

## **Police Mothers at Home: Police Work and Danger-Protection Parenting Practices**

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**Abstract :** Studies of the challenges faced by women in policing have paid little attention to the specific experiences of Policewomen who are mothers. Guided by critical theorizing on the gendered nature of the police culture and domestic labor, 16 police officer mothers in Ontario, Canada, were interviewed. Our qualitative analyses explore their experiences of the “lion’s share” of domestic labor; the organizational, cultural, and operational features of policing; and the challenges of child care, and examine how these combine to foster particular stresses. In contrast to intensive mothering approaches that rely on the advice of external experts, our participants work to protect children by carefully constructing stories and asking questions that are based on their own on-the-job experiences with dangerous and/or abhorrent situations. As such, they engage in danger-protection parenting practices to prevent their children from becoming victims or offenders. Our research extends the theorizing on intensive/extensive mothering practices, builds on the scholarship on policing, and adds to the literature on women in nonstandard occupations. This sociological analysis of police mothers’ experiences and practices underscores the importance of understanding and working to change the social contexts, at work and at home, that compromise the well-being of police mothers and other emergency-response workers.

**Keywords :** policewomen, mothers, parenting, danger, qualitative research

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