

Women in law enforcement

Law



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Women in Law Enforcement Essay There are many stereotypes that women in law enforcement field had to face throughout time. Women troubled with being taken serious as a crime fighter, or if a women would ever be allowed to become a police officer, was a question because women are usually viewed from others as too small, weak and gentle to ever be taken serious from the public. In this research paper I will explain the background on women in the law enforcement and how women have the same intelligence, communication, compassion, and diplomacy as a male officer.

Having examples from articles and an interview from a women officer will help my thesis on how women can be successful as any male officer. Women have struggled since the early 1800s to have a career with law enforcement so one day hope to succeed and be recognized as a valued part of law enforcement just like their male counterparts. Women dealt with lack of respect, sexual harassment, discrimination.

These times were very difficult and challenging for female officers not only verbally and emotionally but also because the police department only made uniforms to fit men officers, who made the female officers, look unprofessional and uncomfortable and very hard to do their job, when they could hardly walk in the heavy yet loose-fitting uniforms they wore. " In the past women had two choices: They could wear a very high-waisted, darted pants pattern from the 1970s or they could wear men's pants,"(Garret).

These uniforms make a female's job even more difficult with the extra weight and fabric bunched inside of their uniform, also caused a delay when reaching for their firearm. The uniforms made their job even more dangerous for females than for male officers. This demonstrates an immense example

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of how fearless women had to be, known that they were an easier target to take advantage of and was more overlooked from citizens. During World War II women were hired into law enforcement agencies, except most of these women who were hired to auxiliary work.

The women that joined the police force during the war helped to assist new men that were employed or couldn't join the military. Many women worked as dispatchers or clerical workers within the departments. While men officers still had patrol duties and worked as the crime fighters. The women were stuck with any job that a male officer wouldn't like to do or feel comfortable doing, like helping with children and young women, or talking to families.

After the war had ended a new push toward advancing women in the career through integration with the men officers, became more demanding than ever before. The amount of women wanting a career in law enforcement encouraged them to work harder for a higher profession as a career distinct from a social worker and office help to working in the field with the men; starting with patrol ride along. These changes led to greater demands for equal treatment and opportunities for women police officers.

The 1950s and early 1960s was when women started to double with the number of them working in law enforcement. This was the beginning of a change in policing that would have a dramatic effect on women in law enforcement everywhere. The changes helped women excel with the police force throughout the 70's and 80's. In 1972 the Civil Rights Act Title VII expanded to include public agencies and as a result police departments were prohibited by law from discriminating against women in hiring, recruiting, promotions, and working conditions.

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The Revenue Sharing Act and the Crime Control Act, both helped women significantly on holding funds from departments that discriminated against. The percentage of women in police agencies from 1960 to around 1980 kept ever-increasing with larger numbers of women joining which brought more opportunities and challenges for them. From 1970 into the early 1990's women in law enforcement have worked and fought for the same equal jobs of policing as men officers. A few examples would be on patrol, in command positions, and in promoting and recruiting officers. It is clear that the structural changes in the law in the United States have helped to create an increase in the numbers of women in this traditionally male dominated field of police work. In policing, as departments expanded in the early 1970's, a related increase of black and white women police occurred driven by affirmative action practices"(Price). In 1985 Penny Harrington became the first woman to be named Chief of Police for a major city, Portland, Oregon, and in Atlanta, Georgia in 1994 Beverly J. Harvards became the first African American woman to be made Chief of Police for a large city.

These accomplishments are a strong testament to the courage and perseverance that women have shown throughout the history of women in policing. Despite the fact that the law enforcement fields are heavily male dominated, woman have been making a large impact for themselves throughout country. Until the women's liberal movement in the 1970s, women generally had clerical roles or held jobs as dispatchers. Then, civil rights and affirmative action laws enabled women to assume they would have a job in law enforcement.