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The feminization of private investigation: a sociological analysis

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THE FEMINIZATION OF PRIVATE INVESTIGATION:
A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation outlines the occupation of private investigation and the role that females play within that profession. The difficulties women experience in male-oriented occupations remains noteworthy in sociological research today. Progress has been made, yet many barriers still exist for women. These include structural, social, and cultural factors that influence women and/or the jobs that they hold. With the completion of interviews with twenty-six female private investigators, I was able to analyze the existing structural, interactional, and gender barriers which moderate the number of women that work as private investigators. Few studies have examined this occupation and this gap may be detrimental to our understanding of this issue. I discovered that women have less difficulty getting into and succeeding in private investigation than in law enforcement. Finally, I found that based on the nature of the work, client demand, opportunity for self-employment, and limited training requirements, females have risen in the labor queue that feeds private investigation. I argue that females may be more desirable to employers and clients because of the advantages their gender provides. Exploration of this topic holds importance for a comprehensive understanding of the position of women in the occupational structure.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the 1970s, women increasingly began to move into occupations that were traditionally dominated by men. For some, gender integration became resegregation. Women came to dominate these jobs, hence, they were "feminized." However, in certain professions, such as law enforcement, the progress of women has been limited. Because of these disparities, research on gender and work has taken on significant theoretical importance. The difficulties women face in a male-oriented occupation remains noteworthy. Interestingly, the experience of women in private security has been relatively ignored, especially those women who work in private investigation. In this dissertation, I will examine previous inquiries of public and private police, focusing on the structural, interactional and gender barriers that impede the progress of women within private security, specifically within private investigation. In addition, I plan to observe any variations in the nature of the work, as well as how these factors affect roles available to women in this occupation. I have completed a qualitative study focusing on the experiences of female private investigators. The goal is to contribute meaningfully to existing sociological, gender, and occupational literature regarding the organization of this profession and its relation to the role of women in a male-oriented career.

In 2001, women accounted for only 12.7% of all sworn law enforcement positions in large agencies (National Center for Women and Policing), as we can see from this statistic and research on policing, women are a minority in police work. The job-related difficulties that women face in public law enforcement continue to be an issue (e.g., Martin 1980; Prokos and Padavic 2002). Examples include widespread bias in police hiring, selection practices and recruitment policies (National Center for Women & Policing 2000). Though the focus on women

in public law enforcement is legitimate, there has been little research that has examined the location of women within the private security industry. In 1995, J. M. Callan, in collaboration with the American Society for Industrial Security, surveyed women in private security. However, she looked at women in management positions. Erikson et al. (2000) studied private security agencies, interviewing both men and women working as guards, investigators, security alarm monitors, and alarm installers. This analysis provides useful information regarding the increased demand in female labor in this industry. The drawback is that the interviews take place in the Toronto area. There have also been several government evaluations (e.g., Cunningham et al. 1985) and privately funded studies (e.g., Rand Corporation 1971) of the industry. These examinations only provide us with broad demographic information of private security employees. By ignoring this matter, we abandon important opportunities to examine women who work in a male-oriented occupation and the implications it may have regarding gender equality. The following dissertation describes a qualitative exploration of female private investigators.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The History of Private Investigation

To understand the organization of private investigation today it is important to review

the history of this occupation. The origins of the private security industry and any subsequent

structural or demographic shifts may hold sociological significance. The roots of private

investigation reach back to the mid-1800s concurrent with America's economic reliance on

railway transportation and industrial production. In 1850, Allen Pinkerton established a private

security force to investigate various railway and industrial crimes (Green and Farber 1975).

Eventually they began to investigate a variety of criminal cases (MacKay 1997). The public

police assemblies utilized private services when their own forces were insufficient (Morn 1982).

Private protection also became essential to railways that cut across the vast landscapes in the

American frontier. Due to the impossibility of public police securing the goods transported on

these railways, the Railway Police Acts gave these forces full entitlement to police property and

equipment. This was a great boon for the private security industry in that their power and

jurisdiction over a large amount of space was recognized.

Pinkerton was a Scottish immigrant who had no formal training in the detection of crime

(he worked as a cooper making barrels) yet his "sixth-sense" helped to solidify his career in

detection and investigation (MacKay 1997). Pinkerton climbed the ranks from full-time deputy

sheriff to the first detective of the Chicago police. He even worked as a personal guard for

President Lincoln. The Pinkerton National Detective Agency was the first of its kind in the West

and its motto ("we never sleep") conveyed the work ethic in which Pinkerton so firmly believed

(MacKay 1997). The Pinkertons have been credited as one of "the only national investigative

bodies concerned with non-specialized crimes in the country until the advent of the F.B.I."

(Green and Farber 1975, p. 26). It is believed that the F.B.I. later modeled its organization on

the landmark agency (MacKay 1997). The Pinkertons were even called upon to assist in the

investigation of international crimes, because at the time, there was no organization equipped

to do so.

The history of the Pinkerton Agency is not without blemish (Green and Farber 1975). In

the 1892 Battle of Homestead, a small group of Pinkertons shot and fatally beat workers who

were striking against the mill owners. A few detectives lost their lives (Mackay 1997). As time

went on, private security forces began to establish themselves as a more legitimate form of

enforcement. Modern law enforcement had a slow beginning that allowed the Pinkertons to

thrive. In America, until the mid-nineteenth century, there was a suspicion and mistrust of

governmental and military bodies (Morn 1982). Businesses and private citizens relied on the

Pinkertons for investigative, as well as protective services. Increased economic and residential

growth outside of the city limits put a strain on the public police. The Pinkerton Agency was

then able to step in. By 1914, over 12,000 private security facilities were in existence (Green

and Farber 1975). As private security moved into ubiquity, the majority of detective agencies

shifted their focus from investigation to private policing (Morn 1982).

Parallel to the end of World War II, crime and the fear of crime began to move to the

forefront of concern among the public. As reported by the National Institute of Justice (1985),

"by 1974, crime and law enforcement had emerged as 'the most salient' issue in local politics,

overshadowing race, economic growth, government reform, and municipal corruption" (p. 1).

Rising crime rates between 1948 and 1978 lead to an increase in police expenditures, as well as

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manpower. Police spending rose 350%, while the number of officers per 1,000 residents went

from 1.33 to 1.96 (NIJ 1985). Near the end of the 1970s, most of the law enforcement

executives reported an increased use of private security in their communities ". . . in which their

own resources tended to be stabilizing or declining" (NIJ 1985, p. 2). Over fifty percent of their

respondents reported placing locks on doors and windows, had improved the lighting

surrounding their homes, and had installed burglar alarms (Cunningham et al. 1985). Many

citizens realized that more often than not, once the police arrived, the "damage had been

done" (Cunningham et al. 1990). There appears to have been a decided shift from reliance on

law enforcement to the more proactive measures of private security (NIJ 1985).

Even today, the private security industry plays a vital part in the fight against crime. The

services provided by this trade are wide-ranging. Because of this, private security is able to

address many concerns related to crime that public law enforcement cannot. The National

Institute of Justice (1991) stated that "private security is now clearly the Nation's primary

protective resource, outspending public law enforcement by 73 percent and employing 2½

times the workforce" (p. 1). In 1969, over 800,000 people were employed as security workers

and over 8 billion dollars was spent on private security and its equipment (Rand Corporation

1971, Vol. 1). However, it should be noted that with a continued emphasis on private

protection, detection has become a secondary service in many security agencies. The Pinkerton

Consulting and Investigations Services division equals only about four percent of the commerce

(MacKay 1997). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2006), a majority (34%) of the wage

and salaried employees who are classified as private detectives and investigators fall into the

private security services industry. Nevertheless, businesses that offer investigation services

make up a little less than three percent of the private security industry. The Bureau of Labor

Statistics (2006) estimates that private investigation is to increase about eighteen percent by

2016. Increased security concerns among private citizens, as well as a greater reliance on

employee background checks for employers, high numbers of legal proceedings, increased

financial activity globally, and an ever-rising dependence on the Internet may contribute to this

uptick (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2006). The historical transformation of this industry combined

with the lack of scholarly research on this occupation signifies its importance as a relevant topic

of sociological examination.

Furthermore, we know little about the individuals who work in this occupation. The

social and technological changes American culture has undergone are likely to have had an

effect on the structure and demography of private investigation. Research shows that over the

past several decades, there has been a change in the demographics of private security,

specifically within the lower ranks of the occupational hierarchy. In 1971, the "typical private

guard" was defined as "an aging white male, poorly educated, usually untrained, and very

poorly paid . . . he averages between 40 and 55 years of age, has had little education beyond

the ninth grade, and has had a few years of experience in private security" (Rand Corporation,

Vol. 1, p. 30). In 1990, Cunningham et al. found that the number of women in the private

security industry doubled over a thirty-year period (data was collected in 1959, 1975, and

1989). In addition, the percentage of black employees has increased from 10% to 51%, the

average age of employees has decreased from 52 to 35, and the educational achievements of

the employees has increased from an average of nine years in 1959 to 85% of personnel having

12 or more years of education (Cunningham et al. 1990). Walsh (1989) examined the private

services that were operating out of Starrett City, a 20,000-resident neighborhood located in Brooklyn, New York. His results showed that eighty 83% of the security officers had a high school degree or more, the average age of the officers was thirty-nine, and the security personnel were evenly split between minorities (blacks and Hispanics) and whites (Walsh 1989). This change in the demographic make-up of private security guard personnel could suggest significant changes for private investigation, not only regarding race and ethnicity, but also gender. It is necessary, then, that we take a closer look at the gender distribution of private investigation, particularly since "most of the published material on the personnel characteristics of private security comes from perceptions, assumptions, and other nonscientific approaches to the issue" (Cunningham et al. 1990, p. 138). In order to lay the groundwork for this task, we must first review research germane to this issue.

The Census offers basic demographic descriptions for PI work. In 2000, there were approximately 63,000 private investigators in the U.S, an estimated 65% being male and 35% being female. Seventy-four percent of PIs are white and 12% are black. Of the total number of investigators, 50% are white males, 24% are white females, nearly 7% are black males, and 6% are black females (Census 2000). Looking at these descriptive values, a distinct pattern becomes obvious - there is both a racial and a gender disparity in private investigation. When we compare these demographics to those in law enforcement, we see dissimilarity. In 2000, an estimated 86% police officers were male and 13% were female. Racially, the statistics show that an estimated 76% are white and 12% are black. Breaking down these numbers, we find that white males make up 68% of the sample, black males 9%, white females 8%, and black females 3%. We know from existing literature that law enforcement is a male-oriented occupation.

However, there are more women in private investigation than in police work, begging the

question – what is it that allows women greater entrance into this occupation compared to law

enforcement? To provide the basis for this inquiry, I explore the obstacles women face when

entering into and working in law enforcement.

The History of Women in Public Law Enforcement

Women are not new to the occupation of law enforcement. The first female in law

enforcement was sworn into action in 1910 (Martin 1980). During the 1900s, the women who

occupied positions within law enforcement typically filled duties that were in agreement with

their role in society: clerical work, guard duty, vice work. The duties they were given were

things that it was believed men could not do. For example, conducting searches on female

suspects and prisoners or working as decoys for prostitution arrests. Most departments did not

even issue them uniforms (Wells and Alt 2005). This patent confinement to "female-

appropriate" job tasks continued until the 1960s. In 1961, Felicia Shpritzer sued the New York

City Police Department because she was not allowed to take the sergeant promotional exam.

She was successful. As a result, Shpritzer and Gertude Schimmel were allowed to take the

exam. Both passed, thus becoming the first two female sergeants (as reported in Wells and Alt

2005).

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw even greater movement of women into mainstream

public law enforcement. In 1969, Executive Order 11478 was enacted. It stated that gender

could not be used as a job qualification by the federal government. Two years later, in Reed v.

Reed, the Supreme Court ruled that the Fourth Amendment prohibited sexual discrimination,

which was followed closely by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. This act prohibited

employment discrimination by state and local government based on race, color, religion, sex, or

national origin. On the surface, it would appear that women have made significant inroads into

public law enforcement. Officially, this is entirely the case. However, research continues to

show the hardships that women face when entering, and working in, in law enforcement.

Unofficially, it seems that women, while allowed to enter into this occupation, face numerous

barriers preventing them from achieving success.

Private Investigators: On the Job

Our understanding of the private eye in American society rests on images created within

movies, television shows, books, and portrayals in the media. Characters such as Sam Spade

and Philip Marlowe paint a picture of a seedy, dangerous underworld where the brooding

(male) PI will do anything he can to catch the bad guy. In reality, this is inaccurate. First, both

men and women work in this profession and many make concerted efforts to be inconspicuous

(MacHovec 1991). Second, PIs cannot prevent the police from doing their job (MacHovec 1991).

They must defer to the authority of the police. Furthermore, investigators must work within the

law and the regulations that govern their industry (MacHovec 1991). Many states require a

license to practice and have outlined a set of rules that practitioners must follow under that

license. Third, most PIs work unarmed (MacHovec 1991). They do not work "in the line of duty"

like law enforcement. Thus, few have the need for a weapon. When we compare fictional

images of PIs with real data, our collective idea of what a private investigator is seems to be

skewed. This occupation has yet to be the focus of any significant sociological inquiry. Some

have outlined this profession while addressing the private security industry generally (e.g.,

Erikson et al. 2000). However, much of the research that looks at this occupation is flawed

because of the setting of the examination. For example, Gill and Hart (1997) published several

publications examining the job of the private investigator, yet their studies outline this

occupation as it functions in England. Because of this scholarly fissure, the knowledge of this

job and its inherent tasks comes mainly from texts written by those who have worked as a

private investigator (e.g., MacHovec 1991). In most cases, the purpose of these manuals is the

informative and/or technical instruction of those who are working as a PI. They tend to lack any

theoretical analysis of the occupation. This reiterates the importance of this dissertation.

According to present texts, PIs are credited with one basic mission – to obtain necessary

information (e.g., MacHovec 1991). There are numerous fields that rely on investigators doing

just this. Namely, background investigation, child custody, depositions, criminal or domestic

surveillance, accident investigation and reconstruction, bounty hunting/bail bond work,

insurance claims investigation, loss prevention, marital infidelity, locating missing persons,

process serving, paralegal services, undercover, etc. Many PIs work as generalists, although

there appears to be movement towards specialization in the occupation. This may increase the

effectiveness of each field and its corresponding techniques because of increased emphasis on

a smaller set of skills (MacHovec 1991). In addition, PIs have access to people and information

that the police do not. The private investigator is not "required by law to identify himself or his

true purpose in interviewing a person or being in a particular place" (Akin 1976, p. 6). They are

able to access to important records and information unlike the public, yet they do not fall under

the legal regulations that can inhibit the police. The occupation allows them to act as a valuable

extension of public policing.

The private security industry has undergone numerous academic inquiries that examine

its expansion of power throughout the history of the United States. Modern American society

finds itself increasingly governed by privatized bodies in both private and public spaces.

Shearing and Stenning (1983) assert that since the 1950s a significant shift has occurred –

citizens spend more time participating in public activities that are located on private property.

The public police force has been discouraged from regulating the activities in these areas for

two reasons: (1) they are generally expected to enforce laws that govern public places

(Stinchcombe 1963; Shearing and Stenning 1983) and (2) those who own mass private property

want to keep control in their hands (Shearing and Stenning 1983). Even when police resources

allowed them to take control of these areas, they were dissuaded from doing so.

The increased legitimacy of private security is attributed to its close association with the

maintenance of private property (Shearing and Stenning 1983). This is also accounts for the lack

of resistance encountered by the public (Shearing and Stenning 1983). This is an interesting

development when the powers of private security are taken into consideration. Private security

forces are authorized with no more power than that of ordinary citizens. They can require

searches of private property and obtain private information for any purpose (Shearing and

Stenning 1983). In many ways, this grants them greater control over the public than the police.

Shearing and Stenning (1983) maintain that this momentous shift from public to private

policing has generated a concurrent transformation in the nature of social control. First, private

security bodies have come to classify deviance in an instrumental rather than a moral way.

Their focus rests on protecting the interests of their employers, not in protection of the public.

It is the individual who creates an illicit opportunity, not the person who capitalizes on it, who is

punished (Shearing and Stenning 1983). Thus, Shearing and Stenning (1983) argue the authoritative reach of private social control has been extended. Second, policing in private security realms has become part of the organizational structure. Control is not an external system of justice. Instead, it is in line with their own interests (Shearing and Stenning 1983). Third, this integration is built into its own system of sanction. It relies on its own organizational resources for containment (Shearing and Stenning 1983). These factors have culminated in a powerful mechanism of control regarding human behavior. Private investigators, by definition, are part of this model. Their clients ask them to obtain information in a variety of forms from which police are routinely prohibited. Issues of privacy have been brought to the attention of government officials because of the considerable amount of leeway investigators are given. This research underscores the importance of this body of research in sociological and criminological scholarship.

Policewomen: Structural Barriers

There are numerous studies of policewomen and their on-the-job experiences, but most salient to this research is Susan Martin's (1980) book, *Breaking and Entering: Policewomen on Patrol*. I will review the components of her study that are most relevant to this research. Martin (1980) examines a group of women who are attempting to "break and enter" into police work. She utilizes an in-depth qualitative study of officers in one district of the Metropolitan Police Department of Washington, D.C. She found two types of barriers that inhibited women from making any great gains through their employment: structural and interactional barriers. Structural barriers are defined as those obstacles that result from both informal practices and official policies that prevent women from being fully integrated into the department. These

include socialization, training, discrimination, job assignment, and certification. Consideration of these factors provides the groundwork for evaluating women in private investigation.

Socialization

The issue of gender and its construction within public law enforcement has been examined and re-examined in various contexts. One useful way of viewing this development is through socialization. Martin (1980) found that several stages are involved in the process of socialization into the police subculture: anticipatory socialization, training at the academy, certification and street patrol. Anticipatory socialization is arguably different for men than it is for women. Fewer than half of the men and women interviewed by Martin (1980) knew someone who was involved in (or encouraging of) work in law enforcement. In addition, she theorizes that men's anticipatory socialization is longer and more intense than that of female police officers (Martin 1980). This is due to the masculine games that men play as children, as well as the aggressive role models found in the media. Women, however, have less exposure to these devices. Martin (1980) discerned the effect that prior work experience had on this type of socialization. Seven out of the twenty-seven male recruits in her sample had served in the military, which introduced them to the concepts of discipline and chain of command. Several others had "men's jobs," such as truck driving and construction work. The transition from these kinds of jobs into police work was less challenging compared to women. The female recruits in her study "came from the white-collar world of the female office-worker" (Martin 1980, p. 115), and none of them had been in the military. For women, the movement from their gender role in society, compounded by their previous occupational experience, was much more traumatic. They were allowed fewer opportunities to "try on" the role, leaving them less

socialized before being exposed to the occupation (Martin 1980). I argue that in private

investigation, socialization will also have an effect. Women who enter into private investigation

will likely be similar to Martin's (1980) sample in terms of gender socialization, especially during

childhood. In spite of this, I expect that females PIs are more likely to have a job history that has

prepared them for PI work. Because there is a link between private security and law

enforcement, I anticipate that more women will have experience with policing and the military.

Almost 3 decades have passed between completion of my work and Martin's (1980) publication

increasing the probability that male-oriented occupations have become a more likely option for

females.

Personal connections and relationships can also play a role in socialization. In Martin's

(1980) sample, twelve out of the twenty-eight women in the sample knew someone who had

exposed them in some way to policing. In each of these cases, the person was male and some

were even in a romantic partnership. Personal relationships with those who are in some way

familiar with, or supportive of, policing may have an influence on a female's decision to become

a police officer. Since private security is considered "men's work," females who get into PI work

are also likely to have been exposed to the occupation through some sort of personal

relationship. Furthermore, many may enter the occupation because of a marital relationship.

Training at the police academy is the start of the formal socialization process for police

officers. It is here that existing inequalities between men and women become glaringly obvious.

Prokos and Padavic (2002) report on a participant observation conducted within a police-

training academy. They were able to reveal the "hidden curriculum" that perpetuates the

masculine image of police work (Prokos and Padavic 2002). "This curriculum, taught obliquely

by teachers and students, instructs students about the particular form of masculinity that is lauded in police culture, the relationship between extreme masculinity and police work, and the nature of the groups that fall 'inside' and 'outside' of the culture of policing" (Prokos and Padavic 2002, p. 440). Through their observations and experiences, they were aware that the formal curriculum was gender-neutral (Prokos and Padavic 2002). Everyone was welcome and it was explicitly stated that everyone had equal abilities and rights. Conversely, the hidden curriculum helped to define the gender boundaries that were expected of the recruits upon job entrance (Prokos and Padavic 2002). This was enacted through the treatment of and interaction between both instructors and students, and between the students. They found that during training, women were treated as "outsiders" (male recruits would get together outside of class), gender differences were exaggerated (in physical training women were paired with women, instead of by size), women were denigrated and objectified (lude comments were made about women portraying characters in training videos), and the authority of female instructors was actively opposed (male recruits resisted female instructors by "acting out" and openly questioning their authority) (Prokos and Padavic 2002). This hidden curriculum was compounded by the association between police work and violence (Prokos and Padavic 2002). Policing is not a job for women because they are viewed as being incapable of violence. Hence, it is the attitudes and action of the male students and instructors that both reinforced the inferiority of females during training, on the police force, and in society (Prokos and Padavic 2002).

Physical training while in the academy also poses many problems for females. The biological difficulties that women face in fulfilling the physical standards serve to undermine

the faith that male recruits will have in their female colleagues during active duty. This is in stark contrast to male recruits who cannot complete the physical standards in that they are treated as individuals, as opposed to being lumped together in a gender stereotypical situation (Martin 1980).

This disadvantage is complicated by the fact that there are those female recruits looking to "get out of" certain physical activities (Martin 1980). They may be passed through the system without much resistance because instructors either feel protective or do not know how to deal with the issue without calling too much attention to it (Martin 1980). This creates tension with other female recruits who are actively working to meet all the standards of physical training. In addition, when exceptions are made for women, it serves in solidifying the differences between male and female officers (Martin 1980). This "encourages the expectations of some women that they can adapt to the job by being 'different' rather than relying on solidarity" (Leger 1997, p. 236). As a result, male colleagues view their female counterparts as subordinate, because of the lack of confidence that they are taught to have in their female coworkers (Leger 1997). Thus, many are left out of the social solidarity created among recruits.

In addition to physical difficulties, interpersonal skills can also become problematic. This skill set is almost wholly ignored in training and is detrimental to female recruits since it has been found to be one of the places where women excel (Martin 1980). By glossing over this capability, females are prevented from growing further in this skill, and from proving to male staff and recruits that they are proficient in at least one skill relevant to police work (Martin 1980). Acquisition of a PI license carries with it fewer requirements than police work. Thus, I argue that this occupation offers fewer chances for socialization than law enforcement. This

may also mean that socialization into the occupation is not necessary for females. Fewer duties and less authority remove the masculine image that could be associated with this position focusing on individual socialization in place of gender.

Martin (1980) emphasizes the importance of the first few weeks of any recruit's career. Females may have a much harder time proving themselves because of these ever-present barriers. During this certification period, recruits work in a supervised position where they are trained by more experienced officers. Those who are the most successful in their certification are those who "don't make waves" (Martin 1980). They cause little trouble, and appear to conform to the requirements and norms expected of them. On the other hand, there may be others who do not "fit" into police work either because of their explicit actions or because they do not have the right personality (i.e., not "tough" enough) for it (Martin 1980). Compounding this problem are the assignments given to new recruits during the certification process. These assignments can provide a wealth of important information and training. However, those who believe that they are not receiving adequate duties may feel undervalued and this may solidify their position as incapable, or as a "troublemaker" (Martin 1980). Once established, a bad reputation is difficult to change. This is exacerbated by negative stereotypes. Each female recruit and her performance stand as a testament of the abilities of all female recruits (Martin 1980). After comparing the attitudes of male and female police officers, Worden (1993) found that females were less likely to be integrated into their jobs, as evidenced by their lower likelihood of joining police associations, lack of confidence in their job skills/performance, and their lower expectation toward advancement in their career. In addition, they tend to receive less informal help from their coworkers and supervisors (Worden 1993).

Once certification has been completed, new officers begin working street patrol. Martin (1980) found that this stage of the process also presents complications. Street patrol may present greater challenges for women because it is a bigger step outside of their comfort zone. They are thrust out onto the street with the likely possibility of encountering a dangerous situation. Because the duties of police officers demand that they deal with circumstances that others should not, they cannot refuse to do so out of fear. However, some do. In many cases, women are allowed to avoid these kinds of situations. Women who are more likely to be sheltered from these kinds of situations in society experience a longer and more difficult adjustment period to street patrol (Martin 1980).

Similarly, Jurik's (1985) study of female correctional officers in medium-security prisons in the western United States revealed that women entered the occupation with less formal experience and training overall. As a result, they came to rely on informal training as a way to learn the occupation. The veteran officers with whom they trained were most likely to be males. These officers have been found to rely on the traditional view of females and make assumptions about how they will perform in this kind of occupation (Jurik 1985). Jurik (1985) argues that new female correctional officers confirmed the stereotype of women being incapable at men's work. Due to the fewer number of licensing requirements for private investigation, the early years of one's career may play an integral role in long-term success. A probationary period is common for many states and this where rookies receive intense supervised training. It is here where deferential treatment may appear. Female PIs may be given assignments based on assumptions regarding their skills similar to those found in many law enforcement agencies.

Finally, the attitude shown by one's training officer may also have an effect on some policewomen (Martin 1980). Some male officers may not have a problem working with women and this partnership may run very smoothly. Nonetheless, there are some policewomen who are more apt to accept protection from male officers and do not attempt to prevent this practice. Similarly, others find that a female-female partnership is ideal due to the more symmetrical division of labor compared to male-female partnerships (Martin 1980). Thus, the lack of opportunity (or failure to create opportunities) places female officers in cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy. The inability to develop skills relevant to street patrol will not allow self-confidence to grow and thus may reinforce the stereotypes of females in police work (Martin 1980). This will most likely have a detrimental effect on assignments in the future. Furthermore, the veteran PIs with whom they work may also have an effect on what skills they master. Their supervisors may not allow them to handle duties that they view as "too dangerous" and may only assign jobs that they deem appropriate for women. This may have a negative effect on their long-term careers. Females PIs in this situation may not gain lucrative skills that will sustain them if they choose to become self-employed.

Assignments

The kind and quality of job assignments also plays an important part in the experience of female officers. Martin (1994) found that job tasks became a breeding ground for gender-based meaning. She argued that there is a disparity between what is known as "real police work" and those tasks that are considered to be "feminine" (Martin 1980). Real police work "is associated with the outside domain of the street where men engage in high status, dirty, dangerous crime fighting activities" (Martin 1994, p. 392). Those aspects that are seen as

"feminine" are "inside administrative work, formal rules, and cleanliness" (Martin 1994, p. 392). As these kinds of tasks are increasingly associated with women, they become increasingly devalued within the world of law enforcement (Martin 1994). In addition, "officers' assignments strongly affect their attitudes toward work, the department, and themselves" (Martin 1980, p. 125). Martin (1980) found that women received fewer assignments in which they would be alone in a patrol car compared to men of the same level of seniority. Regarding permanent assignments, females were overrepresented in administrative, community relations, and youth service units (Martin 1980). She also observed that they were rare in detective, vice, and "casual clothes" units, traffic and special operations divisions, inspectional services, and investigative units (Martin 1980). There were no women in the canine or robbery squads. One of the main motivations behind this was that women being placed in these positions would be inappropriate (working with dogs is too dangerous, and male colleagues fear inadequate back-up from women) (Martin 1980). Remmington (1983) also found a high level of "protectiveness" surrounding female officers. Male officers would "take over" calls to a female officer that were perceived as violent and, in mixed partnerships, the males would assume responsibility and many times the female partner would be relegated to "secretarial work" (Remmington 1983). Due to the high level of specialization in private investigation, women may become centralized in certain areas of work. Though the number of the dangerous jobs is much fewer in these private investigation than in police work, there may still be gender segregation among employees. Clerical duties and emotional work are a part of many cases. Hence, in specializations that are dominated by these duties, women may be the majority.

In her study, Jurik (1985) discussed the effect of supervisory discretionary practices had on the assignments that that were given to female correctional officers. There were no formal limitations on where the officers were assigned, yet most women ended up in the control room and in visitation and clerical areas. These appointments could work as a career shortcoming, in that receiving a lower level assignment was detrimental to the career and promotional opportunities of the officer (Jurik 1985). A continued assignment in a control room would make it more difficult to move to higher security duties later in time. This is based on the associations made between that officer and her perceived capabilities (if she was good enough she would be in a better position). She also discovered that the duties given to female officers created an atmosphere of intra-sex competition in addition to the male resentment for the "special treatment" they received (Jurik 1985). The negative stereotype given to women in corrections caused trouble for not only individual female officers, but also created animosity between females and males (Jurik 1985). This may also be an issue in PI work. Women who wish to compete for jobs in the more labor-intensive or riskier specializations may feel that women who choose female-oriented specializations affect their image. I may find some animosity between these two kinds of PI.

Erikson et al. (2000) considered the issue of gender in Canadian private security service agencies. They looked at how the gender of the employee relates to the gender of the client. They found that "a total of 7 out of 9 employers reported that they would not assign a woman guard to a risky site such as solitary night patrols at a warehouse even though they also think women defuse conflict better" (Erikson et al. 2000, pp. 307-308). Their findings showed the tendency of private security services to follow gender homophily. Guards and investigators are

assigned targets based on the gender of each. Female guards would be assigned to "female" targets, such as hospitals (Erikson et al. 2000). Many employers believed that this was the proper way to dole out assignments (Erikson et al. 2000). Females should work in an environment where they would be surrounded by other females and males by other males. Additionally, they discovered that as the number of female clients increased for an agency, the more female managers that would be hired (Erikson et al. 2000). Agency employers assumed that a female client would be more comfortable interacting with a female manager than with a male. The greater the demand, perceived or real, the more female guards and investigators that would be used (Erikson et al. 2000).

Further research points out the further complications created by the intersection of race and gender. Pogrebin et al. (2000) examined the experiences of twenty-one black female officers employed at a large city police district. They outlined the organizational relationships and the interactions between officers and superiors that continue to put black females in a position that places them outside of the bounds of full acceptance within their own department (Pogrebin et al. 2000). The issue of gender discrimination was listed as a common problem for the women they interviewed (Pogrebin et al. 2000). Several officers stated that they felt that gender took precedence over race in how they were treated (Pogrebin et al. 2000). In some situations, this discrimination was entirely overt, such as nasty notes and pornographic pictures being left in lockers (Pogrebin et al. 2000). They also suggest that the negative feelings toward policewomen are exacerbated by the risky situations police often find themselves in and the policemen's desire for "masculine" backup (Pogrebin et al. 2000). Many policemen fear that females will not be able to handle the stress of life-threatening situations. Due to their shaky

status in law enforcement, women are forced to prove themselves in a way that no policeman has (Pogrebin et al. 2000). Private investigation, though dissimilar to policing, does carry the mark of a male-oriented career. Thus, the possibility of discrimination within agencies can be expected here. This may pose less of a problem for female PIs than policewomen because of the structure of the occupation. Self-employment is a common practice in investigation. Many investigators are only under this threat for a limited period, during the probationary period (if at all), so that discrimination may lose its efficacy.

Moreover, Pogrebin et al. (2000) discovered several illustrations of blatant exclusion of women from the police subculture. Instances that were given include being left out of "mainstream communication," the allotment of specialized assignments for "good police work," and the differential evaluations given to women as compared to men (Pogrebin et al. 2000). They argue that paternalism affects the treatment of women within organizational relationships (Pogrebin et al. 2000). Several female officers complained of being continually left out of the information network and, more dangerously, their colleagues refused to provide back-up. Similarly, they found that many qualified women were passed over for special assignments because male superiors felt that they could not "handle" the job (Pogrebin et al. 2000). Finally, sexist attitudes were believed to affect the evaluations of female officer job performance (Pogrebin et al. 2000). One woman complained that her male sergeant told her that she was "too nice" and he continually attributed feminine characteristics to female officers, reinforcing their status at being "incapable" of "real" police work (Pogrebin et al. 2000, p. 317). Because PIs work alone a majority of the time, the likelihood that male investigators

will overtly sabotage a case in order to undermine the work of a female PI is much less than for women in law enforcement.

Policewomen: Interactional Barriers

Interactional barriers refer to the "sexual politics" that affect male and female interactions on the job. Seitzinger (1979) lists acceptance by one's peer group as the single most difficult challenge faced by the policewoman. In that, it will determine her future attitude toward her work, the organization, and her own self-image (Seitzinger 1979). This statement still rings true today, as evidenced by the plethora of research examining the interactional barriers women encounter in law enforcement. "If they do not accept her [the female officer] they can make life miserable for both the female officer and anyone who befriends her in her peer group" (Horne 1980, p. 172). The norms dictating this acceptance are difficult to negotiate. In Martin's investigation (1980), she argues that there is one overarching problem within the social organization of the police department: the norms governing male-female interaction. One of the norms of interaction between male officers is that they treat one another as equals. When females are present, the male-female interactions are at odds with this norm-set. Due to the confusion, the men behave according to the cultural rules governing everyday male-female interaction (Martin 1980). Consequently, general rules of interaction to take over and attempt to sustain the male image of superiority (Martin 1980). "Such patterns . . . lead to a set of reciprocal roles with a semi-sexual basis that limit the behavioral repertoire of all, and are particularly dysfunctional for women's occupational success" (Martin 1980, p. 140). Thus, the rules governing interaction inside (and outside) the stationhouse perpetuate the idea of woman as subordinate to men (Martin 1980). The circumstance of interaction between males and

females in law enforcement is also an important issue to examine in relation to private investigation. This literature sets the stage for exploring the norms that frame the day-to-day interaction of male and female PIs.

Verbal Cues

In police subculture, language is an important device for relations between male and female officers. Martin (1980) points out that words are used to elicit certain behaviors from some people and to inhibit some behaviors in others. Certain words are used by male officers to indicate the roles that women are allowed to play within law enforcement (Martin 1980). The term "lady" is indicative of female propriety. Women who are referred to as "ladies" need to be protected. "Broad" refers to women as sexual objects. Aside from sex, these women have no real worth. "Girl" suggests that a female is irresponsible and immature. Females who do not fit into any of the above categories are deemed "bitches" or "lesbians," most often because of their lack of response (or denial) of sexual availability (Martin 1980). Females entering into the police subculture hear these cues and must decide which category they will fit into, because these are their only choices (Martin 1980).

There are several other verbal cues that are salient to this discussion: addressing coworkers, jokes, and gossip (Martin 1980). Martin (1980) theorizes that the way individuals are personally addressed within the stationhouse environment is an indication of their job status. Those of lower status must address a superior with their title and last name, whereas the superior can use an inferior's first name (Martin 1980). The difficulties women face in gaining respect in this context is illustrated by their inferior designation by male colleagues. Many policemen address female officers with their first name or terms of endearment, as a way

to remind them of the level of control they have over women (Martin 1980). Many women may insist that they are to be addressed more formally. However, to continually insist this treatment is a risk for women because male colleagues address each other in an informal manner. Thus, attempting to garner respect from male colleagues using formal language can have the opposite result (Martin 1980).

Having a platonic connection with colleagues is common among those in a workplace (Martin 1980). Between male and female officers, this interaction is loaded with meaning. Men are allowed to make jokes, many sexual, but women are not allowed to do the same. For a woman to joke about a man in a sexual fashion would be considered "crude" and unwomanly (Martin 1980). The perpetuation of this kind of "joking relationship" reminds women of their status as inferior and "unique" (Martin 1980).

Finally, gossip is one of the more powerful devices available within law enforcement (Martin 1980). "It is a key mechanism of group control over the behavior of its members, provides feedback on performance, limits competition, is a source of vital information about work-related matters, and is a medium of exchange among the workers" (Martin 1980, pp. 146-147). In her study, Martin (1980) outlines the importance of the "grapevine" within law enforcement. First, she theorizes that it is a strong form of social control (Martin 1980). For example, one norm of interaction within the stationhouse is that officers do not complain about, or "squeal" on, one another (Martin 1980). When one male officer had a problem with another, they were able to confront one another face to face (with the occasional physical fight). On the contrary, women were not allowed the same courtesy (Martin 1980). They became fodder for gossip, or they went to a superior and complained. Thus, Martin (1980)

argues, gossip is used as a form of informal socialization. By talking about policewoman behind her back, or going over her head, male officers were able to reinforce the image women as inferior (Martin 1980).

The "grapevine" can also be used as a means to relay important information about job opportunities within the department (Martin 1980). These prospects are found through the informal socialization network. Yet, women are many times locked out of the informal networking system and are unable to find out about these positions. "They [women] are unable to participate in the grapevine in the same way since they are the subjects of much of the gossip as highly visible outsiders, feared competitors, and desired sexual objects" (Martin 1980, pp. 148-149). Because they are placed in this situation, they are incapable of developing informal ties and are unable to the gain strong ties across the department that would impart this information (Martin 1980). The structure of private investigation guides the interaction between private investigators. Since the structure of police and PI work are theoretically different, the way they interact may also be different. This occupation, though male-oriented, may not hold the same stigma for female PIs as policing does for policewomen. The level of "maleness" appears theoretically to be much lower in this occupation. Therefore, the verbal cues are likely to be much less stigmatizing. If socialization into the occupation is argued to be much less intense for women, then fewer labels will be used to reinforce the position of female PIs. They will not be assumed subordinate or incapable. Similarly, the views taken by women and men of each other may be alike. There should be fewer boundaries for women in relation to their general behavior as well as how they interact with men as a consequence. Finally, gossip may still work to the advantage of men. If we assume that job specialization will lead to

greater gender segregation across the occupation, then we can assume that the women who

attempt to enter into the male-dominated specializations will be at a disadvantage. On the

other hand, if we assume this same gender segregation, we can presuppose that gossip may

not apply between genders, but among them. There may be a higher level of competition

between women and between men, not both.

Nonverbal Cues

Martin (1980) argued that nonverbal messages also played a part in communicating the

power positions that men and women held within the department. "The higher the status, the

greater the personal space permitted to the individual" (Martin 1980, p. 159). In 1966, Willis

found that within the context of conversation, woman's personal space is more likely than a

man's to be violated. She points out that touch is one such violation (Willis 1966). "The higher

status person is more likely to touch a subordinate, since the reverse is considered

presumptuous" (Martin 1980, p. 149). Men are more likely to be in positions of power in law

enforcement, so that touching is used by men to convey women's status within the department

(Martin 1980). This is complicated by the belief that the touch of a woman is traditionally

believed to have sexual undertones (Henley 1970; Martin 1980). Thus, women are left with the

message that they are inferior to policemen and are powerless to react. To do so, they would

appear "unfeminine." or sexually open, which would place them even further down the totem

pole (Martin 1980). In private investigation, being female is less likely to be viewed as a

disadvantage. Additionally, the hierarchical structure may be less important, so to use touch as

a method of reinforcement would be not be necessary.

Informal Socializing

Informal socialization is an important part of the police subculture. Unfortunately, female officers rarely participate (Martin 1980). This is due to several factors. Most times, women are not invited. Many have family responsibilities and do not have the time to devote to off-duty relationships (Martin 1980). Sometimes jealousies from husbands or boyfriends may play a part in their social distance (Martin 1980). Many women do get involved with male colleagues while off-duty, sometimes in romantic relationships. Occasionally, dating a colleague can help to further one's career (Martin 1980). Other times, it may work to foster resentment or increased harassment (Martin 1980). "Their limited informal social participation, which results partly from the men's opposition to their presence and attempts to make them feel uncomfortable and out of place 'with the boys,' ironically is taken as a sign of female officers' disinterest, lack of dedication to the job, and thus, their inappropriateness as officers" (Martin 1980, p. 157). Women find themselves in another, all-too-common lose-lose situation.

Franklin (2005) uses the male peer support model as proposed by Schwartz and DeKeseredy (1997) to examine the oppression and abuse of women in policing. Several factors are observed: social group membership, hypermasculinity, absence of deterrence, and excessive alcohol consumption (Schwartz and DeKeseredy 1997). Schwartz and DeKeseredy (1997) argue that group membership plays a central role in understanding male peer support because when men belong to a defined social group, the likelihood that they will legitimate and validate their collective abuse beliefs and tendencies increases" (Franklin 2005, p. 11). Membership within a formalized all-male social group allows for the justification of the separation from the population at-large, but also from any distinctly "feminine" sentiment. This

formalized distinction allows for the establishment and maturation of a sense of

hypermasculinity, where due to their gender roles and expectations women are believed to be

incapable of participating in "real police work" (Franklin 2005). "In conjunction with

membership in social groups, solidarity and social isolation promote the absence of deterrence"

(Franklin 2005, p. 16). This is related to the code of silence that is ever-present in police

subculture. Any misdeeds by police officers are kept "under wraps," because to tell on another

officer is to commit a "betrayal of brotherhood" (Franklin 2005). Therefore, the social

relationships act as a way to prevent the interference of any kind of outside control, even from

police administration (Franklin 2005). Finally, Franklin (2005) outlines the effects of alcohol

consumption among male police officers. "The use of alcohol among police officers has three

repercussions relevant to the theoretical argument at hand: (1) social drinking serves as a way

to objectify women by using the reduction of inhibitors as a way to sexualize the social

encounter, (2) women are viewed as outsiders where they are unwilling or unable to contribute

and be a part of the intense isolation and solidarity (cover up wrongdoings) of their fellow male

officers, and (3) by ostracizing women from recreational peer group gatherings, women miss

out on bonding opportunities within the culture at the patrol and supervisory or administrative

level" (Franklin 2005, p. 18). Therefore, through this tradition, female police officers are

increasingly devalued and prevented from making any progress within the occupation. Because

they are systematically barred from off-hours socialization they are prevented from creating

the social bonds necessary to allow them to move up in their career (Franklin 2005). The strong

undercurrents of patriarchal beliefs and misogynistic values, serve to perpetuate the anti-

woman sentiments and abusive practices that are so prevalent in police subculture today

(Franklin 2005). Likewise, many female officers have complained that the major obstacle that they face within police work is the negative attitudes of their male colleagues (Lonsway 2006; Scarborough and Collins 2002; Timmins and Hainsworth 1989). Female PIs also face the possibility of being left out of opportunities for informal socialization. I expect that these situations will be due, not because male PIs overtly disregard females, but because of job specialization. However, across the occupation, male and female private investigators will be more likely to interact outside of work in comparison to police work. The presence of "hypermasculinity" that exists in law enforcement is less likely in PI work, which would decrease the need for male PIs to participate in gender reinforcement.

Policewomen: Role Choices and Role Dilemmas

Brewer (1991) describes the difficulties women face in fitting into their role in police work. To begin, policing is a non-traditional occupation for women. It is made more confusing because the roles women are expected (or allowed) to play are dichotomous (Brewer 1991). Brewer contends that the atmosphere in policing is decidedly "herculean" (1991). In other words, males generally ascribe to an overtly aggressive and overly dominant gender role, reminiscent of the Greek figure Hercules. "Of all the figures from Greek mythology, none was more loved than Hercules. He was stronger and braver than other mortals, second only to the gods" (Brewer 1991, p. 231). In police work, it is bravery and strength that is rewarded rather than their opposite (i.e., "feminine traits").

Women, on the other hand, have two gender roles to which to adopt – Hippolyte or the Amazons (Brewer 1991). In Greek legend, Hippolyte is known for her beauty and sexuality, and is given a girdle by Mars in order to secure her purity. The Amazons are characterized by their

aggression and ability to fight, removing their left breast as a way to defeminize their appearance. Brewer (1991) finds that female police officers who take the "Hippolyte" approach play up their feminine features (through their appearance and manner of speaking) and, as a result, tend to encourage the masculine behavior exhibited by male police officers. Those who choose to work as "Amazons" attempt to compete with their male counterparts (also through their appearance and manner of speaking) and, as a result, become devalued by their male officers because they "confuse" their sex role (Brewer 1991). Based on the dichotomous roles offered, women are at a disadvantage, being either too masculine or too feminine.

Martin finds a similar dichotomy (1980). She argues that females in law enforcement must choose between their job and their femininity – they must adopt the role as POLICEwomen or policeWOMEN. POLICEwomen accept the role as an officer over their role as a female. They believe that it is not discrimination that holds women back in police work, but the behavior of individual women (Martin 1980). Those women who are not making gains in their career are the masters of their own fate and should not blame their femininity for their difficulties (Martin 1980). POLICEwomen are also take on the masculine qualities of their male counterparts and they feel comfortable doing this (Martin 1980). They exercise authority and are confident in their day-to-day job duties. They are eager to face the dangers of the occupation because they realize how important it is for them to prove themselves in this capacity (Martin 1980). They fight for their respect as an officer and work to establish relationships that they hope will help them in the long run (Martin 1980).

On the other hand, policeWOMEN wish to hold onto their femaleness. They have little interest in the job and view it only as a source of income, not a career (Martin 1980). Most

accept duties that are more service-oriented and many are hesitant to exercise control over citizens, even if necessary (Martin 1980). PoliceWOMEN want to prove themselves as officers, yet they resent the greater efforts that they, as women, have to make; thus, many seeing how futile this may be, give up and slip to the bottom of the hierarchy (Martin 1980). Many simply accept the stereotypical labels and roles in which they are placed. They work to hold on to their image as women and choose to disassociate themselves with their male coworkers when off the job (Martin 1980). Some policeWOMEN move on to another career after a few years spent in law enforcement. Others want to get a departmental job that fits well with their personal life (Martin 1980). In law enforcement, the nature of the job requires that women choose between their gender and their career (Martin 1980). I contend that female PIs may not have to make this choice because the nature of PI work is different from police work. It may simply be a choice. They are able to accommodate both roles.

Apart from choosing between professionalism and femininity, many females in law enforcement must deal with conflicts between their work life and their home life (Martin 1980). The unique characteristics of the job have been found to create strain in the personal life of law enforcement officers, socially and physically (Kroes 1974; Hurrell and Kroes 1975; Richard and Fell 1975; Martin 1980). Martin (1980) points out that struggle to balance home and work life is intensified for women because the responsibilities associated with the role of wife and mother are usually greater than those roles that men fill in these relationships. Additionally, whether man or woman, the duties in law enforcement do not vary. Females may have more trouble excelling in their careers because of the incumbent role expectations (Martin 1980). Women who are motivated and determined to do well risk even greater strain, especially when

compared to ambitious males (Martin 1980). Women who are married to a man outside of law enforcement may have increased marital problems (Martin 1980). Many husbands are uncomfortable with their wives working in a male-dominated occupation. The best way to diminish this conflict is to marry within the department (Epstein 1970; Martin 1980). They have someone who understands their profession and the demands that it makes (Martin 1980).

Martin (1980) further discusses the pressures of motherhood. Shift changes and long hours can cause schedule conflict (Martin 1980). Many policewomen have come to rely on neighbors and family members for childcare. They work to take on fixed assignments to decrease this tension (Martin 1980). Stress and guilt are common feelings for policewomen when it comes to family (Martin 1980). Some look to rationalization techniques to cope (Martin 1980). They convince themselves that the check that they bring in will be beneficial for their children and that this will eventually make up for their time away from their family. Finally, some policewomen admit that if there are many other jobs that offer them the same income with fewer conflicts in the future, then fewer women may choose law enforcement as their career (Martin 1980). Indeed, role dilemmas present a significant problem for females in police work. Female PIs are also likely to encounter this problem of role conflict. Long hours and unpredictable schedules can wreak havoc on family interaction. Thus, as mothers and wives, female PIs may struggle balance these demands with their career.

Together, structural and interactional barriers place women at a disadvantage within the occupation by sending the message through structural and normative channels that women are not qualified to fully participate in police work (Martin 1980). Here we see how "the structural . . . and the interpersonal factors that make 'breaking and entering' different for male

and female officers, so that functioning effectively as an officer is more difficult for women"

(Martin 1980, p. 109). To compound the problem, sex specific roles in society conflict with

those in police work, so that women must make a choice between their gender and their career

(Martin 1980). Because these dynamics appear to be intertwined within police work, there is

little hope that they will be fully eliminated in the near future. These factors offer a platform

from which similar occupations, such as private investigation can be analyzed.

Gender Queues and Job Queues

Reskin and Roos (1990) built on Thurnow's (1969) thesis of labor markets as labor

queues. Originally, the theory addressed the racial bias in the structure of the labor market.

Thurnow (1969) theorized that employers ranked blacks lower than whites in their preferential

employee hierarchy inflating the rate of unemployment among African Americans. Reskin and

Roos (1990) extended this idea to the continued gendered bias of many occupations. They

argue that the gendering of an occupation is the result of a shift in the structural properties of a

labor queue (Reskin and Roos 1990). First, a queue is a collection of ordered elements

organizing the most desirable employees into the best jobs (Reskin and Roos 1990). Second,

both its relative and absolute number of elements determines the shape of a labor queue

(Reskin and Roos 1990). A mismatch between the number of jobs available to any number of

workers will result in a shift for workers in their respective level of the labor queue (Reskin and

Roos 1990). The more jobs that are available, the more workers are able to move up the

employment ladder into a position they were previously denied. Third, the intensity of the

raters' preferences affects the ordering of a labor queue (Reskin and Roos 1990). Some

employers are loyal to in-group preferences, whereas others are not. During the 1970s, the

large influx of women into the workplace is due (at least in part) to the change in the structural

processes of the labor queue as indicated by their case studies (Reskin and Roos 1990). They

argue that the segregation of most jobs by sex is a result of this labor queue (Reskin and Roos

1990). Consequently, the labor queue can actually be viewed as a gender queue (Reskin and

Roos 1990). Women will be offered the jobs that men do not want, or the jobs that men cannot

fill. Over time, some jobs become associated with women and may become feminized.

Reskin and Roos (1990) found several more trends that they believe spurs on occupation

feminization. First, in many of the occupations they studied (e.g., real estate) there was an

exponential growth in that occupation leading to a consequent shortage of male workers

(Reskin and Roos 1990). Employers looked to women to fill these gaps (Reskin and Roos 1990).

In addition, the material rewards or level of prestige associated with many jobs was diminished

which removed the inherent appeal for men (e.g., pharmacy) (Reskin and Roos 1990). Second,

there was an increase in demand for women in the workplace (Reskin and Roos 1990). This

demand was created through several factors: increase in antidiscrimination practices, a growth

in the occupations that included tasks already considered "women's work," an increase in the

number of female clients, and the cheap cost of female labor (Reskin and Roos 1990). Third, a

modification in social attitudes affected the way women were viewed, which subsequently

changed the way employers viewed their economic potential (Reskin and Roos 1990). With the

civil rights and feminism movements women began to obtain opened opportunities that

solidified their qualifications. Fourth, there was a drop in resistance against women by male

coworkers (Reskin and Roos 1990). When women could no longer be formally excluded from an

occupation (combined with the increase in female competition in the marketplace) many men

felt that these occupations were not worth the fight, such as in bartending (Reskin and Roos 1990). Fifth, the increased number of women becoming economically independent had an effect on female stereotypes, which lead to a continued economic preference for females (Reskin and Roos 1990). However, this does not diminish the effect of increased opportunities on the initiation of this change (Reskin and Roos 1990). Finally, there is a large amount of hidden segregation within occupations that appear to be desegregated (Reskin and Roos 1990). They argue that men and women even though working in the same occupation, do not work side by side (Reskin and Roos 1990). Instead, they work in different jobs. This can be found both laterally within the occupation or industry (such as baking and bus driving) and vertically with men holding the upmost positions within that occupation (such as in bank management) (Reskin and Roos 1990). Their analysis provides us with a theoretical template in which to examine the labor market and its structural biases.

Job queues are the employees' ranking of jobs by their level of appeal or desirability (Rotella 1981; Strober 1984; Strober and Arnold 1987; Catanzarite and Strober 1988). Employees choose the best jobs out of their labor queue (Reskin and Roos 1990). As certain occupations have transformed (through decrease in salary, benefits, or prestige) white males ranked those jobs as now less desirable, thus they are placed lower in their job queue. Employers, because they are unable either to attract or to sustain these male workers, they will look to the next most qualified group (usually white women) (Reskin and Roos 1990). Women, who had no previous access to these jobs, will now rank them highly in their job queue. Subsequently, these occupations may feminize (Reskin and Roos 1990).

Gender Homophily

Lazarsfeld and Merton (1964) speculated the existence of a social process that helps to form personal relationships, based either on status or on values. Kandel (1966) further broadened this theory to include "similarity in group affiliation, or social status, of persons who are in close social interaction but not necessarily friends" (p. 641). This idea of homophily has been used in several studies. In 2000, Erikson et al. examined the role of gender in the private security industry. They examined four occupations: private investigators, security guards, security alarm monitors, and security alarm installers working in the Toronto area. They argued that gender did play a role in the demographics of this industry (Erikson et al. 2000). For instance, out of the male and female investigators they interviewed, sex segregation related not to the jobs themselves but to the sites to which they were assigned. Most of the respondents (both male and female) believed that women were better suited to working with clients who were female and with targets that were considered feminine (e.g., hospitals). Employers did not feel comfortable sending female PIs to sites that would be considered dangerous. This bias is amplified when the focus of the job is covert work (Erikson et al. 2000). They would be more likely to send a female investigtors to a site where many women would be present. Thus, if an employer needed an undercover PI to prowl a make-up department a woman would be the most likely choice (Erikson et al. 2000).

Erikson et al. (2000) also find that in investigation, women have more opportunities to do sex atypical work and show how qualified they are for that work. Many of the female PIs interviewed for their study used their gender and the inherent sex role stereotypes to gain an advantage over men (Erikson et al. 2000). Many male investigators and employers agreed with

this. However, though women have made progress in this occupation, Erikson and her

colleagues (2000) find that there are some limitations to this progress. For instance, though

women have a chance to earn a higher income in this occupation, they may not be able work in

the highest paid positions. They hypothesize that this is associated with gendered jobs and

assignments (Erikson et al. 2000). The inequality in private investigation appears to mirror that

in society. The highest paid jobs are generally related to those sites that carry the largest risk,

such as warehouses (Erikson et al. 2000). The demographics of this environment (traditionally

male) dictate that the position is likely to be occupied by a male investigator. Environments

where female criminals are found usually involve PI positions that are much less lucrative

(Erikson et al. 2000).

In private security management Erikson et al. (2000) found that one of the factors

affecting the hiring of female managers had to do with the increase in female clients. They find

that companies that have fewer female clients have fewer female managers (Erikson et al.

2000). Thus, with an increase in female clients, there comes with it a belief that these clients

would want to work with female managers because they would be able to better relate to one

another. This study indicates that gender homophily plays a significant part in the progress

women have made in private investigation (Erikson et al. 2000). Employers in private security

have been more open to hiring women due to the both the real and perceived demand of

female labor (Erikson et al. 2000). Additionally, they may feel that female labor is logical due to

certain environmental factors, such as the target that needs to be guarded. In the women's

wing of a psychiatric hospital, a woman may be the rational choice, especially when female

patients may be in comprising positions (ill, partially clothed, etc.) (Erickson et al. 2000). The

assumption that women want to work with other women and that women should work with

other women could be a theoretical piece of this puzzle.

A Summary of Expectations

   In her conclusion, Martin (1980) outlines two factors that make police work "men's

work." First, officers hold the authority to enforce law. Second, officers have the right to

physically restrain or control others (when they violate the law or when they are a threat to the

safety of themselves and to others). She contends that these factors that jointly create an

environment that makes law enforcement uniquely masculine (Martin 1980). It also shapes the

disadvantages with which female police officers have to contend. It is here that I am able to

make a distinction between the experience of the policewoman and the female private

investigator. Martin (1980) maintains, "because women are thought to convey less authority

and are smaller and physically weaker than men, they enter the job with a disadvantage that is

both real and symbolic" (p. 206). In her work, these disadvantages are a result of their image

(women do not promote the capability of force and authority as men do). As a result, they are

forced to choose either defeminization or deprofessionalization and either one carries with it

disadvantages (Martin 1980). In private investigation, the focus is not enforcement. Instead,

their job is an extension of law enforcement. They are to "observe and report" on their subjects

(Machovec 1991). The general authority of private investigation is no more than that of an

ordinary citizen. Laws that apply to the public also dictate their level of authority. When we

remove the use of force and authority, we remove two central factors that make an occupation

"men's work."

In my dissertation, I reason that in an occupation where authority and force are not the norm, women will face fewer barriers, less stigmatization, and diminished role conflict. Structurally, female PIs will undergo socialization of less intensity than females in police work. The training periods will be much shorter and much less concentrated because there will be fewer requirements that guide physical training and certification. The lack of force and authority will work to diminish the necessity for skills that are viewed as more masculine – strength, bravery, size. Therefore, the paternalistic and protective attitude among males that is common in law enforcement will be weakened. This, in turn, will affect the assignments given to female PIs. Private investigators are not in a position "to protect and serve" like in law enforcement, so there will be fewer reasons to give males precedence when it comes to assigning cases. If males and females are on a more level playing field in PI work than in policing then the evaluations by superiors will be much less biased. This prevents female PIs from being placed in a position of disadvantage when future assignments are considered. This lack of "maleness" in the image of private investigation will also have an effect on male-female interaction in the occupation. Women will not be viewed as incapable as they are in police work. Consequently, the norms governing interaction while on the job will be more akin to those guiding everyday interaction. The verbal and nonverbal cues that are used to send sexist messages in the police environment will have much less effect in private investigation. The expectation that men would not be any more qualified for private investigation than women will work to temper any interactional barriers. Furthermore, female PIs will be less likely to be locked out of informal networks because males will not feel the same sense of male camaraderie that is so pervasive in law enforcement. Lacking a strong male-orientation, the

occupation will be less likely to inspire a protective male bonding mechanism. Finally, the lack of force and authority may lessen the role disparity between one's gender role and one's job role. In private investigation, I expect that females will not be forced to choose between their job and their gender. Some may, but because that is what they choose. Additionally, the demands of the job are theoretically less grueling. For instance, though the schedule of a PI may be busy, it is likely to be less restrictive than that of a law enforcement officer. Hence, females will encounter less stress in PI work than in policing.

Previous scholarship points out the importance of labor queues, client demand, and gender homophily. Employers may rank women higher in their labor queues when they view women as a greater value (Reskin and Roos 1990). In private investigation, the lack of force and authority may increase the value of female labor compared to its value in police work. Additionally, as Erikson et al. (2000) point out, an increase in female labor may be due to gender homophily (perceived and real). Employers may hire more women when clients demand them, or when they feel that it simply the right thing to do. They believe that female clients would rather work with female managers, or that female PIs should work with female targets (e.g., Erikson et al. 2000). Because there are many specializations in PI work, which may be viewed as "female," this may in part account for the higher number of women in PI work. Thus, I will examine the relevance of these theories in the context of my own work. Women in private investigation may face fewer barriers because they may be the preferred gender by their clients. I anticipate that there will be some reference to gender preference by the clients of the respondents. By examining the gendered organization of private investigation, I will be able to place this occupation into the broad spectrum of the labor market.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample Characteristics

Upon conclusion of data collection, the sample included twenty-six participants. The average age of the sample is fifty years old. The age range is thirty-four to sixty-six, with fifteen out of the twenty-six being age fifty or over. All had received some amount of higher education: twelve received some college, two received an associate's degree, ten received their bachelor's degree, and two received a master's degree. Fifteen are married or have a domestic partner. Five are divorced, three are single, two are separated, and one is widowed. The investigators are located in eleven states: California, New Jersey, Louisiana, Missouri, Kansas, Oregon, Arizona, Mississippi, Texas, Tennessee, and Florida. All but one of the women are licensed, and this is because Mississippi is a state that does not require a license in order to work as a private investigator. The participants have held their license between three and thirty-seven years. The majority (15) have been licensed for ten years or less. A table description of the respondents can be found in Appendix A.

Methodology

In everyday life, we encounter many aspects of private security. As social scientists, we have many opportunities to examine this industry, especially in the qualitative sense. I believe that the use of qualitative methodology is best due to the nature of the research project. I am examining the experience of women in private security, and quantitative methods do not lend themselves to the assessment of this phenomenon. "The fullest condition of participating in the mind of another human being is face-to-face interaction . . . . Through taking the role of another face-to-face, one gains a sense of understanding him" (Lofland 1971). I have utilized

the semi-structured interview (or as it has been referred to by Lofland, the "intensive interview with an interview guide") with twenty-six female investigators. This technique allows sociologists to acquire "thick descriptions" (Geertz 1973) of the respondents' experiences. With these depictions, I will be able to more fully examine relevant issues and the meaning behind them.

The women in this study were recruited in two waves. First, the author did an Internet search for female private investigators. An email was then sent out to several investigators asking for their participation. Four women responded positively. Once contact was made through email, the author then contacted the investigator by phone for the interview. Snowball sampling was then utilized. More names were garnered in this process. Once a respondent made contact, the author proceeded to set up an acceptable time for an interview. All interviews except for three were done by phone. These were found in the author's local area. All interviews were recorded with the permission of the respondent. Due to issues of privacy and confidentiality, the interviews did not begin until informed consent was obtained verbally (for consent document see Appendix C).

Most of the methodological basis comes from previous literature (e.g., Martin 1980). However, when necessary, I employed the inductive approach to ensure validity in my method of gathering data. In this way, I was able to probe a respondent when the answers were unclear or when she alluded to an aspect of the occupation for which I had not prepared a question. The interview guide is based on the methodological direction found in Esterberg (2002). A copy of this guide can be found in Appendix B. This guide allowed me to tap into the potential structural and interactional barriers that are outlined above. Because very little information

exists regarding this occupation the underlying goal was to collect information on the requirement, duties, and experiences that it entails. As information was collected, changes in hypotheses and the methodological instrument were made accordingly. By using grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), I can ensure that my data more accurately reflects the constructs under study. Nevertheless, this examination should in no way represent a full outline of this occupation. Rather, it should be viewed as a stepping-stone for further research in investigation.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Private Investigation: On the Job

To have a comprehensive understanding of private investigation, characteristics of the

occupation need to first be considered. The nature of police work has an effect on the progress

of women in law enforcement (e.g., Martin 1980). Similarly, some of these features may have

an influence on the demographics of PI work. By outlining these features, we set the stage for

further sociological evaluation.

Job Specialization and Duties

There appear to be three main sources of work available for investigators in this sample:

legal investigation that focuses on criminal and/or civil cases, domestic investigation that

involves issues such as infidelity and child custody cases, and corporate investigation, which

includes tenant screenings and pre-employment background checks. Eight respondents

concentrated solely on criminal and/or civil investigation. Based on respondents' descriptions,

criminal investigation appears to be very similar to police investigation.

> Respondent 24: "I would go through the police reports, read the police reports, look at
> any evidence, uh, go to the crime scene. There might be, uh, measurements involved,
> photography involved, surveillance sometimes, uh, [I] interview suspects, interview
> witnesses, uh, look at videotape. Basically reinvestigate everything the police did."

Similarly:

> Respondent 11: "What happens is that the attorney calls and asks if I'll take a case, he
> gives me all the police reports . . . [I'll go] interview witnesses, I go interview the
> defendant, whether they be [sic] at their house or in jail . . . . The attorney may ask me
> to look for witnesses, or re-interview people that were interviewed by the police
> originally. Sometimes I go to have to have to testify, um, about maybe about what I saw
> or, if someone changed their statement after I interviewed them. I look up backgrounds,
> you know, criminal histories, and just check . . . and find out information on people . . . ."

Civil investigation follows similar steps, but there is generally less involvement with the police

than for a criminal investigation.

> Respondent 25: "Uh, [in] civil [investigation] somebody has fallen, I can go out and take pictures of the area, maybe speak to any witnesses that might have seen the fall, et cetera."

Domestic investigations encompass a wide variety of things, such as child custody, divorce, locating missing persons, locating heirs, infidelity, runaways, and so on. Only four specialized in domestic investigation, even though many in the sample accepted this kind of case.

> Respondent 25: "We [also] have a lot of cohabitation investigations, which is surveillance to determine whether or not somebody's living with another person against court order, meaning that once, uh, once you divorce you receive alimony, etc., there's usually a stipulation that if you are, um, begin to live with another individual then that alimony stops, so that cohabitation becomes very big."

Additionally:

> Respondent 08: "I really enjoy reuniting family members. I had a case where a woman hadn't seen or heard from her brother in over thirty five years. She thought he was dead. I found him, reunited them, and it was very rewarding. They were . . . just couldn't believe it. They thought each other were [sic] dead."

Many (14) worked in a combination of the three areas, dividing their cases between legal, business, and domestic clients.

> Respondent 16: "I will say the majority of our business . . . most of them are attorneys for, um, agencies . . . [and] we have a lot of, um, condominium associations, so we do a lot of background checks, so that probably seventy percent of our case-loads are those repeat clients. The other thirty percent might be, you know, a friend of a friend, um, or the individual person . . . looking to check on their boyfriend or girlfriend, or things, things along that line."

The duties enacted by an investigator depend on the kind of cases on which one works. These include things like interviewing, writing reports, taking photographs, locating people (physically or by computer), background checks, surveillance, interacting with clients, and process serving.

> Respondent 08: "Most of my cases, I do surveillance . . . a lot of it is infidelity. I also do a lot of worker's comp . . . document, uh, preparation, you know, legal papers, subpoenas,

uh, complaints that type of thing. I also do process serving, a lot of that. I also do background checks, asset checks, uh, tenant screening, [and] skip tracing."

Additionally:

> Respondent 19: "I specialize in capital cases and I do the mitigation so I'm doing their whole social history. Um, it depends on whether I've scheduled interviews or whether I'm typing up my notes from previous interviews, um, I'm, you know, looking at documentation, and putting it into a time line. Uh, you just, it, it varies from day to day."

The of the ubiquity of the home computer allows PIs to do most of their work at one

centralized location. Five focus on cases that are solved using a computer. Locate work is

where an investigator uses technology to track down someone's physical location.

> Respondent 04: "I locate, um, difficult to obtain information. Sometimes that's like on a corporation, or business, or an individual. And, I locate, um, individuals that are, um, what we call "difficult locates." I locate employment on people if we don't know where they work, but we need to know, so that we can garnish wages. Um, I locate assets on people when we have a judgment against somebody, or a corporation. I'll locate assets on them, so they can be attached . . . . Um, so, and those kinds of cases locating historical information also . . . basically, I sit in front of a computer. I really do. I mean, I'd like to make it sound more glamorous . . . . But, you know, I am probably in front of a computer ninety-five percent of my time."

The following investigator uses computer forensics.

> Respondent 18: "We research court records. We do just about any type of investigation . . . I also do a lot of computer forensics, um, where I go into people's computer . . . I've had somebody send me their, their computer, their laptop, to find the key logger that was hidden in the system. Yeah, so I do a lot of that kind of computer forensics, uh, tracing IPs and such. And I can locate it down to the exact house that an ISP comes from, [that] an email comes from."

Looking back over the history of private investigation, it becomes evident that new

technologies have an impact on the resolution of cases.

> Respondent 23: "I mean as far as the work, the work doesn't change, you know, I mean the methodology as far as, um, obtaining information changes with technology. I mean, we didn't have computers, we had old typewriters, you know, and I'm talking almost manual typewriters . . . ."

Additionally:

> Respondent 10: "I'm good at finding people. I mean physically finding them. You know, when I started we didn't have computers and cell phones, so, you know, you had to just go out and find people by foot."

Documentation is another aspect of investigations that is found in all cases.

> Respondent 25: "Well everything that you do, you have to document. So, you know, that pretty goes without saying. Surveillance has to be documented, um, the guy does the surveillance, then sends me the report and I go through it and make sure I like it, um, and, um, you know, for everything you have to write a letter to the client. You know, 'Thank you for your business, and here's what happened.' So yeah, a lot of reports."

The length of a report can depend on the case.

> Respondent 01: "A report can go one page. A report could go . . . ad nauseam. Um, you know, if I'm interviewing, if I'm doing a social history of a client in a death penalty case, I've had reports that are thirty pages long."

According to respondents' accounts, this responsibility could make or break a PI's career. Two

addressed this:

> Respondent 09: "The biggest, most important thing about being an investigator is knowing how to write a report. You can be the best investigator in the world, you can be the best cop in the world, but if you can't justify it and do it, the documentation, properly then it means nothing. Because when you think about everything you do, you have to think ahead, 'This is going to end up in the hands of an attorney,' or maybe even a jury will be reviewing this, or a judge will be reviewing this, and if you screw it up, you could be in a lot of trouble. So writing skills are the main thing. If you can't write, you can't do this kind of work."

In addition to sedentary work, there can also be a lot of interaction with people in this job.

Physically locating individuals, interviewing witnesses and police officers, talking to defendants,

and doing client intake are all part of the investigative process.

> Respondent 07: "People skills, that was, um, something that I've always been fortunate with, being able to talk to people and have them talk to me and tell me, and you know, I could, I've been very fortunate in having people sit down and tell me their life story . . . . You can get a lot of information that way."

In some specialties, like criminal investigation, interviewing may be more difficult. For example:

> Respondent 11: "I think that you need to be confident and not easily intimidated. 'cause you're working with criminals who, you know, lie and try to twist things, and intimidate you. . . . I feel that, you know, that I'm not intimidated and that I'm not, you know, afraid to ask tough questions, or talk to people about you know about what they did. At first it was uncomfortable, you know, talking to people about raping someone or, you know, things like that, but you just get used to it."

Testifying in court is another responsibility. PIs may have to recount events that they witnessed

or describe people to which they spoke.

> Respondent 11: "I hate testifying in court. . . . . Luckily, [its] not often, but I do have to do it, and I just don't like it because, you know, you're up in front of everyone, and, you know, the other side is really going to grill you and try to, you know, try to mess you up. I mean it's their job, it's their job, and, you know, the DA is really going to come down hard on you. But that's the part I dislike the most."

Court appearances can be avoided through other job tasks, such as reports.

> Respondent 06: "I prefer to write report from a, more from a business perspective, than an investigative. So my reports don't read like somebody else's, I might have charts and diagrams, I'll use a bibliography, you know, I make it that if somebody takes that [report] into court they know exactly where it came from, how it got there, you know, it's like they can track it with that document. That prevents me from coming into court all the time. A lot of PIs I know end up in court a lot. Because they turn the report in and nobody can understand where, how they arrived at that, so you know, it's worth the extra effort to do a really good, um, report."

Undercover work is an additional task in investigation.

> Respondent 06: "Trying to come up with ways to get information without somebody knowing that we're onto them, or something, um, that can be real challenging. It's almost like, like role playing in a way. Um, so I enjoy that a lot."

Pretexting is used to find out information about a subject. This is where you use a fictional

story to coerce individuals into revealing a subject's location or to recover financial data.

> Respondent 09: "I shine at is undercover work. Yeah, it's all that Charlie's Angels stuff where you pretend you're somebody else. I'm really, really good at that. I just did one yesterday, and you better be a good actress and know, you know, which way to jump in case something goes really wrong."

One PI felt uncomfortable using this method.

> Respondent 19: "If someone was using what we call a mail drop, in other words they were using an address, and they didn't actually live there . . . what I really was reluctant to do was come up with that pretext so when you knocked on the door to find out and determine whether or not they actually lived there, and when they might show up, so that you could follow them to where they actually lived. I'm not a good liar, I'm not a good pretexter, um, I had to come up with stories that had just enough truth in them, um, and really I had to get the right mindset before I could do it, 'cause I'm not good at just . . . there are some people who can call someone and spend a half an hour on the phone with them, and get their life history, I'm not good at that, not, not when it's, um, false pretenses . . . some people are great at it. They have the gift of gab, and um, the, the half truths come dripping off their tongue, and they can get the information they need."

Legwork makes up a large part of the day-to-day lives of these women. Background checks are common practice. For this activity, some mobility is needed because most of the records one needs, such as criminal history, have to be obtained from courthouses.

> Respondent 23: "In order to do a thorough background check, you should physically go and pull records, there's no such animal as, um, getting on the computer and everybody's information being in one central location . . . . it's, it's mostly criminal records that everybody's looking for."

One may have to go to several different places in order to obtain all necessary information.

> Respondent 22: "What I enjoy the most is the, um, um, going to . . . the old courthouse there and I had to look up a, a, uh, a murder, um, case, and get some information off of it, and, uh, going to those old courthouses and all that, that was fun, and it was, that was one of the first things that I did . . . and I don't mind doing the background checks all that much . . . see if there's anything on their records and stuff, I still like doing that . . . . You have to go to the, um, the big courthouse, and then you have to go across the street to the city's courthouse, so that everything is not in one place when you're background checks."

Surveillance is also a physical part of PI work. There are two general types: stationary and mobile surveillance. Stationary surveillance or "sitting surveillance" is when a PI waits covertly outside of a building or home for a subject. Usually, the PI is attempting to capture them leaving that location in order to prove infidelity.

Respondent 23: "If somebody goes into a house or apartment that they're not supposed to be in, that they're not married to, I'm staying there till they come out, I can't make them come out . . . ."

It can be hard to blend into any given area.

Respondent 02: "It's still to this day difficult being hidden, um, and, when I mean being hidden, when it's surveillance, trying to blend into an area that you're not familiar with and that everybody in that area is familiar with and you're the outsider, and trying to blend in to where you're not noticed. Um, that is very, very hard. But, um, one thing I've learned is when I go into an area, um, you know, people look at tags, people look at cars, and, 'Well, that car's never been here before, why is it here now?' Just trying to blend into an area, but you are the outsider, it's very, very hard to do."

Mobile surveillance involves following someone, also covertly, on foot or by car.

Respondent 12: "If I have somebody that enjoys going 90 miles an hour down the interstate, weaving in and out of traffic . . . you have to be ready for anything, you know, you have to be ready to punch the gas when you need to . . . I always make sure that I'm driving."

Surveillance can be used to gather evidence for a legal case – by obtaining photographic and

video images.

Respondent 05: "If you're being sued by someone who is claiming that when you hit them with your car, you paralyzed them from the waist down, and I've got videos of them standing up chopping firewood in their backyard."

These images may be central to any particular case.

Respondent 08: "You know, I've closed drug houses, that type of thing. I've gone in to neighborhoods to take photos, of, uh, you know, meth houses, things like that, and given it to the authorities."

Some (4) find that they excel at these difficult tasks.

Respondent 02: "I call it getting the 'sweet spot,' the perfect location to get surveillance footage that is needed, um, there's been several cases where, uh, it was a wooded, rural area and they had sent investigators out and, uh, nobody could get footage and they called me, and I checked the locality of the area, checked property, and everything, and, um, found the spot. Even if it means that I had to dress in full camouflage and shimmy down the side of a hill, then sit there and video tape while it's snowing, um, I would do it, um, so I found that I was very good at getting the spot."

How long a surveillance case will last is unknown.

> Respondent 22: "It can go anywhere from fifteen minutes to days. 'Cause we, we've tracked people for several days, gone, uh, like, not too long ago, went from here to, was it Gulf Shores? Alabama? And followed the lady . . . we followed her all day and all night, and all the next day."

This delay is due to that need for physical evidence. They cannot leave until they get what they need.

> Respondent 23: "You can't make somebody do something if they're not doing it . . . ."

Boredom was listed as one of the main drawbacks to sitting surveillance (11). To be aware of what is going on around them investigators have to remain alert for long periods, without bringing things that could be a distraction.

> Respondent 02: "You're sitting there thinking there's nothing happening, they haven't come out of their house . . . their blinds are open and I can see in the house and I don't see any movement and that just is really boring, and it's hard to do, and you can't, some of the investigators I know bring books, or bring their laptop and play on the computer and I don't do any of that, 'cause that's not what I'm there for. I'm not there to keep myself entertained. I'm there to do the job, and it might be boring sitting and staring at a house, but there is that one chance where you might be playing on your laptop and the client's out doing something and then you look up and they're walking back into the house and you missed it."

Process serving, though not technically investigation, is another service offered by many PIs (11). This involves the delivery of legal documents to individuals.

> Respondent 06: "Process serving is good to do as a PI 'cause it fills up the time gaps where you don't have a real case going on, so it's a good thing to add on to your job in the beginning, and everyone recommended that I do that . . ."

Even though this job can be difficult, three mentioned their ability to complete this task successfully.

> Respondent 09: "It might seem like a silly thing, but I'm really, really good at serving papers, especially when it's a dangerous situation or other people have failed and they can't get this person served. I've never failed once . . . ."

Nine PIs in this sample preferred the legwork to clerical work. They enjoyed getting out and

meeting others and physically tracking down information.

> Respondent 03: "I like that it's different all the time. I'm not good at sitting in an office
> and just staring at a computer screen. I like to, you know, I can get out and meet people
> and, you know, I do all different types of investigation, so it's something different every
> day."

Correspondingly:

> Respondent 12: "I'm not one to sit on the computer and . . . I don't have the patience
> for it. I have to be moving all the time or I'm sleeping."

Writing reports was the one thing that many PIs (5) were hesitant to begin because they much

preferred being active.

> Respondent 06: "The fun part is actually doing the, the in-depth background, if you're
> doing an investigation on someone and nosing around and asking questions and that's
> all the fun stuff. The stuff that isn't as much fun is doing the report, and I don't trust
> them to somebody else . . . . It's real easy to walk off and say, 'I've done the work. I
> don't want to do the report.' I have to really force that on myself. Once I start, I'm fine
> and I do a good job, but it's a matter of I just want to do the fun stuff, you know, like
> anybody else."

Besides the duties relating to individual cases, several (3) women owned their own agency and

spent more time with office-related activities.

> Respondent 16: "I do all, um, the office work as far as, you know, bookkeeping, accounts
> payable, collections, um, I assign the cases, I interview our clients, do the intake with
> them to get . . . the information . . . a lot of hours are spent, um, on the computer either
> preparing for surveillance or, you know, um, background checks, things along those
> lines, and compiling information."

This may mean that they spend less time hitting the streets and more time supervising and

running the business.

> Respondent 26: "[First,] I have to discuss [the case] with the client, figure out what it is
> they need and want, whether they know, know what it is or not, and then . . . the parts I
> do I, I accomplish myself. I then go, 'Oh, okay this person needs a bank account located,'
> so I'll call this person and . . . 'This person needs surveillance,' and so I'll get Larry out

doing that, and then I control while they're doing their parts of it, you know, whatever their specialty is, and I report back to the client and then I pull it all together into a report form, as well as, um, sometimes, you know, 'Oh gosh, now we have a questioned document and so I need to contact Janice for a handwriting analysis,' or something like that. You know, I just, I run the show and act like a manager acts, you know."

However, they learned that there are downsides to being the one in charge. For one, the work

ultimately falls onto your shoulders.

Respondent 07: "It's a lot easier in the police department when you can do your, your shift and go home. Um, owning your own business, is, there's no such thing as a cut off time, and, you do work a lot of hours and I know sometimes, you know, it would be a twelve hour day and, um, or sometimes you're working through the night, because you've got to. You've got to have something done by court the next day, um, or you have too many cases, and in order to meet your deadlines, especially court deadlines, um, you've, you just have to put in the hours and you're the only one that can do it. Because you've done the interviews, you've done, you know, you know where you're going with it, and one of the really, really, hard things is to try to bring someone in to help out, and I, I, it takes more time to try and train somebody and get them up to speed. It's, you know, much easier to do it yourself."

The agency owner must also work to keep the business going.

Respondent 23: "My being an agency owner, my stress level could be higher because, because I'm more involved in the, in the, uh, administration and the paperwork, and then technically it's my job to get cases in for people to work on, you know, so I have to come up a constructive idea . . . ."

Because running an agency is time consuming, an investigator may find that she would rather

work without employees. The love of the job can be a lure back to self-employment like the

following PI:

Respondent 19: "When I had my agency in California, um, I had up to nine employees working for me at one point, which then, put me in the office, fixing everybody else's reports, which was something I figured out I didn't like. I got into this because I enjoyed the field work. That's what I enjoy the most is the field work . . . so when I moved here . . . I made the decision that I wasn't going to have employees again."

There are many different specializations in PI work. Within these specialties there is a variety of

tasks, making it a diverse and interesting occupation. Three respondents echoed variations of

the same phrase: "I took to it like a duck to water." Many confessed that they love their work

and what it entails (11).

> Respondent 12: "You know, my first case turned into a twenty-four hour surveillance, and I ended up going to court . . . and testifying, all for my first case. You know, so it was fun. I enjoyed it. So, I knew at that point, that, that I made the right decision."

Additionally:

> Respondent 20: "It's different every day. It's interesting. No two cases are alike so you're constantly challenged and on your toes. Um, it's, I don't know, it's good for your mind, it's good for your mind to be challenged."

This multiplicity appears to be one of the key assets of PI work (9).

> Respondent 09: "We all end up having to wear a lot of hats, and one of the hats we have to wear is psychologist . . . . Every single last one of us. We all have to be writers. We all have to be quasi-lawyers, okay, to do this job. And we have to be a lot of other things too. But that's why we all love it, because you have to wear a lot of different hats. You never get bored."

The absence of this stimulation was something that a few women (3) struggled with over the

course of their work lives.

> Respondent 26: "I would always get in trouble at, at jobs because I'd learn my job and then I'd get bored and I'd start fussing with other people's [jobs], you know? And so, it didn't make me very popular, you know, cause I'd go, 'Well, oh God, but we could do this better.' You know, and 'Hey, I got an idea,' you know, and they're going 'Shut up, get up, get back to your desk.' So with this, I like it because I can take any kind of case I want, I can be interested, you know, whatever I decide I'm interested in, I spend a tremendous amount of time just doing like online training things and stuff like that, um, just because, you know, I may need to know this, and, uh . . . so that's what I like about it. It keeps me stimulated."

Similarly:

> Respondent 03: "I knew that I really, really liked it instantly, and so I never really thought about doing anything else at that point. It just, when I, I first got sent out on that first case with zero training, I kind of went, 'You know, this is pretty fun.' And, yeah, I just never, 'cause I could have gone back to law enforcement any time with my degree and stuff. I just really had no desire to do that."

A love of learning plays a big role in private investigation (10). Working on a diverse set of cases

means gaining the knowledge needed to complete those cases.

> Respondent 09: "This is something that everybody will say the same thing I betcha.' You never stop learning and learning new things . . . . I'm not typically minded, nor do I care to be, but I . . . learned a lot of things, technical things I never knew before, and I opened up a whole lot, a whole new thing, so we all enjoy learning things through our research. You're never bored because you're always learning something new."

In addition, it appears that PI s are able to easily change specializations if they so choose. This

decision may be inspired by the wish for more of the variety that is inherent to this occupation.

> Respondent 13: "I'm wanting to change my career from doing so much of locating lost loves or missing family members . . . to do some criminal investigations in the legal field is what I'm going to be working my career towards. Um, it just really makes my blood boil and I love it."

Women may also make this move based on finances. Some areas may offer more money than

others.

> Respondent 05: "The majority of my work, well, for the first fifteen years of my career, was strictly criminal, uh, and then I branched out and started doing civil 'cause it pays better."

Burnout is a constant threat and changing one's area of specialization may help to extend the

amount of time one will work as a PI.

> Respondent 19: "If I would have only done surveillance, I would have ended up burning out, but it progressed from doing surveillance to I had a, um, and, I got to the point where I had an employer that, um, encouraged me to learn other areas. So I went from doing surveillance to, um, uh, uh, a different form of, of, worker's comp investigations where I was doing what they call AOECOE work, and that stands for "arising out of employment, in, in the course of employment." So then I was going out and I was interviewing people, um, looking at the areas where somebody might have been injured, and so that, it, it just progressed."

There are plenty of classes and seminars available in order to get training for other areas.

Respondent 19: "There are so many associations that if you want to go and specialize in a particular area, the training is available. It might be expensive. You might have to travel, but the training's there."

Thus, it is apparent from the findings that there are many different ways that an individual can work as an investigator. Two of the five investigators who specialized in criminal and civil investigation had a law enforcement background. Two who specialized in domestic cases had either military or law enforcement experience. Two other respondents had a background in bill collection (locating individuals and their assets) and one continued this work as a private investigator. Another participant who worked heavily in computer forensics as a PI had previously worked as a navy cryptologist. Of the six PIs who specialized in surveillance, four had law enforcement or military experience. Two of the seven women who had a background in paralegal/pretrial investigation worked on the same kind of cases as in they did in paralegal work. Previous employment appears to have a strong tie with private investigation work, since the work of many of the women mirrored that of previous employment. Finally, if one desires a new specialization then one is able to move easily from one area to another because of the regularity and the variety of the training that is offered. In addition, many of the tasks of the occupation relate to college education, such as computer and writing skills. All of the women in this sample received at least some college education. This combined with the previous job experience may be associated with the job duties of this occupation.

The love of the variety in the occupation seems to be associated with those who accept all kinds of cases (9). Seven of these nine respondents had no specialization. This, in addition to the previous statements, indicates that they are able to modify their job duties and case focus to fit what they are familiar with and/or what they enjoy. Conferences offer training and

support for those who wish to change their specialization or expand the nature of their cases.

Nine admitted to doing this at some point in their career. The duties of an investigator can vary

tremendously across the occupation and across one's career.

Unpredictability, Flexibility, and Power

The unique schedule of private investigators is also an important feature of the job.

What one is working on and where one will be working can vary from day-to-day.

> Respondent 03: "Monday through Friday I work from like eight in the morning 'til about ten at night, with, you know, I take a lunch break and a dinner break in there. And on Saturday I sleep in, and I work from like ten 'til, you know, like six or eight, and I try to make myself take Sundays off. But, most of the time, that doesn't happen. I still do work then too. So, but part of that is my own fault. I do that, I work from home, and so it's always here, and if there's, you know, and since I love my job, if, you know, if there's work to do, I do it."

This can relate to what kinds of cases on which one focuses. Domestic cases seem to be the

most irregular and cause the most sleepless nights.

> Respondent 02: "Sometimes my cases are at night, for domestic cases especially. Trying to catch the cheating spouse. Um, you don't work those cases during the day, or I try not to, and it's not that I don't want to, but people are more active at night, because that's their free time. They're not at work anymore, and they're going to go out and they're going to play."

Correspondingly:

> Respondent 12: "Sometimes you don't sleep. Sometimes you don't sleep. You go straight from here. You go home take a shower, grab your camera and go. And you can't leave until, you know, your surveillance has ended, so if someone's out doodling around in a barroom until two or three o'clock in the morning, you're with 'em. So, you know, sometimes you just don't sleep."

Calls for work or visits from clients are also unpredictable.

> Respondent 03: "I get late night phone calls, especially dealing with, I do pre-employment backgrounds for law enforcement, and people that work in law enforcement just don't think about the fact that everyone else on the planet doesn't work 24/7, and yeah . . . So I get phone calls at three in the morning, and sometimes I'll

get, you know, investigators from other countries that'll call and, you know, the time difference thing messes people up. So yeah, I get calls at all hours of the day and night . . . . you never know."

This can affect one's ability to plan extra-curricular activities.

>Respondent 09: "If you have a bunch of cases, if you have a pretty rocking business, for instance, some of them will say, 'Hey can you go out Friday night?' I'll say, 'Well, I don't know. Maybe,' because you're at the whim of your clients, especially if you do domestic stuff. Where there are cheating husbands and wives and stuff, people will call you up at a moment's notice and you have to be there. Especially when they're paying you a lot of money per hour, then your work life does take over your personal life."

Thus, many (14) implied that one has to be willing to give up the predictability of daily life in order to become successful.

>Respondent 12: "You have to, in this job, you have to be ready on a dime pretty much, you know, 'cause you may not know 'til 30 minutes before something happens that you have to go, you have to be [there]. When you get your license, you have to be prepared to take that, you know? You got to take what comes with it. I've seen, I've seen apprentices come out all gung-ho, but you call them on a Friday and say, 'Can you work tonight?' 'Oh no, can't work tonight. I'm going to shoot pool tonight.' 'But, I thought you wanted to work?' 'Well I do, Monday, Monday through Thursday at night, 'cause I have a day job.' Well, we don't do a whole lot Monday through Thursday, so, you know . . . I see that a lot with the young ones."

Work can even interfere with holidays.

>Respondent 23: "Occasionally I have had the problem because, you know, we might be having a function with family, Mother's Day or something like that, and all of sudden, somebody calls, and I gotta jump and run. He's [my husband] like, 'Can't you find somebody?' and I'm like 'Nope. Gotta go do it.'"

However, many women (9) are able to harness this irregularity and set up a schedule that is much more flexible. This may be easier for those who specialize in legal cases and may be more likely to have work that can be done within the span of a normal workday.

>Respondent 01: "I work nights, I work weekends when I need to, if I don't have to, I don't. When I want to take some time off, I take it off if I can work around something. You know, it's just really up to me, and I like it that way."

Those who work out of their own home (12) are able to customize individual responsibilities to

match their workspace.

> Respondent 11: "I really enjoy the hours, and I really like that I can work when I want.
> It's really flexible. I work from home. I have an office."

Similarly:

> Respondent 24: "If I have to interview somebody and I can do it by telephone, it's not
> something I have to be face-to-face with, I can go to my office and interview 'em, and be
> back out in the living room . . . instead of having to drive all the way to wherever to
> meet them."

This leads to a third feature of investigation that is significant – control. The respondents lauded

the amount of control their occupation provides. One's success seems to be linked to one's

willingness to work.

> Respondent 19: "You answer to yourself. If you goofed up, you blew the day, you wrote
> it off and you started the next day, okay? If you did a good job, you did a good job. So, it
> was, you're driven by your own efforts and your own successes and your own failures.
> And that what's got me into it. I fell in love with the work."

PIs have a lot of leeway when it comes to the cases that they are offered. If they do not want to

take a case or they do not have the time, they do not have to accept a case.

> Respondent 01: "I can pick and choose who I want to work for. If I don't want to work
> for somebody I don't have to."

Two even accepted cases pro bono.

> Respondent 15: "I enjoy being able to help people that, who would not otherwise be
> able to be helped. . . . There are times when I'll do pro bono work, if I can find a case
> that . . . I'm really passionate about . . . and they don't have the money to pay me, but I
> know that it would be well-served to help them out, then I'm willing to do that and just
> no-charge it."

This level of control seems to be reliant on two factors: their level of employment and their

ability to subcontract. All the women in this sample, except for five own an agency or are self-

employed (22). Self-employment gives power to the individual PI, so that they are able to shape

the form of their job to fit their own specifications.

> Respondent 04: "I have my own business, so if you work for somebody else it would vary. But I have my own, so, my health insurance is private insurance, you know? Any vacation time I take is, you know, is what I designate. Any kind of bonuses are what I designate, when I designate, or it's just . . . when you're self-employed that's kind of how it works."

They are able to decide what cases on which they will or will not work.

> Respondent 10: "Basically, you choose, you choose what you want to do, and . . . of course you have the freedom to decline a client if for any reason you feel it's not in your best interest, his or hers [the clients] too, but mostly your own best interest, I would say, and, uh, there's just a great deal of freedom that way."

Some (12) have chosen to work out of their home.

> Respondent 26: "There's some things, once you're out there doing it, it's not so bad, but it, you know, like, you know, process serving and even surveillance, it can be like, 'Oh God, I gotta go sit in the car for six hours, you know?' Um, I don't like it. Some people love it. But once I get out there, I usually enjoy it. You kind of get in the zone and you're okay. But, most of the time I send other people because I'm lazy and I like to sit here in my, you know, my cutoffs, or my pajamas, or whatever and work online."

Subcontracting work plays an additional part in increasing the amount of control present in PI

work. Investigators are able to subcontract other investigators when they are not willing or able

to perform a task that is necessary for a case.

> Respondent 13: "If somebody else specializes say, in, um, asset investigation, and I don't do that and I don't have time to do that, then, you know, I'll call her up and say, 'Hey, can you do this for me,' and then, um, so you kind of subcontract out certain parts of an investigation that you don't want to do . . . . Or if someone's better skilled at that, well I definitely want them to do that part of the investigation."

This is a very common practice with twenty-two of the female PIs. These respondents have a

network of other PIs that they rely on when this need arises. A reciprocal relationship between

investigators can develop through subcontracting.

Respondent 04: "I personally believe, you can't do a little of everything and be good at all of it. So I really think that it's helpful, at least for me, to specialize. Um, if you put me in a surveillance vehicle and ask me to work for eight hours, you're not going to get the kind of product that you would if you put Darcy in a surveillance vehicle and she's going to give you a far superior product, um, but if you give Darcy a locate to do, we work together a lot, if you give her a locate to do, you know, she's gonna probably look it up in the White Pages, and if she can't find it, she'll call me."

Using subcontracting, PIs are able to hire another investigator to work on a certain aspect of a case, while they are able to retain the case itself, thus holding on to their control over the case.

Respondent 25: "The guy does the surveillance, then sends me the report and I go through it and make sure I like it . . . ."

This practice may also assist in extending the longevity of one's career in investigation. With age comes limited mobility. Older PIs are able to hire another investigator to complete work that they cannot. Three gave this as a reason for why they subcontract. They, in the meantime, will complete tasks that hold no limitations for them.

Respondent 05: "I'm not a spring chicken anymore and with health issues and everything, I can't go out and do a lot of the things I used to do, so when I need surveillances done I have operatives. I use licensed PIs to go out and do my videoing and doing this and doing that, while I'll hit court records and look at files, and see how many times you've sued other people, see what history it is, things like that. It just depends. I'll interview people that have known you in the past . . . . I used to do my own grunt work. I don't do my own grunt work anymore."

One has been limited by her health, not her age:

Respondent 15: "I might get really sick, and can't work on something and call one of my other friendly PIs, and say, 'Hey, can you take this over for me, and just bill me instead of my client and I'll take care of making sure you get paid,' and turn it over to them and they'll take it from wherever I left off. Um, so far that hasn't had to happen very many times, but I know that it's possible if I need it to be."

With the large amount of power offered in PI work, it should come as no surprise that most of these women (23) could be characterized as independent and strong-willed individuals.

Respondent 06: "I think a lot of PIs are very powerful women and we're not the typical business woman. We're powerful in that we don't work inside. We have chosen not to have cubicles, and, you know, we're out there doing things that most women would be afraid to do, so I think we're a little bit different."

Correspondingly:

Respondent 19: "I don't play well in office environments when I have to have somebody tell me what to do . . . this opportunity came up to do investigations, surveillance, [and] many and varied positions."

These attributes may be important when one looks at the daily work lives of PIs. Much of the time they are working alone.

Respondent 17: "Work on a daily basis, it's, it's [only] me, it's a very solitary sort of, there's a lot of people out there who don't know what they're doing and they just think it's sounds glamorous . . . ."

Much of the work can only be done in an office, in front of a computer. Therefore, it may be a certain kind of individual who enjoys this solitude and this may hold a key to success in this occupation.

Respondent 23: "The computer's wonderful, but it makes us antisocial, I mean, that's not a person. And, you know, I can go days sometimes and, and only visit with a client and see my husband . . . . [I'm] getting really getting antisocial. They call me a hermit."

One's interests in PI work and the responsibilities found in those areas help to outline the daily work routine of PIs. Those who focus on domestic cases (4) are less likely to confine their tasks to a normal workday because much of the surveillance occurs after-hours (such as infidelity). Those who work in criminal and civil investigation may be better able to regulate their daily schedules. Collecting interviews, pictures, retrieving background records generally occurs during the day. However, an important issue appears to be self-employment. Twenty-three participants either openly described themselves as or described characteristics that can be associated with independence. It should be a logical connection that twenty-two

respondents are either self-employed or own an agency. Self-employment grants a private

investigator the power to accept or reject cases at will. Many of those (12) who are self-

employed also work out of their own home. Because of this, they are able to enjoy a certain

amount of flexibility. Women who work under an agency do not necessarily have this choice. As

an employee, they would be the ones on which an owner would rely. In addition, PIs are able to

subcontract work. Those who do not want to do surveillance or who cannot work after-hours

can simply hire another PI to do that job.

Emotional Work

Through the course of investigation, one learns to handle a variety of skills that are

necessary to working through a case. One of these is emotional management. Working to settle

the emotions of a client is important for a case.

> Respondent 24: "There's a lot of hand-holding involved and I didn't realize when I got
> started how much counseling investigators end up doing, because you have a client
> whose life is falling apart . . . . I think that's one of the main things you have to
> remember in being a private investigator, is you talk to a lot of people where you just
> have to remain calm no matter what they say . . . ."

Similarly:

> Respondent 23: "I think being able to talk with people 'cause . . . technically my degree
> is, like, listening to people. 'Cause when somebody walks in my door, normally they've
> got a big problem, and they're hurting, you know, and they want somebody, a woman
> wants somebody that she can just, you know, vent to because she's mad. She's upset
> and she's, she's gotta know . . . ."

PIs must be able to relate to their clients in order to get as much information about their

situation as possible. This emotional management can continue throughout the length of a

case. In domestic cases, clients are waiting for the PI to collect information that dispel or

substantiate fears or suspicions. Because of this heightened sense of emotion, clients may lash

out at the investigator. Thus, controlling clients' emotions are a large part of the job.

> Respondent 23: "The difficulty is dealing with a client that can go ballistic on you. Because they don't think things are moving far enough, fast enough, you know, so you have to keep them calm, and, and that's a talent."

Realizing this, PIs may restrict access to evidence that they find for a client. For instance, one PI

describes this practice:

> Respondent 02: "I have learned, working domestic cases the most, that even if you get the smoking gun, you get the picture of infidelity, or whatever, if people are not actually there and see it with their own eyes, even if they see it on video, they still don't want to believe it. And I don't ever allow my clients to, on an infidelity case, to go and see it and if it's something major that I catch on camera, I don't even allow my clients to see it and I state in the contract that you will not see it, 'cause I just, it's human emotion. People are already upset, and I just don't let them see it."

Clients may also become attached to investigators because of the deep emotions they have

shared.

> Respondent 11: "Sometimes it's a little uncomfortable or awkward when you interview someone and they want to be your friend. Or you have a client that wants to be you friend, and, you know, you don't want to go down that road."

They must also deal with their own emotions on a case.

> Respondent 13: "Criminal investigations I'd say, I would say, are challenging . . . the people you have to interview and, you know, the, how emotionally invested you can really get into a case. I just worked on a murder investigation and . . . they're very time consuming and, I'm just not the type of personality that can leave it at the door at five o'clock. You know?"

Sometimes these emotions conflict with their duty as an investigator.

> Respondent 07: "I think some of the hardest things for me, uh, because of law enforcement experience, is the criminal defense when you know someone's guilty. Uh, that's, that's the hardest for me . . . having to, um, do a thorough, good investigation for someone that you know is, uh, guilty . . . ."

Eleven PIs discussed how they are affected emotionally by certain cases. For the most part,

domestic cases were the most strenuous, even for those for whom it was a specialty (4).

> Respondent 08: "When you have a child abduction case . . . I get some of those sometimes. You know, that's always hard. Um, I've done some child extractions . . . where I've gone in, take[n] the child, and return[ed] them. And it's always difficult because it's hard for the child."

Divorce and/or child custody cases were the most disturbing (6).

> Respondent 12: "There's some things that, that, uh, that can sometimes be disheartening, you know, when you have, uh, a couple going through a divorce and they have a small child, and they just tear each other up and the kid's the victim, you know? It's not either one of the parents. It turns in to the kid being the victim, bounced back and forth. That's a real hard thing to watch."

One PI explicitly stayed away from domestic cases because of the emotional load.

> Respondent 03: "I get a lot of calls from people that want domestic cases and things like that, and I try to avoid those, because they're just not, they're just not good to work. The only way I work those is if it comes from a referral from somebody I know."

One chose to work on legal investigation (both criminal and civil) in order avoid these

situations.

> Respondent 14: "I don't have my own agency, I'm . . . just, uh, I'm licensed under an agency. I suspect people would be calling me to do, like, domestic stuff and, uh, like surveillance and stuff like that. Although I have done it, I don't want to, don't want to invest in the equipment in doing it, and I really don't want to put myself in the, you know, in the situation."

The respondents paint a picture of an occupation that does not appear in our traditional

understanding of private investigation. They hint at a higher level of emotional work than the

job duties alone would indicate. Much of the time that investigators are interacting with clients,

they are attempting to manage their emotions. This applies not only to domestic cases, but to

civil and criminal as well. In many cases, their own emotions may need to be regulated in order to complete a case without bias.

Danger

The occupation of private investigation carries with it its own propensity for danger. There are certain tasks that are inherently risky. First, there are interviews. PIs (12) must track down individuals who witnessed a crime and obtain a new account of what they saw. Some of these individuals live in dangerous areas.

> Respondent 03: "I did one time, go to interview someone that lived in the projects . . . and the person that I interviewed kind of freaked out when I showed up at his front door by myself, and because I had driven through this totally scary place . . . he had asked me while I was interviewing him if I was armed, and I said, 'Yeah, I've got a gun with me,' but, and he said, 'Well, just take it and sit it on your dashboard when you drive out, so that people that see, you know, that you have it right there as you're driving out.' I'm like, 'Ok,' so, that's the only time I ever did anything like that. And that was just because, you know, I was this little girl in this little sports car. All by myself somewhere that I probably shouldn't have been, and so that, you know, people were kind of giving me funny looks, but nobody approached my car, and that was the goal . . . ."

The respondents all recognized the awareness needed for them to remain safe as illustrated by the following statement:

> Respondent 01: "You use common sense, as to when you're going to go someplace, if it's a dangerous or high, high, uh, area of crime, you know, I'm probably not going to go there after dark unless I really have to because of the case."

A few (6) did not realize this until after they were threatened.

> Respondent 05: "Getting shot at isn't a good thing, you know, and I mean, on the job, I've been shot at many times on the job, and, uh, so that's something that's always been kind of nasty."

One PI limited her duties to database searches, taking precaution to avoid the active parts of the job.

Respondent 14: "I really don't want to put myself in the, you know, in the situation where, um, I would be, you know, when you have to go on surveillance. It's not really good, especially for a female by herself."

Others (4) chose simply to accept the possibility of a refund and the loss of a client.

Respondent 02: "I never put myself in a situation when I'm out on my own, either daytime or at night, I never put myself in a situation where I'm going to feel uncomfortable or if I start getting a bad vibe of 'I really shouldn't be here,' I automatically call my client whether they like it or not and tell them, 'Look, I do not feel comfortable being in this location. I'm sorry. I'm going to have to break off surveillance,' and, you know, some of my clients get very mad at me and I've refunded money to them, like, 'I'm sorry, look, if you're wanting me to be putting myself in this situation, then I'm just going to refund you the money. You need to find another investigator.'"

Process serving is another hazardous situation. Two pointed out that a number of individuals

are regularly injured or killed during the completion of this task.

Respondent 06: "You get threatened and in the state of Arizona we get maybe five process servers shot every year. Oh, it's very, very scary and you're going into some really bad neighborhoods, and sometimes you have to serve at night because you can't reach the people . . . ."

Others (2) live off the excitement produced by this situation.

Respondent 24: "I love process serving . . . because, it's, it's, it's not involved. It's in, it's out and there's a certain adrenaline rush. You kind of have to be an adrenaline junkie to do this job to a certain degree, but I mean, a lot of it is very safe, very tame . . . . But with process serving there's a certain amount of risk. You never know when someone is going to blame the messenger and for some reason . . . I'm an adrenaline junkie. I love that."

Surveillance may present special challenges. For stationary surveillance, it means remaining in

an area for long periods, sometimes without knowing anything about the neighborhood.

Respondent 06: "Getting threatened in the field . . . it can happen even when you don't expect. You never know how people are going to react, um, in certain situations, or what area you're going to be working in. I mean, until you do the surveillance and you're actually on the spot, that, you know, are you going to be in an area that has drive by shootings or not."

Mobile surveillance may put a PI in a location of which it may be difficult to get out.

> Respondent 02: "I've have worked a couple of cases where, uh, it just, uh, I thought I was on the right person, and, you know, lost them and then ended up running into them face-to-face and, you know, was not prepared for that at all. I just quickly, just acted nonchalant and everything like that, um, but one thing I did learn very early on: surveillance and when your tailing somebody, um, some people are smart and slick and think they're being tailed and some people just don't care, but never turn into a dead-end road. You could get trapped, and, um, I had a scenario where me and another female investigator were working a case and she was following and I was behind her and the person turned into a dead-end road, and we just kept on driving straight and I turned around and when I turned around and came back, the person was right in the middle of the road and came at me with a baseball bat. Um, so that kind of freaked me out, and came up to window and was asking who I was and everything like that, and I carry, I am licensed to carry a weapon and so I had my gun underneath my lap and, uh, you know, had my hand on it, and I just kind out cracked my window and I said, 'Look I don't know who you are. I am lost. You can look at my tags. I am not from this county,' and 'Can you help me get to this location?' And I just named a location 'cause I had remembered a gas station up the road, and, um, he was like, 'You passed it. I don't know why you're following me,' and I was like, 'Well sir, I wasn't following you. I'm just trying to get back to this gas station, 'cause it's kind of a landmark and I didn't know how far back it was,' and, you know, I was just trying to be as nonchalant as possible, but believable as well."

In law enforcement, officers are able to carry a gun and to protect themselves with lethal force if it is needed. In this sample, while many had their certification, only six women admitted to carrying guns. Four of those who did carry, only did so when they felt a weapon was necessary. They did not carry every day.

> Respondent 08: "I usually use it if I'm in a case where I feel it could be dangerous. Sometimes if I'm in a neighborhood . . . you need to make sure that you're protected."

Three others equated the need for a gun with the need for their absence.

> Respondent 22: "I had taken the concealed weapons class and passed it but I do not carry concealed . . . I don't own a weapon . . . if I'm somewhere's [sic] where I need a weapon, I don't need to be there The police need to be there."

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Four use other nonlethal weapons, such as Mace, a stun gun, or even dog treats to protect

themselves.

> Respondent 06: "I do not carry a gun though. I use a stun gun. I don't believe in shooting as someone approaches, but if somebody gets close enough to me and I've asked them to stop nicely, I won't hesitate to put them down. So you have to be prepared to protect yourself and the CCW class teaches you, especially, here in Arizona, this is a right to kill state, you don't kill to maim or to injure, you kill, you shoot to kill. So that's, that's a huge responsibility so by the time you go through the class, you're well prepared to do what you have to do to protect yourself."

Similarly:

> Respondent 09: "Legally I'm not allowed to [carry a gun], but after last year, I actually did get attacked, and, uh, I got tear-gassed and I had this miniature Kubuton thingy, pointy-stick that will hurt someone pretty bad, and so I have a pair of pants that have all kinds of pockets, and I'm going to go in every time fully loaded, except for a gun."

A further caveat is that many states require additional insurance coverage for weapons, so

agency owners and those who are self-employed may not wish to pay the extra cost. In this

sample, those who did not carry but could simply chose not to.

> Respondent 18: "It depends on the state you're in . . . . In Florida, to be a private investigator you also have to be licensed for a gun and carry and conceal, but most employers in Florida don't allow you to carry your gun on a job, um, because they don't want to pay the added insurance to cover you for that. And there are some investigators who do take their gun with them, um, here in Missouri, it's, you know, open option. You know, the PI can have a gun and carry it if they wish, or not . . . Um, well, I don't carry it with me. I haven't seen a need here 'cause . . . crime is, like, very low, so I haven't had a need. Now in Florida, I could not carry it with me because my employers at the time were not insured. And most employers that don't have the insurance will say it's a cause for termination if you're caught with your gun on the job."

Of the six PIs who specialized in surveillance, four had law enforcement or military experience.

This is half of the women who have military and/or police experience. Therefore, women who

have experience in male-dominated occupations may be more drawn to the more dangerous

job duties. Two of those who specialize in surveillance share a business with their husband. One

of these two females also has law enforcement experience. These females may feel capable

working in an uncomfortable situation because they have the support of their male husband-

partner. Half of the PIs who actively focused on surveillance were age forty or younger. The

remaining three are between the ages of fifty and fifty-four. Law enforcement/military

experience (4), partnership with husband (2), and younger age (3) combine to explain their

desire to specialize in this task. Of the eleven who serve process, only three have military/law

enforcement experience. Five were age forty or younger. Only three PIs did both surveillance

and process serving, so one does not necessarily relate to the other.

The respondents reiterated an important aspect of investigation that applies here –

subcontracting. It may not be a coincidence that the cases that are most frequently

subcontracted, referred, or turned down altogether are those that fall under the label of

dangerous. Thus, many respondents are able to avoid danger by simply hiring another

investigator. Finally, age may also play a part in one's enactment of certain duties. The median

age of this sample is fifty-two. As one ages, physical mobility and one's desire to place oneself

in an unsafe or uncomfortable environment may significantly decrease.

Ethics and PI Work

For PIs, there are many regulations that govern the methods with which they obtain

their information. Respondents described working for clients or under employers who had

misconstrued expectations as to what it is that they are allowed to do.

> Respondent 02: "I left the . . . company, 'cause they, uh, they wanted me to do
> something that was unethical in court, I had to testify in court . . . they wanted me to do
> unethical stuff and I will not do that, so I left . . . ."

She continues:

> Respondent 02: "It taught me . . . [that] there's always a gray line. People always talk about that, 'There's always a gray line here.' And, um, not even trying to get close to that gray line, to just be as professional as possible, to be as honest as possible, and to work the case. And if it's not workable, don't try to convince your client that it is workable when it's not just to try to milk 'em for money."

However, though it is legal, many investigators may use tactics that could be viewed by some as ethically questionable to get information that cannot be acquired otherwise. Four discussed this:

> Respondent 09: "The real trade, the skill, it's like being a magician. You can't show all your tricks, right? And we all have our own techniques and tricks for doing things and some of those are in the gray areas if you will . . . . All of those interesting little things that we learn or develop . . . ."

Many clients do not understand the power that is given to PIs.

> Respondent 11: "People call you who aren't attorneys, they want you to do crazy things that are totally against the law, like get their neighbor's phone records so they can spy on them, and then they don't understand when you tell them 'No, you can't do that.'"

Four feel that incorrect media depictions of private investigators have lead to this misunderstanding.

> Respondent 26: "People usually call you thinking that they want surveillance for everything because that's what they watch on television, and, uh, they, they really don't usually need it, and so . . . if they really do, then I'll tell them . . . ."

A few respondents (3) even found that attorneys asked them to break the rules.

> Respondent 07: "Sometimes I really dislike working with the attorneys, um, so, you know, I've cut down, uh, the client base to attorneys that I really like, that I work well with, but, um, you know, I've run into a few attorneys that were less than ethical . . . you know, I've had attorneys just pull things out of their ass . . . or they'll ask you to something that's just absurd. You know, like, 'Oh well, why don't you wear a wire and go in and do this?' . . . . It's like, um, they know better. In California, you can't just put on a wire and go in and talk to somebody. It's, you know, it's not the police department. You know, you're not covered under that umbrella . . . [and] I've had, um, attorneys that I've worked with, you know, once, 'cause I won't work with them again after . . . I found that their dealing with their client, their client was less than ethical."

Three came across other investigators who disregarded their ethical responsibility.

> Respondent 02: "I'm very choosy with the investigators that I do work with, um, just for the simple fact: there is [sic] unethical investigators out there . . . there's investigators that will cheat on their time, will tell their client that they were out there for eight hours, and, you know, nothing's happened, so they leave after five, but they'll fast forward. If their time and everything is on their camera, they'll fast forward the time and take more shots of every hour, on the hour, and then they'll leave after five hours, but bill the client for eight . . . ."

In addition:

> Respondent 23: "You know, we could carry badges, um, we're not law enforcement. You cannot represent yourself as law enforcement. If you, um, run into a situation, [then] you have to identify yourself as a private investigator . . . some people kind of wiggle their way around it, as far as, 'Well, I'm an investigator.' You know? Is that legal? Probably. You know, my, my badge states on it that I'm a private investigator and I like that. It should, if you're going to carry a badge, it should say private investigator on it."

Some states take a much more rigorous stance on the behavior and methods of private

investigators. One opined on her own state's regulatory stringency.

> Respondent 02: "Basically you have to keep your nose very clean. You're allowed to have speeding tickets, but other than that, um, you have to keep your nose very, very clean. Um, or you will get your license revoked. So, it's very strict and I like that . . . I like the strictness of Tennessee, 'cause it keeps, it keeps people honest and it keeps the hard-working professional PIs honest and doesn't let all the riff-raff in."

Counter to the impressions given by many depictions in the media, PIs do have to follow laws

that govern the methods they use. These regulations are sometimes amended by PIs because

of their subjective nature. A few did admit to straddling the ethical boundary from time to time

only when (seemingly) necessary. The presence of a licensing board and how strict that board is

contributes to the use of certain tactics, such as pretexting. However, there are investigators

who may choose to break these rules, as three respondents found. Though laws are in place to

protect the public from harm, there are those who will capitalize on the subjectivity of these

laws. This includes attorneys. Clients also hold misunderstandings of the powers given to this

industry. Depictions of private investigators in movies and on television skew the level of perceived conscientiousness in this occupation. This can encourage a client to hold unreasonable expectations and may lead to animosity between the investigator and his/her client. Though there were a few PIs who admitted to taking advantage of minor privacy laws (4), this was not a common practice. All mentioned the rules and regulations that guided their occupation at some point in the interview. This provides us with a view of PI work as an occupation that comes under much greater scrutiny.

An Occupation under Fire

As I interviewed PIs, one of the concerns that was brought up repeatedly is the legislative acts that threaten the use of certain investigative techniques. One of these is the current push for stricter privacy laws. There are groups, such as the National Council of Investigation and Security Services, which are pushing to block these changes because of the effects that it will have on PIs and their ability to do their jobs. Restrictions have been steadily increasing over time, due to ever-increasing problems such as identity theft. There is a constant state of anxiety among private investigators regarding this issue. I feel that it is important to mention this issue, especially when it could have an effect on how they do their job. For instance, court systems and law enforcement bureaus are becoming more stringent about who is allowed to view personal records.

> Respondent 03: "I would say the biggest challenge is all the stuff that various places are doing to try and protect people from identity theft. So, it kind of limits our access to information . . . no private investigator has ever caused someone to suffer from identity theft . . . so, it's, you know, other people losing information that do it, but that's kind of . . . made things difficult . . . . There's a lot of, um, you know, like public records, uh, a lot of the courts are limiting what we see. A lot of police departments will not release police reports to us, even though they're required to. They, they fight it. So, you know, we have to fight to get it."

Four PIs admitted that they had joined organizations, such as NCISS, that are lobbying to

protect their rights as investigators. For many, being banned from certain public records and

personal information could be detrimental.

> Respondent 26: "[One reason why] I belong to that [organization] is that they lobby for us. They spend, you know . . . . All their time and money goes towards lobbying in Washington and various, occasionally, state causes that they think are important to keep, um, make sure that we keep access to DMV, and different records that, that privacy people keep trying to make it so we can't get that kind of thing."

If most of their work involves collecting information, what happens when they no longer

have access to that information? One of the most controversial activities is pretexting.

Pretexting is pretending to be someone in order to find out information about an individual. It

is controversial because groups define it differently. The position taken by ASIS International is

that pretexting is "the use of false, fraudulent, or fictitious information in the course of

gathering personal information during investigations" (Longmore-Etheridge 2007). Over time,

what is allowed under the guise of pretexting has changed. In 1999, the Gramm-Leach-Bliley

Act was passed, which prohibits the use of false pretenses in order to obtain financial

information about an individual.

> Respondent 09: "This is kind of a little touchy, but this was a long time ago. This became illegal, we would, um, do a lot of pretext work . . . . Now it's possible that the legislators are going to try and limit us and stop us from doing it, which will put us, pretty, pretty much out of business. It takes a thief to catch a thief. So basically, um, an attorney would hire us and say, 'We need to find the assets so we can,' you know, 'account for the money. Go get the money out of the bank.' So we would pretext, and I would pretend I was a bank or somebody, [then] call the subject. The subject is the person we're investigating, and [say] 'I'm Susie Q. from bank so and so, and we're going to give you a credit card,' or whatever we're going to do. Double-talk them into making us, into telling us something about where their money is, where the bank account is, right? And we would call the bank and pretend we were another branch, and we would double-talk them into breaching their own security code . . . no computer hacking. We would call the branch, the actual part of the branch where the money is, and get them to tell us, to pull signature cards, and you'd have to match the name of what's on the signature card

with what's on the judgment . . . it's very complicated, and you'd have to know a lot about banking and buzzwords, and all kinds of stuff in order to get this and it's a very dicey, very difficult thing to do, so as soon as, you know, they've got like millions of dollars in their bank account or ten dollars in their bank account, you call your client, attorney, you say 'The money is here, and this is how much they've got in the bank account. This is the bank account number. This is what's on the signature card. Go get it.' And if they were smart they would go down the very next day and get the money. Most of the time, they just sit around and do nothing, and then the bank account changes. Very, very, very difficult."

Many investigators (5) still use this practice legally, such as when they need to find the physical

location of an individual. One investigator the presence of these regulations requires an

investigator to use their creativity to find information about a subject.

> Respondent 06: "Part of the job is, we're not allowed anymore to pretend we're someone we're not. We're not allowed to do that. We have to be forthright about who we are, so trying to come up with ways to get information without somebody knowing that we're onto them, or something, um, that can be real challenging."

In addition to current regulations, PIs also lack authority. No one in the public is obligated to

answer their questions.

> Respondent 20: "It's difficult because . . . people aren't afraid of you, you know, they don't, they don't necessarily feel that they have to talk to you because you're not a law enforcement officer. So, you know, getting your information you have to be a little sneakier, a little more [sic] sneakier."

Another method that has come to the attention of the courts is mobile surveillance. One

participant is hesitant to use this practice because the privacy issue has become so contentious.

> Respondent 19: "The privacy thing, it's just gotten, the whole thing has gotten very, very sticky. I mean, there have been lawsuits, um, there have been lawsuits filed against investigators who have followed someone on an assignment. They've been hired by an insurance company, they've burned the person, um, either didn't realize it or were too stubborn to just back off and get somebody else to work the case because you, you're burned. And people have filed lawsuits for stalking. Now to date, the judges have come back and said, 'No it's not [stalking],' but . . . with everything the way it's going . . . it's turned into an issue . . . ."

There are numerous bills on the legislative floor that may have important implications

for these investigators, such as S-30 "Truth in Caller ID Act"[1] and S-141 "Protecting the Privacy

of Social Security Numbers Act"[2]. As reviewed earlier in this dissertation, the private security

industry has been given a tremendous power over the public. Many occupations have been

created to take advantage of this authority. Consequently, any threat to these rights is a threat

to job security. Imposing greater limits on data access may put investigators in a precarious

position. If in the future this profession has less power that could affect the demographics of

this industry – less power means less prestige. Though this issue may have little relevance to

the current dissertation, this should be considered in later research.

Comparison to Police Work

There is a common idea that law enforcement and private investigations are very

similar. Eight respondents addressed this misunderstanding. The power held by, and the job

structure of, private investigators is very different from that of police officers. Even those who

were once in law enforcement had to adjust (5).

> Respondent 03: "I've got a friend now who just recently got licensed and I'm kind of
> mentoring him and, he's someone that was in law enforcement for many, many years,
> and, he had no idea just how much stuff you have to know, to do certain types of
> investigation, and he calls me like every day with questions on things, and says, you
> know, 'I had no clue,' so, so that right there kind of shows, and that's typical of a lot of
> people."

As explicitly declared by many of the state (or local) licensing boards, investigators are at no

time allowed to lead others to believe that they are an officer of the law.

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[1] The bill would prohibit the communication of incorrect caller identification used "to defraud, cause harm, or wrongfully obtain anything of value." This will amend the Communications Act of 1934.
[2] This bill would prohibit the misuse of Social Security numbers. This would amend Title 18 of the United States Code regarding crimes and criminal procedure.

Respondent 19: "One thing we can't ever do is pretend to be law enforcement. Ever, ever, ever, ever, ever."

Their legal powers are no different from those belonging to any other citizen of the United

States. The laws that govern investigators are different for those that govern the police.

Respondent 07: "Well, of course, when you're doing criminal defense work, it's totally different [from policing]. You're working the cases backwards. Rather than from beginning to end, you're working it from the end back to the beginning . . . um, civil cases, which, you know, police officers don't do, you have to study the laws, the case laws, and everything for civil litigation and keep up with that, um, for, specific cases, especially employment law, because in California that law changes constantly, with every new case law that comes out . . . ."

The celerity with which one is required to act is different in PI work. Assistance is not

immediately needed like in policing.

Respondent 25: "You know, private investigations, you know, at least for me, it's not on emergent needs. Like with law enforcement where you don't have any, any choice. There's no, um, you know, 'A case just came in you have to go out. You have to respond immediately.' It's not that, at least for me, it's not that at all."

In addition, there is a special skill set for investigation.

Respondent 09: "I've worked with a lot of ex-police officers and even though we are cousins in a way professionally, a cop cannot just cross over and become an investigator. Some of them have a natural ability, the natural gift . . . 'cause it is a different profession . . . [and] people get them confused. But, I used to work with so many ex-cops that got basically booted out of doing police work, and they think they can just come over and be private investigators, and they're not, and not have the gift, 'cause there's a great deal more to it."

The cases originate in a dissimilar way than those for police detectives. Clients hire an

investigator and present them with cases, which, as reviewed above, they do not have to take.

This is in opposition to law enforcement detectives.

Respondent 23: "Private investigations is totally different from law enforcement. You know, I mean, that's what a lot of people assume, is, 'Oh well, you've been a police officer, so when you retire, you'll open up a detective agency,' or something to that effect. It's different. Most police officers, when they're in the detective role, when they go into work every morning, their cases are sitting there on their desk, or on their

shelves or whatever, because it's a criminal matter. They're out to catch the bad guys. Our cases are not like that . . . "

Private investigators are forced to face the stereotypical idea of private investigation and how it can be confused with law enforcement. Individuals who leave law enforcement may correctly assume that they have the skills to excel at private investigation, yet they are not familiar with the laws that will legally guide their work. Licensing regulations may contribute to this misunderstanding. Many states allow law enforcement experience to satisfy the requirement for a probation period. Five respondents have law enforcement experience that would arguably make for an easy transition into this profession; however, this is not necessarily the case. Different laws direct private investigators. This creates a steeper learning curve. Rookie private investigators may also hold an inaccurate view of this occupation. This seems to come from the images of private investigators found in the media. As a result, investigators who have no law enforcement experience may also be presented with a learning curve, which may be much more precipitous because of their lack of experience.

Unique Cases

There are two unique respondents in this study. Though they may not have a direct bearing on the problems at hand, they may be indicators of underlying trends in private investigation. One was a paralegal who obtained her license for her primary occupation. She does not work as an investigator.

> Respondent 14: " . . . . I use a database to locate witnesses and stuff like that. That's why I, uh, got my license as, you know, being a paralegal, I thought it might help me to be able to locate some people . . . I use the knowledge that I got from getting, you know, going to the, to the class, taking the class. I take that to apply towards my work."

The second case is a woman who holds her PI license and does investigation, but it falls secondary to her position as an organizational ombudsman.

Respondent 10: "I specialize in workplace issues . . . . That's everything from investigations within the workplace, background screening to, uh, conflict prevention, uh, conflict resolution training, uh, coaching, um, exit interviews, policy audits."

Her job is to help diffuse conflicts within the workplace, as well as provide the training needed to prevent these disputes. If a conflict does arise and needs to be investigated, then her license will come into play.

Though their day-to-day work lives may differ from the others in the sample, they were included because they went through the licensing process, the training and have worked many of the same cases as others. Hence, they provide valuable experience that can be analyzed. They have to remain up-to-date on continuing education hours, so they are familiar with the issues that are addressed in this study.

These women provide examples of an issue that was brought to light. There are a number of investigators, both men and women whose license may be used simply to supplement their primary occupation. This may shed light on certain aspects of private investigation that may not be obvious on a superficial level. For instance, looking at the number of individuals who have their PI license for each state does not indicate who works primarily as a private investigator. However, this may also be evidence for what the occupation is – not a career, but a job. Examining the demographics of this sample, we see that more than half are over the age of fifty and all are over the age of thirty. Thus, just the ages of the respondents alone may give some evidence for this. When we consider the amount of ex-LEOs as well as those who have retired out of some other occupation, this theory may be strengthened.

I also discovered some resistance toward this trend. Two women commented on this development and what they had to say was overwhelmingly negative.

Respondent 23: "There are investigators in this industry that shouldn't be in it, you know? I mean, we don't need bail, need bail bondsmen. You know, uh, they don't do investigations. They may do investigations to go find their subjects, you know, or their bail skips, but the main reason they have to have a PI license, is to get into a different state, and do what they normally do. You have others that have a PI license just to have it."

Similarly:

Respondent 05: "There's one [female PI association] I can think of, um, where the majority of the members are like real estate agents and nurses and they call themselves PIs in name only. Even though they have licenses and stuff, they don't really practice the industry, or many of them are in states that have no licensing. You know, Mississippi, Colorado, places like that. Um, when I see, when I see these female groups . . . . I have no faith in them. Let's just leave it at that."

She continues:

Respondent 05: "When I started out there was one woman in all of California who was licensed . . . . Now, there's probably thirty percent, forty percent women. Most of them are the most incompetent people God ever put on the face of the earth . . . they sit at computers all day long and call themselves investigators. They wouldn't know how to work a grunt work, grunt work, if their life depended on it."

Therefore, the increased specialization of the occupation and the licensing of women who do not work primarily as private investigators may be a point of contention among female PIs. This could have an effect on the relationships among women in PI work, leading to increased competition and pervasive stereotypes between female investigators. Consequently, this could reinforce the ideas held by male investigators, postponing the full acceptance of women in this occupation.

Summary

The features that have been reviewed here combine to create the foundation for this profession and may contribute to present barriers (or means of access) for female investigators. For many, job specialization and job duties tend to follow previous employment. Those who were in law enforcement, the military, paralegal or pretrial investigations, journalism, and even

bill collection chose specializations and job duties with which they were familiar. Level of education appears also to be important here. All women had at least some college. Two had a master's degree, and ten had a bachelor's degree, and two had an associate's degree. Many job duties are tied to skills learned in an academic environment, such as writing and computer skills.

Schedule unpredictability and flexibility are significant features of the occupation. These can vary across the occupation. Most respondents are self-employed (22) which offered them greater power over their cases. They are able to subcontract, refer or turn down cases as they see necessary; however, this may have an effect on the kinds of women who get into and stay in this occupation. For example, women who have children and single mothers may be at a disadvantage.

There is a large amount of emotional work in this profession. Investigators have to control the emotions of their clients and subjects, and must manage their own so as not to affect a case. This feature may contribute to the number of women that are in this occupation. Emotional work has been traditionally associated with the work of women. Clients may be drawn to a woman in this position rather than a man because of the "soft skills" she is believed to possess. Similarly, women may feel some draw toward this occupation because of certain traits that females have traditionally been socialized to hold, such as dealing with emotions of others.

Like law enforcement, danger can also be found in private investigation. Surveillance, process serving, and interviews all present some measure of risk. Women who have law enforcement or military experience may be more likely to get into this type of work because of

their previous training. In general, though, women may be turned away from this occupation due to this. On the other hand, these services can be subcontracted. They are able to keep the case, yet avoid risky situations. To be successful in private investigation then, it is not necessary to participate actively in these dangerous services.

Though the private security industry has been given an ever-reaching grasp of authority, the powers of the private investigator do have limits. The methods with which they are able to access personal data are regulated. Over time, they have become increasingly so. Most investigators follow these rules, yet some have stepped into the "gray area." Several met attorneys who asked the respondents to do things they considered unethical. Clients from the public have also made similar requests. This appears to be based on the depictions of PIs in movies and on television. The respondents have encountered investigators who blatantly snub work ethics and are viewed as a threat because of their bad behavior.

Due to recent breaches of privacy law, several bills have been proposed to counter these loopholes. These bills could have detrimental effects on the PI profession. A few investigators belong to an organization (National Council of Investigation and Security Services) that advocates for the private security industry even if it means actively opposing these bills. Many fear what further restrictive measures will mean for their jobs. This may have important implications for future research.

There are significant differences between private investigation and law enforcement. First, a different set of rules and regulations guide the work of the private investigator. Many ex-law enforcement officers had to learn to operate under these new directives. Second, the timeliness with which PIs operate is much different from law enforcement. They do not have to

take a case and when they do, they are not under the time constraints as in police work.

Thirdly, the powers that are granted to police are not given to private investigators. This can be problematic for PIs. It can difficult be to collect information for a case when you lack authority. When we combine these factors, we can see that a background in law enforcement does not guarantee a seamless transition into PI work A learning curve still exists, though it may be much less steep than those without this experience.

There are two cases in this sample that are unique: one works as an organizational ombudsman and another works as a paralegal. Both have their investigative license and both use it in the course of their job. Yet, private investigation is not their primary career. If this takes place in large numbers, it could have a significant impact on broader trends in this occupation. Many respondents spoke about this and a few were disapproving. This development should also be examined in future research.

These issues are each important to the organization of private investigation. They may also determine the position of women in this occupation. In order to consider fully this topic we must evaluate several other factors. The structure of the occupation may also hold significance, as it did in Martin's (1980) study of women in policing. This will be considered next.

Structural Barriers

In *Breaking and Entering* (1980), Martin found that police work presents structural barriers that make it difficult for women to succeed. These obstacles include socialization, training, certification, street patrol, mentoring, and assignments. The organization of law enforcement places policewomen at a disadvantage. In this section, the structure of private investigation will be examined to identify any similarities between the two occupations.

Socialization

As summarized above, Martin (1980) found that, in police work, women were at a disadvantage when it came to familiarity with the skills necessary in police work. This was due, in part, to the lack of anticipatory socialization in the young lives of her respondents. Women are at a disadvantage because they play fewer games that involve physicality and competition. They do not get to try on the roles that would prepare them for this kind of work (Martin 1980). This appears to be the case here as well. Eleven women in this sample remarked on childhood interests and hobbies that they believe to be relevant to their career. Five mentioned these experiences as a direct reason for entering this occupation as an adult.

> Respondent 06: "Going back to when I was a child, my, what I've always loved to do was puzzles and codes. So that was always part of what I always did, like as the block snoop and stuff like that . . . a lot will take you back to that period, to where, 'Oh God. We did puzzles endlessly' . . . ."

Mystery books such as Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys, and books by Cherry Ames and Trixie Belden were a favorite way to pass the time.

> Respondent 17: "I grew up reading, and I guess I was weaned on Nancy Drew, and I remember one vacation we took . . . my dad, uh, was transporting a Winnebago back to Michigan or somewhere, and we drove cross country and I found, stuffed in the pocket, of, you know, the seat pocket, whoever had it before us had these old pulp detective, uh, magazines. The cheesy ones, you know, on the crappy paper and I just sat and I just, and they were gross, and all made up stuff I'm sure, I just, I just devoured them."

Similarly:

> Respondent 19: "When I was a kid, I loved to read, and I read every Cherry Ames and Trixie Belden book in existence, and I don't know if you're familiar with those. Cherry Ames was a nurse, oh, uh, I think these books were written back in the twenties, and, but she was a detective. She was always solving mysteries. And the Trixie Belden series were a bunch of kids in their early teens who did the same thing. You know, the Trixie Belden series was this, was the girl version of the Hardy Boys . . . . I inhaled those books. So I, you know, thinking back on it, I always laugh."

Footage in the media provided images of law enforcement, giving early exposure to roles

involving authority and toughness.

> Respondent 02: "Professionally, I have been a licensed private investigator, for going on six years . . . but I have been dabbling in it since the age of twelve . . . I've always been curious about investigation, and you know, growing up watching Cops and stuff like that."

Three, however, indicate that they were more or less born to be a private investigator.

> Respondent 15: ". . . . My momma said one year when they went skiing that I found her literally on top of the mountain. Somehow I managed to call up there and track her down, and her and her friends used to say, 'All grown up, your child is going to be an investigator. One of these days, I know she is . . .'"

Similarly:

> Respondent 20: "I knew that's what I wanted to do and actually if you would have asked me at eight years old, what I wanted to be, I would have told you, private detective . . . "

For some, these early experiences may have made a lasting impression (5), and were given as

the reason behind their career choice.

> Respondent 06: "I went through the divorce and then immediately had major back surgery, where, I like, for six months I couldn't do anything but lay in a bed. So, as you're thinking about all the things that you love to do . . . and I realized that I now really had to work hard, not just go to school and do the things I'd been doing, or take part-time jobs in museums, that I really needed, uh, an income, what would I want to do, and it was just an obvious choice for me to do this."

One chose to participate in her own investigation when becoming a licensed PI was not

something she was considering.

> Respondent 02: "I had a situation, um, while I was going through a divorce, my now ex-husband took my son at the age of a year and two months old and I didn't see my son 'til he was four and, um, when I would call my ex-in-laws and stuff, nobody knew where he was, and everything, and I spent fifteen hundred dollars, hired a private investigator that got me nowhere. Um, so I just started doing more investigative work on my own and located my son and won custody of my son, and come to find out, it was rather easy. I just decided to make a career out of it . . . . [but] it came later. Um, actually, it came down to, I needed a job. I had just got laid off, um, from a position that I was

working at, at a car dealership, and Tennessee has a 'no reason to fire' law, and, um, so I lost my position, and, um, needed to support my family . . . ."

For one PI in particular, there was direct exposure to private investigation during young

adulthood.

> Respondent 17: "He started his own investigative firm and he, by virtue of having been well-known in the Bureau, he got a lot of really, like, the biggest attorneys . . . became his clients. And, um, when I was in college and right out . . . . I worked for my father, and he's the one who really taught me how to dig and find stuff. My dad would take me to court with him for famous cases, and he took me to the Manson trial and he took me to the Sirhan trial, the guy that killed Bobby Kennedy, so I, I just was, from the bottle, I was into this stuff."

Three other respondents had a significant other who was involved in investigation or in the

military at the time that they obtained their license. This gave them direct contact with

someone in a male-oriented occupation. In fact, for two of the women, these men were a

gateway into PI work.

> Respondent 05: "I was dating a gentlemen who was a private investigator, and he did primarily bounty hunting, and whenever he had anything involving a female, he tried to arrange it so he could do it either at night or on weekends, so I could be with him. 'Cause he didn't want to do women alone. Just for the fear of being sued or something, or having false allegations made against him, and that went on for quite a few years and then one day . . . when we got in the car, [he] threw this book at me, and I said, 'What's this for?' He says, 'Well, while I'm driving, you start studying,' and I said, 'Why?' He says, 'Because I want you to take the PI exam.' I said, 'Why?' and he says, 'Well, because you've had enough hours in. You're legally qualified. I'll certify your hours and I want you to get a PI license.' I said, 'Ok, fine. What the heck?'"

For one, her husband has been forced to delay retirement:

> Respondent 16: "My husband . . . he's in military and he had always wanted to open his own agency . . . and, um, he was planning on retiring and running it himself, and, but wasn't able to retire . . . so three more years 'til he retires . . . so I've been kind of, um, indoctrinated by fire, for lack of a better word. Uh, it wasn't my career of choice, I just kind of happened into it . . . ."

In addition, seven others knew someone who was already working as a private investigator before they decided to obtain their license. Two were employers/supervisors and the other five were platonic relationships. In five of these cases, these relationships had a direct impact on the respondents' decision to enter the occupation. For instance, one woman was hired as a typist for a female PI and was asked to help on a case.

> Respondent 03: "When I got out of law enforcement, I started an at-home typing business, like, you know, with a type writer . . . and just by weird coincidence, um, my first five or six major clients were private investigators and one of those people, after, you know, me doing some word processing for her for a little while, one day she desperately needed someone to go out and do some interviews and sent me. And that was it."

A second PI was asked by her former training officer to join his business.

> Respondent 01: "It was kind of sheer luck. I had been a police officer . . . and one of my training officers quit and started a PI business and asked me to come to work for him, and I did . . . As a law enforcement officer, I wasn't at it very long, and it was just in patrol, which I found very boring and in the private sector, I had a chance to really go out and interact with people. Both in criminal defense and civil litigation work."

Two had a friend suggest that they become a PI to assist them in their work.

> Respondent 11: "I had a friend that was doing it and I was going through a divorce and she said, 'You need to do this with me,' and I worked with her for a year before I got licensed."

Also:

> Respondent 26: "We had a friend that had the business in Sacramento and San Francisco, and they wanted somebody to start it here, and so they conned me into doing [it] and so they were, they had built in business, is I guess what I'm telling you. They, they talked us into starting the business 'cause they already had some, you know, that they needed someone down here anyway."

These two PIs were not directly influenced by their contacts to enter the occupation. However, when they made the decision to apply for their license, they relied on their acquaintances for training. For example:

Respondent 20: "We were really, um, litigating civil claims at the time and I really got, wanted to do this, and I had a friend who owned a detective agency, and, um, you know, she said that, you know, I could come over and work for her. She couldn't pay me what the law firm was doing, so I agreed for the training, on-the-job training, and worked for less money, and I left the law firm and I went to work for her detective agency."

Out of twenty-six respondents, seven had a relationship with someone who was a PI. Four

others also received encouragement whether it was advice from a friend, or an offer for a job.

Respondent 18: "I was parked in the middle of a median, five feet away from the road. This guy came, and my car was stopped, turned off, the guy came off the road and hit me at sixty miles an hour and shoved my van twenty feet. It injured four vertebrae in my back and my neck. Um, so I had to find a job I could do sitting down. So, one of my friends suggested I take a course and go in to do PI work, since I already had enough background for it. So that's what got me into it."

Additionally:

Respondent 07: "I worked a year for an attorney and then started my own company . . . Working, here in California, working for an attorney, you don't have to have a PI license, and, um, that's what he was talking me into getting. Going for my PI license and then getting my own business."

In two of these cases, the respondent already had some measure of anticipatory socialization,

from a boyfriend and from a father found in the discussion above.

Respondent 17: "Journalism is going down the toilet, all over the country, and especially so in Los Angeles . . . because of the internet, we, you know, all the studies show, and . . . . I had some ethical problems with a couple of the editors where I was working, that I was just not going to compromise myself and I decided that I wasn't. I was white, I was fifty-four and I don't speak Spanish. I wasn't going to get a better job in L.A. And I'm married and have a house, and I can't just leave, and I was kind of moaning and groaning and my friends[,] . . . some of them are lawyers, they said 'You're already doing it, just go back and do what you did with your father,' and a light bulb went off. I went, 'Oh my God, I could do that.' So, I, um, talked to a few of the lawyers that I had gotten to know pretty well from covering them for years and that I'd known, a couple of them I knew through my dad, and they all said, 'You know, we'll hire you tomorrow. There's a need for women. You can do it. We know your work,' and, and I thought, 'Well if I pass the test, I'm going do it,' and I did, and I did. And now all my friends that are in journalism are losing their jobs. Everyday there's lay-offs. It's horrible. So it was a smart move at the time."

Another, whose husband is in the military, performed an amateur investigation as a favor for a

friend, and subsequently obtained her license.

> Respondent 24: "I actually fell into it. I had a friend who got into trouble with her landlord and the landlord said he had fixed all of these things that were wrong with the house after she moved out, and we knew he hadn't and I went to the house, talked to the new residents. They let me in. They let me take pictures. I got statements from everybody. I took it to her lawyer, started talking to the lawyer and he said, 'Wow, do you want a job? Get licensed. You're hired,' so, and I went, 'Oh ok.'"

It seems that the exposure during childhood and early adulthood may set the stage for

an interest in investigation later in life. There were also two cases where the respondents

carried out an investigation. This later influenced their decision to join this profession. It could

be argued that a more powerful influence would be a connection with someone who is in either

private investigation or is in a male-oriented occupation. Suggestions made by friends and

acquaintances also served as stepping stones for licensure. One point should be made though.

Of the four who received a suggestion from someone who was not an investigator, those four

all had some kind of previous socialization.

In her study, Martin (1980) found that the previous work experience of her respondents

had an effect on their degree of socialization into police work. Those in her sample all had jobs

in white collar occupations and none had been in the military (Martin 1980). In contrast, eight

of these participants had been employed in police work or the military in some form before

they entered the occupation. One of these worked as a probation officer and had been doing

child predator work before becoming an investigator.

> Respondent 21: "[I] worked as a probation officer. I really liked the investigating part of it, when I was in college and as an intern, and then I just got involved in some online predator work, where I was, um, trying to catch, uh, predators that were going after children online, as a volunteer, and then I realized that I had, you know, I was back at, at

this thing I loved so much, investigating. Then, so, that's how I got started. I realized that I could do this."

Four other women had a background in public policing.

> Respondent 25: "I was a police officer. I was a road officer for eight and a half years, patrolled, and then . . . I was hired by a prosecutor's office and worked there for the remainder of my twenty-five years. Um, promoted to sergeant worked in the child abuse, sex crimes unit. Actually, worked pretty much every unit . . . . It was time to retire. I had my twenty-five years [in the police force] and, uh, it's really what I know and what I felt I'd do best."

One former officer worked only on sting operations.

> Respondent 03: "I started out working as a records clerk, and, um, they were looking for volunteers that wanted to, you know, work undercover narcotics, and without thinking, I went, 'Oh, I will!' So they put me through the police academy, and sent me out, you know, to do undercover narcotics work. Yeah, that's all I ever did, I never worked patrol or anything else."

One PI was told she should get into law enforcement because of her skill set, but she chose

otherwise.

> Respondent 04: "When I went to college, I took a bunch of aptitude tests, and they all said that I should be, like, in law enforcement. But, I knew law enforcement wasn't my thing, so I was like, 'Ok, not gonna happen,' but . . . I started thinking about it, and I was like, well, I love everything on there, um, and then I started doing collection work . . . and I was like, 'This is what I like to do' . . . . I had no law enforcement experience. I just was a, um, I worked for a collection company in college. That, that basically was the same thing. I located people."

This provides possible evidence of the similarity between the job of police officer and private

investigator. Besides those who were employed in public policing (5), four respondents had

military experience.

> Respondent 12: "I always wanted to do it, since I got out of the military."

One PI had both police and military experience.

> Respondent 01: "I had law enforcement [experience], I had military [experience] . . . both as a military police officer and a journalist in the military."

Those who were in law enforcement (5) fell into two categories. Two worked in a variety of units within their respective departments and two had a very limited law enforcement career. One only worked a year in policing and one was trained to only work in an undercover capacity. Those in the military tended to be very specialized (navy cryptologist, military journalism/military police, and graphics specialist/medical specialist). However, one was an army officer. When asked about their work history, four participants mentioned other occupations that could be viewed as "men's jobs" (apartment maintenance, forklift operator, self-employed in construction as painter and new construction site clean up). These would provide a good foundation for future male-oriented occupations. This is a decidedly different trend from Martin's (1980) sample respondents who held none of these characteristics. Thus, it seems those who enter PI work may have received more exposure to this occupation before they became licensed.

Having exposure to policing, as well as military work may have provided adequate contact with a male-oriented occupation, giving them experience that may be crucial to their investigative careers. The job positions mentioned by these women appeared to include duties that in some ways parallel private investigation. Many of the skills used in police work such as the use of standard investigation procedures and interviewing were listed as valuable assets. Police work also allows numerous opportunities for one to become skilled at reading people.

> Respondent 07: "[Police work] gives you the experience to, um, um, to be able to judge character and whether or not somebody's lying to you, the cues that they give, if, you know, if they're not being truthful. So, that does help. All of that experience, and I think you can . . . some people do naturally have that, but if, if you don't, let's see that you've lived a pretty protected life, um, and you're not going to have that until you actually get out and are lied to, and, um, you know, can develop that."

The interviews by these PIs while in law enforcement have had an effect on their interviewing

technique now.

> Respondent 25: "My forte was child interviews. I also have been able to obtain
> confessions from sex offenders when I, you know, did the investigations with the
> prosecutor's office, so I had a pretty [high] arrest rate with that, um, so I think my forte
> is listening to people, um, and, and getting to things."

Additionally:

> Respondent 01: "Well, ten years of social services of interviewing people and military
> police as a journalist being trained to interview and write. Those definitely have lead to
> my interviewing skills, as an investigator."

In police work, women can learn to feel comfortable dealing with unnerving situations.

> Respondent 03: "I would say, probably . . . interviewing techniques, and, um, not being
> afraid to approach people and ask them questions, you know, some people are just kind
> of nervous about asking questions. Oh, I'll just walk in anywhere."

Being familiar with the technical process of this kind of work makes it easier to adapt quickly to

PI work.

> Respondent 25: "Um, I think what's very valuable is the fact that I, when I do do an
> investigation, I know what I'm doing, and I know how to go about, you know, and attack
> it. I know what I should be looking for, uh, I know how to write a report, I know how to
> take a statement. So, those are all things that I got, you know, from my past life."

The time spent in the military also provides valuable practice for work within a male-oriented

occupation. Four women had this experience. These positions provided job skills that proved

beneficial later on.

> Respondent 18: "A lot of the research we do . . . . Being able to shoot is always a good
> thing, because, you know, you really want to protect yourself, you know, if it became
> necessary. The attention to detail always comes in, into play with anything. It's making a
> lot of time to pay attention to every little tiny detail."

Those previously holding policing and military positions (8) may be better prepared for the

physical and emotional demands of private investigation than those in white collar may or

service industry occupations may. This is due to exposure to intense training sessions and work

environments.

> Respondent 12: "Being in the military, uh, took a lot of fear away. You know, I'm
> comfortable in any neighborhood. Basically, I don't really have that that fear. I respect
> danger, but I don't really have that fear."

Though there were those who had military and/or police experience (8), the majority of

the respondents were similar to Martin's (1980) participants. Many (14) described a varied

work history, with many white collar or service industry occupations (car dealership service

representative, counselor at treatment center, public relations, bill collection, and journalism[3]).

As the women in this sample were recounting their experiences, it became apparent that

socialization into private investigation intersected with previous job experience. While some

occupations were more helpful, most (17) felt that their jobs prepared them for PI work. Many

of the skills required for the job include writing reports, interviewing, physically locating

individuals, locating information, either physically or on the internet, and doing emotional

work.

> Respondent 11: "I think Sprint helped a lot because I worked in a call center in customer
> care and repair, so we talked with a lot of people, all day, basically, I was just on the
> phone handling complaints, and customer issues and things like that. But now what I do
> is, you know, pretty much all day I talk to people, interviewing and, you know, people
> aren't always happy about it . . . ."

Additionally:

> Respondent 02: "I had to work with the general public a lot when I worked for the
> dealerships and got the customer service relationship, and [I learned] how to deal with
> people and how to treat people, and how to read people as well. That helped me
> become a better investigator, with surveillance, interviewing people, interviewing
> clients . . . ."

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[3] For a full list see Appendix D.

Prior employment may also help in running one's business.

> Respondent 23: "As far as accounting, because of working for other companies, and what I always said is seeing how the big boys ran their companies, you know. It helped me with, uh, running my companies. You know, and, it, you can't just have a checking account and pay your bill and make sure people pay you. There's more involved in running a company."

> Here, we find one trend that could prove to be significant. Seven respondents worked as

a paralegal or pretrial investigator. This job seemed to be the greatest socialization agent for

the occupation, second to military and policing. It appears that the job skills used in paralegal

and pretrial investigation is very similar to that in PI work.

> Respondent 08: "I was in the legal field for about thirty years and much of what I did as a paralegal, legal assistant was doing investigations. I was required to do research, prepare legal documentation, uh, you know, locate witnesses that type of thing, and it intrigued me. Um, I did it for years and years and years and decided after so many years to just branch out on my own and do it as a private investigator."

For two paralegals, their licensing came because of problems they encountered when accessing

certain data.

> Respondent 15: "Actually, through doing my paralegal stuff, and finding that there were a lot of the things they wouldn't give me without a license, and I might as well just keep going, so I finally decided to break down and get my license."

Bill collection may also a valuable precursor to investigations. Two PIs had worked in this

occupation.

> Respondent 09: "Before I was an investigator, I was a bill collector, which gave me the basis, and it's a lot of tracking down information . . . and I just had a knack for tracking people down. That is a form of investigation, and when you can, I've tracked people down all over the world, and out of the country . . . and I just, it was just sort of an instinct."

Law enforcement and military experience were very common in this sample (8). Though these

occupations are dissimilar in function, they may be similar in technique, thus socializing these

women into the skills of a private investigator. In bill collection (2), locate work makes up a

significant part of that job. This is a technique that is useful when trying to find individuals for

legal proceedings, such as those who have witnessed a crime and have moved to another place.

Paralegal and pretrial work (7), aside from law enforcement and public policing, also seems to

mimic many of the skills needed in PI work. Research, interviewing, documentation, and

analysis are each found in this legal occupation. There seems to be a significant connection

between anticipatory socialization and a female's decision to enter the occupation. Seven other

females entered PI work as a result of encouragement from others. Six knew or were exposed

to someone who was in private investigation and the seventh was a lawyer. Thus, it appears

that anticipatory socialization does not appear to be a significant barrier for female PIs as it is

for females in public policing.

However, one final issue salient to these findings is that of career turning points. Many

stages in a career are anticipated, such as a physician moving from an active medical practice to

administrator (Hughes 1955; Strauss 1968). Then there are events, which are unexpected, such

as war or recession that can end one's current career trajectory (Hughes 1958). This is also the

case for these respondents. Several respondents simply moved from one occupation to private

investigation (9). Their decision did not come because of a particular event, it was more or less

something that they were interested in or "made sense" in terms of career transition. Their

occupations before PI work include bill collection (1), paralegal/pretrial investigation (7), law

enforcement (2), and genealogy (1). Three others entered retirement (1) or their current job

ended (2). Four met someone who encouraged them to join the profession. One was even

offered a job. The remaining respondents joined the occupation because of some external

event that more or less forced them to choose a new career (9). One woman became a PI

because her husband needed her to take over the business while he was away serving

unexpected military service. Four of these women were going through a divorce and needed

some way to support themselves, either as a primary occupation or as a supplement to their

original income. Three had an accident, were injured, or had surgery, which affected the kind of

job they could later hold. Lastly, one PI was fired from her job. Many of these women possessed

some kind of previous socialization for this occupation. If these incidents never occurred it is

unlikely that they would have relied on this socialization. As a result, these career turning points

play a strong role in the respondents' decisions to become a PI.

Licensing Requirements

The struggle one encounters when meeting licensing conditions is also important. In her

study (1980), Martin found that the training period in police work could be a very difficult one

for females, both through the experience of socialization into the occupation (having to fight

against the negative stereotypes regarding the female gender) and with satisfying requirements

that may be inherently more difficult for women (such as the physical training). Here the

structure of training is much different. There are no rules regulating physical ability. There is

only one state in this sample that requires a formal course. The length of probationary hours

depends on the individual's work and educational background. The requirements for obtaining

a PI license vary depending on the state. There are no national specifications. For Colorado,

Idaho, Mississippi, Missouri[4], South Dakota[5], and Wyoming[6] there are no state requirements for

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[4] For Missouri, there are no statewide requirements (although it will be made mandatory in the fall of 2009), but the cities of Kansas City, St Louis, Joplin, St Joseph and Springfield require a license.
[5] In South Dakota, there is also no state licensing, but the Department of Revenue requires a business license.

licensing. Within the interview, each investigator outlined the conditions that she had to meet

in order to obtain her license. A few women (2) worked in states that had few formal

requirements (e.g., Arizona), or none at all (Missouri[7] and Mississippi). Seventeen respondents

were expected to complete a specified number of hours of supervised paid work before they

could work on their own (California, Florida, Louisiana, New Jersey, Oregon, and Texas).The

number of hours ranged in many states. Exams are also a common requirement (California,

Florida[8], Kansas, Louisiana, Oregon, Texas, and Tennessee). In this sample, Louisiana is the only

state that requires applicants to attend a formal course (which totaled forty hours). In all states

(except Mississippi), an application was necessary. The following requirements would be part of

this application. If an age requirement existed it was either 18 (Oregon, Texas, and Florida) or

21 (Tennessee). Background checks (California, Kansas, Oregon, Louisiana, Florida, Texas,

Tennessee, New Jersey, and Arizona), bonding (Oregon, New Jersey, and Kansas), and insurance

obligations (Oregon, Texas, and Kansas) were common. In some cases, there has to be proof of

citizenship (Tennessee, Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, and Oregon). One also must be without any

sexual offense charges[9], a history of mental illness[10], and/or a history of substance abuse in a

few states[11]. Occasionally, satisfying a certain number of continuing education hours is essential

(Oregon, Tennessee). In this sample, these hours ranged from 12 hours every two years for

Tennessee to 32 hours for Oregon.

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[6] In Wyoming, the local jurisdictions determine the licensing requirements.
[7] The investigator from Missouri worked in a city that had requirements, so she, in fact, obtained her license even though there are no state-wide regulations.
[8] The investigator from Florida did not have to take an exam because this condition was not enacted until after she obtained her license (January 1, 2008).
[9] Texas
[10] Florida, Kansas, Louisiana, Texas, and Tennessee.
[11] Florida, Kansas, and Louisiana.

Superficially, it may be much easier to get into private investigation compared to policing, though many women lamented certain aspects of their training. I will examine the existing requirements governing licensing. One tough stipulation was the exam. Among the investigators, illogical and confusing questions were common complaints (5).

> Respondent 07: "The test that I took, um, was just nuts . . . you have to know what the answers are because it's not common sense questions they give . . . you just wonder who put them together. And, you know, some of the questions that they ask, like, um, you know, 'If you're following someone, and you lose sight of them, do you make a right? Do you make a left? Do you turn around? Or none of the above?' You know, it's multiple choice questions. Well, you can't answer that question as it's presented because, um, you know, it depends on your conditions. You know, is it day or night? Are you in the city? In the country? There's, there's too many variables to, you know, give a correct answer, and a lot of questions were like that. They were just, um, just, uh, didn't make any sense."

Similarly:

> Respondent 24: "I mean . . . there was an actual question on my test for the state of Oregon that said, 'Do you commit the crime of harassment when you harass someone?' You know the answer's yes, but you still gotta think, is that a trick question?"

Others recognized the difficulty (2), but simply viewed it as something that had to fulfill in order to get their license.

> Respondent 01: "No, um, I had to take a test. In California, there's a test which has completely changed since when I was in it. But, the test is not easy , and I would say that almost everything I ever did up to and including this helped me with the test . . . At the time I just saw it as another test, like school. It wasn't something that I put a lot of weight in, other than I had to pass it."

For two others, the exam posed no problems at all.

> Respondent 12: "It's a joke. It's an absolute joke. A monkey could pass the test."

> Overall, it appears that though many found that the exam to be tough (7), it in no way impeded their progress into the occupation. Of course, this barrier does not apply to those

states where no exam is necessary. A second requirement that may be viewed as problematic is

supervised working hours. Seventeen were expected to meet this stipulation. Here, PIs must

work under another PI or a PI agency as part of their training. What they do during this time is

monitored and kept on record.

> Respondent 16: "So the company sponsored me, um, and for two years my work was monitored, and subsequent reports were sent up to the state to make sure I was fulfilling all of my obligations, and after the two year period, then I was able to get my, my investigator license."

To get to their provisional hours, PIs have to actively find an agency that would take them on as

a new hire.

> Respondent 14: "You have to find an agency that will be willing to let you work under them, before you can, you know, uh, get a license. I mean, you get your license, but you have to be able to have someone. You can't just go and get one. You have to be working with an agency."

This was not always an easy task.

> Respondent 18: "What I did was, my kids and I kind of did a team work thing and add up my resumes and put 'em in envelopes and sent them out to about three hundred agencies . . . I went online and looked up the agencies and just went down the line."

If you do not know anyone in the business this could create an obstacle (15).

> Respondent 22: "I took the forty hour class, and then I just started calling everybody that was in the phonebook, and I got a hold of Mary and I told her I didn't know anything, but that I wanted to be a private investigator, and that I had taken the classes and had passed my test, and I, I did not, I didn't know the first thing about it after taking that test."

The difficulty is finding someone who will be willing to take the time and effort in training new

PIs. Because of the lack of formalized training, skills are learned on the job. Agency owners may

not want to risk resources without being sure of a new PI's dedication.

> Respondent 23: "I'm not going to hire someone under my agency, with absolutely no experience unless they're ready to eat, sleep, live and breathe it . . . ."

On the other hand, many (12) were able to use contacts to get their hours. As discussed in an

earlier section, those who were encouraged to get into investigation by other PIs or attorneys

worked for those who made the suggestion.

> Respondent 16: "Because my husband's career put him eligible to get his license in his company, when you own a company then you sponsor an intern, so I actually came into the company as an intern . . . ."

Those who have police experience or time in the military (8) may have an easier time getting

into investigation. Many states, like Florida and California, allow one's police career to satisfy

the work hours needed for a license.

> Respondent 25: "In the state of New Jersey, the requirements that they had, is that you have to have had police experience, or five years working for a licensed investigator, so the police experience automatically got me my license."

Additionally:

> Respondent 07: "[The police experience] makes it easier to, uh, have the investigative hours, because they require in California 6,000 hours of, uh, investigative work before you can apply for your license and then you take the test . . . I can't say that the, um, background in police work helped for the test, because it was completely unrelated, but, um, the, it was much easier for me to go and apply for it, because I had the hours behind me already, and most people starting out in the private sector, you know, for private investigation, if they are not, um, say they don't have MP, military, uh, background, or police background, then they have to work for another private investigator to gain those 6,000 hours."

Those who spent time on the force (5) may be viewed as fully trained, because of their

experience in active duty as well as a familiarity with the law.

> Respondent 23: "If you were law enforcement, you could obtain your agency license, by just taking the test. Now, why that is, I have yet to, to understand, but I think it's because of law enforcement, they feel has the background with the, with the laws."

In some states[12], a specific college degree may also reduce the working hours.

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[12] Florida and Oregon

Respondent 03: "In California, you have to have 6,000 hours working under a licensed investigator. Plus, you have to pass a background check and you have to take a test, have to pass the state test. If you have a bachelor's degree in like criminal justice, or police science, then they take off 2,000 of the required hours, so you need 4,000 hours."

While working under someone else's license, PIs do not necessarily have the luxury of choosing the clients. They work the cases that they are given. Some agencies may take advantage of this situation and overwork PIs.

Respondent 18: "The boss told you what to do and you did it. You don't get to pick and choose until you're actually an agency owner . . . . The agencies, the turnover is, uh, pretty fast because they're basically PI mills, they use 'em up and burn 'em up and, you know, kind of toss 'em to the side, kind of thing. Um, I know of two agencies like that that are tough to work for, you know, or three, you know, that, uh, they, they pretty much, you know, they have little concern about the actual PI as much as they do, let's get, get out there, get this job, get these done fast, fast, fast, you know, to the point where a person gets burned out . . . I don't think they couldn't handle it, but, you know, the companies would say, you know, 'Oh we've got all this work,' and they'd send them out for like two months, they'd be doing all these cases, and then all of a sudden nothing, you know. But, uh, most PIs persevere, you know, the, 'Well, this agency isn't working out, so let's go to another one.'"

This respondent felt wronged by seemingly discriminatory practices by a few male agency owners.

Respondent 18: "Well, this one, uh, gentleman that I moved halfway across the country to work for has only given me three hours of work in three months, but I, 'cause there's a lady PI agency here that, she's given me a great deal of work, you know, and I'm thankful for that because that helps pay my bills and rent . . . . Men have a tendency to give the majority of the jobs to other male investigators because they quote, 'Oh, they have families to raise.' Well they don't stop to think that, you know, single mothers, especially if you have handicapped kids. I have three handicapped kids here, so, that I support, you know, and a lot of male employers don't consider that, you know, that some women are the sole breadwinners. You know? And they have families to take care of too. They don't take that into consideration and generally in the investigative world, men give men the first opportunity to the best jobs and, you know, the best work. And I've seen that with every male agency I've ever worked under."

A second PI refused to take a job because of one agency owner.

Respondent 23: "I mean, when I started in '84 . . . and I remember interviewing with an investigator, but I can't remember who he was, and you have to remember I had

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already worked two agencies . . . . Back then, we didn't charge but twenty-five [dollars] an hour 'cause we could pay someone to help us as an assistant minimum wage or five dollars an hour, you know, which was more than minimum wage back then, I'd have to even look, look and see what minimum wage was back then . . . But when I interviewed . . . that's what they wanted to pay me was five bucks an hour. I laughed at 'em. I totally laughed at 'em and I said, 'You've got to be kidding.' I said, 'I probably know more about this, this business than you do.' I said, 'One of these days . . . remember this name . . . .'"

For one, her conflict comes not from male investigators but from attorneys. All of the

respondents work with lawyers in some capacity. For some, attorneys are their only clients (9).

> Respondent 19: "I mean when I started, I had, I'll never forget one attorney. He wouldn't use me. He flat out would not use me. In spite of the fact that I had done work for him, and I had done good work under the gentlemen who had originally trained me. Okay? But he wouldn't specifically hire me when I got my own license because I was female."

This appeared to be confined to three cases. In private investigation, it seems that the quality of

their training is based on what and how many cases they receive.

> Respondent 10: "You took whatever came along because you had, for court, you had no choice as to who gets arrested . . . . Our contract was to take anybody and everybody that was eligible to go before the judge for arraignment."

Out of the requirements, exams and probationary hours were the trickiest issues among

respondents. Yet, other stipulations may create speed bumps.

> Respondent 04: " . . . You needed recommendations (laughs) . . . somewhere between three and five people that have known you ten years or longer, and depending on your age . . . that was kind of hard for me, to find people that had known me, um, and, and, I think it, somehow, it was worded they had to know you really well. Like maybe [they] had at least weekly contact or something with you, um, and it couldn't be friends or relatives . . . so that part was the hardest for me . . . ."

Finally, continuing education is a condition for the renewal of a PI license. It is unavoidable

because of the fluidity of the laws regulating private investigations.

> Respondent 10: "You have to have some way to keep up with, you know, changing regulations, and this and that."

A change in certain laws may affect a whether or not someone can bring a case against

someone else. Not knowing about these changes may be detrimental for an investigator.

> Respondent 23: "And you have to keep abreast of it . . . . I mean, each year you have to kind of watch, you know, what laws are passed and all that, that could affect your, you know, your profession. Because back then, if you caught someone cheating, you got alimony until the day you died or remarried, and then, you know, um, representatives and senators and all that got smart and said, 'Oh, we need to change this,' and that's how law gets changed, you know. Um, it's changed several times even in the last fourteen years . . . ."

> Thus, those who have had some variation of socialization beforehand may be at an

advantage when it comes to the ease of movement into the occupation (16). For a majority,

formal requirements were compounded, where several provisions have to be met (23). Having

to meet multiple conditions may make it harder for women to get into the occupation.

Conversely, women who have fewer obligations to fulfill may still be at a disadvantage. Those

who do not have to undergo any supervised job training, nor take an exam (3), may start their

career farther behind those who do. Their foundation is much more tenuous.

> Respondent 05: "You've got these idiots out here. Ninety percent of the people that are licensed . . . don't have a clue what they're doing. They don't know anything about the laws. They don't stay on top of them and they're the most incompetent people I've ever seen in my life."

One's career may be even more at risk if they do not have previous socialization from similar

occupations (law enforcement, military, pretrial investigations, bill collection).

> Respondent 06: "My training was hit the road running, yeah, it, it was very scary the day I opened. Um, I knew how to do background screenings and all of that for my work . . . but basically, everyone who runs a business knows how to run a background search, um, but I hadn't, hadn't worked with the professional databases. I hadn't, so I took a lot of courses . . . I got self-trained really fast and I also got a mentor."

Thus, those who had no formal training requirements (4) sought training and assistance from

other investigators.

Respondent 21: "I've gone to, uh, taken a seven hour surveillance, took one, um, took one online, and on the, like, they call it a teleconference, uh, and, uh, counter surveillance, which is like bug sweeps and stuff like that, and I've studied books, read . . . things like that . . . ."

Some relied on experts in their field to receive case-by-case guidance (12).

Respondent 04: "I just did what they call continuing ed[ucation], I might seek out, like an expert in missing persons, and I might retain them or hire them to give me kind of a run-down and, so, I can have a file on missing persons. So if I have an assignment . . . I can be qualified and that kind of thing."

Not only does a dearth of training affect the implementation of an investigation, an investigator can also miss a chance to discover the area in which they want to specialize. Thus, at the beginning of their career, time is spent figuring out what they want to do.

Respondent 04: "Formal training back when I was licensed, you didn't need any . . . . [but] I was very, um, diligent about doing a lot of continuing ed[ucation], or, um, you know, education classes into different aspects of investigation. Since I didn't know what I wanted to specialize in necessarily."

In PI training, few formal requirements may allow for better movement of females into the occupation. Even though it may be easy to become a PI, it does not guarantee success on the job. No formal training may hurt them in the long term. Other requirements such as the exam appear to present little resistance for women. Yet, education level could be related to this. Everyone in this sample had some college education and consequently, some experience in taking tests. Previous experience in the military and law enforcement do not provide much assistance with an exam due to the difference in laws governing this occupation. A formal course is only required in Louisiana (in this sample) and it appears that this is an opportunity for women to become socialized into the occupation by the "macho" storytelling of male instructors. This requirement does not appear to be structurally disadvantageous. On the other

hand, there are only four women from Louisiana, so that its significance may be hard to ascertain and should be marked for later research.

Supervised working hours are a possible hurdle. The hardship will be for those who do not have any contacts in the business. Those who know someone in PI work are going to be at a much greater advantage. Some PI businesses may not want to risk time and resources on individuals without knowing their level of commitment. Law enforcement and military experience is very helpful when gaining provisionary hours. Those who had this background were able to use their previous careers to satisfy these hours (5). In addition, education and specific degrees may also fulfill this requirement. Thus, education, again, plays an important part in determining who enters this occupation.

Obtaining one's license may relate to one's life stage. This could influence women in the general population who would consider this as a potential career. A few women became PIs as single mothers (6). Women who have small children, or who are single mothers may recognize the amount of time this training may take and choose not to contemplate the job any further.

Finally, there may be requirements in the application that may create hurdles. For women, lacking a solid work history that would provide salient references for a new occupation may present a problem. Financial capital could provide further trouble. Application and licensing fees can run into the hundreds of dollars range. Some women may not have the extra cash to pay for this. For instance, single mothers who are on a restricted budget and may need quick access to a salary or wage.

Mentoring

When we examine hardships that women face, we find that many look to mentoring to assist in their learning experience. If the training is inadequate, or the requirements as a whole are defunct, then there needs to be some other element keeping these women afloat. This appears to be accomplished through mentorship. Indispensible knowledge can be learned from working with someone who has been in the business for a long time.

> Respondent 13: "Absolutely, anybody can get a license, but that doesn't mean you can be a private detective, you know? You've got to know what you're doing in order to do it, and if somebody is looking for somebody from twenty years ago, well, where do you start? You've got to have somebody teach you, you know, how a real investigation goes. So absolutely, I think that mentoring under somebody is absolutely, incredibly necessary."

Eleven respondents actively searched for someone who would act as their mentor.

> Respondent 06: "The first thing I did was approach somebody I respected in the field. He turned me down and I said, 'You don't understand. You can't turn me down.' You know, and, and I met him for lunch, paid for his lunch, and we'd get together at least once a week in the beginning, then twice a month, and then every, you know, and then once a month and then eventually I didn't need him anymore."

Mentors are a direct source, telling a rookie what to do and why. Many women take on the job unaware of the level skill that it takes. Six of the respondents echoed this sentiment.

> Respondent 19: "Like with surveillance, you can't just go out there and do the job. You're going to end up constantly losing someone or constantly burning, what we call, you know, 'burning the subject,' which means that they become aware of the fact that you're following them. Um . . . you need to learn how to use video equipment . . . so you need someone to teach you . . . . Nothing, um, beats on the job training and experience."

With a mentor, they can work on their own, yet have someone on which to rely and eventually gain much-needed self-confidence.

> Respondent 06: "It gives you confidence, otherwise you're totally alone. And you have no one to get feedback from, you know, and so . . . I can say, 'Hey,' you know, 'You've been in business thirty-five years,' and, you know, 'You've brought your criminology

degree and all this. Am I doing the right thing?' And if he didn't feel I was on the right track he would say, 'Where do you think you should be going?' He wouldn't really give me the answer. I sort of had to develop the answer. . . .'"

Many PIs report on the rigidity of their mentors. They believed this to be advantageous (4).

Respondent 09: "I've had mentors where I'd write a report and, like, say it was for an investigation company that didn't have paper writers, and they'd yell at me and throw it back in my face, and I'd be so embarrassed, and I'd feel so beaten down. But at the end, you know, now I look back and I realize they did me a favor. They were harsh, but they did me a big favor . . . I learned by, by fire, if you will, by very tough, very perfectionist type of people. And it's very difficult because you feel, you know, beat down, but you realize, at the end of the day, it's the best way to learn."

Looking back, this was the best way for them to learn. Two even credited their mentors with

the longevity of their work.

Respondent 20: "It is a hard field. I don't know that I would have continued had I not had a mentor who encouraged me to broaden my horizons, um, to, to, he believed in education and, you know, and, uh, educating yourself in, you know, in seminars, and would send me all over to do stuff, to learn. I had one of those mentors who didn't, who, uh, who didn't, who wasn't afraid you were going to learn more than them and take their job, but he wanted his team to be the most educated they could."

In addition:

Respondent 15: "That's really what got me through . . . . I probably would have gotten so frustrated, I'm not sure that I would have kept going [without a mentor]."

Most women who had a mentor lauded the experience (16). In many cases, they still keep in

touch with those who provided guidance (7).

Respondent 02: "I still keep in contact with her, and . . . she's actually one of the ones that I worked with for the first six months, and, um, I started working with her and then, um, we just lived so far apart, I just went ahead and got my own company. But yes, we keep in very close contact and actually, you know, if I have a dilemma on a case, I will call her and run the scenario by her and just give her feedback and she does the same with me as well . . . It taught me to be very honest . . . to read people and be honest, even if it's brutally honest. Just tell them, 'This is the deal,' and, um . . . . she's very insightful and she's had over 30 years PI experience, you know, it's really helped me a lot."

One respondent is under the impression that mentoring is necessary for women but not for

men. She feels that because women are still a minority they may need extra support.

> Respondent 10: "I think that's invaluable [having a mentor]. I think you should have that. If you can't have it, [you should have] someone you can talk to, and particularly for women in investigations, because the field is still predominantly men . . . but women are becoming more and more involved in it and so yes, a mentor, is, is, it's really is invaluable, I would say."

In addition, having a female mentor may be more beneficial than having one who is male.

> Respondent 14: "It's very important for men or women, but yes, women, it is, it is very important. And I guess, I guess, if you could have, um, like a female mentor that would help too, to give you more, um, help, depending on what type of investigative work you're going to be doing, you know, they could have a different insight into things [than a man would]."

A female may be able to give advice that is only relevant for female investigators.

> Respondent 18: "I would have preferred taking the training from a woman and not a man, because men really have no concept of what women investigators go through compared to men out in the field . . . surveillance for one. You can't just, I mean, men, if they've got to go to the bathroom, you're stuck on a eight hour surveillance, you cannot leave your subject, you know, you can't just step out of the car like men do and piss on the side of the road, you know?"

Others felt that guidance came not from a mentor per se, instead it came from those who

trained them (11).

> Respondent 10: "I wouldn't say it was anyone particular. It was my supervisors at the time, who were already trained investigators, and we did, you know, criminal, uh, criminal law. It was pretrial investigations that we did for the courts, so the only mentoring I had were my immediate supervisors at the time."

Those who work in legal investigation may be hired by numerous attorneys and may use them

for this benefit (6).

> Respondent 11: "The way it works for me is whoever, like, whoever I'm working for . . . luckily, like, I can always go to the attorneys and say, 'Hey, I'm not feeling comfortable with this,' or 'How should I be going about this?' Luckily, they're, they're always, of course, more than willing to help and tell you what to do or not to do, because it's their case . . . so, you know, they want to be involved in it. So I've always felt comfortable

going, and there's a couple of the attorneys that I'm really good friends with, so I can even call them if it's not their case, and say, 'Hey what do you think about this?'"

One woman, even though she had a mentor, did not seem to feel any attachment to him, nor did she appear to believe that this individual was particularly useful.

> Respondent 01: "Well, my training officer that had been a police officer who then brought me on in the private sector. He was certainly a mentor in criminal defense work. [But] I don't know if there's one particular anything that anybody's done, other than my own initiative . . . ."

Mentoring is a highly praised characteristic of this occupation. The majority of women felt that having a mentor offered them constructive training and experience (16). This support comes from family members, significant others, experienced PIs in PI groups, attorneys who employ investigators, or fellow investigators in their local area. When we examine the quantity and the quality of the training requirements, we begin to see the importance of mentorship. It can supply a female PI with a more meaningful education and go a long way to ensure their tenure in PI work. PIs that have female mentors may be given useful information and support that is specific to their gender. However, there does not appear to be any significant trends among women in this sample regarding mentoring. All respondents had some kind of mentor, whether it was one significant individual or a group of women that they looked to for support.

Mentoring, then, may be a gendered issue. This is a tricky issue on which to speculate, because there are no men in this sample. As this is a male-oriented occupation, it would imply that females would be more likely to look to mentoring for support.

On Their Own

Once licensing conditions are satisfied and licenses are granted, a new set of hurdles is met. The probationary hours can vary according to state, work history, and educational level.

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No matter whether one had more or less formal training, all respondents had to work to get

their business off the ground. Based on the respondents' experiences, hard work is crucial to a

PI career.

> Respondent 11: "You can look at . . . where we get licensed. You can go on that page, and look at all the investigators and their license and their license number and their expiration date, and it seems like we renew every two years, and I see lots of them that get their license and never work and then they just let their license go, you know, you have to get work somewhere, so they do something else. So, I do see that a lot, and I mean, it is a hard industry, it's hard to get into . . . but it's just work. I mean, like everything else, you just have to work at it."

Some (6) pointed out that new PIs do not realize how difficult it is to learn the job.

> Respondent 17: "I can tell by the mail I get on our listserv that a lot of people are struggling because, it's, because the economy, for whatever they specialize in, um, but, I, I do know that, I was just having this conversation with someone that other day, people watch too much TV and that think, 'Oh, I'll go be a private investigator. I just have to snoop around,' and they don't realize the training and the work and the skills that are involved, and I'm seeing a lot of emails from people saying, 'Oh, my nephew is a really smart kid, and,' like, 'does anyone want to take him on?' And, you know, it's, I just, I would discourage anyone to just dive in, never having had any experience . . . unless they're going to be taken under somebody's wing because it's not, you know, some TV, on some TV show."

Some look to other PIs for help, because they do not know what kind of cases on which they

want to focus (2). This uncertainty can be injurious to one's career.

> Respondent 04: "My first thing I did, personally, was I picked up the phone and called the state and talked to them about, you know, some of the bigger investigators in the state, and then I called them and took several people out to lunch. You know, that kind of thing, before I did much work . . . . It's kind of a tough start. I mean, I got kind of lucky . . . I took a bunch of people out to lunch, and I really picked the people that made a career out of it, that were ethical and honest, and all that. Um, I didn't waste a lot of time with people that had it as a second job, or, were retired law enforcement or whatever. Um, I really picked some great people and they kind of took my under their wing. Um, but it is a hard start, you have to figure out what you want to do."

Four respondents know individuals who started in PI work and are now no longer doing it, or

they are doing it as a supplementary career.

Respondent 04: "There's probably, when I started, probably about seventy percent are no longer in the business . . . . You have to be really ambitious, you know, you can't watch soap operas. When you're not working, especially in the beginning, you have to be marketing, you know? You have to be figuring out ways to get work. Um, and you can't just sit around and wait for the phone to ring, um, you know, it just doesn't work that way. It's just like anything. You have to be really, super ambitious . . . . I would say most people I started with are no longer in it, or no longer make a full salary at it. Some of them stayed in it and just, you know, pitter around with it in the evenings or whatever, after their day time job."

There are several factors that make PI work challenging, especially at the start of one's career.

One of the harder aspects is finding clients. Those who want to specialize in legal investigation

must work to get recognition from attorneys.

Respondent 11: "It was really difficult when I first started to, like, gain the trust, you know, to get in with the attorneys. That was probably was the most difficult thing . . . 'cause they're trusting you with all this confidential information. So that was probably the most difficult thing, that was the, probably, still is the hardest thing to, you know, get in with the new ones. Once you get established with, you know, I work for like sixteen of them now. It's a long time to really, you know, you can't just send them a card and they say, 'Hey, ok, work for me.' It's really hard to get into it."

Their cases come through of word-of-mouth between attorneys. They have to market

themselves until they develop a solid client base. This uncertainty can make rejection more

discouraging.

Respondent 19: "I hated cold calling and that's exactly what it takes. You have to, um, do the letters, uh, mail 'em out, and then you have to do follow-up calls, or you have to make the cold call. If they're willing to look at your background resume, you mail that out, but you still have to follow-up with a phone call. And I really hated doing that stuff so, um, it, you know, it, it was difficult for me. I didn't like doing it 'cause you, when you get rejected, you know, you can't take it personally but you always do."

Those who specialize in domestic investigation have to rely more on mass advertising (4). The

public tends to look to advertisements and sources such as local phonebooks, to find a PI.

Paying for general advertising can get expensive.

Respondent 23: "I've got several people parked 'cause they don't want to lose their license . . . . They paid for it and just because they don't do any work, doesn't mean they

can't have their license. You know, they can't, if they didn't have three years of experience, they couldn't get an agency license, so, you know. But, I've got probably two or three people right now that could easily open up their own agency if they wanted to, you know, but they see the headaches that I go through so they're, like, why should I open an agency? It would just cost me more money . . . . Having an agency is not just the agency name. You've got to advertise it. You know, you, you've got to have that business line, you know, of course, now, you can use any phone number there is and put a Yellow Page ad in. You know, so you've got to have that Yellow Page ad, and that Yellow Page ad gets expensive. I mean, I remember fourteen years ago, it was costing me a hundred and fifty dollars a month . . . Right now I'm paying over seven hundred dollars . . . but if I don't have that ad in there I know I'm going to lose business, because most people will tell me, you know, they either found me online, you know, whether it's the, the ad, the Yellow Page ad, or they've Googled it."

The time spent in this early, unstable stage can vary. For some it is only a few months, for others it can take several years to gain a steady client base (8).

Respondent 16: "When I talk to people about, you know, opening their own agency and going it alone, I always tell them, you know, prepare for at least three years of hungry times because I truly remember sitting in the office, like 'La-dee-da,' 'What am I gonna do now?' You know, I've filed. I've organized. The phone's not ringing, you know, so that's when you just have to market yourself. You start, you know, with the Yellow Pages, or, you know, the internet, or, um, the Chamber of Commerce meetings for your local city. Just always have a business card in your hand and a smile on your face, and just get out there and market, market, market."

Additionally:

Respondent 24: "When I very first started, I only worked with one attorney, but, yeah, you know, it was, it was because I didn't know business-wise what I was doing, and I was trying to learn in the process. So my, my, my business started on a very slow upswing . . . I'd say three years. Three years and I was, I was doing, I mean, my business continued to double, um, every year, and still, I mean, money-wise it still does, but I think it was three years that, that I was working pretty steady . . . ."

A few admitted to working another job while waiting for their PI business to take off (3).

Respondent 11: "Well, luckily I had another job, you know, I was a shelter manager and ran a shelter, and so luckily I had another kind of part-time paying job, but, yeah . . . it took, probably two or three years before, like, like now, I'm almost on my seventh year, so I don't worry about, 'Am I going to make enough money this month to pay my bills?' But it used to be, yeah, I'd worry, like, 'Oh my gosh, is anyone going to call me? Am I going to get another case this month?' But now, I'm kind of established, so I don't. You know? They just come, luckily, and I don't worry too much. And now, I kind of branched

out. Now I'm doing mortgage fraud investigations, interviews, different things like that now."

These women recognized the uncertainty of this occupation and do not want to risk being

without financial support for an extended period.

> Respondent 15: "It took a little bit of time before it caught up because I got my license and then I left the firm I was at a month later. [It] probably took all summer before things really started kicking in. Um, the first couple of years 'til I had my license, I actually worked for another law firm and did my PI stuff on the side. When I left them in '05, I just said, 'You know what? I'm gonna see how long I keep this going without having to go back to another attorney's office full-time . . . .'"

One PI was able to put a previously acquired skill sets to use for her business.

> Respondent 26: "When we first started, I actually, since my background was in PR marketing and sales . . . it isn't all that hard. The main thing was, um, I, I had a lot of really great, you know, PR and promo ideas and we just worked our tails off and it came together."

Those who remain committed may find out just how lucrative PI work can be.

> Respondent 04: "My initial thought was I would do pre-employment backgrounds, and, to supplement my, um, income. As it turns out, um, you know, I think within the first six months or so I was making more money doing investigations than I was doing, working for the school district. So I kind of revamped my way of thinking. And within a couple of years I quit the school district and just did investigations."

Acquiring a solid client base is an important first step in private investigation work. This can be

a great risk, particularly for the self-employed (22). They have more riding on their success. This

may make them more apt to seek help from others, as well as remain in an occupation before

committing fully to PI work. Next, I examine another possible hurdle for female PIs.

Competition increases the odds of one's failure in PI work. It makes getting assistance from

other PIs tough because of the rivalry between investigators.

> Respondent 21: "I had actually several times contacted other private investigator agencies and they never really would give me the time of day. I guess 'cause I was contacting people locally, and they didn't want competition . . . . "

Some fear getting involved with other PIs because of this state of affairs (5).

> Respondent 13: "[In criminal investigation] I think networking with other investigators is good thing, but I also hear from other investigators that it can be a real backbiting business. You know, everybody's worried that you're trying to take their client, you know, or things like that, so I haven't gotten real involved with anything like that."

The people they are competing with - former law enforcement - may complicate this. Ex-LEOs

are receiving money from their time in law enforcement, yet they are in competition for jobs

with those who were not in police work and thus, have no pension on which to lean.

> Respondent 26: "I think a lot of people are in a very different place than I am, because I don't have, uh, it, you know, most of the people I'm having to compete with are former law enforcement, males with pensions and they may have, you know, they were probably in the military and they've got B.A., and they got this, that, and the other thing going for them, and most of them, you know, married a nurse who either is still working and bringing home money or is retired also and has her pensions . . . ."

Three found that some investigators might be reluctant to train a new PI because of the fear

that the student will out-perform the teacher.

> Respondent 01: "You know, it's a business where ultimately, people who work for you get their own license and generally go off on their own. That's just the nature of the beast. Um, I'm not somebody who's ever been afraid of training someone, for them to go out and compete with me. Um, if I do my job right, I'm not going to lose work. If I don't do it right then it's my fault."

Several PIs worked in an area with little apparent competition and they were able to gain a

sense of fellowship and trust with other PIs (8). This ultimately is a benefit to the whole group.

> Respondent 07: "We had a group of PIs that worked pretty close together. If I needed something or if I had a case that, uh, I was too busy to handle I could call around and see if somebody else could help me out, and they would do the same or if somebody has a specialty in an area . . . . There was very little competition. We pretty much had it wrapped up there, and we had more work than we could do. And, you know, we even had to turn down, uh, clients and turn down cases because there's just, uh, there's not a lot of competition there."

Through networking, they provide jobs for one another as well as a place for support and

camaraderie.

Respondent 15: "There's a group of us that gets together every so often, in addition to work and stuff and into association meetings and stuff, that we go like out to lunch or stuff like that."

Additionally:

Respondent 16: "We're also very lucky to have some friends that we've met that also own their own agency, so it's great meeting and going lunch and chatting about different approaches. Um, sometimes, you know, when you're working a case and you can't seem to get the end result, you know, you're talking to another person, whether it's my husband, or an outside friend who, you know, is into the business, suddenly something might click in their eyes that can kind of change the direction of the investigation and ultimately give you the results that you're looking for."

These women face common issues faced when starting out. Opening an agency, much like any business, takes effort and many do not know what steps need to be taken. Thus, having this support may be a crucial part of PI work.

Respondent 07: "I know the problems that I had when I first started out, I didn't know what direction to go. I had one attorney that I was working for . . . I wasn't even sure how to do, how to do my bookkeeping, um, how to keep my records, because, um, I just had little file folder of cases that I did from him, and everything was retained in his office. So, now I'm on my own and it's, uh, not knowing what equipment to buy, um, and it, some of it was trial and error. I'd buy things that were just junk that didn't help me at all. And, um, once, you know, I could start, um, talking to other PIs to get their ideas on things . . . ."

Lower levels of competition in an area may make it easier to find support and consequently learn what it takes to do the job, because other investigators can be a fount of useful information.

Many who get into this occupation are not aware of the amount of work it takes to start a PI business. Establishing a client base can be a challenging task, especially if one is in an area where there is a high level of competition. Some worked second jobs while working on their PI business because of their need for stable income. Two of the three respondents who did this were single mothers. Those who have a law enforcement or a military background are generally

assumed to have a pension. They are believed to be the greatest competition due to this tacit position. Their presence adulterates the market. However, those who network with local PIs are able to gain support and tips on how to run their business successfully. Women who are not required to gain probationary may be at a disadvantage. They do not have a business model to emulate. They must start at the bottom and work their way up unless they possess relevant job experience. In addition, women may be turned away from this occupation when they find out how much work goes into building one's career. The amount of money one makes is based on the number of cases on which she works. The fewer the cases, the less she earns. Women, particularly single-earners, may want an occupation with greater monetary guarantees and may be discouraged from entering this occupation. Finally, long hours and job insecurity may not fit with familial responsibility.

Structure of Case Load

The amount of cases on which one is working can be different at any given time. As one PI pointed out, the origin of one's cases is much different in law enforcement. In police work, an officer/detective has their assignments waiting for them. In PI work, one has to be contacted and then hired. The caseload is not always steady, nor guaranteed.

> Respondent 06: "It's a very tough thing to do the first few years out, because, you know, you really, you don't have a steady income. It comes and goes with the market, and, um, so right now, I'm super busy, but there's, there's been weeks, even a month or two where maybe there was no jobs. So you know, it's kind of like, where's the next paycheck coming from?"

At the beginning of one's career, this pattern of instability is understood even expected, but it can be frightening for those who have their lives invested in their business.

> Respondent 23: "It's that up and down pattern, as far as the way the business runs. It's sort of feast or famine. You know, um, if you don't know how to budget and plan for

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those months that you may not have anything, you won't be in business very long. You know, I mean, I have been blessed that, uh, I have had means of being able to borrow to keep me afloat. And then, so far, knock on wood, you know, things have been going along pretty good. You know, where, um, don't, don't think I don't still get scared. You know? Because you do. But when I made up my mind that I wasn't going to go work a temp job, you know, or work here, or work there, you know, it was, like, I'm gonna dedicate myself to this business and jumped off that bridge. I just did it . . . ."

This unpredictability has become more significant in the past year due to the instability of the

economy.

Respondent 01: "In the economic downturn, I feel very fortunate 'cause, I have quite a bit of work and I see other people losing their jobs, and struggling, even other PIs that don't have enough work coming in for, I couldn't tell you why, maybe it's their specialty areas, or, I don't know. I've just always been told that there's plenty of work for the good ones."

The area in which a PI specializes is related to the volatility of those cases. Those who work

domestic cases (4) may see a drop in cases when the economy is suffering. For instance, paying

someone to check up on a significant other may not be an option when times are hard.

Respondent 26: "Just recently things are not as steady, and I still get business but it's, um, it's in fits and starts and I'm noticing a lot more people are, you know, calling up and discussing it and then chickening out, you know, or 'I changed my mind, I want my retainer,' and, you know, that kind of stuff, which never used to happen. So that's, that's been rather frustrating."

Similarly:

Respondent 23: "Domestic issues, you know, they're not just there, you know, people call you . . . . They may think about it. They may call, I may, I may talk to somebody today and they may not even, you know, come in to see me, or sign a contract for three months, you know? It depends on what information they have."

Corporate clients may be more financially sound. Those who have these clients may not feel as

great a pinch (9).

Respondent 16: "It really just runs all over, you know, some weeks we can be swamped and then some weeks we can, you know, have a breather. It just really depends. I will say that the economy, um, has impacted us, probably like every other type of company across the board. Um, and by that I mean, we used to have a much higher percentage of

individuals, you know, um, people from the neighborhood calling to set up appointments to, um, probably the majority is doing some type of surveillance, um . . . . But now, with the economy so bad, I don't think many people have that type of disposable income to take out fifteen hundred dollars and do that type of investigation. So, that's the one thing my husband and I were just commenting about is those individuals, um, type of investigations are, um, you know, far and few between now. You know, our corporate clients are still pretty much on the money, um, you know, and the only other, I guess, other sector would be, um, the tenant screenings for the real estate properties that we do. Um, when I speak to the office staff they, you know, nobody's qualifying, nobody's moving, nobody's doing anything so that market itself has gone down too."

Legal investigation may offer even more stability (5).

Respondent 11: "I like the criminal defense stuff because I, it's kind of a guaranteed work. I get paid by the Indigent Defense Fund, so I, I get an approval sheet from the attorneys, saying you have X amount of hours. As soon as I, you know, get my work done, I bill it. The state pays me within a week and I don't like the private, retained cases, because, you know, people don't want to pay you and you have to take them to small claims court."

Much like at the beginning of one's career, times may become hard enough to take up a second

job to supplement one's primary income.

Respondent 17: "I know that some people are struggling, and they have other skills that they're, you know, maybe they're a real estate agent, and they also have this license. They're, you know, going back and forth, balancing two or three things, trying to make it."

One PI even returned to work at a family-owned business.

Respondent 12: "It's too up and down. It's like the economy. You know, you just, you know, you can have six cases come in one week, and then for two months have nothing. So you can't count on it for a couple of weeks. You may make a ton of money, and then for the next couple of months you may not make a dime. So when you have that going on . . . that's why I started working back over here, 'cause we got real slow and I have a mortgage, and I want to stay in my house, you know?"

Though cases may not be steady, most are able to make enough money off individual cases to

support themselves (23).

Respondent 04: "Oh, it varies, but I never have to worry anymore. You know, I have probably every six months, something huge, and, um, to be honest, the money that I'll

make from the huge case is more than I would have made from a year, um, working at the school district. It's, you know, you'll have dry times where, you know, a couple of days go by and you go, 'Wow, I don't think I've gotten a new case in a couple of days,' but it doesn't matter 'cause you still have fifty open ones on your desk."

For others, they may be able to rely on their husband's income (10) if business falls short.

Respondent 23: "You can go through burnouts, you know, just like a nurse 'cause after 14 years, I mean, probably, um, I've gotten pretty close to where it's like, 'I can't do this anymore, I'm tired.' You know? 'I just can't do this anymore.' And I would slack off, you know, because I could. Um, before I was married, I probably wouldn't have slacked off as much as I have, you know? But I can be more selective and try to turn, not necessarily turn people away, but let them know what they're going to pay me."

Their position allows them to work at a job because they want to, not because they need to.

Respondent 25: "I feel more, more, um, uh, I want to say, I don't know if blessed is the right word or not . . . . like, I was just talking to somebody today, a friend of mine that just retired, you know, I don't need this to feed my family, so there's a difference. Yeah, I mean, I know a lot of people out there that, you know, are scared with the economy, and have thought about closing their business, etc, etc, um, you know, and I feel bad for them, because this is their only, their only financial support."

Two PIs stated that a common resolution to a struggling business is to begin working under a

firm.

Respondent 19: "I would tend to say that over half of the licenses here in Arizona are not actually utilized. 'Cause they get the license, and then they kind of sit back and they pick up a case or two but they don't really need it to make a living, so they don't utilize it. As far as somebody, uh, who got licensed, and, what happens is they end up working for someone else if they can't make it on their own."

Caseload Instability is a characteristic of PI work. Once a woman is licensed and on her own, she

can choose the jobs on which she would like to work. The disadvantage is that she may fall

victim to the whims of the market and must deal with a "feast or famine" marketplace.

Domestic cases appear to be much more unstable and many (11) offer services like process

serving because they are "guaranteed" work. Others find that avoiding domestic cases and

focusing on criminal and civil cases ease fears regarding lack of work. The majority accept a

combination of the three kinds of cases to temper the effects of the market. Taking up a second

job to supplement their PI income remains an option for those who need financial help and one

PI has done this. Overall, though, cases appear to be lucrative and can support these PIs over a

dry spell. Ten women have husbands who have a separate income from their own, which offers

them a safety net. Those who are not married are in a much more precarious position. The

reality of the day-to-day workload and financial insecurity may be injurious to those who are

not married and who have children and need a guaranteed source of income over a long

period. Most of the respondents are over the age of fifty, are no longer responsible for their

children, and thus, appear to have less anxiety over case instability.

Health Benefits and Retirement

Benefits are another aspect of investigation that may influence the progression of a

female PI's career. Health insurance and retirement may have shape the length of one's stay in

an occupation. A common response to this issue was similar to the following, "Gosh, there are

none [health benefits] . . . . You do it on your own." Some (4) have to make do without this

coverage, because self-employment does not offer good coverage.

> Respondent 19: "I don't have any. Well, it's only me, okay? And, right now, I don't have any insurance coverage. I had it when I had the agency in California . . . since it's me, myself, and I, and right now, no I don't have insurance coverage. I smoke, can you imagine what it would cost to get me to get insurance? You don't even want to guess. I'd be spending eight hundred dollars a month. Yeah, and then it wouldn't be very good coverage . . . and I'm thinking about looking. But, uh, right now, I don't have any."

Being self-employed as a PI can be difficult for those who do not have health plans from past

employment (4).

> Respondent 26:"The only time I had health insurance in my entire adult life was when I did some TV commercials and I had SAG health insurance for a year and other than that, nope, nothing. I'm, I'm just a, if I get sick, yeah, so I, yeah . . . . I'm fortunately not into,

um, doctors much. I'm more into natural medicine anyway, and that stuff probably wouldn't be covered and I'm also fortunate to have very good genes and when I, you know, I'm very, very healthy but, nope, you know, it's really, really difficult."

Many are able to rely on the insurance secured through their husband's career (7).

Respondent 17: "I'm very fortunate. I'm on my husband's insurance, so I don't at this point, don't have to worry about it. But I know, and you can check with other people, but most people have to buy their own, or if they're with a bigger firm they get a group, you know, kind of a group rate deal."

Most have been lucky regarding their health, but one particular PI has not. This highlights the burden of individual health coverage.

Respondent 15: "It got to a point where I almost had to take on a part-time job last year because I was so sick and wasn't making a lot of money. So, yes, there are times when I've had to be more choosy than others . . . I have no insurance . . . [and] I went through my entire inheritance in less than two years dealing with medical issues. It hasn't been pleasant. Um, there is probably self-employed insurance, I just don't ever qualify because . . . [I] have all the other issues going on, so, um, at some point, I may have to pick up a tiny secondary job just to pull insurance . . . ."

Some do pick up a second job in order to get insurance benefits. Like the following PI:

Respondent 12: "That's another reason I'm here, 'cause of insurance. You're pretty much on your own to get your own insurance and when I was working for Sarah, I was paying for my own insurance, and, and, you know, I was approaching forty and my insurance was steadily going up, so I had to, I had to make some decisions."

Lack of access to medical benefits may be a deal breaker for some investigators, especially females. Six of the respondents were single mothers when they began, and two remained so. Thus, this could be viewed as an additional barrier for females. There is also the question of retirement benefits. Most appear to view this job as something they will do for the long-term (24).

Respondent 2: "This is my career. This is what I will retire from doing . . . ."

As one respondent pointed out, the time investigators put into their training and their business solidifies their long-time commitment.

Respondent 25: "I don't think I went to this thinking, 'I'm only doing it for short time,' because I, I've invested a lot of time and energy and money, so I don't think I ever had a short term, you know, a very short term thought process with that . . . ."

Four of the twenty-six planned to stay for a short period, but this goal was thwarted by job

satisfaction.

Respondent 26: "Our friends talked us into doing it and, um, our idea, at the time, was, 'Well, heck it sounds kind of like fun,' and since I'm good at building, you know, we, together we made a great team for building businesses. We thought, 'Well, we'll just build the business up and then we'll sell it in a couple of years,' you know? And that was the plan, and then I really liked it . . . ."

Three have plans to relinquish the business to someone else once they decide to retire.

Respondent 25: "My goal is to get it built up and have somebody else, you know, take it over."

Two, however, only see this as a job, not as a profession to which they are particularly

attached.

Respondent 24: "I'm probably different from most people. I have four kids and I go to school, and so, I, I only work with a few attorneys in town. I've never worked with a bunch of attorneys and I've never made this a full time gig . . . . I think I'll be in this job until another job comes along that offers me the chance to do varying things on my own schedule that pays really well. I mean, it's, it's one of those jobs, you kind of make your own schedule. You get paid really well, and . . . it's hard to find another job like this . . . and I was a stay-at-home mom . . . [so] I thought, 'Well, if this works out, great. If it doesn't, oh well, I wasn't doing anything to start with.'"

Most (21) want to relinquish control gradually over certain aspects of the job.

Respondent 04: "I would really like to say that, um, you know, I will taper down when I have less financial responsibility. My kids are almost out of the house, and, um, one's in college and the other one will go soon, and I would think, you know, four or five years and I'll have, you know, kind of be able to just work a few days a week and not, not seven days a week and not fifteen hour days. But, um, yeah, I would think I will probably do this as long as I can. It's, um, it's a great a living. I can't imagine doing anything but I might go in-house with a law firm or something."

Because so many in this sample are self-employed (22), and many have a spotty work history

(14), there are few who have any kind of retirement money on which to fall back. Twenty-two

do not. Retirement seems to be based on an individual's decision to save.

> Respondent 19: "I don't have a retirement fund. I spent it when I left LA. I spent it to
> regain my sanity after leaving Los Angeles. So, yeah, I work until I die, but as long as my
> brain continues to function I can do that, and I don't have to work full time in order to
> sustain my lifestyle, because I'm low maintenance."

This has proved to be a difficult endeavor.

> Respondent 03: "I always tell my husband, you know, he's going to bury me with my
> laptop . . . my video camera, and my binoculars, and my laptop are going with me."

Similarly:

> Respondent 01: "It's something I'll do until I drop dead . . . . There was a time when I
> had looked forward to retirement. I put money away and I've tried to take care of things
> like that, but with what's happened in our economy now, most of us feel, it's like, you
> know, we're just always going to work. Period. But it means you take a vacation here
> and there and you come back and you work. Take a vacation, come back and work. It's
> going to be that cycle for as long as I know."

The majority will work until they no longer can (21).

> Respondent 02: "I know investigators that are 70 years old that are still out there doing
> surveillance, because it is not, it sounds like it's hard work, but it's really, really, not hard
> work. Um, so I don't see, I honestly don't ever see me retiring until I die."

Correspondingly:

> Respondent 26: "I'm just screwed. I'm just going to die at my desk . . . even if I could
> retire, I really am not a kind of person who would want to do that. Um, I think people
> start to die when they retire and I don't have any interest in going into anything else
> particularly different . . . ."

The lack of medical and financial benefits in this occupation may create a barrier for

women. The women in this sample are able manage these concerns, either through the reliance

on the coverage provided by a significant other or obtaining their own. However, some simply

make do without. Due to the absence of a pension, many decided that their work as a PI will

continue until death or until they are no longer capable of doing the work. Job structure

diminishes common threats to the careers of females, such as maternity leave. Nevertheless,

the absence of health insurance and a pension may create a barrier for women who wish to

enter or who wish to stay in private investigation.

Summary

The structural issues discussed here provide possible barriers for women who want to

enter into or remain in this occupation. One qualification should be made - the structure of this

occupation does not appear to be an obstacle for all women. It seems that there is a strong

correlation between previous job experience and entrance into private investigation. Law

enforcement and military experience provide useful skills and can be a substitute for certain

formal requirements. Paralegal/pretrial investigation and bill collection apply here also. Those

who have a background in these occupations are able to move into the occupation with little

formal resistance. Level of education is an additional factor. Those who have some college

education may have an advantage because of skills they acquired within higher education.

Moreover, seven respondents knew someone who was a PI and four others had someone who

encouraged them to get into the occupation. Anticipatory socialization, then, plays an

important role in the decision of a female to become an investigator. Though this may provide a

foundation for this occupation, the fact that many women were challenged by external events

may confound this effect. These turning points forced them to find a new source of income or

to become a private investigator. These women may not have entered (or considered) this

profession without this influence.

Training and formal requirements also present problems for women. It seems that the less a state requires, the easier it is for women to get their license. When a state requires more, especially if it involves a formal course (e.g., Louisiana) or probationary hours (e.g., California) then this lessens the likelihood that these women would to continue on that trajectory. Many women may be looking for a lucrative job that will not take away from family responsibilities. This profession provides that. Conversely, even though it may be easier to obtain a license (or do the work of a PI) in a state with little or no requirements, this does not guarantee professional success. Those who have not had formal job training may be at a disadvantage in working on their own. Thus, women who have a college degree germane to the occupation, who have relevant training, and who are not limited by family responsibility may be the least likely to fall victim to these potential barriers. Those who have a relevant degree or job history can substitute this experience for job training and still be successful without additional formal training. Women with children may not be able to devote the time needed to training due to their familial responsibilities. In states where they need little or no training, they risk their career success unless they possess the necessary human capital.

Mentoring also appears to be an important issue for the respondents. There does not appear to be any substantial trend that is associated with mentoring, except that all of the respondents depended on this experience at some point(s) in their career. Even those who have years of law enforcement background (8) relied on others for assistance. Respondents had positive descriptions of both male and female mentors, so that neither one appears to have offered better training. However, it generally seems that for day-to-day job support, these PIs

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count other women as their most significant ally. Accordingly, in an occupation that is still male-dominated, women may look to each other for help both emotionally and professionally.

Building a business can be a long and unstable process. Competition may be high in some areas and this makes it difficult for new PIs to find clients. Three women had to work second jobs while they attempted to establish a steady client base. Networking can be beneficial at this stage. New PIs can learn how to find clients, how to advertise, how to run their business, etc. Some women may be able to call upon skills gleaned from previous occupations to establish themselves as a private investigator. Owning one's own PI business, similar to formal requirements as discussed above, may work against women with certain characteristics, specifically those who are single mothers. Financial need in this situation, as well as time restraints, may discourage single mothers from enlisting. Those who join may have to work two jobs or give up time spent with children to gain success. Single mothers, then, may be dissuaded from this profession once they learn the amount of work and the unpredictability of that work.

The structure of the caseload in PI work continues to be uncertain even for those who have made this their career. Domestic cases may be the most volatile. Those who specialize in these cases may be more likely to experience periods of economic idleness (4). Some respondents know PIs who have gotten second jobs to supplement their PI business. One respondent went back to work at her family's company because of this (she specialized in domestic cases). Those who are married appear to have an advantage. If times get tough economically then they are able to fall back on their husband's income. Additionally, PIs who have a pension from a previous career are also fortunate. The whims of the market will likely be

less detrimental. Those who are single with children and who have no pension may be more likely to struggle through tough times.

Finally, health benefits and retirement are limitations within this occupation. Those who are self-employed must pay for their own insurance (if they are able) and those who are unmarried are left without a secondary insurance plan. This factor may limit the kind of women who remain in private investigation. If insurance is needed, a PI has the option to work for an agency. However, this limits the amount of freedom a PI has over her own career. In addition, retirement is not provided by the occupation. Individuals are expected to save for their own retirement needs. Thus, private investigation is structurally disadvantageous to women who have no pension or savings on which to rely and for those who are unmarried and have no insurance plan.

The issues discussed here outline the structure of the occupation and what factors may discourage women from doing PI work. Anticipatory socialization, training, and mentoring may act as hurdles for policewomen. In PI work, they may temper the effects of caseload instability and licensing requirements. Self-employment and health/retirement benefits each have their own inherent problems and may paint an unwelcoming picture for women. Those who are unmarried with children may experience these structural hardships in private investigation.

Interactional Barriers

In Martin's (1980) study, she argued that policewomen encountered adversity when working with male police officers. She argued that the norms directing these interactions are the greatest problem facing the social organization of the police department (Martin 1980). I

outline the situations in which interaction with male investigators, as well as the consequences of these interactions.

Working with Law Enforcement

There appear to be three circumstances where interaction with local police is necessary or prudent. The first of these is when an investigator is "sitting surveillance." When an investigator goes into a neighborhood for surveillance, the respondent will give a courtesy call to the police. This is done in anticipation of any neighborhood residents calling the police to report a suspicious vehicle. If a neighborhood resident calls in, then local law enforcement is already aware of the investigator. This prevents a situation where law enforcement would be called out to a surveillance site and unknowingly spoil a job.

> Respondent 23: "I've been confronted like at two or three in the morning, like with lights blazing and all that, but then, I was sitting in a neighborhood, and, you know . . . they didn't know what was going on, but they, they knew somebody was in a vehicle. So here comes [the] sheriff's department, you know, lights blazing and all that. All you do is bail out and give 'em your license, you know, and let 'em know what you're doing. And, um, you know, 'cause, you know, they'll like, I mean I've bailed out before and, I mean, it was really funny. You know, where it was, you know, you had the baseball, baseball cap on, and you look like a kid, you know, and . . . you say, 'Please turn your lights off' . . . and you're like, 'Well, who you [sic] looking for,' and they say, 'You,' you know, [and] you're like, 'Why,' you know, and you tell 'em what . . . you're doing and they leave you alone. You know, they'll . . . ask you how much longer you're going to be out here, and I'm like, 'Well, since you blew my cover, not very long,' . . . . then when you go back, you know, you switch vehicles and let 'em know ahead of time."

Similarly:

> Respondent 13: "[When] doing surveillance, like, I always call the police and let them know . . . so that . . . they know that somebody's not stalking somebody. You know what I'm saying? So I'll usually let them know that, you know, I'm going to be doing a little bit of surveillance over in that area or something . . . ."

By letting the police know where they are, investigators give themselves some measure of

protection. Going into an unfamiliar neighborhood can be risky. If the police have been notified

of a PIs location, and they need back up, the police will be able to respond more quickly.

> Respondent 06: "You call when you're leaving the area so that they can give you an 'all clear.' That way if you need help and you call for assistance, you know, 'I'm a PI and I need assistance right now,' they know right where you are. And I have had them on the phone a few times when I've got a very irate huge man in front of me, being very threatening and I'll just dial in to 911 and I'll say, 'Please hold,' and I'll ask the person that's creating the scene if there's anything he needs to discuss with the police department 'cause they can be here right away and they usually then back down."

The police also may offer a cover story in order to protect the PI. In communities where there is

a neighborhood watch, this can be especially advantageous. Leaders of these watch groups may

be especially sensitive to unfamiliar vehicles in the neighborhood and will not hesitate to call

the police.

> Respondent 23: "Occasionally, if you let the police departments know that you're in the neighborhood, they'll tell whoever calls, that, you know, 'Don't worry about it, it's, it's, it's a detective in the neighborhood.' So, they may assume that it's undercover, you know, they [the police] will kind of what they call 'cover your butt.'"

This allows the PI to complete their mission with the support of law enforcement. The second

customary communication concerns legal investigation. Those who are hired to reinvestigate a

criminal case may need to re-interview an officer who worked that case.

> Respondent 11: "They interview, and I interview, and sometimes you have to go talk to them to find out why they, you know, what they saw, or why they interviewed."

Through this practice, they are able to collect information that may be valuable to their cases.

They can scrutinize the initial feelings of the officer regarding any persons related to the case

and why they subsequently took those steps.

Thirdly, investigators are required to report any unlawful activity to the police. Just like any other citizen, if they find anyone breaking the law they are required to report it.

> Respondent 08: "Sometimes when you come across something, [like] you find out there is a crime that's been committed, or you're aware of a crime that's going on, or there's criminal activity, I always contact that authorities. Give them a heads-up."

Many (14) found that the circumstances that put investigators in touch with police officers have resulted in a trivial interaction.

> Respondent 18: "We work very well together. They have their aspect of it. They understand, they understand my side of it, you know, we'll, we'll, we work together to achieve the same goal."

However, these interactions do not always go as smoothly as investigators would like. Several respondents recounted incidents where they were the victims of a botched surveillance (3) or a process service (1).

> Respondent 18: "I had to do a case in a very ritzy neighborhood and I called the police like I always do, let them know I'm in the area, give them the cross sections of the street, and they showed up a half an hour later surrounding my car with lights and sirens, and went to every door knocking on it with big flashlights, 'Is this the one you're watching? Is this the one you're watching?'"

Additionally, respondents have also encountered roadblocks when attempting to contact police regarding criminal investigation (10). Some officers are not willing to give assistance.

> Respondent 16: "Some of the cases that we've had are from inmates, per say, you know, who feel that they've been wrongly convicted. So, you know, we'll gather evidence . . . I will say, personally, on some of the cases, where I've had to contact the different deputies in the field, most of them are pretty reluctant to speak to me. Um, it's always . . . 'Get a subpoena. Take my testimony.' Things like that. And I'm not sure if it's anything personal, or maybe that's just the protocol within their particular agency. But, um, but as far as, you know, when I'm working a case and I'm pulling records and stuff, they're fine along that line, but I just know . . . . Like there's one gentlemen, I was just contacting for weeks on end and he never even bothered taking two seconds out of his day to call me back, and only when I went to his supervisor's supervisor was he, did he finally tell me, 'Listen to me, he's never going to talk to you.'"

This can create serious problems for those trying to work on a case. Correspondingly, those

who work criminal defense cases may be viewed as a threat to the police (13). They are seen as

working against the mission of law enforcement, which is to put bad guys behind bars, not to

release them.

> Respondent 19: "I don't work with the police. I do defense, criminal defense work and
> they are not overly fond of us, of, of investigators who are doing defense work because,
> of course, since they think someone's guilty, um, they sure don't want you, you trying to
> prove that they're wrong. So I don't, no, I don't work with the police . . . I mean, I've
> talked to them in conjunction with a case, so on and so forth, but . . . we're diametrically
> opposed."

One respondent indicates that it is a busy schedule, not defiance that prevents police from

adequately assisting PIs.

> Respondent 24: "My brother-in-law worked for the police department. My mother-in-
> law worked for the police department, and I have met officers who will work with me,
> but they are so slammed at the moment. You're not going to get an officer to call you
> back, and if you do, you're going to get a five minute conversation where they say, you
> know, 'Can you read the report? I don't have much more to say . . . .'"

Contacting law enforcement regarding an active criminal case may also lead to conflict. This is

because PIs and officers have opposing loyalties. Cops need to catch a criminal and PIs have to

finish the job for which they were hired. As explained by one PI:

> Respondent 20: "I'm doing a missing person, which I'm working on, and we pretty much
> determined that he's dead. We got some suspects. I turn it over to them and then, of
> course, we're going back and forth, because I've got, you know, five years of knowledge
> in my head . . . . Pretty much, they take over. Now, you know, kind of simultaneously . . .
> the case could still be ongoing, 'cause I still have my particular thing that I need to
> investigate, and I still have a client that's hired me."

This can lead to animosity between the two groups. Four respondents specifically used the term

"ego" when speaking about police officers and their relationship with law enforcement. The

way the questions were asked generally addressed their work with the police so that they could

speak about male and/or females officers. For those who spoke of the police, in only seven

cases were male officers explicitly discussed. The following PI received a backlash when she

discovered evidence involving an ongoing, unsolved case:

> Respondent 20: "There tends to be especially with male police officers an ego type of, they're 'the law' and, you know, they'll handle whatever, you know . . . . I had, um, you know, encountered and battled in the media with police . . . until I finally got, you know, like the . . . Bureau of Investigations to listen to me. It's, you know, it's, it's an ego of, 'How could you have turned this evidence up? . . . . We worked it. That doesn't exist. You made it up.'"

The animosity was mainly (17) described as a broader phenomenon, instead of a specific event.

Three reported no interaction with law enforcement. As one PI explicated, over time the

relationship between cops and PIs has deteriorated.

> Respondent 05: "I've been in this so long it's gone from very good to absolutely atrociously bad . . . . There was a time at five o'clock, at the end of the day where everyone took off the boxing gloves and went to a local bar and had a drink together. Today, they're adversarial. They have no socializing together, and they want nothing to do with each other. So, it used to be, police weren't upset about private investigators and they, they, they respected, and they were happy they were out there working. Uh, through the years there has been so much disclosure of ineptness, incompetence on the part of law enforcement stuff that now they resent us. They hate us. So, it's, it's just changed through the years. The attitude is changed. It's no longer a fun industry, like it used to be."

One female PI stated that her ill feelings came from her stint as a police officer. Her previous

career exposed her to individuals in the department who, she believed, did not always have the

best intentions.

> Respondent 01: "I try to have as little communication with the police as I can. I, uh, am a former police officer. I have also had my bouts with the criminal justice system, because I was good at what I do, and, uh, because of what I've seen, I choose to stay away from police officers as much as possible . . . . I don't expect them to always be truthful. I don't think they genuinely care about any particular person that they're interviewing . . . . It's just a means to their end. It's just convicting somebody and throwing somebody away."

For one respondent, age was believed to have an effect on the treatment of PIs by law

enforcement. Older officers may have negative views of female investigators.

> Respondent 26: "A lot of law enforcement, especially the older, more traditional guys, are, like, they don't want any part of private people, you know, 'Keep those people away from me.' But I'm finding that more of the more modern and, you know, mainly younger . . . the guys who do fraud, internet crime, or that sort of thing, that are a little more progressive, are actually quite open . . . ."

One investigator had experience working in a big city and, now, in a small town. She found that

in her small town, she had to work much harder to get cooperation from local law

enforcement.

> Respondent 02: "It's been very open. They've been very receptive to me, um, I live in a very small town and here it is the good ole' boys system, so at first . . . when I first started to try and work with law enforcement that's what I ran into, was 'You're not a guy. You're a girl, and I don't care if you're a PI or not, or a bondsman, you're still just a girl.' So I kind of had to prove myself. Um, going to . . . a major city, um, working with law enforcement there, it was very more open and very more receptive. Here in a small town, there is no female officer at all. There's female officers in the jail. There's no patrolmen, or sheriff's deputies that work the streets that are females. So, once in this little small town . . . I kind of had to prove myself, and it kind of ticked me off, but I thought, 'Well, it's just the way the world is.' Um, once I proved myself, now it's very receptive. I have patrolmen calling me when they're looking for somebody, 'Hey, can you possibly know where they're at,' 'Can you come help us look,' and, 'Sure, absolutely,' and I don't get paid anything for it and some investigators do get paid for it. Me, I don't. I look at it as, 'I'm very honored now that they do call me and ask for my help.'"

For four, the animosity they may have felt initially disappeared over time. Because of their job

restrictions, cops have to be tightlipped about information regarding a case. However, once

they get to know an investigator and trust her, they may open up.

> Respondent 26: "As far as cops in general, um, once they get to know you and trust you, they're wonderful. In the beginning, they're very, very close-mouthed and they want you to tell everything you know and they're not telling you a darn thing, and that kind of thing I can understand, you know? That's their responsibility, and that's fine. But as soon as they find out that, hey, you really are okay and you're not going to mess things up, and, uh, then I don't have any problems at all."

Another investigator worked to remain on good terms with law enforcement.

> Respondent 17: "I've had some difficult situations where they're just uncooperative or they don't, I feel, like, do their jobs . . . but, for the most part, I've had good luck getting what I need, you know, or cooperating, putting a case together, handing it over to them if it needs to [be] . . . . They don't like us, you know, sometimes, so I just always try to approach it very nice and respectful at first and, you know, and then, then, kind of throw my weight around if I have to, if I know I'm right. But it, it's much better to just work cooperatively. And . . . I still know a lot of cops, so, you know, that helps too."

Three iterated that being on good terms with the police is important for PIs and their cases, but that this relationship can also work for the benefit of the police.

> Respondent 09: "It just depends on the city and the county that you're in and everybody has a different take on it. But if you really need a cop, you need to know that you can work with them, and that they know that you're there to help them. If something goes wrong some of them know that, that we can take care of business . . . you are an extra set of eyes for them, and some of them don't know that, so if something goes wrong, and you see something wrong in the neighborhood, and maybe not related to your thing . . . at least the police know that there's another set of trained eyes that could actually help them . . . ."

The police also may benefit through direct assistance. Because of laws and regulations governing police protocol, law enforcement officials cannot obtain some information. Investigators, though, may be able to get access.

> Respondent 26: "We've solved so many cases that the cops couldn't solve, not because they're stupid, [but] because they have certain things they can and can't do, and certain tools, and we have different things that we can and can't do and tools, so it's, we're actually able to do things that they can't, and if we work with them, together we can solve almost anything . . . ."

One investigator even has officers that contact her for help in understanding relevant laws. There are regulations that officers are not familiar with and that investigators may use on a day-to-day basis.

> Respondent 08: "I have a lot of police people I know that call me and say, you know, 'What's the legal aspect of it,' even though they're a policemen . . . . They enforce the law, but they don't know the law, but we're, you know, to look for the law that type of thing, and they call me for advice."

Most PIs have interacted with law enforcement throughout the course of the job (23). There seems to be some general animosity toward PIs based on the respondents' descriptions. Many cops feel that private investigators are working in opposition to them. Most (23) women in the sample could recall at least one unconstructive interaction with the police. Nonetheless, those who work on criminal cases are likely to experience more negative interactions with the police. This is because they follow behind the police and reinvestigate. Sometimes this hostility is associated with the gender of the investigator. The respondents feel that their gender makes them the victims of stereotypes, especially from older male police officers. These officers are believed to hold the most traditional view of those in the police profession. The clichéd views that pervade police subculture appear to be applied to women in private investigation as well. Encountering officers this kind of attitude makes it difficult for female PIs to complete their case and, more broadly, prevents them from being fully accepted as legitimate. In light of this, law enforcement can stand to benefit from the work of private investigators because of the rules that restrict police investigative methods.

PI Associations

PI associations fulfill several functions. The first of these is training. Local and state associations offer courses regularly through annual conferences. At these meetings, one can attend seminars that address individual specializations and classes that teach up-to-date investigative techniques. These courses can be used to meet required continuing education hours.

> Respondent 24: "I got most of my, um, training at the OALI seminars. In fact, I got 100% of my training at the OALI seminars. Um, and there's no better place to go and ask because they've been doing this, probably as long as, some of them as long as I've been alive, and so there's no better educator than experience . . . .'"

Correspondingly:

> Respondent 21: "The very first association that I joined . . . exposed me to, um, if I wanted to take advantage of it, different, um, different association classes, training, uh, books, equipment, all of kinds of things, plus a host of private investigators, and the primary purpose that I chose to use the association was for the networking with other seasoned investigators, so I could find mentors. So that's how I found my mentors in the beginning was through that association . . . ."

Investigators are able to find people who will assist them as 'experts' on future cases as the following investigator found:

> Respondent 05: "I went to educational seminars. Listened to people. I mean, I'd go listen to . . . an arson investigator speak, although I had no desire to ever be involved in arson investigations. You know, if I wind up getting a general, overall investigation that includes needing an arsonist, a, arson expert, and this expert and that expert, I just know where to go get the experts to have them do their portion of the work."

Many use these annual meetings as a time to network with other investigators (8). Networking increases the likelihood that a PI will receive referrals and subcontracts for future cases. They meet other investigators who they can contact if needed.

> Respondent 01: "I'm a member of nine different associations . . . You know, they absolutely are [useful]. You go to the conferences. Uh, you interact with people. You do a lot of networking, and a lot of work over the years have been from other PIs, because we've met at different conferences, and they know who I am, and I know who they are."

Furthermore, meetings also provide an environment where investigators get receive support from other members (2).

> Respondent 06: "It does give you a sense of belonging. You know, there's a sense that if you show up at a private investigative event, and we'll all very independent people, it's, it's very hard to break the ice when you're in one of these groups. Um, it's almost like we're so used to being isolated on our own that it's one of the few times that we really can get together and talk about things, and the other person knows exactly what you're talking about."

This experience appears to be helpful to those who take part in it. Investigators may feel unique stresses and may believe that only other PIs would understand how they feel.

Respondent 09: "I have in the past had very close personal relationships with other investigators, because, um, we just, we know each other's mind set and we have the same issues, and it's comfortable. So basically any investigator you talk to, you can become instant friends with, because we all have the same issues."

One respondent uses the relationships she developed to become a more responsible

investigator.

Respondent 21: "Primarily it gives you, uh, a lot of exposure to other investigators who have expertise in areas that you may not, or I may not. And then also . . . accountability. I really believe, really believe in accountability, because, you know, we [in Mississippi] don't have licensing. If you don't seek out accountability, you won't have any. So I seek it out."

Not all the respondents felt that the industry organizations were useful (5). However, four

joined because one PI group was advocating for the occupation by fighting privacy legislation.

Respondent 07: "I absolutely think they're worthless. Yeah, I don't belong to any of them. The only one that I ever joined was . . . the national group, um, only because at the time they were going to Washington on some issues that I thought were important, and it wasn't so much as joining their group as contributing to their cause, to support people for, uh, you know, for legislation."

As one points out, the main benefit is how their membership appears to their clients.

Respondent 06: "I find, primarily, what I find is . . . that those initials are behind my name and that makes a client feel really good . . . ."

Similarly:

Respondent 20: "Honestly, it's something to put on your website . . . . It's something to put on your resume, and, and maybe get a discount or rate on a continuing ed hour somewhere . . . ."

Many belong to them in a limited capacity due to disagreements with their utility (3).

Respondent 05: "I've belonged to them . . . . It winds up that they have self-serving purposes, that they're top-heavy, and, uh, inure to the benefit, of, of, of just a very small handful of people. They do not protect their members. Um, I, I have no faith in them anymore. Years ago they were wonderful things."

Additionally:

> Respondent 23: "There's a battle going on right now . . . . They're trying to get it cleaned up, you know, from the good 'ole boys and politics and all that. But, um, a lot of 'em, there's no benefits in it other than, I, I've even had people tell me that all their meetings are, is a big party. People get drunk, they do this, there's no actual teaching or, you know, you might could meet . . . vendors of products, but they, I, I never joined . . . I've gone to some of their training classes before and walked away empty. You know, where it was mostly, I had to have, have my eight hours to renew my license, and, that was the one that was available . . . ."

The number of women in this sample who belong to these groups (25) indicates some level of importance. Associations provide PIs with an environment where they can learn from more experienced investigators. Conferences include seminars where they can learn new methodological techniques and receive additional professional training. Many fulfill their required continuing education hours through associations. They are also able to network with other investigators to collect future referrals and subcontracts. Additionally, they can find personal support in this environment. One investigator uses local association as a way to hold her accountable, since her state requires no PI license. Another found that this membership is not valuable for her, yet they make her clients feel more comfortable. Four joined associations as a way to oppose legislative changes that may affect their occupation. Associations seem to fulfill many functions that benefit private investigators. There were five women who felt that the associations were not useful and it appears that those women could be classified as loners. There was only one respondent who denied membership to any association. Thus, these women may not feel that they need to rely on these groups other than for training.

Interaction with Male Private Investigators

Similar to Martin's research (1980), female investigators have met resistance from male

investigators, though there a few who have experienced very little dissatisfaction with male

investigators (7).

> Respondent 10: "I've worked fine with both men and women. I have no difference in them."

Some rely on men for assistance on certain jobs.

> Respondent 11: "A lot of times I'll work with other investigators, men investigators, 'cause there are times where they [interviewees] need someone who sort of intimidates them to get stuff . . . . If we need one because, you know, they won't talk to me, but you know, maybe a guy would help . . . . In my area, I don't know about other areas, but . . . the ones that I work with get along good . . . . They treat me as equal, and we call each other and ask questions, and it's been good."

Private investigation is an occupation where women are the minority, even if the disparity is

not as great as in police work.

> Respondent 13: "I don't think they think that we're . . . equal . . . . When I went to my continuing education class, I don't know how many there were, but there was way less women than the men in the room. And I'm not sure that it's as widely accepted yet. I think we have to work a little harder."

Five respondents clearly observed this difference.

> Respondent 25: "I truly believe, as I believe, having come from law enforcement, that women are still not totally accepted, um, and I still think we have a ways to go."

Male-female interaction occurs in two situations. The first is during annual conferences and

training seminars. Many of the respondents became the object of a female stereotype at some

point in their career (11).

> Respondent 03: "I had attended a conference a long time, like, ten years ago now, in New Orleans. And it was a superconference, it had, there were, like, ten different associations that all got together at this conference. So I met a whole lot of investigators that were from the South, and every single male investigator from the South that I met, walked up to me, looked at my name tag and said, 'Wow, does your husband let you do

that?' And I had never heard that before. I was like, 'Well, that's interesting,' I said, 'You know, my husband wasn't really given a choice. I did this before I married him,' . . . . They thought it was so weird that, you know, these women owned their own businesses and were licensed investigators. They just assumed to start with that we all were someone's secretary. But around here, in California, I don't get that at all."

Additionally:

Respondent 03: "They [male investigators] vary drastically. Some of them are great, wonderful, brilliant investigators, and some of them are just slime balls, so, I mean . . . and there's everything in between. It depends. There's, you know, there's a lot of, you know, older ones that are retired cops that think they're still cops, and can do whatever they want, and, you know, the ones that see conferences, as just an opportunity to chase, you know, whatever females around, and then there's others that, you know, really take the job seriously, and are trying to learn things, and it really varies. I would say that there's more that are good than bad, let's put it that way."

A few respondents have had male PIs respond to their appearance (2).

Respondent 02: "To some male investigators that I have worked with in the past, I'm nothing but a dumb girl, and, um, they treat me as such, and I just don't tolerate that. I don't care how much I need the money, um, I won't be belittled, and, um, you know there's some investigators, male investigators that started out treating me that way, and then as the more I worked with them, they figured out I'm not a dumb girl. I know what I'm doing, and I'm open to criticism on anything because there's always room for improvement. And, then there's some that, 'Oh hey, you know, she, I think she's pretty, so yeah, I want to work with her,' and they neglect the case. And then there's some that's just very professional. Um, the ones that are very professional I will call if I need a male investigator, and say 'Hey, I need your help. I love working with you. You're very professional. You don't care what I look like, or what I'm wearing. You do the job, so can you come help me?'"

The second circumstance was interaction on the job. One agency owner reluctantly admits that

she lacks trust in her male employees. This is due to negative experiences with male

investigators in the past.

Respondent 23: "When you have agents under your agency, you got that, you've got to have that bond of trust. Every girl that I have, I could trust with my life. I could trust with my animals. You know, I can trust with money, you know? But I still don't have that same trust with guys that work with me, and I don't know why it is, you know? I mean, occasionally, yeah, me and my husband may go somewhere and, you know, and I gotta have somebody watch the dogs, but do they have access to my house? No. Would these girls have access to my house? You bet. You know? Because, it's just, I don't know what

it is, it's just, I don't know, but, I have had cases initially where I had guys that were working them, and . . . it's hot and, you know, you're thinking, 'Oh, they're out there, and they're,' or 'they're cooped up,' you know, 'in a vehicle,' and, you know, '[they're] trying to be covert,' and it's so hot, and, usually I would load up, you know, water and ice and cokes, and something, and I'd ride out [and] they're not where they're supposed to be. And they don't, they don't call in and tell you, but then they bring you that report and they don't realize that you was [sic] out there. The subject was there, but they wasn't [sic], and, um, I've called them on it before, you know, that, I, I think that's what made my radar go up . . . ."

Male investigators may also be viewed as more dangerous than their female counterparts (3).

This may influence who will work with male investigators.

Respondent 12: "You've got a lot of retired law enforcement and then you got a lot of young yahoos that, you know, think they're invincible . . . . They're risk-takers . . . they'll push that button. They'll go as far as they can and then they'll go a little bit further than that. A lot of men carry weapons, we don't. A weapon will just get you in trouble . . . But there are a lot of male private investigators who carry a weapon. Not necessary . . . . For the most part, they pretty much do what they want to do, you know? They don't follow the guidelines, uh, I'm not saying all of them, but the ones I've worked with, they don't follow the guidelines too well. You know? They, the few that get worked with, don't really care if they get burned, you know? They'll get right up in your face, they don't care. Um, I don't know if they do it for the excitement, 'cause most of the time there's not a lot of excitement. Most of the time you're just sitting, watching, or if they do it for the money . . . . I don't know."

Three respondents felt male PIs were especially critical of their job performance.

Respondent 01: "Like anything else, you learn who the good ones are and who you don't want to hire again, and I've had one guy in the insurance industry that lost his job, came to work for me and didn't like the way I wanted to have the cases worked, and kept saying, 'Well in insurance this is how we did it,' and I said, 'You know, it's not a problem. Go back to the insurance company. You're not working here anymore. There's a reason I'm successful and,' you know, 'You don't want to work by my rules, in my business, go somewhere else.' And that doesn't mean that I'm not receptive to listening to how to do it another way . . . ."

A significant trend in demographics is the number police officers who get into private

investigation following their law enforcement career.

Respondent 26: "If you look at the number of licenses in each state, like, say here in California, quite a few of them are retired. Whether they were Feds or cops or

whatever, and they qualify for their PI license. They retire from their first job, and they're getting a pension, and they go, 'Oh well, I'll get a PI license.'"

Furthermore, ex-law enforcement officers are able to use their acquaintances.

> Respondent 06: "I think they've [the local police] been very helpful overall. You can't get close to them though, unless you've been in law enforcement. So if I was an ex-LEO, if I had been in law enforcement, and I was a PI . . . oh yeah, they get a lot more jobs and stuff."

Also, the people they know in the department may be able to provide assistance with a case.

This may put them in an advantageous position, even if the activation of these networks is

frowned upon.

> Respondent 12: "When you're retired from law enforcement, you still have those connections, and a lot of those connections are illegal to use. You know, we're not allowed to call a friend at the police department and get them to run a background check, you know, we're not allowed to that, and a lot of the retired police officers will use that to their advantage, even though they're not supposed to."

Not only can it put female PIs at a disadvantage, but these men tend to extend the prejudicial

attitudes found in policing subculture to PI work. Seven respondents found that these men are

hard to get to know and slow to give respect.

> Respondent 06: "Learning to work, learning to work with ex-LEO's, or law enforcement officers. That's a whole different breed of private investigator and it's very hard to get close to those people, so you just have to keep pumping away and earn their respect slowly, and, so yeah, so I took lots of courses, and went to seminars, and, you know, I went to tradeshows, and I did all those things, and met as many people as I could."

However, the arrogant attitudes that male PIs tend to exhibit can outweigh those of female

investigators.

> Respondent 24: "Some of 'em are great. Some of 'em are completely horrible and that's, that's, it's kind of a standard in everything . . . . I think that it's the same thing in any industry. You've got good people and bad people, and, and we tend to remember the bad people. I will say that the guys tend to be a little bit more cocky when they talk to you 'cause you're a female, in some instances, but, you know, the females can't really do that to you . . . ."

Respondents find that the older male officers' ways of thinking does not welcome female

investigators.

> Respondent 07: "I've run into a few that were just, you know, their ego comes in the door before they do and, um, of course I've run into a few women like that too, but it seems to be more prevalent with men. But a lot of these are also, you know, they're retired cops, and they're kind of old school, and you know, when they're in my age bracket, or older, then, you know, some of them can be pretty set in their ways."

Four women feel that those who have a background in law enforcement have a career

advantage.

> Respondent 04: "I think women in this industry have additional challenges. In this particular industry we have a lot of arrogance, a lot of ex-law enforcement, and so, we can be patted on our head a lot by men, and, um, so . . . especially if you don't have law enforcement background, which I don't. Especially in the beginning, I think that was really frustrating . . . ."

Having a police background does not necessarily guarantee acceptance by male investigators

though. Existing ties with others in a powerful position may allow other stereotypical

assumptions to appear. As evidenced by the following PI:

> Respondents 25: "I think they are some people out there that do respect me, um, for the fact that I do have the law enforcement background, but I also, there are others that . . . of which I've heard, you know, I've been told that they think, you know, I'm successful simply because of, um, my husband happens to be a, uh, judge. Um, the only reason that I have any work is because of him which is not true . . . there's a lot here that judges cannot do. Um, you know, most of the work I get is the work I've gotten on my own, you know, without him. So it's automatically, 'Oh, her husband got it for her.' You know, 'cause God forbid, I should be able to do this on my own . . . . There's a lot of very good people out there, but there's still some of the old time boys."

The interaction between male and female investigators occurs frequently on the job. The

problems that women have in these encounters tend to mimic those with male police officers.

Former law enforcement officers or "ex-LEOs" appear be the most critical of women in PI work.

They bring the attitudes and beliefs of the police subculture with them. Unsurprisingly, they are

the most reluctant to grant acceptance to women. Nonetheless, many women believe that

male investigators are more likely to take unnecessary risks on the job, are more disapproving of the work of female PIs, and are more likely to apply prejudicial stereotypes to females. Conversely, several women expressed little dissatisfaction with male PIs and even looked to them for job assistance (7). Women are still the minority in private investigation and this negative interaction may encourage them avoid male PIs whenever possible. As a result, the acceptance of women in the occupation may remain limited.

Female PI Groups

In associations, women and men are placed in situations where they must interact with one another. In addition to the physical gatherings of these groups, many have a website, an online forum, or a message board where investigators can communicate over the internet. Some groups exist solely on the internet. This form of communication offers another opportunity for male-female interface. Cyber-interaction does not eliminate prejudicial attitudes. One female investigator recounts the opposition she experienced in this environment. As a consequence, she started a female PI group.

> Respondents 26: "It has changed quite a bit over the years, I will say, but we had, uh, a lot of the guys on the, the boy PIs on the . . . groups would, you know, I started . . . [this group] . . . because time after time, somebody would ask a question on something that was typically a male kind of thing, you know, like weapons or computer forensics, or, you know, some technical thing, and one of the ladies, some of the ladies on the group are just brilliant with that stuff, would, would answer the question and then the boys that were promoting themselves as 'the authority in computer forensics' would go, 'Wait a minute,' . . . 'You should get back in the kitchen,' you know? Kind of being very chauvinistic. These are guys, these are guys who are mainly former military, former cops, they're, they're, you know, they're like, 'Crap. Why'd they let women into this thing?' You know? But it's gotten a whole lot better, but that's why I started [the group], because I, I realized that there were a lot of women that were brilliant that were afraid to say anything, you know? So, yeah, it's been problem. Now it's gotten much, much better . . . I think it's made a difference and the boys kind of, they treat us better."

Another PI describes her attempt at starting a group for female investigators. Male PIs made

derogatory comments. This reaction seems to have placed the formation process on hold.

> Respondents 23: "We have attempted to start an organization . . . it's still kind of sitting there, you know, because the guys would start crap, as far as, well, 'That's discrimination.' You know? I'm like, 'Hey you can join us,' you know, 'I don't discriminate. If you want to come join us, be my guest,' and then somebody'd say, 'But you gotta wear a dress.' You know? Stuff like that to intimidate them . . . but I don't discriminate. Mostly, I think an organization of females, we get more accomplished."

Because of these kinds of problems, twenty-one respondents have also become members of

female PI groups. One of the biggest arguments for these groups is support (16).

> Respondents 21: "I do think it's important to have women's organizations in any profession, especially in this one, because this is traditionally been, been a men's profession, and, and, the last, say, twenty, twenty-five years women have come, started to rise up, and, um, there's more respectability now for women to do this."

Women can feel safe asking job-related questions in this environment.

> Respondent 25: "These women, um, that are, um, all over the country, and are able to throw out questions and get answered by other people that, you know, that may have experience with it . . . . [That's] the best way that they're useful . . . . Sometimes we feel more comfortable throwing out a question, um, that a man might say, 'Boy, that's a dumb question,' where the woman's not going to. You know? We just feel more comfortable, um, asking other women things."

There seems to be a group reliance on the common experience of being female, which allows

them to interact in a way that they feel that they cannot in mainstream associations (16).

> Respondent 16: "I've not personally met anyone, you know, but had communications, worked on cases with some of the ladies and helped them out, and they've helped me out. Uh, it's very nice because I think the industry is male-dominated, um, whether, you know, as a group collectively, again, you know, we, we tend to, if one of us is needing a piece of a puzzle, we put it out there, and the gals seem willing to jump in and say, 'Hey, this is,' you know, 'This is what I think,' not, 'Let me do it and I'll bill you for it.' There's a camaraderie, I believe. If it was male, I don't know if they would act the same . . . ."

Similarly:

> Respondent 04: "I worked with a couple of other women that, um, you know, that we kind of worked together a lot, and throughout the years, you know, depending on what

my focus has been or what my case load has been, I've kind of worked with other investigators. I would say we all mentor, I mean, we have a group that mentor each other."

Women get much needed help on their cases from the members (19).

> Respondent 15: "I might say, 'I'm having this kind of problem on this kind of case. Can you point me in the right direction of some places that you might check, that I might not have thought of?' Um, and let them tell me, because a lot of them have been in this business way longer than I have, and might know of a place to check that I wouldn't, so, I very much enjoy that . . . . Like I had one case that I had been tracking this guy for six years, and he'd been missing for fifteen and I was getting really frustrated, so I finally went online and asked the ladies. And within one day I was, um, one week behind him, and before I had been six years behind him. So they are a great bunch of ladies."

The assistance offered is usually seen as trustworthy due to the risk that these women take

when sharing information. Thus, women in this group are viewed as a reliable source of

information (18).

> Respondent 22: "They're more, uh, particular, and they, they, they, when you ask them from help or something, then you're going to get a more precise answer and stuff, and they put a lot of, their reputation is on the line too, so they, they're really careful about making sure they give good information, stuff like that."

Internet-based groups allow one to learn from the questions and answers posted by

investigators without having to be actively involved in the conversation. The previous

respondent continues:

> Respondent 22: "What I belong to is, uh, uh, internet groups that are women . . . those kind of things, and I learn a lot from that, from watching the back and forth, when people are doing different cases and stuff, and they're asking questions about, 'How do I do this? How do I do that?' And I learn a lot that way."

The members have also been known to band together to work on cases (19). Through the

internet, they are able exchange information and work together as a team.

> Respondent 18: "As a matter of fact, we're working on a forty-year old murder investigation, a cold case, um . . . . There's some eighty women across the United States that have been involved in this investigation. And everyone has their little aspects of it that they do, but when we bring it all together, we bring it together as a team."

These groups also address changes in laws and regulations.

> Respondent 09: "I never gave it much thought before, but it's been invaluable to me, um, because they keep you abreast of the changing laws, and legislation, which I never would have even been aware of before. And so, yeah, I'm in my own little world but, you know, you learn things that . . . if I didn't know this I would get in trouble. I could step over the line and do something that I'm going to get in big trouble for. Some of the things I don't want to know about, but, you know, it's better to know, than not know, and, um, you know, I may think I know everything, 'cause I've been in the business a long time . . . . [It's] like a checks and balances system. And I think it's true for any profession . . . ."

Additionally, these groups assist in referrals:

> Respondent 07: "The nice thing about those are, um, it's, it's not ego-based, and your, you know, the time you put into it is spare time. So if you have time to read emails, you know, and to respond, then you can go in and do that, and I have found that responding to some of the people's questions, um, you know, it comes back around eventually that sooner or later, they may know something, or they may be able to help you out, and it's nice to have referrals, especially out of state referrals."

Female PI groups seem to make subcontracting much easier. Subcontracting investigators

becomes necessary when a case involves going out of the local area (15). They will subcontract

someone when they need to obtain records that are located in a courthouse out-of-state, or

out-of-area. Few clients are willing to pay an investigator to travel to another state to get pick

up court records. In addition, many states do not have reciprocity with others, so an

investigator's license may hold no value in another state.

> Respondent 17: "When I need to hire someone out of my area to go conduct a search of a courthouse, or public records, like today, I was just dealing with a girl up in . . . northern California, because my client is not going to pay for me to go up there, or . . . [other times] there's places where we cannot work unless we hook up with [a local investigator], you know, because of licensing restrictions . . . ."

Because of this frequent situation, investigators need a place to network so they can find

investigators willing to do the job. This can be tricky, especially when it comes to verifying the

qualifications of someone who lives in another state. The female groups provide an outlet for

this kind of information. As one PI recalls:

> Respondent 07: "I know one time I needed a private investigator in Colorado, and didn't know anyone there, and looked it up in the phone book and called the guy, and, um, they're not licensed there, which I didn't know at the time, but, you know, it didn't turn out well. And, uh, so now, it's great to have, 'Can you recommend somebody from,' you know, say, 'Georgia . . . that does good work?'"

In addition, conferences for mainstream associations may be used as a way to interact with

female PIs from the female PI groups (2).

> Respondent 04: "We have continuing ed that's required now, so a lot of times, we'll do like a conference, and we'll meet up a couple of days ahead of time or we'll stay late or we'll have social events in the evenings."

The groups, though they were created to support women, are not necessarily biased against

men. When an opportunity for a referral comes up, if the best-qualified investigator is a man,

then he is likely to get the recommendation.

> Respondent 22: "You can share resources . . . even though there's no men, they will refer you to a man sometimes. It's not like its anti-men or anything. But if there, if there's a woman doing the same job, they'll refer you to the woman. But if, if the guy's better, then they'll go with the guy."

The aim of these groups is to support the women in these occupations. Thus, female PIs who

are unwilling to help are frowned upon.

> Respondent 08: "There's so much work out there that, you know, if you come across an investigator and you call and say, 'Hey,' you know, 'can I brainstorm with you on this,' and they say no, well, you know, that's not a cool thing to do. I think in our kind of business, there's work out there, um, and most of us, I think 99% of us, are honest hardworking people that want the best for our clients or, you know, and most of us, I believe, abide by the rules and the laws that govern out profession. I think most people want to help one another, you know, to do the, to achieve the goal or to help them. I've rarely come across anyone who's not wanted to, um, help, you know."

The groups also offer a place where women can feel free to socialize about things that are

unrelated to PI work (4).

Respondent 15: "Sometimes we get off topic, um, the female associations . . . [it] tends to happen more on the weekends, 'cause she kind of relaxes the rules on the weekends, and so, you know, we can have funnies and all kinds of other stuff on the weekends, or whatever, but we're more geared towards business during the week."

One investigator appears to frown upon this informality.

Respondent 17: "They seem to be more of a club, like a coffee klatch kind of thing, I don't mean to denigrate them but, some of the, a couple of, one of them is very valuable and I've learned a lot from a couple of the women in there, and, and, gotten some jobs and hired people through it. But there's a lot, a lot of people, who will, there's a number of people on them who, it, it, they don't treat it like business. It's like, 'Oh, here's a picture of my new grandbaby,' and, and stupid, in my opinion, irrelevant stuff that doesn't belong on there, you know? So, but I'm pretty much, I've got my friends and I really don't, I wanted it to be more professional, and, but I've met some, but the good side is I've met some, uh, four or five really great people through them who are very helpful and I can help, but the rest of it, it just gets in the way. And I just, just see their name and I delete their stuff 'cause I know it's useless. And that's sounds cold, but . . . its gets too, I don't know, girly or something."

One feels that female associations are useful if she has a question about a case, but that overall

they do not help her to become more successful.

Respondent 02: "They're good, but I don't base my career on them. Um, they're good for information and bouncing ideas [around] . . . but as far as putting my career in a better [position], you know, and promoting my career more, I don't think that it has done that, but it does give me another outlet for information and bouncing ideas off somebody."

Two felt that these groups are a terrible idea.

Respondent 05: "Associations for women have members that are nothing but a bunch of idiots, as far as I'm concerned. Um, you know, it's sexist. It's discriminatory. And violates, and they're in for a surprise some day when some guy wants to join . . . ."

Overall, female groups look as if they are a response to the minority position that women hold

in PI work. They offer an environment where female PIs can find emotional support as well as

professional information that may assist these women in their careers. They provide the same

functions as official associations except that members will be able to empathize with one

another because of the basis of this membership – gender. In contrast, a few women may not

feel that these groups are useful and that they may even be detrimental to women in private investigation. Though the individual careers of these women may benefit, this bonding may aid in a kind of segregation of men and women in PI work and should be explored more fully in later research.

Summary

Male-female interaction in Martin's (1980) work provided a significant obstacle for policewomen. Because of the occupational overlap, many of the same stereotypes that apply to policewomen also exist for female investigators. These attitudes can result in limited progress for women in PI work. On a broad level, they are part of the occupation. Yet, because of these attitudes, they may be indirectly driven to work with other female investigators and to avoid working with males.

Because male police officers are already in an environment that pigeonholes and stigmatizes women, it is of no surprise that they may also apply this way of thinking to female private investigators. Additionally, these stereotypes may not emerge until women encroach upon what males believe to be "their" work. Female investigators who work on cases that involve the reinvestigation of a criminal matter experience the most resistance from police. Police do not like it when a case they believed they have closed is reopened, especially when it is based on allegations of false charges or innocence. Consequently, this may affect the view of females generally within the occupation.

PI associations fulfill several important functions for investigators. They offer training, continuing education hours, professional and emotional support, a place to network with other investigators, and legislative lobbying for the profession. Most respondents (25) belong to at

least one of these organizations. However, a few simply belong to them in name only (3). These

groups are significant because they offer an environment where male and female investigators

can interact.

Male private investigators seem to hold stereotypical views of females in this

occupation. This may be due to the number of former law enforcement officers that enter

private investigation. Many male ex-LEOs, especially those who are older, shift these old-

fashioned attitudes from females in policing to females in PI work. Almost half of the

respondents (11) had experienced some kind of interaction in which they felt stigmatized

because of their gender. Conversely, a few respondents felt that male PIs were more dangerous

and took greater risks than females. Having a background in policing is assumed to be

beneficial for women. On the other hand, at least two of the five respondents who had this

police experience believed the opposite to be true.

Female PI groups provide a place where women receive much of the same assistance

they receive in general associations. The one exception is that they can feel more comfortable

because their gender will not be an object of stigmatization. They are able to bond

professionally because of this connection. Three respondents attempted to or did start a

female PI group because of their minority status. A few women did balk at this idea. It seems

that these groups can also be a shortcoming for women because they may be viewed as

segregating themselves from men. Ultimately, this can lead to a greater detachment between

male and female investigators.

Male and female interaction in private investigation can be problematic. Because

women are still a minority and a lot of the work can be labor-intensive and dangerous, male

police officers and investigators may feel that women are not able to or should not handle

these occupational components. As a result, the relationships between these groups may

become strained. These attitudes may filter into the norms of communication between men

and women. This may subtly push women to interact with and work with other women as much

as possible, relegating them to the outskirts of the occupation and limiting their professional

acceptance.

Gender and Private Investigation

One issue that was addressed in Martin's (1980) study of policewomen was gender. One

of the hardships females face in police work is role conflict. She found that many times their

role as law enforcement officer and mother overlapped (Martin 1980). In private investigation,

due to the erratic schedule and demands of the job, role conflict may create its own hurdles for

women.

Conflict between Work and Family

There are various aspects of this career that may increase the disparity between a

woman's home life and work life. An unpredictable caseload, long hours, and the demands of

various job duties allow for possible tension between work and family roles. An important

factor appears to be family. Six respondents had no current spouse and no children. For these

individuals, when a job came up after-hours, it simply ate into their personal time. One

divorced PI finds few conflicts between her job and her personal life:

> Respondent 12: "I don't go out and party, you know, I don't do any of that stuff, so as
> far as it really interfering with my personal life? Not so much. You know? It's usually not
> something I can't reschedule or whatever."

Another PI pointed out the advantages of one's single status.

> Respondent 23: "Initially, when I got into the business, I was single, so it didn't matter, you know? And if I was dating someone . . . I'd let 'em know that, you know, if I get a phone call, or you know, if, if I'm sitting there, 'cause, I mean, sometimes a boyfriend or a spouse can be good cover when you're in a restaurant or something like that, but it's like, you know, if they up and leave, I gotta get up and leave, you know? And it, I didn't, I never really had that problem."

However, most of the women in this sample were married (15) and having a spouse that

appreciates the demands of the job is essential.

> Respondent 23: "You don't necessarily have a life, you know? A lot of it, a lot, it's kind of like law enforcement, you know, law enforcement works shifts . . . day shifts and then all of a sudden, you know, the next week, or every few days they shift, the, they change that to night shift . . . . It's stressful on a relationship unless somebody understands . . . . I take people here, and I take 'em jump and run, you know, where my husband gets, he gets furious at times, you know? I can be up at all hours of the night, you know, I may have a client come in at eight o'clock, you know, and I stay out there 'til ten, you know, and 'course he comes out here pacing the floor . . . ."

Spouses must be willing to watch children sometimes at short notice.

> Respondent 13: "You have to have an understanding spouse. Because like with me, with my adoption work that I do, a lot of times, you know, it's five, six, seven o'clock at night, because my office is in my home, you know, well, I'll probably end up taking the call if I think that it's necessary to take, because somebody needs to know something. And so you know, my husband has got to watch the five year old grandson and then I'll run back up to the office and visit for a little bit."

Each of the respondents' spouses appears to have adjusted willingly to their wife's schedule

(15).

> Respondent 02: "I'm used to it now, and my family, my husband, now, he's used to it. Um, with me getting a call, sometimes at one o'clock in the morning, and saying, 'Hey,' you know, 'My wife said she was running to the grocery store and she's been gone two hours,' um, or, we're used to it with me being a bondsman. I'm on-call twenty-four hours a day, so I get phone calls all day and night."

For four investigators, their husbands were in law enforcement or the military. These men

seem to be more accepting of an erratic schedule.

Respondent 23: "I've only been married, right now, five years, and my spouse was law enforcement, so we kind of ran parallel, so he understands . . . ."

Sharing a business with a spouse helps to ease the burden and offers built-in scheduling

flexibility. Three respondents share a PI business with their husband.

Respondent 16: "Having our own agency, um, you know, between my husband and I . . . it's kind of nice not just being a single person where you have to do everything."

Owning an agency (even without a business partner) may make it much easier to plan for this

kind of situation.

Respondent 25: "If you would have asked me that about law enforcement I would have said 'Yeah, absolutely,' you know? That was really difficult. Um, you know, the main thing here is simply because I get to choose my own hours. So, you know, I get to ask my husband, you know, 'Are you going to be around tonight?' 'Okay, I'm gonna need to go out to work.'"

One PI waited until later in life to pursue her career as an investigator due to family

responsibilities.

Respondent 13: "As a paralegal, I kind of wanted to get into that, I, ever since I can remember. I really just thought that that was something I wanted to do, and so after the kids were raised and grown, and I, I thought I'd enter the field . . . ."

Being a mother with no spouse can cause significant hardship. Four women were divorced

when they started their PI career (two never remarried) and were able to relate their struggles

as a single parent.

Respondent 04: "I think just like any, um, woman that's a working mother, especially a single working parent, um, and, you know, my kids' dad's not really involved in their lives, so it's, um, like I said, I've been in the business for thirteen years, so, um, you can do the math and it's most of their childhood, um, you know? They think it's neat to tell their friends what I do, but as far as what they, what I've compromised, I mean, it's a lot. There's, when you have a big case, I mean, I remember a couple of years where my kids went to bed at night on Christmas Eve and I went downstairs and worked all the way through Christmas morning. I mean, again, yeah, it's hard. There's been a lot of times where I've promised my kids brunch or something, and, you know, something big happened, and, um, you know, I sent them to the movies, and apologized, and, but again, it's just, I think in any kind of career, you can have that come up, and you just

have to focus on talking to them . . . . We went on a Disney cruise a few years ago, because, um, I had a big case that kind of took me through Christmas, and it just really, you know, messed up our Christmas, um, and it was really difficult. So you know, I mean, you just try to do your best as a parent to make up for that, and um, you're gonna have, you know, relatives, or friends that, you know, raise their eyebrow, or even, you know, make you feel guilty about it, but it is what it is. You know, you have to be able to pay the bills and you have to be able to have a house for your children to sleep in, and short of winning the lottery, you know, I mean, when it all falls on your shoulders you do the best you can do . . . ."

Additionally:

Respondent 26: "I'm self employed and I'm a single mom, um, and when I, ever since my daughter, who's twenty-four now, was born, um, I always found a way to work at home almost all the time. And it, it's been, it's been a struggle. I could have done a whole lot more with my life, if I hadn't done that. Um, as far as doing it with the investigative, in the early days it was really rough for, um, well, when my, when my ex-husband was still with me, you know, he would, he did most of the running around stuff and I did the stay at home stuff and that worked out okay. But, uh, then, since I've been single, yeah, it can, it can be stressful when you're, you know, stuck down in Orange County on a surveillance, and, you know, you're, you're, you know, two hour drive through rush hour to get to pick your kid up who got out of school and they're like in the second grade and is standing there, you know? Yeah, so I had to set up a very strong support network and, you know, from networking with other moms and, and also, you know, when I was able to, sub work out. That's part of why I developed such a network of subcontractors because if it was something I was pretty sure, like, you know, I mean, my, my son now is almost fifteen so it's no big shakes if I don't pick him up on time. But, like, yesterday I went out and I had a couple of meetings and I had some papers I needed to serve while I was in that direction, and little things like that. Yeah, I mean, I know it's only going to take so long and I'll be able to get back in time to pick him up or whatever . . . I do remember one time I was conducting an investigation over the holidays and it went on and on and on and I remember that in January I'd finally wrapped it up and decided, 'Boy, I better clean out my refrigerator. It smells really scary,' and I found out I had forgotten to cook Thanksgiving dinner and the turkey was rotten. That's how bad it got. And this Thanksgiving was almost the same only I had, I had so many good subcontractors."

For one PI, her start as a PI paralleled her divorce, but she did not have any young children. This

relieved much of the burden.

Respondent 11: "I got into this when I was going through this big ugly divorce. And my daughter was almost fifteen at the time, so I didn't have any little kids at home, and you know, I didn't have a husband anymore . . . ."

Two felt that their job makes it is easier to spend time with family.

> Respondent 24: "There's a trade-off. And the trade-off is I don't have to go to work unless there's a court hearing or I scheduled an appointment. So I can be, if a kid gets sick, I can be home, whereas somebody else has to call their boss, and that's never good."

Further evidence here:

> Respondent 16: "In the beginning . . . we were relatively slow, um, or at least my portion of it was slow so that I, I did have a lot of free time. And I guess, I've used, um, I've used that benefit, because you know, um, with both of the children I was, you know, always so involved in their school and it was so nice not having a nine-to-five job that if a teacher called and said, 'Hey, tomorrow we're having a kid's party can you come?' I'd be like, 'Yeah,' so I always tailored things around, not that I would turn down making money, you know, if I was truly hungry for it, you know, because I wanted to go chaperone a field trip, but that said, I really have the, and still to this day, have the luxury of tailoring my appointments around, you know, certain events that are coming up. So I can really mesh the two very nicely. And my kids always know that I am there for them, and, yes, the company is still viable, and I give my clients, you know, what they expect from us."

One woman works solely as a paralegal, using her license as a way to make her job as a

paralegal easier. Thus, her schedule does not fall outside of the bounds of the nine-to-five

workday. This diminishes possible role conflict:

> Respondent 14: "I personally don't find anything difficult because I'm not, I'm not doing it. But you have to take our continuing education and just going to the, uh, seminars, and speaking with other, um, investigators, I know that it's, it's not an easy line of work, you know? You're, um, a lot of them are doing domestic stuff, or just stuff, or surveillance for insurance companies for worker's comp purposes, so it's not easy. It's not easy trying to do the surveillance, locating the people and then trying to get them on tape without being, you know, uh, identifying yourself. So, um, I personally don't because I 'm not active on the street in it. I personally don't know. I'm aware of just how difficult some of the stuff is."

Finally, age can also play a factor. The youngest respondent was thirty-four and most

respondents (15) were age fifty or older. Therefore, most women were no longer responsible

for their children. The ability to work without this burden may release a strong restraint when it

comes to the job.

Respondent 10: "At my age, I don't have to worry about that. I do what I want to do, and whatever, you know? It's the profession. You follow what your profession requires."

In private investigation, there is a possibility of conflict between one's work role and one's family role. Work-related assignments can cut into the time originally set aside for family. Client intake and unexpected activities can also threaten the family responsibilities of a female PI. However, owning a business with one's husband can be an advantage. One spouse will be able to run the business even when the other is taking care of the family responsibilities. Role strain can be amplified by situations such as single-motherhood. Because of this, older women, or women without young children, may be the best suited to this occupation. A few found they were able to manage the two roles and their incumbent responsibilities easily because of the structure of the job. In fact, they felt that their job was very compatible with the roles of wife and mother, especially if they were able to work out of their own home. Single women with no children were able to move easy from their personal to professional role because of the absence of familial responsibilities.

Gendered Advantage

In addition to acting as a springboard for role conflict, gender also carries with it inherent advantages. There are many tasks that male investigators may have trouble with and many may try and fail on those assignments in which women excel. This may have to do with the traditional expectation regarding an investigator's appearance. Many clients expect PIs to be men and this may make it difficult for men to complete certain cases. By capitalizing on this stereotype, women are able to succeed at some dangerous tasks, such as process serving.

Respondent 11: "I serve a lot of paper . . . [and] I think I'm really good at it because I'm not threatening to anyone. So I think people feel comfortable where, I've heard before people come and go, 'Oh, well . . . you don't like an investigator,' and exactly what do

they look like? They . . . picture big men in suits and, you know, intimidating kind of. So I think it helps a lot that, you know, people feel more comfortable when I come to their door . . . ."

The public does not expect a woman to show up at their front door, especially when that home

is in a bad neighborhood.

Respondent 12: "When I go serve papers, I'll wrap it up in a gift basket or whatever, if it's a hard service, I'll put it in a gift box and go serve it, 'cause nobody ever expects that."

Female investigators are able to use stereotypical impressions of women to get jobs done, such

as capturing necessary surveillance footage.

Respondent 02: "I've even went up to clients that I've worked in workman's comp cases, and actually pulled up to the client's house while they're outside, and set up my video camera, and hit record and got out was talking to the client, and got them to do, you know, whether they were claiming it was a bad back or an arm, or whatever, and got them to use those parts of their bodies that they were claiming they couldn't use . . . . So just kind of manipulating the situation, to getting the information that was needed."

Similarly:

Respondent 12: "Nobody expects a woman to be a private investigator, so it's a lot easier that way. I can go into a barroom with my video camera and my subject can be ten feet away from me, and I can set my video camera on a table and point it, and just hit record and nobody's ever the wiser. You know? It's just nobody suspects."

Another woman associates her ability to get people to open up with her gender. She compares

this to her investigative partner – her husband.

Respondent 16: "I think probably the, one of the key parts of this job is that you really have to be a people person . . . if you're not friendly and outgoing and warm, you know, you're not going to get the same response. I definitely think that it helps that I'm a woman, you know, compared to my husband and myself, you know? I think people relate to me, hands down, better, and again, I think it's a female thing. I think people are just more comfortable because I am not intimidating where my husband is, you know, Mr. Military and looks the part. So I think he's certainly a more intimidating person than I am."

In addition, the following female PI has found that many female victims do not want to speak to

a male PI.

> Respondent 11: "There's kind of a softer side. A lot times it's easier for them [female PIs] to get in and talk to someone. You know? Especially if the victim is female or something, you know? You don't want to talk to some big guy about whatever happened."

Still another has found that male clients choose her because they feel like she will be able to

find answers regarding significant others.

> Respondent 23: "I have found that more men would rather talk to a woman than they would a man. Because I've had so many that'll call me and say, um, 'Well, you're a woman, so, who better to, to find out because you're a woman and you, you're going to know,' and sometimes they're right, you know? Sometimes they're right."

An additional PI believes that her gender makes her preferable to her attorney clients because

of her attention to detail.

> Respondent 12: "The attorneys we work with pretty much prefer to work with women, and that probably comes from the details that we put in our reports. Um, we cross all our t's, dot the i's. Our reports are very thorough. We play, we play by the rules, and so when an attorney gets our report, they're getting something useful, and even if nothing happened, they're still, it looks good, you know?"

Women may simply be more persistent, and hence, "better" at their job than men.

> Respondent 08: "No bias intended but I think women make better investigators than men do. Yeah, I think we're more inquisitive. I think women are more persistent, you know that old adage of, you know, they're not going to quit till they get the guy kind of thing."

Because of the stereotypes associated with private investigation, women appear to be able to

operate more effectively. The respondents found that most people in the public expect a man

to be involved in serving process, doing surveillance, and collecting information covertly.

Therefore, they are able to complete these tasks successfully because of these assumptions.

Moreover, women are able to play off female stereotypes. They can play "dumb" or "lost" in

order to collect information on subjects or to get out of dangerous situations. Those women

who work in more intense situations may be more likely to experience the benefits of their

gender. Yet women who regularly do interviews may find that their gender offers other

advantages. Clients may find that it is easier to open up to a woman. In some circumstances, it

may be easier for a female PI to get a subject's account, such as from a rape victim, because

they are women. Generally, interviewees or clients may be more likely to open up to female

investigators because of traits that females are assumed to hold (i.e., being a good listener,

being easy to talk to). Finally, respondents believe that women make better PIs. They are

harder workers and pay more attention to detail. Women are believed to hold traits that offer

them advantages to which males are not privy.

Summary

Women who are employed outside of the home are at risk of experiencing conflict

between their personal and professional lives. In Martin's (1980) study, policewomen seem to

experience a greater sense of conflict than policemen because of the role women have

traditionally played in the family. The female gender, then, appears to be a disadvantage when

a woman attempts to work as a PI. In their professional lives, however, the female gender may

be an advantage because of the stereotypes and expectations associated with this occupation.

Many women (18) experienced a spillover of their work life into their home life. The

unpredictability of the job and the effect this can have on one's schedule create the possibility

of role conflict. Additionally, long hours can lead to emotional burdens such as stress and guilt.

Based on these findings, women who have children appear to experience more role conflict

than those who may be married with no children. Furthermore, those who are single mothers

(3), who endure most of the responsibility for childcare, may struggle the most to keep these two worlds separate. Some argue that this job makes it easier for them to spend time with their family. Women who feel this way are married. Having a husband takes the financial burden off the wife, and she can then take any time off to take care of familial duties without the worry. Single mothers may not feel that they have this option.

The female gender appears to be a distinct advantage for women in PI work, most notably for women who specialize in the stereotypically masculine job duties. These women are able to collect video and pictures of their subjects without them being aware of this. Few people expect women to be involved in these kinds of activities. Thus, they are able to operate effectively under these conditions. In addition, they are able to play up their gender to obtain necessary information on a subject or to get out of danger. They act out the parts into which American culture has pigeonholed women, such as being incapable of independent thought. Respondents felt that women were simply better at the job because of the time and consideration they paid to their job duties.

In this sample, private investigation is a gendered experience. Role conflict threatens the tenure of females in PI work as evidenced by the accounts of many of the respondents. This is especially applicable to single women with children. The responsibility that they hold in their personal lives may clash with the long hours and unpredictability of PI work. In opposition to this, women may carry an unassuming asset – their gender. By playing upon the traditional (male) image of a private investigator, they are able to amass information both covertly and overtly. By relying on implicit female traits these respondents have been able to successfully

close cases. Therefore, the female gender carries with it both advantages and disadvantages in

the private investigation industry.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study is to parse out the gender barriers present in private investigation. To determine this, PI work will be examined in contrast to law enforcement. In Susan Martin's (1980) analysis of one police department, she found that there are structural and interactional barriers that create a difficult and daunting work environment for policewomen. She also theorizes that the nature of police work and gender role expectations offer an unsuitable mold into which policewomen must fit (Martin 1980). I discovered that though there are structural and interactional barriers present, that the nature of the work in combination with the roles that women are expected to fill, results in much weaker resistance for female PIs. In fact, much of the opposition from males seems to be the remnants of ideas once held in previous law enforcement careers. It is not necessarily an intrinsic characteristic of private investigation.

Furthermore, the work by Reskin and Roos (1990) provides a framework that allows me to consider the location of women in the labor queue in PI work. Reskin and Roos (1990) have outlined many dynamics that help to shape the gender bias of a given labor queue. Cost of labor, gender stereotypes, and an occupation's loss of prestige influence the desirability of female labor (Reskin and Roos 1990). These factors will be applied to the accounts given by the respondents. Consideration of these issues is important for the formulation of potential correlations between gender and job location in private investigation.

Private Investigation as Social Control

The increasing power accorded to the private security industry is theorized to have extensive influence over the behavior of the public (e.g., Shearing and Stenning 1983).

According to accounts provided by the respondents, private investigation holds significant

power regarding social control. Many of the respondents specialized in work that focused on

criminal behavior. They collect material that will be used by prosecution during a criminal trial

(e.g., photographs, witness statements). Civil cases, such as insurance fraud and asset

investigation, are also common. Four specialize in domestic cases, which cover a variety of

concerns: location of biological parents and children, location of runaways or missing persons,

and divorce or custody cases. In addition, there are jobs that affect employment, such as

background checks of job applicants. These duties require an invasion of the subject's privacy.

Examination and retrieval of personal and financial records, covert surveillance of person and

property, and video and audiotape recordings of interaction are used regularly in this field.

These actions, though they may be viewed as dishonest or manipulative to the general public,

are allowed within the bounds of this occupation. The power afforded to private investigators

allows them to influence the behavior of the public. The military manages outside threats and

law enforcement dictates the behavior of those within our society who pose a threat to others.

Private investigation, though it can be used as a supplement to the police and military, is often

asked to supervise conduct that poses no danger to others. It also utilizes methodologies that

provide a third party with information on a wide range of personal activity that may have no

relevance to their investigation. Much of the time, this data will be used to reprimand them in

some way (divorce, loss of a job opportunity).

An ever-widening margin of social control exists within private security (Shearing and

Stenning 1983). Much of this authority is used simply to protect mass private property and to

control behavior while on these premises, such as the use of security guards. The focus mainly

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rests on preventing criminal behavior. However, in private investigation, we can see this authority expanding to involve general deviant behavior. Those who are cheating on spouses or partners are not committing a criminal act, yet this behavior can legally be monitored by investigators and ultimately punished by the client. The scrutiny of non-criminal private behavior by those in this industry may have important implications as the industry continues to grow. The boundaries of social control in the private security industry are much larger than they may appear. Because this occupation is founded on a broad consent of power, any attempts to limit or reign in this power threaten the livelihood of many investigators. Private security has come under great scrutiny in recent years and many legal bills that may restrict the methodologies of this industry are under consideration. If they pass, this could greatly influence the work done by the respondents and possibly their jobs. For instance, limiting access to personal and financial information of citizens would be a detriment to investigative services. Currently investigators are able to obtain much of this information and then hand this over to clients. Ending this practice may injure their economic longevity. Future research should consider this issue.

Comparison to Police Work

From the previous findings, we can see similarities between police work and private investigations. Many of the job tasks are the same - interviewing, surveillance, locating individuals, collecting evidence to be used in court. Many women who were once in law enforcement or in the military were able to move almost seamlessly into PI work due to the skills gleaned from their former occupation. Being formally trained in investigation and interviewing skills gives them an advantage. They can jump into their job duties with little

hesitation. However, this is where the similarities end. First, the nature of the work is different. In police work, officers are obliged to maintain public order and enforce laws. They are vested with the authority to apprehend, question, or remove anyone they feel to be a threat to any individual or group in society. Concurrently, the amount of force an officer can use is related to his/her perception of the intensity of that threat. These factors make law enforcement "men's work" (Martin 1980). Private investigators, in contrast, are endowed with no more authority and right to force than that which is given to the average citizen. This significantly diminishes the masculine image that could be associated with this occupation and that which is so pervasive in law enforcement. In policing, this masculinity works against female officers. Police work is "men's work," so women are at an inherent disadvantage (Martin 1980). In private investigation, the absence of these two factors removes the assumption that women are unable to be a successful PI simply because they are not men.

One's acceptance of the duties of a law enforcement officer means accepting the inherent risks. Since danger is traditionally a trait of male-oriented occupations, policewomen must prove that they are willing to face these kinds of situations. Those who choose to act against gender stereotypes are believed to be working outside their capabilities. Those who choose to accept this stereotype reinforce that stereotype. This makes it difficult for other women to try to disprove it (Martin 1980). Many policewomen are placed into the protective care of male officers or placed in assignments that prevent them from establishing themselves as serious about their careers (Martin 1980). Like police work, many of the tasks in private investigations are dangerous. Surveillance, process serving and, in some cases, interviewing, put these individuals in crime-ridden neighborhoods or in situations where their subjects may

become emotional, even violent. In addition, much of this work is done alone and few arm themselves. Without the veneer of authority and protection of force given to police, this can lead to possible injury and death. However, the above findings indicate that private investigators are able to subcontract work that they cannot or will not do enabling them to maintain a successful business while avoiding unpleasant job tasks. This practice permits them to choose their area of specialty as well as which tasks on which they would actively like to work. Thus, female investigators can distance themselves from danger and remain successful in a way that law enforcement cannot.

There is a variety of job fields in PI work where risk is moderated, if not eliminated. According to the respondents, it appears that PI work is (and may continue to become) more specialized. Some PIs work mainly for courts and attorneys (both civil and criminal) and there are those who work more with domestic issues - divorce, child custody, infidelity, adoption locates, etc. As indicated by the findings, each case can carry with it any number of duties, some being more dangerous than others are. Those who have no desire to be in the way of danger way can alter their area of interest to fit this goal. Those who encounter a case where a risky task is necessary can subcontract another PI for this job. In this sample, few did surveillance. Fewer specialized in it and most relied on male investigators for this task. Thus, job specialization may have an effect on the gender segregation of the industry, dichotomizing the kind of work done by men and women. Like in police work (Martin 1980), men may come to dominate the more prestigious, labor-intensive and riskier areas of investigation, and women may be concentrated in the areas of routine job tasks and emotional management. One important matter is that many of the respondents choose to work on less physically demanding

tasks. This characteristic, then, may be based on choice instead of opportunity. This matter should be considered in later research.

A second difference between police work and PI work is the organizational structure. In police work, there is a hierarchical system based on rank. Officers must prove their abilities in training and then again on the job. Opportunities for promotion are competitive and informal networks can increase one's chances of obtaining higher positions. This provides this occupation with a vestige of prestige. However, in law enforcement, women must battle the stereotypical female role into which they are cast. Consequently, policewomen may be locked out of the necessary informal networks and overlooked by superior officers who disregard their abilities. In this sample, this seems not to be the case. There is no system of rank, except in the case of agencies, where there is an employer and an employee. The only apparent upward movement would be from employee to agency-owner or to self-employed. One can receive credits in other specialties through continued training but his/her position does not change significantly. One's success is based mostly on past cases and securing future clients. "You're only as good as your last job" was a common feature in the respondents' business models. In private investigations, women may be able to make greater progress in the occupation due to this lack of structural barriers. An important factor in this sample appears to be self-employment. Most of the respondents (22) were self-employed. Those who are self-employed are able to run their business as they see fit. In a large agency setting, there are more opportunities for discrimination and women may be hesitant to work in this atmosphere, especially if a male heads it. Two respondents related experiences of direct discrimination from a male agency-owner, but most lauded the freedom they had in self-employment. This may be

a distinct draw for females, who traditionally are burdened with familial responsibilities. They are able to cut their day short and work out of their own home if they choose. This would ease the conflict that could arise between their role as PI and wife or mother. This should be examined more fully in future studies.

Training and education for female PIs is also different from those in police work. Martin (1980) found that policewomen had either a high school degree (or its equivalency) or some college. In this sample, all respondents had at least some college and the highest degree one had attained is a master's degree. In law enforcement, relatively extensive training is mandatory; however, in PI work, little to no training is required. In many cases where respondents were required to receive training, they were able to satisfy that stipulation with proof of relevant employment experience or with an applicable degree. Because of the lack of regulated training conditions, education may prove to be a tipping point between those who do well and those who do not. Education may help to push one forward in her career because of skills acquired while in the education environment – writing ability, computer skills, problem solving, autonomy. Those who have only a high school degree may be at a disadvantage. In law enforcement, the time spent in the training academy and formal guidelines may cancel out any disparities created by education.

Furthermore, the benefits in private investigation are few and far between. Because of the nature of police work, officers are able to rely on job-related health coverage and retirement benefits (Martin 1980). In this sample, women were not provided with these allowances. They have to pay for their own insurance plan, rely on their husband's plan, or go without health coverage. This appears to be related to one's employment status. For those who

are self-employed, they do not qualify for a group plan and may not feel that it is feasible to pay

for their own insurance. Retirement also is a concern. It is up to individual investigators to save

money, or plan on working until they are no longer physically or mentally able. This factor may

have an impact on the kinds of people who wish to join this occupation. The number of cases

one can possibly receive makes PI work a lucrative occupation. On the other hand, the absence

of long-term benefits may discourage a number of potential employees. People who have

families to support may not feel that this occupation offers adequate compensation. When this

factor is combined with the absence of licensing requirements that are present in many states

and the few formal prerequisites (indicating a lack of prestige), potential applicants may

discover that this job may not be worth the effort. As a result, this occupation may draw on a

specific pool of potential candidates. Those who have retired from a previous career (need a

job to meet their monetary needs and/or physical limitations), those who have another career

(obtain a license as a supplement), and those who are older or those who have few family

responsibilities (do not need to provide for dependants) may be more likely to choose this

occupation. Thus, it may be that for many potential job candidates, they turn away from PI

work because it may be is less of a career and more of a job. In policing, women may face

increased competition from males who are drawn to the high level of prestige and possibility of

advancement and increased compensation (Reskin and Roos 1990). Because private

investigation generally lacks these characteristics, women have been able to infiltrate this

occupation.

Third, interactional barriers between policing and private investigation differ.

Interaction between males and females in law enforcement has created stress, frustration, and

even impediments for policewomen (Martin 1980). Verbal cues, non-verbal cues, and sexual

discrimination color the relationship between female officers and male colleagues. In addition,

policewomen are routinely locked out of informal social networks that would provide

opportunities for career advancement. There have been similar experiences for female PIs,

though not to the extent found in police work. Many of the comments and taunts have

occurred during conferences and seminars or through association forums. Many women have

come to rely on female PI groups as a way to find support because of this. In these groups,

women can find emotional encouragement, case assistance, and business advice. These groups

appear to play a significant part in the lives of most of the women. References and subcontracts

come from these groups. In contrast to law enforcement, these groups can have a direct effect

on individual success. Many groups that provide training and support for female law

enforcement, but they may not be able to immediately influence one's job career. This can lead

to a greater influx of women into PI work, because they are able to find this kind of support.

Conversely, the number of respondents that claim membership to a female PI group may also

signify an important social detachment of women from men. Because of the strong association

linking social and professional ties among respondents, this social separation may also lead to a

professional disconnection between men and women. Because women are able to rely on

other women regarding their work, it may aid in the isolation of those women from men,

widening the interactional gap between male and female investigators.

Finally, gender role conflict has been found to affect females in law enforcement

(Martin 1980), yet is greatly diminished in private investigation. In Martin's (1980) analysis, she

concluded that there were two roles available to females in police work: POLICEwomen and

policeWOMEN. POLICEwomen are women who choose to work against the female stereotype (Martin 1980). They take on the traits associated with males and those inherent to police work itself: courage and toughness. PoliceWOMEN hold on to female traits and accept the roles given to them by their male counterparts (Martin 1980). In PI work, this does not appear to be a necessary choice. None of the respondents indicated that they had to choose between their femininity and their job. Most spoke of the advantages their gender brings to the job. They are able to maneuver with less difficulty within the work itself. The (male) image of the traditional private investigator gives females a chance to complete jobs that may otherwise be problematic. They are also able to play up to stereotypes of femaleness to complete tasks and obtain evidence (e.g., being a good listener, appearing unintimidating). Many felt that this provided them with on-the-job benefits to which male investigators were not privy. In addition, many found that clients preferred women, attributing this inclination to qualities they associated to their gender - attention to detail, persistence, and deference to laws and regulations, avoiding unnecessary risk. The female gender in PI work can be viewed in many ways as an advantage. Policewomen are not able to enjoy this. They are faced with the belief that law enforcement officers should be men, whereas private investigators could be women.

In Martin's work (1980), many participants lamented the struggle they faced when trying to mesh their duties as a wife and mother with those of a law enforcement officer. Because women are traditionally the keepers of home and family, policewomen would be more likely to have to choose one role over the other, whereas male officers would not (Martin 1980). Thus, women in police work must strike a balance between their police duties (which mirror that of males) with those of the home (which usually far outweigh their husbands)

(Martin 1980). Ambitious women come up against even greater challenge (Martin 1980). Some

policewomen find that seeking out a ,marital partner in law enforcement eases the conflict.

Most of the respondents have, or had been in a marriage at some point during their job tenure.

Half had children. Several pointed out, much like in Martin's book (1980) that having an

understanding spouse was the key to maintaining a balance between work and home. Busy

schedules and spontaneous cases can cause chaos in the homes of many of the respondents.

However, those who were ex-law enforcement found little difficulty because they were used to

the work. Two had husbands who were also in law enforcement and one was a judge. Three

respondents worked alongside their husbands. Logically, this eased the inconvenience that the

job can cause because they are able to share (and to hand off) the responsibility of the

business. Single mothers seem to be in the most precarious position when managing these two

roles. Reliance on other mothers and family members helps to ease the burden, but does not

eliminate it. However, due to the structure of the job, and the absence of an employer, these

women can alter their schedule based on family emergencies or obligations. Very few

respondents were in a position where they had to take on a job. This is quite dissimilar to the

occupation of policing, where one's involvement in family emergencies and obligations can

threaten one's career. Consequently, law enforcement can be discouraging for the number of

women who are interested in this occupation, yet feel a pull toward being present for their

family. In private investigation, the occupation appears to be more accommodating to one's

personal life and thus causes less role conflict.

The Advantaged and Disadvantaged

In PI work, there are a few factors, which create an advantage for those who hold them. First, there are those who received some socialization before entering the occupation. Three women had received anticipatory socialization from a loved one or significant other. This prepared respondents for the structure of the occupation. They were exposed to the duties necessary to complete a case and were able to develop a deeper understanding of the occupation beforehand. Those who held a job relevant to PI work (17) before obtaining their license also benefited from this work experience (military, law enforcement, paralegal/pretrial investigation, or bill collection). Of the five respondents who had law enforcement experience, most were able to use this to satisfy their probationary hours. They were able to start working on their own much more quickly than those who had to go through training. Those who had worked in one of these fields were able to begin their work easily because of their skill set (17). They knew how to go about investigating cases (either generally like in law enforcement or in specific ways like bill collection); thus, their learning curve was much shorter than those who had no previous socialization. Those who had no previous experience or knowledge of PI work had to spend more time learning the techniques and may spend more time developing their skills. This leaves them with less time to focus on their cases. Previous socialization looks to be important this occupation.

Second, the specialization in which many respondents work may provide individual advantages in the occupation. Those who focus on criminal and/or civil investigation (8) may encounter less opposition from males because the assumption that females are incapable of assisting with a legal investigation is less likely to be present. Additionally, the schedule of many

of the legal investigators appears to fit the nine-to-five work schedule. The work that is done

afterhours, such as writing, can be done at home. Therefore, there may be less role conflict

present for these females. Those who work on domestic cases (4) are more likely to face

resistance from other males because of the male-oriented nature of duties, such as

surveillance. Female PIs who specialize in domestic work may meet unwelcoming male PIs,

leading to increased frustration (and more competition) for these women.

Third, women who are married have an advantage (15). Married women are more likely

to have a second income on which to fall back, if their business began to suffer. They are more

able to weather the storm than those without another income. Many married women in the

sample also relied on their husbands for health coverage (7). Furthermore, married women

have someone to watch the children if they need to go out on a job. Thus, single mothers are

the most disadvantaged in this occupation. The conflict between the two roles is intensified for

them. The unpredictability of day-to-day work, the volatility of the caseload, and the possible

lack of group benefits can be a turn-off for single mothers. They may be looking for a job that

includes guaranteed pay as well as benefits because of their situation. They also face increased

role conflict. The single PIs with children (3) encountered situations where they had to choose

between working and spending time with their children. This can lead to feelings of stress and

guilt, leading to an exit from the occupation.

Fourth, self-employment may be an important benefit for females. In self-employment,

females are able to decide for themselves what kinds of cases on which they wish to work. They

have more freedom. They can determine when they will work and where. In an occupation

where the majority of workers remain male, self-employment may be of assistance to women.

Women may be discouraged from working at male-owned agencies because of the possibility of unequal treatment. Being self-employed allows them to achieve success on their own terms.

Finally, female PI groups provide women with a place to garner support both socially and professionally. This kind of reinforcement may be another important feature in the movement of women into this occupation. Through these groups, they are able to establish professional connections with other female PIs locally and across the country. As a result, they receive referrals and subcontracts and many develop reliable networks for regular job assistance. Thus, social capital may also play a crucial role in the career of a female PI. Male investigators may not have access to this set of resources.

Master Status and PI Work

Status also has important implications within this dissertation. Everett C. Hughes (1945) forms the basis for our understanding of this concept. Master status is a socially established position that can carry with it defined formal or legal rights, such as a physician (Hughes 1945). The medical license determines the rank of the physician and there are expectations for traits that accompany it. For the physician, one would expect the person to be male, white, and Protestant (Hughes 1945). When one who holds the master status does not satisfy the expected auxiliary characteristics, then that person is viewed as unsuccessful within his/her master status (Hughes 1945). If a physician is black or female (or both) then (s)he may only receive marginal acceptance (Hughes 1945). In some cases, certain subordinate traits may become one's master status. These characteristics then take priority (Hughes 1945; Becker 1963). Being black or female becomes the overriding trait of an individual, not their medical degree (Hughes 1945). For female private investigators, it appears that being a female is their master status. Many

recounted experiences that indicate that they are viewed primarily by their gender, then by their job, even by their (female) colleagues. In certain professions, this leads to the marginalization of females, such as in policing (Martin 1980). Being identified as female, instead of an officer, prevents their full acceptance into law enforcement (Martin 1980). In private investigation, however, the female gender status expectation may make women professionally more effective. Policewomen do not seem to have this opportunity because of the male-oriented nature of the work. Being female puts policewomen at a widespread disadvantage (Martin 1980). Since the public does not expect a female to be involved in private security work, female PIs are able to capitalize on this expectation, especially within covert work. Women are able to end a case successfully and prove themselves as legitimate investigators (e.g., Erikson et al. 2000). This can lead to future job references and a more complete acceptance within the occupation. The master status of female PIs may be their gender, yet this may make them more effective in their job and over time their master status may shift from their gender to their occupation.

Labor Queues

In Reskin and Roos' (1990) analysis of occupational gender segregation, they argue that the feminization of both traditionally male and mixed-sex occupations can be explained by labor queues and job queues. Labor queues sort sets of workers according to how attractive they are to potential employers (Reskin and Roos 1990). Job queues, on the other hand, arrange jobs by their appeal to potential employees (Reskin and Roos 1990). Sex segregation in occupations indicates that labor queues have been transformed into gender queues (Reskin and Roos 1990). Reskin and Roos (1990) offer explanations as to why women have been able to

move into traditionally male occupations. In private investigation, evidence can be found for each of these. First, they argue that when the growth of an occupation outweighs the number of available workers, then it is more likely that those lower in the labor queue will be recruited (Reskin and Roos 1990). The private security industry continues to expand (Shearing and Stenning 1983). This growth has occurred in the private investigator occupation as well. In 1969, there were approximately 32,000 investigators in the U.S. (Rand Corporation 1971, Vo. 1) and in 2006 that number had increased to a little over 51,000 (Bureau of Labor Statistics). It is projected to increase another 18% before 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics). This, in combination with the overall growth of the private security industry, signifies that the workers who would be most qualified for this occupation (traditionally males) may not be able to fill all available employment openings. Thus, employers may look to the next qualified group in the hierarchy - women. With increased opportunities over time, there are women who have obtained at least some college and/or military or law enforcement experience. Hence, women should have adequate work history, education, and skill sets to work effectively in this occupation. If employers cannot fill these positions with enough of the most desirable employees - males, then they may be looking to females to take their place.

Moreover, the lack of benefits and low levels of advancement in private investigation may affect the rating of this occupation in the workers' job queues. Some of the most qualified men may not feel that it pays adequate compensation. It can offer a high salary, though the occupation may turn away those who are looking for job prestige and career development, group health coverage, and a pension plan. Very few respondents had a health or a retirement plan through their business. Most relied on their husband's benefits or went without them.

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Thus, the shortage of these benefits may encourage qualified men to rank this occupation

lower in their job queue, making the way for women to enter in their place. Women may rank

this occupation higher in their job queues because of a lack of formal licensing requirements in

addition to the schedule flexibility and job freedom. Women traditionally look for jobs that will

create little conflict with their personal life and may feel that private investigation ranks high on

this list. As a result, when the opportunity arises, they may be more likely to take it.

Second, Reskin and Roos (1990) theorize that increased demand for women affect their

ranking within employers' labor queues. Many respondents discussed the greater demand for

female PIs. Respondents felt that their clients might feel more comfortable with women. For

instance, those who work in legal investigation stated that lawyers preferred women based on

characteristics they associated with their gender – more meticulous, better temperament. Most

declared that their gender made them better at their job. "They not only conceal their roles as

investigators; they also may use prevailing ideas about gender as they work. One woman

described her favorite investigation strategy as 'dumb little blonde, works every time'" (Erikson

et al. 2000, p. 309). Prevailing stereotypes that guide our impressions of the typical private

investigator can be useful for women throughout the course of their job.

Likewise, many of the duties in PI work could be viewed as female work. Erikson et al.

(2000) discussed the presence of "female targets." Some sites may be more "appropriate" for

female investigators. This included the make-up section in a department store, a mall, or the

women's wing of a psychiatric hospital (Erikson et al. 2000). In private investigation, this could

refer to "female cases" – divorce, child custody, marital infidelity, adoption cases, etc. There are

times, due to the level of client interaction or emotional work, when employers/clients may feel

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that women are more appropriate. Clients may also choose a woman believing that she will

better understand what needs to be done. As a consequence, the issue of gender homophily

may also play a part here.

The tasks in private investigation may also be very mundane (background checks,

obtaining records, interviewing, clerical work, client intake) and some employers may view

women as the best workers for these positions. It may be relatively uncomplicated work and

employers can pay women much more cheaply than they can pay men. This would help to

account for why lawyers would prefer female PIs.

Third, Reskin and Roos (1990) contend that declining discrimination and a change in

attitude contribute to women's movement into male-oriented occupations. Because PI work,

like other occupations, can no longer discriminate against women, more women have been

able to take advantage of these employment opportunities. Since the rise of the feminist

movement, there has been a shift in the social stigma for women who choose a career outside

of the home (Reskin and Roos 1990). Due to the lack of authority and force, there is also little

motivation to exclude women informally. Reskin and Roos (1990) point out that a decrease in

occupational unions helped to diminish the structural barriers for many jobs. The increase in

educational opportunities for women and the movement they have made into the labor market

may also remove much of the stigma for women who want to work in this occupation.

Furthermore, there are many PI groups that have been created to cater to women. The support

that these groups offer may encourage women to join this occupation. These groups can be

used as a way to counteract any discriminatory behavior by male PIs. The members of these

female PI groups are able to call upon one another for job references and case assistance. This

increases the possibility of success for individual female PIs and may assist in reducing the stigma for future females who want to join this occupation.

Fourth, in many masculine occupations, there has been a decrease in the amount of resistance by male workers (Reskin and Roos 1990). The respondents generally felt that much of the resistance to their presence in PI work came from older males, many of whom are former law enforcement. Several pointed out that younger males are usually much easier to work with. Additionally, many women reported on their ability to work closely with male investigators with few problems. This indicates that over time women have been able to enter into the occupation without being viewed as a threat. This may be spurred on by the continued specialization of the occupation. "Because security clients are numerous and varied and demand a variety of services, security companies are numerous, varied, and little integrated. Thus, security cannot maintain a homogeneous view of gender (and a strong resistance to women) as effectively as the more united public protective services" (Erikson et al. 2000, p. 303). This allows women to move more easily into this occupation. Indeed, the respondents described the occupation as varied in its focus and methodologies. Consequently, women are able to join specializations without having to dispel negative beliefs about the female gender.

Fifth, the labor supply of women may relate to a transformation in the labor market (Reskin and Roos 1990). Women, over time, have been able to increase the size of their representation as potential employees (becoming more qualified through job experience and education). However, this does not ignore the reason behind their movement into this job pool – increased demand and opportunity (Reskin and Roos 1990). This movement stimulated "natural forces" in the labor market. As the first wave of women moved into male-oriented

occupations, they set the stage for later movement (Reskin and Roos 1990). As women become educated, they also become potential workers, and as women become workers, other women are encouraged to become qualified. This may help to account for the high number of respondents who were offered jobs or encouraged to take PI jobs by other PIs (some of whom were also women). The reliance on female PI associations also helps to explain some of this phenomenon. Women who want to get into the occupation are able to rely on groups of women who are already employed. These women can offer insights into the occupation based on their experiences. Over time, female PIs have been able to refute the some of the stereotypes that women are not qualified for this kind of work.

Finally, there may also be segregation within an occupation that appears to be desegregating. This affects the outward appearance of integration (Reskin and Roos 1990; Bielby and Baron 1986). For example, Erikson et al. (2000) found that male and female investigators do the same jobs but at different sites. Census data give us limited gender estimates of this occupation and as Bielby and Baron (1986) point out, occupational gender estimates may conceal any segregation[13]. Private investigation includes many specializations and these job niches may be associated with gender. Like Erikson et al. (2000), much of the work examined in this study appears to fit the definition of "female" work. It could be that as more women move into PI work, more men are accepting specializations that enhance the masculinity of the job. As a result, women are hired to do jobs that are viewed as more appropriate for women (e.g., interviewing, writing reports, obtaining records, dealing with clients). However, most of these women were self-employed (22). Therefore, it could be that

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[13] However, Bielby and Baron argue that sex segregation is evidenced by the differential titles given to men and women who are doing the same job within the same occupation (1986). I am not making this claim.

these women are choosing to take on jobs that are "female- oriented." Women may feel more comfortable working with women or on "female targets." Most of the respondents chose to subcontract jobs that would put them in harm's way (process serving) or jobs that are viewed as easier for males (surveillance). This also relates to collaborative efforts among female PIs. Respondents spoke of the importance of female PI associations, as well as their relationships with other female private investigators. Consequently, increased job specialization combined with a higher percentage of women, may lead to greater separation between males and females.

Private Investigation and Race

Even though the focus of this study is gender and work, the issue of race may be an important issue. None of the respondents in this study is black and this may hold sociological significance. The labor market studies referenced here have been used for a discussion of gender, but this problem can include a racial component. Race, like gender, can affect one's place in the labor queue (Reskin and Roos 1990; Thurnow 1969) as well as one's opportunities in the occupational structure[14] (Blau and Duncan 1967). Occupational opportunity for black Americans is disproportionately lower than it is for whites (Blau and Duncan 1967). This is due to the class of one's family of origin, level of education, and job history (Blau and Duncan 1967). Other research has pushed deeper into this issue by examining the intersection of gender, race, and economic position (Branch 2007). The disadvantage of black women in the American job market is two-fold: they are both women and black, thus removing any group associations on

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[14] Blau and Duncan (1967) controlled for these three factors in their analysis and found that blacks remained in a position of disadvantage; they argue that race can have an affect separate from that qualifications and occupational performance.

which white women (being white) and black men (being men) are able to capitalize (Branch 2007). Based on data from the Census combined with the findings from my sample, there appears to be a racially biased labor queue. In every state, (excluding Washington D.C.), the majority of all private investigators are white and in all states but three the majority of female investigators are white (Washington D.C.[15], Hawaii[16], and Mississippi[17]). This may be explained by the class differences that have been found to exist between these two groups. Job description by the respondents, as well as work history, indicate a middle class bias within this occupation. Persistence, initiative, dedication, and hard work are qualities demonstrated by the respondents (if not overtly discussed). In addition, the skills on which they rely while come with a middle-class, college-educated upbringing – familiarity with computers, adequate writing ability, and capacity to network with others in the occupation. Additionally, PIs must also have reliable transportation. PI work can involve a lot of driving and one must be able to afford a car (and remain inconspicuous in that car). Work history also provides a stepping-stone for PI work. Many respondents were exposed to the occupation through a previous job. Finally, for those states with licensing requirements, a background check was a basic stipulation. The disproportionate number of blacks in lower classes and the association between social class and criminal involvement may also play a part in this trend. Those who have a criminal background are going to be less likely to be part of this occupation. Therefore, the historical lack of opportunities black males and females have been faced with (Blau and Duncan 1967) helps to explain the racial disproportion in PI work.

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[15] In D.C., the percentage of Black non-Hispanic is 47.5%.
[16] In Hawaii, the percentage for both Asian non-Hispanic and White non-Hispanic females is 4.1%.
[17] In Mississippi, the percentage for both White non-Hispanic and Black non-Hispanic is 8.6%.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

There are several constraints within this dissertation. First, the sample size is relatively small. Thus, many of the theoretical correlations previously established merely offer the underpinning for future research. Though limiting the size of the sample allowed me to gather a "thick description," it does restrict generalizability. Future studies should include a greater number of respondents to temper this effect.

Additionally, the control variable used in this dissertation was women in law enforcement. The experiences of male investigators are also significant to the understanding of this occupation. Any assumptions made about male investigators are based on the respondents' accounts as well as on research on law enforcement. Descriptions of interactions with males and the meaning behind these interactions is founded solely on the perceptions of the respondents. To have balanced view of the power structure within the occupation, upcoming studies should include men in the sample.

Finally, a more focused investigation should be considered. This dissertation took a holistic view of PI work. This is useful for the formation of an intellectual yardstick for the scholarly examination of the occupation. Forthcoming analyses must offer more detailed views of these individual issues. Matters such as socialization, the structure of PI work, interaction between male and female investigators, and the ever-widening boundaries of social control in the private security industry are significant and need to be understood in reference to the gendered experience.

Conclusion

In *Breaking and Entering* (1980), Susan Martin examines the progress women have

made into public law enforcement and outlines the obstacles that have kept them from moving

farther into the occupation. Based on the similarities to public policing, private investigation

may carry these same concerns. Some of the issues Martin (1980) considers are structural and

interactional barriers, the nature of the work, and the gender role conflict. In this dissertation, I

interviewed twenty-six female PIs in order to gauge the kinds of barriers they encounter as well

as their intensity. Private investigation appears to provide fewer obstacles for women.

Respondents who had previous job training and women who are married seem to have a

distinct advantage than those who have had no relevant job experience and who are without a

spouse. Women who are single mothers appear to be at a disadvantage due to the level of

family responsibility and the absence of someone on which to financially fall back. Reskin and

Roos (1990) provide this analysis with a way to broadly interpret these issues through the

paradigm of the gendered labor market. Many occupations that were once held by males have

feminized. This is due, in part, to structural changes within these jobs, which raise the ranking

of females within the labor queue. PI work gives evidence for the existence of an increasingly

feminized occupation. However, because of the limitations of size and scope in this

dissertation, it should only provide a starting point for research on this topic. For researchers to

have a solid understanding of the experiences of women male-oriented jobs, it is important

that we research the concerns outlined within this dissertation. This analysis lays the

groundwork for future study of this occupation, other male-oriented occupations, and the

gendered labor market.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Resp #	Age	Education	Marital Status	Children	Location	Years Licensed
1	62	Bachelor's	Separated	N	CA	24
2	34	some college	Married	Y	TN	6
3	49	Master's	Married	N	CA	27
4	42	Bachelor's	Divorced	Y	KS	13
5	60	Associate's	Widowed	Y	CA	37
6	60	Bachelor's	Divorced	Y	AZ	5
7	53	some college	Married	N	CA	9
8	53	Associate's	Married	N	OR	15
9	54	some college	Divorced	N	CA	14
10	60	Bachelor's	Married	Y	CA	30
11	39	some college	Married	Y	OR	6
12	40	some college	Divorced	N	LA	4
13	45	some college	Married	Y	KS	5
14	54	some college	Married	N	LA	5
15	38	Master's	Single	N	TX	5
16	44	Bachelor's	Married	Y	FL	11
17	54	Bachelor's	Married	N	CA	4
18	50	Bachelor's (3)	Divorced	Y	MO	4
19	58	Bachelor's	Single	N	AZ	30
20	41	Bachelor's	Single	N	KS	16
21	54	Bachelor's	Married	N	MS	0
22	52	some college	Domestic Partner	N	LA	4
23	57	some college	Married	Y	LA	14
24	36	some college	Married	Y	OR	6
25	46	some college	Married	Y	NJ	3
26	56	some college	Separated	Y	CA	7

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

Date
Location
Name
Age
Race
Education
Marital Status
How long worked as PI

What do your general job duties include?

When you first began: How did you come to apply for this job?

Were you actively looking to get involved in investigations/security work?)

What kind of experience did you have with law enforcement or private security/investigations before you applied?

What kinds of jobs (other than public or private security/investigations) have you had in the past?

Do you feel like your previous jobs prepared you for PI work?

What kind of formal training (if any) did you receive?

How do you feel about the training you received?

What other lessons would you have liked to have seen during training?

Is there anything for which you felt unprepared?

Were there any tasks on the job that cause you problems or that you find difficult?

Were there any activities/requirements that you feel you were good at?

What kind of informal training did you receive?

Did anyone offer their help once you were on the job?

How do you feel about recruits having a "mentor"?

If you had a mentor, do you feel that it was a very experience?

What do you like about your job duties?

What do you dislike about your job duties?

Are you allowed to carry a gun?

Are you allowed to use your gun? In what instances?

Do you have any involvement with the police? If so, when and in what way?

Have you encountered any problems when working with the police?

Do you work with other investigators at any time, while on the job? If so, in what capacity?

Do you belong to any associations relevant to your industry?

Do you belong to any female groups relevant to your industry?

If so, what do these associations do for you (how are they beneficial)?

What have your experiences with male PIs been like?

Do you every find a conflict between your personal and professional life?

What are the benefits like for investigations?

How long do you plan to stay in investigations?

How picky can you be about the jobs you take?

Where do you find clients?

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM

<div align="center">
Principal Investigator: Jessica S. Pearce
225-578-1114
M-F
9 am – 2 pm
</div>

The goal of this study is to explore the experience of women who work as private investigators, including recruitment, training, and on-the-job experience. Private investigators were chosen because there is little research that has examined this occupation. I will relate the data I collect to a larger issue: the connection between gender and work.

In order to collect information, I will ask a series of open-ended questions (there are no right or wrong answers) regarding your experience in investigation. All the information I will gather today will be held as strictly confidential. Also at any time during the interview if you would wish to stop just say so and we will terminate the interview. Would you have any problems with me recording the interview?

The study has been discussed with me and all my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding study specifics to the investigator. If I have questions about subjects' rights or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Mathews, Chairman, LSU Institutional Review Board, (225)578-8692. I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the researchers' obligation to provide me with a copy of this consent form if signed by me.

Participant Signature:_____ Date:_____

APPENDIX D

PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS OF RESPONDENTS

Paralegal (x7)
Pretrial investigator
Bartending (x2)
Nurse
P.E. Instructor
Journalist
Military Journalist
Bill Collection (x2)
Parent educator for school district
Professional dancer
Waitressing
Dancer at themed cocktail bar
Nanny
Car dealership service lane employee, general operations
Employed under oral surgeon
Worked with people with disabilities
PR marketing
Event planning for museum
Interior design
Photography
Accounting
Counselor at treatment center
Express mail coordinator for post office
Traffic coordinator for European wine importing company
Hotel Maid
Self-employed in construction as painter and new construction site clean-up
Sewed solar panels
Telemarketer
Inventory for seafood brokerage company
Internal expeditor for cost corporation
Forklift operator
Worked in paint factory
Apartment maintenance
IT support
Real estate agent
Cell phone call center
Shelter manager

VITA

Jessica Simpson Pearce received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Louisiana at

Lafayette in 2005. She then went on to Louisiana State University where she received her

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State University during the spring 2010 commencement. During her time at LSU, she published

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International Journal of Crime, Criminal Justice, and Law. She has also gained valuable teaching

experience, instructing several courses, Sociology of Deviance, Introduction to Statistics, and

Current Social Problems, during her graduate tenure. Her scholarly interests include gender and

crime, deviant subcultures, and gender and occupation.