Occupational stress and the homosexual police officer

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Occupational Stress and the Homosexual Police Officer

by

David Barton

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Abstract

This dissertation analyzed occupational stress among homosexual officers. Previous researchers have investigated occupational stresses experienced by racial, ethnic and gender minority police officers; however, research has not examined the occupational stresses experienced by homosexual officers. This study utilized an internet survey to gather quantitative data that were statistically analyzed for similarities and differences in how homosexual officers perceive stressors common to all officers and stressors experienced only by minority subgroups, including discrimination. Because homosexual officers have the unique ability to disguise their minority status, this study also examined whether the officers’ choices to reveal or conceal their sexual preference affected their perceptions of stress.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A large body of research has illuminated the extensive, life-altering and even fatal impacts of stress on the lives of police officers, their loved ones and those they serve. Research has also explored the stress experienced by racial, ethnic, and gender minority officers, including stress caused by occupationalinequalities and discrimination. However, very little research has examined the occupational stresses experienced by homosexual officers. Homosexual officers represent an important subgroup in today’s police force. Long gone are the days when a police force was comprised of white males with working-class backgrounds, a high school diploma, and few or no occupational alternatives. Today’s police workforce more nearly represents the communities they serve, diverse in many different ways.

The study of homosexual police officers is important for several reasons. In order to understand the police force as a whole, all of its subgroups should be studied. Comparative analysis of different subgroups reveals similarities and differences in how officers handle stressors common to all officers, and also stressors experienced only by minority subgroups, including discrimination. Finally, this group of officers has the unique ability to conceal its minority status in order to avoid discrimination or harassment. A greater understanding of the officers’ choices to reveal or conceal their sexual preference may lead to a greater understanding of the effort, or discomfort, officers are willing to expend to avoid isolation, discrimination or harassment.
For Toch’s study, *Stress in Policing*, a questionnaire was administered to officers in two police departments. Officers’ perceptions of stress were examined in relation to their occupation. Stress was analyzed in terms of officers’ race and gender. In this study, Toch’s questionnaire was administered to a third minority group of officers, homosexuals. With Toch’s instrument as a tested set of measures and his findings as benchmarks, this study examined the stresses perceived by homosexual officers. The responses of homosexual officers were compared to those in Toch’s study, most of whom were presumably heterosexuals. The responses of homosexual officers were also compared to those of racial and gender minority officers in Toch’s study. My hypothesis, both from field experience and from previous research, was that homosexual officers perceive the same stresses as the other officers and perceive the same stressors as other minority groups.

This study also explored variation among homosexual officers, in particular by comparing officers who have chosen to reveal their sexual identity to those who have not. Research suggests that those who have revealed their sexual identity experience discrimination, harassment and social isolation.
POLICE STRESS

Stressors

The types of stressors that police officers experience can be described in terms of several categories: police management; the criminal justice system; the nature of police work; and public perception and officers’ private life (Finn, 1997, 20; Stratton, 1980, 75-77).

Police Management

Review of the literature on police occupational stress has shown that numerous studies demonstrate that the police organization and management is the most stressful factor of police work (Reiser, 1973; Madonna, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1990; Kickcaldy, Cooper and Ruffolo, 1995; Toch, 2002; Crank & Caldero, 1991; Behrend, 1980; Alkus & Padesky, 1983; Kop, Euwema and Schaufelt, 1999; Brooks & Piquero, 1998; Biggam, Powers and McDonald, 1997; Hart, Wearing and Headey, 1995; Morash & Haarr, 1995; Kohan & Mazmanian, 2003; Hillgreen, Bond and Jones, 1976; Patterson, 1999; Dinnauer, Metz and Dinnauer, 1988). More stress is felt from within the organization than from outside the organization (Toch, 2002). Crank and Caldero (1991), for instance, found that more “than two-thirds of all officers identified the organization as their principal source of stress” (p. 343). This is supported by the work of Violanti and Aron (1993), who quantified how much more stressful the organization is than other police stressors that inhere in the nature of police work. They found that “organizational stressors had a total effect on distress of approximately 6.3 times that of inherent police stressors” (Violanti & Aron, 1993, 903). Finally, this has been confirmed by Liberman et al. (2002), who found that the administration was the greatest stressor (p. 423).
In 1974, Kroes, Margolis, and Hurrell found that officers’ complaints about the administration fell into two categories:

(1) Administration policy concerning work assignments, procedures, and personal conduct; and

(2) Administration backing and support of patrolman, including the relationship and rapport between patrolman and administrators (p. 86-87)

More recent research done by Ayres and Flanagan (1990) has expanded on this topic and found 11 factors related to the organization that officers found to be stressful. They are:

- Autocratic, quasi-militaristic models of management
- Hierarchical structure
- Poor supervision
- Lack of employee input into policy and decision making
- Excessive paperwork
- Lack of administrative support
- Role conflict and ambiguity
- Inadequate pay and resources
- Adverse working schedules
- Boredom

**Quality of Immediate Supervision**

Violanti and Aron (1994) state that “the paramilitary structure of police organizations does not seem to allow for meaningful interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates” (p. 825). Impersonal relationships between officers and supervisors create stress (Violanti 1988; Cooper, Dewe and O’Driscoll, 2001).

Stotland (1991) found that officers, especially those not suffering from other stressors, perceived stress because of this lack of interpersonal relationships with supervisors. This stress includes “rejection or derogation by their sergeants” (p. 373). Stotland (1991) also
attributed this negative relationship with front-line supervisors to “poor interpersonal relationship with their fellow patrol officers and with the public” (p. 373).

Poor supervision is also a stressor (Eisenberg, 1975; Reiser, 1975; Stratton, 1978; Kroes, 1985; Stearns & Moore, 1990). Research by Burke (1993) identified poor supervision as one of the top stressors perceived by officers (p. 175). Inadequate or incompetent supervision affects the efficiency and effectiveness of the police department. In addition to influencing how officers do their job, problems with supervisors affect their perception of other occupational stresses (Storch & Panzarella, 1996; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Kroes, 1981; Martelli, Waters, and Martelli, 1989; Evans & Coman, 1993).

Perception of occupational stressors affects the intensity of stressors. Because of negative perceptions, officers are more likely to see chronic stressors or even daily hassles as a threat instead of a challenge. This creates a spiral in which the view of constant threat not only affects the perception of the intensity of stressors, but also affects how officers do their job.

**Inadequate Reward or Recognition**

A common theme in the study of police occupational stress is the reward system. The police administration is more likely to punish officers for negative behaviors and less likely to reward officers for positive behaviors (Stratton, 1978; Violanti, 1981; Violanti & Aron, 1995; Lazarus, 1999; Sigler et al., 1991). The knowledge that officers will not be rewarded for doing a good job creates stress (Eisenberg, 1975; Madonna, 2002). The implicit message here is that no matter how well the police duty is performed, there will be no reward (Monahan & Farmer, 1980). However, if there is a reward, it will not be rewarded fairly because of bureaucratic dysfunction (Silbert, 1982). This concept also
includes not being recognized for routinely performing above and beyond the call of duty (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Kop et al., 1999).

**External Political Influence**

The police organization can be affected by external political forces. In addition to interventions by elected officials, police organizations can be influenced by grassroots organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) (Sewell, 2002). These groups may pressure the administration to suit their own ends. MADD, for example, desires that police departments give more attention to drunk-driving enforcement or even add extra police units that would actively seek out this illegal behavior. These political influences affect the organization in that, in extreme cases, political interests can interfere with the objectivity of investigating criminals (Anderson, 1995). Another issue with external influence is that officers’ use of discretion can be negatively affected (Stratton, 1978). The decisions of officers are framed by “such diverse factors as the oath of office, the law, court decisions, departmental policy, informal quota systems, the political climate, community pressures, common sense, and the personality of the chief of police” (Ward, 1971, as cited in DePue, 1979, 9), not all of which are benign.

**The Nature of Police Work**

Collectively, police officers work 24 hours a day, 7 days a week—in short, every day of the year. Police officers respond to citizens’ calls for help regardless of the time of day or night. Research shows that this responsibility is a stressor for officers, especially those assigned the afternoon and midnight shifts (Hurrell, 1986). Storch and Panzarella (1996) found that “the number one dislike about being a police officer was a
poor work schedule” (p. 102). Also, Abdollahi (2002) reports that “shift work is proclaimed in virtually every study as a major stressor” (p. 9).

Officers who work the night or overnight shifts sleep during the daylight hours (Davidson & Veno, 1980), leaving them fatigued and tired. This is exacerbated on the days when they are required to be awake during day time (Brock, Klaus, Harbour, and Nash, 2002), as an officer would in order “to fit in with his family and the rest of society” (Kroes, 1985, 39).

It has been found that daytime sleep is “qualitatively different from nighttime sleep and less satisfying” (Stratton, 1978, 77). O’Neil (1986) explains the fatigue of night work: “fatigue is directly attributed to shift schedules and the social, psychological, sleeping and eating pattern, and physiological disruption associated with night work” (p. 471). Researchers also contend that it is never possible to get used to working overnight (Halbert, 1976, as cited in O’Neil, 1986, 472). This is because of “neurophysiological rhythm,” circadian rhythms, or natural body rhythms (Dinnauer et al. 1988; Kroes, 1985; Golembiowski & Kim, 1990) that regulate blood and body temperature, metabolic rate, urine flow, skin conductance, blood sugar levels, and mental efficiency (Hurrell & Kroes, 1975; Davidson & Veno, 1980; Back, Lerner, and Schore, 1981). These natural body rhythms work in such a way that the body is at peak performance during the day and naturally at rest during the darkness or nighttime hours. In studying the police occupation and mental capacity, it has been found that “vulnerability to fear may occur between the hours of 4:00 and 8 a.m.” (Reiser, 1975, 18). Because officers are working the overnight shift, their body rhythm is not synchronized with the normal functioning or work pattern.
This fatigue affects general mental and physical functioning such as efficiency and work motivation (Back et al., 1981; Golembiowski & Kim, 1990).

This fatigue also creates problems at home, including a change in disposition caused by lack of sleep or breaks in the sleep cycle (Stratton, 1978; Golembiowski & Kim, 1990; House, 1981). It has been found that “the family is also affected by the absence of the officer from many social situations wherein his or her presence is both expected and most appropriate” (Brock et al., 2002, 32). Examples include when officers are unable to make appointments such as with children’s teachers, doctors, or others who work normal hours (House, 1981).

**Experiencing Violence**

Both fear and threat are very real stressors within the police occupation (Kroes, 1985). Officers may experience fear for very good reasons, since their actions can result in their death or the death of another (Violanti, 1981). The threat of both physical and emotional harm is also a reality (Kroes, 1985; Jermier, Gaines & McIntosh, 1989). Grencik (1975) presents the concept of fear as a stressor:

> Stress comes because we have given into fear—fear that we would not live up to expectations, do as we should, not be loved, not be acceptable, that what we are thinking and feeling was so abnormal and unacceptable and that death, damnation to hell, or isolation from the important others would inevitably result. (p. 52)

Because of the inherent nature of police work, the personal safety of officers may be jeopardized. In 2002, 58,066 officers were injured, and 133 officers were killed while performing their duty (*Uniform Crime Report*). Officers die from murder, accidents, and preventable diseases at “rates [that] are considerably above the national averages for all workers” (Lester, 1981, 63). According to Gurlnick (1963), police officers have the
highest risk of any occupation of being murdered at work (as cited in, Lester, 1981, 43). The U.S. Department of Labor cites police work as the seventh most dangerous job (per 100,000 employees) (p. 4).

While others flee from threat, officers move forward toward the dangerous situation. When officers’ fight or flight instinct goes into effect, it must be resisted. They must put themselves in harm’s way to restore order or to protect others. Kelly (2002) explains this: “Unlike other trauma victims, with the exception of combat veterans, police officers and other emergency service workers have the additional burden of responsibility to perform during their high-intensity experiences” (p. 129).

There are several different types of scenarios where police officers may be injured or killed as a result of exposure to criminal violence. According to Brown and Campbell (1994), these situations can include one-on-one physical confrontations, public disorder or riots, and terrorist attacks. Police officers are both trained and socialized to understand that police work is inherently dangerous. Officers are also taught that they can minimize the danger by controlling situations. This leads officers to believe that if they handle situations properly, they will not be injured or killed in the execution of their duty. However, this is not always the case. Because of the inherently dangerous nature of police work, the uncontrollable nature of police work, and the types of individuals that officers have contact with, officers are assaulted and killed in the line of duty (Anderson et al., 1995). The Uniform Crime Report (2004) shows that officers are assaulted every 9 seconds, and one is killed every 66 hours (p. 1). When officers are the victims of criminal violence, they may suffer “more pervasive trauma than does the citizen victim” (Reiser & Geiger, 1984, 315).
Witnessing Child Abuse

Researchers have found that incidents involving victims who are helpless, especially children, are perceived as very stressful (Abdollahi, 2002) and that officers are affected by cases of child abuse (Stevens, 1999). This is particularly stressful when the abuse is of a sexual nature (Reese, 1988; Kop et al., 1999). It has been found that of all victim types, the death of children has the greatest impact on police officers (Hetherington, 1993).

Inadequate Information

Officers may not have all the information that they need. This is significant because information forms the basis of primary appraisal and affects decisions (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The unknown or ambiguous is more stressful than when all the facts, all the outcomes, and all the ramifications of decisions are known.

Information may be lacking or incomplete because of the speed with which incidents unfold. Some incidents happen so quickly that officers must act on only the information that they gather from personal observation. Other incidents transpire while officers are not on the scene and so they must rely on information provided by others, and that information may be incorrect or missing critical elements (Abdollahi, 2002).

The result of incomplete or faulty information is that officers second-guess decisions. This second-guessing becomes an additional stressor that compounds the difficulty of police work. This is further compounded by the reality that decisions are also second-guessed by others who were not on scene or do not understand the stressful nature of police work.

Public Perception and Media Coverage
The police deal directly only with a small percentage of the community; therefore, the police image is directly tied to how they are presented by the media. According to Leisman (2003), police are portrayed in three ways: in a factual manner, a fictional manner, or a lifelike cinematic representation.

When the media presents police in a factual manner, public perception of police efficiency and effectiveness can be either positively or negatively affected (Leisman, 2003). When the media acts in a positive way, such as in cases where the police use TV, newspaper, or other news media to ask for the community’s help in solving crime, it may improve police efficacy. This is particularly helpful in cases when the police need witnesses to come forward or when they are seeking information from people who would not normally assist them.

The media may negatively affect the perceived effectiveness of the department through its portrayal of extremely violent crimes or murder. Guffey (1992) explains that the press engages in “sensationalist practices, ill regard for providing valid accounts, interference in investigations, lack of respect for crime victims, and lack of recognition of the negative effects of the news coverage on police” (as cited in, Scott, 2004, 242). This portrayal of crime presents a bad image of police and hinders officers’ attempts to gain acceptance from the community. This lack of objectivity in the presentation of events also hurts officers in their attempt to solve crime (Yarmey, 1990).

This presentation of crime and police failure to solve high-profile crimes directly or indirectly inculcates in the community the belief that the police are failing to do their duty and are not controlling the criminal element. Abdollahi (2002), explains this phenomenon:
The Los Angeles Police Department and the New York City Police Department are prime examples of police agencies that are all too familiar with public scrutiny. Distorted reports by the media about incidents of police “disappointments” damage the organization’s public image. These criticisms by the media cause the police organizations to receive a bad reputation and subsequently affects the morale of the institution. (p. 7)

This reduction of morale is exacerbated by the media’s preoccupation with incidents of violence toward criminals or cases that involve abuses of force, which adds to an already stressful, difficult working environment (Leisman, 2003).

The media also presents police in a fictional manner. The media can present the police as a superman (such as John Wayne1), a fool (as in Reno 9112), or as a rule breaker (as in Dirty Harry3) (Leisman, 200; Yarmey, 1990). These media representations of the police portray officers in an unrealistic light. This unrealistic portrayal may influence, on some level, the way that the public perceives officers (Phelps, 1975). This presentation of an unrealistic persona fosters further alienation between officers and members of the community.

The final manner in which the media presents police is lifelike. This type of media representation is based on real officers, victims, cases, or crimes but portrays these events in fictional terms. Examples of this are any of the numerous shows in the Law and Order4 series or the CSI: Crime Scene Investigation5 series. These television shows present police unrealistically in that all crime, no matter how old or complex, is solvable within the allotted time frame. This creates unrealistic expectations, which officers are

1Actor in movies from 1926 to 1976.
2Television series on Comedy Central.
3Movie from 1971 starring Clint Eastwood.
4Three television series on NBC.
5Three television series on CBS.
unable to live up to (Stearns & Moore, 1990; Leisman, 2003). Officers working in the real world experience stress when they cannot live up to these expectations (Anderson et al., 1995).

Many people feel that it is the media’s responsibility to act as a “watchdog” (Guffey, 1992). They think that the media is needed to bring to light exactly what the police do and why they do it. The idea is to keep the police responsible for their actions and prevent cases of brutality or corruption. However, police officers are people, and people make mistakes. The media takes advantage of this; when the media discovers a mistake made by officers, they dwell on this fact. The media often takes this out of context and uses it to make both the officers and the department look bad (Stillman, 1986; Mitchell & Bray, 1990; Guffey, 1992). This is especially prevalent in allegations of brutality.

For many officers police work is not just a job. Officers’ identity may be tied to their occupation. Public criticism or a negative public image challenges this identity, especially when the media intentionally makes officers look bad by distorting police incidents or questioning the actions taken by police (Stillman, 1986). This challenge to the police identity is stressful for officers.

In addition to challenging their identity, this negative view within the community devalues the work of police and the efforts they give to their occupation. This negative public view has an adverse effect on the way officers view themselves, and this negativity affects their self worth because officers tie their opinion of themselves to the value that others place on their service (Back et al., 1981). Kroes et al., (1974) found that this view by the community is a “threat to his [or her] sense of professionalism” (p. 97).
In the research by Storch and Panzarella (1996), it was found that the second most prevalent stressor for officers was “public blame, which included public condemnation of police, negative stereotyping of police, and public distrust and disapproval” (p. 102). These researchers found that this stressor was second only to the police organization.

Public Perception and the Community

As today’s police departments move from the traditional role of policing toward community-orientated policing models, the problems of the community become the problems of the police department. These issues are no longer solved by the band-aids of patrol-oriented policing. Today’s community oriented officer now must work to resolve problems at their core. The problems in and of the community itself become the problems for officers. As Lord (1996) explains, these problems of the community introduce their own stressors to the officer:

Law enforcement departments implementing community based policing, the stressors may include lack of recognition by the public, administration, and other officers; lack of communication between its different types of line officers and for supervisors; lack of participation in decisions; and rule changes specifically pertaining to community policing philosophies and practices. (p. 513)

As officers work within the community, and thereby become part of the community, they expect a positive reaction to this work; however, when victims, witnesses, or community members express negativity, officers perceive the stressful effects of working in a hostile environment (Kroes et al., 1974; Kroes, 1985; Dinnauer et al., 1988; Yarmey, 1990; Sigler et al., 1991; Lawrence, 1984; Crank & Caldero, 1991).
CHAPTER 2

THE STRESS OF HOMOSEXUAL OFFICERS

Discrimination

This examination of stress on homosexual police officers began with a discussion of the numerous stressors that all officers are exposed to. Now it is time to turn attention to the group of interest in this study. To explore the stress experienced by homosexual police officers, it is important to understand stressors—in addition to the ones already discussed—that these officers are exposed to. It would be ideal to look to previous research on this topic to know what is to be expected. However, as stated by Brown and Campbell (1994), there is a “dearth of research” on this topic (p. 100). According to Ward and Winstanley (2005), “references to sexual orientation in the diversity literature in the past have been cursory; one of the reasons for this is that it is, unlike most other forms of diversity, often invisible, and in many cases silent’” (p. 448).

This being the case, we can learn about this group from previous research only indirectly, by way of findings about other minority groups, their experiences and their perceptions of police stress. It has been found that minority officers experience similar occupational stressors to majority officers. In addition, minority officers experience additional stressors, specifically discrimination (Liberman et al., 2002). This study explores homosexual officers’ experience of discrimination, and specifics about this form of discrimination. Hence we will first consider research on discrimination as a stressor for other minority groups in policing, and then assess the potential parallels between the experiences of those minorities and homosexual officers.
As a backdrop to discrimination or the perception of fairness, it is important to understand the police culture. Police culture is a culture of machismo, where physical prowess and heterosexual values are of great importance. It also includes an “us-versus-them” mentality in which only white males are included. This mentality is of “traditional Anglo-American masculine values” (Haarr & Morash, 1999, 304). Anyone who is not within this social group is therefore on the outside. Historically, only white males were on the inside, leaving females and minorities on the outside (Miller, Forest, and Jurik, 2003). Haarr (1997) explained that women and racial minorities are not welcome into the informal police culture and are still subjected to sexist and racist attitudes, discrimination, and harassment (p. 78).

The sexism and racism of this culture keeps the “us” empowered and uses discrimination and harassment as tools to keep “them” out of the informal social group (Evans, Coman, Stanley, and Burrows, 1993; Fielding, 1994). When people outside the group try to enter, they are met with “hostility and resentment from white male officers” (Ellison & Genz, 1983, 67). This discrimination begins with the complicated, multistage pre-employment process that is “uncomfortable for women and members of racial and ethnic minorities” (Haarr & Morash, 1999, 304). The pre-employment screening includes physical requirements and testing to exclude women; written testing or educational requirements to exclude ethnic minorities; and background investigation, including personal interviews, to exclude all of the above. According to Miller, Forest, and Jurik (2003), “policing recruitment and selection practices effectively excluded outsiders. These included physical requirements (to exclude women) [and] written tests or educational requirements (to exclude blacks)” (p. 359). This serves to “screen out
candidates who failed to express the ‘correct’ attitudes towards the meaning of masculinity, including an aura of toughness and aggressiveness” (Miller et al., 2003, 359).

This is a remnant of traditional police culture. While it would be expected that modern police culture would accept these archaic concepts, “male power is not dying out with the retirement of the old traditionalist men. It is being reproduced in new, one might say literally ‘virulent,’ forms that are appropriate and effective for the late twentieth century” (Cockburn, 1988, 158). This viewpoint is widespread; other researchers have found that “racist and sexist attitudes and behavior remain a problem in many departments” (Miller et al., 2003, 356).

**Racial Tension**

It is inconsequential as to where discriminatory tensions within a department begin. All that is of real concern is whether or not it is present and if it is present, how harmful it is to the police organization and how stressful it is to police officers. Discriminatory tension may arise from perceived imbalances, the police culture, or discrimination or antidiscrimination (such as affirmative action) policies of the organization.

Racial tension affects minority officers through perceived, verbal, and actual discrimination. White, Lawrence, Biggerstaff and Grubb (1985) found that minority officers perceived more stress than majority officers. Stevens (1999) found racism to be the eighth most intense stressor in the department that he studied.

One of the forms of discrimination that minority officers cite is the inability to form strong, interpersonal relationships with coworkers (Haarr&Morash, 1999). Ellison
and Genz (1983) explain that “officers who are a member of a racial minority group are often denied access to the informal channels of support and information that are an important part of police work” (p. 68). Miller et al. (2003) explain that this discrimination prevents minorities from promotional opportunities. Numerous researchers have found that the inability to gain support from majority coworkers or supervisors causes minority officers to turn to those with whom “they share a racial bond” (Haarr & Morash, 1999, 312).

It has been found that some nonminority officers feel that minority officers are afforded advantages. This includes selection of preferred postings, in hiring, and in promotion. Even some minority officers feel that minority officers are afforded prestigious job assignments only because of their race, not their qualifications. Research by Haar (1997) found that nonminority officers expressed the belief that “black officers were promoted because of affirmative action rather than merit” (p. 69). She also found that these officers had a “lack of respect and trust towards black sergeants, whom they perceived as nothing more than unqualified affirmative action promotions” (Haar, 1997, 69).

**Gender Discrimination**

Several researchers report that female officers perceive higher levels of stress than male officers (Webb & Smith, 1980; Haarr & Morash, 1999; Morash & Haarr, 1995; Ellison & Genz, 1983; Zhao, He, Lovrich, and Cancino, 2003; Hart et al., 1995; Richmond, Kehoe, Hailstone, Wodak, and Uebel-yan, 1999; Patterson, 2003). When exposed to occupational stressors, female officers may perceive more stress than males who are exposed to the same stressors (Madonna, 2002). However, it has been suggested that
female officers do not perceive more occupational stress; they simply “report higher levels of distress because they’re more ready to admit to personal difficulties” (Collins & Gibbs, 2003, 262; also see Nelson& Burke, 2002; Martin et al., 1986; Brown & Grover, 1998). Furthermore, “evidence suggests that women tend to both experience and report emotions at a higher level of intensity than do men” (Jex, Adams, and Ehler, 2002, 75).

There are two distinct forms of discrimination that female officers are exposed to. These are the notion that women donot belong in the police occupation and sexual harassment.

The first form of discrimination comes from both within the police organization and outside of the organization, or the working environment (He, Zhao and Archbold, 2002). The discrimination that comes from within the organization is explained by Yarmey (1990), who presents four factors that female officers name as types of discrimination:

1. *Negative attitudes of policemen*. Questions about their sexual orientation, blatant antiwomen comments, and refusal to talk to women are frequent experiences of policewomen.
2. *Training*. Training officers often verbally abuse, punish, and attempt to intimidate female recruits into resigning. The types of physical training given to women disregard physical size and muscular differences between females and males.
3. *Rumors*. Policewomen feel particularly stressed when policemen spread rumors about their sexuality, trustworthiness, or capability. Not willing to be part of the gossip mill, policewomen often feel isolated and lonely. They fail to develop the occupational camaraderie usually found among their male counterparts.
4. *Group blame*. Policewomen frequently experience the stress of minority group status. When a policewoman fouls up, their fellow female officers believe that policemen take this as proof that all policewomen are inadequate. (98-99; also see Wexler& Logan, 1983)
This discrimination comes from the traditional model of police culture in which policing is considered an occupation for males, and females are unwelcome (Silbert, 1982). The police culture is also noted as:

… having a strong sense of competitiveness and being preoccupied with the imagery of conflict, together with an exaggerated heterosexual orientation often articulated in terms of misogynistic and patriarchal attitudes. There is still a perception that women officers are best suited to deal with ‘emotional labor’ of police work, which pushes them into a marginalized social services policing. (Brown, Fielding, and Grover, 1999, 314-15)

Discrimination that stems from this perception of policing can be of differing levels of severity. Some majority officers treat female officers with disdain. Some majority officers withhold or fail to offer information to female officers. Majority officers may also fail to mentor females. This lack of informal training may make learning aspects of the police occupation difficult or cause unnecessary or embarrassing errors. The most severe display of discrimination is the failure to provide female officers “with reliable backup or protection” (Haar, 1997, 79).

This antifemale attitude is supported by the idea that police work is a dangerous occupation where physical prowess determines success. This leads to the reasoning that females are unfit to be police officers because they are not physically able to perform the police duty (Westmarland, 2002). In the traditional concept of police work, success is determined by “the ability to run, catch and restrain the prime target of the fight against crime” (Westmarland, 2002). As presented by Haar (1997), “males, both black and white, expressed strong negative views about women as patrol officers. Male officers at all seniority levels claimed that females could not handle the physical aspects of patrol work and therefore should not be in policing” (p. 75). Concerning this point, Garcia claims that
“only about 1% of police work is too physically demanding for women police” (2003, 338). In addition, it was found that female officers make arrests when dealing with criminal incidents at the same rate as their male counterparts (Westmarland, 2002).

In addition to the allegation of being too weak to perform the physical aspects of the police function, the police culture holds that female officers are also too mentally weak. According to Westmarland (2002) “Women were thought to lack the ‘aggression’ or ‘ability to kill’ in a life and death situation, or they could be too ‘weak’ to withstand the mental stress of isolation if they held promoted post, especially where most of the people they would manage, and probably have to discipline, would be male” (p. 136).

Also, there is a belief that “women lacked the commitment and motivation needed to succeed, which is often responsible for the indirect discrimination experienced by women” (Fielden & Cooper, 2002, 22). This leaves female officers with the constant, repeated need to prove themselves both physically and mentally. These officers need to work harder, write better reports, and make better arrests (Fielding 1994). This treatment of female officers by male officers is a form of discrimination that has been found to be an intense stressor (Green & Carmen, 2002).

Discrimination against female officers begins prior to training. It has been shown that “women are disproportionately disqualified early in the selection process by their higher failure rate on pre-employment physical tests that are used by the great majority of departments in the United States” (Martin & Jurik, 2007, 78).

Traditionally, female officers were assigned to working with juveniles, juvenile crime, and investigation of sexual offenses (Westmarland, 2002). Two reasons are presented for this. The first is that women are more empathetic to the plights of these
groups and would serve them better than men would. The second is that, as with all other male-dominated occupations, women are “channeled into the least desirable jobs within an occupation” (Garcia, 2003, 335).

In previous sections it was explained that crimes involving those unable to protect themselves, including women and children, are intensely stressful to officers. It was also shown that investigations of offenses of a sexual nature are intensely stressful (Brown et al., 1999). Dealing with helpless victims and the investigation of sex crimes creates an environment where these officers are in less control than those dealing with other assignments such as patrol or traffic enforcement. Working on assignments with less inherent control would make female officers perceive more stress (Nelson & Burke, 2002). It has been shown that female officers have a higher turnover rate as compared to male officers.

Stressors that come from outside the work environment include work-family conflict. It has already been explained that shift work and the 24/7 nature of police work is a stressor for all officers. However, this issue may be worse for female officers. Females officers “are forced into a double duty of juggling family and work, working by day outside the home and working by night performing household and childcare responsibilities” (Wells et al., 2006, 67). The conflict between these roles has been identified as an intense stressor (Nelson & Burke, 2002; Brown & Fielding, 1993). This role conflict, or the conflict of work and family, has been labeled workload or overload, “which includes both vocational and domestic, paid and unpaid work” (Nelson & Burke, 2002, 4)
In addition to nonacceptance, female officers are also exposed to discrimination of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment. It has been found that 80% of female officers have experienced sexual harassment (Anshel, 2000). Sexual harassment includes exposure to pornography, sexual or lewd comments, sexually explicit jokes, solicitation for unwanted dates, being touched, stroked, or pinched, or being sexual assaulted (Brown, 1998; Martin & Jurik, 2007; Morash & Haarr, 1995; Miller et al., 2003).

Sexual harassment can be an intense stressor and it has been described as “the biggest problem women entering law enforcement have to face” (Wells & Alt, 2005, 49). Sexual harassment is a tool used to “diminish and marginalize” (Haar, 1997, 77) female officers. Sexual harassment is “violence against women” that is used to diminish female officers who may threaten male domination of police work (Cockburn, 1988; Brown & Heidensohn, 2000). This discrimination serves to control women and keep them outside of acceptance by the majority group (Cockburn, 1988).

Another aspect of this sexual harassment is that female officers are questioned about their sexual identity. As Bernstein and Koselac (2002) explain, “women in policing are often assumed to be (or ‘accused of’ being) lesbians and so [they] often have to contend with homophobia and sexism regardless of their sexual orientation” (p. 308). In addition to being discriminated against as a female, and therefore not fitting in, female officers are also challenged as to their sexuality and are pushed further outside of what is the norm and accepted by the police culture.
Sources of Discrimination

Administration

Discrimination by the administration can come in two forms; one is direct, and one is indirect. The first is when the administration fails to stop discrimination that is occurring. This can be done by creating an environment where discrimination is accepted or where those who foster this type of mentality are not disciplined. The second source by the administration is their involvement in discrimination. This could be in the form of failure to hire and foster the professional development of minority officers. It may be even more overt when the administration is part of ongoing discrimination.

Supervisors

In earlier sections, it was shown how important the role of the supervisor is. Supervisors insulate officers from stressors and can provide essential support. However, supervisors can also be a source of stress and discrimination. As an extension of the administration, they can be directly and indirectly discriminatory toward officers.

Supervisors can allow discrimination to continue, or they can create an atmosphere where this mentality and behavior is extinguished. Supervisors also affect officers in their assignments and their reviews. By being unfairly critical or relying too much on an isolated incident, supervisors can prevent officers’ career growth or impede promotion.

Members of the Public

Minority officers may also find that they are treated differently than majority officers by members of the public. This may be caused by the public’s expectation that all officers are white males. This may result in hostility of the public when dealing with
minority officers. Whatever the reason, minority officers find stress in the reality that “they are sometimes not respected by citizens” (Anderson, 1995, 13).

In addition to not receiving acceptance from male officers, female officers also experience problems from males outside the police occupation regarding their occupational choice. Wexler and Logan (1983) reported that “71 percent of the heterosexual women who were single reported that men outside the department have troubles accepting women in police work” (p. 51).

**Homosexual Discrimination**

Discrimination against homosexual officers comes from both within the organization and outside it. Historically, the formal discrimination against homosexuals who desired to be police officers was not only acceptable, but it was also legal. Police institutions were allowed not to hire people because of their homosexual orientation. The administration provided numerous reasons why these individuals were unfit for duty. This was, in part, caused by the perception that homosexuals “could not hold the dignity and image of a police officer” (Leinen, 1993, 8). Swerling (1977) provides an excellent explanation:

Deviance and respectability are linked in everyday meanings. The more intensely people believe a thing to be good, the more intensely they will find its opposite to be bad or even an attack on good. Homosexuality, if seen as deviant, would be a violation of a set of stipulations of rules of conduct, which ultimately derive from some set of values. The more intense the belief in heterosexuality, the more intense the belief in the attack on heterosexual rules of conduct by homosexuals. Opposition makes the deviant categorization inevitable. Violation of rules of conduct, which the police may be expected to enforce, might not only be considered deviant, but also perceived as a threat to the self and to relationship, particularly to officers whose work life is within a largely male organization where social fraternity is encouraged. (p. 31-32)
Some other reasons that homosexuals were not suitable were that they were untrustworthy, unreliable, and emotionally unstable (Leinen, 1993). The belief was that those who lacked morality in their personal lives are unable to enforce laws that are based on morality (Swerling, 1977).

The administration could also justify discrimination based on the public’s reaction to homosexual officers. Religious and political leaders in the community would not accept these individuals as officers (Humphrey, 1999). Finally, there was the fear that, if hired, other officers would refuse to work with homosexuals. Reasons why officers would not want to work with homosexuals include moral issues and the fear of “catching AIDS” (Leinen, 1993, 117).

In 1977, “strong feelings [were held by the Los Angeles Police Department administration that homosexuals are not acceptable for consideration for employment as police officers” (Swerling, 1977, 3). Niederhoffer (1967) explains that any “sign of homosexuality would lead to immediate dismissal or forced resignation” (p. 121). Miller et al. (2003) agree that “until recently, being an openly gay or lesbian officer meant dismissal from the job” (p. 360). According to Leinen (1993), until 1989 it was acceptable in New Jersey to dismiss an officer solely based on the fact that he or she was homosexual. As recently as 1993, the Dallas Police Department would not hire homosexuals. The stated reason was that homosexual acts were against the law. In addition, as recently as 1992, there were only 10 departments in the United States that made efforts to recruit homosexuals as police officers (Leinen, 1993). This discrimination is widely recognized. In a study conducted by Burke (1994b), “100 percent of
respondents failed to disclose their sexual orientation at any stage during the selection process” (p. 220).

Homosexual officers are not offered the same protections as other minority groups. It is illegal to discriminate against an employee based on numerous factors, including race, religion, and sex; however, federal law “does not prohibit discrimination or harassment because of an individual’s sexual orientation unless the individual is a federal worker” (Wells & Alt, 2005, 61). The protections of homosexual officers include “1) the due process and equal protection clauses of the fourteenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution and 2) free speech rights under the first amendment” (Lee & Brown, 1993, 49).

In addition to homosexuals having difficulty obtaining positions as police officers, there are also numerous administrative acts that foster homophobic discrimination after they are hired. These include personnel evaluations, moves within the organization, and promotion. It has been shown that discrimination occurs during evaluations by supervisors. Supervisors may zero in on one act that was done improperly, and the evaluation is excessively or unfairly negative because of the personal bias of the rater. Homosexual officers may also be passed over for reassignment from the uniform squad to specialized units or for promotion. Homophobic discrimination in the form of unfair evaluations may keep these officers from positions they have earned.

**Attitude of Officers**

A common attitude of police officers is virility. Officers are virile when they exhibit the macho, authoritarian, unemotional attitude and behavior that is prized by the police culture. Scanff and Taugis (2002) explain it this way:
a man is called virile when he is able, without any problem, to inflict pain and suffering on another person, to reestablish order or domination. In the course of their jobs, the police officers may have to act in this way without expressing doubt or fear, blocking any emotional reactions to it. If a man is not able to do so, he is called a “homosexual,” a “woman,” or a man without courage. (p. 331)

Those who demonstrate virility are powerful and able to perform the police role.

According to this view, women and homosexuals are the opposite of virile; by definition, they are weak and unable both physically and emotionally to perform the police task (Scanff & Taugis, 2002; Jacobi, 1975).

Police culture values strength and power, where others follow the orders and comply with the demands of officers. The introduction of homosexuals contradicts this culture and challenges the police identity (Miller et al., 2003). Homosexual officers threaten the core of the police culture. Police culture is “based on authority, aggressiveness, technical competence and heterosexist desire for and domination over women” (Miller et al., 2003, 357). Police culture relies on the importance of conquest and machismo. Policing is the only occupation where violent acts are not only acceptable but are at times required (Westmarland, 2002). Introduction of officers who are not masculine and who commit supposedly immoral acts are therefore considered immoral and would give the department a bad image, causing the loss of the department’s moral image (Miller et al., 2003; Acker 1990).

Officers traditionally believed that homosexuals are criminals who commit atrocious, immoral acts. Authors explain that “homosexuals are the social group most disliked by police” (Miller et al., 2003, 360) because they are “threats to the existing social order” (Burke, 1992, 32). It was the job of the police to arrest those who commit
these acts, to create an environment where people who engage in this behavior are not welcome, and to drive these behaviors from society (Burke, 1994a; Derbyshire, 1990). The comparison has even been made between drug addicts and homosexuals. The homophobic belief is that both groups are morally weak, have failed, and possess undesirable qualities (Leinen, 1993).

From this perspective, allowing the hiring of homosexuals would intentionally introduce criminals into the ranks of the police department. Bernstein and Koselac (2002) explain that “this organizational relationship between the police and heterosexuality contributes to a police culture that is rooted in a hegemonic masculinity, which defines itself in opposition to both femininity and homosexuality. For the police, homosexuality represents the social disorder they are charged with eradicating” (p. 307). Their research showed that 15.4% of officers surveyed “felt homosexual officers would undermine the ability of police to be role models for the community” (p. 317). In addition, they found that 25% of officers surveyed responded that “recruiting homosexual officers undermines department morale” (Bernstein & Koselac, 2002, 316).

Considering this basic understanding of police culture and the homophobic view of heterosexual officers toward homosexual officers, there are various acts committed against this minority group of officers. They represent either indirect discrimination and direct discrimination.

**Indirect Discrimination**

A 1992 study of a Midwestern police department found that every homosexual officer faced discrimination. A survey found that officers were indirectly discriminated against by use of slang, graffiti, or cartoons (Miller et al., 2003). This is supported by
Burke (1994b) who found that 81% of homosexual officers had been exposed to this type of discrimination (p. 223). A study of Australian officers yielded similar results. It was found that all officers “reported experiencing incidents that were more indirect, subtle, surreptitious and covert in nature, originating dominantly in rumors and innuendo, with the gay and lesbian community the target of verbal denigration” (Cherney, 1999, 43). This study also found that very little of the discrimination was overt (Cherney, 1999).

This indirect, or covert, discrimination is one tool of those who have a negative attitude toward homosexual officers (Leinen, 1993, 41). This type of discrimination is used to keep homosexuals from the majority group and keep them viewed as the “them.” This type of discrimination also “is used to solidify power relations among dominant heterosexual males” (Miller et al., 2003, 368). One reason for the use of indirect discrimination is to prevent officers from being confronted concerning their behaviors. Anti-homosexual officers can circumvent departmental orders and policies that are intended to protect homosexual officers from this type of discriminatory behavior (Cherney, 1999).

Another reason for this coventness is the belief that officers’ indirect discrimination is more of an attack on homosexuality and less of an attack on homosexual officers (Cockburn, 1988). There is also the belief that most police officers “care little about one’s private sexual preference but who, because of the powerful need to belong, join the vilification of gays” (Leinen, 1993, 120).

This indirect discrimination might also be an attack on homosexual officers’ failure to hide their sexual identity. There is the perception that being open and
displaying or flaunting sexual identity is a choice to not fit in with the established norms (Cockburn, 1988, 193).

**Direct Discrimination**

Police work is unlike most civilian occupations in that success and personal safety rely on the cooperation and respect of coworkers. The inherent dangerousness and unpredictability of police work allows for an almost limitless number of things that can be done to harass, belittle, endanger, or sabotage those not fitting within the social norms. Homophobic officers may not trust homosexual officers or may even refuse to work with them. Homophobic officers may create false calls for service to harass homosexual officers (Leinen, 1993). There may be instances in which homophobic officers block radio calls made by homosexual officers, including calls for help. The discrimination may go as far as homophobic officers deliberately not backing up homosexual officers when they need assistance (Bernstein & Koselac, 2002).

**Attitude of the Public**

There is also a possible negative reaction to homosexual officers by community members. Historically, homosexuals were seen as deviants, with their behavior both illegal and immoral. A homophobic attitude is shared by the police and the public (Swerling, 1977). Crimes that were committed against homosexuals were not a high priority for law enforcement. In addition, those who committed criminal acts against homosexuals were not arrested or prosecuted for this behavior. Bernstein and Koselac (2002) explain that police “often refuse to intervene on behalf of lesbian and gay claimants and do not protect victims or apprehend perpetrators” (p. 304). This is supported by Comstock (1995) who explains as follows:
The primary reason for adolescent attacks on lesbian and gay men is recreational, and such activity is encouraged or permitted by social sanctions against homosexuality. The primary reason for adult perpetrators of attacks is to defend one’s place in a social order that disapproves of homosexuality; and robbers attack lesbians and gay men as they’re unprotected and considered unimportant in society. (p. 94)

This homophobia among members of the public is experienced by homosexual officers (Cherney, 1999). Swerling (1977) explains that the “public, of which the police are a part, does not wish to see homosexuals in positions of public authority or in government service in general” (p. 5). Both of these sources are dated, though. More recent findings hold that this homophobic attitude today is waning. More recent research shows that “there appears to be more tolerance (or at least less overt hostility) from many citizens towards both lesbians and gay men” (Wells & Alt, 2005, 63). It has also been shown that “where gay men and lesbians have acquired some degree of political power, reports of police harassment have decreased . . . [and] cooperation between gay people and the police ha[s] increased” (Comstock, 1995, 160).

Out

Unlike other minority groups, the minority status of homosexual officers is not readily apparent. To some extent, it is the choice of homosexual officers to hide or disclose their sexuality (Gonsiorek, 1993). Some officers make the decision to hide their sexual identity. In a police culture that places value on virility, homosexual officers who want to remain hidden may be drawn into conversations or instances in which they are forced to affirm their own virility. This means that homosexual officers may find themselves forced to act in certain ways, say certain things, or discriminate against others (Miller et al., 2003). Some homosexual officers go to great lengths to hide their identity.
Some examples include “staged relationships with members of the opposite sex, engaging in staged talk with men at work, wearing wedding bands, denouncing gays at appropriate times, and cultivating speech patterns designed to misinform others about their true sexual preferences” (Leinen, 1993, 5). In the study conducted by Burke (1994a), “36 percent of respondents felt that the effort required in the maintenance of their heterosexual facade affected their efficiency at work” (p. 200). Cherney (1999) offers this explanation:

Antihomosexual sentiment leads to the stigmatization of lesbians and gay men. This creates for them a set of consequences that are distinctive, because unlike other groups such as racial or ethnic minorities, sexuality is a status whose disclosure is optional. This means that lesbian and gay men must choose between unsatisfactory options, because self censorship (being closeted) and self disclosure (being out) have personal risks. (p. 130)

Management of this hidden identity is not an easy task. Homosexual officers “do not act passively with regard to their homosexuality but take an active role in shaping the identity they present to others in the workplace” (Leinen, 1993, 47). Revealing sexual identity is not a single event. This is a never-ending process (Humphrey, 1999).

Keeping one’s identity hidden is typically identified as being closeted. Disclosure of sexual identity is not a black and white issue. There are varying shades of grey in which these officers may choose to reveal their identity to only some people in their lives and to not tell others (Ward & Winstanley, 2005). These officers may only choose to tell those closest to them. There is also the possibility that they choose to tell no one, but they decide not to be dishonest to those who ask. As Miller et al. (2003) explain, “being closeted or out is more of a continuum of openness with considerable variability from one individual to the next” (p. 372). The concept of being closeted reveals two important
points related to the decision of not revealing one’s sexual identity: the stresses associated with living a dual life and the consequences of revealing sexual identity.

The decision to reveal sexual identity is not an easy choice to make. It is an important career decision that will affect every facet of an officer’s occupational and personal life (Ward & Winstanley, 2005). There is the justified concern that officers who reveal their sexual identity will be discriminated against and will open themselves up to abuses that they would not have to endure if they had remained closeted (Humphrey, 1999). Ridicule and victimization at the hands of co–workers, and barriers to advancement are all motivators to keep sexual identity hidden. With the discrimination and stigma attached to homosexuality, it may be easier and safer for these officers to initially remain in the closet and allow others to perceive them as members of the majority group (Leinen, 1993; Cockburn, 1988). In the study conducted by Burke (1994a), 53% of the officers made the choice to remain in the closet.

While there are reasons why officers choose to remain in the closet and not reveal their sexual identity, there are also reasons why officers choose to reveal their identity. It has been found that homosexual officers who hide their identity experience stress because of the duality they experience (Burke, 1994a). The duality is between what they feel and believe in and the life they live. This duality is stressful because living a dual life can “present substantial risks to their mental health and ability to function comfortably within the police environment” (Cherney 1999, 38; also see, Humphrey, 1999). This is, in part, because these officers are never able to truly relax or escape from the stress created by living this duality. They must always be on their guard to protect the lie that they are living:
Fears about coworkers and supervisor hostilities, termination, loss of promotional opportunity or denial of backup lead some officers to hide their sexual orientation. Tensions between the police and lesbian/gay communities encourage some officers to hide their occupation from gay/lesbian friends and acquaintances. In either case, hiding consumes energy, creates stress, and can erode job productivity. (Miller et al., 2003, 361)

By living a dual life, these officers are living a lie. They lie about their sexual identity and feelings, which are an important part of who and what they are. This lie, especially when it must be reinforced, damages officers’ view of themselves; this view becomes one of “self loathing” (Humphrey, 1999, 140). This is because no matter which role they are in, the other, or hidden, identity is “spoiled or discreditable” (Burke 1994a, 199). Ward and Winstanley (2005) present the other side of this duality. They explain the duality of closeted homosexual police officers in the following way: “The result is that one identity develops at work, that of police officer where his or her sexual identity remains undisclosed, and another, off-duty life, where the identity is lesbian or gay, but where occupation is a closely guarded secret” (Ward & Winstanley, 2005, 451).

In this example, these officers are hiding their sexual identity from those they work with. In addition, they are forced to hide their occupation from those in their personal lives. This is done to manage their identity so that they are not outed at work.

For those who decided to reveal their sexual orientation, it has been found that there are three reasons for this decision: “First, there is an issue of honesty and integrity at the personal level; second, there are significant benefits in building open relationships at the professional level; finally, some people think that it is important to educate colleagues about sexual minorities” (Ward & Winstanley, 2005, 449). Ward and Winstanley (2005) help define the grey areas that many homosexual officers function in.
There are four strategies that are used to manage their identity in the workplace. These are passing, covering, being implicitly out, and affirming identity:

- **Passing**: this is where the individual lies in order to be seen as heterosexual;
- **Covering**: not disclosing information;
- **Being implicitly out**: using explicit language and artifacts to indicate sexual orientation;
- **Affirming identity**: encouraging others to view him or her as gay. (p. 450)

Officers who are out of the closet do not feel the pressures to be part of a culture that is not welcoming to them. These officers no longer need to display their virility or the machismo of police culture (Miller et al., 2003). However, these officers now have to “manage uncomfortable social situations” (Leinen, 1993, 5).

One interesting point that other workers express as a result of discrimination is the need to over-perform their occupational tasks. The belief is that homosexual officers, like minority officers, need to work harder and not make mistakes. This is done to defeat the homophobic attitude that homosexual officers do not belong in the police ranks. It also neutralizes the attitude that one task performed incorrectly or a mistake defines all homosexual officers and their inability to perform the police task (Miller et al., 2003; Miller, 1999).
CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Study of Homosexual Officers

This study explores stress as experienced and perceived by homosexual police officers. The purpose of this study is to gain a greater understanding of homosexual officers through an analysis of data collected in a survey that as closely as possible replicates Toch’s survey of officers in two police departments. The survey results are assessed against the findings of stress research on police officers generally, and they are compared to the results of Toch’s survey. Finally, this study compares the stress perceived by officers who are in the closet versus those who are out of the closet.

Officers in the Study

This study capitalizes on Toch’s study of stress in policing, which included a survey of officers in two police departments. Toch (2002) summarizes the background information, research methodology and both qualitative and quantitative data collected during the investigation of the departments studied. The study, conducted in 1997, set out to examine police officers’ perceptions of occupational stress. The objectives were to expand on the understanding of stresses in the police occupation and police officers’ perceptions of this stress. This work aided the police organization, and officers in that organization, in recognizing stresses that existed in the departments, creating an opportunity for the departments to reduce stress in the work environment. In addition this work allowed for the examination of those experiencing stress to determine if outlets were available, and utilized, to ameliorate those stresses.
In addition, the study allowed for the exploration of race- and gender-based stresses, particularly discrimination. Differences in officers’ perceptions of occupational stress across majority and minority groups of officers were examined. This work found that racial discrimination did exist in the studied urban department; however, this issue “ranked low among perceived sources of perceived stress” (Toch, 2002, 119). With regards to gender discrimination it was found that female officers perceived discrimination in promotion.

Toch’s research was done in several stages. Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered. Qualitative analysis began with semi-structured interviews and then moved to focus groups. The research team then conducted non-participatory observations of officers in the field, through ride-alongs. From the information gathered through these methods, a survey instrument was formed. This survey is reproduced in appendix A.

This project replicates the survey that was administered by Toch and his research team. Adapting and expanding the original survey enabled me to conduct research on the unique characteristics and perceptions of homosexual officers. However, the survey was not altered in such a way that comparison was impossible.

The original survey was distributed with the assistance of the police departments, their administration, union and members from those departments. The original study was an examination of members of two departments. This allowed the original survey to produce results from both an urban and a rural department. It also allowed for the study of minority officers, including racial and gender minorities.
However, the purpose of this dissertation was to explore the stress perceived by police officers who are members of a specific group, which comprises a rather small and not readily identifiable fraction of the police occupation. One homosexual police officer estimated that homosexual officers comprise 10% of police department personnel. However, it is believed that less than 1% are out of the closet and admit their sexual identity.

To find members of this group to study, the cooperation of the Gay Officers Action League (GOAL) was enlisted. GOAL is an organization comprised of criminal justice personnel, firefighters, and emergency service personnel. GOAL is divided into several regional offices. The GOAL office from which respondents were recruited was the New England Chapter, because it is in the same region of the country as the officers from the original survey. The survey was distributed to the 150 members of GOAL New England. Thirty-three respondents completed the survey, for a 22% response rate, and of the 33 respondents, 25 were police officers. Of these 25 only 4 were female and the remainder were male.

GOAL presents a list of objectives including the following:

- To provide an understanding environment in which gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) members can support one another
- To improve the conditions under which GLBT criminal justice professionals, fire fighters, and publicly employed emergency medical technicians work (G.O.A.L. New England, 2009).

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6 Personal correspondence with GOAL member. I was unable to locate any other type of statistic concerning this.
GOAL also identifies the following as its purpose: “The organization provides peer support to members, serves as a forum for members to share their knowledge and experience, and discovers solutions to problems faced by members and agencies” (G.O.A.L. New England, 2009).

Published studies show that this organization has allowed itself to be studied in the past. Three instances have been identified where members of GOAL have been involved in survey research. The first appears in a GOAL Newsletter (November 2005). In the newsletter the President of the local GOAL chapter (New York) asked members to assist in a survey about discrimination. It appears that the purpose of this survey was to gather data concerning agencies and their acceptance of homophobic discrimination. No data were available from this survey.

The second survey in which GOAL members participated was that performed by Colvin (2009). Colvin administered his survey by attending the International Conference of Gay and Lesbian Criminal Justice Professionals. In this work, while Colvin attended this event, he offered his survey to those in attendance at the conference. Sixty-six gay and lesbian officers responded in this survey (Colvin, 2009, 91).

A third survey was conducted by Coleman and Cheurprakobkit (2009). This survey was aided by GOAL and the IACP. GOAL members gave a presentation to educate attending members of the IACP (International Association of Police Chiefs) about issues related to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender officers. The survey in this instance used a “telephone survey technique … to gather data from agencies regarding their policies and practices in the hiring and retention of gay, lesbian, and bisexual
employees” (Coleman and Cheurprakobkit, 2009). While GOAL members aided in this work they were not the subjects of the research.

**Methods**

Toch’s study used the traditional methodology of having officers complete a survey using pen and paper. The original survey was administered at two known (but unidentified) locations. The study of homosexual officers did not allow for this. These officers work at many different departments. This presents the first challenge. Since officers in this study come from different departments, it is possible that stressors they reported were a result of the organization from which they come, not as a factor of their sexual orientation. Comparisons of the survey responses of homosexual officers in this survey and the officers in Toch’s survey must be drawn carefully, with cognizance of the potential differences in the organizational and occupational environments of the two populations.

A method that allowed for distributing the survey to a large number of police officers throughout a disparate geographic area was needed. In addition, the survey methodology needed to take account of the protective nature of the members of this group. To accomplish this, an Internet survey was used. Numerous companies offer web-based survey services to a wide range of users. Research was conducted on several of these professional survey/data collection Internet services, and the following service was selected:

[http://www.surveygold.com](http://www.surveygold.com)

This company offers a relatively easy survey creation system. SSL Encryption was used for data transfer. The data were stored on a password encrypted database. Once the
information was collected by the internet company, the data were transferred to a password encrypted desk top computer. Qualitative data were collected in open-ended responses, and quantitative data were collected in closed-ended responses.

Electronic communication has been well received by the GOAL members. Newsletters and other communications from GOAL, and between GOAL members, are done through the internet. This medium is accepted among this group and allows for a level of anonymity. The use of the internet survey allows for confidentiality, with no identifiers collected which would allow for identification of the respondent. In addition only minimal personal data were collected from each respondent.

The first step in securing the cooperation of GOAL was to approach a GOAL member. This member was introduced to the concept of this project. The response was enthusiastic. It was his, and this researcher’s, belief that academic study of this group of officers is overdue. This GOAL member is a 20-year member of the Springfield Police Department, former president of GOAL New England, and current GOAL member. This officer is an advocate for gay rights and has taught numerous workshops (to law enforcement and the public in general) on gay rights and his experiences as an openly gay police officer.

The next step was to introduce this concept to the GOAL New England president. Before he could speak on this topic he needed approval from GOAL’s board, whose members are the elected officials of GOAL New England. The concept was presented to the board, which gave approval for the president to speak to this researcher. Once approval was received the actual mechanics of getting the survey to the GOAL members was discussed, including any issues that GOAL may have.
The GOAL New England President stated that it would be most efficient for him, and authorizing board, to introduce this work to the GOAL members through an email. He then suggested a follow up email to each GOAL member. It is the policy of GOAL not to give anyone access to their mailing list. Therefore, the president decided it would be best if the email was sent by the GOAL organization. Included in this email was the hyper-link to the web site hosting the survey and the informed consent documentation. He explained that several years ago there was an effort to send a paper survey to the members. This experience was described as ‘horrific,’ and an experience they would not be willing to repeat.

Two months was determined to be a sufficient time to reply to the survey request, and so the hosting web site allowed respondents only that much time to respond. It has been found that the average return time in an internet survey is under a month (Friche&Schonlau, 2002). The data were then retrieved from the web site.

**Survey Modification**

This study is based on Toch’s *Stress in Policing*. However, due to the change in survey methodology and the population in question, the survey was modified and questions added. In addition to the modifications that have already been presented, it needs to be recognized that GOAL does not only represent police officers. GOAL members include “criminal justice professionals, fire fighters, and publicly employed emergency medical technicians” (G.O.A.L. New England, 2009). Therefore in the final section of the survey (which solicits personal information) the following question was presented:
Please identify which field closest defines your work environment (check only one):

- Police Officer
- Corrections Officer (or other incarceration institution)
- Court Officer (or official including probation or parole)
- Fire fighter
- Medical or Emergency Medical Technicians

These categories were chosen because they align with the GOAL mission statement for individuals that are represented. For this project only officers who check the first category were included in the analysis.

In addition to representing officers in different types of law enforcement or medical organizations; GOAL members work in different sized agencies. Therefore a question was asked as to the size of the agency where the GOAL member works:

Please check how many employees your agency employs:

- Less than 50
- 50-200
- 200 or more

These size categories correspond to the sizes of the original organizations studied. No further information concerning the organization was gathered in effort to protect the identity of the respondents.

The question that asks about discrimination was also changed. The original question asked the respondent to identify sources of racial or gender discrimination. The question posed to homosexual officers read:

Which of the following are sources of homophobic discrimination at work?

- Administration
- Supervisors
- Fellow Officers or Partners
- Members of the Public
- Other (Please specify.)
Unfortunately, research shows that respondents to web based surveys are less likely to respond to lengthy surveys (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002; Schonlau, Fricker, & Elliot, 2002). It was therefore decided to remove several questions (9, 20, 23, 41, 42, 31, 32, 33, 34 and 39) that appeared on Toch’s instrument. These were relevant in the original survey, but not relevant to the officers examined in this survey.
CHAPTER 4

Results

Stressors and the Homosexual Officer

Only 8% of homosexual officers reported that they experience a “great deal” of work-related discomfort or stress, while 62% experience “some” such stress, and about one-third experience none or very little (see Table 1). Bearing in mind the sampling error around these estimates, the distribution of perceived stress among homosexual officers is roughly comparable to that of the respondents to Toch’s (2002, 79) survey, which is also shown in Table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question / Response</th>
<th>% in this study</th>
<th>% in the original study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Would you say that you are experiencing some work-related discomfort or stress?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Great Deal</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Homosexual respondents identified the sources of stress, and from their responses a ranking, much like the ranking in *Stress in Policing*, was created. Table 2 shows the various sources of stress, listed in the order of the frequency with which homosexual officers identified them, and also the proportions of Toch’s respondents who indicated that each was a source of stress for them. Three broad findings stand out.

First, features of police administration and management were identified by many officers in both surveys as sources of stress. Internal departmental politics, inadequate
reward or recognition, and the quality of immediate supervision were marked as sources of stress by about half or more of the homosexual officers, and by comparable proportions of Toch’s respondents. This is quite consistent with the findings of previous research, which has repeatedly found that administration and stressors related to the organization are ranked as among the most stressful occupational factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Stress</th>
<th>% in this study (n=25)</th>
<th>% in the original study (n=269)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Departmental Politics</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Reward or Recognition</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Immediate Supervision</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial / Gender [/ Homophobic] Tension</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Information</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat to Personal Safety</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessing Child Abuse</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Political Influences</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems in the Community</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Violence and Death to Others</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing Violence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My assignment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be noted, however, that homosexual officers identify two reasons why immediate supervision was a source of stress. The first is lack of support by supervisors and that “some supervisors are not ‘leaders’, they demonstrate poor judgment or favoritism” (Anonymous21). The second reason was homophobia displayed by supervisors. An officer explains this homophobia when he explains that his chief discussed “firing me when I came out” (Anonymous6).
Second, discrimination was named as a source of stress by similar proportions of the two sets of survey respondents (36% and 41%). Homosexual officers’ responses to the open-ended questions offer a more textured portrayal of the discrimination that they experienced as stressful. They explained how they are ostracized by their peers: “They treat you like an outsider, Not invited to any outside activities etc (sic)” (Anonymous10); “they [homosexual officers] are looked upon as outsiders and not as equals” (Anonymous16).

Examples of direct discrimination include “blatant homophobia and hazing by senior members of the barracks” (Anonymous22). Another officer explains the fear and stress felt “when your backup/partner is ‘not there’ (or the threat of) cause your [sic] gay!” (Anonymous21). In addition, homosexual officers are exposed to homophobic comments and derogatory cartoons (n=3). Examples of indirect discrimination include the expected responses of blocking of goals, specifically the impeding of homosexual officers’ opportunities for promotion (Anonymous18) and, more generally, “poor career development” (Anonymous15).

Some homosexual officers also noted that other minority groups are afforded protections while they are not. One officer goes so far as to state, “Ok for officers to say ‘faggot or queer’, but if they call someone a ‘nigger’ would be punished [sic]” (Anonymous3). There are federal protections and rights for individuals based on race, sex, national origin, age, religion, and disability. These federal protections do not exist for homosexuals in the work place. The legislation that would provide this protection, Employment Non-Discrimination Act, was introduced in 1994 and still has not passed.
Even so, about half or more of the respondents in both surveys did not identify discrimination as a source of stress. Furthermore, tension in majority-minority group relations was flagged as a source of stress by only 28% of homosexual officers, making it a less-common source of stress than it was among Toch’s respondents, and less common than it was among black officers, 69% of whom identified racial tension as a source of stress. This could be attributable to the salience of race relations in the departments – and especially the urban department – that Toch studied. While the survey data on homosexual officers does not reveal much about the organizational environments in which they work, they permit the observation that perceived tension was not confined to those working in the largest departments. Three of 8 respondents working in agencies of 200 or more cited racial/gender/homophobic tension as a source of stress, as did 4 of 12 working in agencies of 50-100, and none of the remainder.

Third, and finally, the stresses related to the actual performance of police work were the least frequently identified stressors among homosexual officers, and less frequently identified by homosexual officers than among Toch’s respondents. Stressors such as inadequate information, threat to personal safety, witnessing child abuse, external political influences, problems in the community, criminal violence and death to others, and experiencing violence were all identified by very few (4 or fewer) respondents. No officers in this study chose their assignment as a source of stress. That the actual performance of police work is less stressful than the organization and discrimination is consistent with Toch’s findings. That these features of police work were identified as sources of stress by smaller proportions of homosexual officers may reflect not a difference between homosexual officers and other officers, but rather a change over time.
in the context of police work, or a difference in the organizational contexts of the two sets of respondents.

Further examining the concept of the administration as a stressor, Table 3 shows that two-thirds of the homosexual officers think that their motivation or commitment has been diminished sometimes or often by administrative actions; 12% (3 respondents) said that actions of their department’s administration had never had such an adverse effect on their motivation or commitment. If we remain mindful of the rather wide confidence intervals around these sample estimates, it appears that homosexual officers’ perceptions are comparable to those of Toch’s respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question / Response</th>
<th>% in this study (n=25)</th>
<th>% in the original study (n=269)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you think that your level of motivation or commitment has been diminished by any actions of the department’s administration?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very occasionally</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another oft-cited stressor is perceived inequity in promotions. Both studies asked officers if there were any problems of fairness in the system for promotions within the department. Substantial fractions of both sets of respondents reported a “great deal” of problems with the fairness of promotions, and nearly as many perceived “some”
problems (see Table 4). It appears that homosexual officers, as a group, perceive the promotional process the same as other officers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question / Response</th>
<th>% in this study (n=25)</th>
<th>% in the original study (n=269)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you see any problems of fairness in the system for promotions within the department?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A great deal</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very little</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With respect to fairness more generally as an issue, the prevalence and degree of homosexual officers’ concerns about fairness appear comparable to those of Toch’s respondents overall (see Table 5). We might speculate that homosexual officers are less concerned about fairness than the minorities among Toch’s respondents, but race and gender breakdowns of Toch’s respondents on this item are not available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question / Response</th>
<th>homosexual officers? % in this study (n=25)</th>
<th>race or gender? % in the original study (n=269)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you personally concerned about issues of fairness in the department as related to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greatly Concerned</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Concerned</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not At All Concerned</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Toch’s survey asked officers whether “enough attention has been given to the issues of race and gender in the department,” And he found that most black officers, and
half of the Hispanic officers, believed that more attention to these issues was needed. Homosexual officers were asked whether “enough attention has been given to the issues of homosexual officers within the department,” and about half felt that more attention was required (see Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question / Response</th>
<th>Homosexual Officers % in this study (n=25)</th>
<th>Black Officers % in the original study (n=39)</th>
<th>White Officers % in the original study (n=163)</th>
<th>Hispanic and other officers % in the original study (n=18)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Enough Attention</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enough Attention</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too Much Attention</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discrimination**

The survey asked officers to identify sources of homophobic discrimination (#33). Nineteen respondents (76%) identified at least one source of discrimination. They identified sources of discrimination inside and outside of their departments; they are listed in Table 7, in order of the frequency with which respondents identified them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Discrimination</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fellow Officers or Partners</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the Public</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was anticipated that the most common source of discrimination would be fellow officers, as other, majority officers were expected to exhibit the attitude of virility, and
hence not accept homosexual officers. Ten of the 25 respondents said that fellow officers were sources of discrimination against homosexuals. One officer described an example of this discrimination as “gay graffiti on [my] locker, [and] harassment” (Anonymous15). The same officer pointed out that “members of the department who are slowly rising through the ranks are homophobic” (Anonymous15). Another officer described the discrimination that he experienced where “a few, who assumed I was gay, posted harassing/embarrassing cartoons or articles, w/ my name on it” (Anonymous21).

Even so, a number of homosexual officers explained how fellow officers supported them. One officer explained that his “coworkers have no problem w/my sexuality” (Anonymous19). Another officer explained that his “agency[sic] patrol officers are accepting and supportive” (Anonymous5). A third officer explained that his fellow patrol officers are “overall, good. Again, it's the attitudes/attacks of isolated individual(s) that are tough” (Anonymous21).

Homosexual officers also identified supervisors as a source of discrimination. One officer described how “[m]inorregs [regulations] are enforced on me but not others in an effort to take away vac[ocation] time” (Anonymous19). If supervisors were not expected to engage in such discrimination, due to fear of departmental sanctions or lawsuits or due to their acceptance of homosexuals, the survey responses contradict the expectation. Numerous officers commented on this issue. One officer described how he was treated unfairly and that “[i]t took a coworker's lawsuit to force the move of a homophobic Lt [lieutenant] from his duty station” (Anonymous19). This is not the only homosexual officer to explain how legal remedies were required to end discrimination by
a supervisor. One officer explained that “I sent my attorney to have a talk with the chief” (Anonymous03).

Members of the public (n=8) were also identified as a source of discrimination. In the open ended questions only one officer mentioned “general aggravation of dealing with public” (Anonymous11) as a source of stress. Toch’s study found that members of the community were a significant source of discrimination; this was also the case here. Homosexual officers appear to face discrimination from members of the community that is comparable to that experienced by other minority groups.

Although matters of administration were frequently cited as a source of stress, and while numerous officers gave examples of discrimination by administrators as sources of stress, only 5 identified the administration as a source of homophobic discrimination. One officer gave the example of “[p]oor management by department heads which has lead [sic] to very low moral [sic]” (Anonymous27). Another officer put it bluntly that the “Chief is a homophobe” (Anonymous5). Another, often cited source of stress created by the administration is interfering with promotion (n=3).

**Closeted and Open**

Revealing one’s sexual identity is not a simple yes or no proposition. Officers may chose to reveal their sexual orientation to some people in their lives, and not to others. Research into this topic shows numerous ways to examine this concept. Day and Schoenrade (1997) present an excellent way to assess the degree to which an individual has revealed his/her sexual identity. They capture it in a single, multifaceted question, which fit with the style of the other questions of the existing survey:
In general, how hard do you try to keep your sexual orientation secret from these people at work?
- Coworkers
- Immediate supervisor
- Other supervisors
- Subordinates
- Middle management
- Top management
  1. I try very hard to keep it a secret
  2. I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret
  3. I don’t try to keep it a secret
  4. I actively talk about it to others at work. (Day & Schoenrade, 1997, 155)

Thus respondents were asked about the openness of their sexual orientation with respect to each of six categories of others, with degrees of openness that ranged from “I try very hard to keep it a secret” to “I actively talk about it to others at work.” Officers who are most out of the closet are those who talk actively about it with all of the listed audiences. Officers who are most in the closet try very hard to keep their sexual orientation a secret from all of the listed audiences. Between these extremes, officers can make efforts of varying intensity to conceal their sexual orientation from one or more sets of other people.

With responses coded as numbered above, a factor analysis showed that one factor accounted for 85.4% of the total variance. The literature suggests that openness is two-dimensional, with a personal factor that includes non-work friends and family, and an occupational factor that includes coworkers and supervisors. The survey tapped the occupational dimension.

Forming a simple additive index of these 6 items, with a potential minimum of 6 and a maximum of 24, the mean of the occupational factor is 16.52. The respondents above the mean can be considered to be open with others with regards to their sexual
orientation (or out). Eleven respondents were above the mean and 14 below the mean, who were considered to keep their sexual orientation hidden (or closeted). Further distinctions among the respondents are prohibited by the small N, but we should bear in mind that openness varies even within these two subsets of respondents.

With the respondents divided into these two sub–groups, numerous questions can be re-examined. The sources of work related stress were explored. A ranking for each of the sub-groups is shown in Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 8</th>
<th>Sources of stress for the sub groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the closet (n=14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Reward or Recognition</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Departmental Politics</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Immediate Supervision</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/ Gender/ Homophobic Tension</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessing Child Abuse</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Violence / Death to Others</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the most part, the two groups report similar sources of stress. The most common sources of stress in both groups of officers relate to police management, while the least common sources of stress relate to police functions. The two sets of responses suggest that there may be a difference with respect to discrimination as a source of stress, as 6 of 11 officers who are out of the closet identified discrimination as a source of stress, compared with 3 of the 14 officers who are not “out.” This is explained by two officers who are out. One writes, concerning the other officers’ attitudes about him being out,
“Very good outwardly, but still underlying homophobia that isn't checked” (Anonymous26). Another explains that his work climate is “pretty much fine, people [sic] who are homophobic know enough to keep quiet about it” (Anonymous26). But the small Ns make these estimates too unreliable to achieve statistical significance at a conventional level.

**Discrimination within the Sub Groups**

One would expect that officers who are out of the closet would be more susceptible to homophobic discrimination at work; the more successfully that homosexual officers conceal their sexual orientation, the less vulnerable they would seem to be to discrimination. That is what we find here: 5 of the 14 officers in the closet reported *no* sources of discrimination, while only 1 of 11 officers who are out reported no source of discrimination. The distinct sources of discrimination for each sub group are shown in Table 9, below, in order of the most commonly chosen responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9</th>
<th>Sources of Discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the Closet (n=14)</td>
<td>Out of the Closet (n=11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellow Officers or Partners</td>
<td>Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors</td>
<td>Members of the Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>Fellow Officers or Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of the Public</td>
<td>Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both groups reportedly experience homophobic discrimination, which may reflect the range of variation within groups as well as across them. Some suggestive differences between the two groups can be detected, though the small Ns preclude a meaningful statistical test of them. Half of the closeted officers identified fellow officers as a source of discrimination. Three identified supervisors as a source of discrimination. While the
officers who reveal their sexual orientation identify supervisors and members of the public as sources of discrimination, it is the closeted officers who perceive fellow officers as the most prominent source of discrimination.

It appears that officers who reveal their sexual orientation receive support from some (or even the majority) of fellow officers and this support counterbalances the effects of those who are homophobic. This is seen in several officers’ responses to the open-ended questions. One officer reported that he is “not out to everyone in the dept but the people that do know treat me well” (Anonymous31). Two officers report that their sexuality is ignored (Anonymous7) and fellow officers are indifferent (Anonymous18).

Another approach to analyzing the implications of officers’ openness about their sexual orientation is to retain the variation in the index and examine the correlations between the index and other variables. This allows us to treat officers’ decisions about revealing their sexual orientation as more of the continuum that they represent. Table 10 shows several correlation coefficients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r with openness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience of work-related discomfort or stress</td>
<td>0.328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of motivation or commitment</td>
<td>0.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often do you experience stress</td>
<td>0.418*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination related to your sexual orientation</td>
<td>0.390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p<0.001
* p < 0.05

The index is labeled “openness” in Table 10; the lower the value on the index, the more hidden, or closeted, these officers are. Conversely the higher the value, the more
open these officers are. As in previous analyses, these correlations must be interpreted with caution due to the small number of respondents; even moderately strong correlations may fail to achieve statistical significance, and the lack of a statistically significant correlation should not be interpreted to mean that there is no relationship.

Officers’ openness about their sexual orientation is moderately correlated with several features of their work lives: perceptions of work-related discomfort or stress; levels of motivation or commitment; how often they perceive work related stress; and discrimination related to sexual orientation. All of the correlations are between 0.31 and 0.42, though only one of them achieves statistical significance.

**Summary**

Homosexual officers experience many of the same stresses that other officers experience, and matters of police administration and management are featured prominently among the sources of their stress, as they are for other officers. Homosexual officers also experience stress that they attribute to homophobic discrimination in the workplace, though they perceived such discrimination less commonly at the time of the survey than racial minority officers perceived racial discrimination at the time of Toch’s survey, and not everyone who perceived homophobic discrimination experienced it as a source of stress. Furthermore, a number of homosexual officers responding to the survey cited the support of fellow officers. To some degree, though, these findings might be attributable to the capacity of homosexual officers to conceal their status as members of a minority group, as the survey results suggest that officers who are less open about their sexual identity are less vulnerable to discrimination and the stress that may accompany it.
CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

This dissertation reviews the large volume of available research on stress, occupational stress, and stress in the field of policing. Given the lack of research on occupational stress for homosexuals in the workplace and the lack of studies on homosexual police officers, it also reviews research on other minorities in policing, in order to gain some insight into the potential sources of discrimination and stress for homosexual officers.

The objective of this dissertation was to generate empirical evidence about the perceptions and experiences of homosexual police officers, their occupational stress and discrimination. The guarded nature of this group of officers makes empirical study very challenging, and as expected, it proved very difficult to reach this group of officers. There are of course no methods to identify and directly contact these individuals. They could not be reached through their departments and they could not be found in any departmental census. The membership organization in which some homosexual officers had enrolled, GOAL, offers them (well deserved) protection. Only a small number of homosexual officers could be contacted. It was impossible to access the numerous small chapters of this organization. Indeed, without a personal invitation from a former president of the organization, there would have been no access for this research. Even with this personal invitation, access was granted to only one chapter. Numerous layers of protection had to be overcome to reach these officers and invite them to participate in the survey.
Once these protections were navigated, the response rate was low, limiting the analyses that could be performed and the inferences that could be drawn from the results. A higher and more satisfactory response rate was, even in retrospect, a reasonable aspiration, inasmuch as the members of the organization are accustomed to electronic communication, their organization had endorsed the survey, and the survey credibly afforded them anonymity. Given this experience, one must question whether it would be prudent to attempt another such survey, until and unless the conditions for it change markedly.

Despite its limitations, this study has further cracked open the door to research on homosexual police officers, and its findings suggest that answers to questions about the occupational experiences of this minority group are not as simple as the hypotheses that rest on intuition. Further research is certainly warranted, but it should not rely on standard survey methodologies. It may be necessary, given the understandably guarded nature of this population, to approach it more individually and more intensively, employing semi-structured face-to-face interviews with individuals recruited through snow-ball sampling. The rich data that can be gathered in such a way would be invaluable, and it would come at little or no cost in representativeness, which is very difficult to assess in any case.

Future research should examine, in greater detail, the sources of homophobic discrimination. As expected, the stresses related to the administration were determined to be the greatest sources of stress. A more detailed examination of the facets of the administration and internal politics would further advance the study of stress and homosexual officers. Further study of direct and indirect discrimination also merits
further study. The prevalence of homophobic incidents by other officers also appears to be worth further study.

Another topic that merits further study is the prevalence of the respondent’s selection of inadequate reward or recognition as a source of stress. Research of the previous literature showed inadequate reward or lack of recognition as a stressor in many studies. The responses to the opened ended portion of the survey demonstrated that these officers chose inadequate reward or recognition as a stressor because homosexual officers are not given the same employments protections as other minority groups.
Bibliography


Appendix A

1. Would you say that you are experiencing some work-related discomfort or stress?
2. Which of the following areas are—or have been—sources of stress for you?
   - Inadequate Reward or Recognition
   - Discrimination
   - Quality of Immediate Supervision
   - Internal Departmental Politics
   - External Political Influences
   - Inadequate Information
   - Racial Tension in the Department
   - Problems in the Community
   - My Assignment
   - Experiencing Violence
   - Threat to Personal Safety
   - Criminal Violence and Death to Others
   - Witnessing Child Abuse
   - Other
3. Do you ever experience unwanted pressures or attention while off the job because of your profession?
4. Does your family ever experience unwanted pressures or attention because you are a police officer?
5. Do you feel that family-related stress has, at some point, affected your work motivation or performance?
6. Do you feel that work-related stress has ever affected your family?
7. Have you ever experienced difficulties balancing job and family responsibilities?
8. Would you say that you are currently experiencing stress as a result of family-related problems?
   a) Please briefly identify or describe the problem.
   b) Please identify or describe the problem
9. To what extent would additional access to child care/day-care facilities for your children relieve stress on your job?
   - If applicable, would you utilize this service?
10. Do you think that your level of motivation or commitment has been diminished by any actions of the department’s administration?
    - Please briefly specify the actions that have (at some point) diminished your enthusiasm for your work.
11. Do you think that your level of motivation or commitment has been diminished by any other aspect(s) of the job?
    - Please briefly specify the actions that have diminished your enthusiasm for your work.
12. Do you think that at any time your level of motivation or commitment has been adversely affected by experiences of stress?
13. What, if anything, do you do when you feel tense or stressed?
• Exercise
• Attend Church Services or Pray
• Listen to Music
• Participate in an Activity or Hobby
• Drive
• Participate in Social Activity
• Sleep
• Share the Problem with Someone Else
• Drink Alcohol
• Use Drugs Other than Alcohol
• Take Medication
• Other

14. With whom do you usually discuss work-related concerns or problems when you have them?
• Spouse/Significant Other
• Supervisor
• Partner
• Another Officer
• Friend
• Child (Age)
• Physician
• No one
• Other (Please specify.)

15. Have you ever found yourself using alcohol to relieve work-related tension or stress?

16. Have you ever experienced nightmares or painful memories related to stressful work experiences?

17. Would you say you are currently experiencing stress as a result of work-related problems?
• Could you briefly identify the problems?

18. Would you say that you have ever experienced serious stress as a result of work-related problems?
• Could you identify the time period and briefly identify the problems?

19. Do you see any problems of fairness in the system for promotions within the department?
• Do you feel that your career has been adversely affected by these problems?

20. Do you see media coverage of the department to be disruptive to your work?

21. How much of a role do you think that external forces (e.g., political groups, business groups, community groups, etc.) play in influencing departmental policy?
• Do you think these external forces should have more influence or less influence on departmental policy?

22. Do you feel that your career opportunities have been adversely affected by political considerations or political pressures?

23. To what extent do you think that external political pressures adversely affect the department’s effectiveness?
24. How would you characterize, in one or two sentences, the current status of racial relations in the department?
25. Are you personally concerned about issues of fairness in the department related to race or gender?
   • Please describe any unfairness you perceive that concerns you.
26. Do you feel that you personally have experienced racial or gender discrimination at work?
   • Please briefly describe the unfairness you perceive that concerns you.
27. Do you feel that you personally have experienced racial or gender discrimination at work?
   • If you do, what was the source of the discrimination? (Please check when applicable.)
     • Administration
     • Supervisors
     • Fellow Officers or Partners
     • Members of the Public
     • Other (Please specify.)
28. Do you feel the department’s climate relative to race relations adversely affects your motivation or performance?
29. Do you feel that enough attention has been given to the issues of race and gender in the department?
30. What, if any, issues relating to race or gender do you feel require additional attention?
31. Do you have any preference as to who you have as a riding partner that relates to race or to gender?
   • Race
   • Gender
32. Do you feel more comfortable or less comfortable when you work with someone of a different race?
33. Do you feel more comfortable or less comfortable when you work with someone of the opposite sex?
34. Do you feel that racial considerations place constraints on your opportunity to advance in your profession?
35. Do you feel that gender considerations place constraints on your opportunity to advance in your profession?
36. Have you found your immediate supervisors in the department to be largely helpful and supportive or unhelpful and unsupportive?
   • Helpful
   • Supportive
   • Unhelpful
   • Unsupportive
37. To what extent have you felt that your immediate supervisors have treated you fairly?
38. To what degree has fairness of supervision become an issue that affects how you feel about your work?
39. Do you feel you have sufficient understanding for what the top brass of this department define as its mission?
40. Do you have any suggestions as to what the department could do to assist officers by improving any aspect(s) of officer or supervisor training?
41. Do you feel you receive an adequate amount of information to properly do your job?
   • What sort of additional information do you feel would help you to better do your job?
42. Have you ever felt that inadequate information has endangered your physical safety?
   • Please briefly describe any perceived problem.
43. Are you aware of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) available in this department?
44. Have you ever used the EAP, or do you know anyone who has ever used the program?
45. Do you personally have confidence or trust in the EAP?
46. Is there anything you can suggest that would improve the department’s EAP or otherwise assist officers with work-related problems related to stress?

Final Question of Personal Characteristics

Age
Ethnicity
• African American
• Caucasian / White
• Mexican American / Hispanic
• Native American
• Other
Gender
• Male
• Female
Marital Status
• Single
• Married
• Divorced
• Widowed
• other
Please check the highest level of schooling you have completed.
• High School
• Some college
• Associates Degree
• Bachelor degree
• Graduate degree
• other
What is your current rank?
• Police Officer
• Detective
• First line supervisor
- Captain or above

What is your current assignment?
- Administrative
- Investigation
- Traffic patrol

How many years have you been employed by this department?
Do you have a second job?
Appendix B

Goal Officer Survey

Instructions
This study involves research, conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Ph.D. at the University at Albany, State University of New York. The researcher is David Barton, who holds an M.A. in criminal justice; the faculty advisor is Robert Worden, who holds a Ph.D. in political science.

This study will examine officers' perceptions of occupational stressors, types of discrimination that they may experience, and how they cope with stress, based on responses to an anonymous survey by GOAL New England members.

questions about the study may be directed to:
David Barton, davidj.barton01@albany.edu or
Robert Worden, 518-442-5217, rworden@albany.edu

We estimate that the survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Survey participants will follow a web link to an on-line survey containing 37 items about occupational stressors that they may experience and how they might cope with those stresses. The only known risk of participation in a survey on this topic is the disclosure of a participant's identity, and so the project provides for an anonymous on-line survey and no information in terms of which participants could be inferentially identified.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. Even after you agree to participate in the research, you may decide to leave the study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you may otherwise have been entitled. I will retain and analyze the information you have provided up until the point you have left the study unless you request that your data be excluded from any analysis and/or destroyed.
All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. In addition, the Institutional Review Board and University or government officials responsible for monitoring this study may inspect these records.

This project has been approved by the University at Albany Institutional Review Board. Approval of this project only signifies that the procedures adequately protect the rights and welfare of the participants. Note that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. Please be sure to close your browser when finished so that others will be able less likely to see what you have been doing.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigator or if you wish to report any concerns about the study, you may contact the University at Albany’s Office of Regulatory Research Compliance at 518-442-9050, toll-free at 1-800-365-9139 or via e-mail at orrc@uamail.albany.edu.

Answer questions as they relate to you. For most answers, check the boxes most applicable to you or fill in the blanks.

**Starter**

1. **Would you say that you are experiencing some work-related discomfort or stress?**
   
   (Select only one.)
   
   □ none
   □ very little
   □ some
   □ a great deal

2. **Which of the following areas are—or have been—sources of stress for you?**
   
   (Select all that apply.)
   
   □ Inadequate Reward or Recognition
☐ Discrimination
☐ Quality of Immediate Supervision
☐ Internal Departmental Politics
☐ External Political Influences
☐ Inadequate Information
☐ Racial / Gender / Homophobic Tension in the Department
☐ Problems in the Community
☐ My Assignment
☐ Experiencing Violence
☐ Threat to Personal Safety
☐ Criminal Violence and Death to Others
☐ Witnessing Child Abuse
☐ Other:

3. Do you ever experience unwanted pressures or attention while off the job because of your profession?

(Select only one.)
☐ Never
☐ Very Occasionally
☐ Sometimes
☐ Often

4. Does your family ever experience unwanted pressures or attention because of your profession?

(Select only one.)
☐ Never
☐ Very Occasionally
☐ Sometimes
☐ Often
5. Do you feel that family-related stress has, at some point, affected your work motivation or performance?

(Select only one.)

- Never
- Very Occasionally
- Sometimes
- Often

6. Do you feel that work-related stress has ever affected your family?

(Select only one.)

- Never
- Very Occasionally
- Sometimes
- Often

7. Have you ever experienced difficulties balancing job and family responsibilities?

(Select only one.)

- Never
- Very Occasionally
- Sometimes
- Often

8. Would you say that you are currently experiencing stress as a result of family-related problems?

(Select only one.)

- None
- Very Little
- Some
- Often
9. Please briefly identify or describe any problems due to family-related problems. (optional)

(Provide one response only.)

10. Do you think that your level of motivation or commitment has been diminished by any actions of the department’s administration?

(Select only one.)

Never

Very Occasionally

Sometimes

Often

11. Please briefly specify the actions that have (at some point) diminished your enthusiasm for your work. (optional)

(Provide one response only.)

12. Do you think that your level of motivation or commitment has been diminished by any other aspect(s) of the job?

(Select only one.)

Never

Very Occasionally

Sometimes

Often

13. Please briefly specify the actions that have diminished your enthusiasm for your work. (optional)

(Provide one response only.)
14. Do you think that at any time your level of motivation or commitment has been adversely affected by experiences of stress?

(Select only one.)

- None
- Very Little
- Some
- A Great Deal

15. What, if anything, do you do when you feel tense or stressed?

(Select all that apply.)

- Exercise
- Attend Church Services or Pray
- Listen to Music
- Participate in an Activity or Hobby
- Drive
- Participate in Social Activity
- Sleep
- Share the Problem with Someone Else
- Drink Alcohol
- Use Drugs Other than Alcohol
- Take Medication
- Other:

16. With whom do you usually discuss work-related concerns or problems when you have them?

(Select all that apply.)

- Spouse/Significant Other
17. Have you ever found yourself using alcohol to relieve work-related tension or stress?

(Select only one.)

☐ Never
☐ Very Occasionally
☐ Sometimes
☐ Often

18. Have you ever experienced nightmares or painful memories related to stressful work experiences?

(Select only one.)

☐ Never
☐ Very Occasionally
☐ Sometimes
☐ Often

19. Would you say you are currently experiencing stress as a result of work-related problems?

(Select only one.)

☐ Never
☐ Very Occasionally
☐ Sometimes
20. Could you briefly identify problems that you are currently experiencing as a result of work-related problems? (optional)
   (Provide one response only.)

21. Would you say that you have ever experienced serious stress as a result of work-related problems?
   (Select only one.)
   □ Never
   □ Very Occasionally
   □ Sometimes
   □ Often

22. Could you identify the time period and briefly identify your experiences? (optional)
   (Provide one response only.)

23. Do you see any problems of fairness in the system for promotions within the department?
   (Select only one.)
   □ None
   □ Very Little
   □ Some
   □ A Great Deal
24. Do you feel that your career has been adversely affected by problems of fairness?

(Select only one.)

☐ None
☐ Very Little
☐ Some
☐ A Great Deal

25. How much of a role do you think that external forces (e.g., political groups, business groups, community groups, etc.) play in influencing departmental policy?

(Select only one.)

☐ None
☐ Very Little
☐ Some
☐ A Great Deal

26. Do you think these external forces should have more influence or less influence on departmental policy?

(Select only one.)

☐ More Influence
☐ Less Influence

27. Do you feel that your career opportunities have been adversely affected by political considerations or political pressures?

(Select only one.)

☐ None
☐ Very Little
☐ Some
☐ A Great Deal
28. To what extent do you think that external political pressures adversely affect the department’s effectiveness?

(Select only one.)

☐ None
☐ Very Little
☐ Some
☐ A Great Deal

**Sexuality**

29. How would you characterize, in one or two sentences, the current status of relations towards homosexual in the department?

(Provide one response only.)

30. Are you personally concerned about issues of fairness in the department related to homosexual officers?

(Select only one.)

☐ Not At All Concerned
☐ Somewhat Concerned
☐ Greatly Concerned

31. Please describe any unfairness you perceive that concerns you.

(Provide one response only.)

32. Do you feel that you personally have experienced homophobic discrimination at work?

(Select only one.)

☐ None
☐ Very Little
33. Which of the following are sources of homophobic discrimination at work?

(Select all that apply.)

☐ Administration
☐ Supervisors
☐ Fellow Officers or Partners
☐ Members of the Public
☐ Other:

34. Do you feel the department’s climate relative to homosexuality adversely affects your motivation or performance?

(Select only one.)

☐ None
☐ Very Little
☐ Some
☐ A Great Deal

35. Do you feel that enough attention has been given to the issues of homosexual officers within the department?

(Select only one.)

☐ Not Enough Attention
☐ Enough Attention
☐ Too Much Attention

36. What, if any, homosexual issues do you feel require additional attention? (optional)

(Provide one response only.)
37. Do you feel that your sexual orientation has placed constraints on your opportunity to advance in your profession?
   (Select only one.)
   □ None
   □ Very Little
   □ Some
   □ A Great Deal

38. Have you found your immediate supervisors in the department to be largely helpful and supportive or unhelpful and unsupportive?
   (Select only one.)
   □ Unsupportive and Unhelpful
   □ Unsupportive and Helpful
   □ Supportive and Unhelpful
   □ Supportive and Helpful

39. To what extent have you felt that your immediate supervisors have treated you fairly?
   (Select only one.)
   □ Mostly Unfairly
   □ Sometimes Unfairly
   □ Mostly Fairly
   □ Always Fairly

40. To what degree has fairness of supervision become an issue that affects how you feel about your work?
   (Select only one.)
   □ None
   □ Very Little
   □ Some
   □ A Great Deal
41. Do you have any suggestions as to what the department could do to assist officers by improving any aspect(s) of officer or supervisor training? (optional)

(Provide one response only.)

42. Are you aware of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) available in this department?

(Select only one.)

☐ No
☐ Yes

43. Have you ever used the EAP, or do you know anyone who has ever used the program?

(Select all that apply.)

☐ No
☐ Know Someone Who Has Used
☐ Have Used

44. Do you personally have confidence or trust in the EAP?

(Select only one.)

☐ None
☐ Very Little
☐ Some
☐ A Great Deal

45. Is there anything you can suggest that would improve the department’s EAP or otherwise assist officers with work-related problems related to stress? (optional)

(Provide one response only.)
46. Please feel free to add any other information or comments that you feel would be helpful. (optional)
   (Provide one response only.)

A bit about you

47. Age
   (Provide one response only.)

48. Ethnicity
   (Select only one.)
   □ African American
   □ Caucasian / White
   □ Mexican American / Hispanic
   □ Native American
   □ Other:

49. Gender
   (Select only one.)
   □ Male
   □ Female

50. Marital Status
   (Select only one.)
   □ Single
   □ Married

92
☐ Divorced
☐ Widowed
☐ Other:

51. Please check the highest level of schooling you have completed:

(Select all that apply.)
☐ High School
☐ Some college
☐ Associates Degree
☐ Bachelor degree
☐ Graduate degree
☐ Other:

52. Please identify which field closest defines your work environment (check only one):

(Select only one.)
☐ Police Officer
☐ Corrections Officer (or other incarceration institution)
☐ Court Officer (or official including probation or parole)
☐ Fire fighter
☐ Medical or Emergency Medical Technician
☐ Other:

53. What is your current rank?

(Select only one.)
☐ Police Officer
☐ Detective
☐ First line supervisor
☐ Captain or above

54. How many years have you been employed in your current field?

(Provide one response only.)
55. Please check how many employees your agency employs:

(Select only one.)

- □ 200 or more
- □ 100 to 200
- □ 50 to 100

**Orientation**

In general, how hard do you try to keep your sexual orientation secret from these people at work?

56. Coworkers

(Select only one.)

- □ I try very hard to keep it a secret
- □ I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret
- □ I don’t try to keep it a secret
- □ I actively talk about it to others at work

57. Immediate supervisor

(Select only one.)

- □ I try very hard to keep it a secret
- □ I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret
- □ I don’t try to keep it a secret
- □ I actively talk about it to others at work

58. Other supervisors

(Select only one.)

- □ I try very hard to keep it a secret
- □ I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret
- □ I don’t try to keep it a secret
☐ I actively talk about it to others at work

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<tr>
<th>59. Subordinates</th>
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<td>(Select only one.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I try very hard to keep it a secret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I don’t try to keep it a secret</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I actively talk about it to others at work</td>
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<th>60. Middle management</th>
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<td>☐ I try very hard to keep it a secret</td>
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<td>☐ I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret</td>
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<td>☐ I don’t try to keep it a secret</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I actively talk about it to others at work</td>
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<th>61. Top management</th>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I try very hard to keep it a secret</td>
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<td>☐ I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I don’t try to keep it a secret</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ I actively talk about it to others at work</td>
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