorite assignments. While the content of the jobs themselves was relevant i.e., some loved patrol work and others disliked it, it was apparent that the women valued both the quality of their working relationships and the opportunity to do challenging, demanding work. When the relationships were poor and/or the work itself was dull, uninteresting, underutilizing their skills, and asking very little of them, the women tended to dislike their assignments. These findings are not surprising given how women generally value the quality of their relationships along with the kind of work being performed.

A significant limitation existed in the fact that our survey only reached women currently on the job at NOPD and those taking retirement. We had no access to those women who left NOPD short of retirement. It seems possible that their assessments of acceptance might be less favorable.

The brief history of women's participation at NOPD, although incomplete, shows that some women have been successful, but very few and very slowly. One retired officer told us

that the first women showed tremendous courage and determination and endured personal hardships to succeed. They opened doors for those who came after them. Even though a few women were already on the job having come through the Academy, a group of five was hired in 1968 and five more in 1969, with the encouragement of then Mayor Moon Landrieu. For at least four years, these were the only women. In addition, she argues, the women at first and in recent years have been successful through the support and encouragement of men on the job. Without the support of the average male officer, women could not have succeeded. The integration of NOPD, she claims, has come from the willingness of the street cops to work with, to support, and to train women.

Still, the achievements of the past--women advancing to command positions and deputy chiefs--have not continued. No women serve in field command positions as of December, 2002, above the rank of Lieutenant. Two women captains promoted in 2002 are both commanding administrative units. The third captain, who had been a district commander, was in another administrative job before retiring in the summer of 2002. Despite ranking as captains, it is understood that field commands are more desirable and prestigious than other commands.

According to the report from the National Center for Women & Policing (Lonsway et al., 2002), in the United States in 2001, equality is being denied. Women's participation nationally has been painfully slow to increase, and in recent years these modest gains appear to be stalled or are even beginning to reverse. According to the report:

Despite overwhelming evidence that women and men are equally capable of police work, widespread bias in police hiring, selection practices and recruitment policies keeps the numbers of women in law enforcement artificially low. Entry exams, with an overemphasis on physical prowess block many qualified women from serving, even though research documents that such tests are not job-related and they do not predict

successful job performance. ... Once on the job women often face discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and are maliciously thwarted, especially as they move up the ranks (pp 2-3).

Yet, there is clear evidence to suggest that women police officers are as or more effective than their male counterparts. Specifically, women police officers tend to be more effective in reducing potentially violent situations. They use communication skills instead relying on force, such that women are substantially less likely to be named in a citizen complaint, sustained allegation, or civil lawsuit for excessive use of force (Lonsway, et al., 2002: p. 3). Further, the treatment of domestic violence complaints by police is handicapped by the shortage of women officers. With approximately half of the calls involving violent crime related to domestic violence, women officers are more effective in these circumstances, especially when it is estimated that as many as 40 percent of male police officers themselves are abusers. Without women officers, it appears viable police responses are more difficult to achieve (Lonsway, et al., 2002).

In conclusion, this survey is an important contribution to our understanding of how women are doing in one non-traditional job law enforcement. Non-traditional jobs for women are ones where women can receive better pay, benefits, and long-term career opportunities, compared to female-dominated jobs, but there are costs for the women in terms of being accepted and learning to deal with *the sexists and the morons*, as one woman noted. Nevertheless, women are increasing in their participation, even though their advancement seems to be slowing. The percentage of the total force that is female and African-American is above the national average at NOPD. The younger women are starting with somewhat more education than those in the past, and it remains to be seen whether they will be able to match the successes of the past. Even

though equal employment laws have existed for almost 40 years, it is still surprising to find such a low percentage of women in jobs women are completely capable of performing, such as police work. The masculine image of a *policeman* persists.

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Table 1. Race and Gender Distribution of NOPD, December 31, 2001.

	N	White Percent Of Total	Black and Others ⁷ N	Percent of Total	N	Total Percent
Females	65	3.9	198	12.0	263	15.9
Of All Females		24.7		75.3		
Males	634	38.4	755	45.7	1389	84.1
Of All Males		45.6		54.4		
Total	699	42.3	953	57.8	1652	100.0

For the women there were four Hispanic females included with the 198 Black females, and 13 Asian, Indian and Mixed race men, and 36 Hispanic men included with the 706 Black males.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of the Police Women, Comparing Those Hired Before 1976, Between 1976 and 1994, and After 1995.

After 1994 Variable	Full Sample N=81	Hired Before 1976** N=10	Hired Between 1976 and 1994 N=45	Hired N=26
—				
Percent African-American	52.6	20.0%	45.2%	76.9%
Martial Status				
Married	30.0%	40.0%	31.8%	23.1%
Single	42.5%	20.0%	34.1%	69.2%
Divorced	20.0%	30.0%	27.3%	7.7%
Widow	<u>7.5%</u>	<u>10.0%*</u>	<u>6.8%</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	
100.0%				
Average Number Of Children	1.3	1.5	1.6	0.7
Average Age When Hired	26.6	24.3	26.6	27.3
Avg. Yrs of School When Hired	13.8	13.3	13.6	14.4
Currently	14.8	15.6	14.8	14.6
Attended FBI Aca.	7.4%	10.0%*	11.1%	0.0%
Previous Law Enforcement Experience	13.6%	10.0%*	11.1%	19.2%
Family Members In Law Enforcement	48.1%	40.0%	48.9%	50.0%
Family at NOPD	37.0%	40.0%	35.6%	38.5%
Accepted by Colleagues				
Yes	60.8%	60.0%	66.7%	50.0%
Yes, sometimes	26.6%	20.0%	22.2%	37.5%
Not very much	3.8%	10.0%*	2.2%*	
4.2%*				
No, not at all	5.1%	10.0%*	4.4%	4.2%*
Other	3.8%	0.0%	4.4%	4.2%*

* Refers to only one case.
lifted.

**Hired before height restriction

Table 3. NOPD Women Officers First Holding Particular Assignments.

<u>Officer s Name</u>	<u>Year Hired</u>	<u>Job Acquired as Regular Assignment</u>	<u>Year Acquired</u>
Chetta, Irene	1950	Juvenile (Civil Service Hire)	1950
Olsen Reilly, Clare	1953	Job Man ID Tech	1953
		Attend Police Academy, Valedictorian	1955
		Lieutenant	1968
		Watch Commander, Communications	1968
		Commander, Woman s Division	1968
		Homicide Task Force	1969
Taminello, Verna	1949	Line Sergeant	1966
Brewer, Laura	1968	Undercover Narcotics	1969
Cimino, Carol	1968	Undercover Narcotics	1969
Kent, Roma	1968	Undercover Narcotics	1969
		Detective Bureau-Missing Persons	
Carol Hewlett	1968	Public Information Officer	1971
		Patrol Platoon Sergeant	1974
		First to Attend LSU Law Enforcement Institute	1975
		Commander, Public Information Office	1979
		Patrol Platoon Lieutenant	1979
		First to Attend FBI Academy	1980
		District Commander, Lieutenant	1985
		Narcotics Commander	1987
		District Commander, Captain	1990
Bechet, Yvonne	1968	Commander, Community Relations Deputy Chief,	1972
		Commander of Administrative Bureau	1985
Faucheux, Anita	1972	Motorcycle Division, riding 2-wheel Harley	1973
Liuzza, Elena Cox	1975	Felony Action Squad	1977
Duryea, Rose	1985	Emergency Medical Services	1979

(when under NOPD)

Danton, Virginia M.	1976	Intelligence	1979
		Supervisor of Tactical	1987
		SWAT training	1987
Buczek, Linda	1976	Homicide Detective	1979
		Rape Commander	1988
		Captain	1989
Keyser, Lorraine	1978	Mounted	
Tumenello, Elizabeth	1978	Forgery	1981
		Robbery	1985
Gunter, Beverly	1977	General Assignment (Detectives)	1981
Coffee, Debbie		Special Operations/Tactical Squad	1984
Noble, Reid	1978	Administrative Assistant to Captain, 8 th District	1985
Graham, Sue	1977	Crime Lab Sgt.	1985
		Internal Affairs Sgt.	1985
		Special Integrity Sgt.	1986
		Admin Assist to Chief, Sgt. To Lt.	1988
		Inspections, Lt.	1990
Williams, Christy	1982	Unit Commander, 5 th District Investigations	2000
		Commander, Robbery Squad	
Overman, April	1985	Narcotics Intelligence	1991
		Traffic Division Supervisor	1996
		Commander, DWI Enforcement	2001
Blanco, E. Toni	1981	Accident Investigations	1992
Albert, Teresa	1982	Commander of National Crime Information Center	1992
Jacomine, Debra Spriggins			

	1989	Traffic/Motorcycle Highway Enforcement	1993 1998
Childress, Patricia	1974	Gaming Division Supervisor Sgt. Commander of Crime Prevention Unit	1995 2001
Bowens, Michelle	1989	Glock Instructor and Armorer	1999
Davis, Christine	2000	Tactical Driving Award	2000
