

ASPEN COLLEGE SERIES

WOMEN AND POLICING IN AMERICA

Classic and Contemporary Readings



KIMBERLY D. HASSELL | CAROL A. ARCHBOLD | DOROTHY MOSES SCHULZ



Wolters Kluwer
Law & Business

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To the women and men who pursue careers in policing, and to the scholars who study their impact. *And*, to the strong women in my life: Gloria, Jan Marie, Misty, Danielle, Michelle, Sue, Julie, Dawn, Rebecca, Amanda, Tina, Carol, and Dorothy.

Kimberly D. Hassell

To Dr. Kimberly D. Hassell and Dr. Dorothy Moses Schulz. I have been inspired by both of these women from the time that I first met them when I was in graduate school at the University of Nebraska—Omaha. It is our mutual interest in women in policing that brought us together to create this book. It has been both a privilege and a pleasure working with them both.

Carol A. Archbold

Thanks to all past and present women who chose policing as their livelihood and to the women and men who have chosen to study their successes. Thanks also to Kimberly D. Hassell and Carol A. Archbold, who gave me the opportunity to join them in producing a book that we hope will inspire others to careers in law enforcement or in the study of those who make that decision.

Dorothy Moses Schulz

PREFACE

There are many books on policing in the United States; they range from the history of police in America to contemporary reforms in recent decades. But only a handful of the books that line library shelves are focused on women in policing. Women have worked in the occupation of policing since the late 1800s and, with increasing numbers, have changed the landscape of policing in the United States. Consequently, there has been a recent burgeoning of studies dedicated to women employed within police agencies. *Women and Policing in America: Classic and Contemporary Readings* is, as the title suggests, a collection of early and contemporary research studies and essays on women and policing. Each reading is placed within a context that emphasizes its significance documenting the changing roles of women in the field.

Women and Policing in America is not merely a compilation of articles; each section begins with a comprehensive, yet concise, overview of the major topical areas that help to explain the significance of the articles and essays in each chapter. We hope that this book serves the important role of instructing and guiding the women—and men—who are currently in policing careers as well as those considering joining this exciting and important profession.

This book is organized into six chapters, discussing several of the major issues faced by women in policing in the United States. We first trace the historical trajectory of women in policing, dating back to the late 19th century. Although women were often seen as ancillary to police organizations early on, they served a vital role in policing in a country that was continually adapting to major social, industrial, and technological developments. Every major social change in the United States produced a reciprocal change in policing; women were at the center of those changes. These major transformations influenced the structure and content of this book. By focusing on the historical and contemporary contexts, supplementing them with classical and contemporary research articles and essays, we trace where women began to where they currently stand in modern day policing. Beginning this book with a discussion of the historical context, therefore, provides a backdrop for understanding not only how the nature of policing has changed in the United States, but also explains the expansion of the role and responsibilities of women in policing from police matron, to police woman, to police officer.

Each article or essay was chosen because of its relevance and its impact on the field of policing. Although we have provided a collection of insightful works, the actual amount of material required that we be selective in our choice of literature.

To overcome the limitations of space, time, and cost we have provided a comprehensive list of references and also a further reading section. We hope our book incites intellectual curiosity beyond the articles we have included in *Women and Policing in America* and that you pursue your interest in policing by seeking out other influential works cited.

We must thank many people for their assistance in the development of this book. First, we thank the scholars who are doing incredible work in important areas of policing—the historians, the researchers, the teachers, and past and present members of a number of police departments. This book would not have been possible without their sacrifices and earnest dedication to this field of study. We also thank Aspen Publishers, specifically David Herzig, our editor, and Susan Boulanger, our developmental specialist. We thank our external reviewers for their insightful comments and suggestions. We would also like to extend our sincere gratitude to Northwestern University School of Law, The Police Foundation, and Emerald Publishing, Inc. for their generosity and cooperation when permissions were sought for some of the articles and essays we have included in this book.

We were able to obtain the photos featured on the cover and throughout the text from various agencies; we want to thank Steve Willard and Tom Giaquinto from the San Diego Police Historical Association for allowing us to feature the three badges displayed on the cover; Glynn Martin of the Los Angeles Police Historical Society and Jim Huff of the Portland Police Museum for the photos featured in Chapter 1; the Fargo Police Department (specifically Chief Keith Ternes, Officers Jess Homan, Susan Dealing, Jeremiah Ferris, Ryan Dorrheim, and Michelle Voeltz) for the photos in Chapters 2 and 4; Chief Jeanette Persons of the Lisbon Police Department for the photo used in Chapter 3; the New York City Police Museum for the photo used in Chapter 5, and John Hallberg of the Institute for Regional Studies at North Dakota State University, Fargo, North Dakota, and retired Portland Police Chief Penny Harrington for the photos used in Chapter 6. Finally, we thank the police officers—women and men—who put their lives on the line every day for the safety of others.

Kimberly D. Hassell, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

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Dorothy Moses Schulz, John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY)

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History of Women in Policing

The articles in this chapter trace women's entry into policing, describing their early roles and changes that occurred in the late 1960s and early 1970s as policewomen moved from social workers to crime fighters. This distinction was first used by Dorothy Moses Schulz (1995) to explain the modifications in the current qualifications, training, and assignments of women police officers, which make them, at least in theory, identical to their male colleagues.

All of the authors of the articles included in this chapter served during different generations as working members of the criminal justice system. T. Roy Leevy's discussion of police matrons is influenced by his career in youth probation services. Lois Higgins, who takes issue with Leevy's limited view of the role of matrons, was a Chicago policewoman who was the director of Chicago's Crime Prevention Bureau throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s. She was the preeminent female officer of her era, speaking often about the benefits of crime prevention as part of the police function and on the roles of women in policing. Her career overlapped with the beginning of women shedding their roles as educated specialists to becoming uniformed police officers. Although not all early policewomen were college educated, with her own department being one of a number that did require higher education for women, Higgins believed that policewomen's roles working with women and juveniles made them specialists and gave them prestige that male officers working on patrol or in generalist assignments lacked. In conjunction with this, she felt that women's interest by the 1960s in assignments identical to their male colleagues, a role she disapproved of, was a loss of the prestige she believed came with specialist assignments

Depicted above are Lola Baldwin (*left*), Georgia Robinson (*center*), and Alice Stebbins Wells (*right*).

in the police department. Theresa M. Melchionne was also a leading policewoman throughout her career with the New York City Police Department (NYPD), and particularly as director of its bureau of policewomen. She, like Higgins, tried to broaden the roles of policewomen during the 1960s by expanding their specialist roles but avoiding assignments as uniformed patrol officers in competition with male officers. Schulz, currently a police historian, represents the modern role of women in policing. Having never served as a policewoman, she entered policing when women were fully integrated into patrol and her management responsibilities included commanding both men and women officers.

The authors are influenced by their careers and the eras during which they worked and wrote. Interestingly, each followed a career in criminal justice with a career as an educator: Leevy in Indiana; Higgins in Chicago; and Melchionne and Schulz as faculty colleagues in New York City. Their articles, combined with the Further Reading section found at the end of the book, provide insights into the changing views of, and by, women in law enforcement about their status and place in policing, and explain why later generations were forced to reject their foremothers' roles in favor of full participation in policing (including promotion to higher ranks and as chiefs of police).

FROM CORRECTIONS INTO POLICING

Women's entry into police departments as matrons (women who cared for other women but lacked arrest authority) and then as policewomen (generally women with the powers of arrest) was an outgrowth of women working in jails and prisons. These women in corrections worked first as volunteers and then in paid positions as matrons. After the development of separate prisons for women in the late nineteenth century, many achieved positions of authority as wardens, in charge of the entire prison, including all staff and inmates.

Women's official entry into municipal policing is generally recognized with the granting of arrest powers to social worker Lola Baldwin (pictured on the left on the first page of this chapter) by the Portland (Oregon) Police Department in 1908, and to Alice Stebbins Wells (pictured on the right on the first page of this chapter) by the Los Angeles Police Department in 1910. Establishing historical firsts can be difficult; there were women doing police work before both Baldwin and Wells. Schulz's article in this chapter identifies Mary Owens as having been appointed to the Chicago Police Department in 1893; because she held the rank of "policeman," she has often been overlooked in discussions about pioneer policewomen.

Women's employment in nonmunicipal law enforcement extends back even further in time. Schulz (2004) found that women were working unofficially as sheriffs' deputies, often assisting their husbands, in the 1870s and that a few were officially deputized, again often by their husbands, by the later years of the nineteenth century. Women also entered federal law enforcement before local policing. Women deputy U.S. marshals have been identified as early as 1890, mostly in the American west (Schulz, 2005).

But Baldwin and Wells were more like their corrections foremothers than these sheriffs' wives and the federal pioneers. They were part of larger changes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to reform policing and to increase women's

roles in public events and in local government. As Schulz indicates in the articles in this chapter and Janice Appier (1992, 1998) reinforces, most were among the first generation of women to have attended college; they were upper-middle-class teachers, settlement house workers, and volunteers in religious outreach groups. Many of these women became involved with private philanthropic groups or entered public service because they believed that changes in society that led many women, particularly young women, to work and to socialize outside the home and away from parental authority, led to increased immorality, juvenile delinquency, and alcohol consumption.

With few exceptions, the pressure to appoint policewomen came from outside police departments. The women were often forced on police chiefs by social reformers, members of the Progressive movement, and temperance leaders. This legacy forced them, as outsiders, to repeatedly prove their worth and suitability for their positions. A defining feature of the Progressive Era, generally defined as from the 1890s to World War I (the 1920s), were attempts by American-born, educated men and women to make big-city politics less corrupt by undercutting the political bosses who controlled local government. A major source of the power of the bosses was the ability to appoint police officers, who were generally members of the dominant immigrant group, were uneducated and poorly trained, and who had little interest in enforcing laws pertaining to prostitution, gambling, vice, and alcohol sale or consumption.

To regulate these activities, the Progressives aligned with the politically powerful Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) to curtail liquor sales and consumption in taverns, which in most cities formed the political base of local politicians. Liquor sales, particularly on Sundays, were a battleground between Catholic immigrants and the primarily Protestant Progressives. The WCTU and the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) were the most powerful voices for appointments of policewomen; they were joined by African-American racial uplift groups, which sought appointment of women of their race as policewomen. The few African-American policewomen, including Los Angeles' Georgia Robinson (pictured in the center on the first page of this chapter), were similar to white policewomen. Although less likely to have graduated from college, most came from the upper strata of their communities; they were wives of ministers or had been active in social welfare (Schulz, 1995).

Both black and white policewomen joined other activist women in demanding limits on the places women could be employed (bowling alleys, pool halls, and taverns, for instance, were seen as corrupting places where women would be exposed to gambling, liquor, and to unattached, predatory men) and in demands for a livable wage (because low wages forced women into unequal relationships with men or into prostitution). Because of their concerns with morality, the policewomen often functioned as official censors, discouraging women from congregating and socializing at dance halls, expositions and world's fairs, penny arcades, and movie theaters. Policewomen were also allied with social hygienists (health officials) because syphilis and gonorrhea, which were believed to be spread primarily through prostitution and promiscuity, were fatal diseases that raised social and medical concerns identical to today's fear about AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

As the readings in this chapter make clear, policewomen did not want to be policemen; they did not want to wear uniforms or carry firearms, and they had little interest

in achieving management positions except to supervise the work of other women. They believed policewomen should assist and oversee other women and girls through women's bureaus—self-contained entities operating under the auspices of the police department but physically separated from it. The women's aims included having policewomen supervised by other women officers. Portland's Baldwin was successful at achieving this. In this chapter, Schulz's article (1993) explains how in other cities women succeeded but at greater effort than Baldwin. In describing the disciplinary action against Lt. Mina C. Van Winkle in Washington, DC, Appier (1992) portrays the difficulty policewomen faced when trying to establish their legitimacy and authority.

Despite their concern over mistreatment of women by men, policewomen were equally critical of the behavior of women, particularly those of lower social status whom they believed failed to lead moral, sober, or chaste lives. Just as the women recognized social class differences between themselves and policemen, they recognized the same differences between themselves and the women they sought to protect. Estelle Freedman (1974) describes how religious, well-educated women lobbied for roles in jails and prisons as "their sister's keepers." They did not see the women as their equals, but instead wanted to protect them not only from predatory men but also from the women's immoral habits.

These views identify the early corrections leaders and the policewomen who followed them as social feminists, women who expanded women's roles in society but did not reject gender-based distinctions. Today, many people use the words *gender* and *sex* to mean the same thing, but they do not. Sex is the more easily defined; with some exceptions, most individuals are either men or women (a biological distinction)—that is, their sex. Gender, though, refers to societal expectations associated with being a man or a woman (i.e., masculinity and femininity). When someone says men are tough and women are soft, or men are aggressive and women are passive, these are attributes of gender.

At a time when gender roles were less fluid than today, men's sphere was defined as outward looking; men worked outside the home, provided economic security to their families, and were expected to participate in public events and in politics. Women's sphere was the home, as protectors of other women and children and as keepers of religious and civic virtue. Policewomen supported this division; the articles in this chapter describe how they depended on maternal imagery to reinforce their police roles within the definition of separate spheres. In her history of women in the Los Angeles Police Department, Appier (1998) describes how policewomen there and in other cities were called "municipal mothers." Eisenberg (2009) traced Seattle's women from their earlier days to modern times. These histories are important; because of the local nature of policing in the United States, while many departments' women were similar, rarely were they identical. For instance, a number of cities, Chicago in particular, did not require policewomen to be college graduates, and Indianapolis, which in the 1920s had a large women's bureau, assigned many women to arrest shoplifters. Both San Francisco and San Diego assigned their policewomen earlier to work with men than in other cities and the women tended to be involved in more activities that we would define today as crime fighting.

CHANGING ROLES REFLECT CHANGED TIMES

Women's presence in policing increased during World War I but was blunted by the Depression. They were able to regain their momentum, though, during World War II, again amid morality concerns. By the end of the war and through the 1950s, they were assigned to a greater variety of investigative and undercover roles, but it was not until the 1960s that many policewomen seriously questioned their specialist roles. Looking at them with modern eyes, readers are apt to say that they were forced into subordinate roles, but the vast majority of women still accepted separate spheres, and only a handful chafed at their limited career mobility.

In articles written a generation apart from each other, Higgins's and Melchionne's selections in this chapter underline women's continuing efforts to remain separated from their male colleagues. These readings also show the beginning of the realization that too much separation and too many limitations on the tasks performed by policewomen may cause them to be marginalized. A close reading of the articles will show how this concern was already visible in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when Higgins chose to debate Leevy's description of policewomen primarily in terms of assisting others rather than having distinct roles of their own. Leevy provides a rather limited view of the role of police matrons, describing them primarily in terms of their roles assisting not only police officers, but also teachers, judges, and probation and parole officers. Although he specifies that a police matron should not be viewed as "a high grade stenographer," he does not describe any role in which the women are not aides or assistants to others, who in almost all instances will be men (Leevy, 1948: 540). Higgins takes issue with this description. Her discussion of the role of policewomen is an example of how the women were trying to expand their roles at a time when gender expectations were becoming less rigid.

The two articles also indicate the dangers of relying on imprecise definitions of titles and responsibilities. In the early years of the development of policewomen, the terms *policewomen* and *matron* were sometimes used interchangeably, but by the 1940s and 1950s, these terms were more likely to be distinguished, particularly in larger urban police departments that employed more than one or two women. The roles Leevy attributed to matrons were more likely to be fulfilled by policewomen. Certainly, the selection criteria he listed were more typically demanded of policewomen than of matrons, who generally provided custodial care for women in police stations and local jails and rarely had the education or professional credentials listed by Leevy. In addition to countering Leevy's limited view of the matron/policewoman's roles, Higgins proposed an overlap in women's and men's roles in policing. Notice how she avoids gendered distinctions between crime prevention and crime fighting, noting that the application of case work principles is important to all police officers, "whether man or woman" (1948: 103–104).

Melchionne goes even further than Higgins in providing an expanded definition of the roles of policewomen. She is, of course, writing ten years later and her attempts to further broaden women's roles reflect the changing views of some policewomen. These views also reflected changes in society that encouraged women in all professions to see themselves moving beyond entry-level positions. Policewomen now wanted careers rather than merely jobs, a difference that called for a wider range of

assignments and promotional opportunities, including reaching positions in upper management. Melchionne also tries to turn the policewomen's "invisibility" into an asset, pointing out the benefits of not being immediately identified as a police officer during many types of plainclothes assignments and criminal investigations.

But not all women saw this as sufficient. Those who wanted even greater opportunities, particularly including upward mobility, began in the 1950s to sue for the right to take promotion exams to supervisory ranks. A contemporary of Melchionne's who had a different vision of the future of policewomen, Felicia Shpritzer, believed that she and other NYPD policewomen should have the right to take the same promotion exams as men. Her article (1959, reprinted in Chapter Two) lays out her reasons for her beliefs but stops far short of advocating sex-neutral assignments for men and women, a position that she ultimately came to advocate and that her own career came to represent.

Like Shpritzer, many policewomen had strong feelings about the importance of their work, felt that they were misunderstood, and tried to explain their activities to a larger audience. Articles and books by a number of the women are listed in the Further Reading section. These works allow the women to speak to you in their own words. Like the book by Higgins (1961), those by Mary Hamilton (1924, 1971), an early director of New York City's women's bureau, and Eleonore L. Hutzler, director of the Detroit Police Department's women's bureau and a deputy commissioner of the department, are manuals for policewomen rather than biographies. The book by Mary Sullivan (1938), who joined the NYPD as a matron in 1911 and became the first woman assigned to the homicide squad and then the women's bureau director, provides a more intimate look at her life and career.

SHERIFFS AND FEDERAL OFFICERS TRAVEL A DIFFERENT CAREER PATH

Despite U.S. policing being layered into federal, state, county, and local, only the last has received widespread attention from researchers. The same is true for women; although the voices of municipal policewomen can be heard in the books and articles by and about them, voices of women at the other levels of law enforcement are faint. At the county level, the role of women working in jails along with their sheriff husbands was well established by the early twentieth century. In *Breaking the Brass Ceiling*, Schulz (2004) explains that because serving as the sheriff of a county was often a family affair, women were sometimes selected to fill a vacancy created by the death of a husband, as happened frequently in Texas, or elected when a husband's term limits prevented him from continuing to hold office, a pattern that occurred in Wisconsin. Beginning in 1916, prior to the election of women running on their own merits, Texas had appointed more than 100 widows to fill their husbands' terms of office. Wisconsin voters between 1924 and 1966 elected almost 50 women sheriffs as a way to evade term limits that would have forced their husbands out of office. (For more on Wisconsin's women sheriffs, see Schulz and Houghton, 2003.)

Women in federal law enforcement differed from both the municipal policewomen and the county wives and widows. With the exception of the U.S. Marshals Service, which has employed women throughout its history, only a handful of women

worked as federal law enforcers before the 1970s. At least three women worked for the Bureau of Investigation (the forerunner of the Federal Bureau of Investigation) in the 1920s but women were ineligible to become special agents until 1971. Despite Executive Order No. 11478 issued in 1969 by President Richard M. Nixon outlawing discrimination in federal employment, it took an additional two years to open to women jobs that required carrying a firearm (see Schulz, 2009, "Women Special Agents in Charge," in Chapter Six). State policewomen were the rarest of all. Connecticut employed six as the State Women's Police Corps during World War I but did not recognize them as members of the State Police. Massachusetts hired two in 1930 whose roles were identical to municipal policewomen; by 1968, as equality for women in policing was about to begin, there were five Massachusetts State Police-women, all assigned to assist troopers in investigations involving women and children and as undercover operatives in cases where a woman's presence was deemed necessary.

By 1968, though, the distinction in roles between policewomen and policemen was starting to crumble. Although Betty Blankenship and Elizabeth Coffal's assignment to regular uniformed patrol as Car 47 in Indianapolis did not result in an overnight revolution, the passage in 1972 of Title VII as an amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act was the catalyst for police departments ending sex-based roles. The transition has not always been smooth; despite almost 40 years having passed, a number of issues remain that form the basis of the chapters that follow.

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