

The gendering of part-time work in Victoria Police

Annije van Den Ham (BBus)

Faculty of Business and Enterprise

Dr Sue Lewis

Faculty of Life and Social Sciences

Swinburne University of Technology

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Declaration

I declare that this dissertation contains no material accepted toward any other degree, diploma or similar award, in the university or institution and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text.

Further, any opinions of individual employees of Victoria Police quoted in this dissertation are personal views, and are not necessarily representative of Victoria Police in general, unless specifically stated.

Researcher: Annigje van Den Ham

Signed: _____

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For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.

— Audre Lorde (1984)

It is the nature of privilege to find ever deeper places to hide.

— Elizabeth Spelman (1988)

Abstract

In police services, both in Australia and internationally, attention has been focused on increasing the representation of women. The diversity approach favored by Human Resource Management and organisational theorists has contended that flexible working practices, specifically part-time employment, are a crucial mechanism to achieving this. However, as this study highlights, part-time work has become increasingly sex-segregated and associated with lower status and lower paid work, resulting in poor career prospects relative to full-time employment.

The current study draws upon quantitative research collected in Victoria Police in 2004 exploring the experiences of, and attitudes toward part-time work (Victoria Police 2004). Utilising Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organisation as a theoretical framework for investigation, a feminist comparative research methodology was applied to secondary data, using gender as an explanatory construct.

This research suggests that part-time employment is a 'double jeopardy' for women, as gender inequalities inherent to policing are further exacerbated. Part-time women have lower organisational status, compared to men. Women chose part-time work to care for young children, whereas men do so for personal and career interests. Relatedly, police women and men work part-time differently; men work part-time for less time and enjoy more flexible shift arrangements, compared to women. Finally, full-time women and men deem part-time work to be of less value than full-time.

The application of a feminist comparative research methodology to gender-neutral research which emphasised diversity, offers a unique insight into a deeply gendered organisation, with mutually reinforcing structures and processes that serve to persistently uphold and repeatedly reproduce women's marginalised place in the organisation, albeit in a new form. The growth of part-time work in Victoria Police, taken up predominately by women, if not closely monitored and adjusted accordingly, may be reinforcing the low value of part-time work and thereby exacerbating the gender inequality that already exists.

1. Recruitment of women into Victoria Police

One of the significant barriers to retaining women in police work is the limited provision of part-time work (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). “It is a concession granted rather than a managerial opportunity” (p. 38) and often involves career compromise because training and promotion opportunities are hampered (Edwards & Robinson 2001). “To date, some emphasis has been placed on ensuring that part-time work is available to police on their return from maternity leave to assist women officers in returning to work after having a child” (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 32) as this was very much part of finding new solutions for the premature loss of women officers (Prenzler 1996). However, available evidence suggests part-time work in policing remains subject to managerial prerogative and is, in effect, a career limiting pathway (Edwards & Robinson 2001). For example, while there has been a part-time employment policy in place in Victoria Police since 1996, in 2003 just over three percent of police officers worked in part-time positions and nine percent of Victoria Police public service employees (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 33). More recently, this figure increased to just below six percent of police officers working part-time and eleven per cent of Victoria Police public service employees (Victoria Police 2007b). Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007, p. 32) observe that “this is still much lower than for the total Australian workforce where 29 percent of all employees are employed on a part-time basis” (Morgan 2005).

Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007, p.32) found that “it is not just the scarcity of part-time police positions that presents an issue. Part-time work in police services is concentrated in the lower ranks and levels of police officers and Victorian Public Sector (VPS) employees. Women account for the overwhelming proportion of part-time employees in general and in police services in particular, with most of the available part-time jobs in police services being held by women and located at the bottom of the police hierarchy in non-operational positions”. Typically, part-time work does “confer lower status on the employee, regardless of the job” which suggests that part-time work is perceived as of less value than full-time work and marginalised accordingly (Edwards & Robinson 2001, p. 438). “The problem is not so much the inherent work value of these jobs, but rather the poorer conditions and the

disadvantages that are associated with them relative to full-time work” (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 33). The associated feminisation of part-time work presents an undesirable alternative to traditional full-time employment, and in effect limits career progression. Unsurprisingly, the limited uptake of part-time work by men, even where it is apparently available, may well be influenced by perceptions of its marginal status within police work.

The policy and practice of part-time work in Victoria Police came under scrutiny in an internal review (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). The main aim of the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) was to identify the policy and cultural barriers that exist in relation to part-time work and specific remedies to assist with the integration of part-time work in the organisation. Flexible work practices had been previously identified as a priority under the Victoria Police strategic plan (Victoria Police 2002).

The review was a comprehensive one, utilising a multi-method approach of documentary analysis, preliminary interviews, focus groups, written submission and two quantitative surveys to both part-time and full-time workers (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 35). When analysing the resulting data, the authors adopted a Human Resource Management (HRM) model which prioritises a contemporary ‘diversity’ approach, emphasising flexibility as a concern for all employees, not just women, and an issue for managers (Smithson & Stokoe 2005, p. 149; McDonald et al. 2005) as it centres on valuing differences between people and developing an inclusive workforce where differences are recognised and accommodated (Skinner 1999).

The gender-neutral terms of ‘diversity’ have gained popularity as it is assumed that men, and organisations, will respond better to ‘flexible working’ and ‘work–life’ initiatives than to gender equality issues (Smithson & Stokoe 2005, p. 149). However, by focusing on individual differences and choices, there is little emphasis on power differentials or structural inequalities (Brown & Heidensohn 2000). Sinclair (2000) contends “that the argument ‘all people are different’ renders equivalent systematic sources of inequality and sources of minor discomfort”(p. 240). It also dilutes societal and organisational responsibilities for providing equal treatment and equal opportunity as men’s position in relation to the male norm is implied but left

unproblematised (Smithson & Stokoe 2005, p. 50). It also leaves unexamined the silencing processes which sever the relational link between advantage and disadvantage. As Edwards observes, “the most effective opposition to change is one that is kept intangible” (1992, p. 82).

Thus, results from the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004), while endeavoring to ‘mainstream’ issues relating to part-time employment, did not consider gender as a dependent variable as part of the analysis – a concern given that overwhelmingly, since the emergence of formal part-time work and regardless of the occupation, women have comprised and continue to comprise most part-time employees (Harley 1994; Pocock 2005; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006). This impacts substantially upon patterns observed in the data, as differences arising from this characteristic are rendered invisible and the results ‘gender-blind’ (Wilson 1996). In turn, this means that the development of organisational policies and practices which have a greater likelihood of delivering substantive outcomes is severely limited. More alarmingly, by ignoring or denying the multiplicity of ways in which HRM is gendered, while contending to be ‘gender-neutral’, HRM concepts and policies actually perpetuate rather than challenge gender inequality (Dickens 1998).

The current study seeks to unravel this complex relationship between part-time status and gender by ‘re-viewing’ the data previously collected from the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) through the lens of gender.

The first section of this paper sets out the historical origins of policing and considers the employment of women in policing at the international, national and state level.

The second section focuses specifically on the gendered nature of organisations and challenges the gender-neutral approach adopted by contemporary HRM theorists.

The third section assesses the representation of women in part-time work at a national and state level. The ways in which policing is constructed as a primarily masculine occupation are highlighted and institutional characteristics which work to exclude women, and more specifically part-time women, are also explored.

Finally, data from the review of Part-time Employment at Victoria Police (Victoria Police 2004) is reframed in this light, leading to the contention that the current status of part-time employment will contribute to the exacerbation of gender inequality in Victoria Police, since the disadvantages associated with such employment rests primarily with women.

1.1 *Origins of policing*

Policing as an occupation in Western liberal democracies has garnered much attention; however, it has only recently been subjected to detailed academic scrutiny (Dick & Jancowicz 2001). The existence of police may be traced to early societies with a low level of social differentiation where the role of police was performed by a religious figure, often a priest, who would play the role of priest, judge and executioner (Tupman & Tupman 1999). Over time, as communities grew in size, greater differentiation followed with roles becoming more diverse. For instance, the traditional role of highway and waterway police has been translated into the modern equivalent of traffic police, and watchmen or temple guards would be recognized as private security. For modern religious and ideological representatives, their traditional role as ‘guardians of the truth’ was to lay the foundation for the commonly accepted first form of policing, which was to preserve public morality. The traditional Code Napoleon concept of “ordre public” has the same connotation of preserving public health (Tupman & Tupman 1999, p. 20).

As moral consensus surrounding social norms has dissipated, the definition of what policing is may be better defined as what police do. For instance, the legal profession would define the police officer as a special citizen with the power to deprive other citizens of their liberty; from a political perspective, policing is the mechanism by which the state exercises its monopoly of legitimate force in the domestic arena, the army does so externally. Sociologists would define policing as part of the complex system of social control, and the public would consider police either the people to whom you report crime and bad behavior, or people who are hostile and prejudiced, existing to harass you. Finally, police officers have typically defined policing as a 24-hour emergency service (Tupman & Tupman 1999).

Despite this myriad of complex definitions of what policing is, and what police do, one factor has remained constant regardless of the historical context and international location; the presence of men holding all, or very recently most, of the available occupational space (Anker 1997; Prenzler 2005). Interestingly, this history of occupational masculinity has been rendered invisible through the refusal to acknowledge, and even outright deny, the amount and form of women's labour with most organisational and HRM theorists producing a sanitised view of what work and jobs are about by "passing it through the filter of dominant gender culture" (Wilson 2003, p. 3).

1.2 Women in Policing

1.2.1 International

In direct contrast to the increasing promotion of policing as a career for women, women constitute just 21 percent of the Australian police workforce (Boni 2005). This is a positive indicator of Australian policing services, comparative to other English-speaking countries. As recently as 1995 only 13.5 percent of all police positions in Australia were occupied by women and only 1.6 percent of women were Commissioned Officers (Inspector and above). This compares to 5.9 percent of women Commissioned Officers in 2003. In the United Kingdom, women comprise 18.1 percent of all police officers, and 12.7 percent in the United States (Boni & Circelli 2002). Yet while women continue to be recruited in increasing numbers and promoted to senior positions, albeit slowly, there is evidence that in Australia women are much more likely than men to leave police work for family reasons (Prenzler 2005). A lack of access to flexible work practices was more frequently nominated by women as a critical reason for leaving their department and a major factor in their decision to leave policing (Boni 2005).

1.2.2 National

The introduction of state and federal equal opportunity legislation from 1977 onwards enshrined in law the concept of the recognition of equality between men and women

in Australian workplaces (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2005). The formal entry of women into the Australian workplace and specifically policing was in 1915 (Nixon 1993). Two women in New South Wales Police were employed as ‘Special Constables’ assigned to deal specifically with matters involving women and children’s welfare. Some 400 women applied for these positions. While numbers of women in policing have grown, the advancement of women in policing has slowed (Nixon 1999) despite optimistic beliefs otherwise (Campbell et al. 2000; Gallup 1998). The number of female police officers in Australia has been steadily increasing since the late 1960s at the rate of approximately 0.5% per annum. The current national average figure of 28.5 per cent female recruits suggests a slightly more optimistic scenario with possibly steadily improving recruitment rates buoying overall numbers. If this trend continues it will take until the year 2060 before women make up 50% of officers (Prenzler 1996).

1.2.3 State

In 2003, Victoria Police ranked seven out of eight other national policing agencies in relation to the percentage of female police (18 per cent) as a part of the total police workforce (Australian Institute of Criminology 2003). Only Western Australia had fewer, with women comprising 15 per cent of police. All other jurisdictions had at least 21 per cent women (Tasmania, Queensland, South Australia) and Northern Territory had the highest proportion (25 per cent)¹.

In 2003, Australia’s only female Police Commissioner, Christine Nixon, announced that Victoria Police would seek an exemption from Victorian anti-discrimination legislation to ensure that at least 50 per cent of police recruits were women (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 32).

¹ More recently, Victoria Police ranked fifth out of six other national policing agencies in relation to the percentage of female police (22 per cent) as part of the total police workforce (Victoria Police 2007b). Western Australia had fewer, with women now comprising 19 per cent of police (Western Australia Police 2007). All remaining jurisdictions had a greater proportion of women. Queensland had 24 per cent, Tasmania had 25 per cent, the Australian Federal Police had 31 per cent, and New South Wales listed their proportion of women at 34 per cent (Queensland Police 2007; Tasmania Police 2007; Australian Federal Police 2007; New South Wales Police 2007). Gender data for South Australia and the Northern Territory was not publicly available.

Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007, p. 32) make the point that while this explicit commitment to recruiting women police caused some controversy (Silvester 2003) and criticism (Bolt 2007), it is reflective of moves, both in Australia and internationally, to increase the number of women in police services. Better representation of women in policing is seen as critical for a number of reasons further identified by Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007, p. 32). That is, “apart from the broader issue of compliance with State and Commonwealth Equal Opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation, gender balance within police organisations is generally accepted to be desirable to ensure that police services reflect the communities they serve” and provide “provide a higher quality of service” (Eveline & Harwood 2002, p. 38) . Further to this “Police Royal Commissions in both Queensland and New South Wales have also identified women as a target group whose recruitment would assist in eliminating the negative aspects of a “cop culture” (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 32). This is specifically through the direct association between increased numbers of women police officers and decreasing levels of corruption (Fleming & Lafferty 2003, p. 47). Such rationale for increasing the representation of women in policing appears to be consistent with Summers (1975) contention that women are literally and metaphorically sought after as 'God's police' - 'respectable' women who, since the early days of colonial Australia, have been assigned the role of moral guardians of the community. Despite this critique however, there appears to be consensus that women in policing is advantageous (Bayley & Shearing 2005; Heidensohn 2005). Substantial research has been conducted to demonstrate and monitor this (Silvestri 2003; Boni 2005) though one may reflect upon the absence of research demonstrating the benefits of men in policing. This is symptomatic of the presumption that men are the norm in organisations, and women ‘the other’.

Literature on women in policing, and HRM more broadly, is considered as something separate. “Prior to the entrance of women there was (apparently) no gender in management” (Calas & Smircich 1990, cited in Wilson 2003) and furthermore it appears that is only women who are ‘gendered’ as the implicit formula underlying much research is that gender is equivalent to sex, which is equivalent to women and therefore problematic (Wilson 2003).

2 The gendering of organisations

Gender refers to “patterned, socially produced, distinctions between female and male, masculine and feminine” (Acker 1990). Wilson (2003) asserts that we must understand how these gender distinctions between men and women affect our behavior and relations in the workplace. However, organisational theorists have largely neglected the role the gender and gender ideologies are expressed in organisations. Behavior in organisations which mitigates against women and minorities is viewed as normal and therefore, in some way, acceptable (Wilson 1996). This also means that organisational strategies for scrutinizing these discourses and constructions are absent, rendered particularly difficult from a theoretical and pragmatic perspective. Theoretically, because it implies that all men have a similar set of advantages, which denies questions of class and ethnicity, and pragmatically because it is politically expedient to avoid upsetting men who need persuading on reforms given that they are more likely to hold positions of influence and power (Eveline 1998).

Organisation theory has typified men and women as alike in the ways workers are treated and described as unisex, even though it is the men who are being described. Gender divisions have been largely treated as irrelevant or invisible, in practice (Wilson 1996). This criticism of organisation theory as ‘gender-blind’ refers to incorporating gendered and sexual relations into organisational analysis in an agendered and asexual way (Wilson 2003).

It is from the perspective of gender that the present study seeks not to add on, provide a comparative view or even generate new theory, but rather re-assess the status of current theory and data contained in the Part-time Employment Review and ‘see reality differently’ (Wilson 1996). In effect, this secondary analysis provides a tool for organisational scrutiny of the gendering of part-time work and this report will recommend these tools need to be adopted as part of the audit processes within Victoria Police.

The present study aims to utilise Acker’s (1990) theory of gendered organisation

to critique the original study (Victoria Police 2004) focusing exclusively on women, rather the construction of gender in the workplace “to utilise the female perspective to foster the development of a more human view, to deepen our understanding of the whole human experience, both male and female” (Wilkinson 1986, p. 835).

2.1 Gender theory of organisation structure

To say that an organisation is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not an addition to ongoing processes, conceived as gender-neutral. Rather it is an integral part of those processes, which cannot be properly understood without an analysis of gender (Connell 1995; Connell 2003).

Empirical evidence confirms that gender segregation is an amazingly persistent pattern in employment, and that the gender identity of jobs and occupations is repeatedly reproduced, often in new forms (Acker 1990; Anker 1997). When we consider the concentration of in women lower ranked positions at Victoria Police and the dominance of women represented in part-time employment (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007) it would appear that gender segregation persists, but reproduces itself in new forms, reinforced by the complex array of mutual factors within a complex social, cultural and institutional situation (Pocock 2005).

Kanter’s seminal work (1977) analysed manifest influences of structural conditions within organisations on gender inequality. Hidden influences such as opportunities, structural power and proportional distribution were identified and closely examined, however, her emphasis on numerical representation of women has been more associated with liberal feminist approaches to illuminating the sex segregated nature of the workplace. Inherent to this approach is a ‘rules’ focus, whereby working within patriarchal institutions and organisations, and changing laws and policies to remove systemic disadvantage, means opportunities automatically follow that allow women to achieve equality (Iannello 1992). This has opened up areas previously restricted to women but on the basis that women should do the job like men. For instance, in

policing “this translated to women being assessed to determine how well they did patrol work, based on a male model” (Brown & Heidensohn 2000, p. 74). This approach has also been critiqued for failing to adequately address the relationship between gender and power (Fletcher 2004, p. 207) and for overemphasising the notion that a ‘tipping point’ will occur; where an occupation switches, often over a relatively short period, from being occupied primarily by one demographic group to being occupied by another. Theoretically, a stably integrated balance could have been achieved in which the percentage of women was approximately equal to that in the labour force as a whole; this however is not the general case, with some studies finding that the feminisation of an occupation is linked with an accompanying decline in wages (Jacobsen 2007). Further, higher levels of career and promotion discrimination against women have been reported by women who were in either a gender minority or majority work working group i.e. a U shaped pattern, “primarily due to the different dynamics that work against women when they are the token or men are the token in a group of working women” (Brown & Heidensohn 2000, p. 124).

To understand the persistence of gender inequality, it is also important to gain an understanding of the latent, subtle and indirect processes in organisation underlying the gender distinction (Benschop & Doorewaard 1998). The gendering of organisations occurs in at least five interacting processes, which though analytically distinct are in practice part of the same reality (Acker 1990).

2.1.1 Division by gender

The first is through the construction of divisions along the lines of gender; divisions of labour, of allowed (sanctioned) behaviours, locations of physical space, of power, including the institutionalised means of maintaining the divisions in the structures of labour markets, the family, the state. Men are almost always in the highest positions of organisational power and manager’s decisions often initiate gender divisions and organisational practices maintain them. In a gendered organisation, technology reorganises, not abolishes, gender divisions. Wajcman (1999) has shown how the introduction of new technology in a number of industries was accompanied by a

reorganisation, but not abolition, of the gendered division of labour that left the technology in men's control and maintained the definition of skilled work as men's work and unskilled work as women's work. The social shaping of gender roles through technology is clearly illuminated through the dogged resistance to the introduction of a home-based work policy in Victoria Police. One male police officer commented that 'home-based work is the beginning of the end of Victoria Police' and another commented that 'this is proof that women are taking over' (2006, pers comm., 25 June). Theoretically, this may be explained through the separate spheres phenomena; the public sphere of paid work where we 'produce' things and the private sphere of family and community where we 'grow' people. Embedded within are certain infallible characteristics; that the spheres are separate, and thus have different definitions of effectiveness; the spheres are unequally valued, as labour in work sphere is assumed to be skilled and complex, whereas labour in the domestic sphere is unskilled and innate; and they are sex-linked, as images of idealised masculinity are associated with public sphere labour and idealised femininity with the private domestic sphere. Of course, in practice the separation and sex linked nature of the public and private sphere is more myth than reality, as women and men actively participate in both, but the notion of separate spheres is a useful tool for analysing the strong and unevicenced resistance to home-based work, as it "violates very basic beliefs... that we, as society, hold dear" about how women and men are expected to act (Fletcher 2004, p. 206).

2.1.2 Symbols and images that reinforce gender

Second is the construction of symbols and images that explain, express or reinforce those divisions. Kanter (1977) has noted that the image of the top manager or the business leader is an image of successful, forceful masculinity. For instance, the all men Special Operations Group at Victoria Police wear black jumpsuits as their uniform. They are immediately identifiable as different to other police, yet elite by creating their own representation. Often images of male workers link their gender to technical skills; the possibility that women might also obtain such skills represents a threat to that masculinity. No female has ever been successful in joining the 'Sons of God' as they are colloquially known. In another example, the VPS employee uniform

was preferred to be navy blue, as this clearly showed Victorian Public Sector (VPS) employees were part of Victoria Police, but some police members of the uniform committee successfully argued that this could be dangerous due to the risk associated with a member of the public mistaking a VPS employee for a police officer (2007, pers comm., 26 May). While the likelihood of such an event actually occurring and further, where such a case of mistaken identity could not be easily redressed, seems very low or possibly non-existent, nevertheless clearly, symbols such as colour are used not only to demonstrate belonging, but difference.

The military and male world of sports provide images for teamwork, campaigns and tough competition between men, and are considered valuable training for organisation success. Even in the public domain, funded policing activities beyond work is predominately through sport; the Police Games, the Emergency Services Games, the Police and Firefighters Games, the Police Masters Games. Paid leave is available to police officers only to participate in these events. The main foyer in the Victoria Police Centre also maintains a 'Victoria Police Sporting Hall of Fame' which has grainy black and white historical images of great sports 'people', even though only one of the sixteen is a woman. Interestingly, she was a cricket player. Of course, proponents have argued that these pictures merely reflect a historical reality, and as more women achieve similar sporting fame, they too will be added (2007, pers comm., 14 December).

However, of notable absence from this 'historical reality' is a Victoria Police 'Caring Hall of Fame'. Indeed, one might speculate how the comparable sex ratio of these historical images would look. These symbolic expressions of male dominance, and absence of female recognition, act as significant controls over women in organisations because they are excluded from the informal bonding (Acker 1990) and fellowship rituals men produce with the 'body talk' of sports (Connell 2003, p.100).

2.1.3 Group patterns that uphold gender

The third process which produces gendered social structures, including organisations, are the interactions between women and men, women and women, men and men and

the patterns that enact dominance and submission. In addition, a military-bureaucracy particularly such as policing (Bradley 1996) is an incredibly complex tapestry of gender and class social structures (Woodward & Winter 2006). i.e. the distinction between police and VPS staff as only sworn (*sic*) versus unsworn (*sic*), sworn men versus sworn women, unsworn men versus unsworn women. Bureaucracies are powerfully hierarchical (Robbins & Barnwell 1994) and this is implicitly or explicitly expressed. For instance, senior police officers in Victoria Police are typically referred to as 'Boss' by their subordinate police officers. VPS staff do not use this term, instead referring to senior police officers by their first name. A male police officer explained this distinction to a female VPS employee, saying that 'of course you wouldn't call him boss. I mean, how could you? you haven't earned the rank' (2006, pers comm., 15 June). Clearly, the term 'boss' is a privileged one and actively used to uphold class distinctions and reinforce explicit forms of hierarchy.

This also further illustrates an aspect of how policing is organised, via a 'command and control' model, which is reflected in a strict rank hierarchy and enacted via giving and following orders without question. Whilst theoretically reserved for genuine emergencies, the command and control model continues to underpin all policing organisational structures. The model is not (and arguably never has been) reflective of the work police actually do, however this pseudo-military operation style is reinforced and upheld in practice through a single point of entry allowance and powerful organisational resistance to lateral entry appointments, despite evidence that this is a highly effective recruitment strategy (Silvestri 2003).

To subvert the dominant paradigm, some senior officers encourage their staff to wear plainclothes, and no badges, when not in public and only working with each other. Others deliberately place junior officers in advisory positions to senior officers to challenge their presumptions of hierarchy (2007, pers comm., 20 June). The success or otherwise of these measures is not known. Police in Australia have been described as representing 'an almost pure form of hegemonic masculinity', (Fielding 1994, p.47 cited in Brown & Heidensohn 2000) so it is likely these individual initiatives would be negatively viewed by the dominant majority and thus remain unacknowledged. This may be symptomatic of reluctance on the part of these senior officers to openly seek recognition for their initiatives (2007, pers comm., 20 June).

2.1.4 Individual behaviors that uphold gender

Fourth, is that these processes help to produce a gendered component of individual identity, which may include consciousness of the existence of the other three aspects of gender expressed in organisations, such as choice of appropriate work, language use, clothing and presentation of self as a gendered member of an organisation. For instance, the rank of Chief Inspector was formally abolished at Victoria Police in 2001, with all Inspectors classified as one rank and pay structure. However, many insisted on retaining the title of Chief Inspector, despite no economic loss due to this change. The fusion of gender and job identity, and associated tolerance and reinforcement through gendered organisational processes can be clearly observed. Thirteen male Chief Inspectors remain at Victoria Police and all human resource information systems and organisation communication material must reflect this title in the rank structure while they exist, and for no other reason (2006, pers comm., 15 June).

Similarly, Detectives use their title in all communication and identification, despite the term denoting a role, not a recognised rank. Detectives also have a unique identification pass which is yellow, distinct from the standard blue for police officers and green of VPS staff. These specially coloured identification cards also highlight the VPS level and Police rank in bold font. This in turn, denotes remuneration to any person who views the security card, though it is unclear how knowledge of these items and special colours assist security, who presumably would be seeking information relating to access only, such as name, expiry date of pass and facial identification. Despite the questionable need for such information on identification passes, the overall effect combines to create important markers of status in a gendered organisation.

2.1.5 Dynamic sub-processes that perpetuate gender

Finally, gender is implicated in the fundamental, ongoing processes of creating and conceptualising social structures. Gender is a basic element in family and friends, but

it also helps frame the underlying relations of other structures, such as complex organisations. Gender underpins organisational logic, which is defined by Acker (1990) as ‘the underlying assumptions and practices that construct most contemporary work organisations’. For instance, the Part-time Employment Review made no reference to the gender of participants in the qualitative data component of the study, which prevents sound qualitative analysis of the results from a gender perspective (Victoria Police 2004). This means recommendations arising from the qualitative component of the review are presumed to typify both women and men. For instance, ‘management’ nominated part-time employees who work set shifts as inflexible and difficult. Yet the review grouped part-time employees who require set shifts for child care purposes and study together. It is interesting to note that these two items are rendered as having equivalent impact on work and life schedules, despite that being late to a child care centre incurs significant, immediate financial penalty by the minute, whereas being late to class does not. Further, perhaps some men hide the need for predictable shifts for caring purposes, under the more acceptable masculine path of ‘study’. The construct of the original survey did not allow for exploration of this as a potential explanation of behavior, and highlights an important area for future research.

On the surface organisational logic appears to be gender-neutral; gender neutral theories of bureaucracy and organisations employ and give expression to this logic. However, underlying both academic theories and practical guides for managers is a gendered substructure that is reproduced daily in practical work activities and less visibly but no less influentially in the writing of organisational theorists.

2.2 Attack of the invisible woman! Gender-less theory of organisation

- *"I was going for a job at a station, the Senior Sergeant position. '....' walks by, says hello and we talk about the job. He said to me "I'll never say boss to a skirt" and I said "well, you might have to". He said it again. I ended up getting the job, and on my first day I saw him and I said "I'm not wearing my skirt today". He replied "you haven't forgotten about that have you boss" and I said to him "it's not likely something I am likely to forget". It's strange you know, he is now one my biggest supporters".*

Conversation with female police officer, 12 April 2006.

The assumption that HRM will be 'good news' for women and for equality more broadly, has not been adequately tested (Dickens 1998). The contrast between empirical findings and the prominent place which HRM occupies in management and academic discourse is compatible with the view that its function is primarily as mobilizing or legitimating rhetoric and a device for constructing employee identities and beliefs systems. Dickens (1998) contends that underlying aspects of the HRM model; commitment, flexibility, management, status and selection, appraisal, reward are gendered practices which result in gendered outcomes.

2.2.1 Management

Almost all theories of effective management have been based on observations of male managers. The characteristics associated with the successful manager are more congruent with traits attributed to men than women. Which ever characteristics are considered important for managers, they appear to be one generally identified with men rather than women and effective leadership is seen to required traits stereotyped as masculine (Collinson & Hearn 1996). If the judges who define the typical manager

are male managers and male business students, then it is hardly surprising that good managers come out looking like good men (Wilson 2003).

Managers ingrained assumptions about workers can be problematic but little recognition is accorded to the fact that these assumptions align with gender stereotypes. In HRM literature, little is made of the fact that most managers are usually men. There is no naming of men as men, which renders women invisible (Dickens 1998).

2.2.2 Commitment

The way organisations define commitment is through a model of gender rather than a job model of commitment. Employee involvement is premised on the idea of complex attitudinal and behavioral measures to justify investment. Consequently, an obvious approach to commitment is defined by input - visible hours at work and 'face-time' rather than outputs – quality of achievement. Women's unequal share of unpaid domestic labour makes it harder to compete for such measures with men. Men usually have fewer demands on their time which enables them to devote more visible time to the organisation and accordingly, display greater commitment. Those with fewer caring responsibilities – disproportionately men – are better placed to manipulate images to control others impressions as to the extent of commitment being displayed. Allen and Russell (1999) found perceptions of decreased organisational commitment by employees who used family-friendly policies, specifically part-time work, resulted in the allocation of fewer organisational rewards, including advancement opportunities and salary increases. Such perceptions suggest compelling reasons why part-time employment tends to be underused by men.

Another example of a gendered model of commitment is Atkinson's (1984) theory of the flexible firm. Atkinson proposed that in response to growing uncertainty, employers now believe that working time can only be sustained through restructuring worked time in unconventional ways, consequently, a common organisational imperative for workplace 'flexibility' emerged and with it the evolution of a new 'peripheral' or 'secondary' worker, who are less committed, offer less valuable skills

and are more expendable as they are more easily replaceable. Atkinson (1984) does not engage in gender analysis of his participants or industries and does not consider the influence of gender upon the emergence of the peripheral worker except to simply note that women are more likely to be one.

Core and peripheral workers are defined by commitment. Commitment may be offered reciprocally to the core workforce but commitment from or to the disposable peripheral worker (mainly female) is neither sought or offered. This creates a self-fulfilling prophecy, and 'taken-for-granted' knowledge (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007) that informs 'common sense' decision making for HRM managers (Dickens 1998), despite evidence that there is no difference between men and women and organisational commitment (Lorence 1987). This is most tangibly demonstrated in Victoria Police through concerns raised by managers that "part-time police would be perceived by the general public as having a lower level of commitment than is required to undertake police work" (Victoria Police 2004, p. 60). In fact women, particularly part-time women, may even have higher levels of organisational commitment. For instance, amongst police Boni and Circelli (2002) found that organisational commitment was significantly higher for women with more than one child than with none, presumably due to guarantee of a job in order to provide for a family.

2.2.3 Flexibility

Flexibility is generally conceptualized in HRM from an employer's perspective as facilitating organisational responsiveness and adaptation to rapidly changing work environments (Dickens 1998). Yet gendered approaches to flexibility mean that, rather than developments in flexibility having an equality dimension there has been a polarisation in male and female working time (Fagan 2001).

Where what is viewed as 'women's work' is concerned, employers are more likely to construct jobs on a part-time basis, rather than through shift work or extended hours (Yue 2002). Given that the reduction of additional compensation for overtime is a motivation for employers to pursue extended hours of work, it seems inevitable that

employers will package tasks together to create full-time jobs, as they expect men to want them and they can lower costs. These mutually reinforcing factors entwine to create the underpinning logic of HRM (Dickens 1998); jobs can be part-time precisely because they are categorised as ‘women’s work’ (Broadbent 2002; Burdett 1994). Unions contribute to this by actively opposing part-time work in well organised areas of (usually male) full-time employment and restricting employers flexibility options, even if this does impact on organisational responsiveness (Totaro 2006). In fact, Beechey and Perkins (1987) contend that “there is nothing inherent in the nature of jobs that make them full-time or part-time. They have been constructed as such, and these constructions are closely related to gender” (Beechey & Perkins 1987, p. 146).

2.2.4 Status

That part-time work may be defined as ‘women’s work’, and the work women do is considered inherently amenable to part-time, and by consequence of lower status, is a powerful manifestation of the gendered nature of HRM. Work areas that prioritise full-time work due to the perceived demands of the roles, are accorded higher organisational value through a combination of explicit and implicit processes. Interestingly, these work areas are also where men dominate. For instance, in Victoria Police, General Operational Policing and Operational Management have a clear career path with an explicit link between rank and remuneration (Victoria Police 2001; Victorian Public Service 2004). Similarly, detectives in the Crime Department, an area well known for its poor representation of women, receive a commuted overtime allowance, a generous one-off annual payment for excessive overtime. Of course, while other specialist areas require specialised skills, the organisational value is lower relative to others as they have an ill-defined career path, and consequently limited scope for growth. Portraying the jobs men do as inherently more demanding than the jobs women do is part of the ideological framework that stigmatises women as marginal workers (Eveline 1998) and reinforces their lower status.

The valuing of a work area as higher or lower, as reflected through overt organisational symbols may not be a function of the work itself rather, who appears to be doing it. For instance, Gerber (2001) examined how ‘status-related personality

traits' which have always been presumed to be gender specific, related to self-efficacy in terms of being able to do the job of a police officer. All male teams had a much higher status profile than all female teams and that they were also more likely to be confrontational and aggressive. Yet women officers, despite being as equally competent in practice, tend to be seen as less effective because of their perceived tendency for more accommodating and submissive feminine traits. While women police officers may appear to have different personality traits from men, it is only because of their lower status, not their gender; and both have exceptionally high levels of instrumental traits such as decisiveness and assertiveness - most probably, Gerber surmises, because they need these qualities to enforce the law (p. 141).

2.2.5 Selection, Appraisal, Reward

It has been observed that 'impression management' may count for more than actual performance to achieve high rating in performance appraisals and achieve success in organisational hierarchies, especially for managers (Hudson 2005). Long working hours are often identified as a sign of commitment, productivity and motivation for advancement; a badge of honour that demonstrates contribution. Men often have, and take, more opportunities than women to ensure appropriate visibility, whilst what they actually do in the long hours is invisible, and are involved in informal, but important organisational networks. Promotion is often dependent on these semi-formal networks which are usually closed to women (Prenzler 1996). The differential willingness and ability between men and women to participate in these activities, is confounded not only by their own gender but by the fact that most managers are likely to be male.

Many studies of how men and women are perceived are gender neutral, and fail to consider how particular social processes affect women. Even the divisions by which attributes of men and women are categorised are artificial, the production of a particular kind of social reality and power. It has been found that behaviors and personality traits thought to be typical of women are instead typical of both women and men who lack power (Wilson 1996). 'Women's intuition', the ability to read non-verbal cues is a function of powerlessness rather than gender (Snodgrass 1992). The hesitations and uncertainties of 'women's speech' are a function of powerlessness too

(Carli 1990). Women's apparent lack of interest in progression may be a function of expectations generated in childhood, the potential conflict between shift work and child rearing responsibilities, and expectations of discrimination, which is likely to result in women who 'self-select' themselves out of applying for employment, promotion or specialist roles (Martin 1996; Prenzler 1996).

Interestingly, HRM literature has focused on these relational skills as critical to a radical transformation of leadership which necessitates more collaborative and less heroic workplaces for competitive edge. These skills are often unrecognized or problematised in women, and thus a future 'female advantage'. Yet Fletcher (1999) demonstrates that relational behavior often 'gets disappeared' in practice, not because it is ineffective but because it is associated with the feminine or softer side of work. Even when they are in line with stated goals, such behaviors are viewed as inappropriate to the workplace because they collide with powerful, gender-linked images of the heroic worker. This collision between gender and power 'disappears' the very behavior that organisations claim they need and actually undermines the possibility of radical change in the workplace by reinforcing a gendered model of HRM.

3 Part-time work in Australia

Part-time work is a crucial mechanism to attracting and retaining women (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007; Boni 2005) as it reduces the conflict between paid and unpaid work, specifically domestic responsibilities (Warren 2004). Despite increasing labour market participation for women "there has been no compensating rush of men into unpaid domestic work as women have joined them in paid jobs" (Pocock 2005, p. 36). Part-time work has been the major area of employment growth in Australia over the last decade, and is now the most common form of flexible working as the national pattern of employment has seen significant casualisation of the workforce (Campbell et al. 2004).

The main factor associated with the increase in part-time employment over the recent decades is the increase in the number of women entering the labour force. The

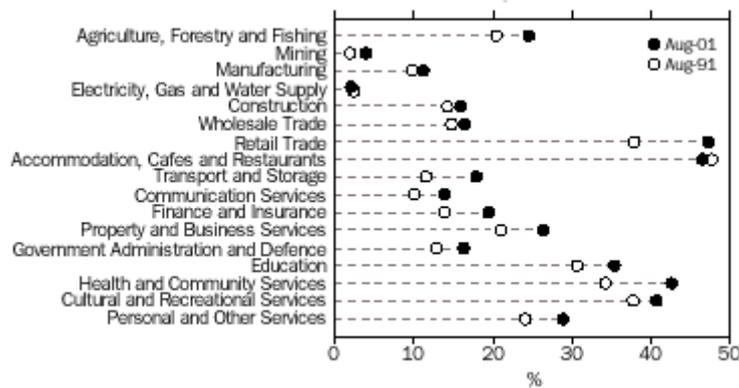
gendered nature of these changes means that more Australian women work part-time than at any time in history, and more than in any other country in the industrialised world (Summers 2003). Women hold 71 per cent of all part-time jobs and it is a growing sector (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001). This may largely be associated with women wanting to combine paid employment and caring commitments as women aged between 25 and 54 accounted for almost half (47%) of all part-time workers (Edwards & Robinson 2001). The share of male workers in part-time employment has also increased over the last decade although to a much lesser extent, from 24 percent in 1991 to 29 percent in 2001 (Sheridan & Conway 2001). More recent research has attributed this increase to underemployment rather than choice (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006).

Whether by choice or necessity (Summers 2002), a part-time worker is defined as “an employed person whose normal hours of work are less than those of comparable full-time workers”. (International Labour Organisation 2004). However for women, being part-time may not just mean fewer hours. Women are earning less, in relation to men, than they did a decade ago. Women's total average weekly earnings are just 66 per cent of men's. In May 2002 women averaged \$555 per week while men got \$839, and this was a larger gap than ten years earlier. Despite appearances to the contrary, the proportion of women in full-time employment has not increased in thirty years (Summers 2003).

Fagan (2001) noted that when comparing the growth of part-time work in industrialized countries, overall part-time work remains female dominated and disproportionately concentrated in low-paid, low status jobs. Part-time women received less training, were paid less and advanced more slowly because employers attach a higher risk to investing in them.

Part-time workers are most strongly represented in the retail and hospitality sector (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001). See Figure 1, part-time employment as a proportion of total employment (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001).

Figure 1 - Part-time employment, as a proportion of total employment, by industry sectors in Australia



Both retail and hospitality areas are associated with high levels of underemployment (Morgan 2005) as not all work part-time by choice. It is noteworthy that there appears to be a consistent negative correlation between part-time employees and sectors that have a typically high proportion of males, known as ‘dense masculinities’ (Lewis 2007). For instance, the Mining and Manufacturing sector and Electricity, Gas and Water Supply sectors, are typically dense masculinities (Wallace 1999) akin to medicine (Williams 1999), aviation (Mills 1998) and construction industries (Pringle & Winning 1998) which all have low levels of part-time employment as a percentage of full-time employment. This parallels Victoria Police, where part-time employees represent just 4.4 percent of the total workforce (Victoria Police 2004).

3.1 Part-time work in ‘God’s police’

While major changes have occurred in women’s access to a career in policing, only on rare occasions have police leaders voluntarily introduced open door policies for women (Prenzler 1996). Change has been driven almost entirely by anti-discrimination legislation and has often been fiercely resisted by the administrative hierarchy (Martin 1996).

“Part-time work in Victoria Police was first introduced in 1992, as part of a pilot program consisting of 10 positions identified as suitable for part-time work” (Charleworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 33). Four years later a formal part-time

employment policy was introduced but with conditions; the number of part-time positions was capped at one hundred (100) and would only be allowed for the lowest ranks of constables and senior constables. The policy was revised again in 1998. This revision removed the cap but introduced an eligibility criteria and a requirement for a business case to be submitted. No policy currently exists for VPS staff at Victoria Police, though they are advised to follow the police equivalent. Despite the policy not technically applying to them, VPS staff and their managers use the current part-time policy.

“Probationary constables are specifically exempted from the part-time employment policy and part-time work is subject to annual review” (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p 34). There was a four-year limit, which was linked to children entering school but this has been removed. Police officers are also required to prepare a business case to support their application for part-time work, requiring them demonstrate how their proposed arrangement will benefit the organisation and can be accommodated (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007).

Victoria Police has a small number of part-time workers. Table 1 depicts the number of part-time employees as a proportion of full-time employees, for Police and VPS women and men in 2003 (Victoria Police 2004).

Table 1 - Part-time and full-time police and VPS employees, by Sex at June 2003

Category	Part-time	Full-time	Total	Proportion
Police Males	59	8,726	8,785	0.67%
Police Females	302	1,604	1,906	15.8%
VPS Males	14	698	712	2%
VPS Females	188	1,333	1,521	12.4%
Total	563	12,361	12,924	4.4%

Notes: Adapted from Victoria Police Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004).

Table 1 shows that part-time employees number just 563 or 4.4 percent of the total Victoria Police workforce at the time of the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004). Of this small proportion of part-time employees relative to full-time

employees, the majority are women. Table 2 depicts the sex ratio of part-time employees for Police and VPS staff as a percentage at Victoria Police.

Table 2 - Percentage of part-time police and VPS employees, by Sex at June 2003

Employee type	Male	Female	Total
Police members	10.5%	53.6%	64.1%
Public servants	2.5%	33.4%	35.9%
Total	13.%	87%	100%

Notes: Adapted from Victoria Police Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004).

Table 2 shows that the majority of part-time employees (87 per cent) are women. In Victoria Police, as in other Australian police services, part-time employment is concentrated amongst VPS staff with only 3.4 percent of police working on a part-time basis compared to 9 percent of VPS staff in 2003. At the time of the Part-time Employment Review amongst part-time police, most (83 per cent) were women (Victoria Police 2004)².

Part-time work is concentrated in the lower ranks. More than 90% of all policing part-time positions at the major policing agencies were at the rank of Senior Constable or below (Victoria Police 2004). At the time of the Part-time Employment Review, “all part-time work in Victoria Police remains at the rank of Sergeant or below” (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 34) which is consistent with other research investigating the status of part-time employees within male dominated professions, resulting in a distinct ‘feminisation’ of part-time work (Broadbent 2002; Edwards & Robinson 2001) . Even amongst female-dominated professions, such as nursing, part-time employees fall behind male colleagues in terms of career development and promotion prospects (Whittock et al. 2002; Allan 2000).

² More recently amongst part-time police, this ratio of women to men remains the same at 83 per cent (Victoria Police 2007b). Overall, the majority of part-time employees are still women (85.5 per cent). The reader is encouraged to read the Victoria Police Annual Report 2006-07, which was most recently updated on the 31 October 2007 and is available on the Victoria Police website at www.police.vic.gov.au.

Police as a gendered organisation

Adequate representation of women in police organisations continues to be problematic (Dick & Jancowicz 2001). Yet, despite an enduring historical and international fascination with policing, the status of women in policing has only recently been subjected to detailed academic scrutiny (Brown 1998). This likely reflects the invisibility of densely masculine organisations, in that the strong normalization of the masculine renders the gendered nature of police work unexamined. In the case of gender, the ‘problem’ is ‘women’s disadvantage’ not ‘male advantage’. As such, women’s lack of advantage is portrayed as a lack of women in themselves, and men remain unscrutinised, the masculine normalised (Eveline 1994).

One area of particular promise has been the role of organisational culture in police organisations, sometimes called the informal ‘canteen culture’ which drives formal practices (Waddington 1999a). This emphasis on the social and informal promotes ‘masculine values’ which engender particular views of women as normal (Chan 1996), and of the nature of policing and the roles for which men and women officers are believed to be most suitable. For example, Waddington (1999a) argues that the culture of police forces glorifies violence and promotes a cult of masculinity. He goes on to suggest that the female officer threatens this culture because, in enacting the role in more feminine ways, she fundamentally challenges what counts as police work. More disturbingly, some studies suggest that typically masculine values promote sexist views of women, leading male police to be hostile to other female officers and resulting in higher levels of stress and job dissatisfaction for women (Burke & Mikkelsen 2005).

Other authors have suggested that the masculine values that permeate the police culture operate to exclude women not only from being perceived as suitable for certain tasks, such as dealing with violence but also from taking a full part in the informal social relations between officers which is critical for promotion (Brown 1998; Gaston & Alexander 1997). Exclusions such as this advantage men, but “are

likely to remain invisible as discrimination against women, precisely because they are seen as normal” (Eveline 1998, p.102).

3.2 *The thin blue line or impenetrable fortress?*

The police culture as portrayed in the literature is much vilified and condemned, with an implicit assumption that it operates with a malign intentionality. Waddington (1999a) has challenged this portrayal, arguing that in fact the ‘canteen culture’ gives meaning and purpose to an inherently problematic occupational experience. The rhetoric of the “canteen culture” and, in particular, what Waddington (1999a) terms “the cult of masculinity”(p. 294) provides an ideological justification for the authority the police exercise against their fellow citizens and, particularly in the case of the lower ranks, confers a sense of solidarity in an organisation where the supervisory ranks have the power to exercise considerable sanctions against ‘improper’ behaviour (Waddington 1999a). From this perspective, police culture does not have its origin in the psychology of individual male police officers but, as Waddington argues, has its source “deep within the fundamentals of policing itself” (Waddington 1999a, p. 297).

Conceptualising the culture as a constructed and dynamic phenomenon enables an understanding of seemingly paradoxical research findings which suggest that women sustain the so-called masculine aspects of the culture, such as emphasising the importance of crime-fighting and dealing with violent incidents (Holdaway & Parker 1998; Prokosk & Padavic 2002). These findings also parallel contemporary research that has been conducted into the position of women in domains characterised as essentially masculine, in which women will not only treat the field as gender-neutral, but actively collude in concealing its gendered nature through denial and rationalization of gender inequity (Lewis 2006; Hoerber 2007).

Nonetheless, the dominance of these views of policing among men and women have material affects on the experiences of females in policing, in as much as they are less frequently deployed to potentially violent incidents, more frequently deployed to ‘safe beats’ and are more likely to be accompanied while on patrol (Brown 1998; Martin 1996). Yet researchers have questioned this ‘version’ of front-line policing,

suggesting that this portrayal of policing is not a reflection of reality, but rather simply ‘an assertion of masculinity’ (Dick & Casell 2004, p. 52).

3.3 Characteristics of police work - perception versus reality

The notion of policing as inherently problematic occupational experience (Waddington 1999a) has been challenged. For instance, an ethnographic study of police officers in the United Kingdom found that rather than being a 24-hour emergency service (Tupman & Tupman 1999) or crime fighting force, police were in effect a “secret social service” (Silvestri 2003, p. 34). Further analysis of the workload of uniformed patrol officers, which revealed that the time devoted to crime incidents and social service tasks was equivalent (approximately one third each). Policing is also less dangerous than mining, construction, agriculture or transport work, prompting one researcher to describe the occupational self-image of police as crime fighters as not just a distortion of what they do, but “virtually a collective delusion” (Waddington 1999b, p. 17). Clearly, there is consensus about the disparity between the realities of police work and the perceptions of it held by the police themselves (Silvestri 2003).

Such was the importance of clarifying what ‘real’ police work is and presumably to minimise the gap between perception and reality, Victoria Police had until only very recently made reference on their website for prospective employees that “only about 20 percent of our work relates to ‘fighting crime’, the rest is about assisting the community”. It is noteworthy that this extract has since been removed because it was unable to be verified, and in its place a generic list of what an ‘operational’ member apparently does (Victoria Police 2007a). Yet it still remains unclear how this new list has been verified, the list does not weight or measure any particular aspect of operational policing to clarify which aspects occupy the most time of a police officer, and finally, police officers are now identified on a public website as ‘operational members’, despite the term being an internal one, and of dubious meaning to a public citizen who is seeking to join the ‘police’. Further, the role of a police officer is described in this way; “at all times the operational police member provides a sense of security and order in the community and must be prepared for the unexpected”

(Victoria Police 2007a). While this tells the public what police are supposed to be 'like', it does not explain what police actually do. Perhaps the most accurate description is simply that "police officers help people solve problems" (Assistant Commissioner - Ethical Standards Department, seminar, 13 August 2007).

Beliefs about what 'real' policing is and how part-time work challenges this model was examined closely in Tuffin and Baladi's research examining flexible working practices in policing in the United Kingdom (2001). They observed that part-time police particularly "were not seen to fit in with the culture of a disciplined organisation whose officers could be handed their jackets any time and told to get out there at any time" (p. 44) however the authors could find little evidence for this culturally determined organisational requirement. Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007, p. 38) propose that certain beliefs and perceptions may be culturally transmitted within an organisation and become accepted as taken-for-granted 'knowledge'. Such conceptions then give rise to the way policing is organised, with police officers constructing their work as conflictual and coercive, enabling the idea that police need to be 'tough', a trait most often identified with men (Dick & Cassell 2004, p. 55).

Consequently, if policing is not as conflictual and demanding as it is often portrayed, then the necessity of the working practices that operate to exclude women must also be questionable (Dick & Cassell 2004, p. 52).

4 The intersection of part-time work and policing

Hegemony works when the knowledge produced by dominant groups becomes privileged and takes on the status of common sense, and thus often goes unquestioned (Fraser 1997). Concurrently, the preferences of the dominated groups go unnoticed, especially when they consent to the existing order characterised by asymmetrical power relations (Hoerber 2007). In densely masculine organisations, the norm is male and consequently the hegemony of masculinity is not scrutinised.

Materially, hegemony emerges in different ways. For instance, in Victoria Police working less than full-time for reasons other than family responsibilities, which has historically been associated with women, may be seen as somewhat more acceptable in Victoria Police (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). Hogan (1999) describes a complaint of sex discrimination pursued under the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 1995, where an application for part-time work for family reasons had been refused, but evidence was produced suggesting that working part-time to study, or take time off to train for police sporting events did not demonstrate the same lack of continuity or impact upon shifts (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). Clearly, the gender order in many organisations, and in Victoria Police, is reproduced by discourses, such as that of professionalism, in which ‘normal’ or ‘ideal’ behaviour complies with norms that favour men as a group (Lewis 2006).

The implied full-time norm reflects a perception of work that is structured around the construct of the ‘ideal worker’, who is available to work full-time and overtime, and whose family and domestic needs are provided for by someone else and does not allow family to interfere with work. This is based on an assumed separation between work and family domains and reflects the traditional gendered division of labour (Lewis 2001). One factor contributing to gender differences in occupational attainment is thought to be women’s tendency to have discontinuous careers or periods of part-time work because of domestic responsibilities (Anker 1997).

Dick and Hyde (2006) contend that part-time work ‘cuts’ through this professional discourse of the norm of work as being centrally defined through presenteeism (Sheridan 2004) and challenges the dominant working practices which serve to reproduce it. Thus, while policing and part-time work may appear to be contradictory, the construction of these incompatible and apparently opposite discourses, necessitates scrutiny.

4.1 Gendered construction of flexibility

The notion that police “must be prepared for the unexpected” (Victoria Police 2007a) translates powerfully into workplace practices that serve to reinforce this belief. For

instance, Dick (2004) asserts that operational policing is a 24 hour a day, seven days a week, demand-led activity and “if the manager has to accommodate pregnant women and recuperating officers returning from sick leave, both of whom cannot be allocated full-duties, in addition to officers on leave, officers in court, it is perhaps understandable that accommodating part-time work will not be greeted with much enthusiasm” (p. 312). Interestingly, “there many full-time roles in the police that do not require officers to work in shifts yet are not seen as a source of inequity (Dick 2004, p. 309). Edwards and Robinson (1999) argue that far from being a flexible resource, part-time officers are viewed as relatively inflexible due to the way flexibility is constructed.

Thus, Dick contends that being ‘flexible’ means staying behind after a shift has finished to complete a task, being prepared to work at short notice, or extra shifts and being on call 24 hours a day because while there are predictable peaks and troughs in policing, there are unpredictable events that occur (2004). Yet, how ‘unpredictability’ is defined necessitates scrutiny. One Victoria Police employee wryly noted that ‘he was not asked to do it again’ after charting service calls over years, rather than weeks or months, and found that the ‘unpredictable’ peaks in work were actually mirrored year to year and in fact, very predictable (2007, pers comm., 3 February).

More broadly, Sheridan and Conway (2001) believe that these differences between the business and equal opportunities discourse surrounding flexibility result in significant problems for employees and organisations. For part-time employment to be an effective organisational strategy, the HRM role must actively negotiate between the different needs of employers and employees utilising a diversity management model. This will entail making both groups needs explicit, acknowledging differences between their needs and directing efforts towards constructing outcomes that are mutually satisfying. Smithson and Stokoe (2005, p. 149) are critical of this approach, contending that while the gender-neutral terms of diversity management have gained popularity, the term ‘flexible working’ has been used to describe aspects of work–life balance, in an attempt to move further away from viewing ‘family’ and working flexibility as issues for women. Sheridan and Conway (2001) consider flexibility from an equal opportunity perspective as an imperative for ‘family friendly’ working conditions that value the diverse patterns that emerge within organisations as worker’s

balance work and family (Raabe 1996). However, they make no gender distinction within this group, the majority women, who are at odds with the dominant business discourse on flexibility (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2005).

4.2 Gendered construction of shift work

Flexibility in policing is defined largely from the organisation's perspective and coupled with a culture of low trust (Waddington 1999a) may lead to the view that operational policing is not compatible with part-time due to its demand led nature (Dick 2004).

Police culture continues to be characterised by a 'command and control' approach to management (Waddington 1999a) leading to a situation where managers are used to being able to resource their units by commanding their officers to work overtime, or work behind after their shift is finished (Dick 2004). Part-time police employees may be given more routine clerical tasks and not assigned to the variety of activities experienced by full-time police because part-time staff are deemed to 'cause' a lack of 'continuity' in police work (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 44). Interestingly, "this continuity criticism is only made in relation to part-time employment, despite the fact that even full-time work could be constructed as 'part-time' in a twenty-four hours, seven days a week operational environment" (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 45). "Further, other factors, such as changes to work hours due to shift rotation, court attendance, roster changes and staff redeployment are not generally viewed as disrupting the continuity of police work but part of the job" (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 44). Interestingly, despite ample evidence that 12-hour shifts have adverse and long-term impacts on employee health (Ulker 2006) causes increased hazards (Dembe et al. 2005), reduce the ability for managers to match staff number to workload which in turn compromises service and benefit those who work second jobs (Rumble 2006), police unions in both Victoria and NSW have resolutely pursued and supported them (The Police Association 2006; Totaro 2006). Yet, no single request at Victoria Police to work 12-hour shifts has ever identified the six day absence that results as 'causing' a 'lack of continuity'. Rather extended shifts are

posited as ‘increasing work and life balance’ and include assurances that any disruption to working practices can be addressed (2006, pers comm., 23 March).

Yet, while part-time work and extended hours shifts may be constructed as the same thing, given that both have the same aim of maximizing time away from the workplace (Hudson 2005) part-time work has not enjoyed the same visible public support from police unions. This apparent dichotomy is consistent with historical activities of Australian male trade unions active in dense masculinities (Lewis 2007) who have traditionally either ignored, interfered with, and at times outright opposed attempts by women to protect themselves from exploitation, while “men have staunchly defended their role as breadwinners” (Summers 1975, p. 311) .

Shift work has often been described as more problematic for women, than men. Women with children tend to experience significantly greater amounts of ‘internal strain’ due to conflicting role demands on their time and energy (Lewis & Cooper 1989). Hochschild (1989) has examined how two-job couples in the United States cope with the structural problem of the domestic work shift, i.e., that when both members work outside of the home, the domestic work becomes an added burden in addition to their outside jobs. This research revealed that the burden typically falls to women because women's entrance into the workforce has not been coupled with the necessary structural changes in family life i.e. no corresponding uptake of domestic labour by men, thereby creating a ‘second shift’ for women.

In Australia, women have remained predominately responsible for caring responsibilities in the family, and have continued to perform almost twice as much domestic and caring work as men, despite an increase in their paid work (Pocock 2005). The combination of unpaid and paid work means that Australian women are shouldering a greater total labour share than men. Adjunct to this, the pattern of hours in paid work has also shifted, with more people working on weekends and at unsocial times of the day (Pocock 2003). This change in the timing of work undermines common family and recreational time and, as women are more likely to bear domestic responsibilities, the impact must be absorbed into their working schedules and limits their ability to participate in paid work. “The extension and continuance of gender inequality has been attributed to working arrangements in neo-traditional families in

which the woman continues to perform most unpaid work in the household and holds a subordinate and/or part-time position in the labour market” (Hudson 2005, p. 18). Notably, the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) found that nearly half (47 percent) of part-time employees had a partner/spouse working full-time at Victoria Police and nearly a third (29 percent) had a partner working full-time elsewhere, which appears to reflect this previous research.

4.3 Employer monopoly; taken hostage and hostage to the ‘taken for granted’

This profile of part-time employment highlights another unique aspect of policing culture which was found in the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) that is, the frequency of intimate relationships between police. This was further evidenced in this study. One could speculate that this likely arises due to the employment monopoly of police organisations more broadly. In Victoria, “Victoria Police is the only employer of police and recruits mainly at the base level” (Auditor-General’s Report 2006, p. 59). If, as Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007) propose, certain beliefs and perceptions that may be culturally transmitted within an organisation become accepted as taken-for-granted ‘knowledge’ (Waddington 1999a) and these conceptions then give rise to the way policing is organised, this, coupled with a more homogeneous workforce, it seems likely that ‘taken-for-granted’ knowledge will increase and group ‘norms’ intensified as a result. Chan (1996, p. 112) cautions that “the interpretative and active role of police officers in structuring their understanding of the organisation” should not be underestimated. That the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) did not consider gender as a dependant variable in data analysis, despite evidence it should have been, may reflect this unquestioned knowledge or perhaps more likely, acute awareness of the consequences for doing so.

Fears of a backlash against gender equity issues have been one of the primary motivators for using a gender-neutral, or ‘diversity’ approach, and one of the main feminist arguments for using gender-neutral terms. It is argued that the language of diversity can reduce ‘backlash’ propensities (Smithson & Stokoe 2005, p.150).

However, diversity approaches are limited in effectiveness. As new terms come into use in an attempt to ‘mainstream’ gender-equality issues, they become associated with women’s and family issues and thereby become limited in effectiveness (Lewis 2001). “One assumption behind the shift in emphasis from women-centred policies and terms to gender-neutral terms is that workplaces are no longer gendered in themselves, and that both women and men have equal choices and opportunities about participation in paid work, non-work commitments and preferences” (Smithson & Stokoe 2005, p. 150).

5 Previous survey findings and current research

As Acker (1990) asserts, organisations are gender blind, and similarly so for researchers, as women are invisible to them (Wilson 2003). Consequently, both fail to analyse the gendered nature of organisational life and the impacts on both the women and men who navigate these cultures.

Atypical to much organisational research which ignores gender (Wilson 1996) Dick (2004) exhorted researchers to further extend her research using gender as an explanatory construct. Dick considered the different attitudes of multiple stakeholders in a policing organisation to part-time work, and the social constructions that underpin the meaning of part-time work and flexibility.

In addition to the inherent limitations posed by a small-scale study of thirteen in-depth, semi-structured interviews and a focus group, Dick (2004) noted an additional methodological limitation to her findings; most of the part-time participants were female (four of five) and most of the colleagues and managers interviewed were male (six of seven). Dick did not use gender as an interpretive construct, however given the apparent ‘macho’ nature of the police service she contended that the influence of gender should not be discounted and encouraged further research on a larger scale to address this issue.

5.1 Surveys of part-time and full-time work in Victoria Police 2003-04

The interesting parallel here is that the surveys of part-time work and full-time work in Victoria Police (Victoria Police 2004) did not conduct thorough analyses of the gender differences arising in the surveys of 2003/04 and consequently perpetuated the fallacy of the gender neutral organisation. The analyses in the current research show that Victoria Police failed to examine the gendered nature of part-time work and hence failed to challenge the latent, subtle and indirect processes in organisations that are underpinned by gender distinctions (Benschop & Doorewaard 1998).

5.1.1 What was asked and not asked

The Part-time and Full-time Employees surveys (Victoria Police 2004) did not request a multitude of variables which would have enabled a more robust analysis of potential gender bias.

Neither survey requested information relating to education, number of years in policing and the number of years in paid work. In addition, the part-time survey did not ask participants for their parental status, if they had children and if so, how many. The questionnaire also made no distinction between childcare and studying as the reason for needing set days and shifts thus any gender differences would be merged. The full-time survey did not ask respondents if they have ever been part-time before and why, nor whether they have ever been primary carers before. The survey did not request their typical working pattern, the type of shifts they generally work, nor the number of hours worked each week. This would have enabled a more meaningful comparison between full and part-time police and VPS women and men in regarding expectations and realities regarding hours worked. For instance, some 55 per cent of part-time employees work weekend shift (Victoria Police 2004). The researcher has no way of confirming if this is less, more or equivalent to full-time employees or their managers. This is particularly critical given that part-time employees were posited as being able to 'choose' when they worked, a privilege claimed not to be not afforded to full-time employees.

Together, these variables would have facilitated a more detailed analysis of gender differences in caring responsibilities and attitudes toward part-time work compared to variables such as previous experience of part-time work, previous experience of primary caring responsibilities and allowed for greater scope to examine the traditional roles undertaken by women and men outside work and how this constrains the way part-time work is conducted.

Further, the survey did not enquire as to the size of the department/branch the part-time employee worked, though this was likely to ensure respondents felt their confidentiality was protected. In summary, inclusion of these items would have assisted to develop a more accurate assessment of the relationship between the independent and dependant variables. Of course, one cannot conclude a causal relationship unless these potentially confounding items are controlled, nevertheless their inclusion would have assisted to draw out the relationship as closer to reverse causation, third variable causation or circular causation. The latter seems most likely given the symbiotic nature of variables which mutually reinforce to determine women's place in organisations.

To better understand the complex nature of the challenge facing women in policing, part-time employment at Victoria Police is considered in the context of Acker's (1990) theory of the gendered organisation to provide a more robust account of the disparate experience and perception of part-time employees in a densely masculine organisation. If part-time employment remains the domain of women, as these jobs are predominantly filled by women primarily to mitigate conflict associated with their multiple role responsibilities of paid and unpaid work, and "such work is consistently associated with less desirable employment conditions than are more regular forms of employment ...then their existence in an organisation can be expected to contribute to the reinforcement or exacerbation of patterns of gender inequality in the workplace, since the negative consequences of part-time employment fall disproportionately on women (Harley 1994, p. 19).

The quantitative data was made available from the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) for this purpose. However, due to the aforementioned

limitations inherent to the original questionnaires, the possible statistical analyses available to the researcher were substantially narrowed, and consequent research aims able to be addressed adapted accordingly.

5.2 Revealing gender – summary of research aims

Organisational theorists and HRM literature have typically treated gender as irrelevant or invisible, resulting in historical research that is ‘gender-blind’ (Wilson 1996).

Using Acker’s theory of gendered organisation (1990) as a tool to examine the secondary data may reveal any emerging differences between female and male part-time employees. Thus the present study proposes:

- (1) To explore whether women and men differ as to why they choose part-time work, primarily due to the additional burden of unpaid domestic labour borne by women (Pocock 2005).
- (2) To explore whether part-time women and men work differently, due to inevitable conflict between paid work, specifically shift work, and the nature of the unpaid domestic labour, which is primarily for caring responsibilities (Pocock 2003).
- (3) To explore whether part-time women and men would have different organisational status, due to a gendered model of HRM that inherently advantages men (Dickens 1998).
- (4) To explore whether full-time women and men have different attitudes and beliefs toward part-time work, as the gendered nature of organisations creates mutually reinforcing cultural and institutional factors that reproduce these differences and leads to ‘women’s work’ being deemed of less value (Beechey & Perkins 1987).
- (5) Finally, to explore whether part-time women and men have a different attitudes and beliefs about their work, characterised by their experience of gender in a gendered organisation which maintains full-time employees, predominately male, as the norm, and prioritises their experiences accordingly (Acker 1990).

6 Method

The current study drew upon data collected by the Victoria Police Research Unit for the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004). Permission to access this secondary source was granted by the Research Unit. All analyses were completed using SPSS for Windows Version 14.

The present study adopted a feminist comparative approach (Nueman 1997) to examine the perspectives of full-time and part-time women and men about part-time work, akin to Jenkins (2004) Edwards and Robinson (1999) and Kugelburg (2006), but specifically Dick's (2004) earlier intensive, small scale study that examined construction and meaning of part-time work in policing using in-depth interviews. Dick exhorted researchers to critique her findings from the perspective of gender, having identified it as a confounding factor in the qualitative data.

Thus the present study extends Dick's (2004) approach by re-examining secondary quantitative data in a larger scale study using gender as an explanatory construct. This offers comparative and contextual data for Dick's previous study, while placing it within a more general context, a noted advantage of secondary data (Saunders et al. 2003). The feminist comparative approach "rests on a value position in favour of advancing human dignity and gender equity" (Nueman 1997, p. 410). The standpoint of the researcher is informed by their experience as a VPS employee in Victoria Police, and an employee involved in the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) and the Quality Part-time Work Project³. The researcher was involved in implementing some of the recommendations arising from both.

6.1 Design

Two surveys were developed by the Research unit in Victoria Police, following a series of focus groups with 107 Victoria Police employees across metropolitan,

³ A detailed analysis of aspects of the findings for the Quality Part-time Work Project may be found in the article published by Sara Charlesworth and Kerri Whittenbury (2007). This article informed this study.

regional and rural areas, in addition to preliminary interviews with managers and representatives from The Police Association (TPA) and the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU). One survey was designed for part-time employees and the other for full-time employees.

Throughout the present study, the original 'Survey on Part-time Work' is referred to as the 'Full-time Survey' and the original 'Part-time Staff Survey' as the 'Part-time Survey' (intellectual property provisions prevent public publication of the surveys). Contact the Victoria Police Research Unit for further information regarding access.

Both surveys consisted of a series of structured questions regarding experiences of, and attitudes toward, part-time work. The surveys were distributed to all part-time police officers and VPS staff and to a smaller sample of full-time employees. The anonymously completed surveys were to be returned in either hard-copy or de-identified reply email to the Policing Research Manager within one month.

6.2 Respondents

The sample comprised police officers and VPS staff. The Part-time Survey was distributed to all 606 part-time employees and 476 full-time employees. Of these, 284 part-time surveys (46.9 per cent) and 88 full-time surveys (18.5 per cent) were returned.

Most part-time respondents (282) were between 26 and 55 years of age. Ten were aged 25 and below and seven were aged 56 and above. Most part-time respondents were female (249), representing 88 per cent of those surveyed. Most full-time respondents (88) were aged between 26 and 55 years of age. Seven were aged 25 and below and three were aged 56 and above.

Most full-time respondents were male (58), representing 66 per cent of those surveyed. All were located across Victoria, in metropolitan, suburban, regional and rural areas.

6.3 Measures

6.3.1 Part-time Survey

Part-time employment profile

The current study drew upon nine items from the part-time survey to assess the employment profile of each part-time respondent. These items related directly to Aims 1, 2 and 3 of the current study. Why respondents were part-time was assessed by their reason for converting to part-time work and applying for a part-time vacancy. How respondents work part-time was assessed by items pertaining to work situation characteristics, that is, the number of hours usually worked, their part-time tenure, their typical fortnightly work pattern and what shifts they typically worked and why. The current organisational status of part-time employees was assessed using single items pertaining to their current rank/grade and which area of policing they work in.

Attitudes and beliefs of part-time employees

The attitudes and beliefs of part-time employees about their work were measured by eleven single items. These items related directly to Aim 5 of the current study. These items encapsulated issues commonly raised by part-time employees, for example, 'I feel that as a part-time employee I am valued as equally as my full-time colleagues are valued in my workplace'. Respondents indicated their views on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = agree). In the present study an acceptable level of reliability was demonstrated ($\alpha = .83$).

6.3.2 Full-time Survey

Full-time employee's attitude to part-time work

The current study drew upon fourteen items from the full-time survey relating to the attitudes of full-time employees toward part-time employment. These items related directly to Aim 4 of the current study. An example item is 'Part-time employees are

generally more committed to their work than full-time employees'. Respondents indicated their views on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = agree). In the present study an acceptable level of reliability was demonstrated ($\alpha = .88$)

Full-time employee's beliefs about part-time work

The current study drew upon seven items from the full-time survey relating to full-time employees' beliefs about which work areas were suitable for part-time work. These items related directly to Aim 4 of the current study. A list of seven distinctive work areas in Victoria Police was given, such as Criminal Investigation, Administration or General Operational Policing. Respondents were asked to nominate whether they thought this type of work was suitable for part-time work by indicating either 'yes', 'no' or 'possibly'.

7 Results

The data were analysed in five sections, each of which addressed one of the five aims. A combination of Chi-square tests and Independent Sample t-tests were used. First, Chi-square tests were performed to explore whether women and men choose part-time work for different reasons. Additional analyses were conducted to examine whether these differences persisted as women progress upwards in the organisation and whether these differences were reflected in the private sphere. Second, Chi-square analyses were performed to examine whether women and men differed in the ways in which they worked part-time, comparing tenure, typical working pattern and shifts usually worked between part-time employees. Third, Chi-square analyses were performed to examine whether part-time women and men have different organisational status, in terms of their current rank or level and work area. Additional analyses were conducted to examine whether differences in organisational status between part-time women and men were a function of their flexibility. In cases where the analyses were performed on cells of less than five participants, Fisher's Exact Probability Test was used to establish significance, as recommended by Pallant (2002, p. 288). Fourth, a series of Independent Sample t-tests were performed to examine whether full-time women and men have different attitudes and beliefs toward part-

time work. Finally, a series of Independent Sample t-tests were performed to examine whether part-time women and men have different attitudes and beliefs toward part-time work. Additional analyses were conducted to explore whether the attitudes and beliefs of part-time women and men differed as a function of their organisational status. Results of all analyses in full are contained in the Appendix.

7.1 To explore whether women and men differ as to why they choose part-time work (Research Aim 1)

A series of Chi-square tests were performed to explore whether women and men have different reasons for choosing part-time work. The results are depicted in Table 3.

Table 3 - Reason for choosing part-time work for police and VPS employees, by Sex

Why did you become part-time?	Police				VPS			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
Family responsibilities	1	1	2	50	3	0	3	100
Young children	146**	18**	164	89	59*	1*	60	98.3
Elderly parents	1	-	1	100	1	-	1	100
Sick or disabled relative	4	1	5	80	-	-	-	0
To undertake course of study	3**	5**	8	37.5	4	-	4	100
Due to temporary or ongoing personal illness/disability	2	2	4	50	4	-	4	100
Other	3	0	3	100	10*	3*	13	76.9
Because you don't need or want full-time work	-	-	-	0	6	1	7	85.7
Total	160	27	187	85.6	87	5	92	94.6

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

As shown in Table 3, police and VPS women were significantly more likely to choose to be part-time to care for young children, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 9.9$ and $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 4.2$ respectively. On the other hand, police men were more likely to choose part-time work to study, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 11.9$. VPS men indicated 'other' reasons for choosing part-time work, including retirement and another career. These personal interests were the predominant reason for choosing part-time work, $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 4.16$.

Additional analyses – complimentary to Research Aim 1

As illustrated above, part-time women and men chose to work part-time for different reasons. Further Chi-square analyses were performed to explore whether gender differences hold for senior employees, given that senior positions in Victoria Police had previously been considered unsuitable for part-time work (Victoria Police 2004). Their reasons are presented in Table 4.

Table 4 - Reason for choosing part-time for senior police and VPS employees, by Sex

Why did you become part-time?	High rank Police (Sergeant +)				High level VPS (VPS-3+)			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
Family responsibilities	-	-	-	0	1	0	1	100
Young children	11 [‡]	2 [‡]	13	84.6	17*	1*	18	94.4
Elderly parents	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	0
Sick or disabled relative	1	0	1	100	-	-	-	0
To undertake course of study	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	0
Due to temporary or ongoing personal illness/disability	0 [‡]	2 [‡]	2	100	-	-	-	0
Other	-	-	-	0	2*	3*	5	40
Because you don't need or want full-time work	-	-	-	0	1	1	2	100
Total	12	4	16	75	21	5	26	80.8

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; [‡] $p < 0.1$.

As shown in Table 4, the results were generally consistent with the first set of analyses. Senior police and VPS women tend to choose part-time work to care for young children, $\chi^2(1, N = 16) = 2.4$ and $\chi^2(1, N = 28) = 5.1$ respectively. On the other hand, senior VPS men choose part-time work for reasons other than the categories provided, $\chi^2(1, N = 28) = 2.9$. Senior police men tended to choose part-time work due to illness or disability, rather than to pursue their education, $\chi^2(1, N = 16) = 3.0$. These results reflect Pocock's (2005) conclusion that responsibility for parenting remains firmly located with women, despite their increasing labour market participation. Traditional familial structures may be reinforcing their reason to be part-time (Hoschschild 1989).

A series of Chi-square tests were performed to explore whether part-time men and women not only have different reasons for choosing part-time work, but have partners with differing employment status. Table 5 depicts the employment status of partners of part-time police and VPS women and men.

Table 5 - Gender differences in partner's work status for police and VPS employees, by Sex

Partner's employment status	Police				VPS			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
Yes, full-time with Victoria Police	88**	4**	92	95.7	11	-	11	100
Yes, part-time with Victoria Police	2	2	4	50	1	-	1	100
Yes, full-time but not with Victoria Police	54	8	62	87.1	61 [‡]	2 [‡]	63	96.8
Yes, part-time but not with Victoria Police	1**	8**	9	11.1	2*	2*	4	50
No, my partner/spouse is not currently in paid employment	3	1	4	75	2	1	3	66.7
Not applicable because I am currently single	12	4	16	75	11	1	12	91.7

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; [‡] $p < 0.1$.

Table 5 reveals that police women were significantly more likely to have a partner working full-time at Victoria Police or part-time elsewhere, compared to men, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 13.1$ and $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 36.5$. On the other hand, VPS women were marginally more likely to have a partner work full-time elsewhere $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 1.8$, and significantly more likely to have their partner work part-time elsewhere, $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 6.7$. Interestingly, no VPS women had partners working at Victoria Police.

Regardless of their rank or level, women choose part-time work in order to care for children, and VPS men to pursue personal interests. However, police men choose part-time work to study and then upon reaching higher ranks, because of personal illness or disability. Caring predominately remains the responsibility of females, regardless of their rank or level. Subsequently, it seems likely then that the ‘choice’ to be part-time is not only personal, but for women likely reinforced by their full-time partner at Victoria Police or elsewhere.

7.2 To explore whether part-time women and men work differently (Research Aim 2)

A commonly cited criticism of part-time employees in shift environments at Victoria Police is their inflexibility. They tend to work set shifts rather than varying shifts (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007), avoid night shifts and be part-time for an indefinite period (Victoria Police 2004). A series of Chi-square tests were performed to compare part-time police and VPS women and men across these aspects, specifically; their typical working pattern, reason for working pattern, shift types and tenure. The results are displayed in Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Table 6 - Usual fortnightly shift pattern for police and VPS employees, by Sex

Description of usual fortnightly shift pattern each fortnight	Police				VPS			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
Work same days and shifts	86*	7*	93	92.5	80	4	84	95.2
Same days but various shifts	24	7	31	77.4	4	1	5	80
Various days but same shifts	6	2	8	75	1	-	1	100
Various days and various shifts	45	11	56	80.4	3	1	4	75
Total	161	27	188	85.6	88	6	94	93.6

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

As shown in Table 6, police women were significantly more likely to work same days and shifts, compared to men $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 5.9$ who, as shown in Table 7, indicated that these set shifts were unnecessary for them, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 8.2$. No such differences were found for VPS women and men which is unsurprising as so few work in a shift environment.

Table 7 - Reason for working varying shifts and days for police and VPS employees, by Sex

Main reason for having varying shifts and days	Police				VPS			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
It is not necessary for me to have set shifts and/or days	17**	9**	26	65.4	1	1	2	50
I did not ask for set shifts and/or days	8	2	10	80	1	0	1	100
I was unable to negotiate set shifts and/or days	8	2	10	80	-	-	0	0
Other	21	1	22	95.5	2	0	2	100
Total	56	14	68	79.4	4	1	5	80

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

A series of Chi-square tests were performed to compare police and VPS women and men and the type of shifts they usually work. The results are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8 - Usual shifts/times worked for police and VPS employees, by Sex

Usual shifts/times worked per fortnight	Police				VPS			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
Day	148	24	172	86	82	6	88	93.2
Day shift not applicable	-	-	0	0	3	0	3	100
Afternoon	99	22	121	81.8	4	1	5	80
Afternoon shift not applicable	15	1	16	93.8	26	2	28	92.9
Twilight	43	9	52	82.7	-	1	1	0
Twilight shift not applicable	40	4	44	90.9	29	2	31	93.5
Night	36**	14**	50	72	-	-	0	0
Night shift not applicable	38	6	44	86.4	30	3	33	90.9
Weekend	83 [‡]	19 [‡]	102	81.4	2	0	2	100
Weekend shift not applicable	18	2	20	90	28	3	31	90.3

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; [‡] $p < 0.1$.

As shown in Table 8, police women were significantly less likely to work night shift compared to men, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 8.9$ and marginally less likely to work weekend shifts, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 2.6$. No such differences were found between VPS women and men.

A series of Chi-square tests were performed to compare the length of time police and VPS women and men work part-time. The results are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9 - Tenure for part-time police and VPS employees, by Sex

Length of part-time work	Police				VPS			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
Less than 2 years	51**	17**	68	75	42	3	45	93.3
2 - 4 years	45	9	54	83.3	28	1	29	96.6
4 - 6 years	37**	0**	37	100	6	1	7	85.7
6 - 8 years	22	1	23	95.7	4	0	4	100
More than 8 years	6	0	6	85.6	8	1	9	88.9

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

As shown in Table 9, police men were significantly more likely to have worked part-time for less than 2 years, compared to women, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 8.5$. On the other hand, police women were significantly more likely to have worked part-time for between four and six years, compared to men, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 6.3$. Thus, police women remained part-time for significantly longer than men. No such differences were found between VPS women and men.

Additional analyses complimentary to Research Aim 2

Given that part-time police women and men had significantly different working patterns, and indicated different reasons for doing so, it seemed possible that differences may have been present in the amount of hours they worked. A series of Chi-square tests were thus performed to compare the number of hours worked by part-time police and VPS women and men. However, no significant differences were found (see Appendix). Part-time women and men generally worked the same number of hours, regardless of difference in shift types, or reasons for working different types of shifts.

In summary, while part-time police women and men contributed the same number of hours to the organisation, they worked them in significantly different ways. Police men were significantly more likely to remain part-time for less time than women, and were more flexible as they did not need set shifts. Conversely, police women were significantly more likely to work set shifts that did not include nights and weekends, and even when working flexibly, they did so to accommodate their family schedule.

VPS women and men did not work part-time differently, presumably as so few actually work shifts, reflecting the more conventional nature of VPS employment (Victorian Public Service 2004).

7.3 To explore whether part-time women and men have different organisational status (Research Aim 3)

A series of Chi-square tests were performed to explore whether part-time police and VPS women and men differed in organisational status, reflected by their current rank or level and work area. The results are displayed in Table 10.

Table 10 - Rank or level for police and VPS employees, by Sex

Low rank	Rank or level	Police				VPS				
		F	M	Total	(%) F	Rank or level	F	M	Total	(%) F
	Protective Services Officer	1	-	1	100	VPS- 1	33 [‡]	- [‡]	33	100
	Constable	6	2	8	75	VPS- 2	33 [‡]	- [‡]	33	100
	Senior Constable or Leading S/C	139	21	160	86.9					
	Forensic Officer-1	-	-	-	-					
	Forensic Officer-2	3	-	3	100					
High rank	Sergeant +	5*	4*	9	55.6	VPS-3 +	22**	6**	28	78.6
	Forensic Officer-3	7	-	7	100					
	Total police	161	27	188	85.6	Total VPS	88	6	94	93.6
	Total low rank	149	23	172	86.6	Total low level	66	-	66	100
	Total high rank	12	4	16	75	Total high level	22	6	28	78.6

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; [‡] $p < 0.1$.

As shown in Table 10, men were more representative of higher ranks or levels than women, across the organisation. Specifically, men were significantly more likely to be at the rank or level of Sergeant, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 4.6$, and VPS-3 and above, $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 11.73$ while VPS women tended to be at VPS-2 level and below, $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 2.0$ and $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 2.0$ respectively.

Another indicator of status in Victoria Police is the type of work performed. General Operational Policing, Crime Investigation and Operational Management are ascribed the highest standing, and Administration and Specialist Operational Policing the lowest. Chi-square analyses were performed to explore whether there were significant differences in gender representation in the type of work performed amongst part-time

employees. Table 11 depicts the areas where part-time police and VPS men and women work.

Table 11 - Work areas for police and VPS employees, by Sex

Work Area	Police				VPS			
	F	M	Total	(%) F	F	M	Total	(%) F
General Operational Policing	47 [‡]	13 [‡]	60	78.3	1	-	1	100
Specialist Operational Policing	65*	4*	69	94.2	1	-	1	100
Crime Investigation	13	5	18	72.2	-	-	-	-
Administrative	6	-	6	100	75**	1**	76	98.7
Forensic Analysis	8	-	8	100	-	-	-	-
Supervisory/management Operational	2*	3*	5	40	-	-	-	-
Supervisory/management Non-operational	2	1	3	66.7	2	1	3	66.7
Other	13	1	14	92.9	8**	4**	12	66.7

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; [‡] $p < 0.1$.

As shown in Table 11, women were significantly more likely to work in areas of lower standing, and men in areas of higher standing. Specifically, police women were significantly more likely to work in Specialist Operational Policing, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 5.4$, when compared to men, who were marginally more likely to work in General Operational Policing, $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 3.0$ and Operational Management $\chi^2(1, N = 188) = 5.3$. Likewise, VPS women were significantly more likely to work in Administration, $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 12.9$, when compared to men who were significantly more likely to work in 'other' areas, defined by them as different to administration, $\chi^2(1, N = 94) = 11.9$.

Additional analyses – complimentary to Research Aim 3

Having established significant gender differences in organisational status in terms of rank or level and work area, these results prompted further analyses to explore whether such differences were a function of flexibility, given that flexibility is posited as critical for policing (Dick 2004). Specifically, a series of Chi-square tests were performed to compare the rank and work area of part-time police women and men who were equally flexible i.e. work varying shifts including night shift. Note that VPS women and men were not included in these analyses as previous findings indicated

that they did not differ in type of shifts worked (these results are displayed in Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9).

The results were consistent with previous analyses for the most part. Despite equal flexibility, police men were still marginally more likely to be ranked as Sergeants or above, $\chi^2(1, N = 42) = 2.5$, and women trending towards lower ranks of Senior Constable, $\chi^2(1, N = 42) = 1.9$. Police women were also still marginally more likely to work in areas of lower standing such as Specialist Operational Policing, $\chi^2(1, N = 42) = 2.4$. Interestingly, there was no significant difference in rank or work area between police men and women who were equally inflexible (see Appendix). In other words, flexibility appears to afford police men, but not women, opportunities to progress to higher ranks.

In summary, the results revealed that part-time men were significantly more likely to have higher organisational status, compared to women. They were more likely to be represented in higher ranks and levels and work in areas of higher standing. Further, amongst police working flexibly, women were still more likely to be lower ranked and in work areas of lower standing, compared to men.

7.4 To explore whether full-time women and men have different attitudes and beliefs toward part-time work (Research Aim 4)

To explore the question of whether full-time women and men have different attitudes toward part-time work, a series of one-tailed t-tests for Independent Samples were conducted. In addition, a series of Chi-square analyses were conducted to compare the beliefs of full-time Police and VPS women and men regarding the potential of work areas for part-time work. Table 12 shows mean scores of full-time police and VPS women and men evaluating aspects of part-time work.

Table 12 - Attitude toward part-time work for full-time Police and VPS employees, by Sex

Aspects of part-time work	Police							VPS						
	F			M			P	F			M			P
	M	SD	N	M	SD	N		M	SD	N	M	SD	N	
Self-reported attitude toward part-time work	4.35	.78	17	3.84	1.08	49	.077	3.8	1.0	10	4.24	.88	9	NS
Part-time should be accessible to men and women	4.76	.43	17	4.48	1.01	50	NS	4.64	.50	11	4.38	.74	8	NS
Part-time productivity	2.81	.54	16	2.59	.74	46	NS	2.50	.85	10	3.38	1.06	8	.069
Part-timers more committed to work	2.65	.78	17	2.40	.89	48	NS	2.55	.82	11	3.38	.74	8	.037
Part-timers flexibility regarding shifts	2.65	.93	17	2.38	1.02	50	NS	2.82	.87	11	3.38	.91	8	NS
Part-timers flexibility regarding over-time	2.94	.89	17	2.82	1.03	49	NS	2.64	.80	11	3.13	.64	8	NS
Part-timers make rostering easier	2.76	.56	17	2.54	.90	50	NS	2.91	.83	11	3.13	.83	8	NS
Part-timers regularly at work	3.59	1.00	17	3.04	1.06	50	.068	3.18	.75	11	3.50	.53	8	NS
Part-timers do not create extra work	3.41	1.06	17	3.16	1.03	50	NS	3.27	1.10	11	3.75	.70	8	NS
Part-timers do their share of night shift/weekend shift	2.56	1.01	9	2.51	1.01	37	NS	2.67	1.15	11	2.67	.57	8	NS
Part-timers make my job easier	3.59	1.12	17	3.33	1.02	49	NS	3.55	1.03	11	3.88	.64	8	NS
Managers have power	2.76	.90	17	2.76	1.09	49	NS	3.09	1.13	11	3.88	.64	8	NS
Part-timers should have same access to development	4.00	1.06	17	3.82	.96	50	NS	4.09	.83	11	3.75	1.16	8	NS
Part-timers do have same access to development	2.53	.71	17	2.58	.88	50	NS	2.36	.67	11	3.13	1.2	8	NS

As shown in Table 12, two marginal gender differences in attitudes toward part-time work were found in the case of police. Police men were marginally more likely to believe that part-time employees never seem to be at work compared to women ($t(65) = 1.85, p = .068$). Police women were also marginally more positive in their general attitude toward part-time work, compared to men ($t(64) = 1.79, p = .077$). Amongst police, there was a trend toward women valuing part-time work more than men.

In the case of VPS staff, the analyses revealed one definitive and one marginal gender difference in attitudes toward part-time work. Specifically, VPS women were significantly more likely to believe that part-time employees were less committed to their work ($t(17) = -2.26, p < .05$) and were not as productive as full-time employees ($t(16) = -1.94, p = .067$), compared to men. Amongst VPS staff, there was a trend towards women valuing part-time work less than men.

To explore whether full-time police and VPS women and men differ in their beliefs about the suitability of particular roles for part-time work, a series of Chi-square tests were performed. The results are displayed in Table 13.

Table 13 – Work area suitability for part-time work for full-time police and VPS employees, by Sex

Work Area	Police					VPS				
	F	M	Total 'YES'	(%) F	Total # overall	F	M	Total 'YES'	(%) F	Total # overall
General Operational Policing	17**	35**	52	32.7	67	4	5	9	44.4	17
Specialist Operational Policing	15	38	53	28.3	67	5	5	10	50	18
Criminal Investigation	13*	21*	34	38.2	66	3	3	6	50	17
Administrative	16	46	62	25.8	67	10	8	18	55.6	19
Forensic Analysis	14	29	43	32.6	65	6	4	10	60	18
Supervisory/Management (operational)	11 [‡]	20 [‡]	31	35.5	64	2	4	6	33.3	18
Supervisory/Management (non-operational)	11	34	45	24.4	64	4	4	8	50	18

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; [‡] $p < 0.1$.

As shown in Table 13, police women were significantly more likely to believe that roles in General Operational Policing, $\chi^2(1, N = 67) = 4.9$, and Criminal Investigation, $\chi^2(1, N = 67) = 4.7$, were suitable for part-time work. Compared to police men, women were also trending towards considering roles in Operational Management as suitable for part-time work, $\chi^2(1, N = 67) = 2.2$. No such differences were found between VPS staff. These findings suggest that police women believe roles of higher standing are suitable for part-time work, when compared to men.

In summary, full-time police men believed that work areas where part-time police women congregated (see Table 11) were suitable for part-time work, whereas work areas where part-time police men congregated (see Table 11) were not. This suggests that 'women's work' is deemed suitable for part-time, but 'men's work' is not. Given that the majority of part-time employees are women (88 per cent) these questions are

indicators of the gender coding of roles and responsibilities within Victoria Police and the need for change initiatives that breakdown these stereotypes within the organisation.

7.5 To explore whether part-time women and men have different attitudes and beliefs about their work (Research Aim 5)

To explore the question of whether part-time police and VPS women and men have different attitudes and beliefs about their work, a series of one-tailed t-tests for Independent Samples were performed to compare their mean scores evaluating eleven aspects of their work. The results are depicted in Table 14.

Table 14 - Attitudes and beliefs of police and VPS employees, by Sex

Aspects of experience of part-time work	Police							VPS							
	F			M				P	F			M			
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>		<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>P</u>	
Experience when applying for part-time work	3.58	1.28	159	3.92	1.11	25	NS	3.73	.96	86	4.00	.89	6	NS	
Supervisor support	3.51	1.23	92	3.75	1.12	16	NS	3.76	1.05	42	-	-	-	NS	
Colleagues support	3.59	.89	92	3.38	1.02	16	NS	3.80	.87	41	-	-	-	NS	
Part-time application process	3.35	1.03	93	3.56	1.15	16	NS	3.64	1.11	39	-	-	-	NS	
Overall experience while part-time	4.11	.79	159	4.12	.95	26	NS	4.20	.76	88	4.60	.54	5	NS	
Supervisor 's perception of part-time	3.37	1.06	160	3.32	1.10	25	NS	3.78	.96	88	3.83	1.6	6	NS	
Colleague's perceptions of part-time	3.32	.95	161	3.61	1.07	23	NS	3.72	.84	88	3.40	1.6	5	NS	
Your work performance	2.38	.86	159	2.48	1.00	25	NS	2.39	.82	88	2.83	.98	6	NS	
Feel equally valued as full-time colleagues	2.86	1.11	159	3.23	1.03	26	NS	3.51	1.07	84	4.00	1.26	6	NS	
Satisfaction with part-time work	4.18	.89	159	3.73	1.15	26	.024	4.32	.72	87	3.80	1.09	5	NS	
Satisfaction with work/life balance	4.47	.67	161	4.19	1.09	26	.077	4.30	.79	87	3.83	.98	6	NS	

As shown in Table 14, two gender differences were found for police, while none were found for VPS staff. Police women were significantly more likely to be satisfied with

their part-time work ($t(183) = 2.27, p < .05$) and marginally more satisfied with their overall work/life balance, compared to men ($t(185) = 1.78, p = .07$).

Additional analyses complimentary to Research Aim 5

Having established gender differences amongst police in their satisfaction with part-time work and work/life balance, further analyses were performed to explore whether these differences held at higher rank, given the increased responsibilities of such positions. A series of one-tailed t-tests for Independent Samples was performed to compare the mean scores of part-time women and men of similar rank or level evaluating eleven aspects of their work (see Appendix). Low ranked VPS part-time women and men could not be compared as no men existed in this category.

Amongst low ranked police one marginal difference was found. While women and men were equally satisfied with their part-time work and work/life balance, police women tended to feel less valued than their full-time colleagues ($M = 2.86, SD = 1.10$) compared to men ($M = 3.32, SD = 1.04; t(163) = -1.83, p = .07$).

Amongst high ranked part-time police, two definitive and one marginal gender difference in attitudes and beliefs about their work were found. Police women were significantly more likely to be satisfied with their part-time work ($M = 4, SD = .853$) compared to men ($M = 2, SD = 1.15; t(14) = 3.74, p < .01$) and their work/life balance ($M = 4.50, SD = .522$) compared to men ($M = 2.50, SD = 1.73; t(14) = 3.74, p < .01$). Yet despite their relative dissatisfaction with their work and work/life balance, police men still considered themselves to be more productive than their full-time colleagues ($M = 3.33, SD = .58$), compared to women ($M = 2.33, SD = .78; t(13) = -.206, p = .06$).

In summary, the results pertaining to Research Aim 5 revealed that amongst police, women were satisfied with their part-time work and work/life balance, regardless of their rank. Low ranked police men felt equally satisfied with their part-time work and work/life balance and additionally, felt more valued at work, than did women. Amongst high ranked police, men became less satisfied with their part-time work and

work/life balance, but still assessed themselves as more productive than their full-time colleagues, compared to women.

Taken together, the results exemplify how gendered expectations of women and men in society impact on the career and promotional pyramid seen in densely masculine organisations like Victoria Police. This study now turns to a deeper exploration as to why.

8 Discussion

8.1 Overview

Two surveys about the work experience of part-time employees in Victoria Police are the basis for this research. The first, the ‘part-time survey’, compared why and how people work part-time at Victoria Police and the experiences of part-time employees. The second, the ‘full-time survey’ explored the attitude and beliefs of their full-time counterparts toward part-time work. This research adopted a pluralistic approach, first employed by Dick (2004) who had previously used qualitative data to examine the dual perspectives of a small number of different stakeholders in policing and their construction of the meaning of part-time work.

The present study extends this approach by re-examining secondary quantitative data in a larger scale study using gender as an explanatory construct, specifically Acker’s (1990) theory of gender in organisation, to reveal how these different meanings of part-time work manifest and are expressed in the organisation, and consequently the dynamic process by which part-time employees, predominately women, have become marginalised as a result.

To operationalise these aims, the present study sought to explore whether part-time women and men differed in terms of (1) the reason why they chose part-time work, (2) how they work part-time, (3) their status in the organisation, (4) whether full-time women and men had different perceptions of part-time work and finally, (5) whether women and men experience part-time work differently. Results demonstrated significant gender differences in each case.

Irrespective of the merits of either position, this presents a ‘double jeopardy’ for part-time employees, predominately women, whom will be mired in their progression in the organisation due to a complex array of factors that, while for different reasons, mutually reinforce to devalue part-time work nevertheless. The current status of part-time employees will exacerbate the gender inequality that exists in Victoria Police,

since the disadvantages associated with such employment rests primarily with women.

Interestingly, secondary analysis of the part-time and full-time survey revealed that the previous research was gender-blind and the conclusions arising may not adequately reflect the population, in which the overwhelming majority are female, in and of itself an illustration of Acker's (1990) theory of gender in organisations. These findings may help shed light upon the status of women in policing more broadly.

9 The gendering of part-time work in Victoria Police

9.1 Who Cares?

Research Aim 1 - To explore whether women and men differ as to why they choose part-time work, primarily due to the additional burden of unpaid domestic labour shouldered by women (Pocock 2005).

The first major finding of this study was that women and men differed as to why they chose part-time work. Women were significantly more likely to be part-time to care, while men were significantly more likely to be part-time to study. This difference persisted at higher levels in the organisation for women, but for men their part-time status then became driven by a personal illness or disability or another reason not linked to caring. The profile of Police women and men and home was different; women's partners were significantly more likely to be full-time at Victoria Police, whereas men were more likely to have a partner working full-time elsewhere.

This finding replicates the results of Pocock (2005) and Lewis (2001) who have consistently demonstrated that according to traditional gender roles and stereotypes men are given the primary role of breadwinners (a work orientation) while women are responsible for nurturing children and maintaining the home (a family orientation). As a result of this family orientation, males have historically been able, due to a lack of external constraints which have been evidenced in the present study, to be able to fulfil the organisationally defined notion of the 'ideal worker' who is available to work full-time unhindered, not allowing family and domestic needs to interfere with work, as these are provided for by someone else.

Women who seek both career and family orientation in their lives often 'choose' part-time work as a resolution of these dual worlds as it reduces the conflict between paid and unpaid work, specifically domestic responsibilities (Warren 2004) and is the mechanism of choice for Australian women (Lunn 2007). Accordingly, part-time work is a crucial mechanism for attracting and retaining women (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007; Boni & Circelli 2002). However, the resulting disparate utilisation

of part-time work by men and women may have far-reaching consequences. It entrenches women's place as primary carers, reinforcing the strongly gendered way in which employment and caregiving is combined in western societies and reinforce the traditional 'breadwinner' model of work/family life (Pocock 2005, p. 36). The present study found this modeling of traditional roles prevalent amongst part-time employees. Female part-time police were more likely to have a partner working full-time at Victoria Police than anywhere else. It seems a likely outcome of being part-time and female and the 'secondary' earner (Hakim 2000) that your paid work becomes the 'default' position and the most amenable to change.

A theoretical explanation for this phenomenon is Pocock's (2005, p. 38) model of 'gender order and work/care regime in Australia'. Originally conceptualised by Connell (2003), gender order is constructed by social and historical power relations. The larger gender order shapes, and is shaped by, the balance of class forces between employers and employees and the role and nature of the state. At any point in time or place, work/care outcomes are the consequences of the gender order and its specific embodiment in a work/care regime. Pocock applied this seminal theory in an Australian context.

The major tenets of Pocock's model were supported. The current data revealed that caring predominately remains the responsibility of females, regardless of their rank/level. Women were significantly more likely to work part-time to care for their young children, while men choose to further their career prospects by studying. Men tended to remain part-time for around two years – roughly equivalent to the time needed to complete a course of study. Whereas women stayed part-time for four to six years – roughly equivalent to the time needed to rear children to school age. Notably, at higher ranks men do not convert to part-time to study, presumably because they had already achieved their desired education, instead they were more likely to do so to accommodate personal illness, which is consistent with studies conducted on long-term shift workers (Ulker 2006).

On the basis of men surveyed, men were not required to bear the burden of childcare. Both low and high ranked male part-time police were likely to pursue study and then experience illness. High ranked male VPS staff were likely to pursue outside interests.

Beyond institutions, recent empirical studies of work and family in Australia suggest that culture is very significant in shaping work/care outcomes (Kugelburg 2006). “What is more, these cultures are resistant to change” (Pocock 2005. p.41). While women have increasingly taken on public paid work, their internalized sense of ‘proper motherhood’ and its public cultural norms remain firmly wedded to notions of traditional, available, nurturing mothers taking primary responsibility for care and attitudes about the care of young children, locating responsibility with mothers ((Pocock 2005. p.41; Wood & Newton 2006).

Chief Commissioner Nixon nominated part-time work as a critical mechanism for recruiting and retaining women (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007), however due to differences between why men and women are part-time, an unintended consequence is that it functions to maintain the status quo; enabling women to continue working, whilst enabling men to enhance their organisational value by utilising the flexibility offered by part-time employment in a different way and pursue professional and personal development but “it is a double whammy for part-time working women – their jobs aren’t the best career option and more is expected of them on the home front” (Lunn 2007).

Equality of opportunity means ensuring that women have the same access to opportunity as men. However, if other factors such as external commitments prevent, hinder or discourage women from taking up opportunities, competing on equal terms for jobs, pay or promotion can never be achieved (Wilson 2003, p. 20).

To examine the extent to which gender influences the construction of part-time work, the present research positions itself within the debates on gendered organisations (Acker 1990). Acker’s (1990) development of the ‘gender substructure of organisations’ has allowed for inquiries into the ways in which gender relations saturate organisational life.

9.2 Inflexible flexibility

Research Aim 2 - To explore whether part-time women and men work differently, due to inevitable conflict between paid work, specifically shift work, and the nature of the unpaid domestic labour, which is primarily for caring responsibilities (Pocock 2003).

The second major finding of this study was that among police, part-time men and women worked differently. Men were part-time for less time than women, and while part-time, worked varying shifts, including night and weekend, because set shifts were unnecessary. Women were worked set shifts because they needed them, and were less likely to work night and weekend shifts.

Examining differences in flexibility between men and women necessarily draws upon two diverse bodies of literature which have significantly tended to be polarized between the supply and demand features of flexibility (Jenkins 2004). Atkinson's theory of the flexible firm initiated debates of flexibility which focused on the nature, form and extent of flexibility (Boxall 1996; Mallon 2000). Competitive efficiencies could only be achieved by the restructuring of organisational time in a flexible way, the most common being part-time work.

Conversely, supply-side flexibility has focused on the characteristics of the part-time workforce who are predominately women (Pocock 2003; Thornwaite 2004). Hakim's (2000) popular, but controversial (Sheridan 2004) 'preference theory' emphasizes the importance of analysing actor choice with reference to women's position in the labour market. Women fall into three categories; home-centre, adaptive and work-centred. Men are not represented in the home-centred category as they are necessarily absent due to their primary 'breadwinner' status, though little analysis is offered as to why. Part-time work is identified an optimal method for women wanting to combine employment and a major role in the family so they can have 'the best of both worlds' (Hakim 2000, p. 249). Caven (2006) contends that women had chosen alternative ways of working in the sense that they had 'rejected' a conventional career within an organisation, allowing them to combine caring responsibilities or volunteer, concluding that work is not always the central interest of an individual life, which is

an interesting generalization given that all her participants were women. Caven's research analysing the career life history of 37 women fails to explore or offer any correlating explanation for men's absence from part-time work (Sheridan 2004) nor why most men have not rejected a conventional career as women do, or not been enlightened that "there is more to life than work" (2006 p. 48). Both Caven's (2006) and Hakim's (2000) work is positioned from a liberal feminist standpoint and as such is concerned with access and choice and not with analysing the discourses that privilege the masculine as normal and unexamined in the workplace.

Both authors fail to account for how the overwhelming growth in part-time work tended to be concentrated in occupations and industries identified as traditionally feminised sectors of the labour market which are characterised by low wages and poor promotion prospects, and" why women continue to dominate part-time work" (Sheridan 2004, p. 208).

Supply versus demand-side flexibility appear to be a construct of gender rather than part-time work. For instance, while most men did not need set shifts, and therefore simply did not choose them, female part-time police who worked varying shifts nominated 'other' reasons such as; 'fitting in with husband's hours' or 'easier to work around family'.

Clearly, even when working 'flexibly' women's working hours are still defined by their external responsibilities related to other (Brewer 2000). This question acts as an indicator of the differential gender-related expectations on women and men in their private lives where childcare responsibilities are still predominately borne by women and consequently their working hours are established in conjunction with these expectations, resulting in a constrained 'choice' that requires them to balance organisational demands whilst upholding traditional familial roles (Lewis 2001) while men are typically able to fulfill organisational demands of availability due to little interference from family, as these demands are likely being taken care of by someone else. When reflecting upon the 'choices' men and women make, it is noteworthy that between couples working in Victoria Police, females are significantly more likely to revert to part-time work, which suggests that amongst police, men choose partners who support their working life choices, but the reverse is not necessarily true for

women. This is consistent with broader research which found that women who work long hours are at increased risk of separating, while men are more likely to see their marriages fail if they work shorter hours. Men who work long hours do not damage their relationship, while the reverse is true for women (Khadem 2007).

9.3 Part-time work as a dynamic sub-process that perpetuates gender

Research Aim 3 - To explore whether part-time women and men would have different organisational status, due to a gendered model of HRM that inherently advantages men (Dickens 1998).

The third major finding of the study was that part-time men and women had different organisational status. Men were significantly more likely to be represented in higher ranks/levels and work in areas of higher status, than women.

These findings have strong theoretical grounding in a plethora of research (Fagan 2001; Blackwell 2001; Jenkins 2004; Tomlinson 2006) that has observed a relationship between part-time work and gender segregation, as part-time work was characterised by low pay and low skills with restricted opportunities for development. Such differences are commonly found across occupations when men and women are compared, and it is often argued that this reflects the more recent entrance of women into these occupations (Burke & Mikkelsen 2005) or women's preference for part-time work, originating from their status as secondary earners (Hakim 2000).

The present study found that with regards to part-time employees, men were significantly more likely have higher organisational status, compared to women. With regards to police, women were more likely to work in specialist operational policing. Conversely, men were more likely to work in general operational policing or operational management and be ranked as Sergeants or above. But this may reflect a whole complex of gender related career and promotional factors including the pattern evident in this study of men using part-time to optimise their education rather than a distinct gender bias.

Similarly, with regards to part-time VPS employees, men were significantly more likely to be at level VPSG-3 or above, compared to women who were more likely to be at level VPSG-2 or below. Overwhelmingly, VPS women worked in administration, while interestingly all VPS men described themselves as working part-time in areas 'other' than administration, that they consider more specialist or expert despite no additional detail provided in the survey to prompt such a distinction.

This outcome is consistent with Wilson's (2003) contention that in many cases, work is deemed inferior simply because women do it. International research has confirmed the connection between the incidence of part-time working and gendered work (Fagan 2001). These features of part-time working have accentuated the gendered nature of part-time work and its negative impact upon gender equality in the workplace (Beechey & Perkins 1987). Beechey and Perkin's (1987) research found that management's gendered assumptions underpin how work is organised as part-time.

9.3.1 Chronic Presenteeism

Gendered assumptions also inform performance measurement and assessment, and consequently organisational status. Consequently the proxy of 'face time' has entered organisations (Dickens 1998, p. 25). The assumption is often made that someone must be 'performing' if they are working long hours and chronically present. Within organisations myths develop around, for instance, the all-nighters that have to be put in — very much in the tone of 'heroic' behaviour, and consistent with policing culture (Waddington 1999a). As Simpson (1998) suggests, endemic 'presenteeism' characterises many organisational cultures. Thus a 'career' person, by (current) definition cannot be part-time. "Because they do not work as many hours as their full-time colleagues, part-timers are perceived as less committed to their work and hence less deserving of opportunities for career progression"(Sheridan 2004, p. 219). The informal script of organisations undermines the legitimacy of part-time work, as part-time taps into the discourse of 'partly-able' and 'partly committed' (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 45).

Dense masculinities, particularly uniformed cultures are characterised by ‘chronic presenteeism’ (Sheridan 2004, p. 210). Longer working hours and availability on the employer’s terms are required from those seeking to advance in the corporate setting (Sheridan 2004, p. 217). Connell (1995) notes pressures on men to be present in the workforce and the organisational norms valuing and rewarding longer hours contribute to the cult of ‘presenteeism’ that many men and women in professional and managerial roles experience.

Given that studies have shown a decline in the quality of performance with length of hours (Dembe 2005), the logic of this remains hard to fathom if the gendered construction of this assumption is not scrutinised. Such an assumption is more likely to reflect a normalizing of men’s working patterns and a devaluing of women’s working patterns which have traditionally encompassed fewer hours than men’s (Dickens 1998). Notably, the present study found that in spite of this, part-time women and men contribute the same number of hours to the organisation. No significant differences between women and men in hours actually worked – both contribute the same number of hours to the organisation. However, the normative model upheld and rewarded is that of men. For instance, amongst police, women who worked varying shifts (i.e. like most men) were significantly less likely to be ranked as Sergeants compared their male counterparts, despite no differences in availability to the organisation. Conversely, men who worked set shifts (i.e. like most women) were of the same rank as women.

It appears that, despite part-time work being available to both men and women, a gendered model of part-time work is not only upheld, but rewarded. Where men deviate from this model, and work part-time in a way that is more like most women, they are effectively punished for doing so by being denied promotional opportunities that are afforded to their masculine equivalent. However, women who work ‘like men’ are also denied promotional opportunities. Thus, a gendered model of hierarchy is upheld; both groups are penalized for deviating from the dominant traditional model of labour, however for women this is already from a point of relative disadvantage.

Eveline's theory of advantage appears borne out in the current study. Eveline (1994) contends that positioning men as normative obscures rather than exposes gender. Focusing on women's disadvantage whilst severing links to men and advantage not only conceals the gender dynamics of women and men but congeals them into 'women's problems' (p. 134). Thus, stalled progression in organisations is often translated into a need for women to apply for more jobs or a need for women to be more active in networking. 'But networking is confounded for women by the fact that most senior positions are typically occupied by men' (Dickens 1998, p. 29). Thus, the ways in which women are positioned is filtered through a masculine norm, reflected in the findings of the current study which suggest that potential for higher organisational status is not disrupted by part-time work for men, but it is for women.

9.4 Division of labour by gender

Research Aim 4 - To explore whether full-time women and men have different attitudes and beliefs toward part-time work, as the gendered nature of organisations creates mutually reinforcing cultural and institutional factors that reproduce these differences and leads to 'women's work' being deemed of less value (Beechey & Perkins 1987).

The fourth major finding was that full-time women and men had different attitudes and beliefs toward part-time work. Amongst police, men felt that part-time employees never seem to be at work whereas women were more positive about part-time work. Interestingly, amongst VPS staff, women were significantly more likely to believe that part-time employees lack commitment to the organisational and are less productive than their full-time equivalent compared to men.

Further, amongst police, men believed higher status work areas, in which men dominate, were unsuitable for part-time work. Part-time work was only suitable for areas where women worked already.

This compounds difficulties for part-time women to achieve higher status, since some full-time women devalue their commitment and productivity. Men, on the other hand,

devalue part-time work, in that they believe it is not suitable to high status positions. Irrespective of the merits of each position, this presents a 'double jeopardy' for part-time employees, predominately women. This also serves to maintain the status of part-time work as marginalised, as other full-time employees witness the negative financial and promotional impact of being part-time and be more likely not to make the same decision.

- *“the fact is that women are just not suited to the more demanding work, especially in forensics, because they are much more emotional than men. They cannot cope as well. If you had a child, you would understand.”*

Conversation with full-time female VPS employee, 10 September 2006.

These findings may be explained through the concept of masculine hegemony. Hegemony works where the knowledge produced by dominant groups takes on the status of common sense, and the preferences of the dominant group are prioritised (Hoerber 2007). Indeed, international research has confirmed that “sex segregation of occupations is not related to socio-economic development, rather social, cultural and historical factors are the main determinants of the sexual division of labour” (Anker 1997, p. 409). The division between genders is continually reinstated, through a consistent undervaluing of women’s skills and work, which is built into the development of technology (Wacjman 1999) and in turn, this gendering of skill reflects and shapes the worth put on women’s work. Undervaluing women’s skills, occupations and work is relational; as it can also be described as the overvaluing of men’s skills, jobs and productivity (Eveline 1998).

Conversely, Hakim (2000) contends that being the primary earner simply imposes different priorities on men, who value job security and good pay more often than women when choosing a job. “Just because women have flooded into highly qualified, professional, technical and managerial occupations does not mean they have adopted the same career commitment as men because many women still regard themselves as secondary earners, looking for jobs that can be fitted around their domestic activities which take priority ultimately” (p. 72).

Entwining hours of work and commitment is not uncommon, consistent with Dicken's (1998, p. 25) contention that HRM defines commitment through a model of gender, rather than job. "Commitment defined by input via hours at work and 'face-time' inherently advantages men as those with fewer caring responsibilities – disproportionately men - are better placed to manipulate images to control others impression as to the extent of the commitment being displayed" (Dickens 1998, p.25). The assumption that hours of work and commitment can be severed from a consideration of gender is at odds with research that has found no difference between sex and organisation commitment (Wilson 1996), in fact amongst women with more than one child it may even be higher (Boni & Circelli 2002).

Interestingly, amongst higher level VPS females, their primary concern was a perceived lack of commitment and productivity from part-time employees relative to full-time employees. This attitude may be consistent with the 'Queen Bee' syndrome, coined in sociological literature to characterise the antifeminist attitude of some highly successful female professionals who became accepted in a man's world. These women do not believe that discrimination based on gender is to be found in organisations (Wilson 2003, p. 142). Selection criteria, job design and working hours are 'fair' so an individual can succeed on their own merits. In doing so, they identify, internalize and actively collude to reflect the values of the dominant culture, in an attempt to distance themselves from 'the weaker sex' and consequently reinforce that culture which is inherently biased against them (Lewis 2006).

9.4.1 Keeping the men in 'Man'-agement

Despite Hakim's (2000) assurance that low commitment and primary family identity are features of secondary workers, not part-time work per se it is interesting that the jobs that are being created in this more 'flexible' format to meet the business goals of numerical flexibility are not being created in the traditional sites of masculine power. The jobs in the senior levels of organisation are not changing (Junor 1998) and women remain significantly under represented in positions of leadership across industry sectors (Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency 2006).

Management jobs, constructed as they are around notions of commitment to the organisation, have not been part of this 'flexing up' process. The role of management has been reified; it has been constructed as being too important to be done 'part-time'. Rather than reducing their working commitments in the more 'flexible' organisations, men and women in management report greater time requirements at work than ever before, as presence demonstrates contribution and commitment to the organisation (Hudson 2005) and the reaffirmation of management as the work of men, often leaving women feeling isolated and excluded as they are continuously being tested on masculine criteria of success such as toughness, political skill and total commitment which work to "keep men as managers, and managers as men" (Collinson & Hearn 1996, p.17)

Consistent with Sheridan's (2004) analysis, amongst police, men believe part-time women are suited to the work roles they are in, and not the areas in which men dominate. Conversely, women did not construct management as being too important to be done 'part-time'. In fact, police women believed that general operational policing and crime investigation are suitable for part-time work, whereas most men did not. This suggests a masked gender bias, as the current study found that part-time work would most likely be performed by a female.

The masking of gender bias takes affect in similar way to the masking of men's depression. Historically, depression has been thought as a disease of women, however, this data is based on who seeks and receives treatment for depression rather than who actually suffers it. The true incidence of male depression may be underestimated because many males are reluctant to seek medical advice, not because they are less likely to experience depression (Wouters 2002). In this way stereotypes about differences between men and women are reinforced.

Stereotypes represent culturally shared beliefs about what individuals will be like and, in a prescriptive sense, what they should be like. Stereotypes about appropriate roles are slow to change and these stereotypes exert considerable influence on our expectations about the roles appropriate for men and women (Schein 2004).

Similarly, the invisibility of gender bias occurs not through an overtly negative attitude toward women, rather covertly through unfounded opposition to part-time

work in traditionally masculine domains. This has the effect of reinforcing stereotypical views about what women should and shouldn't be doing. These attitudes may also be symptomatic of an underlying fear of the perceived 'feminisation' of policing (Waddington 1999a) and the infiltration of women into sacred domains, (Acker 1990) established through the inextricable fusion of job and personal identity, symptomatic of dense masculinities (Lewis 2007).

9.5 *The myth of the female advantage*

Research Aim 5 - To explore whether part-time women and men have different attitudes and beliefs about their work, characterised by their experience of gender in a gendered organisation which maintains full-time employees, predominately male, as the norm, and prioritises their experiences accordingly (Acker 1990).

The fifth and final major finding of the study was that men and women have a significantly different attitudes and beliefs about their part-time work. Police women were more likely to be satisfied with their experience of part-time work and work/life balance regardless of their organisational status, compared to men. Yet police men at lower ranks felt significantly more valued in their part-time position, and amongst higher ranks, they felt significantly more dissatisfied with their part-time work but still considered themselves more productive while doing it, compared to women. The experiences of part-time men and women were clearly different.

This outcome is consistent with research assessing gender differences between men and women and organisational appraisal processes and outcomes (Wilson 2003). Research on self-assessment and feedback shows that females are less likely to overestimate their performance than their male counterparts and tend to rate themselves lower than men do and lower than their own bosses rate them (Fletcher 1999; Wilson 2003). Similarly, more general studies of performance show that females give lower estimates of their performance or ability. It has been suggested that this may be due to gender differences in self-presentation, rather than self-

confidence, as women are more likely to present themselves more modestly because they will be better liked for doing so, compared to men (Daubman & Sigall 1997).

Interestingly, these same 'anti-hierarchical' relational characteristics have positioned women as benefiting from moves to newer, more relational models of leadership in HRM literature (Fletcher 2004). However, within a densely masculine organisation, many women experience this as exploitative "because their behavior benefits the organisation but fails to mark them as having leadership potential" (p. 208).

Men were unhappier and dissatisfied with their part-time position, but have a career path, thus presumably they are comparing present rank to future rank and aspiring which is reflected in their choice to study. These differences may be examined in light of Eveline's (1994) notion of men's advantage, where privilege is not recognised as privilege, rather experienced as normal. Dissatisfaction with part-time work may arise because the perceived gap for part-time males between 'what is' and 'would could be' in the organisation is much greater, than for part-time females who have much less favorable prospects for promotion.

9.6 *Re-reading part-timers consent to their marginalised positions*

The present study has evidenced fundamental differences between men and women in why and how they work part-time. Yet even though part-time women felt less valued, were of lower status, lower paid and less likely to be promoted, they were overwhelmingly happier and more satisfied in their part-time position.

This apparently contradictory finding is consistent with previous research (Walters 2005; Dick and Hyde 2006) which suggests that despite the marginalised status of part-time employees, they may not experience their subordinate positions as problematic, often believing that the drawbacks of reduced hours working are a legitimate consequence of their 'choice' to work part-time. Such 'choices' are frequently attributed to part-timers' prioritization of non-work activities (Pocock 2003) which the present study has further evidenced is fundamentally different

between men and women. Dick and Hyde (2006, p. 554) propose that that these apparently contradictory responses to their marginalisation can also be understood as resistance to some of the dominant norms of professionalism. The authors literally re-read part-timers' consent to their marginalization, arguing that part-time workers responses to their position at work are a complex interaction between the multiple identities required of women. Despite the 'new man' discourse that constructs gender relations on a more egalitarian basis (Sheridan & Conway 2001), especially in policing (O'Sullivan & Sheridan 2005), the fact remains, as further evidenced in this study, that women continue to be positioned as primarily responsible for the domestic sphere and for the care of children (Australian Institute of Family Studies 2007).

“The gender order in many organisations is reproduced by discourses, such as that of professionalism, in which ‘normal’ or ‘ideal’ behaviour complies with norms that favour men as a group” (Dick & Hyde 2006, p. 555; Lewis 2001). “These gender differentiated meanings of the professional and motherhood discourses have implications for men. While able to position himself more securely within the terms of the discourse of professionalism, a man is less free to take up a subject position in parenting discourses, precisely because this is primarily targeted at women” Dick & Hyde 2006, p. 555). As a consequence, ‘men may not feel it is legitimate to request shorter working hours due to the way that this might be interpreted’ (Fagan 2001, p. 245).

These discourses intersect with broader social and cultural discourses about gender to regulate the identities of male and female employees in the ways the present study illustrates. By positioning themselves within the discourses of professionalism and of motherhood, part-time women can be understood as subjectively resisting (as well as consenting to) ‘some of the central norms of each concurrently, thereby constituting new relations of power from the new truths and knowledge created in the process’ (Dick & Hyde 2006, p. 555 - p. 556).

10 Limitations of the current study

10.1 Design and internal validity

Using a non-experimental research design and a primarily comparative statistical methodology creates inherent limitations. The present study used quantitative data to ascertain attitudes and beliefs about, and towards part-time work which was based upon self-reports by police and VPS staff. These reports may or may not accurately reflect true attitudes and beliefs. Future research could triangulate such findings through in-depth qualitative research. Further, primarily categorical data was available; however, more scale data would have been useful to triangulate the results

Interestingly, the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) did contain a qualitative data component; however the comprehensive focus group notes which are available contain no sex identification information associated with participant comments, rendering secondary analysis of the qualitative data from a gender perspective impossible. It appears that Acker's (1990) theory of gender in organisation is borne out in the current study. By failing to identify women, patterns arising associated with this characteristic are rendered invisible. Consequently the current study only analyses secondary quantitative data and was unable to adopt a multi-method approach to triangulate the secondary data to check for consistency, reliability and validity (Saunders et al. 2003)

Relatedly, this raises a further issue regarding identification of respondents. Future research should take into account the disproportionate representation of men and women in policing. However, results may well be confounded through such identification as there are so few women, leading to lower participation rates and potentially, less truthful responses. For instance, while highly reliable overall, that the scale items pertaining to the attitudes and beliefs of part-time employees were not as reliable as their full-time equivalent (see Method section) suggests that differences between groups exist regarding interpretation and/or self-reporting.

This study suggests that the organisational status of part-time women in policing is different to their male counterparts and this aspect of promotion needs to be further examined to compare women and men in this regard. The part-time survey enquired as to whether the employees had achieved promotion, not when or how long they had been at their current rank or level. The present study also suggests that actual job content is critical to properly assess roles undertaken, as reporting of actual work role undertaken may differ between genders. Both the full-time and part-time employees' survey do not enable this question to be addressed. Similarly, such data relating to promotion for part-time employees needs to be considered in conjunction with similar data for full-time employees but then also examined with gender as an explanatory construct in both groups, to assist in controlling for the potentially confounding effects of gender.

10.2 External validity and generalisability

The present study has attempted to analyse secondary quantitative data using gender as a dependent variable. While focusing on one policing jurisdiction may arguably limit the generalisability of the study findings, when considered in the context of Dick's (2004) qualitative study of part-time work and policing, the current quantitative research offers a unique comparative and contextual placement of women in a specific culture and setting. Indeed, there is little evidence to suggest that Australian policing jurisdictions differ markedly, and thus by engaging Acker's (1990) theory of the gendered organisation to examine the feminisation of part-time employment, the present study offers a theoretical insight into the marginalised position of women in policing more broadly.

Previous studies have used men and women as subjects, without considering gender differences. In addition, policing as a gendered organisation and environmental setting further complicates any data analyses, making it "more difficult for a comparative researcher to detect hidden biases, assumptions and values until they apply the concept in a different culture or setting" (Neuman 1997, p. 402). This study examined these gender differences and they were significant. Past samples that were dominated by men, particularly in policing research, would likely reflect issues relating to dense

masculinities (Lewis 2007) and consideration of this would enable a better understanding of women and men in these workplaces.

10.3 Future research

Future research should consider gender as a dependant variable, as research many have failed to find effects when genders were combined, because of the variance attributable to gender. The present study highlighted the need to triangulate data to verify findings, especially in light of the distinctive organisational culture of policing, which in effect is a society within itself, with heterogeneous groups within that again (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). However, comparative research studies of this nature may also suffer courtesy bias, an aspect of social desirability bias (Neuman 1997). This occurs when strong social and/or cultural norms cause respondents to hide anything unpleasant or give answers they believe to be what is wanted. Triangulation of future qualitative and quantitative research examining women and men in policing may well be confounded by the nature of policing as focused on secrecy and confidentiality, a 'cult of masculinity' (Waddington 1999a) that renders open critique taboo.

Another area of future research would be time-series based research that compares the findings of this study, based on data from 2003, to more recent data. This would allow for comparative analysis and more detailed assessment of the impact of the recommendations arising from the original Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004).

Yet even within these limitations, the present study highlights the need for continued research of both women and men in policing, and more specifically, part-time work in policing. More broadly, this study suggests that gender is a confounding construct in any examination of organisational culture and practices.

10.4 Conclusion

Chief Commissioner Nixon has set the target for 25 per cent women in Victoria Police (Victoria Police 2004) positing part-time work as the key to achieving this numerical representation (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007). A formal part-time employment policy has been in place for Victoria Police since 1996, and an assessment of its effectiveness to attract and retain women is both timely and necessary. However, this study suggests that the implementation of part time work has not dislodged the traditional culture of the gendered organisation (Acker 1990). In summary, part-time work at Victoria Police is becoming institutionalised as career limiting for women but career enhancing for men.

The uptake of part-time work by men in Victoria Police remains very low, and for the men who do work part-time, it appears to actually enhance their career prospects by enabling them to study, pursue outside interests, cope with illness or work into retirement. Part-time work is used separately and differently by women and men to uphold the gender order (Connell 2003; Pocock 2005) both inside and outside the workplace. While it has provided women with flexibility needed for family care, for men it is another mechanism to enhance their career prospects from an already advantaged position.

By virtue of part-time work only being actively constructed in lower status, and by association lower paid areas in which women dominate, the less valued and desirable that work becomes. Full-time women devalue part-time work, in that they believe part-time employee commitment and productivity is lower, while full-time men devalue part-time work, in that they believe it is not suitable to high status positions in which men dominate, only where women work already. Inevitably, part-time work is less likely to be adopted at more senior levels, as it is perceived and thus 'proven' to be unsuitable, particularly in policing where 'reality' is actively constructed and interpreted (Chan 1996). This symbiotic cycle of devaluation creates an invisible institutional barrier for part-time women to achieve higher status as it positions them in a 'double jeopardy', and ultimately mitigates against the promotion of women in the workplace.

Indeed, preliminary investigations conducted for the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) suggest “that of the (very) few women who hold senior positions in Victoria Police, most have neither married or raised children...for women, family responsibilities have hampered progression... and is indicative of a gendered culture that treats women with family responsibilities differently...given that men in Victoria Police are not expected to ‘choose’ between a career and having children” (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 41).

The strategy to offer part-time work as part of flexible work strategy (Victoria Police 2002) is mobilised differently by women and men in Victoria Police, reflecting a gendered organisation (Acker 1990) in a gendered society. These two factors are coterminous, as the organisation relies on public/private sphere determination to provide the ‘ideal worker’ (Lewis 2001).

Fletcher (2004) observes that in practice men are active participants in the domestic family sphere and women in the work sphere, but idealised images of sex linked attributes and inclinations have a powerful effect of how women and men act in each sphere and what type of behavior is considered appropriate – or tainted as inappropriate (p. 206). Part-time work violates these underlying societal principles and beliefs about gender, power, work and family, as it exposes women and men actively participating in both spheres. This study has evidenced that few men feel free to take up part-time work in Victoria Police for caring responsibilities, a pattern common in many Australian organisations. Societal and organisational change has not progressed substantially enough, as men do not as yet feel valued to take this bold move against the gender order (Pocock 2005).

This gendering of part-time work is so invisible that even pioneering research by Victoria Police (Victoria Police 2004) into part-time work, the organisation’s own research tool, could not unearth the gendered patterns of uptake. The ‘gender-neutral’ approach adopted has resulted in ‘gender-blind’ outcomes (Wilson 1996). The Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004) made no recommendation that maternity leave positions be backfilled, and backfilled as a priority above others. The backlash from current practice results in widescale resentment of maternity leave, and by association women, who are still most likely to undertake it, despite access being

available to both men and women. The reluctance to backfill maternity leave vacancies as a priority reflects the HRM approach to diversity, which arguably, treats people the same but results in unequal outcomes.

Another critical omission from the recommendations is reference to the absence of a formal roster policy in Victoria Police and proposed methods to address this. Shift work was identified as “the most significant concern for managers” (p. 49) in the Part-time Employment Review (Victoria Police 2004), specifically, the incompatibility between requested shift patterns by part-time employees and existing full-time employee shifts and roster practices, which meant that part-time employees were treated more “favorably” than full-time staff in a case of “reverse discrimination” (p. 49). Yet no reference to how to address this contentious issue is made in the recommendations. Further, due to the (perceived) lack of continuity “offered” by part-time employees, managers believe that certain roles are unsuitable for part-time work and this influenced how they distributed work (Victoria Police 2004, p. 54). The absence of recommendations to address this is particularly notable given that 20 per cent of the part-time survey questions (10 out of 49) were about shift work, presumably designed to explore and examine aspects of this divisive issue.

The review observed that some managers in Victoria Police called for maximum quota of part-time employees allowable in a single work area, citing a detrimental impact on staffing levels, rostering flexibility and service provision (Victoria Police 2004, p. 52). In contrast, this same concern was not raised in relation to full-time work, suggesting that the nine weeks leave per year available to all police officers plus all other forms of leave such as sick, sporting, study etc. is perceived as having no detrimental impact on service provision, and even where this is acknowledged, it is accepted as ‘normal’ and worked around. In fact, when mandatory training and court appearances are taken into account, a full-time police officer is actually physically available to work for less than half the entire year with 181 shifts possible (Victoria Police 2001). However, this has never been raised publicly as problematic.

This demonstrates the normalisation of full-time work, but more disturbingly, reveals a conceptual misunderstanding of contemporary organisation structure which is costed through a ‘full-time equivalent’ (FTE) model (though in and of itself a gendered construct) not individual ‘bodies’.

So under the current Victoria Police organisation and establishment model, whether one has 100 full-time employees or 200 part-time employees performing 0.5 FTE should theoretically make minimal difference to productivity. While an increase in head count will result in increases in training costs, uniform costs and equipment costs this needs to be balanced against the cost of attrition and work cover premiums associated with prioritising a full-time norm. Notably, data was neither provided nor wider literature available to substantiate these costs, which highlights an important area of future research.

Regardless, the total operating budget and number of police positions in Victoria Police is decided by government, and even where a better use of resources, it is not able to substitute VPS staff for police due to industrial restrictions (Auditor-General's Report 2006). These external and internal institutional practices, which are culturally melded to a virtual collective delusion (Waddington 1999a) about the role a police officer performs, prioritise a full-time, and relatedly, masculine model. Thus, working part-time apparently impacts on service provision and should not be allowed in policing at all because of the reduction in service that often results (Victoria Police 2004, p. 51) whereas working 12-hour shifts which result in a six-day absence (a typical part-time shift pattern results in a maximum of four or less) or being absent for over half the year does not. Consequently, part-time employees are perceived not to 'fit in' with current rosters, despite the fact that no policy or guidelines actually exist to define and embed good roster practices from the outset. In their absence, full-time work becomes both the mark and measure of good rostering practice and shift work, so it is unsurprising that part-time employees are deemed therefore 'inflexible'.

Interestingly, many managers contended they are under-resourced (Victoria Police 2004). They may well be, but it is part-time work that has been made visible and relatedly, women held (wrongly) responsible. Part-time work draws attention to existing inefficient full-time work practices that have historically avoided scrutiny by being hidden, ignored, unacknowledged and sometimes outright denied, but ultimately always rendered invisible through the normalisation of 'masculine' working practices, regardless of their inefficiency, which protect men's status as breadwinners.

It appears true that the nature of privilege is to find ever deeper places to hide (Spelman 1988) as there is nothing in the nature of particular jobs that make them full-time or part-time. In fact, 'in a 24-hour organisation all jobs could potentially be constructed as part-time' (Charlesworth & Whittenbury 2007, p. 45). Rather gender enters into the construction of part-time jobs and is a crucial manifestation of gender in production, and relatedly, an expression of the gendered nature of organisations (Acker 1990).

Part-time work is not simply an inevitable result of women's 'preference' to be part-time (Hakim 2000). Rather, vested social, cultural and economic interests are served which encourage women to perform both paid and unpaid work (Pocock 2005). "Instead of being taken for granted as the norm, full-time work needs to be treated as problematic, and analysed as a social and economic construct" (Sheridan 2004, p. 221).

While more women may well join policing, without a multi-dimensional approach to their integration, and a more comprehensive strategy to accommodate part-time work, men may actually be advantaged long-term. Part-time work is being subsumed into the existing gender order in Victoria Police for men, by further advantaging their career and work identity in Victoria Police. For women, the effect is opposite.

"In a sense the growth in part-time work is reinforcing the low value of part-time work" (Sheridan 2004, p. 221) and thereby exacerbating the gender inequality that already exists (Harley 1994), an unintended consequence of an institutional policy designed to attract and retain women.

The availability of part-time work is fundamental to equity measures. But without broader, more comprehensive, cultural change strategies to deepen the effect, the outcome will mean assimilation into the traditional culture and maintaining a traditional and gendered organisation, rather than integration of part-time employees as part of the ongoing reframing of a contemporary organisational culture toward an organisation that is genuinely 'diverse'.

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