

Bad Lady Cops:  
Explaining Sex Differences in Police Officer Misconduct

by

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## ABSTRACT

Police misconduct is a relatively rare event, though typically, it is a male dominated event. As such, research on police misconduct has largely ignored women. Generally, research examines differences in misconduct by using sex as a control variable, or has focused on small samples of female officers using qualitative methods. Neither of these methods is able to explore or explain the possibility that factors related to officers' decisions to commit misconduct may differentially impact males and females. As a consequence, we are left with a shallow understanding of when and why women commit misconduct.

This research fills this gap by a large sample (N=3,085) of matched police officers in the New York City Police Department, half of which committed career-ending misconduct between 1975 and 1996. Additionally, unlike previous research, this data includes a large sample (N=435) of females. Research has determined that some factors, such as having children or employment problems, are risk factors for misconduct regardless of sex; likewise, other factors, such as age and higher education, create protection against misconduct. Using logistic regression and split-sample z-score comparisons, analyses will focus on examining how the predictors differentially explain the likelihood of police misconduct for men and women.

As expected, some predictors of misconduct that are salient for women, such as getting divorced, are not statistically significant for men; likewise, some variables that are significant for both men and women have a larger effect size for one sex, such as citizen complaints, which are of more predictive value for women than for men. These findings yield important theoretical, empirical, and policy implications. Notably, there is evidence that a gendered theory of police misconduct may be necessary. Additionally, conceptualizations within mainstream criminological theories may need to be rethought;

for example, divorce was found to be a protective factor for women in this study, rather than a risk factor as both strain and life-course criminology would indicate. The findings also demonstrate the need for gender-specific models when studying police misconduct. Finally, the results of this study yield important policy implications, such as the utility of gender-specific hiring considerations and early-intervention “red flags.”

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Adam, and my daughter, Hannah. Adam, this document would never have been finished without your unending support and love. You have been a pillar of strength through four years of coursework, comprehensive exams, and the research and writing of this dissertation. Hannah, I want you to know that you can do anything in this world as long as you work hard and follow God's direction. My life is better because you are in it and I am so grateful that I get to be your mom. God has great things in store for you and I can't wait to see what they are!

I also thank my parents, Richard and Kristin Perona, for teaching me to love learning, especially reading, and encouraging me to pursue three degrees. Mom and Dad, you endured my childhood antics (I don't think the UPS man ever got over the body outlines in masking tape on the living room floor) and fostered my curiosity and inquisitiveness, and for that I am forever grateful.

“And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **State of Women in Policing**

The occupation of policing is an extension of traditionally male roles associated with protection and order maintenance, thus it is unsurprising that it has been, and in some ways remains, a male-oriented profession (Martin, 1980). Female police officers were not permitted until 1910, and even then they were relegated to duties dealing with women and children or tasks that required nurturing, such as dealing with victims (Gau, Terrill, & Paoline, 2012; Martin, 1980; Sklansky, 2006). Early policewomen formed the International Association of Policewomen in 1915 in order to achieve goals such as better workplace standards and the promotion of preventive and protective police services (Martin, 1980). Reform within departments was closely aligned with greater social reform movements that sought better protections for women and children, especially in urban environments, and increased female participation in the workplace (Martin, 1980). Between 1946 and 1971, women's representation in policing remained relatively stagnant at an average of 1.5% of police departments, but by 1975 that number had nearly doubled to 2.9% (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1976; Martin, 1980; Williams, 1946). Despite these gains in representation, policewomen were still confined to secretarial or juvenile assignments during this time (Crites, 1973; Martin, 1980), despite recommendations from The President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice (1967) stating that "policewomen can be an invaluable asset to modern law enforcement and their present role should be broadened" (p. 125).

Even in the 21st century, women have had difficulties making inroads into a profession characterized by masculinity and machismo (Gau, Terrill, & Paoline, 2012; National Center for Women and Policing, 2002; Sklansky, 2006; U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). For example, females accounted for only 13% of sworn officers in agencies with

more than 100 sworn officers in 2000, up only slightly from 9% in 1990. Moreover, only 7.3% of top command positions in 2000 were held by women (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001). The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972 forced police agencies to actively recruit females. These laws required all government agencies receiving federal money, including state and local agencies, to increase their hiring of females and minorities (Belknap & Shelley, 1992; Garcia, 2003; Gau et al., 2012; Remington, 1983).

However, because female recruitment was forced on agencies, there was substantial resistance from the nearly all-white male rank-and-file (Garcia, 2003; Hunt, 1990). Even today, women in policing are faced with sexual harassment, job assignments consistent with beliefs about sex-appropriate tasks, questioning of overall capability to do the job, and social isolation (Balkin, 1988; Franklin, 2007; Holdaway & Parker, 1998; Hunt, 1990; Poole & Pogrebin, 1988). This affects the ability of women to do their jobs as police officers due to blocked institutional support including peer support and mentoring opportunities (Franklin, 2007; Haar, 1997; Holdaway & Parker, 1998; Hunt, 1990; Lord, 1986; Poole & Pogrebin, 1998). It is unsurprising, then, that recruitment of women into police departments has plateaued, with their numbers remaining similar today to those of 10 years ago. Likewise, just as women compose a small percentage of police officers in general, women are also a minority of “bad cops,” or those who commit misconduct (Kane & White, 2009).

### **Prevalence of Police Misconduct**

To date, researchers have failed to come to a consensus regarding a universal definition of police misconduct. The vast range of police activities make it difficult to determine if administrative violations, or what might be argued is simply poor judgment such as losing one’s badge or falling asleep on the job, should be classified in the same

category as serious criminal activity like stealing and selling drugs, stealing evidence, or extreme police brutality qualifying as assault (Manning, 2009). Still others question whether misconduct should only include criminal activity, such as theft or assault, and leave out behavior that is not overtly criminal in nature but is still an abuse of one's police authority, such as offensive verbal encounters with citizens (see Kane & White, 2009).

Despite the definitional disagreement, scholars do agree that it is a rare event, especially among women. In terms of citizen complaints, it is agreed that a small number of officers account for a disproportionate numbers of complaints (Goldstein, 1977; Walker & Bumphus, 1992); specifically, the Christopher Commission's investigation of the Los Angeles Police Department found that less than 1% of officers accounted for 15% of citizen complaints, a ratio that could not be accounted for by assignment or arrests (Christopher Commission, 1991). Studies of the Boston Police Department, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, and Kansas City Police Department demonstrated similar trends (Walker, Alpert, & Kenney, 2001). Another study found that roughly 2% of officers in the NYPD committed career-ending misconduct between 1975 and 1996 (Kane & White, 2009). It is unclear exactly how many officers commit misconduct because it is likely that a good deal of the phenomenon goes undetected or unreported. The police subculture is the primary culprit for the "dark figure" of misconduct. The culture of police departments is one of intense loyalty and solidarity, with extreme informal sanctions for those found to be violating the code of silence (Levitt, 2009). Even departments without such entrenched corruption as was present in the Serpico-era New York City Police Department (NYPD) have a strict, informal "blue wall of silence" (Knapp Commission, 1972; Mollen Commission, 1994; Rothwell & Baldwin, 2007a/b; Skolnick, 2002, 2005).

As difficult as it is to ascertain clear data on police officer misconduct in general, it is even more difficult to do so among female officers. Kane and White (2009) found that of the 2% of officers who committed career-ending misconduct, women were only a small percentage. Some have argued that women are less likely to commit misconduct because female officers tend to de-escalate situations using logical reasoning and interpersonal skills to settle disputes rather than turning to violence (Belknap & Shelley, 1992; Rabe-Hemp, 2008; Rabe-Hemp & Schuck, 2007). Additionally, women are typically excluded from the police subculture, and thus cut-off from opportunities for organized or group misconduct (see, e.g., Belknap & Shelley, 1992; Chu & Sun, 2007; Reiner, 1992).

### **Definition of the Research Problem**

The limitations of the current body of police misconduct research, including the small subset of police misconduct studies focusing on female officers, have empirical, theoretical, and policy implications for both researchers and police departments. This section outlines each of these implications, why these implications are problematic, and how this study fills the gaps presented by these implications.

### **Empirical Implications**

Outside of use of force, there is a dearth of research on female officer misconduct, seemingly for two main reasons. First, as noted above, it is fairly uncommon relative to male misconduct (Archbold & Schulz, 2012; Lersch, 1998). A recent study of the NYPD found that only 13% of officers who committed career-ending misconduct over a 22-year period were female (Kane & White, 2009). Second, women comprise a small number of police officers overall — roughly 13% (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001). Combined, these facts make finding samples with adequate statistical power for quantitative analysis extremely difficult.

As a result, research on women in policing (especially female misconduct) has followed one of two paths. Some research uses small samples (generally less than 100 officers) of female officers, without a male comparison sample. Research of this kind is usually qualitative in nature or is survey-based (see, e.g., Haarr & Morash, 1999; Rabe-Hemp, 2008, 2009). Other studies use larger samples of officers, both male and female, and use sex as a control variable (see, e.g., Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2012; Piquero & Wolfe, 2011). This is known as the “add gender and stir” approach (Chesney-Lind, 1986; Daly, 1997). While this allows researchers to see the direct effect of gender, this method lacks nuance, as gender differences in predictor effects are lost.

Given the data constraints on police researchers in the form of low sample sizes of female officers, this is an understandable approach. This method, however, is rooted in the assumption that the predictors of misconduct are the same for both men and women. This assumption is inconsistent with literature demonstrating gendered pathways of risk in a variety of settings (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; see also Burgess-Proctor, 2012; Reising, Holtfreter, & Morash, 2006). Gendered pathways can only be accounted for by using gender-specific models, which are especially important when gender-specific policies are implemented without fully understanding how the risk factors vary by gender (Holtfreter & Cupp, 2007). In the context of police misconduct, it is unclear whether gender exerts direct or indirect effects, or possibly both, on police misconduct, and whether indirect effects are moderating or mediating in nature, thus the field’s general (albeit limited) understanding of gender’s effect on misconduct is incomplete at best – and completely misleading at worst.

This research fills the gap in the literature by exploring important questions regarding the impact of gender on police misconduct by addressing these two main

concerns with previous research. First, the sample used in this study is large enough (N=3,085) to include a substantial number of women (N=435) from which to draw empirical conclusions about the effect (both direct and indirect) of sex on police misconduct. These women are also rather evenly split between both the study group (“Bad cops”) and the comparison group, providing enough statistical power in both groups to make comparisons between them. Second, in combination with the large sample of men and women, this study uses quantitative methods to draw specific conclusions about the direct and indirect effects of gender on police misconduct. This overcomes both previous methodological deficiencies, allowing for the interaction of sex with other variables of interest to construct a more complete picture about the differences between men and women regarding their likelihood to commit misconduct. Specifically, this research hypothesizes that the factors that predict police misconduct affect men and women differently, both in sex-specific ways and across sexes.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Mainstream theories of criminality and deviance such as strain, deterrence, social control, and social learning, were created using the deviance patterns of white males (Daly, 1992; Daly & Chesney-Lind, 1988; Smith & Paternoster, 1989). Theories used to explain female deviance have historically used a qualitatively different set of explanatory factors relative to theories of male deviance (Smith & Paternoster, 1989). Thus, early theorists believed that theories of male deviance had limited utility in explaining female criminality (see, e.g. Adler, 1975; Klein, 1973; Smart, 1977).

Similarly, theories of police misconduct are also based largely on the misconduct of male officers. The subcultural theory of police misconduct, for example, argue that officers engage in misconduct because the police subculture promotes deviance and wrongdoing (Knapp Commission, 1972; Micuccui & Gomme, 2005; Mollen Commission,

1994; Skolnick, 2005; Stoddard, 1968). The police subculture values masculinity, camaraderie, and loyalty above all else, which perpetuates both misconduct itself as a show of power and the “blue wall of silence” that prohibits reporting misconduct (Bittner, 1974; Stoddard, 1968; Van Maanen, 1980; Westley, 1970). Taking this theory a step further, Kappeler, Sluder, and Alpert (1998) articulate an anthropological theory of misconduct that emphasizes socialization and culture, especially the police worldview of “us vs. them.” This worldview begins during a selective recruitment process that eliminates diversity and continues throughout the academy and field training, during which officers are taught to have high trust and solidarity with other officers (especially white male officers). Likewise, this culture and socialization is top-down, meaning that chiefs and top brass set the tone for the culture of the department. Thus, a culture of misconduct is bred at the top of the ranks and trickles down to the rank-and-file (see also Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993). Lastly, Sherman’s (1974) classic explanation of police misconduct, the “rotten apples” theory, illustrates misconduct within police departments using an analogy of a barrel of apples. In some instances, misconduct is a result of a “few bad apples” (i.e., particular officers) within an otherwise honest barrel; other times, misconduct comes in “rotten pockets” (i.e., units or divisions) in an otherwise honest barrel (Sherman, 1974).

Using mainstream criminological theoretical perspectives to explain gender differences in deviance in general, and police misconduct specifically, can be problematic because there are profound differences in overall offending/deviance patterns between men and women (Smith & Paternoster, 1989; Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996; Steffensmeier, Schwartz, Zhong, & Acker, 2005). Women are more likely than men to engage in traditionally female crime, such as shoplifting and prostitution (Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996; Steffensmeier et al., 2005). They are also much less likely than men to



commit violent crimes (Koons-Witt & Schram, 2003; Lauritsen, Heimer, & Lynch, 2009; Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996; Steffensmeier et al., 2005). Even in non-street crime, there are discernible gender patterns. White-collar crime research has found that women account for a large percentage of embezzlement cases, but the vast majority of them are small dollar amounts, consistent with their orientation within the bottom of the organizational hierarchy (Daly, 1989; Holtfreter, 2005; Steffensmeier et al., 2013). Thus it is consistent with both street and white-collar criminal behavior that female police officers commit not only less misconduct than do male officers, but also different forms of it (Lersch, 1998; Steffensmeier, 1979; Van Wormer, 1981).

Additionally, there is some research that indicates the “gender gap” in offending may be converging, at least for some offenses (Heimer, 2000; Lauritsen et al., 2009). Originally, the narrowing of the gender gap was believed to be due to an increase in the female share of crime (see Adler, 1975, Simon, 1975). More recent research, however, indicates that a larger decrease of male offending relative to female offending in the 1990s rather than an increase in female offending can at least partially account for this convergence of the gender gap (Lauritsen et al., 2009; see also Heimer, 2000; Steffensmeier et al., 2005; Steffensemeier, Zhong, Ackerman, Schwartz, & Agha, 2006). Alternatively, it is possible that changes in the gender gap are unrelated to changes in offending patterns and more closely connected to changes in arrest, conviction, or sentencing patterns (Lauritsen et al., 2009; Steffensmeier et al., 2005, 2006). Thus, even though there is evidence that the gender gap is narrowing, the contention that women commit less crime than men, *ceteris parabus*, is still valid. It is likely, then, that similar patterns may be seen in occupational deviance, such as police misconduct.

Even using police-specific theories to explain both male and female misconduct creates problems. The subcultural theory of misconduct is problematic because it

assumes all police officers are male, leaving most female officers at the periphery of the subculture. Thus it cannot adequately explain why some female officers commit misconduct; they should not, based on their social orientation outside of the subculture. Likewise, Sherman's (1974) "rotten apples" theory also falls short in explaining female misconduct. Sherman himself argues that, while many departments say that their instances of misconduct are few and far between (rotten apples), it is more accurate that departments suffer from rotten pockets, such as the Buddy Boys scandal in the 1980s in New York City (McAlary, 1987). In some cases, the corruption and misconduct can go beyond rotten pockets to become systemic, organized corruption. In both cases, misconduct is group-oriented, yet female officers are often excluded from these groups.

This research will offer theoretical interpretations that better explain the differences in male and female police misconduct. Recent explorations of male and female criminal behavior demonstrate that some mainstream theories have the capacity to explain both male and female offending (see, e.g., Agnew & Brezina, 1997; Augustyn & McGloin, 2013; Broidy, 2001; Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Hubbard & Pratt, 2002; Kaufman, 2009; Smith, 1979), but they do so by differentiating between male and female predictors and pathways. Theoretical tests of strain have found that men and women have been socialized to have vastly different coping responses to anger; men are more likely to respond to anger with externalized deviant coping strategies such as crime, whereas women often experience anger in combination with emotions like shame and guilt that prompt internalized deviant strategies like eating disorders (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Jennings, Piquero, Gover, & Perez, 2009; Kaufman, 2009; Piquero & Sealock, 2004; Sharp et al., 2001, 2005). Similar studies of strain in police contexts have found that men and women report qualitatively different kinds of stresses as well as using different coping mechanisms in response to those stressors (Dowler, 2005; Haarr &

Morash, 1999; Poteyeva & Sun, 2009). Thus it is clear that traditional theories, both mainstream and police-specific, require gender-specific interpretations because of the gendered pathways and predictors of deviant behavior.

Daly's (1992) gendered pathways to crime approach explains that female offenders are more likely than men to have suffered past abuse (especially sexual abuse), be economically disadvantaged, and be addicted to drugs or alcohol. This seminal study launched feminist pathways research, and has been supported in a number of contexts included female recidivism (Reisig, Holtfreter, & Morash, 2006), help-seeking of battered women (Burgess-Proctor, 2012), and gender-specific programming (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006). This evidence of gendered risk and protective factors provides support for the contention that men and women differ in the factors that impact their likelihood of misconduct. This study will identify the gendered predictors of misconduct to theoretically frame the gendered pathway to misconduct.

### **Policy Implications**

Police departments have typically implemented a number of policies to curb police misconduct. Two of the most popular include early intervention (EI) systems and changes to hiring practices. EI systems warn agency leaders when an officer is demonstrating problematic performance. The "red flags" used in these systems usually relate to the number of citizen complaints, sick days, or use-of-force reports (Walker, 2003; Willis, 2014; Worden, Harris, & McLean, 2014). When an officer is "flagged" by the system, the officer's supervisor will make a course correction by requiring an intervention that will curb the problematic behavior. These systems are specifically designed to identify officers who may present future problems before they commit serious infractions, so the interventions are non-punitive, such as anger management or diversity training or task re-assignment (Walker & Alpert, 2004; Willis, 2014; Worden et

al., 2014). Hiring practices are also used to address concerns of misconduct, especially corruption. For example, new hiring practices were put in place in the New York City Police Department following the Serpico scandal and the findings of the Knapp Commission in the 1970s. Unfortunately, these new hires were largely let go during the layoffs of the early 1980s, thus corruption and misconduct continued during the 1980s and early 1990s (White, 2014b). Background investigators consider a number of facts when making hiring recommendations, many of which are correlated with misconduct research findings. For example, background investigators look for a criminal history, which is also a risk factor for misconduct.

These policies are problematic in relation to the gender disparity in police misconduct because they are based on research that does not adequately account for this gender difference. Early intervention systems, for example, are designed to improve officers' performance rather than serve as a conduit for formal discipline, but the underlying assumption is the same regardless of the intended purpose: That certain factors, such as excessive numbers of citizen complaints or use-of-force reports, serve as indicators of behavior that is problematic, potentially reaching the point of misconduct (Walker, 2003; Worden et al., 2014). If the indicators used to measure problem behavior are gendered in nature (i.e., certain indicators are applicable only to one sex or have opposite effects depending on gender), then one gender or the other may be incorrectly flagged. For example, if citizen complaints are used to indicate problematic behavior, but women are differentially assigned to community-oriented policing assignments and thus have different kinds of citizen encounters, it is possible that women may be unfairly flagged for problem behavior. This is consistent with Harris's (2011) work on police career pathways, in which he argues that EI systems that use multiple indicators as separate qualifying factors of misconduct are more likely to identify different kinds of

problem officers due to varying career pathways. Harris (2011) focuses on complaint-based pathways, but there are many ways that career pathways could be measured and if any of them are gendered, then the EI systems can create gendered outcomes.

The criteria used by background investigators may also be gendered. For example, background investigators look for a criminal history, which is a risk factor for misconduct. If criminal history is only salient for men, however, and not for women, then some women may be unfairly excluded from employment. The same could also be true for early intervention systems. In many early intervention systems, citizen complaints are often used as a red flag of increasingly problematic behavior. If citizen complaints have a stronger effect on one sex than the other, however, their use may have greater predictive utility for one sex versus the other. Additionally, early intervention systems could use personal strains, such as the death of a family member or a divorce, as red flags for possible future misconduct. If these stressors operate negatively for one sex and positively for the other, however, one sex may be unfairly targeted for interventions.

By identifying the gendered risk factors and pathways to misconduct, this study will allow police departments to make better decisions regarding outcomes affected by misconduct rates. Just as greater racial parity has lowered rates of misconduct, it is possible that greater gender parity will positively affect rates of officer misconduct. Steffensmeier, Schwartz, and Roche (2013) note in a study of white-collar offenders that women “do business in a way that carries a sense of connectedness and bring a more ethical perspective to the workplace” (p. 452), attributes which are beneficial to any work setting, including police departments. The results of this study may also boost efforts to increase the retention rates of female officers. A clear understanding of the gendered nuances of police misconduct may aid departments in addressing the culture and strain associated with female policing.

## **Research Questions**

In order to address the deficiencies of previous research on female police misconduct, this study focuses on three main research questions:

**Research Question 1:** Do predictors of misconduct affect men and women the same way?

**Research Question 2:** Do some predictors serve as risk factors for men but protective factors for women, or vice versa?

**Research Question 3:** What risk factors predict women's commission of career-ending misconduct?

The answers to these questions will further inform police and feminist scholars in the study of police misconduct and how female police officers fit into the discussion.

## **Organization of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. Following this introduction to the definition and scope of the problem of gender and police officer misconduct is a comprehensive review of the literature. This review discusses the difficulties associated with defining police misconduct; explains the ways in which previous research has operationalized officer misconduct and the benefits and limitations of each type; outlines the benefits and limitations to different methods of measuring police officer misconduct; addresses various forms of data on police misconduct, including up-and-coming new forms of data; describes the risk and protective factors for police misconduct found in previous research; provides a brief overview of the NYPD, especially during the study time period of the 1970s through the mid-1990s; and details various theoretical explanations of police misconduct, including how each is explained through the lens of gender.

The third chapter of the dissertation provides an explanation of the data used in the study and the methodology employed for the quantitative analyses. The data come from official records of the NYPD. It includes all officers who were fired from the NYPD between 1975 and 1996 (termed “bad cops”), who were then matched with a randomly selected officer who had not been fired (as of 1996) who was in the same academy class as the “bad cop.” The variables included in the study are also discussed, including: The dependent misconduct variables; the primary independent variable of sex; additional independent variables used as predictors of misconduct; and control variables.

The fourth chapter details the results for both the full sample (N=3,085) and the female portion of the sample (N=435). A logistic regression was performed on the full sample (N=3,085) to determine the effects of established correlates of misconduct when using sex as a control, simulating the most common quantitative method used in police misconduct research. The sample was then split by sex and the same logistic regression performed on both subsamples. The z-scores of the coefficients for each predictor were compared to determine if the effects of the predictors varied by sex.

Finally, the fifth chapter presents a discussion of these findings and their empirical, theoretical, and policy implications. It also outlines limitations of this study and provides directions for future research in the area of gender and police misconduct.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The History and Role of the Police**

Police misconduct is, at its core, a violation of the function, or role, of the police. As such, it is imperative that the police role be understood before attempting to dissect the causes and consequences of police misconduct. Determining what constitutes this role, however, has been debated for decades and there is still not a clear answer. Most scholars agree that the police have the authority to use force, up to and including deadly force, to enforce the law; at the very least, society has given this power to police, thus the legitimacy of the authority goes with it. Miller (1975) explains that “the patrolman’s most formidable discretionary power is his ability to use force to maintain his authority” (p. 86). Manning (1978) argues that in creating an organization (the police) with a monopoly on force, society has molded a police mandate that includes the efficient, apolitical, and professional enforcement of the law. He goes on to explain that the police have cornered themselves into an impossible task, staking out a vast and unmanageable social domain (see also Wilson, 1968). This role ambiguity creates a dilemma for officers, who justify their law-breaking as a necessary means to the achieve order and apprehend the worst offenders (Stoddard, 1968).

This creates difficulty in forming a cohesive, holistic definition of the police function. Part of this difficulty is rooted in changes in social context. Historically, police departments served an order maintenance role rooted in street justice (Kelling & Moore, 1988; Lane, 1992; Sykes, 1986). This early period was known as the political era because the police function was rooted in the exceptionally intense political atmosphere of most major urban centers that owned (and corrupted) their police departments nearly from the start and the myriad of social ills with which police departments had to contend. The role of American police was largely oriented in terms of the provision of social services



(Lane, 1992). In the mid- to late-1800s and even into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, police officers were more like social workers, with departments serving as homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and orphanages (Haller, 1976; Kelling & Moore, 1988; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

Though police officers engaged in law enforcement, they had little to no training and there was little emphasis placed on legal procedure (Haller, 1976; Kelling & Moore, 1988; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Thus, departments relied on informal processes for handling crime. Since police officers walked their beats, and their beats sometimes took them a mile or more away from the station house, officers relied on street justice to handle problems (Haller, 1976; Kelling & Moore, 1988). Petty crimes were dealt with using the baton or “hickory stick” (Haller, 1976). Because they were expected to be physically imposing, many of the first police officers were former blue-collar workers such as welders, steel workers, mechanics, and shipyard workers; post-Civil War appointments were often made to former Union soldiers (Haller, 1976).

Two factors epitomized life in urban cities in the early decades of police departments: High rates of immigration, especially from Europe, which contributed to rapidly growing populations within relatively fixed borders. Urban centers like Chicago and New York had populations that grew at an exponential rate due to high levels of immigration, especially from Europe (Lane, 1992; Walker, 1976). Cities were geographically segregated by ethnicity, and officers were recruited to patrol their respective ethnicity’s part of the city (Haller, 1976; Kelling & Moore, 1988; Miller, 1975). In Chicago, black officers were recruited to handle crime in the black areas of the city, while Italians were assigned to combat crime against Italians. Likewise, the Five Points section of New York City, a largely Irish portion of the rapidly growing city, was patrolled by Irish police officers. This ethnically-based system of patronage brought with it an

expectation of absolute loyalty to the political machine in power that often pitted officers against their own kinsmen (Haller, 1976; Miller, 1975).

Ethnic tensions and political favors meant that police officers were “important cogs in political machines,” and law enforcement was run as a racket through which officers could make extra money (Haller, 1976, p. 307; see also Miller, 1975; Worrall, 2014). In fact, the inequality of pay relative to the dangers of the job colored the type of men willing to become police officers and is a hallmark of the policing job that continued into modern times. Police graft was expected and even encouraged in early police departments, and tacit coordination of illegal enterprises like gambling and prostitution were common, especially during Prohibition (Haller, 1976, 1990). These practices continued as a common form of police corruption well into the late twentieth century, as illustrated by the 1972 Serpico scandal in New York, in which one-third of the department was found to have engaged in organized corruption (Knapp Commission, 1972; Lardner, 1996).

Beginning in the mid-twentieth century, the political and social landscape of America dictated that the police become a crime-fighting entity. This came to be known as the professional era of policing, driven largely by police reformers like August Vollmer and the creation of professional organizations, such as the International Association of Chiefs of Police in 1893 (Kelling & Moore, 1988; Worrall, 2014). These reformers argued that in order for police officers to do their jobs and be taken seriously, they needed to separate from local politics and become neutral enforcers of law (Worrall, 2014). Unlike the political era, when officers were given jobs as political favors with the only requirements being loyalty to their political patrons and sometimes a particular ethnic or racial background, professional police departments used criteria like educational background, criminal history, and psychological readiness (Kelling & Moore, 1988).

The federal government, most notably the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), spearheaded the implementation of professionalism in law enforcement agencies (Walker, 1976). In fact, J. Edgar Hoover, who revolutionized the Bureau, was far ahead of his time in creating a more efficient and professional police force. He created a national registry of fingerprints in 1924, the federal crime laboratory in 1932, and the first training academy in 1935 (FBI, 2011; Kessler, 2002). Under his leadership, the FBI standardized everything from the paperwork to the “G-man” uniform of a black suit, white shirt, and bowler hat (Kessler, 2002).

Following suit, reformers implemented professional standards in local police departments by introducing police academies and civil service examinations. They also advocated measuring police effectiveness through the use of numerical indicators, such as arrests or citizen complaints (Kelling & Moore, 1988). Technological advances such as the advent of the telephone and automobile, made it possible for police officers to conduct their business farther from the precinct. Officers could patrol larger areas using a patrol car and citizens could request service by calling the police to report crimes (Haller, 1976; Kelling & Moore, 1988).

The professional era of policing emphasized a mandate in which police were “a mechanism for the distribution of non-negotiably coercive force” (Bittner, 1970, p. 46; see also Kelling & Moore, 1988). This role as crime-fighter was directly at odds with the routine activities of police; roughly 75% of police activities are tasks other than those related to fighting crime (Bittner, 1970; Manning, 1978). These tasks include writing reports, attending training, and visiting schools or community organizations. The development in the 1930s of the Uniform Crime Reports, and departments’ increased reliance upon them and the comparisons they generated, provided concrete evaluation measures (Walker, 1984). Thus, police officers are evaluated based on numbers like

arrests and clearance rates, thereby creating a disjunction between ends (evaluation measures) and means (activities while on duty) (Manning, 1978).

This mandate of fighting crime fits squarely with Van Maanen's (1978) discussion of how police officers orient themselves toward both citizens and their jobs. He argued that citizens who encounter the police fall into one of three groups: The know-nothing, the suspicious person, or the asshole. The majority of people are know-nothings, conceptualized as members of the general public who are well meaning and cooperative, but ultimately know nothing about what it means to be a police officer. These people are harmless, registering as slight annoyances to officers. Suspicious persons are those who are believed to have committed a crime, whether because of concrete factors (e.g., fits the description of a wanted person) or "gut feelings" developed through years of experience (e.g., a person who seemingly is out of place, such as a teenager in an industrial park after dark). These people are handled cautiously and formally. Finally, there are assholes, or people who do not accept a situation as police have defined it. These are the people who become argumentative with police or otherwise challenge an officer's authority. During a routine traffic stop, the know-nothing is the driver who is polite and accepts the citation without questioning the officer's judgment; the suspicious person is the driver who acts suspiciously towards the officer, most likely for some other reason (e.g., the driver may have an active bench warrant or have marijuana in the trunk); the asshole is the driver who angrily shouts at the officer and does not cooperate with routine traffic stop procedures (e.g., refuses to provide identification).

Under this framework, the role of the police is "asshole control." Police are called when assholes get out of control and cause problems, and it is the job of police officers to bring them under control – likely through what Van Maanen calls street justice. In some cases, assholes are only arrested for "resisting arrest," which is cop-speak for "contempt

of cop.” Van Maanen (1978) notes that officers view street justice as an opportunity to do “real” police work, demonstrating that police consider their mandate largely as one oriented towards law enforcement or crime fighting.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the professional model was called into question as the national crime rate exploded. The serious crime (UCR index crimes) rate in the United States increased from 5.0 crimes per 1,000 people in 1950 to 14.3 per 1,000 people in 1970 (Reynolds, 1995). Particularly, police agencies were unable to improve their numbers even with the emphasis on preventive patrol and rapid response to calls for service (Kelling & Moore, 1988). The 1960s also brought with it intense political and social strife with the civil rights and antiwar movements, challenging the authority and legitimacy of police. A slowing economy in the 1970s also presented problems for police agencies (Kelling & Moore, 1988; Willis, 2014). As a result, police departments turned to a more community-oriented problem-solving perspective that allowed for better use of scarce resources and relied on community involvement in defining crime problems and in preventing and controlling crime (Goldstein, 1990; Skolnick & Bayley, 1986; Weisburd & Eck, 2004). This strategy allowed departments to be more responsive to the needs of their specific communities and at least attempt to regain a sense of public trust and legitimacy (Crank, 1994; Willis, 2014). Crank (1994) goes so far as to argue that the implementation of community policing is symbolic in nature, similar to the adoption of other policing innovations like CompStat (Maguire, 2014).

The 1970s also saw police departments partner with research organizations to better understand the mechanisms of police approaches. In 1972, the Kansas City (KS) Police Department and the Police Foundation studied the effectiveness of the foundation of American policing: Preventive patrol. The results of this study demonstrated that targeted crime prevention strategies are likely a better use of police resources than

routine preventive patrol (Kelling, Pate, Dieckman, & Brown, 1974). An analysis of foot patrol in Newark, New Jersey, found that in neighborhoods with foot patrol, residents experienced less fear of crime, even when there was no effect on the actual crime rate (Police Foundation, 1981).

In addition to police strategies, internal departmental changes also benefited from research. For example, the Dallas (TX) Police Department implemented several human resources programs aimed at increasing recruitment of women and minorities, improving officer education, and decentralizing department decision-making. The evaluations performed by the Police Foundation determined that while the perceptions of the rank-and-file did not change, there was a noticeable increase in both officer education levels and the number of women in the department (Kelling & Wycoff, 1978).

The community-oriented problem-solving approach requires broad measures of effectiveness, such as quality of life in neighborhoods, reduction of fear, and increased order. It fits with Bittner's (1970) conceptualization of the police role as one of peacekeeper rather than law enforcer. This is especially salient in areas where police officers must patrol highly vulnerable populations such as the mentally ill on skid row (Bittner, 1967). In this model, police must protect people from themselves and others. Effective peacekeeping requires particularization of knowledge, a restricted relevance of culpability, and a background in ad hoc decision-making. Particularization of knowledge refers to a beat cop's ability to know and remember the people, places, and events within his or her beat. Officers who familiarize themselves with every aspect of their beat are better able to command authority while engaging in some measure of informality with the residents of their beat, which allows them to maintain control and keep peace (Bittner, 1967). An officer describes this to Bittner (1967) when he says, "If I want to be in control of my work and keep the street relatively peaceful, I have to know the people.

To know them I must gain their trust, which means that I have to be involved in their lives” (p. 372).

A restricted reliance on culpability refers to the ability of officers to recognize that some illegal behavior is best handled using nonlegal, informal sanctions. For example, officers may simply ask intoxicated individuals to vacate doorways and other public spaces at night rather than arresting them for loitering or vagrancy (Bittner, 1967). This is especially true in situations where culpability is ambiguous. Finally, effective cops need a background in ad-hoc decision-making because every beat has its unique set of factors. These factors, such as knowledge of prior events or the mentality of those inhabiting one’s beat (e.g., vulnerability and exploitation of residents of skid row create an elevated sense of risk even towards seemingly innocuous provocations), require officers to make decisions that may not be strictly in keeping with the letter of the law. Bittner (1967) notes that officers patrolling skid row use the protection of arrested persons as the most common explanation for minor arrests, and the responses in different incidents of the same type may vary based on the needs of the people involved and what will best preserve order and peace.

Bittner’s characterization of good policing means that officers do what needs to be done to mitigate aggregate harm. Good officers might not arrest the rowdy drunk man in the park if it means instigating a riot. Muir (1977) elaborates on this issue in his idea of police as “craftsmen,” epitomized in the person of Mike Marshall. Marshall knows his beat and knows the people in it, understanding that most problems can be resolved without handcuffs. In this way, police officers are the solvers of human problems, whatever those problems may be – and sometimes buying a candy bar and calling a guardian rather than arresting a disorderly man becomes the better solution of the human problem. Manning (1978) uses the peacekeeping framework in his policy

suggestions for police departments, insisting that police departments should have several specialized units for various peacekeeping endeavors (e.g., domestic unit or juvenile unit), with only one squad dedicated to felony crime suppression (and possibly another unit for riot control).

Some have argued that a new era of policing has emerged out of the community-oriented policing era: Cops as soldiers, or an era of the police role as warlike (Sklonick & Fyfe, 1993). This is unsurprising given the decades-old “war on crime,” and even more recently, the wars on drugs and now terrorism. The analogy of cops as soldiers is in some ways fitting, as departments have already created a paramilitary police force, complete with military-like uniforms, ranks, a centralized hierarchy, use of weapons (and increased use of military-grade weapons such as explosives and high-powered weapons like MP-5s), and boot-camp style academies (Maguire, 2014; Kraska & Kappeler, 1997; Sklonick & Fyfe, 1993). In fact, some community-oriented policing strategies use a paramilitary approach and are referred to in terms of counterinsurgency (Metz, 2013). The use of military-grade technology includes surveillance and communication needs, such as surveillance drones and night-vision goggles, “extend[ing] the level of police surveillance and control over the populace” (Maguire, 2014, p. 86).

Police officers have traditionally viewed their role as one similar to Van Maanen (1978), but in recent years, the perception has changed to one of cops as soldiers. In some ways, these are not incompatible; for example, police still engage in asshole control, they simply do so with better weapons and with a stronger show of force. This perception on the part of police officers as to their occupational role is instilled even before the academy through selection and recruitment, as departments recruit those who will succeed in the academy and field training. Additionally, the events of September 11, 2001, infused, especially in the New York Police Department, the realization that local



first responders must be ready to combat terrorism in a paramilitary-like manner (White, 2014b). This emphasis on counter-terrorism and the internalization of the mandate of urban warfare rather than traditional policing has led to an increase in the use of force in general (Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993), especially regarding aggressive tactics such as the NYPD's use of stop-question-and-frisk (Fagan, Geller, Davies, & West, 2010; White, 2014b).

## **The Many Forms of Police Misconduct**

### **Defining Misconduct**

As often as the term *police misconduct* is used in the literature, a clear and comprehensive definition is somewhat elusive (Ivkovic, 2005b). Many people contend that misconduct only refers to the use of force. Since police have a virtual monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Bittner, 1970; Klockars, 1996), and because force can escalate to lethal force, this focus on police brutality and excessive force is unsurprising. News coverage of incidents such as the Rodney King beating in 1992 made police brutality and excessive force a topic of conversation among both politicians and the general public. Likewise, popular media often depicts police officers engaging in excessive force, thus leading people to believe that this is the norm. There are, however, a number of activities that can be considered misconduct (Ivkovic, 2005b). Perjury (lying while under oath), verbal abuse during citizen encounters like swearing or racial slurs, and misuse of a department-issued firearm are all examples of police misconduct that are not considered use of force (Kane & White, 2009).

Kappeler, Sluder, and Alpert (1998) describe four broad categories of deviant police behavior: Police crime, occupational deviance, abuse of authority, and corruption. *Police crimes* consist of criminal behavior that is committed while in the course of one's duty as a police officer. Kappeler and colleagues (1998) explain, "the factor which

distinguishes police crime is the commission of the crime while on the job or by using some aspect of the occupational position to carry out the illegality” (p. 21). Using this explanation, some police officers commit crimes that are not classified as police crime, such as an officer who assaults his or her neighbor after an argument.

*Occupational deviance* is based on the work of Sutherland (1940) and others that describes workplace crime, or white-collar crime. In the context of policing, occupational deviance consists of “inappropriate work-related activities in which police may participate” (Kappeler et al., 1998, p. 22). Specifically, police occupational deviance is only possible because of one’s status as a police officer. Examples of police occupational deviance include inappropriate searches or lying to the public about aspects of an investigation.

*Corruption*, while seemingly simple to define, has no clear definition among scholars (Hale, 1989; Kappeler et al., 1998). Some consider any wrongdoing to be corruption, whereas others define it more narrowly, usually requiring an element of personal gain (e.g., Goldstein, 1977; Sherman, 1978) or monetary compensation (McMullan, 1961). Of Stoddard’s (1968) 10 categories of police deviancy, six are overtly connected to corruption in some form: Mooching (gratuities), chiseling (demanding off-duty free admission or price discounts), favoritism (using police authority to avoid minor violations like traffic tickets), extortion, bribery, and perjury. Kappeler and colleagues (1998) bring consensus to the definition by noting that police corruption must involve the use of police authority in pursuit of personal gain. Standard examples of corruption include embezzlement of public funds, extortion, and bribery.

Finally, Kappeler, Sluder, and Alpert (1998) describe *police abuse of authority*. Using Carter’s (1985) broad definition of abuse of authority that includes “any action by a police officer without regard to motive, intent, or malice that tends to injure, insult,

tread on human dignity, manifest feelings of inferiority, and/or violate an inherent legal right of the police constituency” (p. 322), Kappeler and associates (1998) explain that abuse of authority can take three forms: Physical (e.g., use of excessive force), psychological (e.g., verbal abuse or harassment), and legal abuse (e.g., perjury or evidence tampering).

Clearly these categories may overlap, especially occupational deviance with the other three forms of police deviance (Kane & White, 2009). Police crime, police corruption, and police abuse of authority fit into the category of occupational deviance because they take place as part of the police occupation. A police officer accepts bribes *because* he is a police officer (i.e., the briber would not be bribing the officer if he or she was *not* a police officer). Likewise, an officer can only abuse one’s authority if one is vested with said authority. Some incidents include facets of multiple forms of deviance, such as “shaking down” drug dealers (corruption) while simultaneously assaulting the dealers, stealing their drugs, and subsequently selling them (police crime and abuse of authority) – and all of these behaviors are also examples of police occupational deviance.

Using similar terms, Barker and Carter (1995) created a typology that breaks police deviance into two categories: Occupational deviance and abuse of authority. They argue that this typology structures deviance based on the locus of behavior; when officers abuse their police authority, they break external conduct standards (i.e., those set by society), whereas occupational deviance violates internal, organizational standards of conduct (see also Kappeler et al., 1998). Through this lens, police misconduct can be defined externally through official means such as citizen review boards, criminal and civil legislation, or court decisions, or internally through administrative rules and regulations (Kappeler et al., 1998). External deviance is directed towards citizens, such

as excessive use of force, while internal deviance is directed at the organization, such as ignoring department regulations prohibiting the acceptance of free meals or drinks.

The internal/external typification, however, does not clearly delineate forms of misconduct. For example, police departments administratively prohibit (internal) officers from being arrested (external) (Kane & White, 2009). Departments, then, administratively sanction three basic forms of police misconduct: Police crime, police corruption, and abuse of authority (Kane & White, 2009). *Police crime* is conduct in which one's police authority is used to carry out activity that is also prohibited by criminal statute (for example, theft of evidence; see also Kappeler et al., 1998). Officers may commit crimes, such as tax evasion, that are not considered police crime because the opportunity to commit the crime is not structured by their status as a police officer. Behavior classified as *police corruption* is conduct in which one's police authority is used for personal profit (for example, "shaking down" drug dealers). This is the behavior traditionally associated with police misconduct. Kane and White (2013) note that the definition of corruption varies, depending on whether it is limited only to illegal behavior. If so, then conduct like accepting gratuities is not considered corruption. The third category is *abuse of authority*, or conduct that includes physical, psychological, or legal abuse. This includes traditional forms of abuse such as excessive force, but also includes legal abuse of authority such as perjury (Kane & White, 2009; see also Carter, 1985; Kappeler et al., 1998).

Kane and White (2009, 2013) note that some of these categories may overlap, such as an incident in which an officer shakes down a drug dealer (police corruption) and assaults the dealer or steals his or her drugs (police crime). Recently, there has been an increase in the overlap between corruption and police brutality, or abuse of authority (in some cases, police crime). For example, the Mollen Commission hearings uncovered

numerous instances of bribery accompanied by kidnapping, robbery, or attempted murder (Kane & White, 2013).

There is also the question of whether police misconduct must be committed while on-duty. Kane and White (2009, 2013) argue that misconduct can occur off-duty, such as a police officer's misuse of a department-issued firearm (see also Fyfe, 1988) or abuse of authority during disputes such as domestic violence or bar fights. These off-duty crimes come into conflict with common conceptualizations of misconduct because, while criminal in nature, these activities are not related to one's official capacity as a police officer, leading some scholars to argue that these crimes should not be included in the definition of misconduct (Manning, 2009). Kane and White (2013), however, maintain that in most cases, the officers abuse their authority as police officers in off-duty encounters, thus bringing their behavior under the purview of the police department and classifying it as misconduct; this is consistent with the policies of departments to discipline officers for misconduct regardless of duty status.

### **Operationalization of Misconduct**

Because the concept of misconduct is so difficult to define, its operationalization is not uniform within the literature. There are three main ways in which misconduct has traditionally been operationalized: Violations of administrative regulations, activity that is criminal in nature, and activity that is career-ending.

When police misconduct is operationalized as a violation of administrative regulations, the activity included in the study is limited activity that is barred by organizational rules and regulations. Operationalizing misconduct in this way includes most activities that are traditionally viewed to be misconduct, such as criminal activity (i.e., departments administratively prohibit criminal activities) and actions officially ruled to be an abuse of authority (e.g., organizational determination of excessive force)

(Kane & White, 2009). It also includes other actions that are not criminal, such as sleeping on the job or accepting gratuities. Because these actions are not usually considered to be police misconduct by the general public, however, some may find this operationalization too broad, lumping together officers guilty of serious crimes and officers who accepted a free meal or fell asleep while filing reports (Kappeler et al., 1998).

Operationalizing police misconduct in terms of criminal activity alone means that actions are statutorily prohibited. Crimes ranging from homicide or manslaughter to perjury are included in this category. A limitation of this operationalization is that behavior that would, on its face, seem to be criminal but does not result in a criminal charge or resulted in acquittal would likely be excluded from examination. For example, the officers charged in the Rodney King beating in 1992 were acquitted of assault and other criminal charges, though two were later convicted of federal civil rights violations (Kappeler et al., 1998); depending on the method of measuring misconduct, this incident could be excluded because the officers were not *convicted* of a crime. Another limitation is that behavior that is a violation of civil, rather than criminal, statutes is also excluded. Activities like the New York Police Department's policy of stop-question-and-frisk are legal on their face, but are arguably a violation of civil rights and an abuse of police authority (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2011; *Floyd v. City of New York*, 2013).

Finally, misconduct may be operationalized as behavior that leads to an officer's removal from the force (i.e., it is career-ending) (Kane, 2002; Kane & White, 2009, 2013). This kind of operationalization includes both administrative and criminal actions, but does not include actions that result in any sanction less than termination of employment. This poses a limitation of this type of operationalization, as officers may engage in behavior that does not result in dismissal but may be criminal or administratively forbidden nonetheless.

This critique is particularly salient for instances in which officers engage in behavior that has been officially deemed to be acceptable, but others outside the department would call into question. For example, James Peters of the Scottsdale (Arizona) Police Department shot seven people (killing six of them) over a 10-year period (Merrill, 2013). While all of the shootings were deemed “within policy” by the internal review board, many questioned the necessity of such force, especially after the city agreed to a settlement of \$4.25 million after the sixth fatality (Merrill, 2013). This is an example of what Fyfe (1986) refers to as the “split-second syndrome,” in which investigators analyze only the few seconds preceding the incident of force rather than taking into account the entire interaction. Walker (2008) notes that a number of factors can affect how misconduct is handled within a department, including the influence of police unions and collective bargaining agreements on disciplinary measures.

### **Measurement of Misconduct**

There are several ways in which researchers have measured police officer misconduct. One of the most common methods of measuring misconduct is some type of formal, organizational sanction, such as instigation of an internal affairs investigation or formal departmental discipline (e.g., notation in an officer’s personnel file or being placed on paid or unpaid administrative leave) (e.g., Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). In these instances, researchers rely on official records of administrative action against an officer. This is perhaps the broadest measurement of misconduct, as it includes not only violations of administrative regulations but also criminal activity since most departments require administrative sanctions when an officer is arrested (Kane & White, 2009).

The most egregious of formal sanctions is the termination of employment (Kane, 2002; Kane & White, 2009, 2013). With this method, an incident is considered misconduct only if an officer was “involuntarily separated,” or fired, from the

department as a result of their behavior. This may include the accumulation of small, administrative infractions (e.g., habitually falling asleep on the job or losing one's badge) or one larger, more serious offense (e.g., failing a drug test or being arrested). Measuring misconduct in this way also relies on official records, as termination of employment is noted in personnel and other organizational records (Kane & White, 2009).

Official records are common data sources in police misconduct research because they contain information on a host of factors that other forms of data cannot include, such as performance evaluations, background investigation reports, and written reprimands in personnel files. Internal records, however, present concerns of selection bias, as the data only include offenses on which the department took official action (Manning, 2009). The broad discretion of supervisors in pursuing official sanctions of misconduct means that some offenses, such as those in which a verbal warning was issued but no official notation was made in the personnel file or to which a superior turned a blind eye, are not included in official records (Hickman, Piquero, & Greene, 2000; Manning, 2009). Official records of police departments, specifically, are also extremely disorganized and vigorously protected from external dissemination, usually leading to limited research findings because of the conflicting interests of researchers and department officials and/or politicians (Kane, 2007).

The final method for measuring misconduct is citizen complaints, in which the presence of complaints (or more complaints) is used as an indicator of misconduct (Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Lersch, 1998; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2000; Terrill & McCluskey, 2002; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). While complaints are still official records, as they are filed with the police department, they are considered public records and are thus easier to obtain. Additionally, the citizen, rather than the organization, files the report, which means the determination of what is "misconduct" comes from an external source,



thus at least partially addressing the concern of organizational mishandling of wrongdoing.

One criticism of this form of measurement is that citizen complaints are a proxy measure for misconduct; thus they do not include acts of misconduct that are unobserved by the public or otherwise may not result in a citizen complaint (Kane & White, 2013). Examples of this would be instances of perjury, violations of administrative regulations, or off-duty crimes in which others are unaware of the officer's affiliation with the police department. Additionally, many citizens do not report poor officer behavior for reasons ranging from general distrust of the police or low expectations to sheer unwillingness to spend the time filing a report. Citizen complaints, then, are contingent upon citizens taking the initiative to file a complaint, which introduces considerable sample selection bias (Archbold & Maguire, 2002; Kappeler, Sapp, & Carter, 1992; Walker & Bumphus, 1992) and can be highly correlated with such unrelated facets as police-community relations and the complexity of a complaint system (Lersch, 1998; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2000). Finally, citizen complaints are made from the perspective of the citizen, and citizens and police officers vary widely in their definitions of what is and is not considered misconduct (officers define misconduct more narrowly than do members of the general public) (Lersch, 1998; Lersch and Mieczkowski, 2000). Thus, unless only sustained complaints are used, citizen complaints may document instances in which a citizen was unhappy with the outcome or with officer behavior when in fact the officer had not done anything wrong.

Information on police misconduct comes from a variety of data sources. To overcome some of the issues associated with official data, which are detailed above, some researchers have turned to vignettes or scenarios, asking officers what they would do in specific situations of misconduct (see, e.g., Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Goodman, 1998;

Hickman, Lawton, Piquero, & Greene, 2001; Klockars, Ivkovich, Harver, & Haberfeld, 1997). These stories allow officers to place themselves in situations and explain what they would do in that particular scenario. One of the most useful aspects of vignettes is that it allows for the systematic variation of characteristics within the situation, providing a quasi-experiment (Alexander & Becker, 1978). Additionally, research has shown that individuals' intentions to offend are strongly correlated with actual offending behavior (Green, 1989; Kim & Hunter, 1993; Pogarsky, 2004). It is possible, however, that correlations between intentions and actual offending may be different with police officers. For example, officers' intentions on a vignette survey may be truthful at the time, but their later behavior may deviate depending on the stimuli presented in the actual situation. Criminological studies addressing the relationship between intentions and actual behavior (e.g., Green, 1989; Pogarsky, 2004) have focused on minor violations, such as driving under the influence of alcohol, and were conducted on members of the general public. It is possible that when the deviant behavior is more serious (e.g., bribery or assault), and when confounding factors such as the pressure exerted through the police subculture and potential external stressors are included, officer behavior at Time B may not be consistent with intentions at Time A.

Similarly, police officers are extremely suspicious of outsiders and thus may not give entirely truthful answers regarding misconduct because of a view that the researcher "doesn't get it" or for fear of being misinterpreted (Mastrofski & Parks, 1990). It has also been argued that vignettes are unable to accurately reflect real-world scenarios and the numerous inputs processed during situational decision-making (see Simpson & Piquero, 2002). This is especially salient to the discussion of police misconduct, as the decision-making process for police officers includes more than simply whether or not to commit a particular act, but encompasses other strong stimuli such as an extremely persuasive

police subculture, department policies, and factors unique to every policing situation (e.g., presence of back-up, number of suspects, and whether suspects have or are believed to have weapons). Mastrofski and Parks (1990) note that officers use perceptual shorthand to make rapid decisions, but they still utilize a decision making process (see also Gilsinan, 1989).

The use of media accounts has been especially useful in studying use of force, especially pertaining to conducted electrical devices (CEDs, e.g., the TASER) (see, e.g., Ready, White, & Fisher, 2008). Since most citizens have very little contact with police, their perceptions about police are typically shaped by the media (print, Internet, and visual) (Gaines et al., 2001); unfortunately, previous research has found that media portrayals of the police (especially television and movies) is often unrealistic and inaccurate, thus distorting public opinion (Hallett, 2007; Manning, 1977, 1997). The use of media accounts has not yet been incorporated into broader research on police misconduct, most likely because news media only includes the most egregious forms of police misconduct (e.g., organized corruption scandals such as Buddy Boys or Serpico, excessive use of force incidents such as the 1992 beating of Rodney King, and citizen/officer deaths or serious injury such as an officer-involved shooting or citizen death as a result of a TASER deployment). Media accounts, however, are important in as much as they color the public perception of misconduct and lead citizens to believe that it is more prevalent or serious than it actually is.

Early research on police behavior was qualitative, usually observational or ethnographic (e.g., Bittner, 1967; Manning, 1977; Muir, 1977; Skolnick, 1966; Van Maanen, 1974). Some of the first qualitative studies were direct, systematic observations of police work conducted by Westley (1953), Skolnick (1966), and Reiss (1967, 1968), and even more were done in the 1970s and 1980s (Klein, 1983, 1984; Smith, Visher, &

Davidson, 1984; Visher, 1983; Worden, 1989; Worden & Pollitz, 1984; Westley, 1970). These observational studies addressed the concern among policing researchers that since most police work consists of talking (see, e.g., Muir, 1977), quantitative methods were insufficient for understanding what police actually *do* (Mastrofski & Parks, 1990). These early observational studies exposed police officers' cognitive processes and work styles based on in-depth interviews and field observations (see, e.g., Bittner, 1967; Manning, 1977; Muir, 1977; Rubinstein, 1973; Van Maanen, 1974; Westley, 1970). One of the criticisms of the use of observational studies, especially in the realm of police misconduct, is that of observer interference. The fact that an observer is present in a vehicle during a ride-along and at specific incidents means that police may alter their behavior (Mastrofski & Parks, 1990). Additionally, the nature of qualitative research is that it generally consists of small sample sizes, both in the number of departments (ranging from a single department to no more than a handful) and the number of individuals, due to time and resource constraints (Mastrofski & Parks, 1990).

New sources of data are becoming available as technology advances. Video footage, such as that captured on vehicle dashboard cameras, provides a glimpse at a limited form of misconduct (i.e., misconduct that occurs near the patrol car). This video footage allows researchers to immerse themselves in the incident, collecting information unavailable through other data sources. Reports and other official records only capture what the officer deems appropriate for input; the researcher, however, has different goals and priorities than the police officer, and thus may find other information more useful than what is included in an officer's report. The newest technology uses body-worn cameras, in which officers carry a small camera on their person during citizen encounters (Smart Policing Initiative, 2011). This footage still creates a "dark figure" of misconduct, as officers only turn these cameras on during citizen interactions, thus

eliminating misconduct that is committed outside of the domain of the citizen encounter (White, 2014a).

### **What Makes a “Bad Cop”?**

Research has found individual, organizational, and ecological characteristics that are either risk or protective factors regarding police officer misconduct. These factors have been examined using large samples with only a small percentage of women, so it is possible that these factors might change if gender were considered as more than a control variable (e.g., data partitioning).

#### **Risk Factors for Misconduct**

Several individual-level factors serve as risks for misconduct, including demographic characteristics, employment factors, and previous problems crime. As noted previously, most research on misconduct has used gender as a control variable; as such, being *male* has been found to increase one’s risk for committing misconduct (Greene, Piquero, Hickman, & Lawton, 2004; Grennan, 1987; Hickman, Piquero, & Greene, 2000; Kane & White, 2009; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 1996; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004; Sherman, 1975; for exception, see Kane & White, 2013, in which officer sex was found to be statistically insignificant), though later analysis by White and Kane (2013) finds that gender is only significant for officers fired between 2 and 10 years into their service and does not predict time-to-failure overall. Kane and White (2009) also find that having *children* was a risk factor for committing misconduct.

Being a member of a *racial or ethnic minority* has been associated with mixed results in the literature. Most research has found that minorities (black or Hispanic) are more likely to commit misconduct than their white counterparts (Greene et al., 2004; Hickman, Piquero, & Piquero, 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 1996; Rojek & Decker, 2009); Chappell & Piquero (2004), however, found no effect and

Kane and White (2009) note that this effect may be confounded with other issues such as differential assignment or rule enforcement. In a time-to-failure analysis of NYPD officers separated for cause between 1975 and 1996, White and Kane (2013) found that black and Hispanic officers are also more likely to be fired quickly than white officers, but that the ethnicities vary in their specific time periods of statistical significance: Being black is a risk factor for officers separated at any point in their careers, whereas being Hispanic is a statistically significant risk factor only for officers fired between 2 and 10 years into their careers.

Some research has found that the longer officers are with a department (longer *tenure*), the more likely they are to commit misconduct (Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Hickman et al., 2004; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004; Micucci & Gomme, 2005; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011); however, other scholars have found longer tenure to be a protective or nonsignificant influence on misconduct (see Fyfe & Kane, 2005; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 1996; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; White & Kane, 2013) or to have a nonlinear effect, with misconduct more likely in the few years immediately following the probationary period, known as the “adolescent phase” (Harris, 2009, 2014; Meredith, 1984; Stinson, Liederbach, & Freiburger, 2010). Research has also shown that employment problems both prior to and during officers’ time in the department lead to a higher likelihood of committing misconduct (Cohen and Chaiken, 1972, 1973; Fyfe & Kane, 2005; Greene et al., 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013) and a higher likelihood of being fired more quickly (White & Kane, 2013). Receiving *citizen complaints*, and receiving them earlier in one’s career, as well as internal complaints from fellow officers, also increase the likelihood of committing misconduct and being fired more quickly (Cohen and Chaiken, 1972, 1973; Greene et al., 2004; Harris, 2011; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; White & Kane, 2013). Having a *criminal history* (Cohen and Chaiken, 1972, 1973; Fyfe & Kane, 2005; Greene

et al., 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Mollen Commission, 1994) or a history of *military discipline* (Cohen and Chaiken, 1972, 1973) or *service* (Kane & White, 2009; for exception, see Kane & White, 2013, in which prior military service was found to be statistically insignificant) are also risk factors for misconduct as well as short time-to-failure (White & Kane, 2013). A *negative recommendation by the department background investigator*, while a risk factor for misconduct and a predictor of early firing, seems to be limited to only to the first two years, after which it is no longer significant (Kane & White, 2009; White & Kane, 2013; for exception, see Kane & White, 2013, in which recommendation of the background investigator was found to be statistically insignificant).

Several organizational characteristics are also risk factors for misconduct. Having a *high proportion of males* (relative to females) or *whites* (relative to any combination of racial/ethnic minorities) both correlate with higher rates of misconduct within the organization (Kane & White, 2009). Likewise, the level of *priority* of pursuing and punishing incidents of misconduct (Sherman, 1978) and informal *organizational culture* that is tolerant of street-level violence and deviance (Chevigny, 1969; Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993) affect rates of misconduct. *Organizational justice* - composed of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice - is also relevant in studies of police misconduct. Distributive justice, or the perceived fairness of outcomes within an organization, affects the quantity and quality of employees' work (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Hg, 2001). Procedural justice emphasizes that fair outcomes alone are not enough; the process by which these outcomes are achieved must also be fair (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 2006). Thus, even in the face of unfavorable outcomes, such as pay cuts or a disciplinary action, employees retain favorable views of the organization if the process was fair. Interactional justice suggests that employees have

more favorable views of the organization when supervisors are polite, honest, and respectful in their interactions with subordinates (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Taken together, organizationally just police departments generally have lower rates of misconduct and a greater willingness among officers' to report others' misconduct (Rothwell & Baldwin, 2007; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). Conversely, organizationally unjust departments may experience retaliation from officers or perceptions of internal illegitimacy, which can manifest in the form of police misconduct (French & Raven, 1959; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 2006).

There are also ecological characteristics that affect police misconduct. Ecological explanations for crime and deviance, including police misconduct, are rooted in the social disorganization tradition (Kane, 2002; Reiss, 1986). Manning (1978) explains that formal social control mechanisms, like the police, are used to control communities where informal social control is lacking. When police activities are linked with community factors, such as socioeconomic status or minority representation, over-deployment can result in decreased police legitimacy (Blalock, 1967; Jacobs & Helms, 1997; Kane, 2002). Klinger (1997) uses a variation of negotiated order theory to argue that police misconduct may be higher in neighborhoods where officers perceive residents to be deserving of their victimization due to risky and/or criminal behavior or where officers normalize high levels of crime and deviance. This explanation is supported by studies of residents in these communities who simultaneously report excessive police presence but a lack of police response to their crime problems (Walker, 1992). It is unsurprising, then, that *disadvantaged communities* have higher proportions of police misconduct (Fagan & Davies, 2000; Kane, 2002; Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993) and more incidents of force (Terrill & Reisig, 2003). Likewise, those with higher *percentages of minority residents* and greater *population mobility* also have higher rates of police misconduct (Kane, 2002).



These risk factors are largely consistent with extant research on employee deviance in general. The literature reports that men are significantly more likely to commit employee deviance, such as theft, than are women, in some cases by as much as a factor of two (Harris & Benson, 1998; Hollinger & Clark, 1983; Mangione & Quinn, 1975; Ruggiero, Greenberger, & Steinberg, 1982). Research on white-collar crime, however, finds that men and women are rather similar in the propensity to commit employee crime, though men's offenses tend to be more serious than do women's (see, e.g., Daly, 1989; Holtfreter, 2005, 2008, 2013). Likewise, age is correlated with workplace misconduct, with misconduct being less likely as workers get older (Hollinger, 1986; Mangione & Quinn, 1975; Robin, 1969). Since age and job tenure affect job satisfaction and other indicators of the quality of employment, it is unsurprising that new, young workers are more likely to engage in workplace deviance (Hollinger, 1986; Hollinger and Clark, 1983; Mangione & Quinn, 1975; Quinn & Staines, 1979). Similarly, it is predictable that new, young police officers, anxious to impress and be accepted by their peers and superiors, would engage in workplace deviance as well.

### **Protective Factors for Misconduct**

Several individual-level characteristics serve to decrease the likelihood of committing misconduct. Consistent with life-course literature and sociological studies, *marriage* leads to a lower likelihood of committing misconduct (Kane & White, 2009; for exception, see Chappell & Piquero, 2004). Being married with children (what is termed the *conventional family* dimension) protects against early employment termination for cause (White & Kane, 2013). Likewise, officers who *got married* during their NYPD tenure were less likely to be fired from the NYPD early in their careers (White & Kane, 2013). While divorce is not a protective factor, the combination of divorce and active enrollment in school creates a *second start* that seems to protect

against misconduct (Kane & White, 2009). These findings regarding family influences are consistent with Sampson and Laub's (1993; see also Laub & Sampson, 2003) findings using a life-course theoretical framework.

Having *education* higher than a high school diploma (including some college not culminating in a degree) prior to appointment has been found to decrease the likelihood of officer misconduct (Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Kappeler et al., 1992; for exception, see Truxillo, Bennett, & Collins, 1998). Interestingly, White and Kane (2013) find that only a college degree is protective in a time-to-failure analysis of NYPD officers, indicating that those with college degrees are less likely to be fired early.

In terms of *age*, being older both decreases an officer's likelihood of committing misconduct (Greene et al., 2004; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011) and protects against early firing (White & Kane, 2013). Finally, obtaining higher *rank* decreases officers' likelihood for committing misconduct (Hickman et al., 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013) and protects against being fired quickly for misconduct (White & Kane, 2013). Having *no citizen complaints* is protective only for officers fired between 2 and 10 years of service (White & Kane, 2013).

These risk and protective factors help explain why some officers commit police misconduct and others do not. Equally as important, however, is an understanding of the historical and organizational contexts in which the officers operate. Characteristics of the city and department in which officers work, and the citizens officers serve and protect, are vital to understanding how and why some officers find themselves in situations conducive to misconduct. For this research, that means an understanding of New York City and its police department will place the findings of this study in perspective.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Though research on police work is largely atheoretical in nature (Kane & White, 2009), scholars have used a variety of theories to explain police officer misconduct. Theoretical interpretations have addressed police opportunity for misconduct (Alpert & Dunham, 1996; Kappeler et al., 1998), police personality typifications such as the authoritarian personality (Neiderhoffer, 1967), individual deviance explanations such as impulsivity (Pogarsky & Piquero, 2003), sociological effects of neighborhoods (Kane, 2002; Klinger, 1997), and reduced deterrence (Pogarsky & Piquero, 2003). In terms of mainstream criminological theories, however, the two most commonly used theories are strain theory (particularly Agnew's general strain theory [GST]) and social learning theory.

### **Misconduct as a Result of Rotten Apples, Pockets, and Barrels**

Early explanations of police misconduct centered on corruption. While other forms of police misconduct were present, corruption seemed to be the root of the problem. Sherman (1974) argues that corrupt acts serve personal rather than organizational purposes. He notes that corruption within an organization is different than organizational corruption, creating a typology consisting of three categories of corruption within organizations: Rotten apples or pockets, pervasive disorganized corruption, and systematic organized corruption.

Most police departments believe that they fall into Sherman's (1974) first type of corruption, which is rotten apples or pockets; he argues, however, that this is not generally the case. Administrators assert that most police are honest, but there are a few lone "rotten apples," usually in the uniformed patrol unit (e.g., officers who take bribes for not issuing minor traffic tickets). "Rotten pockets," on the other hand, are usually found in plainclothes units such as detective and vice squads. These are small groups of

officers who have normalized corruption, typically through the use of informants (Sherman, 1974). The Buddy Boys and “Dirty Thirty” scandals are examples of “rotten pockets” corruption (and other misconduct, such as police crime) because it was not pervasive throughout the department, but was limited to only one precinct (the 77<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, respectively) (McAlary, 1987).

Sherman’s (1974) second type of police corruption is pervasive, unorganized corruption. Departments in this category have widespread (i.e., a majority of personnel), but not systematic (i.e., disorganized), corruption. He describes these departments as ones in which rookie officers are told by others in the department how to “supplement income,” and then encouraged to do so, keeping whatever they get. In this way, it is an “entrepreneurial graft” (Sherman, 1974, p. 11). Sherman (1974) notes that this kind of corruption is most common in developing countries and the Mediterranean, where it is present throughout the political system.

The final type of corruption in Sherman’s (1974) typology is pervasive, organized corruption, or that which is “organized in a hierarchical, authoritarian fashion” (p. 10). In many cases, this kind of corruption extends beyond the police department to include local politicians and criminal justice officials (e.g., local magistrates), and usually involves organized crime syndicates. He describes this kind of corruption as that in which rookie officers are told where to pick up bribes (e.g., brothels and casinos) and how much to distribute to each person involved in the scheme. This form of corruption was rampant in the NYPD during the mid- to late-1960s until Frank Serpico and others brought it to the attention of the public through the media (Levitt, 2009).

Sherman (1974) describes six factors that make corruption possible, or at least easier to commit. The first is the discretion involved in police work. Officers with more discretion (e.g., patrol units or specialized units removed from supervision) are more

likely to engage in corruption. Second, and related, low managerial visibility contributes to corruption. Officers (or groups) who are removed from supervisory oversight – or are often out of sight of supervisors, as are specialized units or patrol officers – are able to engage in corrupt behavior without fear of being discovered. Third, officers tend to have low public visibility. Most officers engage in corrupt behavior away from the eyes of the public. This can be both literal – officers accept bribes away from public view – and figurative – officers accept bribes from drug dealers or operators of vice establishments (casinos, brothels), most of whom are considered the “underbelly” of society.

Fourth, there is often peer group secrecy. When individuals, small groups, or even whole departments (e.g., the blue wall of silence) have the guarantee of peer silence, corruption is able to flourish, as was evident in both the Serpico and Buddy Boys scandals at the NYPD. Fifth, there typically is managerial secrecy. In instances where supervisors are made aware of the corrupt activities, and the supervisors do not take appropriate action to thwart the behavior, corruption will thrive. For example, Frank Serpico took his concerns to his superiors, and their superiors, but nothing was done (in fact, he was told that “such accusations could result in his being found in the East River”) (Sherman, 1978, p. xxvii). Finally, status problems lead to a proliferation of corruption. Police officers have long considered themselves underpaid (and much of society would likely agree), both monetarily and in terms of social status, especially in relation to their power and authority. The disconnect between pay and prestige can lead to a social acceptance within the policing profession that profit-motivated corruption is simply supplemental “reimbursement” for services rendered (Sherman, 1974).

In discussing corruption, especially in police departments, Sherman (1978) notes that “it is important to distinguish deviance committed *by* organizations from deviance committed *in* organizations” (p. 4; see also Sherman, 1974). Deviance committed by

organizations is collective in nature and aids in attaining organizational goals.

Alternatively, deviance committed in an organization does not further organizational goals – or is harmful to them – and can be either individual or collective (Sherman, 1978). This is an important distinction because nearly all organizations (including police departments) have deviance in them, but it is the organizations that are themselves deviant that cause scandal and usually lead to massive reform efforts. In the police context, deviant departments have such systematic corruption that “criminals can purchase immunity from arrest,” which is clearly a violation of any definition of the role of the police (Sherman, 1978, p. 4).

A clear example of this would be the Serpico-era NYPD with widespread corruption that routinely used *pads*, or organized payments by criminals to police officials in exchange for continued protection from arrest. This form of corruption was so entrenched within the department that it has been estimated that nearly one-third of the department was involved (Levitt, 2009), requiring the police commissioner’s resignation, followed by the implementation of the Knapp Commission and the appointment of reformist police commissioner Patrick Murphy, to begin to change the culture of corruption within the NYPD (Sherman, 1978). This example is a good reminder, however, that individual officers vary significantly in the degree to which they take advantage of opportunities for corruption, from completely honest (only one-third of the department was involved in the organized corruption), to the “passive ‘grass-eaters’” taking advantage of opportunities as they were presented, to the “extortionist ‘meat-eaters’” aggressively seeking out opportunities (Sherman, 1978, p. 41).

Organizations become deviant either by adopting deviant organizational goals or by legitimizing the use of deviant means to achieve non-deviant organizational goals (Sherman, 1978). Regarding the first method, police agencies routinely face both internal

and external opposition regarding the adoption of goals. The legal system, advocacy groups, politicians, police administrators, and factions within departments (e.g., the patrol officers' union versus the supervisors' union) all have differing perspectives regarding the role of the police and the goals in implementing that role (Sherman, 1978). The second method can be seen in the film *Dirty Harry*, what has been termed "noble-cause corruption." Klockars (1980) explains the Dirty Harry problem as "when and to what extent [...] the morally good end warrant[s] or justif[ies] an ethically, politically, or legally dangerous means to its achievement" (p. 35). This form of corruption is indicative of attitudes that "imply that corruption is consistent with the formal police goal of fighting crime, and that a corrupt police department is merely accommodating the tastes of the community it serves" (Sherman, 1978, p. 33; see also Cooper, 2012; Klockars, 1980). Caldero and Crank (2004) argue that officers are ethically predisposed to noble-cause corruption and view their work through this pre-existing lens. More recent findings, however, show that officers contextualize their commitment to noble-cause corruption based on their circumstances and the "dirty" behaviors being utilized (Crank, Flaherty, & Giacomazzi, 2007).

### **Misconduct as a Result of Strain**

Agnew's (1985, 1992, 2006) revised general strain theory stems from traditional anomie theory (Merton, 1938), which states that crime or deviance results when a person is unable to achieve monetary success through legitimate means, also referred to as the goals/means conflict. Agnew (1985) extended anomie to include any goal one might have (including those unrelated to monetary success) and multiple legitimate means of attaining those goals. Similar to Merton, Agnew argues that delinquency, or "innovation," is one of many responses to this conflict. Unlike Merton, however, Agnew (1992, 2006) extends and broadens the goals/means conflict to include three specific

types of stress, or strain: 1) The inability to achieve a positively valued goal, 2) the presence of noxious stimuli, and 3) the removal of positive stimuli. These three strains then induce a series of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anger, and anxiety) that are corrected through either legitimate or illegitimate coping mechanisms. Deviance – in this case, police officer misconduct – is one such illegitimate coping mechanism (Agnew, 1992; Agnew, Brezina, Wright, & Cullen, 2002).

Strain theory is commonly applied to policing because of the inherently stressful nature of police work due to its dangerousness and unpredictability (Manning, 1995; Paoline, 2004; Skolnick, 1966; Terrill, Paoline, & Manning, 2003; Westley, 1970). Research has demonstrated that officers with high levels of stress are more likely to display anger or engage in negative coping mechanisms such as gambling or excessive drinking (Gershon, 2000; Roberts & Levenson, 2001). Additional negative effects of stress, which are compounded in police officers, include poor health, drug abuse, and even suicide (Anshel, 2000). Haarr and Morash (1999) address the issue of occupational stress when they note that it is “a matter of both theoretical and practical concern because of the possible physical, emotional, and/or job performance consequences for an individual” (p. 306; see also Morash & Haarr, 1995). Negative effects of occupational stress include job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, burnout, and other performance problems (Brown, Cooper, & Kirkcaldy, 1996; Crank, Regoli, & Culbertson, 1995; Wright & Saylor, 1991), all of which may contribute to misconduct.

### **Misconduct as a Result of Socialization**

Social learning theory as posited by Akers (1998) is an extension of Sutherland’s (1940) differential association theory of crime. Akers (1998) theorized that favorable attitudes towards deviance are learned through social interactions, and these attitudes are strengthened through four mechanisms: Differential association, differential



reinforcement, definitions, and modeling. Differential association, or the influence of those with whom one interacts, is presumed to be the strongest of the four mechanisms. In policing, differential association is seen in the police subculture, as it is the primary method by which officers learn the ways of policing (Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Sherman, 1978). Early work on the police subculture originated in studies of routine police work that discovered a series of occupational norms and values steeped in the rigid hierarchy of police organizations (Cain, 1973; Chan, 1996; Manning, 1977, 1995). Stoddard's (1968) early sociological study of police wrongdoing, or what he termed "blue-coat crime," argued that misconduct was socially prescribed through an informal code rather than individual deviation from the law.

The police subculture is based on solidarity, secrecy, and a distrust of the public (Bittner, 1974; Stoddard, 1968; Van Maanen, 1980; Westley, 1970). This solidarity and secrecy is seen in the commonly referenced "blue wall of silence," wherein it is informally prohibited that officers "rat out" one another. This code of silence is present in nearly every police department, both domestically and abroad (Knapp Commission, 1972; Mollen Commission, 1994; Rothwell & Baldwin, 2007a/b; Skolnick, 2002, 2005). Research has demonstrated that strict adherence to the code results in a higher likelihood of officers using excessive force, engaging in corruption, or committing perjury (Knapp Commission, 1972; Micuccui & Gomme, 2005; Mollen Commission, 1994; Skolnick, 2005). There is some evidence, however, that this wall of silence can be breached in the face of external investigation (Punch, 1985).

Distrust of the public is articulated clearly in Van Maanen's (1978) discussion of police views of the public, in which people are either classified as assholes, suspicious persons, or know-nothings – none of whom are to be trusted. This subculture, combined with long and irregular hours and a social orientation that places officers at odds with

nearly every citizen they encounter, creates an intense “us vs. them” mentality, also referred to as a “siege mentality” (Alpert & Dunham, 1996; Bittner, 1974; Kappeler et al., 1998; Rubinstein, 1973; Skolnick & Fyfe, 1996; Van Maanen, 1978; Westley, 1970). In fact, an NYPD Internal Affairs Division captain told the Knapp Commission, “cops viewed themselves as surrounded by hostile forces that wanted to destroy the department” (Levitt, 2009, p. 9).

The subculture has also been described in terms of normative orders, drawing on similar constructs such as the norms of safety, adventure/machismo, and bureaucratic control (Herbert, 1998; see also Kappeler et al., 1998; Reiner, 1992; Skolnick, 1966). The social and occupational role of a police officer immediately confers authority and status; this formal group membership in the police profession brings with it intense solidarity, loyalty, and trustworthiness (Barton, 2003; Bittner, 1974; Brown & Sargent, 1995). This camaraderie is the vehicle through which the shared norms, values and beliefs of the police subculture teach, reinforce, and perpetuate deviance because it allows officers to justify and rationalize misconduct in order to be viewed as “good” by their peers (Alpert & Dunham, 1996; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). As officers’ social isolation increases by socializing with one another both on- and off-duty (and not socializing with non-police friends and family members), they retreat further into the subculture for moral support (Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Kappeler et al., 1998).

Kappeler and colleagues (1998) use an anthropological description of the subculture to explain police misconduct. This explanation emphasizes the interaction of socialization and culture. In particular, they argue that police departments engrain officers with an “us vs. them” mentality, pitting officers against the public, creating a confrontational culture. This begins in the selection process, in which officer recruits are chosen based on how well they will fit into the established subculture, and continuing

through the academy and field training, where the subculture is further established. Because the culture and socialization process is top-down, a subculture that both perpetuates and protects misconduct is bred, trickling down from top-brass to the rank-and-file (Kappeler et al., 1998; see also Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993).

### **Misconduct as a Result of Organizational Context**

Although many individual characteristics are correlated with police misconduct, it is ultimately the police agency that is often blamed for instances of misconduct (Ivkovic, 2005a). This is because social context is intrinsically intertwined with individual officer behavior (Smith, 1986). Other scholars, however, argue that studying the organizational contexts and correlates unfairly blames police supervisors and organizations for the misconduct of individual officers (Manning, 2009).

Research in organizational theory has found that when employees view their organizations as just and fair, they are less likely to commit workplace deviance (Greenberg, 1993). Likewise, fair and just supervisors are more likely to garner support from their employees and inculcate norms and values of the organization (French & Raven, 1959; Schein, 1993). Specific to policing, supervisors and administrators who do not abide by the tenets of organizational justice are more likely to experience a legitimization of deviant behavior or decreased ability and authority to punish and deter deviance, which can lead to situations of invocation of the code of silence or reliance on noble-cause corruption (also known as the “Dirty Harry” problem, see Klockars, 1980) (Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). Police officers in an organization that is procedurally just are also likely to experience greater willingness among the rank-and-file to report misconduct (Rothwell & Baldwin, 2007).

Recently, Wolfe and Piquero (2011) found that officers in the Philadelphia Police Department were less likely to commit misconduct if they “viewed the [department] as

distributing decisions fairly, engaging in procedurally just managerial actions, and interacting in a polite and courteous manner toward subordinates” (p. 346). Though they do not discuss organizational justice, Kane and White (2009) explain that organizational context is important in a department’s handling of misconduct incidents. Two major commissions (the Knapp Commission in 1972 and the Mollen Commission in 1994) bookended the 22-year period of their study of the New York Police Department. The prolonged period of time that the department was able to remain free of scandal allowed the department more latitude in determining sanctions for misconduct, as it had greater freedom from external scrutiny (Kane & White, 2009; see also Baker, 1996; Black, 1972).

### **Theoretical Explanations Through the Lens of Gender**

While research has shown that there are a number of individual and organizational traits that correlate with police misconduct, it is likely that some characteristics alter the effects of the traits in substantively important ways. Strain theory, social learning theory, and organizational theory provide direction for understanding how the predictors of police officer misconduct differ by gender.

**Gender and strain theory.** Explanations for the “gender gap” using strain theory center on the fact that men and women are socialized differently based on gender norms, which create an oppressive social environment for women, or strain (Irwin & Adler, 2012). Most criminological theories do not consider social hierarchies, and thus do not encompass the gender stratification in which women live (Chesney-Lind, 1989). Strain theory encompasses the feminist notion of social oppression (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Katz, 2000); in fact, Agnew (2001) finds that certain strains, including prejudice and discrimination, are particularly conducive to deviance. These strains result in emotions like anger and frustration, yet women are not socialized to express these in the conventional ways (e.g., through aggression) (Brown & Chesney-Lind, 2005; Irwin &

Adler, 2012). In fact, women experience as much or more strain than men (Broidy & Agnew, 1997) and are as likely, or more likely, than men to experience anger as a result of strain (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Jennings, Piquero, Gover, & Perez, 2009; Piquero & Sealock, 2004), though anger is often one of a barrage of emotions felt by women (including guilt and shame), leading to non-criminal maladaptive coping mechanisms such as eating disorders, many of which are not studied by criminologists (Kaufman, 2009; Sharp et al., 2001, 2005).

Additionally, women's experiences are qualitatively different from those of men (Agnew & Brezina, 1997; Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Daly, 1992; Eitle, 2002; Piquero & Sealock, 2004). Specifically, men and women differ in their fairness conceptions and the value placed on different kinds of goals (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Kaufman, 2009). Where men value fair distribution, women are more concerned with fairness of procedures. Likewise, men place higher value on material goals whereas women highly value personal relationships. They also experience different types of strains, such as high levels of gender-based discrimination (Eitle, 2002), behavior restrictions (e.g., curfew) (Bottcher, 1995), sex-based criminal victimization (e.g., sexual abuse, sexual assault, and rape) (Kruttschnitt & Macmillan, 2006; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000, 2006), and interpersonal relationship problems (Turner, Wheaton, & Lloyd, 1995).

Strain theory has long been used to explain the gender gap in criminal offending (Agnew, 2006; Broidy, 2001; Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Piquero & Sealock, 2004); as such, it should also be able to explain gender differences in the predictors of police misconduct as a form of occupational deviance. Female officers experience as much or more strain than male officers, consistent with strain literature for the general population (Dowler, 2005; Haarr & Morash, 1999; Poteyeva & Sun, 2009). Alternative coping mechanisms

could also be present in policing, including adapting to one's surroundings (role acceptance) or leaving the profession (avoidance). For example, a qualitative study of the harassment coping strategies of female police officers conducted by Haarr and Morash (1999) found that women engage in escape (e.g., suffer in silence or endure harassment) more often than do men. Additionally, because women are taught not to be aggressive and to moderate their anger and stress, they are better able to outwardly manage those emotions and impulses (Brown & Chesney-Lind, 2005).

Organizationally speaking, research indicates that strains stemming from workplace problems (especially features of the work organization) are more salient than other kinds of stressors for police officers, and are particularly relevant for women and racial minorities (Haarr & Morash, 1999; Morash and Haarr 1995; Wexler and Logan 1983). Additionally, female officers often are victims of many forms of gender discrimination, which is highly conducive to deviant behavior (e.g., misconduct) (Agnew, 2001; Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Jennings et al., 2009). They may also experience informal discrimination by virtue of administrative or organizational policies in the form of maternity leave policies, promotion and performance review criteria which favor assignments or tasks disproportionately given to male officers, and training opportunities (Garcia, 2003; Martin, 1983; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007; Wexler & Logan, 1983).

Difficulty assimilating into the police subculture and a lack of acceptance by male counterparts can also lead to strain. In fact, one of the primary causes of stress for female officers is not being accepted by their fellow male officers (Belknap & Shelley, 1992; Hunt, 1990; Martin, 1983; Remington, 1983; Wexler & Logan, 1983), stemming from the belief that female officers are not fit to do the job, either by competency or physical fitness (Balkin, 1988; Charles, 1981; Remington, 1983; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007).

Much of this is due to the fact that a large number of male police officers still subscribe to gender stereotypes in which women are physically and emotionally weaker, difficult to supervise, and emotional (Belknap & Shelley, 1992). In many respects, it is a catch-22 for female officers; women who attempt to assimilate are labeled “dykes” or “butch,” whereas women who fail to do so are viewed as inept (Rabe-Hemp, 2008).

**Gender and social learning theory.** The police subculture is characterized by its masculinity (specifically, Anglo masculinity), so much so that it is part of its very identity (Haarr & Morash, 1999; Herbert, 1998; Hunt, 1990; Reiner, 1992). This is demonstrated in that the subculture “accepts violence as a means of resolving disputes, promotes competition to establish formal and informal hierarchies of authority and dominance, and supports displays of masculinity, sexism, and racism” (Haarr, 1997, p. 55; see also Felkenes & Schroedel, 1993; Hunt, 1990; Kraska & Kappeler, 1995; Rabe-Hemp, 2009). Male police officers typically self-select into their chosen profession (i.e., they choose policing because of the danger, masculinity, etc. present in the job), though the subculture is also self-perpetuating because the all-male (or nearly all-male) peer group supports the subculture’s myths and values (Franklin, 2007; see also Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997). Thus, it is incredibly difficult for women to assimilate into the subculture (Chu & Sun, 2007; Reiner, 1992) because of the social isolation and high visibility of women’s status as “token females” (Kanter, 1977) and because female officers’ attitudes and behaviors are not aligned with the hyper-masculinity of the policing culture’s values of aggression, cynicism, and authoritarianism, leading to a lack of male acceptance (Belknap & Shelley, 1992). Worden (1993) posits that male officers’ disinclination to accept females and welcome them into the subculture could actually further the rift by causing female officers to question or even reject traditional “crime-fighter” role assignments and make them more critical of their environment.

The masculinity of the police subculture is similar to the corporate business culture, and women are treated in much the same fashion in both worlds. Just as women have difficulty assimilating into the police subculture, women in business often find that they are excluded from the corporate subculture. Research on white-collar crime has found that even when women are in high-ranking positions, they are excluded from the informal networks within their organizations or industries (Daly, 1989; Gorman & Kmec, 2009; Kanter, 1977). This lack of access to informal social networks limits their opportunity to collude with others in criminal schemes (Steffensmeier et al., 2013). This explanation for gender differences in white-collar crime, also referred to as “occupational marginality” (Chapman, 1980; Daly, 1989; Messerschmidt, 1986), closely aligns with the subcultural justifications for the gender gap in police officer misconduct.

The social isolation of female officers and their place at the periphery of the police subculture could also explain their lower rates of misconduct. Women may be excluded from opportunities for organized group misconduct because of mistrust. Female police officers also may not “buy in” to the police subculture and its perpetuation of deviance, as evidenced by research demonstrating that females observe unethical behavior more often than their male counterparts (Alley, Waugh, & Ede, 1996; for exception, see Felkenes, 1991). Additionally, remaining on the edge of the subculture means that women are free to use the characteristics that make them effective police officers, such as sympathetic responses to victims, lower rates of use of force, better communication and interpersonal skills, and reliance on de-escalation tactics rather than violent aggression – thus also reducing their likelihood of committing misconduct (Alley et al., 1996; Belknap & Shelley, 1992; Bloch & Anderson, 1974; Sherman, 1973). It is possible, however, that women may have different patterns of the types of misconduct they commit, especially career-ending misconduct. For example, supervisors may



terminate female officers for minor administrative violations, over which they have extensive discretion, in order to remove female officers they view to be in violation of the informal code or a danger to the social group (Stoddard, 1968).

**Gender and organizational theory.** Little research has linked organizational theory to police misconduct from a gender perspective. There is, however, research that has highlighted the orientation of women within police departments and the organizational contexts that affect their experiences within the department. Balkin (1988) and Fielding (1994) both note that the police department is perhaps the most gendered of all social institutions because of the sheer percentage of men consistently present throughout the ranks. Fielding (1994) uses the uniformity of gendered role regulation and task assignments as further evidence of the gendered nature of police.

The police department is also a perfect example of Acker's (1992) notion of a gendered institution because its processes, practices, images, ideologies, and distribution of power are all heavily influenced by gender. For example, masculine traits are used as part of the rubric of success (e.g., competitiveness, aggression, and emotional detachment) (Garcia, 2003), the power structure and day-to-day protocols are paramilitary in nature (Kappeler et al., 1998), and police officers themselves are known as a "brotherhood" or the "boys in blue." The perception of females as tokens is reinforced, as female officers view the promotion of women as public relations stunts or an attempt to fill a quota (Gau et al., 2012). One woman's failure becomes associated with all members of her gender, creating immense pressure not only for themselves but also for future female officers (Leger, 1997).

Additionally, the femininity that is inevitably introduced into policing when women enter the profession changes what it means to "do police work" (Franklin, 2007), thus threatening the "cult of masculinity" (Waddington, 1999) of the police subculture.

The institutional response to this attempt to introduce femininity is to preserve the status quo by reducing the introduction of change, thus women are unable to engage fully in the job of policing. These organizational factors influence women's experiences in departments, and subsequently affect the predictors of misconduct along gender lines.

The position of women within departments is also salient to the discussion of police misconduct from an organizational perspective. Women make up a small percentage of police departments, but their distribution throughout the ranks is far from equitable (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001). The literature on white-collar crime emphasizes that organizational position colors criminal opportunities (Holtfreter, 2014). For example, women in police departments are more likely to be in lower ranks, similar to their positions in the private sector; thus, their organizational position within the department determines the opportunities available to them to commit misconduct much as women's occupations in business organizations (i.e., largely clerical or low-ranking management positions) affects their involvement in white-collar crime (Daly, 1989; Steffensmeier et al., 2013).

This study advances the literature on police misconduct by drawing from the mainstream criminological theories of strain and social learning, organizational theory, police theories of deviance like rotten apples and police subculture, and feminist pathways theory to provide a more holistic framework for addressing the lack of attention paid to women in policing scholarship in general, and police misconduct research in particular.

### **The Current Study**

Using a large sample (N=3,085) of male and female police officers fired from the NYPD for misconduct, this study addresses two issues that remain unanswered in the extant policing literature: 1) Do predictors of police misconduct operate in sex-specific

ways, and 2) What is the “predictor landscape” for women regarding police misconduct? First, the full sample will be used to assess the generality of predictors of misconduct. Do some predictors operate as risk factors for men but as protective factors for women, or vice versa? Are some predictors that are thought to predict misconduct, either positively or negatively, statistically insignificant for women? Second, the female-only sample (N=435) is used to determine what predictors are relevant for women. Of specific interest is whether certain combinations of predictors consistent with general strain theory (for example, change in marital status and the presence of children) affect women. Given the socialization and social stratification of women, especially in a masculine profession like policing, it is likely that some predictors of misconduct will be more salient for female officers.

## **CHAPTER THREE: DATA AND METHODS**

### **The Research Setting: The New York City Police Department**

Misconduct, especially corruption, can arguably be found in every large police department in the United States (Sherman, 1978). The New York City Police Department (NYPD), however, has a particular history of misconduct and corruption, beginning from colonial times and continuing until the twentieth century and beyond (Sherman, 1978). Specifically, public corruption scandals seem to occur in regular intervals, approximately every 20 years: the Lexow Committee (1890s), the Wickersham Commission and the Seabury investigation (both in the 1930s), the Harry Gross gambling investigation (1950s), the Knapp Commission (1970s), and the Mollen Commission (1990s) (Johnson, 2003; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; Sherman, 1978). Many of these corruption scandals were also linked with public outcry over excessive police brutality (Johnson, 2003). Indeed, continuing beyond the 1990s, the stop-question-and-frisk “scandal” in the 2000s and early 2010s could arguably be included in this cycle, as it included widespread, organized abuse of authority (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2011; *Floyd v. City of New York*, 2013). The reasons for the cyclical nature of police misconduct in the NYPD go back to its formation in the mid-nineteenth century.

### **The Early Years of the NYPD**

The NYPD was formally created in 1845 and was intended to be modeled after the recently formed London Metropolitan Police Department under the leadership of Sir Robert Peel (Lardner, 1996; Worrall, 2014). In reality, however, the NYPD looked very different from the London “bobbies” – as different as London itself was from New York City (Walker, 1976). London was largely homogeneous in terms of racial, ethnic, and religious composition. The police enforced laws that had generally broad support among the populace, they were created to be independent from the local politics by making

them civil servants rather than political appointees, and they wore distinctive uniforms (a dark blue uniform that earned them the nickname “bluebottles”) so as to be easily identified by citizens requesting assistance (Lardner, 1996; Miller, 1975).

In New York, the model reflected the American individualism and pride of local popular democracy: Police officers were appointed by local aldermen and had to be re-appointed at regular intervals to ensure loyalty to their political patrons (Lardner, 1996; Johnson, 2003; Walker, 1976). Additionally, the population of New York City was growing rapidly – it grew by more than one-third between 1845 and 1855 – and soon had a foreign-born immigrant majority. This ethnic amalgamation made enforcing laws, which were enacted by conservative, nativist legislatures in northern New York, difficult. Officers resorted to bribery and other forms of corruption in order to reconcile the nativist laws (such as Sabbath laws and gambling prohibitions) with an immigrant population who enjoyed such vice as drinking, gambling, and prostitution (Lardner, 1996; Miller, 1975). The political and ethnic tensions present in New York City made police officers walking targets, especially in neighborhoods whose politics or ethnic nationalism did not match the reigning political power of the moment; thus, officers were permitted to wear plainclothes, allowing them to better fit in and make themselves less distinctive (Lardner, 1996).

The close link between politics and policing, which would continue into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, made police brutality an ever-present concern among the citizenry and created a “self-perpetuating culture of violence” in which officers commanded respect through a nightstick or baton (Johnson, 2003, p. 15; see also Haller, 1976; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Tensions grew as police clashed with labor groups in the late nineteenth century into the 1920s, as employers often retained the “services” of the police department to break up strikes and unionizing efforts in return

for a large donation to the police officer pension fund. Elite native-born New Yorkers viewed organized labor and immigrants as the source of public disorder in the city and approved of any and all measures invoked by the police as necessary and proper (Johnson, 2003; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; Miller, 1975).

During this time, however, some in the NYPD made strides towards a more professional police department well before the professional era of policing took hold. In 1880, Thomas Byrnes was the inspector in command of the Detective Bureau (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). He transformed it from an auxiliary function of patrol to the mold for modern detective work through the institution of meticulous intelligence gathering and initiating a record-keeping system of criminal information, including photographs (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). The Detective Bureau also tracked arrests and “sentence-years,” or the number of years to which criminals were sentenced upon conviction, which was the common practice for tracking police effectiveness prior to the use of clearance rates in the Uniform Crime Report starting in the 1930s (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). It was during Byrnes’s tenure that detective work began to specialize, with units assigned to robberies, homicides, and other serious crimes.

Tamanny Hall, the infamous political machine, used police officers as graft-collectors, involving “coppers” in political corruption from the beginning (Haller, 1976; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; Worrall, 2014). Rather than merit promotions, ranks were sold, often for sums upwards of \$15,000 for a lucrative captain’s position (Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Police reformers were usually linked to anti-Tamanny Hall activists, and they finally succeeded in removing the political clout of the political machine in 1895 when the Lexow Committee released its report about NYPD corruption and brutality under the direction of Tamanny Hall. Specifically, former U.S. Senator Thomas Platt, head of the state Republican Party, targeted Tamanny Hall for not sharing

its political patronage by mounting the committee's investigation, led by chief counsel John W. Goff, which centered on police-led voting fraud (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

Following this incident, the people of New York City chose a tough Republican mayor, William Strong, and the state legislature created a bipartisan board of four commissioners, two each from the major political parties. The Republicans were Theodore Roosevelt and Col. Fred Grant (son of Ulysses S. Grant) and the Democrats were Avery Andrews and Andrew Parker, with Roosevelt as the president of the board and the most outspoken of the commissioners (Johnson, 2003; Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Under Roosevelt's direction, officers were expected to use aggressive tactics when needed; it was said that "under his leadership, police were to walk softly and courteously among respectable citizens but carry a big stick to deal with criminals and thugs" (Johnson, 2003, p. 90), thus police brutality continued for those deemed "problematic." Roosevelt also reformed the department's recruitment, expanding the geographical restrictions so that officers could reside anywhere in New York State to draw more educated men from outside the city, and standardized the armament and training of officers, requiring that every officer be issued a .32-caliber revolver with a four-inch barrel and have training in its proper use from the newly-appointed firearms instructor (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

William Gaynor was elected mayor of New York City in 1910 and was a true police reformer, concerned with police corruption and brutality (Johnson, 2003). He instituted a new use of force policy in the NYPD requiring captains or lieutenants on duty to hear citizen complaints of problematic police behavior and send a report to headquarters by the end of shift, or face dismissal. He also preferred to charge officers involved in brutal tactics, resulting in 10 officers being dismissed for brutality in the first few months of the policy. While his preferences met with disapproval from police officers and politicians

alike, he was the first New York City mayor to tackle police brutality in a committed fashion (Johnson, 2003; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Gaynor also recognized that vice and crime were out of control in the city, but his methods were misguided: Police were ordered to leave alone vice establishments that were orderly, declaring a virtual open season for gangsters and gamblers (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). This invited rampant graft throughout the ranks. Also during Gaynor's tenure, the NYPD's first black police officer, Samuel Battle, was appointed as a patrolman. But the progressiveness of this move was slow to catch on; by 1916, the NYPD had only 15 black officers, all of whom were patrolmen, whereas, in comparison, the Chicago Police Department, at half the number of total officers, had 131 black officers including one lieutenant and 10 sergeants (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). The racial homogeneity of the NYPD was a characteristic that would plague the department for nearly a century.

During World War I, the NYPD became a hotbed of military counterintelligence efforts. The department instituted "intelligence police" consisting of city cops with the military rank of sergeant and the department-title of inspector (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Several top police leaders were well-educated socialites who had impressive military credentials, further linking the military and police department and creating the beginning of the military-police complex. Social and antiwar activists, such as the International Workers of World, or Wobblies, and the National Civil Liberties Bureau, were common targets of the military-police cooperative (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). The "military-intelligence police apparatus" extended so far as to enforce draft laws, randomly searching otherwise-law abiding men for draft registration documents and arresting them on the spot if they did not have them on their person (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000, p. 186). It was during this time, also, that the department developed a working "confidential squad," or internal affairs unit (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).



During Prohibition in the 1920s, violent tactics, including “the third degree,” became commonplace in the pursuit of shutting down bootleggers and speakeasies. Inspector Thomas Byrnes created the third degree in New York in the 1890s. It consisted of a number of police interrogation practices, including “physical violence and torture, prolonged grilling, food and sleep deprivation, and psychological coercion” (Johnson, 2003, p. 122). These practices were effective in that they brought in substantial numbers of criminals under the Mullan-Gage Act of 1921 (New York’s state version of the Volstead Act, which codified execution of the Eighteenth Amendment), swelling court dockets ten-fold and resulting in a severe shortage of jurors to hear cases (Johnson, 2003). Mullen-Gage was repealed in 1923, but the NYPD continued to make liquor raids, especially under the direction of Police Commissioner Grover Whalen, whose special prohibition enforcement unit was called “Whalen’s Whackers” (Johnson, 2003; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Prohibition also created extensive opportunities for police graft (i.e., officers took payments to ensure that liquor operations were undisturbed) and organized crime (Johnson, 2003; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

In 1929, President Herbert Hoover created the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement, better known as the Wickersham Commission, as a response to concerns from the public centering on police actions surrounding prohibition and an increasing fear of crime (Johnson, 2003). The commission was headed by former federal judge George Wickersham and conducted a survey of 15 cities in the United States. Its findings were issued through 14 different reports, but Report Number 11, *Lawlessness in Law Enforcement*, was devoted to police brutality concerns, especially the third degree. It ranked the NYPD the third-most egregious third degree offender and began to treat the third degree as a civil rights issue in and of itself (Johnson, 2003).

## **Civil Rights and the NYPD**

The 1940s and 1950s were rife with police brutality targeting blacks (Johnson, 2003). Organized labor, especially the International Workers of the World, was often tied to communism, as were calls from the black community for civil rights. As such, all three groups were often equated with one another and police violence was linked to anti-radicalism (i.e., anti-Communist) reforms (Johnson, 2003). Blacks joined the ranks of the Communists because of their acknowledgement of racial tensions, though Communists approached the problem from a class-based, rather than race-based, perspective. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed several complaints with the Department of Justice during these decades on behalf of the black community, and Communist rhetoric was used by police groups to block investigation of the claims, tying the NAACP to radical Communists (Johnson, 2003). In 1959, the department created the Tactical Patrol Force (TPF), an early predecessor of the SWAT unit (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). The TPF was composed of officers specially trained in martial arts with the express purpose of crime and civil unrest suppression. Since riots in the 1950s and 1960s were largely due to racial tensions, the TPF often targeted the city's black communities, foreshadowing the aggressive tactics used by the NYPD in black communities in the 1990s and 2000s (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

In the 1950s and 1960s, while civil rights activities were raging in Southern cities, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) targeted northern cities, especially New York City with its large black populations in Harlem and Bedford-Stuyvesant (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). These demonstrations and marches usually resulted in police violence against black participants, adding fuel to the fire of racial tensions in the city. The most explosive of these occurred in 1964, after a white police officer, Thomas Gilligan, shot and killed a black teenager, James Powell, in an upper-class white neighborhood while

Powell was returning home from a summer school program at the neighborhood's school (Johnson, 2003; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). This led to six days of violence, known as the Harlem race riot, the first of the 1960s' urban ghetto uprisings. These racial tensions between police and the city's black population are unsurprising, as the department's racial make-up was never on par with the city's demographics. In 1950, the NYPD had 368 black officers, or less than 2% of the entire force, which was vastly smaller than the concentration of blacks in the city after the northern migration of blacks out of the Jim Crow south (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). It was not until 1953 that the department had its first black civil service captain; by contrast, Chicago had appointed a black captain in 1940 (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

While the racial and political events embroiling the NYPD and its constituents was often the front-page news of the day, police corruption continued during the civil rights era. William O'Dwyer was elected mayor in 1945, at the same time that Arthur Wallander took over as police commissioner (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Whereas the previous two police commissioners had kept corruption at a minimum, Wallander was much weaker and politicians and police officers alike worked around him. O'Dwyer, a detective named Jimmy Reardon, and gambler Harry Gross facilitated extensive graft within the department (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). When these activities came to the attention of District Attorney Miles MacDonald, O'Dwyer saw the writing on the wall and attempted to have the department dismiss Reardon, who ultimately resigned instead, and left to be ambassador to Mexico, leaving commissioner William O'Brien - successor to Wallander upon retirement - to answer for the corruption scandal (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). In 1950, Harry Gross was indicted for running an illegal gambling ring, worth nearly \$20 million per year, with Reardon also facing indictment (Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Reardon refused to name others implicated in the graft

scheme, but Gross ultimately implicated 200 police officers of varying ranks in grafts, 21 of whom were indicted and 57 others were named co-conspirators. Gross spent \$1 million per year on police pay-offs to avoid arrest (Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). By the end of the ordeal, 47 officers were fired over the course of three years, including Commissioner O'Brien, and another 150 officers either resigned or retired over implications of involvement (Lardner, 1996).

Though police grafts, also known as pads or payoffs, were brought to the public's attention with Gross's arrest and prosecution, the practice continued. By the 1960s, it was rampant throughout the NYPD, with both criminals and the elite paying off police officers, sometimes for something as mundane as parking violations (Lardner, 1996). The department's response to corruption was to target individual, rank-and-file officers, rather than look for patterns or any indication of organization. It was well known throughout the department, however, that gratuities and payoffs "thrived with the active or tacit support of much of the hierarchy" (Lardner, 1996, p. 56; see also Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). The department's personnel and disciplinary policies caused immense cynicism among the rank-and-file, with many officers resorting to "curbside justice" to stay out of trouble with top brass (Lardner, 1996).

### **Serpico and the Knapp Commission**

With the social tensions and departmental history of corruption as the backdrop, one of the most famous cases of corruption gripped the NYPD. Most people believe that Frank Serpico was the key figure in the NYPD corruption scandal of the 1970s, but there were in fact two people at the center of the unfolding drama: Serpico, a plainclothes detective, and Detective Sergeant David Durk (Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Serpico met Durk in 1966 at an in-service training at the police academy and they became friends, both disillusioned with the practices of the NYPD. That same year,

Serpico was invited to join a gambling “pad,” or a “group of officers in a plainclothes gambling squad who were paid off by a gambler,” but he declined to participate (Sherman, 1978, p. xxvi). Serpico, a gifted undercover operative, refused to engage in the customary corruption practices – specifically, accepting payoffs, falsifying reports, and giving false testimony (i.e., committing perjury) in prostitution cases. A consummate idealist, Serpico took the advice of his friend Durk and brought his concerns about corruption to First Deputy John Walsh. Serpico asked to be transferred from his unit, but Walsh asked him to stay and be Walsh’s eyes and ears in the unit while he conducted an investigation (Lardner, 1996).

After six months of no communication from Walsh, both Serpico and Durk began to think Walsh had never begun an investigation; Durk insisted they go higher up the ladder and they took their complaints to Jay Kriegel, chief of staff for Mayor John Lindsay. Because Serpico was still refusing to take payoffs, his fellow officers were growing suspicious of him, so Serpico asked Kriegel to go to the mayor and initiate an investigation, or transfer him out of the South Bronx precinct because he feared for his safety (Lardner, 1996). It is unclear whether Kriegel told the mayor all of Serpico’s allegations of corruption, but regardless, Serpico’s complaints fell on deaf ears (either Kriegel’s or Lindsay’s). Independent of Serpico, Durk told his friend and mentor Arnold Fraiman in the Department of Investigations – a city-level unit separate from the police department – about the allegations, but Fraiman would not move forward with an investigation after Serpico refused to wear a wire (Knapp Commission, 1972; Lardner, 1996).

These three failed attempts were echoed in Durk’s attempts to get his complaints of corruption in the Narcotics Division heard (Lardner, 1996). When it was clear that no one was taking action regarding these claims of corruption in two different areas of the

NYPD (the 7<sup>th</sup> Precinct-South Bronx and the Narcotics Division), Durk approached Serpico about going to the media with the story (Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). They told David Burnham, reporter at *The New York Times*, about their story and told him to print it if anything should happen to them. At the urging of Burnham's editor, Arthur Gelb, Serpico and Durk brought four other officers (Paul Delise and three still-unnamed officers: A captain, lieutenant, and detective) to the table to tell their stories. Gelb and Burnham wrote the story, which appeared on the front page of *The New York Times* on April 25, 1970 (Burnham, 1970; Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; Levitt, 2009).

The revelation of widespread corruption in the NYPD prompted Mayor Lindsay to create the Knapp Commission, formally called the Blue Ribbon Commission to Investigate Allegations of Police Corruption and the City's Anti-Corruption Procedures, in 1970, chaired by former Assistant District Attorney Whitman Knapp (Levitt, 2009; Sherman, 1978). The commission used Bob Leuci as an informant in the Narcotics Division during its investigation, who was later replaced by William Phelps because Leuci's complicity in the corruption was too entrenched (Lardner, 1996). The commission held its first hearings in the fall of 1971 and testimony soon "destroyed the police union's argument that police corruption was confined to a few 'rotten apples' in an otherwise healthy barrel" (Sherman, 1978, p. xxviii).

The Knapp Commission's report (1972) determined that corruption within the department was widespread; top brass were not only aware of the systemic nature of the corruption, but sometimes aided in its continuation (Levitt, 2009). It divided police officers into categories of culpability: "Grass-eaters," or those cops who engaged in minor forms of corruption as opportunities presented themselves, and "meat-eaters," or those who engaged in major forms of corruption, often aggressively pursuing

opportunities (Sherman, 1978). Levitt (2009) notes that the commission's hearings and report "would change the dynamic between the police department and the outside world" by making "police corruption part of the city's political dialogue" (p. 81). The report also recommended that the department create a special prosecutor's office for corruption cases; the NYPD became the only department in the United States to have a special anti-corruption prosecutor (Sherman, 1978).

In October 1970, Mayor Lindsay (who had been spared the humiliation of being indicted in his own commission) appointed a new police commissioner, Patrick Murphy, just as the Knapp Commission was getting underway (Lardner, 1996; Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; Sherman, 1978). Murphy's no-nonsense approach to reform led him to fire nearly all of the previous administration's top brass and replace them with new people (sometimes several ranks down on the ladder), demote hundreds of plainclothes detectives (those most culpable in the corruption scandal), and hold commanders personally responsible for corruption within their units, even if they were not involved in any way (Lardner, 1996). He also instituted several reforms aimed at reducing opportunities or need for corrupt activities or brutal tactics, such as lifting the ban on "moonlighting" (i.e., off-duty employment), evaluating officers based on how many cases went to prosecution rather than simply the number of arrests, encouraging merit-based promotion in the Detectives Bureau, and replacing the Plainclothes Division (gambling enforcement unit) with the Organized Crime Control Bureau (Dombrink, 1988; White, 2014b). In 1963, Officer Felicia Spritzer sued for the right to take promotional examinations; by 1971, Murphy had promoted 13 women - three lieutenants and 10 sergeants - and there were 327 women in the department. In 1978, Gertrude Schimmel became the first woman in the NYPD to be named deputy chief, and in 1976, Captain Victoria Renzullo was the first female precinct commander (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

Organizationally speaking, the Serpico corruption scandal and the Knapp Commission had several unintended consequences. The department decentralized authority, which created two cultures: That of the management cop at headquarters and that of the street cop (Reuss-Ianni, 1983; see also Dombrink, 1988; White, 2014b). Prior to the Knapp Commission's findings, police departments across the country, and especially the NYPD, operated under a shared ethos of the street cop culture. This interdependence created fertile ground for the secrecy that permitted the corruption and graft that became endemic (Reuss-Ianni, 1983). The Knapp Commission occurred at a time of social accountability and increased attention to the rights of minorities, thus both internal and external pressures led to the separation of the previously-shared culture. The new management cop culture valued efficiency maximization, cost-effectiveness, rationality, and accountability (Reuss-Ianni, 1983). While both cultures valued the same goals - fighting crime and ensuring a safe city - their approaches to these abstractions widely varied, which created friction and animosity between the two. The management cop valued rules and procedures, measurable outcomes such as arrests or clearance rates, and predetermined solutions to general problems; alternatively, the street cop valued on-the-job experience in identifying both people and situations that require their intervention and expects all cops to abide by the socialized code of loyalty (Reuss-Ianni, 1983).

An example of the new management cop model can be seen in the citywide management-by-objectives plan in 1977. This was a top-down reform, instituted by the mayor and requiring several layers of cooperation within the department. This required measurable objectives at each level of the department, which was perfectly in keeping with the management cop model; it was completely contrary, however, to how street cops do their jobs, and most could not see the usefulness of it (Reuss-Ianni, 1983). The



NYPD also initiated a series of proactive procedures for investigating police deviance, including a field associate program that used recent academy graduates as internal affairs investigators in undercover operations and an early warning system that identified problem officers using a series of criteria (Dombrink, 1988; Murphy & Plate, 1977; White, 2014b).

### **The 1980s and the “Buddy Boys”**

In June of 1975, New York City faced a severe financial crisis; the city laid off 50,000 people, including nearly all officers hired in the post-Knapp era (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; White, 2014b). For the police department alone, this meant a loss of 11,000 officers, or 34% of total sworn personnel, while serious crime increased 40% (White, 2014b). This was a significant staffing decision, as policing in New York City had long been considered an occupation with near-absolute job security – even during the Great Depression, the NYPD had not resorted to layoffs (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). The result of this decision was a severe shortage of police officers, such that when the financial crisis ended in 1980, the NYPD was in dire need of cops on the street. In four years (1980-1984), the NYPD hired more than 12,000 officers at a rate that far surpassed the ability of the Personnel Division to conduct background investigations (White, 2014b). Thus, many officers were hired who would otherwise not have been due to serious problems in their employment or criminal histories, leading to continued concerns of corruption and other police deviance.

It was during this time of fiscal crisis and overwhelming growth that the 75<sup>th</sup> and 77<sup>th</sup> Precincts were thrust into corruption scandals. In 1979, four officers in the 75<sup>th</sup> Precinct’s Anticrime Unit began robbing drug dealers, burglarizing apartments, and stealing money from bodies. The state initiated an investigation into the matter and recruited Dennis Caufield to wear a wire to obtain evidence of the officers’ wrongdoing.

All four officers were indicted and either pled guilty or were found guilty at trial (McAlary, 1987). Henry Winter, the brother-in-law of Dennis Caufield, was then sent to the 77<sup>th</sup> Precinct in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a predominantly black neighborhood with a serious drug problem (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

Winter became embroiled in a police graft operation with his partner, Tony Magno, and a number of other officers in the precinct. Specifically, Magno and Winter took payoffs from drug dealers, sometimes shaking them down for drugs or additional cash as well (McAlary, 1987). Throughout the precinct, officers were also doing drugs, especially with people they met on their beats. Magno and Winter were identified as corrupt cops by a drug dealer; the district attorney turned the case over to special prosecutor Charles Hynes, who recruited Magno and Winter to be informants (McAlary, 1987). They turned in hundreds of hours of tape, implicating multiple cops and continuing to engage in the corrupt activities (stealing drugs and drug dealing). After several leaks – including one by Hynes himself – officers in the 77<sup>th</sup> Precinct began to suspect Winter of being a rat because of his association with Caufield.

In October 1986, 13 officers were presented with grand jury indictments for “conduct unbecoming an officer” (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; McAlary, 1987). The same day, Commissioner Benjamin Ward announced an anticorruption plan that required 20% of the NYPD’s 27,000 officers to rotate to new precincts every year. Ward gave up the plan after the police union demanded his resignation and city cops went on “strike” for one week, refusing to issue any citations or summonses (McAlary, 1987). Magno and Winter were reassigned to Internal Affairs, and in December 1986, 25 more officers were indicted. Eventually, all 205 officers – including the honest cops – were transferred to new precincts (McAlary, 1987).

## **The Mollen Commission**

The late 1980s and early 1990s were plagued by a crime wave during which drug sales and homicides skyrocketed (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). David Dinkins, the city's first black mayor, was elected in 1989, narrowly beating Rudolph Giuliani. One of his first orders of business was to appoint Lee Patrick Brown as police commissioner. Brown was a beat cop in San Jose, California, then earned his doctorate in criminology at the University of California, Berkeley (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). He later went on to be sheriff of Multnomah County, Oregon, and chief of police in Atlanta and then Houston before landing in New York. Under his predecessor, Benjamin Ward, the NYPD had begun a community-policing program, with a team of one sergeant and 10 to 12 officers in 64 of the city's 75 precincts (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). Brown sought to build on that beginning and convert the entire department to a community-policing approach, requiring 5,000 new officers. Originally opposed to the plan, Mayor Dinkins changed his mind when faced with the peaking crack epidemic and a string of high-profile homicides in the summer of 1990. In a program called *Safe Streets*, Dinkins signed off on the 5,000 new officers and implemented new counseling, education, employment, and drug-intervention programs (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000). But in 1991, the crime problem began to subside and two days of rioting in Crown Heights, a neighborhood in which Lubovitcher Jews and blacks often clashed, caused chaos for Dinkins and Brown. Later that year, Brown resigned and Raymond Kelly was appointed commissioner (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000).

In 1992, Mayor David Dinkins appointed Judge Milton Mollen to investigate police corruption in The City of New York Commission to Investigate Allegations of Police Corruption and the Anti-Corruption Procedures of the Police Department, also known as the Mollen Commission (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; Levitt, 2009). The

commission continued its investigations for several years, often using extraordinary tactics. One such tactic – allowing known corrupt cops to continue wearing their weapons and wear a wire to trap other cops – came to a head in what is now known as the “Dirty Thirty” incident.

The Dirty Thirty scandal was rooted in professional rivalry between Manhattan District Attorney Morgenthau and the investigators of the Mollen Commission (and the U.S. District Attorney’s Office) (Levitt, 2009). Between 1992 and 1994, both Morgenthau’s office and the Mollen Commission investigators turned officers in the 30<sup>th</sup> Precinct into informants – Jorge Alvarez for Morgenthau and Joseph Walsh for the federal investigators. Several groups of officers – one of the most famous was Nannery’s Raiders, eight officers who stole money, guns, and drugs from drug dealers – engaged in drug-related offenses of varying degrees, but the informants were the worst offenders. This is unsurprising, as the investigators likely had the most evidence against the leaders of the groups, but it meant that the officers most culpable for the corruption received more lenient sentences and were sent back into the precinct to catch other cops in lesser, more trivial violations (Levitt, 2009). Ultimately, 33 officers were convicted of corruption (one-sixth of the officers in the precinct), with the informants receiving only probation while other officers received jail time of over one year (Levitt, 2009).

The Mollen Commission released its scathing report in July 1994, at which point Rudolph Giuliani was mayor and Kelly had been replaced by William Bratton as police commissioner (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; Levitt, 2009). It argued that the department fostered a “police culture that valued loyalty over integrity” (Levitt, 2009, p. 36) and that the corruption of the 1970s was fundamentally different from the corruption facing the NYPD in the 1990s:

Today's corruption is not the corruption of Knapp Commission days.  
Corruption then was largely a corruption of accommodation, of criminals

and police officers giving and taking bribes, buying and selling protection. Corruption was, in its essence, consensual. Today's corruption is characterized by brutality, theft, abuse of authority and active police criminality. (Mollen Commission, 1994)

The report went on to make two main recommendations: The establishment of an independent, external permanent corruption monitor and that the monitor should have subpoena power to investigate police corruption on its own (Levitt, 2009). Giuliani rejected both, and for the next 16 years (eight years under Giuliani and eight years under Michael Bloomberg), the NYPD was left to police itself except for the Citizen Complaint Review Board (CCRB).

At the same time the Mollen Commission was investigating the NYPD for corruption and other forms of police misconduct, Mayor Dinkins made a drastic change to the Citizen Complaint Review Board by requiring that all of the board's members be civilians (New York City Citizen Complaint Review Board [NYC CCRB], 2013). The board was created in 1953 and its members were all police officers who reported to the commissioner (Johnson, 2003). In the 1960s and 1980s, the board had some civilians, but the Patrolman's Benevolence Association (PBA) protested civilian members, arguing that it was inappropriate to give civilians the authority to evaluate the actions of police officers (NYC CCRB, 2013). The board was given the power to "receive, investigate, hear, make findings and recommend action upon complaints by members of the public against members of the police department that allege misconduct involving excessive use of force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or use of offensive language" (New York City Charter, n.d.). The board was also permitted to compel witnesses to be present at proceedings and require the department to produce documentation needed in the investigation of complaints (New York City Charter, n.d.). The New York City CCRB is the largest civilian oversight board in the country, overseeing a city agency with an

annual budget of \$10 million (NYC CCRB, 2013). Civilian oversight is argued to make the complaints process more “objective, thorough, and transparent” (Willis, 2014, p. 18).

While most police agencies in the United States with citizen oversight have some sort of oversight board, the NYPD’s civilian board is the more pure form of oversight, which is rare. Other agencies, rather than using an oversight board, have civilian oversight in the form of an ombudsman system in which an independent office has autonomous staff that conduct investigations, make disciplinary recommendations, and are easily accessed by the public (Willis, 2014).

### **The Era of Order-Maintenance Policing**

William Bratton came to New York City as the commissioner of the New York City Transit Police in the 1980s, then returned to Boston Police Department before coming back to New York City as the police commissioner of the NYPD in 1993 (Lardner & Reppetto, 2000; White, 2014b; Willis, 2014). Bratton’s hallmark initiative was to pursue broken-windows policing, a strategy born out of research in the 1970s and 1980s showing that residents’ fear of crime was not always correlated with their risk of victimization; rather, residents were concerned about urban disorder and quality of life (Taylor, 2006; Thacher, 2014; Willis, 2014). Likewise, foot patrol experiments of the time indicated that while foot patrol may not reduce crime, it does quell fears of residents and increase police-citizen relations (Kelling et al., 1978; Skogan & Roth, 2004; Willis, 2014). The most ardent advocates of order-maintenance policing were James Q. Wilson and George Kelling (1982), authors of the broken windows perspective: When neighborhoods are allowed to fall into decay and disorder, crime soon follows. Disorder can be social in nature, like rowdy teenagers, aggressive panhandlers, or loitering, or physical, such as litter, graffiti, and buildings left in disrepair (Wilson & Kelling, 1982). Neighborhood disorder cues to criminal offenders that residents of the neighborhood

have low levels of informal social control, and therefore crime is able to flourish (Kelling & Coles, 1996; Wilson & Kelling, 1982).

Bratton aggressively pursued quality-of-life offenses, such as “fare-jumping” (avoiding subway fares by jumping over the turnstiles) and “squeegee people” (people who approached stopped motorists and pedaled cleaning services), first in New York’s subway system and then on the city’s streets (Joanes, 2000; Thacher, 2014; White, 2014b; Willis, 2014). Many, including Giuliani and Bratton, attributed the resulting drop in serious crime throughout the 1990s as an indicator of the effectiveness of order-maintenance policing, though research has cast doubt on the strategy’s true effects on crime reduction (Eck & Maguire, 2000; Weisburd, Mastrofski, Willis, & Greenspan, 2005; Weisburd, McNally, Greenspan, & Willis, 2003; White, 2014b). In addition to the disorder aspect of broken windows, Bratton focused on two other policy initiatives: The removal of guns from the streets of New York City and the elimination of open-air drug markets in the city (New York City Police Department, 1994a/b; White, 2014b).

The stark contrast between Brown’s community policing initiative and Bratton’s order-maintenance policing strategy can be seen in the arrest, beating, and torturing of Abner Louima in 1997 (Manning, 2001). Louima was a black Haitian immigrant arrested outside of a nightclub, beaten, and then sodomized in a precinct bathroom using the handle of a toilet plunger, eventually hospitalized for multiple injuries, including damage to his small intestine and bladder (Kocieniewski, 1997). Justin Volpe, who received a 30-year prison sentence for the crime, reportedly told Louima, “This is Giuliani time, not Dinkins time” (Fried, 1999; Manning, 2001). In 2001, Louima received an \$8.6 million settlement from the city (*The New York Times*, 2001). This incident emphasized the difference in tactics between community policing, which was intended to bridge the gap

between minority communities and the police, and order-maintenance policing, which often targeted minority communities for heightened police activities.

Two key unintended consequences of these initiatives, however, were the increased use of Terry stops, or stop-question-frisks (SQFs), and racial disproportionality in arrests bordering on racial profiling (Golub, Johnson, & Dunlap, 2007; White, 2014b). Terry stops in particular have heightened tensions between police and minority communities as evidenced by the increase in both civil rights legal claims of abuse (75%) and citizen complaints (60%) (Greene, 1999). During the 15-month period of January 1998 to March 1999, blacks and Hispanics were three times more likely than whites to be stopped and frisked on weapons or violent crime suspicions, and the use of SQFs increased three-fold between 2003 and 2009 (Fagan, Geller, Davies, & West, 2010; Jones-Brown, Stoudt, Johnston, & Moran, 2013).

Two major lawsuits resulted from the NYPD's use of SQF and the racial discrimination that resulted from it. The first, filed in 1999 by the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), was a class-action lawsuit alleging racial profiling in the NYPD's SQF tactics. The lawsuit, *Daniels et al. v. City of New York* (2001), was settled in 2003, with the NYPD agreeing to "maintain a written anti-racial profiling policy, to audit officers' stops to insure their adherence to both department policy and the law, and to provide the results of those audits to the CCR on a quarterly basis" (White, 2014b, p. 85). Five years later, however, the CCR alleged that the NYPD engaged in "significant non-compliance" with the *Daniels* settlement, and "after new information released publicly by the City showed a remarkable increase in stop-and-frisks from 2002-2006," the CCR filed a second class-action lawsuit, *Floyd et al. v. City of New York* (2013) (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014). In 2013, the U.S. District Court for Southern New York "found the New York City Police Department (NYPD) liable for a pattern and practice of



racial profiling and unconstitutional stop-and-frisks” and ordered joint remediation (Center for Constitutional Rights, 2014; see also court ruling *Floyd et al. v. City of New York*, 2013). In January 2014, the City of New York dropped its appeal and agreed to participate in the court-ordered remediation process.

Also during the 1990s and 2000s, the NYPD incorporated Compstat, an innovative management system focused on “timely and accurate information, rapid deployment of resources, effective tactics, follow-up, and assessment (White, 2014b, p. 81). This system was the hallmark of Bratton’s tenure at the NYPD and included several reforms within the department. Drawing from organizational theory, Bratton looked to middle managers – the precinct commander position – to establish institutional change by making them responsible for the crime reduction in their precincts (White, 2014b). Twice-weekly Compstat meetings, whereby precinct commanders were to report their results to Headquarters staff, establishing institutional accountability, offset this decentralization.

The primary unintended consequence of Compstat, however, was the massive internal pressures it created among precinct commanders. Two-thirds of precinct commanders were removed from their duties in the first year of Compstat’s implementation, theoretically removing incompetent supervisors, yet the trend continued beyond the incompetent commanders as a result of the pressure to produce results (Eterno & Silverman, 2005; Thibault, Lynch, and McBride, 2011). Compstat created an environment in which precinct commanders were required to continually lower crime rates, leading some to manufacture the needed results; organizationally, commanders began to rely on aggressive tactics and official sanctions, reinforcing low morale and occupational deviance (Eterno & Silverman, 2005, 2010; Flynn, 2000; Rashbaum, 2003; White, 2014b).

One positive outcome of the Compstat model, however, was the use of crime mapping to facilitate the hot spots policing strategy (White, 2014b; Willis, 2014). Hot spots policing is a strategy based on randomized controlled-trial experiments in multiple cities in the United States. These experiments demonstrated that, when focused on small spaces such as blocks or street corners, concentrated levels of police patrol significantly reduce crime calls-for-service (Sherman & Weisburd, 1995; Braga, 2008; Ratcliffe, Taniguchi, Groff, & Wood, 2011). The NYPD used a system that tracks calls-for-service, allowing the police department to adjust deployment of services on a real-time basis and conduct follow-up and assessment (White, 2014b).

This overview of the history of the New York City Police Department provides valuable context for the time period of this study (1975-1996). The next section details the collection and coding of the data used in the study.

### **Data**

This project uses secondary data originally collected over three years, 1997-1999, as a part of a grant from the National Institute of Justice obtained by Dr. James Fyfe and his former graduate student, Robert Kane (for more information regarding data collection, see Fyfe & Kane, 2006; Kane, 2002; Kane & White, 2009, 2013). These data were collected from official administrative records at the NYPD and involved several steps. The first step was to identify officers who were separated from the department for reasons of misconduct between 1975 and 1996. The NYPD did not retain central records for separated officers at the time of the study, so the researchers built the list of separated officers through a manual review of personnel orders, which are disseminated several times per week and report any employee change in status (i.e., appointment, promotion, transfer, change in designation, resignation, retirement, vesting, dismissal, termination, or death) of sworn and non-sworn NYPD personnel (Kane & White, 2009).

The first group of officers included in the study included those officers separated from the department by dismissal. Officers who are dismissed from the department are tenured officers who have completed probation and generally enjoy extensive due process benefits (Fyfe & Kane, 2006). Dismissals resulted from conviction for felonies (and some misdemeanors) and are typically handled simply through written notification of “termination by discretion” from the Police Commissioner. Some dismissals required that the department formally file charges against the officer resulting in a military-like trial prosecuted by the Department Advocate (or lawyer from the Advocate’s office) and presided over by the Deputy Commissioner for Trials (Fyfe & Kane, 2006). Both types of dismissals were reported in personnel orders, so dismissed officers were found during the overview of these orders. These orders also indicated terminations of probationary officers, but these officers’ files had to be reviewed to ensure that only those who were terminated for misconduct were included in the study (Fyfe & Kane, 2006).

The second group of officers included in the study was more difficult to find: Officers who resigned or retired rather than face formal charges (or who resigned as part of negotiations in turning state’s evidence against other officers) (Fyfe & Kane, 2006). The researchers inquired with internal affairs and Trial Room personnel and upon their recommendations of such cases, carefully reviewed the files of officers whose resignations indicated that they had resigned or retired for less-than-honorable reasons. Specifically, the researchers looked for resignations without the Police Commissioner’s permission, a key indicator that the officer had been in trouble upon resignation (Fyfe & Kane, 2006). They also looked for single resignations on any given personnel order, as they typically came in batches as groups of younger officers transitioned to other government jobs such as the fire department (Fyfe & Kane, 2006).

Through this process, researchers created a list of 1,542 officers who had been involuntarily separated from the NYPD between 1975 and 1996 (who were classified as “bad cops”). Each officer in the list was then matched (random selection) with an officer from his or her police academy class who was not involuntarily separated for misconduct as of 1996. The matched officers created a comparison group of 1,543 officers, for a total dataset of 3,085 officers. Of this, 435 officers are female, fairly equally divided between bad cops (N=232) and comparison cops (N=203)<sup>1</sup>.

To collect information that may predict misconduct, researchers also accessed personnel files from the Personnel Records Unit. The personnel file, known as the PA-15, including an extensive application form completed by candidates for police officer positions that is used as the starting point for pre-appointment background investigations. Additional information was obtained from files that contained recruit training performance appraisals; annual performance evaluations; disciplinary reports; changes in marital status or education; task assignments; sick leave and injuries; and other departmental points of note, such as letters of commendation or recognition, serious vehicle accidents, and line-of-duty injuries (Kane & White, 2009). Lastly, researchers obtained access to and coded data from the Central Personnel Index, Management Information Systems Division, Internal Affairs Bureau, and the Department Advocate (the prosecutor in serious internal disciplinary actions) (Kane & White, 2009).

### **Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable used in this study is a dichotomous variable representing whether the officer committed career-ending *misconduct*, where 1 signals that the officer

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<sup>1</sup> Officers were matched on academy class only, not sex. As a result, there was initially concern that female study officers and comparison officers may not compare in terms of time of employment due to hiring practices within the NYPD during the study time. Subsequent diagnostics determined that the female officers were relatively comparable across the two groups.

committed career-ending misconduct and 0 represents otherwise. In other words, the variable represents whether the officer belongs in the “bad cops” group or the comparison group. There are 1,542 “bad cops” and 1,543 comparison officers in the sample. There are 232 female “bad cops” and 203 female comparison officers.

### **Independent Variables**

The primary independent variable of interest is *sex*. A dichotomous variable *female* (1=female) was used in the full sample models to assess the main effect of sex, consistent with previous literature that uses sex as a control variable which predicts direct effects only. The variable was coded 1 for female as opposed to 0 for male because the interest in this study is the differential effect of predictors for women. The sex variable was not needed in the second portion of the analysis because split-sample analysis was used, which splits the sample by sex into a male portion and female portion. The same analyses were then conducted separately on each portion of the sample and the coefficients were compared using z-scores. This will be explained in more detail in the Analytical Strategy portion of this chapter.

In addition to *sex*, five groups of individual characteristics are used as independent predictors of misconduct. Traditionally these variables are used as control variables when testing other relationships with misconduct, such as the relationship between sex and misconduct when sex is used as a dichotomous predictor. This study aims to determine if each of these control variables have different effects for men and women. In this way, these variables are each treated as a predictor, or independent variable, in their own right. In the first set of models, these variables are interacted with sex to determine if their effects are moderated by sex; in the second set of analyses, they are each used to predict misconduct for the female subsample. These variables were chosen based on previous research that has found each of them to be significant

predictors of police misconduct (see Chapter 2, “What Makes a Bad Cop?” for additional literature supporting each predictor).

Individual characteristics can be broken into five categories. The first is *race/ethnicity* (white = 1 [reference], black = 2, Hispanic = 3). This coding is consistent with prior research using this dataset (see, e.g., Kane & White, 2009, 2013; White & Kane, 2013). Previous literature demonstrates that being nonwhite contributes to a higher likelihood of committing misconduct (Greene et al., 2004; Hickman, Piquero, & Piquero, 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Rojek & Decker, 2009). It is possible, however, that the predictive effect of these characteristics may be different for men and women. For example, being a racial or ethnic minority and being female may have a multiplicative effect, such that both minority statuses within policing create a strain on officers because they have more difficulty assimilating into the police subculture due to their double-token status (see Kanter, 1977). Additionally, research has demonstrated that workplace stressors can be especially salient for women and racial/ethnic minorities (Haarr & Morash, 1999; Morash and Haarr 1995; Wexler & Logan 1983), further emphasizing the importance of these demographic factors.

Second, officers’ family life circumstances are captured: *Marital status* (single/never married = 1 [reference], married/cohabitating = 2, divorced/widowed/separated = 3), *change in marital status* while in the department (no change = 1 [reference], got married = 2, got divorced/separated/ widowed = 3), and whether the officer had *children* when starting with the department (no children = 0, 1 or more children = 1). This coding is consistent with prior research using this dataset (see, e.g., Kane & White, 2009, 2013; White & Kane, 2013).

These characteristics can create strains for officers that may incentivize police misconduct. For example, having children or getting divorced may create a financial

hardship on officers, such that they feel that misconduct (especially profit-motivated misconduct) may be their only option. Family stresses for criminal activity are well documented in white-collar crime literature (see, e.g., Klenowski, Copes, & Mullins, 2011; Willott, Griffin, & Torrance, 2001), so it is logical for that motivation to cross over into other instances of workplace deviance, such as police misconduct. Some white-collar crime literature (see Zietz, 1981) has found that the family motivation is more common among women than men, thus these factors may be especially salient for female police officers.

It is also likely that the same family characteristic may contribute to different responses by men and women. Strain literature has shown that women and men respond to strain in qualitatively different ways (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Jennings, Piquero, Gover, & Perez, 2009; Piquero & Sealock, 2004), with women much less likely to respond to strains through criminal coping mechanisms. This is also true for female officers relative to male officers (Dowler, 2005; Haarr & Morash, 1999; Poteyeva & Sun, 2009). Likewise, the presence of what might be considered a “negative” strain could in fact be a positive event, or vice versa. For example, getting a divorce may be a positive change if the officer is removing him or herself from a problematic partner. While life-course literature shows divorce to be positively related with criminal behavior (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 1993), these studies are largely based on male delinquency and may be substantially different for women.

Third, several variables detail officers’ employment history. These variables came primarily from background investigation reports and include: Whether the recruit had ever been *fired from previous jobs* (never fired = 0), the presence of *negative comments from previous employers* (no negative comments = 0), whether the *background investigator recommended hire* (recommended hire = 0), whether an officer had any

*below standard performance evaluations* (no below standard evaluations = 0), and number of periods of *unemployment* greater than 30 days (0-5 or greater periods of unemployment greater than 30 days). *Prior police experience* (no experience = 0) and *prior military experience* (no experience = 0) were also included.

Employment history has been demonstrated to provide significant risk factors for misconduct (Cohen & Chaiken, 1972, 1973; Greene et al., 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013), but is important for several theoretical reasons as well. First, police misconduct is a form of occupational deviance, so previous instances of occupational problems may signal a higher likelihood of deviance in the workplace setting of policing. Second, the inability to obtain and maintain steady employment is a demonstration of low stakes in conformity (Hirschi, 1969), so officers with these characteristics in their past may have difficulty conforming to conventional norms, especially those within the rigid and hierarchical police department.

Sex differences related to employment history may manifest themselves in officers' perceptions of their jobs. While most research finds that there is no significant sex differences in motivations for becoming an officer (see, e.g., Flavin & Bennett, 2001; Charles, 1982; Raganella & White, 2004), it is possible that men and women view their occupation differently. Huiras, Uggen, and McMorris (2000) explain that some jobs are marginal or "survival jobs," such as the fast food industry, whereas other jobs have greater opportunities for advancement and become "career jobs." It is possible that women's social isolation within the police department and lack of opportunities for advancement may compound previous employment problems to make them view police jobs as "survival jobs," thus lowering their stakes in occupational goals and potentially increasing their likelihood for misconduct.



The policing occupation and the military are very similar (e.g., hierarchical structure, high numbers of administrative regulations, and ranks), thus previous experience in either may expedite one's acceptance into the police subculture. The police subculture values many of the same things that the military subculture does, including secrecy and camaraderie (Bittner, 1974; Van Maanen, 1980; Westley, 1970). The police subculture promotes and perpetuates deviance (Knapp Commission, 1972; Micuccui & Gomme, 2005; Mollen Commission, 1994; Skolnick, 2005), so it is possible that those with previous police or military experience will more easily fall into deviance. In terms of sex, women have difficulty assimilating into the subculture (Belknap & Shelley, 1992; Chu & Sun, 2007; Reiner, 1992). This is true regardless of how they "do gender," creating a catch-22: If they retain their femininity, they are viewed as weak and incompetent, but if they attempt to take on a more masculine outlook, they are viewed as "dykes" or "butch" (Rabe-Hemp, 2008). Thus it is important to address prior military and police service from a gendered perspective to see if women's experiences are qualitatively different.

Fourth, officers' criminal history at the time of the background investigation is included using a dichotomous variable (no criminal history = 0). The criminal history variable was created using three variables illustrative of a criminal record: Arrests for violent crimes, arrests for property crimes, and convictions for misdemeanor offenses. The presence of any of the three types of criminal behavior yielded a 1 for criminal history; a lack of all three types of criminal behavior yielded a 0 for criminal history. Previous research has used a criminal history score, but when principal component analysis was conducted on the three component variables, there was not enough correlation between them to warrant using a score (violent arrests and property arrests

were correlated 0.22, violent arrests and misdemeanor convictions were correlated 0.07, and property arrests and misdemeanor convictions were correlated 0.07).

Criminal history has consistently been identified as a risk factor for misconduct (Cohen and Chaiken, 1972, 1973; Greene et al., 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Mollen Commission, 1994). Substantial research has demonstrated that women are less likely to commit street crime than men (with the exception of shoplifting and prostitution; see Smith & Paternoster, 1989; Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996; Steffensmeier, Schwartz, Zhong, & Acker, 2005), but the effects of prior offending on female police officer behavior (especially misconduct) has never been studied. So while women are less likely to offend overall, we do not know how those who do have a history of criminal behavior adapt to their role as a police officer. It is possible that criminal history makes them more likely to commit misconduct, especially if their criminal pasts give them an advantage in assimilating into the subculture, but it is just as plausible that the prospect of a stable job could increase the likelihood of desistance, as supported by life-course literature (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Sampson & Laub, 1993), and motivate women to end their criminal tendencies to support their families.

Feminist pathways research has argued that the same set of risks do not apply to men and women (Belknap, 2001; Chesney-Lind, 1989; Daly & Chesney-Lind, 1988; Simpson, 1989). For example, abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual) and substance abuse are common risk factors for criminal behavior among women (Daly, 1992; Hubbard & Pratt, 2002; Owen, 1998; Owen & Bloom, 1995). Poverty affects women's likelihood of recidivism, and recidivism risk varies by one's pathway to criminal activity (Holtfreter, Reisig, & Morash, 2004; Reisig, Holtfreter, & Morash, 2006); thus, women who obtain a job with the relatively high job security that comes with policing may find themselves loathe to jeopardize that by engaging in misconduct. Criminal history has not

been explored in a gendered context, thus bolstering the need for a gendered model to better delve into these particular questions.

Finally, job-specific characteristics of officers' time at the department are available<sup>2</sup>. Specifically, *rank* (probationary officer = 1 [reference], patrol officer = 2, detective = 3, sergeant or higher = 4), *command* (patrol = 1 [reference], special unit/proactive investigation = 2, staff assignment = 3, police academy/field training = 4)<sup>3</sup>, whether an officer's *father was in the NYPD* (no NYPD father = 0), and the amount of time before an officer first received a *citizen complaint* (no complaints = 0, complaint from prior police service = 1, within one year = 2, more than one year = 3) are included in the analyses.

These variables address two main theoretical perspectives. First, these variables address the ability of officers to resist the pressures of the police subculture. Officers with a family history of NYPD service, for example, likely have a familial obligation to honor and respect the badge by not engaging in misconduct that would bring shame upon themselves and their entire families. Thus, a family history of NYPD service may provide necessary resistance to the peer pressure of the police subculture, as research has shown that officers with a family history in the NYPD are less likely to commit misconduct (Kane & White, 2009, 2013). This relationship may be different for women, however, who experience different pressures relative to the police subculture. Because

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<sup>2</sup> Promotion was initially included, but further analysis determined that promotion was too closely connected to gender and race to include in the analysis conducted here. This provides support for the contention that the gendered (and racial) distribution of work assignments likely affected women's (and racial minorities') likelihood of promotion (see Kane & White, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> The patrol portion of the command variable was originally divided into three categories corresponding to the rank of the commanding officer of the precinct (captain, deputy inspector, or inspector), for a six-category command variable. It was hypothesized that the rank of the commander could be used as a proxy for police activity in the neighborhood (see Kane & White, 2013). Separating patrol within the command variable, however, did not yield significant differences between the precinct levels in any of the three models (full sample, male subsample, or female subsample) so the distinction between commanding officer ranks was removed to allow for better comparisons to the patrol command as a whole.

women are not part of the “good ole boys’ club,” it’s possible that the family element may be nonsignificant in their resistance to the subculture. It is also possible that exposure to the police subculture from a young age, and the realities of life on the force for women, may strengthen female officers’ resolve against the subculture. Alternatively, a father well versed in the department’s subculture may teach his daughter to “do gender” in a police context, thus making them more susceptible to the influences of the subculture. If it comes down to taking a bribe while a probationary officer or disappointing their family, female officers may be more apt to choose the former.

Variables like rank and command address the level of one’s opportunity for misconduct. While everyone is at risk for losing one’s badge (an administrative violation eligible for dismissal), higher-rank officers and officers in commands other than patrol or special investigation units (e.g., narcotics or homicide) have limited opportunities to commit misconduct (Hickman et al., 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; White & Kane, 2013). Additionally, how these effects interact with sex is unknown. Female officers in special investigation units like narcotics may be less likely to commit misconduct than men due to their social position on the periphery of the police subculture (Belknap & Shelley, 1992; Chu & Sun, 2007; Felkenes & Schroedel, 1993; Haarr, 1997; Hunt, 1990; Kraska & Kappeler, 1995; Rabe-Hemp, 2009; Reiner, 1992), leading them to be left out of organized opportunities for misconduct (e.g., organized corruption). These effects are lost in gender-neutral models (i.e., models with sex as a control), thus demonstrating why gender-specific models are imperative for truly understanding how these risk and protective factors work for both men and women.

### **Control Variables**

This study also includes two sets of control variables. First, the *political era* of the department during the time of the officer’s separation from the NYPD is included in the

analysis. The sample is divided into three political eras: 1975-1989, 1990-1993, and 1994-1996. The 1975-1989 era includes two mayors (Abraham Beame and Edward Koch) and covers the period of layoffs between 1975 and 1980 as a result of the city's fiscal crisis and subsequent rehires between 1980 and 1984. This also includes the beginning of departmental changes as a result of the Knapp Commission. The period of 1990-1993 covers the mayoralty of David Dinkins, the continuation of community policing, and the start of a two-decade (and continuing) crime decline. The era of 1994-1996 covers the first three years of Rudolph Giuliani's tenure as mayor of New York City (the only Republican during the study period), the installation of William Bratton as Police Commissioner and the implementation of order-maintenance policing, and the creation of Compstat. This last time period also provides a control for the 1994 Violent Crime Control Act, which put over 100,000 additional officers on streets across the country. This variable separates the officers into meaningful eras of time that can account for time-dependent variations in propensities, especially those related to employment practices (i.e., hiring and firing practices) or organizational changes. Factors such as command assignments and promotion possibility could be tied to the policy priorities of mayors (and their police commissioners) or to the changing social environment due to the passing of time. Prior research using this dataset has indicated that time is salient to understanding the story of misconduct; specifically, misconduct increased nonlinearly until hitting a peak, then decreased nonlinearly (Kane, 2002).

The second set is a series of control variables that are known correlates of police officer misconduct. Both *education level* (high school diploma or less = 0, at least some college = 1) and active enrollment in school at the time of appointment (yes = 1) are used. Previous research has shown that having education higher than a high school diploma (including some college not culminating in a degree) decreases the likelihood of officer

misconduct (Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Kappeler et al., 1992). Additionally, *age* in years (grand mean centered) is included in the analysis. Research has demonstrated that being older both decreases an officer's likelihood of committing misconduct (Greene et al., 2004; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004; Kane & White, 2009, 2013; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011) and protects against early firing (White & Kane, 2013).

## **Research Questions**

### **Do Predictors of Misconduct Vary Between Men and Women?**

Police literature has identified, rather extensively, the predictors of police misconduct, with variables serving as both protective and risk factors in an officer's decision to commit misconduct. However, as Chapters 1 and 2 explain, these studies use sex as a predictor along with other officer characteristics, thus losing nuance. Qualitative studies that focus on female officers lose the benefit of male comparison samples as well as statistical power from small sample sizes. This leads to the first set of research questions:

**Research Question 1:** Do predictors of misconduct affect men and women the same way?

**Research Question 2:** Do some predictors serve as risk factors for men but protective factors for women, or vice versa?

Clearly there is a gender effect for police misconduct; the fact that being male is a risk factor indicates as much. But there is limited understanding as to how this gender effect manifests itself in misconduct decision-making. Current research does not allow us to understand the intricacies of how risk and protective factors truly operate within this decision-making mechanism. Multiple factors may interact with one another to create a delicate web of risks and protections that is not as straightforward as some research has implied. Indeed, Kane & White (2013) note that the effect of race and ethnicity may be

confounded by other factors, such as differential assignments or evaluation criteria. These confounding effects are likely present for women as well, thus indicating the need for a gendered model to begin to unravel the web of predictors of police misconduct.

### **The “Big Picture” of Female Police Officer Misconduct**

Previous literature that has focused on female police officers has typically been qualitative in nature, obtaining information from interviews and surveys. Sophisticated quantitative analyses are rare because of the low statistical power associated with small sample sizes. Likewise, a long line of previous quantitative literature has demonstrated the predictors of misconduct for large samples, but as demonstrated above, the effects for women are masked due to their small numbers. The field is therefore left with unanswered questions regarding the factors that predict misconduct among women, leading to the final research question:

**Research Question 3:** What risk factors predict women’s commission of career-ending misconduct?

This question further underscores the need for gender-specific theoretical explanations of crime, including occupational deviance in the form of police misconduct. Theoretical perspectives such as strain and social learning were developed on the basis of male delinquency (Daly, 1992; Daly & Chesney-Lind, 1988; Smith & Paternoster, 1989), thus they are limited in their explanation of female offending. It is likely they are unable, on their own, to explain other forms of female deviance, such as police misconduct. Just as women’s pathways to deviance are gendered (e.g., Burgess-Proctor, 2012; Reisig, Holtfreter, & Morash, 2006), so too are their risk factors (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006), and these pathways need to be accounted for in explanations of police misconduct.

### **Analytical Strategy**

The data analysis proceeds in two phases. The first phase addresses the first two

research questions and is a set of analyses of the full sample, known as the “add gender and stir” approach, consistent with most previous literature in policing and allows us to get an understanding of the correlates of police misconduct using the standard method in policing literature. In this first stage of analyses, a logistic regression is used on the full sample (N=3,085) of officers.

The second phase addresses the third research question and uses a split-sample approach, as is the preferred method among feminist scholars (see, e.g., Belknap & Holsinger, 2006). This method divides the full sample by sex, creating a male portion (N= 2,650) and a female portion (N=435). The same logistic analyses are then conducted on both samples. The equality of coefficients is then compared using z-scores as outlined in Paternoster, Brame, Mazerolle, & Piquero (1998). The split-sample approach provides context for how strain and subculture affect both men and women’s misconduct decision-making to determine if certain predictors apply to only one sex. Alternatively, some factors may vary in their predictive power (i.e., be stronger or weaker for one sex) or may predict misconduct in opposite ways (e.g., be a risk factor for men but a protective factor for women).



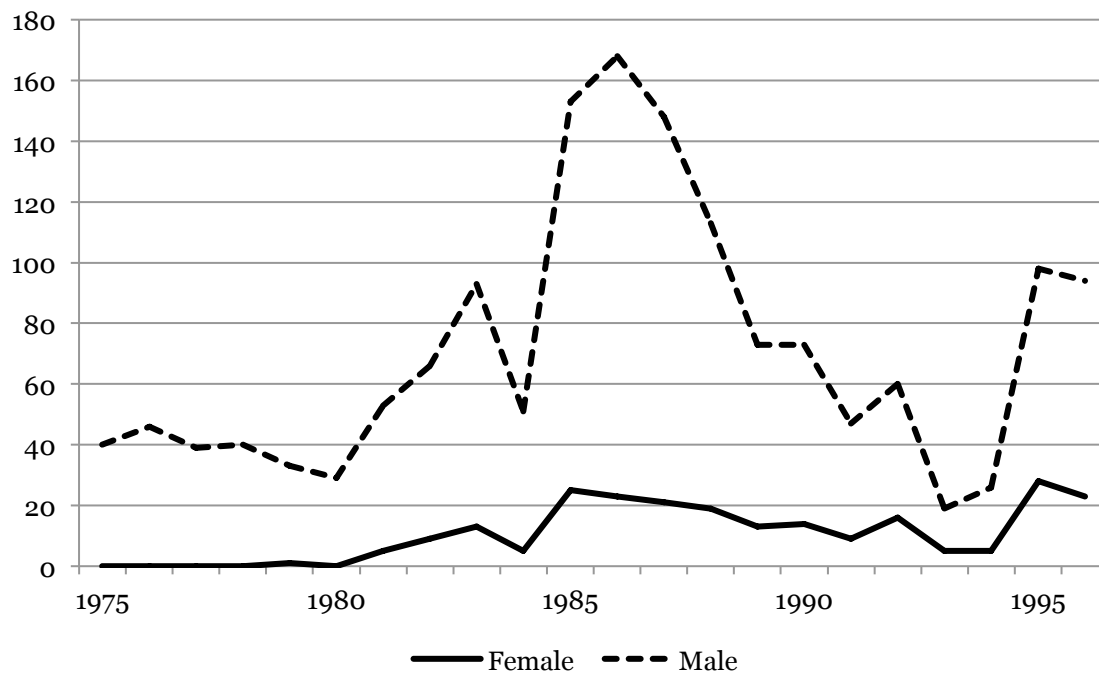
## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

### Descriptive Statistics

#### Full Sample

The full-sample descriptive statistics by sex can be found in Table 1. Similar percentages of men and women committed career-ending misconduct (49.43% and 53.33%, respectively), and unsurprisingly, this difference was not statistically significant<sup>4</sup>. The number of male and female study officers fired each year for misconduct is represented visually in Figure 1. There is a similar pattern for both men and women, but the pattern is much less marked for women than for men.

Figure 1. Male and Female Study Officers Separated from the NYPD, by Year



The racial/ethnic breakdown for men and women, however, is notably different. Nearly three-quarters of the men in the sample are white (72.86%), which is representative of police officers in general, whereas women were more evenly divided

<sup>4</sup> Statistical significance for the difference between male and female descriptive statistics was determined using the *ttest* command in Stata13.

racially (43.32% white, 41.01% black, and 15.67% Hispanic). These differences are all statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ). A smaller percentage of women than men were married at the time of appointment (18.25% and 33.04%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ) and a larger percentage of women than men were divorced at the time of appointment (8.06% and 2.58%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ). More women had no change in their marital status than men (74.25% and 67.02%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ), thus more men either got married (27.89% compared to 22.53%,  $p < 0.05$ ) or got divorced (5.09% compared to 3.22%,  $p < 0.10$ ) than women.

Fewer women in the sample had a criminal record when joining the police department (5.39%, compared to 9.98% for men,  $p < 0.01$ ). This is unsurprising, since women typically commit less crime than men overall (Smith & Paternoster, 1989; Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996; Steffensmeier, Schwartz, Zhong, & Acker, 2005). In terms of employment history, a small percentage of both men and women had prior police experience (4.04% and 2.07%, respectively,  $p < 0.05$ ), though roughly one-third of men (38.69%) and one-quarter of women (23.24%) had prior military experience ( $p < 0.01$ ). It was uncommon for the background investigator to not recommend hiring an officer (10.49% of men and 6.44% of women,  $p < 0.05$ ) or for the background investigator to receive derogatory comments about the recruit from previous employers (7.15% of men and 7.59% of women, not a statistically significant difference). Men had an average 1.27 periods of unemployment lasting longer than 30 days, and women had an average 1.54 periods, a statistically significant difference ( $p < 0.01$ ). Women and men were statistically similar in whether they had been fired from previous jobs (13.43% and 10.96%, respectively), though a higher percentage of women received below standard performance evaluations in previous jobs (10.44%, compared to 7.30% of men,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 1

Full Sample Descriptive Statistics, by Sex (N=3,085)

Variable	Men		Women	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
<b>Dependent Variable</b>				
Misconduct				
Yes	1,310	49.43	232	53.33
No	1,340	50.57	203	46.67
<b>Independent Variables</b>				
<i>Race</i>				
Race				
White**	1,901	72.86	188	43.32
Black**	448	17.17	178	41.01
Hispanic**	260	9.97	68	15.67
<i>Family Life</i>				
Marital Status				
Never Married**	1,621	64.38	311	73.70
Married**	832	33.04	77	18.25
Divorced**	65	2.58	34	8.06
Change in Marital Status				
No Change**	1,776	67.02	323	74.25
Got Married*	739	27.89	98	22.53
Got Divorced+	135	5.09	14	3.22
Children+				
Yes	546	22.57	105	26.38
No	1,873	77.43	293	73.62
<i>Criminal History</i>				
Criminal History**				
Yes	248	9.98	22	5.39
No	2,238	90.02	386	94.61
<i>Employment History</i>				
Prior Police Experience*				
Yes	107	4.04	9	2.07
No	2,543	95.96	426	97.93
Prior Military Service**				
Yes	975	38.69	96	23.24
No	1,545	61.31	317	76.76
Background Invest. Recommended Disapproval*				
Yes	278	10.49	28	6.44
No	2,372	89.51	407	93.56
Periods of Unemployment >30 days (mean)**	1.27	SD=1.44	1.54	SD=1.67
Fired from Previous Jobs				
Yes	269	10.96	54	13.43
No	2,186	89.04	348	88.69
Below Standard Performance Evaluations*				
Yes	173	7.30	40	10.44
No	2,198	92.70	343	89.56
Derogatory Comments from Previous Employers				
Yes	172	7.15	30	7.59
No	2,232	92.85	365	92.41
<i>Employment at NYPD</i>				
Rank				
Probationary Officer**	704	26.57	184	42.30
Patrol**	1479	55.81	200	45.98
Detective*	177	6.68	18	4.14

Table 1 continued

Sergeant or Higher*	290	10.94	33	7.59
Command				
Patrol**	1,608	60.68	218	50.11
Staff Assignment+	371	14.00	46	10.57
Proactive Investigation/Special Unit	237	8.94	49	11.26
Police Academy/Field Training**	434	16.38	122	28.05
Father was in the NYPD				
Yes	179	6.75	28	6.44
No	2,471	93.25	407	93.56
Time to First Citizen Complaint				
No Complaints	1,284	48.45	220	50.57
Complaints from Prior Police Service*	165	6.23	39	8.97
Within 1 Year*	200	7.55	47	10.80
More than 1 Year**	1,001	37.77	129	29.66
<i>Control</i>				
Education				
High School Diploma or Less**	1,392	55.70	164	40.00
Some College (No Degree)**	860	34.41	182	44.39
Associate Degree or Higher**	247	9.88	64	15.61
Active Enrollment in School*				
Yes	183	7.63	48	12.47
No	2,216	92.37	337	87.53
Age (mean)*	24.3	SD=3.16	23.9	SD=3.19
Political Era				
1975-1989**	1,746	72.75	271	62.30
1990-1993*	319	13.29	78	17.93
1994-1996**	335	13.96	86	19.77

Note. \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , +  $p < 0.10$  (two-tailed test).

In looking at officers' experience at the NYPD, there are several marked sex differences. All four categories of officer rank and three of four categories of command were significantly different between men and women. Nearly 90% of women were probationary or patrol officers at the time of separation, divided rather evenly (42.30% and 45.98%, respectively, both statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ ), whereas only about three-quarters of men were probationary or patrol officers (26.57% and 55.81%, respectively). A larger percentage of men were both detectives (6.68%, compared to 4.14% of women,  $p < 0.05$ ) and sergeants or higher (10.94%, compared to 7.59% of women,  $p < 0.05$ ). More men than women had patrol assignments (60.68% and 50.11%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ) or staff assignments (14.00% and 10.57%, respectively,  $p < 0.10$ ), and substantially more women than men (28.05% and 16.38%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ )

were assigned to the police academy or as field training officers. Statistically similar percentages of men and women had no complaints during their time at the NYPD, but more women received their first complaint within the first year (44.39%, compared to 34.41% of men,  $p < 0.05$ ) whereas more men received their first complaint after the first year (37.77%, compared to 29.66% of women,  $p < 0.01$ ). More women also had complaints that carried with them from prior police service (8.97%, compared to 6.23% of men,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Organizationally speaking, there were more men than women in this sample who were separated or voluntarily left the department between 1975 and 1989 (72.75% and 62.30%, respectively). Higher percentages of women were dismissed in the 1990s; the period of 1990-1996 also saw larger numbers of women being added to the ranks of the NYPD, however, so it is somewhat unsurprising that they would leave in larger percentages as well (for reasons related and unrelated to misconduct).<sup>5</sup>

The average age (23.9 for men and 24.3 for women), while seemingly similar, was statistically different ( $p < 0.05$ ). Finally, the sample significantly differs by sex in terms of education. A higher percentage of women (60%) than men (44.3%) had some college or a degree (44.39% and 15.61%, respectively, for women and 34.41% and 9.88%, respectively, for men, both significant  $p < 0.01$ ). A higher percentage of women were also actively enrolled in school at their time of appointment (12.47%, compared to 7.63% of men,  $p < 0.05$ ).

### **Split-Sample Components**

This section describes the sample when split into its two component subsamples, male and female. Each subsample will be described comparing those in the study group

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<sup>5</sup> Rates, rather than percentages, are used here because of incomplete information about the number of officers who joined and left the NYPD during the study years. This information is obtained from LEMAS, which started collecting data in 1986. Thus, there is no information regarding the number of males and females at the NYPD for study years 1975-1985.

Table 2

*Male Subsample Descriptive Statistics, by Misconduct (N=2,650)*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Study Group</b>		<b>Comparison Group</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<i>Race</i>				
Race				
White**	803	62.01	1,098	83.56
Black**	343	26.49	105	7.99
Hispanic**	149	11.51	111	8.45
<i>Family Life</i>				
Marital Status				
Never Married	770	63.06	851	65.61
Married	405	33.17	427	32.92
Divorced**	46	3.77	19	1.46
Change in Marital Status				
No Change**	1,011	77.18	765	57.09
Got Married**	218	16.64	521	38.88
Got Divorced*	81	6.18	54	4.03
Children**				
Yes	289	25.20	257	20.20
No	858	74.80	1,015	79.80
<i>Criminal History</i>				
Criminal History**				
Yes	161	13.64	87	6.66
No	1,019	86.36	1,219	93.34
<i>Employment History</i>				
Prior Police Experience				
Yes	46	3.51	61	4.55
No	1,264	96.49	1,279	95.45
Prior Military Service**				
Yes	508	42.05	467	35.59
No	700	57.95	845	64.41
Background Invest. Recommended Disapproval**				
Yes	185	14.12	93	6.94
No	1,125	85.88	1,247	93.06
Periods of Unemployment >30 days (mean)*	1.34	SD = 1.49	1.21	SD = 1.41
Fired from Previous Jobs**				
Yes	172	14.88	97	7.47
No	984	85.12	1,202	92.53
Below Standard Performance Evaluations**				
Yes	134	12.30	39	3.04
No	955	87.70	1,243	96.96
Derogatory Comments from Previous Employers**				
Yes	110	9.70	62	4.88
No	1,024	90.30	1,208	95.12
<i>Employment at NYPD</i>				
Rank				
Probationary Officer*	377	28.78	327	24.40
Patrol**	786	60.00	693	51.72
Detective**	58	4.43	119	8.88
Sergeant or Higher**	89	6.79	201	15.00
Command				
Patrol**	856	65.34	752	56.12
Staff Assignment**	127	9.69	244	18.21
Proactive Investigation/Special Unit**	84	6.41	153	11.42

Table 2 continued

Police Academy/Field Training**	243	18.55	191	14.25
Father was in the NYPD**				
Yes	68	5.19	111	8.28
No	1,242	94.81	1,229	91.72
Time to First Citizen Complaint				
No Complaints**	585	44.58	700	52.24
Complaints from Prior Police Service**	127	9.69	38	2.84
Within 1 Year*	116	8.85	84	6.27
More than 1 Year	483	36.87	518	38.66
<i>Control</i>				
Education				
High School Diploma or Less**	732	61.05	660	50.77
Some College (No Degree)	394	32.86	466	35.85
Associate Degree or Higher**	73	6.09	174	13.38
Active Enrollment in School				
Yes	75	6.59	108	8.56
No	1,063	93.41	1,153	91.44
Age (mean)	24	SD = 3.29	24	SD = 3.03
Political Era				
1975-1989	874	73.82	872	71.71
1990-1993	154	13.01	165	13.57
1994-1996	156	13.18	179	14.72

Note. \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , +  $p < 0.10$  (two-tailed test).

(the “bad cops”) and those in the comparison group. There are 2,650 men and 435 women in the sample; the descriptive statistics for the male subsample can be found in Table 2, and the descriptive statistics for the female subsample can be found in Table 3.

**Male subsample.** The racial and ethnic composition of the male subsample is somewhat surprising. Similar to the racial and ethnic makeup of the overall sample, white men constitute the largest percentage of both groups, but there are substantially more whites in the comparison group than in the study group (83.56% and 62.01%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ). The study group has more than three times as many blacks compared to the comparison group (26.49% and 7.99%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ) and nearly 50% more Hispanics (11.51% and 8.45%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ).

In looking at family life characteristics, never married and married men are statistically similar across the two groups, but just over twice as many divorced men are in the study group compared to the comparison group (3.77% and 1.46%, respectively,

$p < 0.01$ ). Changes in officers' marital status, however, were statistically different in all three categories. The percentage of males in the study group who had no change in their marital status was significantly higher than that of men in the comparison group (77.18% and 57.09%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ). Conversely, the percentage of men who got married was much higher in the comparison group (38.88%, compared to 16.64% in the study group,  $p < 0.01$ ). Slightly more men in the study group got divorced during their time in the NYPD than in the comparison group (6.18% and 4.03%, respectively group,  $p < 0.05$ ). A higher percentage of men in the study group had children than in the comparison group (25.2% and 20.2%, respectively group,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, twice as many men in the study group had a criminal record compared to the comparison group (13.64% and 6.66%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ). Men did not differ significantly on prior police experience, but did so on military experience: 42.04% of study officers compared to 35.59% of comparison officers had prior military experience ( $p < 0.01$ ). Men in the study group also had higher percentages of a negative background investigator recommendation (14.12%, compared to 6.94% of comparison group,  $p < 0.01$ ), below standard performance evaluations (12.30%, compared to 3.04% of comparison group,  $p < 0.01$ ), derogatory comments from previous employers (9.70%, compared to 4.88% of comparison group,  $p < 0.01$ ), and having been fired from previous jobs (14.88%, compared to 7.47% of comparison group,  $p < 0.01$ ). Men in the study group had a slightly higher average number of periods of unemployment greater than 30 days (1.34, compared to 1.21 for the comparison group,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Nearly 90% of male officers in the study group were probationary officers or patrol officers (28.78%,  $p < 0.05$ , and 60.00%,  $p < 0.01$ , respectively), whereas only about three-fourths of comparison officers were in the lower ranks (24.40% probationary



officers and 51.72% patrol officers). Conversely, the comparison group had nearly twice the percentages of detectives (8.88%, compared to 4.43% of the study group,  $p < 0.01$ ) and sergeants or higher (15%, compared to 6.59% of the study group,  $p < 0.01$ ). A larger percentage of study officers were assigned to patrol (65.34%, compared to 56.12% of comparison officers,  $p < 0.01$ ) and the police academy or field training (18.55%, compared to 14.25% of comparison officers,  $p < 0.01$ ). Conversely, more comparison officers were assigned to staff units (18.21%, compared to 9.69% of study officers,  $p < 0.01$ ) and proactive investigation or special units (11.42%, compared to 6.41% of study officers,  $p < 0.01$ ).

A statistically significantly larger percentage of comparison officers had a family legacy in the NYPD (8.28%, compared to 5.19% of study officers,  $p < 0.01$ ). In terms of citizen complaints, a statistically significantly larger percentage of comparison officers had no complaints (52.24%, compared to 44.58% of study officers,  $p < 0.01$ ). Conversely, comparison officers had both a statistically significantly lower percentage of prior complaints than study officers (2.84% and 9.69%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ) and a statistically significantly lower percentage of officers who received their first complaint within the first year relative to study officers (6.27% and 8.85%, respectively,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Finally, the only control variable with statistically significant differences between male study and comparison officers was educational attainment. A significantly higher percentage of study officers had a high school education (61.05%, compared to 50.77% of comparison officers,  $p < 0.01$ ), whereas comparison officers had a significantly higher percentage of college graduates (13.38%, compared to 6.09% of study officers,  $p < 0.01$ ).

**Female subsample.** One of the most striking differences within the female sample is the racial and ethnic composition. Similar to the full sample, the comparison group of female officers is 55.67% white, 27.09% black, and 17.24% Hispanic; the study

Table 3

*Female Subsample Descriptive Statistics, by Misconduct (N=435)*

Variable	Study Group		Comparison Group	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
<i>Race</i>				
Race				
White**	75	32.47	113	55.67
Black**	123	53.25	55	27.09
Hispanic	33	14.29	35	17.24
<i>Family Life</i>				
Marital Status				
Never Married+	155	69.82	156	78.00
Married	46	20.72	31	15.50
Divorced	21	9.46	13	6.50
Change in Marital Status				
No Change**	200	86.21	123	60.59
Got Married**	27	11.64	71	34.98
Got Divorced	5	2.16	9	4.43
Children**				
Yes	64	32.00	41	20.71
No	136	68.00	157	79.29
<i>Criminal History</i>				
Criminal History**				
Yes	17	8.25	5	2.48
No	189	91.75	197	97.52
<i>Employment History</i>				
Prior Police Experience				
Yes	4	1.72	5	2.46
No	228	98.28	198	97.54
Prior Military Service**				
Yes	70	33.18	26	12.87
No	141	66.82	176	87.13
Background Invest. Recommended Disapproval				
Yes	16	6.90	12	5.91
No	216	93.10	191	94.09
Periods of Unemployment >30 days (mean)*	1.75	SD = 1.78	1.34	SD = 1.52
Fired from Previous Jobs**				
Yes	36	17.91	18	8.96
No	165	82.09	183	91.04
Below Standard Performance Evaluations**				
Yes	33	17.65	7	3.57
No	154	82.35	189	96.43
Derogatory Comments from Previous Employers**				
Yes	23	11.62	7	3.55
No	175	88.38	190	96.45
<i>Employment at NYPD</i>				
Rank				
Probationary Officer	97	41.81	87	42.86
Patrol*	120	51.72	80	39.41
Detective+	6	2.59	12	5.91
Sergeant or Higher**	9	3.88	24	11.82
Command				
Patrol*	129	55.60	89	43.84
Staff Assignment	22	9.48	24	11.82
Proactive Investigation/Special Unit**	14	6.03	35	17.24

Table 3 continued

Police Academy/Field Training	67	28.88	55	27.09
Father was in the NYPD+				
Yes	10	4.31	18	8.87
No	222	95.69	185	91.13
Time to First Citizen Complaint				
No Complaints	110	47.41	110	54.19
Complaints from Prior Police Service*	28	12.07	11	5.42
Within 1 Year	23	9.91	24	11.82
More than 1 Year	71	30.60	58	28.57
<i>Control</i>				
Education				
High School Diploma or Less**	99	46.92	65	32.66
Some College (No Degree)	94	44.55	88	44.22
Associate Degree or Higher**	18	8.53	46	23.12
Active Enrollment in School				
Yes	21	11.05	27	13.85
No	169	88.95	168	86.15
Age (mean)	24.35	SD = 3.02	24.26	SD = 3.37
Political Era				
1975-1989*	132	56.90	139	68.47
1990-1993	46	19.83	32	15.76
1994-1996*	54	23.28	32	15.76

Note. \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , +  $p < 0.10$  (two-tailed test).

females, conversely, are almost completely opposite in their white and black composition, with 32.47% white ( $p < 0.01$ ), 53.25% black ( $p < 0.01$ ), and 14.29% Hispanic (difference was not statistically significant).

Differences in family status within the female sample are also notable. First, a much higher percentage of women were never married in the comparison group (78%) compared to the study group (69.82%,  $p < 0.10$ ). Conversely, a higher percentage of women were married in the study group (20.72%) than in the comparison group (15.5%), but this difference was not statistically significant. A higher percentage of women in the comparison group got married during their time in the NYPD (34.98%, compared to 11.64% of the study group,  $p < 0.10$ ); instead, women in the study group were more likely to have had no change in their marital status (86.21%, compared to 60.59% in the comparison group,  $p < 0.01$ ). In terms of children, a higher percentage of women in the study group had children (32%) than in the comparison group (20.71%,  $p < 0.01$ ).

In terms of employment history, there are some key differences between study and comparison female officers. First, female officers in the study group had, on average, more periods of unemployment (1.75 for the study group and 1.34 for the comparison group,  $p < 0.05$ ). Women in the comparison group had a substantially lower percentage of officers who had received below standard performance evaluations in previous jobs (3.57%, compared to 17.65% of the study group,  $p < 0.01$ ). Likewise, a markedly higher percentage of women in the study group received derogatory comments from employers (11.62% and 3.55%, respectively,  $p < 0.01$ ).

Study and comparison female officers also have key differences in their experiences at the NYPD. First, a higher percentage of officers in the study group were at the rank of patrol officer (51.72%) than in the comparison group (39.41%,  $p < 0.05$ ). Conversely, a higher percentage of comparison officers were either detective (5.91%, compared to 2.59% of study officers,  $p < 0.10$ ) or sergeant or higher (11.82%, compared to 3.88% of the study group,  $p < 0.01$ ). In terms of command, a higher percentage of study officers were assigned to patrol (55.6%, compared to 43.84% of the comparison group,  $p < 0.05$ ), whereas a higher percentage of comparison officers were assigned to proactive investigation or special units (17.24%, compared to 6.03% of the study group,  $p < 0.01$ ). Twice the percentage of comparison officers had fathers in the NYPD (8.87%, compared to 4.31% of the study group,  $p < 0.10$ ). Unsurprisingly, the study group had a higher percentage of officers with complaints from prior police service (12.07%, compared to 5.42% of the comparison group,  $p < 0.05$ ).

The study and comparison groups also differ along several control variables. First, a higher percentage of study officers received only their high school diploma or less (46.92%, compared to 32.66% of comparison officers,  $p < 0.01$ ), whereas more officers in the comparison group achieved a college degree (23.12%, compared to 8.53% in the

study group). Slightly more comparison officers were actively enrolled in school at the time of appointment to the NYPD (13.85%, compared to 11.05% in the study group,  $p < 0.01$ ). Finally, a higher percentage of officers in the comparison group left the NYPD during the period of 1975-1989 (68.47%, compared to 56.9% in the study group,  $p < 0.05$ ), whereas higher percentages of study officers were dismissed during the 1990-1993 and 1994-1996 periods (19.83% and 23.28%, respectively, compared to 15.76% for each period in the comparison group,  $p < 0.05$ ).

## **Bivariate Correlations**

### **Model Diagnostics**

The bivariate associations (Pearson's  $r$ ) for all variables included in the multivariate models can be found in Table 4. For ease of interpretation, categorical variables were separated into dummy variables. Variance inflation factors (VIFs) for all variables were less than 1.53 (average VIF = 1.15), below the standard threshold of 10 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) and tolerance tests for all variables were above 0.65. Additionally, condition indices for all variables were less than 21.62, below the traditional limit of 30 (Belsley, Kuh, & Welsch, 1980; Mason & Perreault, 1991). All bivariate correlations were less than 0.66, below the traditional level of absolute value 0.70 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Thus, collinearity is not a concern for these analyses.

### **Dependent Variable Associations**

Many key variables are associated with misconduct, as expected<sup>6</sup>. In terms of race and ethnicity, being white (-0.240,  $p < 0.05$ ) is weakly and negatively associated with misconduct, whereas being black (0.247,  $p < 0.05$ ) and Hispanic (0.037,  $p < 0.05$ ) are both weakly and positively associated with misconduct. Family status variables also act in

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<sup>6</sup> In order to conduct bivariate correlations with categorical variables, the individual categories were separated out as dummy variables. This was done using the *STB-25 sg36* add-on in Stata13. The *tab(var1)*, *gen(var2)* command was then used to generate dummy variables for each category.

Table 4

*Bivariate Correlations with Dummy Variables*

	Misc.	X1	X2	X3	X4	X5	X6	X7
<b>Female (X1)</b>	0.027	1.00						
<b>White (X2)</b>	-0.240*	-0.223*	1.00					
<b>Black (X3)</b>	0.247*	0.206*	-0.753*	1.00				
<b>Hispanic (X4)</b>	0.037*	0.064*	-0.514*	-0.177*	1.00			
<b>Single (X5)</b>	-0.033	0.069*	0.092*	-0.047*	-0.077*	1.00		
<b>Married (X6)</b>	0.007	-0.112*	-0.052*	0.018	0.056*	-0.926*	1.00	
<b>Divorced (X7)</b>	0.069*	0.106*	-0.109*	0.078*	0.061*	-0.258*	-0.125*	1.00
<b>No Change (X8)</b>	0.225*	0.054*	-0.098*	0.067*	0.059*	-0.226*	0.235*	-0.006
<b>Got Married (X9)</b>	-0.253*	-0.042*	0.129*	-0.087*	-0.079*	0.394*	-0.415*	0.027
<b>Got Divorced (X10)</b>	0.035	-0.031	-0.054*	0.035	0.034	-0.320*	0.345*	-0.043*
<b>Kids (X11)</b>	0.070*	0.032	-0.218*	0.172*	0.103	-0.560*	0.516*	0.150*
<b>Prior Police Exp. (X12)</b>	-0.027	-0.036*	0.031	-0.033	-0.003	-0.018	0.022	-0.009*
<b>Prior Military Exp. (X13)</b>	0.085*	-0.112*	-0.063*	0.125*	-0.070*	-0.171*	0.153*	0.058*
<b>Derogatory Comments (X14)</b>	0.112*	0.006	-0.070*	0.068*	0.016	0.019	-0.023	0.010
<b>Below Standard Perf. Evals (X15)</b>	0.186*	0.041*	-0.106*	0.109*	0.017	0.019	-0.031	0.029
<b>Fired from Jobs (X16)</b>	0.121*	0.027	-0.089*	0.119*	-0.022	-0.009	-0.003	0.032
<b>Periods of Unemp. (X17)</b>	0.056*	0.063*	-0.098*	0.079*	0.045*	-0.023	-0.019	0.108*
<b>Criminal History (X18)</b>	0.116*	-0.055*	-0.035	0.042*	-0.003	-0.038*	0.034	0.014
<b>Probationary Officer (X19)</b>	0.043*	0.121*	-0.014	-0.038*	0.071*	0.147*	-0.152*	0.002
<b>Patrol Officer (X20)</b>	0.087*	-0.069*	-0.023	0.053*	-0.035	-0.119*	0.116*	0.017
<b>Detective (X21)</b>	-0.089*	-0.036*	0.008	0.007	-0.021	-0.039*	0.041*	-0.003
<b>Sergeant or Higher (X22)</b>	-0.134*	-0.038*	0.055*	-0.037*	-0.033	0.005	0.007	-0.031
<b>Patrol (X23)</b>	0.096*	-0.075*	-0.030	0.046*	-0.016	-0.047*	0.037*	0.029
<b>Staff Assignment (X24)</b>	-0.113*	-0.035	0.024	-0.003	-0.033	-0.042*	0.048*	-0.009
<b>Proactive Investigation (X25)</b>	-0.101*	0.028	0.005	-0.008	0.003	-0.032	0.039*	-0.014
<b>PA/Field Training (X26)</b>	0.054*	0.106*	0.012	-0.051*	0.048*	0.121*	-0.117*	-0.017
<b>No Complaints (X27)</b>	-0.075*	0.015	0.046*	-0.104*	0.066*	0.087*	-0.096*	0.019
<b>Prior Complaint (X28)</b>	0.138*	0.0438*	-0.017	0.029	-0.013	0.036	-0.034	-0.006
<b>Within 1 Year (X29)</b>	0.037*	0.042*	-0.031	0.031	0.006	0.028	-0.047*	0.047*
<b>More than 1 Year (X30)</b>	-0.015	-0.059*	-0.022	0.074*	-0.065*	-0.124*	0.144*	-0.043*
<b>NYPD Father (X31)</b>	-0.066*	-0.004	0.120*	-0.082*	-0.073*	0.098*	-0.098*	-0.006
<b>BG Invest. Recommend. (X32)</b>	0.104*	-0.047*	-0.099*	0.103*	0.014	-0.095*	0.077*	0.054*
<b>Age (X33)</b>	-0.002	0.039*	-0.143*	0.113*	0.067*	-0.366*	0.307*	0.176*
<b>High School or Less (X34)</b>	0.106*	-0.110*	0.019	0.017	-0.051*	-0.174*	0.181*	-0.005
<b>Some College (X35)</b>	-0.025	0.072*	-0.045*	-0.001	0.070*	0.119*	-0.130*	0.022
<b>College Degree (X36)</b>	-0.133*	0.065*	0.040*	-0.026	-0.026	0.097*	-0.089*	-0.027
<b>Active Enrollment (X37)</b>	-0.037	0.061*	-0.017	0.010	0.012	0.1217*	-0.109*	-0.028
<b>1975-1989 (X38)</b>	-0.002	-0.083*	0.089*	-0.065*	-0.047*	-0.066*	0.068*	0.003
<b>1990-1993 (X39)</b>	0.004	0.048*	-0.041*	0.022	0.033	0.049*	-0.057*	0.018
<b>1994-1996 (X40)</b>	-0.001	0.059*	-0.073*	0.062*	0.028	0.036	-0.030	-0.019

Table 4 continued

	<b>X8</b>	<b>X9</b>	<b>X10</b>	<b>X11</b>	<b>X12</b>	<b>X13</b>	<b>X14</b>	<b>X15</b>
<b>No Change (X8)</b>	1.00							
<b>Got Married (X9)</b>	-0.890*	1.00						
<b>Got Divorced (X10)</b>	-0.329*	-0.138*	1.00					
<b>Kids (X11)</b>	0.153*	-0.240*	0.168*	1.00				
<b>Prior Police Exp. (X12)</b>	0.0003	0.002	-0.005	-0.010	1.00			
<b>Prior Military Exp. (X13)</b>	-0.039*	0.005	0.073*	0.113*	-0.020	1.00		
<b>Derogatory Comments (X14)</b>	0.029	-0.032	0.005	0.019	0.029	0.036	1.00	
<b>Below Standard Perf. Evals (X15)</b>	0.040*	-0.045*	0.008	0.023	-0.017	0.066*	0.098*	1.00
<b>Fired from Jobs (X16)</b>	0.040*	-0.048*	0.013	0.041*	-0.004	0.028	0.408*	0.112*
<b>Periods of Unemp. (X17)</b>	0.026	-0.037	0.020	0.036	0.011	0.018	0.124*	0.070*
<b>Criminal History (X18)</b>	0.061*	-0.062*	-0.003	0.051*	0.003	0.036	0.005	0.034
<b>Probationary Officer (X19)</b>	0.083*	-0.066*	-0.043*	-0.086*	-0.028	-0.225*	-0.003	-0.028
<b>Patrol Officer (X20)</b>	-0.044*	0.011	0.073*	0.079*	0.017	0.137*	0.032	0.081*
<b>Detective (X21)</b>	-0.076*	0.084*	-0.009	0.020	0.019	0.089*	-0.042*	-0.063*
<b>Sergeant or Higher (X22)</b>	0.010	0.013	-0.047*	-0.019	-0.001	0.041*	-0.014*	-0.042*
<b>Patrol (X23)</b>	-0.001	-0.011	0.024	0.045*	0.025	0.052*	0.045*	0.070*
<b>Staff Assignment (X24)</b>	-0.067*	0.074*	-0.010	0.009	0.007	0.077*	-0.066*	-0.070*
<b>Proactive Investigation (X25)</b>	-0.025	0.021	0.011	0.014	-0.004	0.014	-0.001	0.009
<b>PA/Field Training (X26)</b>	0.079*	-0.068*	-0.031	-0.077*	-0.035	-0.147*	0.004	-0.034
<b>No Complaints (X27)</b>	0.029	-0.019	-0.023	-0.073*	-0.022	-0.173*	-0.027	-0.046*
<b>Prior Complaint (X28)</b>	0.082*	-0.089*	0.007	-0.012	0.037*	-0.015	0.027	0.014
<b>Within 1 Year (X29)</b>	0.056*	-0.051*	-0.016	-0.007	-0.014	-0.029	0.009	0.019
<b>More than 1 Year (X30)</b>	-0.104*	0.094*	0.030	0.085*	0.012	0.202*	0.009	0.029
<b>NYPD Father (X31)</b>	-0.039*	0.049*	-0.018	-0.099*	-0.019	-0.095*	-0.029	-0.030
<b>BG Invest. Recommend. (X32)</b>	0.016	-0.027	0.021	0.116*	-0.009	0.086*	0.195*	0.037
<b>Age (X33)</b>	0.118*	-0.152*	0.059*	0.334*	0.034	0.140*	0.034	-0.016
<b>High School or Less (X34)</b>	0.010	-0.043*	0.068*	0.148*	-0.007	0.205*	0.035	0.025
<b>Some College (X35)</b>	0.005	0.014	-0.039*	-0.107*	0.022	-0.124*	-0.022	0.002
<b>College Degree (X36)</b>	-0.024	0.049*	-0.049*	-0.073*	-0.023	-0.138*	-0.022	-0.044*
<b>Active Enrollment (X37)</b>	-0.017	0.038*	-0.041*	-0.098*	-0.013	-0.093*	-0.032	0.005
<b>1975-1989 (X38)</b>	0.012	-0.013	0.0003	-0.010	0.001	-0.066*	0.015	-0.020
<b>1990-1993 (X39)</b>	-0.005	0.009	-0.007	-0.012	-0.009	0.059*	-0.032	0.029
<b>1994-1996 (X40)</b>	-0.010	0.008	0.007	0.024	0.007	0.026	0.012	0.003

Table 4 continued

	X16	X17	X18	X19	X20	X21	X22	X23
<b>Fired from Jobs (X16)</b>	1.00							
<b>Periods of Unemp. (X17)</b>	0.148*	1.00						
<b>Criminal History (X18)</b>	0.053*	0.029	1.00					
<b>Probationary Officer (X19)</b>	0.038*	0.062*	0.034	1.00				
<b>Patrol Officer (X20)</b>	0.003	-0.034	0.010	-0.695*	1.00			
<b>Detective (X21)</b>	-0.048*	-0.025	-0.043*	-0.165*	-0.284*	1.00		
<b>Sergeant or Higher (X22)</b>	-0.023	-0.017	-0.034	-0.217*	-0.374*	-0.089*	1.00	
<b>Patrol (X23)</b>	0.038*	0.013	0.006	-0.289*	0.313*	-0.210*	0.086*	1.00
<b>Staff Assignment (X24)</b>	-0.063*	-0.015	-0.004	-0.178*	-0.015	0.419*	-0.045*	-0.476*
<b>Proactive Investigation (X25)</b>	-0.012	-0.021	-0.011	-0.142*	0.075*	0.013	0.077*	-0.385*
<b>PA/Field Training (X26)</b>	0.018	0.013	0.005	0.635*	-0.443*	-0.115*	-0.127*	-0.565*
<b>No Complaints (X27)</b>	0.003	-0.010	-0.035	0.132*	-0.154*	-0.014	0.067*	-0.065*
<b>Prior Complaint (X28)</b>	0.011	-0.026	0.057*	0.142*	-0.089*	-0.048*	-0.027	-0.084*
<b>Within 1 Year (X29)</b>	0.003	0.023	0.016	0.100*	-0.042*	-0.047*	-0.042*	0.041*
<b>More than 1 Year (X30)</b>	-0.010	0.011	-0.003	-0.266*	0.230*	0.065*	-0.031	0.088*
<b>NYPD Father (X31)</b>	-0.048*	-0.027	0.026	0.041*	-0.010	-0.006	-0.041*	-0.044*
<b>BG Invest. Recommend. (X32)</b>	0.160*	0.135*	0.165*	-0.012	0.051*	-0.010	-0.057*	0.040*
<b>Age (X33)</b>	0.050*	0.132*	0.060*	-0.016	0.028	0.007	-0.016	-0.018
<b>High School or Less (X34)</b>	0.016	-0.056*	0.033	-0.159*	0.157*	0.019	-0.038*	0.100*
<b>Some College (X35)</b>	-0.005	0.051*	-0.011	0.135*	-0.108*	-0.023	-0.006	-0.079*
<b>College Degree (X36)</b>	-0.017	0.011	-0.036	0.047*	-0.086*	0.005	0.070*	-0.040*
<b>Active Enrollment (X37)</b>	-0.028	-0.047*	-0.042*	0.017	-0.044*	0.007	0.043*	-0.043*
<b>1975-1989 (X38)</b>	-0.026	-0.075*	0.001	-0.005	0.012	-0.019	0.003	-0.018
<b>1990-1993 (X39)</b>	0.008	0.055*	-0.005	0.043*	-0.016	-0.022	-0.023	0.008
<b>1994-1996 (X40)</b>	0.026	0.042*	0.004	-0.036	0.001	0.045*	0.018	0.016

Table 4 continued

	X24	X25	X26	X27	X28	X29	X30	X31
<b>Staff Assignment (X24)</b>	1.00							
<b>Proactive Investigation (X25)</b>	-0.126*	1.00						
<b>PA/Field Training (X26)</b>	-0.185*	-0.150*	1.00					
<b>No Complaints (X27)</b>	-0.029	-0.032	0.133*	1.00				
<b>Prior Complaint (X28)</b>	-0.021	-0.022	0.143*	-0.260*	1.00			
<b>Within 1 Year (X29)</b>	-0.050*	-0.020	0.008	-0.288*	-0.079*	1.00		
<b>More than 1 Year (X30)</b>	0.069*	0.056*	-0.216*	-0.741*	-0.202*	-0.224*	1.00	
<b>NYPD Father (X31)</b>	0.0001	-0.005	0.060*	0.031*	-0.009	0.026	-0.043*	1.00
<b>BG Invest. Recommend. (X32)</b>	-0.004	-0.031	-0.023	-0.091*	0.030	0.002	0.079*	-0.015
<b>Age (X33)</b>	0.030	0.025	-0.022	-0.001	0.014	-0.013	0.002	-0.094*
<b>High School or Less (X34)</b>	-0.015	0.005	-0.118*	-0.072*	-0.033	-0.030	0.107*	-0.035
<b>Some College (X35)</b>	0.022	-0.025	0.100*	0.020	0.038*	0.028	-0.056*	0.016
<b>College Degree (X36)</b>	-0.009	0.030	0.035	0.085*	-0.006	0.005	-0.087*	0.032
<b>Active Enrollment (X37)</b>	0.001	0.064*	0.005	0.007	0.002	0.008	-0.012	0.025
<b>1975-1989 (X38)</b>	-0.081*	0.009	0.086*	-0.115*	0.067*	0.035	0.065*	0.088*
<b>1990-1993 (X39)</b>	-0.018	-0.005	0.009	0.106*	-0.044*	-0.032	-0.069*	-0.044*
<b>1994-1996 (X40)</b>	0.121*	-0.006	-0.118*	0.044*	-0.042*	-0.014	-0.015	-0.069*



Table 4 continued

	X32	X33	X34	X35	X36	X37	X38	X39
<b>BG Invest. Recommend. (X32)</b>	1.00							
<b>Age (X33)</b>	0.111*	1.00						
<b>High School or Less (X34)</b>	0.115*	0.044*	1.00					
<b>Some College (X35)</b>	-0.080*	-0.090*	-0.801*	1.00				
<b>College Degree (X36)</b>	-0.063*	0.068*	-0.371*	-0.259*	1.00			
<b>Active Enrollment (X37)</b>	-0.057*	-0.137*	-0.223*	0.209*	0.036	1.00		
<b>1975-1989 (X38)</b>	0.038*	-0.028	0.056*	-0.037	-0.031	-0.007	1.00	
<b>1990-1993 (X39)</b>	-0.018	-0.002	-0.023	0.016	0.012	-0.002	-0.634*	1.00
<b>1994-1996 (X40)</b>	-0.032	0.037*	-0.049*	0.032	0.028	0.011	-0.656*	-0.169*

Note. \*  $p < 0.05$  (two-tailed test).

expected fashions. Being single or married is not significantly correlated with misconduct, but being divorced is weakly and positively associated with misconduct (0.069,  $p < 0.05$ ). Having no change in marital status is weakly and positively correlated with misconduct (0.225,  $p < 0.05$ ), but getting married is weakly associated misconduct in the negative direction (-0.253,  $p < 0.05$ ). Having children is weakly and positively correlated with misconduct (0.070,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Many work history variables are also correlated with misconduct in the expected direction. First, having prior military experience is weakly and positively associated with misconduct (0.085,  $p < 0.05$ ). Additionally, indicators of employment problems such as receiving derogatory comments from prior employers (0.112,  $p < 0.05$ ), having below standard performance evaluations (0.186,  $p < 0.05$ ), having been fired from previous jobs (0.121,  $p < 0.05$ ), and having greater numbers of periods of unemployment greater than 30 days (0.056,  $p < 0.05$ ) are all weakly associated misconduct in the positive direction. Having a criminal history is weakly and positively correlated with misconduct (0.116,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Variables related to officers' experiences while in the NYPD are also related to misconduct. Being a probationary officer (0.043,  $p < 0.05$ ) or a patrol officer (0.087,  $p < 0.05$ ) are both weakly and positively associated with misconduct. Conversely, being a detective (-0.089,  $p < 0.05$ ) or a sergeant or higher (-0.134,  $p < 0.05$ ) are weakly and

negatively correlated with misconduct. Being assigned to a patrol command (0.096,  $p < 0.05$ ) or the police academy or field training (0.054,  $p < 0.05$ ) are weakly correlated with misconduct in the positive direction, whereas being assigned to a staff assignment (-0.113,  $p < 0.05$ ) or a proactive investigation or special unit (-0.101,  $p < 0.05$ ) are weakly and negatively associated with misconduct.

Having no citizen complaints is, unsurprisingly, weakly and negatively correlated with misconduct (-0.075,  $p < 0.05$ ). Having citizen complaints from prior police jobs (0.138,  $p < 0.05$ ) or receiving a complaint within the first year (0.037,  $p < 0.05$ ) both have a weak, positive relationship with misconduct. Having one's father in the NYPD is weakly and negatively associated with misconduct (-0.066,  $p < 0.05$ ). Finally, receiving a negative background investigator recommendation (or the background investigator recommending not to hire the officer) weakly and positively correlates misconduct (0.104,  $p < 0.05$ ).

The only control variable significantly correlated with misconduct is education. Having a high school diploma or less is weakly and positively associated with misconduct (0.106,  $p < 0.05$ ) whereas having a college degree has a weak, negative relationship with misconduct (-0.133,  $p < 0.05$ ).

### **Primary Independent Variable Correlations**

The bivariate correlations are also useful for gaining an understanding of the make-up of the females in the sample. First, being female is weakly and positively correlated with being black (0.206,  $p < 0.05$ ), Hispanic (0.064,  $p < 0.05$ ), single (0.069,  $p < 0.05$ ), or divorced (0.106,  $p < 0.05$ ). Being female is also weakly correlated in the positive direction with having no change in marital status while working at the NYPD (0.054,  $p < 0.05$ ) and in the negative direction with getting married (-0.042,  $p < 0.05$ ).

In relation to employment factors, being female is weakly and negatively associated with having prior police ( $-0.036, p < 0.05$ ) or military ( $-0.112, p < 0.05$ ) experience. Conversely, being female is weakly and positively correlated with having below standard performance evaluations ( $0.041, p < 0.05$ ) and having more periods of unemployment greater than 30 days ( $0.063, p < 0.05$ ). Unsurprisingly, being female is negatively correlated with criminal history, albeit weakly ( $-0.055, p < 0.05$ ).

In the NYPD, being female is weakly and positively correlated with being a probationary officer ( $0.121, p < 0.05$ ) and weakly and negatively associated with being a patrol officer ( $-0.069, p < 0.05$ ), detective ( $-0.036, p < 0.05$ ), or a sergeant or higher ( $-0.038, p < 0.05$ ). Being female is weakly and positively associated with being assigned to the police academy or field training ( $0.106, p < 0.05$ ) and weakly and negatively correlated with being assigned to patrol ( $-0.075, p < 0.05$ ). Being female is weakly and positively correlated with receiving the first citizen complaint in prior policing jobs ( $0.044, p < 0.05$ ) or within the first year on the job with the NYPD ( $0.042, p < 0.05$ ), but is weakly correlated with receiving the first complaint after the first year in the negative direction ( $-0.059, p < 0.05$ ). Being female is also weakly and negatively correlated with receiving a negative background investigator recommendation (or a recommendation not to be hired;  $-0.047, p < 0.05$ ).

Finally, key control variables are significantly correlated with being female. Being female was weakly and positively correlated with being older than average ( $0.039, p < 0.05$ ) and having a college degree ( $0.065, p < 0.05$ ), but is weakly and negatively associated with having a high school diploma or less ( $-0.110, p < 0.05$ ). Being female was also weakly and positively correlated with being actively enrolled in school while working at the NYPD ( $0.061, p < 0.05$ ). Finally, being female was weakly and negatively correlated with leaving the department during 1975-1989 ( $-0.083, p < 0.05$ ), but weakly and

positively correlated with being separated either during 1990-1993 (0.048,  $p < 0.05$ ) or 1994-1996 (0.059,  $p < 0.05$ ).

### **Full Sample Predictors of Misconduct**

The full sample logistic regression for misconduct (see Table 5) is conducted in the same way most policing research is done, with sex as a control variable, known as the “add gender and stir” approach. In this model, sex operates as expected; female officers are 26.5% less likely than male officers to commit misconduct. There are several other notable findings in each of the predictor categories. Variance inflation factors (VIFs) for the model were less than 2.99 (average VIF = 1.49) and tolerance levels for the model ranged from 0.33 to 0.95. Nagelkerke’s R-squared for the model was 0.326 and the model chi-square was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

#### **Race and Ethnicity**

The main effects for race/ethnicity are notable in their own right. Blacks were 321.7% more likely to commit misconduct than whites, and Hispanics were 42% more likely to commit misconduct than whites. While both minority statuses are statistically significant risk factors, this model demonstrates the importance of parsing out race beyond a white/nonwhite dichotomy, as the size of the effects are substantially different.

#### **Family Life**

The second set of predictors – those of an officer’s family life – continues to show expected relationships. Consistent with previous research, marriage is a protective factor and divorce is a risk factor for officer misconduct. Married officers were 42.4% less likely to commit misconduct, whereas divorced officers were 71.9% more likely to commit misconduct than never married officers. Likewise, getting married while employed by the NYPD is a protective factor, as expected; officers who got married were 72.7% less likely to commit misconduct than officers with no change in marital status.

Table 5

*Full Sample Logistic Regression Likelihood of Misconduct (N=2,215)*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Odds Ratio</b>	<b>SE</b>
Female	0.735*	(0.109)
Race (reference: White)		
Black	4.217**	(0.585)
Hispanic	1.420*	(0.224)
Marital Status (reference: Never Married)		
Married	0.576**	(0.087)
Divorced	1.719+	(0.518)
Change in Marital Status (reference: No Change)		
Got Married	0.273**	(0.034)
Got Divorced	1.020	(0.246)
Kids	0.951	(0.139)
Prior Police Experience	1.002	(0.252)
Prior Military Experience	1.390**	(0.154)
Number of Jobs Fired	1.292	(0.235)
Periods of Unemployment	0.985	(0.035)
Derogatory Comments from Prior Employer	1.349	(0.301)
Below Standard Performance Evaluations	3.070**	(0.675)
Criminal History	1.703**	(0.309)
Officer Rank (reference: Probationary Officer)		
Patrol Officer	1.657**	(0.231)
Detective	1.050	(0.283)
Sergeant or Higher	0.370**	(0.091)
Command (reference: Patrol)		
Staff Assignment	0.622**	(0.106)
Proactive Investigation/Special Unit	0.515**	(0.092)
Field Training/Police Academy	0.841	(0.139)
Father in the NYPD	0.817	(0.162)
Time to First Complaint (reference: No Complaints)		
Complaint from Prior Police Service+	4.228**	(0.927)
Within 1 Year	1.464*	(0.255)
More than 1 Year	1.293*	(0.145)
Background Investigator Did Not Recommend Hire	1.433*	(0.260)
Age	0.962*	(0.017)
Education (reference: High School)		
Some College (No Degree)	0.749**	(0.082)
College Degree (Associate/Bachelor/Graduate)	0.429**	(0.081)
Actively Enrolled in School	0.929	(0.179)
Political Era (reference: 1975-1989)		
1990-1993 (Community Policing)	0.789	(0.119)
1994-1996 (Order Maintenance Policing)	0.924	(0.131)
Constant	0.734+	(0.129)

*Note.* Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\* p<0.01, \* p<0.05, + p<0.10 (two-tailed test).

These findings are consistent both with previous studies in policing as well as life-course and other longitudinal research findings that show marriage to have a stabilizing effect on people, whereas divorce can create a chaotic environment that manifests in criminal or otherwise deviant behavior.

### **Employment History**

Employment history has consistently been found to be relevant for predicting misconduct, yet here there is little in officers' employment history that is significant. Officers with prior military experience are 39% more likely to commit misconduct, and officers with below standard performance evaluations are 207% more likely to commit misconduct than those with positive evaluations. The lack of significance of other facets of poor employment history is surprising, not only because of the inconsistency with previous research but also because one would expect someone who experiences employment problems in policing to have had problems in previous jobs as well. This could, however, be a matter of masked sex-specific effects, which will be addressed in the split-sample results.

### **Criminal History**

The main effect of criminal history is a significant risk factor, as would be expected. Officers with a criminal records upon entering the police department were 7.3% more likely to commit misconduct than those without a criminal background. This is consistent with previous research; the best predictor of future criminal behavior is previous criminal behavior. This finding holds across a variety of contexts, samples, and time periods.

### **NYPD Employment Experience**

Rather than employment history, it seems that officers' experiences in the NYPD are more salient to their misconduct likelihood. Even from the point of application, some

misconduct can be predicted; officers who had a negative recommendation (a recommendation not to hire) from the background investigator were 43.3% more likely to commit misconduct than those with positive recommendations.

Consistent with prior literature, an officer's rank is significantly related to misconduct likelihood. Patrol officers are 65.7% more likely to commit misconduct than probationary officers, whereas officers at the rank of sergeant or above are 63% less likely to commit misconduct than probationary officers. Additionally, being assigned to either a staff assignment (37.8% less likely) or a special unit or proactive investigation (48.5% less likely) is protective for officer misconduct. Interestingly, being assigned to the police academy or field training was statistically similar to patrol assignments. The field training aspect could drive this seemingly surprising finding. This finding could be tied to the oft-cited statement that senior officers say to rookie officers on the first day of training, "Forget everything they taught you in the academy; I'm going to teach you how to really do police work." Part of this training is immersion in the police subculture, so it is possible that field-training officers are more likely to commit misconduct in an attempt to "show rookies how it's done" and inculcate the culture of secrecy and fidelity to their brothers-in-blue. Alternatively, it is possible that the field training officer position was used as a form of informal punishment and was not highly sought after. Thus, problematic officers may have been funneled into this position.

Citizen complaints have long been established as a strong correlate for police misconduct, and for good reason: The best predictor of future offending is past misbehavior. In this study, the same is true. Having citizen complaints is a risk factor for misconduct, especially complaints from previous police service; officers with complaints from prior service were 322.8% more likely to commit misconduct than those with no complaints. Officers with complaints within the first year 46.4% more likely to commit

misconduct than those without complaints, and those with complaints after the first year were 29.3% more likely to commit misconduct.

### **Controls**

Previous research has shown that as officers get older, they are less likely to commit misconduct, consistent with research on offending in general. This study supports these findings; as age increases one standard deviation from the average, officers are 7.6% less likely to commit misconduct. Surprisingly, there were no statistically significant differences in misconduct likelihood between the different political eras.

While enrollment in school during employment with the NYPD is not statistically significant, education level at the time of appointment to the NYPD is salient for officers' likelihood of committing misconduct. Compared to officers with only a high school education, those with some college (but no degree) were 25.1% less likely to commit misconduct and those with a degree (associate or higher) were 57.1% less likely to commit misconduct. This is consistent with previous research and could be related to the economic aspects related to higher education; officers with some college education or a college degree often make more money than their less-educated counterparts and are often more attractive for promotions and other accolades that accompany greater monetary gains.

### **Subsample Differences in Predictors of Misconduct**

The split-sample model (see Table 6) gives a quantitative picture of the correlates of misconduct separated by officer sex. The same logistic regression was performed on both the male and female subsamples and the equality of the coefficients were tested using z-score comparisons. The effects discussed below remained after controlling for known correlates of police misconduct, which did not vary by sex. This model shows that



some long-standing assumptions of how some variables operate in predicting misconduct may require greater nuance when looking separately at males and females.

For the male subsample model, VIFs for the model were less than 3.20 (average VIF = 1.49) and tolerance levels ranged from 0.35 to 0.91. Nagelkerke's R-squared was 0.313 and the model chi-square was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). For the female subsample model, VIFs were less than 2.69 (average VIF = 1.67) and tolerance levels for the model ranged from 0.37 to 0.88. Nagelkerke's R-squared for the model was 0.500 and the chi-square for the model was significant ( $p < 0.001$ ). Notably, the female model has much more explanatory power than the male model.

### **Race and Ethnicity**

In the full sample findings, race and ethnicity were significant for both blacks and Hispanics, with both being risk factors for misconduct. On its face, the split-sample model indicates that black males have a higher likelihood of committing misconduct relative to their white counterparts than do black females (341.5% more likely for black males compared to 252.2% more likely for black females), but the difference is statistically insignificant. Additionally, first glance would show that Hispanic women are not statistically different from white women, whereas Hispanic men are 48.6% more likely to commit misconduct than white men. In this interpretation, Hispanic women's gender overshadowed the risk value of the ethnicity, yet the z-score comparison shows that Hispanic men and women are not statistically different from one another.

### **Family Life**

Of the three family life variables (marital status, change in marital status, and having children), only three categories are statistically different between male and female officers. Married female officers are statistically indistinguishable from their non-married counterparts, but married male officers are 72.9% less likely to commit

Table 6

*Logistic Regression Likelihood of Misconduct, Split-Sample Analysis*

Variables	Female (N=338)		Male (N=1,884)	
	Odds Ratio	SE	Odds Ratio	SE
Race (reference: White)				
Black	3.522**	(1.205)	4.415**	(0.707)
Hispanic	0.879	(0.400)	1.486*	(0.259)
Marital Status (reference: Never married)				
Married*	1.456	(0.651)	0.522**	(0.086)
Divorced	1.241	(0.736)	2.228*	(0.837)
Change in Marital Status (reference: No Change)				
Got Married	0.214**	(0.083)	0.271**	(0.036)
Got Divorced*	0.177+	(0.157)	1.201	(0.304)
Kids	0.758	(0.279)	1.017	(0.167)
Prior Police Experience+	0.255+	(0.184)	1.072	(0.284)
Prior Military Experience	2.240*	(0.884)	1.296*	(0.154)
Fired from Previous Jobs	1.558	(0.829)	1.326	(0.263)
Periods of Unemployment	0.990	(0.095)	0.980	(0.038)
Derogatory Comments from Prior Employer	3.301	(2.630)	1.194	(0.286)
Below Standard Performance Evaluations	6.033**	(3.698)	2.753**	(0.661)
Criminal History	3.206	(2.423)	1.620*	(0.305)
Officer Rank (reference: Probationary Officer)				
Patrol Officer**	4.735**	(1.970)	1.424*	(0.215)
Detective	1.070	(1.107)	0.977	(0.277)
Sergeant or Higher*	1.665	(1.191)	0.313**	(0.082)
Command (reference: Patrol)				
Staff Assignment	0.406+	(0.221)	0.658*	(0.122)
Proactive Investigation/Special Unit*	0.194**	(0.098)	0.608*	(0.119)
Field Training/Police Academy	1.302	(0.596)	0.760	(0.136)
Father in the NYPD	1.727	(0.977)	0.750	(0.161)
Time to First Complaint (reference: No Complaints)				
Complaint from Prior Police Service+	12.316**	(7.410)	3.814**	(0.925)
Within 1 Year	1.912	(1.013)	1.461*	(0.279)
More than 1 Year	2.158*	(0.808)	1.241+	(0.149)
Background Investigator Did Not Recommend Hire	2.355	(1.399)	1.403+	(0.272)
Age	1.014	(0.048)	0.959*	(0.019)
Education (reference: High School)				
Some College (No Degree)	1.278	(0.475)	0.708**	(0.083)
College Degree (Associate/Bachelor/Graduate)	0.399*	(0.178)	0.424**	(0.092)
Actively Enrolled in School	0.637	(0.303)	0.991	(0.216)
Political Era (reference: 1975-1989)				
1990-1993 (Community Policing)	1.098	(0.449)	0.722+	(0.121)
1994-1996 (Order Maintenance Policing)	1.272	(0.519)	0.880	(0.138)
Constant	0.140**	(0.087)	0.902	(0.168)

*Note.* Robust standard errors in parentheses; \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*  $p < 0.05$ , +  $p < 0.10$  (two-tailed test).

misconduct than never married men. This difference is significant; the protective aspect of marriage, then, is driven by the males in the sample and masks the non-significant effect in women. Getting married, however, is a similarly significant protective factor for

both men and women; women who got married during their time in the NYPD were 78.6% less likely to commit misconduct than women who had no change in their marital status and men who got married during their time in the NYPD were 72.9% less likely. Getting divorced, however, shows a statistical difference between men and women, and in a surprising fashion. Men in the sample who got divorced were statistically equivalent to men with no change in their marital status. Women who divorced, however, were 82.3% less likely to commit misconduct than women with no change in marital status.

This finding has two important implications. First, it demonstrates the importance of viewing men and women separately in assessing risk and protection factors for various forms of offending. Additionally, this finding shows that some stressors may be positive rather than negative. Prior research on general offending and desistance has found divorce to have a destabilizing effect, hindering efforts at desistance from criminal behavior. These studies, however, have used samples primarily of men; it is possible that divorce, for women, can have a stabilizing effect if the woman is removing herself from a negative or dangerous situation. The job stability that generally accompanies professions like policing could empower women to leave abusive or otherwise negative relationships (e.g., drug-addicted or chronically unemployed spouse). Thus, rather than divorce being a stressor, the *relationship* is a stressor and divorce removes that stressor. Thus, theoretical explanations for offending may need to be re-evaluated in light of the differences for men and women. In this instance, strain theory, which emphasizes that strains can only be negative, and life-course criminology, which specifically notes that divorce is a destabilizing factor in desistance from criminal behavior, may need to re-examine their frameworks.

### **Employment History**

Like the full sample, few characteristics of employment history seem to salient to

predicting misconduct. Prior military experience and below standard performance evaluations are significant risk factors for misconduct for both men and women, though the sex differences are not significant. Conversely, prior police experience has significantly different sex effects. Male officers with previous police experience are not statistically different from those without prior experience; for female officers, however, prior experience as a police officer is a protective factor for misconduct, as women with prior experience were 74.5% less likely to commit misconduct than women without it.

### **Criminal History**

The effect of criminal history on misconduct likelihood is not significantly different between men and women. This is somewhat surprising, since it is a significant risk factor for men but not a statistically significant risk factor for women. The fact that it is significant for one and not for the other, yet the difference between them is not significant, demonstrates the importance of comparing males and females in the same sample. Studies that use samples consisting of only one sex may be drawing incorrect conclusions based on incomplete information.

### **NYPD Employment Experience**

Several aspects of officers' experiences in the NYPD differ by sex. First, the only command, relative to patrol, that had statistically significant differences by sex was proactive investigation or special units, which is a protective factor for both men and women but to varying degrees. Women assigned to this command were 80.6% less likely than female patrol officers to commit misconduct, whereas male officers assigned to proactive investigations or special units were 39.2% less likely than male patrol officers to commit misconduct. Being assigned to a staff unit was also a protective factor for both men and women, but the difference between the two was insignificant.

Second, the amount of time it took for an officer to receive his or her first citizen complaint was significant between the sexes. Women with prior complaints were 1131.6% more likely to commit misconduct than women without any complaints. For men, the effect of prior complaints was much smaller, though still significant: Men with prior complaints were 281.4% more likely to commit misconduct than their counterparts with no complaints. Women and men are statistically similar in the effect of a citizen complaint within the first year on their misconduct likelihood, but women who receive their first complaint after the first year are 115.8% more likely to commit misconduct than women without complaints, whereas men are 24.1% more likely to commit misconduct than men without complaints.

These two effects combined could show that citizen complaints are much more accurate at pinpointing female misconduct than male misconduct, especially when a female officer entered the NYPD with a complaint from a prior job in policing. This could have significant effects on misconduct screening procedures within the department, especially early intervention (EI) systems.

Finally, the effect of officer rank differed by sex for patrol officers and higher ranks (sergeant and above). For higher ranks, there was no statistical difference between higher ranked women and female probationary officers, but there was a significant protective aspect to being a higher ranked male (68.7% less likely to commit misconduct than male probationary officers). Given that nearly half of separated women were probationary officers, and being a higher rank did not protect women from committing misconduct as it did for men, it is possible that higher ranked women feel increased pressure to commit misconduct in order to stay in the good graces of their male peers and superiors, especially since there were very few females in higher ranks during the study period. Likewise, women in supervisory positions, such as sergeants or lieutenants,

may feel pressure to commit misconduct to retain authority and control over male officers under their purview.

Female patrol officers were 373.5% more likely to commit misconduct than their probationary counterparts, whereas male patrol officers were only 42.4% more likely to commit misconduct. In other words, when comparing female study officers to female comparison officers, female officers are more likely to make it through probation before getting into trouble, and this effect is substantially higher for women than it is for men. There are two possible explanations for this finding. The first is that this substantial difference could be due to the extreme pressure women often feel to fit into the police subculture, especially among line officers. Patrol officers, more than other ranks, must rely on their fellow officers for back up in dangerous encounters. When officers become problematic or do not assimilate into the culture, they remain on the fringe and may be less likely to receive assistance when needed. Female officers already encounter resistance from male counterparts because they are believed to be less capable in the field; thus, misconduct by female patrol officers may be a form of conforming to the subculture in a perceived act of survival. This would especially be true in organized, group-level misconduct.

**A deeper look at the probationary period.** It is also possible that, in looking at it from the opposite way, men were more likely to be fired during the probationary period (the first two years) than women, thus it only appears that female patrol officers are so much more likely to commit misconduct than female probationary officers. As Table 7 indicates, however, this is not the case. Nearly 43% of female study officers were fired in the first two years; comparatively, not even 30% of male study officers were fired in the first two years. This leads to two possibilities. First, supervisors rely on the discretion present during the probationary period to remove female officers

Table 7

*Time to Separation, by Sex*

Time to Separation	Male (N=1,310)	Female (N=231)	Total (N=1,541)
Less than 6 months	92 7.02%	27 11.69%	119 7.72%
6 months to 1 year	120 9.16%	41 17.75%	161 10.45%
1 year to 2 years	170 12.98%	30 12.99%	200 12.98%
2 years to 5 years	203 15.5%	39 16.88%	242 15.7%
5 years to 10 years	318 24.27%	40 17.32%	358 23.23%
10 years to 15 years	249 19.01%	43 18.61%	292 18.95%
15+ years	158 12.06%	11 4.76%	169 10.97%

who seem to have difficulty assimilating into the culture. Alternatively, and more pessimistically, male supervisors use probation to covertly discriminate against women.

Yet, when separated by race (see Table 8), a much larger percentage of white female study officers than black or Hispanic female study officers were fired during the probationary period (60.81% of white women, compared to 29.27% of black women and 37.69% of Hispanic women). This is counterintuitive to the subcultural explanation, as minorities, especially minority women, should be more likely to be fired than white officers, thus lending credence to the gender discrimination explanation. There is a similar pattern between white and black males (31.89% of white male study officers were fired in the probationary period, compared to 22.16% of black male study officers), though white and Hispanic males are nearly indistinguishable (31.89% and 28.56%, respectively). It is therefore possible that an officer's minority status was protective during the probationary period. The department was under intense public scrutiny during the study period and firing minority officers during their probationary periods

may have drawn unwelcome attention. The same protection may not have been afforded to women because gender parity was not as politically important as was racial parity.

Table 8

*Time to Separation, by Sex and Race*

Time to Separation	Male (N=1,295)			Female (N=230)		
	White (N=803)	Black (N=343)	Hispanic (N=149)	White (N=74)	Black (N=123)	Hispanic (N=33)
Less than 6 months	61	20	9	9	12	6
	7.6%	5.83%	6.04%	12.16%	9.76%	18.18%
6 months to 1 year	81	25	14	23	11	7
	10.09%	7.29%	9.4%	31.08%	8.94%	21.21%
1 year to 2 years	114	31	25	13	13	4
	14.2%	9.04%	16.78%	17.57%	10.57%	12.12%
2 years to 5 years	120	45	36	12	18	8
	14.94%	13.12%	24.16%	16.22%	14.63%	24.24%
5 years to 10 years	168	108	36	11	26	3
	20.92%	31.49%	24.16%	14.86%	21.14%	9.09%
10 years to 15 years	150	74	23	3	35	5
	18.68%	21.57%	15.44%	4.05	28.46	15.15%
15+ years	109	40	6	3	8	0
	13.57%	11.66%	4.03%	4.05%	6.5%	0%

Moving beyond simply time to separation, Table 9 describes the type of misconduct for which male and female study officers were fired. This table indicates that a much higher percentage of men committed crime and serious official misconduct – the behavior most people associate with police misconduct (43.41% of male study officers compared to 24.09% of female study officers).

Table 9

*Type of Misconduct, by Sex*

Type of Misconduct	Male (N=1,207)	Female (N=220)	Total (N=1,427)
Crime & Serious Official Misconduct	524 43.41%	53 24.09%	577 40.43%
Administrative Violations	347 28.75%	83 37.73%	430 30.13%
Drug and Drug Test Failures	336 27.84%	84 38.18%	420 29.43%



When broken down further by time to separation, there are some clear sex differences (see Table 10 for males and Table 11 for females). First, 55.42% of women fired for administrative violations were fired during their probationary period (compared to 36.89% of males fired for administrative violations). The other two categories of misconduct, which have much less discretion, had more similar percentages between men and women: 27.68% of men and 32.14% of women fired for drugs and drug test failures were fired during their probationary period, and 27.1% of men and 37.73% of women fired for crime and serious official misconduct were fired during their probationary period.

Table 10  
*Time to Separation, by Type of Misconduct for Males*

	Crime and Serious Official Misconduct (N=524)	Administrative Violations (N=347)	Drugs and Drug Test Failures (N=336)
Less than 6 Months	26 4.96%	17 4.90%	47 13.99%
6 Months to 1 Year	50 9.54%	44 12.68%	20 5.95%
1 Year to 2 Years	66 12.60%	67 19.31%	26 7.74%
2 Years to 5 Years	78 14.89%	48 13.83%	54 16.07%
5 Years to 10 Years	121 23.09%	71 20.46%	90 26.79%
10 Years to 15 Years	96 18.32%	69 19.88%	71 21.13%
15+ Years	87 16.60%	31 8.93%	28 8.33%

These findings raise questions about how the NYPD handled misconduct early in an officer's career. The disproportionately high percentage of female officers fired for administrative misconduct during the probationary period is consistent with a sex discrimination thesis, though no definitive conclusions can be drawn. The findings of this study are nonetheless noteworthy and again raise important questions about the

clear distinction in prevalence and type of misconduct across officer sex, and the department’s responses to that misbehavior.

Table 11

*Time to Separation, by Type of Misconduct for Females*

	Crime and Serious Official Misconduct (N=53)	Administrative Violations (N=83)	Drugs and Drug Test Failures (N=84)
Less than 6 Months	4 7.55%	7 8.43%	15 17.86%
6 Months to 1 Year	9 16.98%	21 25.30%	7 8.33%
1 Year to 2 Years	7 13.21%	18 21.69%	5 5.95%
2 Years to 5 Years	11 20.75%	9 10.84%	18 21.43%
5 Years to 10 Years	7 13.21%	17 20.48%	11 13.10%
10 Years to 15 Years	12 22.64%	11 13.25%	19 22.62%
15+ Years	3 5.66%	0 0.00%	8 9.52%

**Summary**

This chapter provided bivariate correlations and multivariate logistic regression results for known predictors of police misconduct using a sample of 3,085 police officers from the New York City Police Department. A single logistic regression using sex as a control (known as the “add gender and stir” approach) was performed as a baseline, and then the sample was split by sex into male and female subsamples. The same logistic regression was then performed on both subsamples and the coefficients from each of the subsample models were compared using z-scores (see Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Paternoster et al., 1998).

The bivariate and multivariate results yielded some key findings. First, it is clear that women respond to strain differently than men, especially strains related to relationships. Getting divorced while employed by the NYPD was a protective factor for women, and the difference between men and women was statistically significant. This

calls into question theoretical assumptions, especially those made based on samples that are largely (or entirely) male. Conceptualizations of strains need to account for the possibility that some factors are stressful yet ultimately positive.

Second, there are some instances where predictors are salient for men but not women, or vice versa. For example, having prior police experience was a statistically significant risk factor for women but was not significant for men, whereas being a sergeant or higher was a statistically significant protective factor for men but not significant for women. Both of these differences were statistically significant. Thus, it is clear that the “add gender and stir” approach common in policing studies misses essential nuance in describing what affects the likelihood to commit police misconduct.

Finally, the split-sample analysis demonstrated the need for male comparison samples, which are often missing in small qualitative studies. Being Hispanic, for example, was not significant for women, but was significant for men. The difference between men and women was not statistically significant, but the significant result from the male portion of the sample rendered the predictor significant in the full sample model. Thus, a female-only model would miss this key predictor.

Combined, the implications of this study strongly suggest the need for a gendered theory of police misconduct. Long-held assumptions about police misconduct do not seem to be true for both men and women. Some factors have effects that are unexpected, such as divorce, which is typically viewed to be a risk factor, yet is a protective factor for women in this study. Other factors, such as citizen complaints, are more predictive for women than they are for men. Further exploration using time to separation and type of misconduct exposed potential sex discrimination within the NYPD. The implications of these results are discussed in Chapter 5 and limitations and areas for future research are provided.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

### **Introduction**

Policing has been, and in many ways continues to be, a male profession (Martin, 1980). Women have historically had difficulty breaking into policing; in 2000, only 13% of officers in police departments with more than 100 sworn officers were female (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001). Though this is a substantial increase from 2.9% in 1970 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1976; Martin, 1980) and even 9% in 1990 (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001), female police officers experience resistance from their male counterparts. It is not uncommon for female officers to experience sexual harassment, gendered job assignments, skepticism of their capability to do the job, and social isolation while on the job (Balkin, 1988; Franklin, 2007; Holdaway & Parker, 1998; Hunt, 1990; Poole & Pogrebin, 1988).

Just as women are a small percentage of police officers in general, they are also a minority of officers who commit police misconduct. Kane and White (2009) found that of the 2% of officers who committed career-ending misconduct, women were a minority. This supports earlier findings that female officers are less likely to commit any kind of deviance than male officers, of which misconduct is one form (Lersch, 1998; Steffensmeier, 1979; Van Wormer, 1981). These overall offending and police misconduct findings differ, however, from some white-collar crime studies, which find that relatively similar percentages of men and women commit workplace deviance (see, e.g., Daly, 1989; Holtfreter 2005, 2013). Because of this, it is understandable that research on police misconduct has largely overlooked any notion of a gendered pathway to misconduct.

This study begins to fill this gap in the literature using official records from the New York Police Department (NYPD). Fyfe and Kane (2006) created a list of officers

separated from the department for misconduct between 1975 and 1996 (N=1,542), then matching each officer with a comparison officer from the same academy class who had not been separated from the department for misconduct (as of 1996; N=1,543). This sample (N=3,085) included 435 female officers. A logistic regression was done on the full sample, using sex as a control, to mimic how quantitative analyses are typically done in policing research. The sample was then split by sex and separate logistic regressions were performed on each subsample. The coefficients of the subsample regressions were then compared using z-scores. This study found that the effects of important predictors of misconduct do vary by sex.

This chapter has three main parts. First, the implications of the study will be explored. There are several empirical implications of a study of this scope, such as the need for large datasets of female police officers. There are also implications for theoretical frameworks used to explain police misconduct, such as strain, police subculture, organizational theory, and feminist theory. Additionally, the policy implications of this study, such as early intervention (EI) systems and hiring practices, are discussed. Second, the limitations of the study are outlined and directions for future research are provided. The chapter ends with concluding remarks.

### **Empirical Implications**

Previous research on police misconduct has approached officer sex in one of two ways. The first, and most common, is to conduct quantitative studies on large datasets using sex as one of several control variables. This approach does not, however, allow for nuances between males and females in how variables predict misconduct. Table 5 shows the full sample logistic regression used in this study. Likewise, Table 6 shows the split-sample comparisons between male and female subsample logistic regressions. There are important empirical conclusions that can be drawn from these two tables.

The first is that the “add gender and stir” approach common in quantitative studies of police misconduct masks some important effects. For example, in Table 5, getting divorced is nonsignificant, but this is statistically significant for women, and the difference between men and women is significant. In this case, a predictor is important for women and not for men, and this significance is lost in the larger, full-sample analysis. Alternatively, being a sergeant or higher is a significant protective factor for men but not women as seen in Table 6, but is described as an overall protective factor in Table 5. In both of these instances, the full sample analysis lacks necessary nuance. The second empirical conclusion is that some predictors may be relevant for both sexes, but to varying degrees. In Table 6, the effect of being a patrol officer is nearly four times greater for women than it is for men, and this difference is statistically significant. In this case, the effect for being a patrol officer seen in Table 5 is representative only for men; the small number of female officers masks the much larger effect for women.

The second approach commonly used in police misconduct research, generally by feminist policing scholars, is to conduct interviews or other qualitative research using small samples (typically less than 100 officers) of female officers. The findings from these studies are then often compared to the findings of studies using the method outlined above (the “add gender and stir” approach with large samples). The problem with this approach is that female-only studies, without a comparison group of male officers, may conclude that there are differences that are in fact statistically irrelevant. This can be seen in Table 6. For example, being Hispanic is statistically significant for men but not for women, yet the difference in the coefficients for males and females is nonsignificant. Likewise, having below standard performance evaluations, which has a seemingly greater effect for women than men, is not significant when the z-scores for

men and women are compared statistically. It is this statistical comparison that is essential in making any conclusions about differences across samples.

In addition to addressing empirical drawbacks of previous methodologies, this study demonstrates the need for datasets with larger samples of female officers. The dataset used in this study had an appropriately large number of females, but there were limitations to the analyses that could be conducted. Several variables had a surprisingly small number of female officers. Divorced women, for example, were relatively rare. This lack of variation for certain criteria begs the question, do police departments have a very narrow viewpoint on what constitutes an acceptable female candidate? Are divorced women, for example, rare because they were only a small number of total applicants, or because they were outliers of a constricted picture of the acceptable female recruit? Organizationally, police departments may have a patriarchal view of what kind of woman can be a police officer. Larger sets of female officers are also important for studies that seek to go beyond the misconduct dichotomy (yes/no). Studies assessing the type of misconduct, for example, need larger pools of female officers from which to draw or else cell sizes for variables will get too small for statistical power, as was the case here with marital status, background investigator recommendation, and other variables.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Three primary theoretical frameworks were used in this study to explain police misconduct: General strain (Agnew, 1985, 1992, 2006), police subculture (e.g., Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Sherman, 1978), and organizational context (e.g., Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). This study proved to have implications for each of these three frameworks when used in police misconduct research.

#### **Strain Theory**

As described by both Merton (1938) and Agnew (1985, 1992, 2006), strain (or

stress) is negative. It includes the inability to achieve a positively valued goal, the presence of noxious stimuli, or the removal of positive stimuli (Agnew, 1992, 2006). Strain then evokes a negative emotion (e.g., depression, anger, or anxiety) and is handled by one of many coping mechanisms, one of which is deviant behavior (Agnew, 1992; Agnew, Brezina, Wright, & Cullen, 2002). Additional research that has either tested the theory or used the theory as a framework to explain various types of deviance (such as misconduct) has nearly always framed strain in the negative. There is, however, the possibility that strain can be positive or have positive implications. For example, the break up of a relationship, especially divorce, has generally been explained as a strain as it is the removal of a positively valued stimulus (the relationship). But quality, not merely presence, of the relationship needs to be evaluated. If the relationship was toxic, then divorce could actually prove to be a positive life change. In the case of women, divorcing a husband who is a negative influence – such as a drug addicted or chronically unemployed spouse – would actually be a freeing, positive change that decreases stress. Removing such influences could alleviate the need or compulsion to commit misconduct. Alternatively, this finding could indicate the presence of unmeasured coping resources, such as social support. Women in the sample who are getting divorced may have access to resources that prevent maladaptive coping mechanisms, such as misconduct.

Feminist strain scholars have long suggested that men and women experience and respond to strain differently. Research has found that women experience as much or more strain than men and their experiences of strain are qualitatively different from those of men (Agnew & Brezina, 1997; Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Daly, 1992; Eitle, 2002; Piquero & Sealock, 2004) and these findings of the general population are also true for female police officers (Dowler, 2005; Haarr & Morash, 1999; Poteyeva & Sun, 2009). Specifically, men value fair distribution and place higher value



on material goals, whereas women are more concerned with fairness of procedures and personal relationships (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Kaufman, 2009). In general, women experience high levels of gender-based discrimination (Eitle, 2002) and behavior restrictions (Bottcher, 1995). Similar strains are also present in policing; female officers are often victims of both formal and informal gender discrimination in the form of administrative and organizational policies regarding family leave policies, promotion and performance review criteria, and training opportunities (Garcia, 2003; Martin, 1983; Seklecki & Paynich, 2007; Wexler & Logan, 1983).

Women are also as likely, or more likely, than men to experience anger as a result of strain (Broidy & Agnew, 1997; Jennings, Piquero, Gover, & Perez, 2009; Piquero & Sealock, 2004). Anger, however, is often felt in combination with other emotions like guilt, leading most women to handle their stress via non-criminal maladaptive coping mechanisms, many of which are not studied by criminologists (Kaufman, 2009; Sharp et al., 2001, 2005). Female police officers also engage in alternative coping mechanisms, including adapting to one's surroundings (role acceptance) and leaving the profession (avoidance) (Haarr & Morash, 1999).

This study supports the idea that women and men cope with stress differently. This is evident in Table 6, wherein women who got divorced while in the employ of the NYPD were actually 82.3% less likely to commit misconduct than women with no change to their relationship. Clearly, women in the study who got divorced viewed their divorce with more nuance than scholars generally allow. There are several possibilities for this unexpected finding. First, women who get divorced could find themselves in a situation where their job is worth more than additional income gained by profit-motivated misconduct. This view of policing as a "survival job" may make these women less likely to commit misconduct, though their circumstances would indicate otherwise. Alternatively,

the divorce separated the officer from a spouse who was a negative influence, as noted above. Yet another possibility is that the job stability that accompanied being a police officer provided the needed financial security for women to leave a problematic relationship. More research is needed, especially using mixed methods, to understand the dynamics underlying these changes and the resulting outcomes.

Alternative methods, such as vignette-based studies or in-person interviews or focus groups, may be better able to address the many facets of gendered strains. Measuring the quality of relationships, rather than merely the presence or absence of a relationship, would also be beneficial. Similarly, studies should investigate the effects of officers' relationships with peers and other family members, such as children, on their strategies for and ability to cope with strains.

### **Police Subculture**

Subcultural explanations for misconduct are rooted in Akers's (1998) social learning theory, which itself is based on Sutherland's (1940) differential association theory. Akers (1998) theorized that deviant behavior is learned through social interactions by way of four mechanisms: Differential association, differential reinforcement, definitions, and modeling. Differential association is the influence of those with whom one interacts and is suggested to be the strongest mechanism. In policing, differential association manifests in the police subculture, the primary method by which officers learn how to do the job of policing (Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Sherman, 1978). Early studies of routine police work found that there was a series of occupational norms and values based on the rigid hierarchy of the police organization, and misconduct was unofficially encouraged through this informal code (Cain, 1973; Chan, 1996; Manning, 1977, 1995; Stoddard, 1968).

The police subculture is based on solidarity, secrecy, and a distrust of the public, often referred to as the “blue wall of silence” (Bittner, 1974; Stoddard, 1968; Van Maanen, 1980; Westley, 1970). This code of secrecy and solidarity is emphasized in what Kappeler and colleagues (1998) describe as an “us versus them mentality,” wherein officers are pitted against the general public in a confrontational subculture. In particular, this police subculture is characterized by masculinity (Haarr & Morash, 1999; Herbert, 1998; Hunt, 1990; Reiner, 1992). It is incredibly difficult for women to break into the subculture (Chu & Sun, 2007; Reiner, 1992) because of women’s social isolation and status as “token females” (Kanter, 1977) and because male officers do not accept women as part of the subculture since female officers’ attitudes and behaviors do not support the hyper-masculinity of the subculture’s values of aggression, cynicism, and authoritarianism (Belknap & Shelley, 1992).

As is the case in corporate business culture, women are often left out of unofficial social networks even when in high-ranking positions (Daly, 1989; Gorman & Kmec, 2009; Holtfreter, 2005, 2013, 2014; Kanter, 1977; Steffensmeier, 1983; Steffensmeier et al., 2013). Specifically, Daly (1989), Holtfreter (2005, 2013), and Steffensmeier (1983) found that women were equally likely to commit some forms of white-collar crime compared to men, but it was the types of crimes that women committed that were salient. Their occupational marginalization either relegated women to low-ranking positions (e.g., bank tellers versus bank managers) or kept women out of deviant peer groups and limited their ability to commit group-oriented crimes, such as collusion. Thus, women were likely to commit low-level infractions in much smaller dollar amounts.

Likewise, women in policing are often left at the periphery of the police subculture. It has been suggested that this placement on the fringes of the subculture

could explain women's lower rates of misconduct. This study supported this contention. The small number of women in higher ranks (11.73% were detectives or higher) and the large percentage of women who left the profession voluntarily during the probationary period (42.9%) indicates that there is likely some measure of social isolation present in the NYPD during the study period.

### **Organizational Context**

The orientation of women within the police organization and the organizational contexts that color their experiences in the profession have predominantly been the key focus of research linking organizational context to policing. Balkin (1988) and Fielding (1994), for example, argue that the police department is perhaps the most gendered of all social institutions because of the sheer percentage of men consistently present throughout the ranks. Additionally, only a small percentage of police officers are female, but their distribution throughout the ranks is inequitable (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001).

It is difficult, however, "to separate individual police misconduct from the organizational context in which it takes place" (Wolfe & Piquero, 2011, p. 1). Scholars have long noted that organizations play a role in individual officer misconduct, going so far as to argue that the blame for officer misconduct lies with organizations themselves (e.g., Ivkovic, 2005). Other scholars, however, argue that researchers need to move past merely blaming organizations and work to determine the mechanisms by which the organization affects individual misconduct (Manning, 2009). Wolfe and Piquero do so using an organizational justice framework, finding that perceptions of fairness and justice within organizational management was closely linked to lower likelihoods of adherence to the "blue wall of silence" or noble-cause corruption. Additionally, they find that these perceptions of organizational justice are also associated with lower levels of

police misconduct (Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). While organizational justice is not the only framework that could be used to study the effects of organizational context on misconduct, it is a promising beginning in this direction.

This study used the political era of the police department as a proxy for organizational context. The eras used were: 1975-1989, which encompassed the period of massive layoffs and subsequent rehires; 1990-1993, which includes the start of William Bratton's tenure as police commissioner and the era of community policing in New York City; and 1994-1996, which is the beginning of the mayoralty of Rudolph Giuliani and an emphasis on order maintenance policing using the concept of broken windows. This variable captured not only the necessary element of time, but all organizational changes that occurred within the department as a function of time, including changes in the ratio of male to female officers.

Since the number of females in the department grew between 1975 and 1996, there were two hypothesized outcomes resulting from the inclusion of this variable. The first was that the increased number of women would have a "civilizing effect" regarding misconduct, since women are less likely to commit misconduct and would conceivably bolster an anti-misconduct element within the subculture. The second possible outcome was that an increase in women in the department would normalize femininity within policing and they would be brought into the larger subculture, thus potentially increasing their likelihood of committing misconduct. Neither of these scenarios seemed to happen in this study. It is possible that there is a threshold number of women – a "tipping point," as it were – required for real change to occur to the subculture, and that threshold was not reached as of 1996. As noted previously, even in 2000, women composed only 13% of police departments with more than 100 sworn officers (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001). According to LEMAS, women comprised, in a relatively linear pattern,

between 11 and 15% of the NYPD during the study period, consistent with the National Center for Women and Policing findings. As more women enter the policing profession, future research should pay attention to this issue.

Another aspect of organizational context is that of organizational values and how those values manifest in the decisions of organizational actors. For example, precinct-level supervisors are given immense discretion in how infractions of administrative and criminal codes are handled. In this study, 42% of female “bad cops” were dismissed during the probationary period. This is a rather large percentage, as the probationary period only encompasses the first two years of an officer’s career. Consistent with Stoddard’s (1968) assertion, exploration of the probationary period in this study indicates that supervisors terminate female officers for minor administrative violations, over which they have extensive discretion, in order to remove female officers they view to be in violation of the informal code or a danger to the social group. This would be especially easy to do during the probationary period, when any violation is grounds for dismissal, no matter how small the infraction.

This could stem from a disconnect between the organizational goals of the top-brass and the subculture present in the rank-and-file. For example, police administrators have a vested interest in a diverse workforce, thus there is an organizational goal of recruiting large numbers of females and racial and ethnic minorities, but these officers are then left on the fringes of the subculture and precinct-level supervisors may then use their discretion to get rid of “problematic” officers. Given the additional information in this study using time to separation and type of misconduct for both sexes, however, it seems to be more likely that there was, at least during the study period, entrenched sex discrimination in how probationary officers were disciplined. Rather than it being a

method of removing threats to the subculture, as indicated by Stoddard (1968), it seems more likely to have simply been a matter of sexism.

### **A Gendered Pathway to Misconduct?**

Scholars have found evidence of gendered pathways to crime and victimization in a variety of contexts (Belknap & Holsinger, 2006; Burgess-Proctor, 2012; Reisig, Holtfreter, & Morash, 2006). Gender-specific models are especially important when supposedly “gender-neutral” policies are in place without fully understanding how risk factors vary by gender (Holtfreter & Cupp, 2007). This study used a split-sample comparison approach to assess the possibility of a gendered pathway to misconduct. The split-sample models in Table 6 demonstrate that there are important differences between men and women in the effects of the predictors of misconduct. Future research, especially qualitative approaches, should build on this to more completely discern the pathways women take in their misconduct decision-making.

## **Policy Implications**

### **Early Intervention (EI) Systems**

In terms of policy, this study has important implications regarding how early intervention (EI) systems are used and the hiring practices in police departments. First, red flags in an EI system may need to be gender-specific. The results of this study indicate that factors vary in their predictability for men and women. Citizen complaints, for example, have much more predictive value for women than they do for men, though they are risk factors for both sexes. Conversely, factors like divorce operate completely differently for men and women, so a “one-size-fits-all” approach to an EI system likely permits some officers to fall through the cracks.

Additionally, EI systems are typically set up to flag official department records, such as citizen complaints or use of force incidents. This study suggests that these

systems should look at personal matters that may affect officers' job performance. Officers who suddenly become caretakers of children or other family members may encounter financial pressures that were nonexistent prior to the new caretaking responsibility. Additionally, personal stresses like a divorce or a child becoming ill may factor into how officers respond to situations at work.

Third, the findings of this study demonstrate the need for departments to examine gendered internal policies and practices. For example, if women in proactive investigation commands are assigned to deskwork or communications whereas men in these same commands are put in undercover work, men may have greater opportunity to commit misconduct. Likewise, if women in patrol precincts are assigned to victim assistance roles and men in patrol precincts are assigned to handling violent encounters, women may be less likely to receive a citizen complaint than men. Both of these scenarios affect who is flagged in the EI system as being "problematic."

### **Hiring in the Department**

Hiring practices within police departments are another important area of policy. As noted above, the political era of the department was insignificant for both men and women in predicting misconduct. Thus, increasing the number of women in the department may not have the same "civilizing effect" that increasing the proportion of minorities has had. That said, the findings in this study are time-specific; the study period of 1975-1996 was not a time frame that found many women in the occupation of policing; women made up only 13% of police officers in departments with more than 100 sworn officers even in 2000. Thus, it may be that policing has not yet reached the needed threshold of female officers for the civilizing effect to take root.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

As with any study, there are limitations as to what can be done and what



conclusions can be drawn. First, the study was quantitative rather than qualitative or mixed methods. Thus, the results from this study can only tell us how one factor affects another, not *why* this relationship exists. Mixed methods studies, which combine both quantitative and qualitative data, would be able to demonstrate how predictors affect decision-making mathematically as well as why these relationships exist and in what ways these relationships affect one another (Gaub & Holtfreter, 2015).

Additionally, this study uses secondary data, which complicates theory testing. While change in marital status, for example, is used as one of several proxy measures for strain, these are crude measures of concepts. Additionally, the use of official data in this study prohibited the possibility of directly measuring opportunity, an important component of testing strain theory in a study of police misconduct. Future research should build on this limitation by anticipating these problems even before data collection begins; studies conducted for the purpose of testing theory will be better suited to developing measures specifically designed to test specific theoretical constructs. Specifically, new data collection efforts should, from the outset, identify a direct measure of opportunity.

Third, while this study used a large sample of women (N=435), there were certain events that were relatively rare (e.g., being divorced). This made some comparisons within the female subsample difficult. This could be tied to the time period being studied; as mentioned earlier, it was uncommon in the 1970s and 1980s to see many women in police departments. While still underrepresented, police departments are beginning to actively recruit female candidates so more recent datasets may yield larger numbers of women in the sample. This would be especially important as studies move beyond the misconduct dichotomy to study other misconduct outcomes.

Fourth, new data should be gathered in the NYPD, especially after the events of September 11, 2001. In the wake of the terrorist attacks that claimed the lives of men and women alike, it is possible that department solidarity was strengthened; researchers should ascertain whether the events of 9/11 had any bearing on misconduct by way of women being accepted into the subculture. Additionally, researchers should address the sex differences in the use of policing tactics such as racial profiling and stop-question-frisk, the use of which increased substantially in post-9/11 New York City.

Finally, this study focused on the New York City Police Department (NYPD). Some scholars (see Manning, 2009) have suggested that the NYPD is a behemoth unto its own, and that conclusions drawn from studies of the NYPD cannot be generalized to other departments. Collecting data from other departments, especially mid-size departments more representative of police departments nationwide, would aid in either proving or disproving the notion that NYPD data is not generalizable. Additionally, multi-agency datasets would allow for more organizational components to be analyzed, which have generally been ignored in the police misconduct literature (for exception, see, e.g., Wolfe & Piquero, 2011). What the values and norms of police departments are – and whether they are gendered – could be better assessed in multi-site studies.

### **Conclusion**

This study sought to answer three key research questions. First, do predictors of misconduct affect men and women the same way? Second, do some predictors serve as risk factors for men but protective factors for women, or vice versa? And finally, what factors affect women's likelihood of committing misconduct?

The results of this study show that not all predictors of misconduct affect men and women the same way. Being married, for example, is significant only for men, whereas getting divorced is significant only for women. Some factors are also stronger

for one sex than the other. Being a patrol officer and having citizen complaints from previous police service, while significant risk factors for both men and women, are much stronger for women.

Regarding the second research question, the study results did not yield findings of predictors being a risk factor for one sex and a protective factor for the other, though there were some instances of a risk factor only being salient for one sex. Being married, for example, is a significant protective factor, but only for men. Conversely, getting divorced is significant only for women, but was surprisingly a protective factor for women.

In looking only at the female subsample, there are some key findings that warrant note. First, consistent with other misconduct studies using official data, black officers were more likely to be fired for misconduct than white officers. Prior research using this dataset found that white officers were more likely to accept a plea agreement for mitigated discipline when confronted with misconduct charges, whereas minority officers pressed for an internal trial (Kane & White, 2009). Rather than racial discrimination, the disparity was due to defendant preference and standard institutional responses to those preferences. If an officer accepted an organizational plea agreement, he or she was more likely to be formally disciplined (e.g., administrative leave without pay) but not fired, whereas officers who pressed for a full trial were then fired if found guilty. However, Hispanic officers' likelihood of being fired for misconduct was no different than that of white officers. While the difference for male and female Hispanics was not significant, the nonsignificance of Hispanic ethnicity among females bears mentioning. This finding demonstrates that female-only studies, without a male comparison group, may draw faulty conclusions; likewise, it shows that large-sample studies with sex as a control may miss nuances among predictors.

Additionally, the over-representation of racial and ethnic minorities is consistent with the use of official data. This finding could reflect greater detection or social control of minorities, especially given the Anglo-centric nature of policing organizations. Alternatively, it could represent a difference in opportunity, which typically cannot be accounted for in studies using official data. Regardless of the reason for this over-representation, the finding by police scholars that racial or ethnic minorities are more likely to commit misconduct differs from findings in studies of other forms of workplace deviance, where the “typical” offender is white.

Second, getting divorced as a protective factor for women, as noted above. This is contrary to a large body of life-course literature and most studies that use sex as a control; or at the very least suggests that, for women, divorce may a turning point, much as marriage is for men (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Again, this demonstrates the need for sex-specific models in quantitative studies and more research into this dynamic of family relationships in qualitative studies.

This study sought to bridge two fields that have historically seemed to be at odds with one another: Feminist scholarship and policing research. Feminist policing scholars have typically focused on small, female-only samples while general policing researchers tend to use large samples with both sexes and include sex as a control variable. Both approaches, while understandable, have severe limitations in understanding female police officer misconduct. This study used a large sample of police officers in the New York City Police Department to analyze the likelihood of misconduct for both men and women using sex-specific models. In doing so, the results of this study complement the existing literature by providing nuance to previously held notions of the factors that predict police officer misconduct.

Policing has been, and still is, a male-dominated profession (Martin, 1980), and misconduct itself is a rare event (Kane & White, 2009), thus it is unsurprising that often-male policing scholars do not focus on female misconduct. But when researchers understand why women are less likely to commit misconduct, police departments can begin to capitalize on that knowledge to bring greater legitimacy to a necessary institution that has historically suffered from public distrust.

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