SENSEMAKING IN A HIGH-RISK LIFESTYLE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK

AND FAMILY FOR PUBLIC SAFETY FAMILIES

A Dissertation

by

JAIME ELIZABETH BOCHANTIN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2010

Major Subject: Communication

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,   Katherine I. Miller
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ABSTRACT

Sensemaking in a High-Risk Lifestyle: The Relationship Between Work

and Family for Public Safety Families.

(August 2010)

Jaime Elizabeth Bochantin, B.A., DePaul University;

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Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Katherine Miller

Past research concerning work and family has largely been from traditional, white-collar settings and has only taken into consideration the perceptions of the employees' experiences with regard to the relationship between work and family. However, there is no doubt that employees' in non-traditional settings, particularly those employed in public safety professions (i.e. police and fire) experience the relationship between work and family differently than those in white-collar settings, especially since they put their lives on the line daily for the protection and betterment of the community, society and even the world. In addition, the experiences and perceptions of work and family will undoubtedly be different for the family members (i.e. children and spouses) of those employed in such "life-threatening" professions.

This study sought to understand how public safety employees, as well as their families, make sense out of the relationship between work and family by first examining what metaphors they employ to articulate the relationship between work and family. In addition, this study sought to examine if male versus female public safety employees experience the relationship

between work and family in similar or different ways, as well as if police officers and fire fighters experience the relationship similarly or differently. Using qualitative methods, the findings indicate that public safety employees and their families articulate and make sense of the relationship between work and family in both similar and different ways. Contrary to previous work-family research, dominant metaphors and constructs such as balance, conflict, segmentation, etc. did not appear at all within this study. Instead, participants likened the relationship between work and family to competition, nature, organism, change, integration, opposition, ambiguity, and destruction. Public safety employees and their families also experienced and made sense of the relationship between work and family through humor, emotion management, fear and risk assessment. Findings also indicate that both male and female public safety employees internalize risk in much the same way, as well as agree that parenthood in general, is devalued in the public safety profession. With regard to differences, findings indicate that females have a harder time negotiating a healthy relationship between work and family, have their competency levels always questioned by family or co-workers, and use different language and rhetoric from males when talking about work and family. Finally, results show that police officers and fire fighters make sense of work and family in much the same way with regard to "dirty work" and communication rules but differ in terms of coping mechanisms and job satisfaction. This study suggests a number of implications for both theory and practice. The findings also point to many necessary areas of future research which could further our understanding of the relationship between work and family, not only in professions characterized by high-risk, non-standard hours and stress, but also in standard white-collar professions as well.

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INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"Our goal is to go home at the end of our shift. Stay alive out there" (Kirschman, 2004a).

Words like this are spoken during role call prior to the beginning of a shift at almost every police

station and firehouse in the nation. Police officers and fire fighters represent a group of people

who die in the line of duty more often, proportionately, than those in any other occupation

(Smith, 1988). According to the Department of Defense, about 300 lives are lost each year in

these careers combined (Department of Defense, 2007). These are people who, as part of their

jobs, respond to danger in order to protect others. The men and women who make up the police

force and the firehouse generally choose to do what they do for both altruistic and egoistic

motives. They want to help keep others out of danger and also want to experience the thrill that

goes along with putting their own lives at risk (Smith, 1988). But like other Americans, these

workers care about their homes and families as well. Public safety employees (PSEs) have

described themselves as being part of two family systems—the department or organization they

belong to (i.e. fire department, police department) and their individual families at home

(Matsakis, 2005). The public safety organizations and the families of PSEs are two separate

systems, and individuals connected to them are in a constant struggle for balance and well-being.

Although the stress experienced by those employed in public safety as well as their

families is evident, work-family literature has typically only concentrated on the relationship

between work and home for Caucasian, middle-class, married, white-collar professionals

(Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Hochschild, 1997; Kirby et al., 2003; McManus, Korabik, Rosin,

_____

This dissertation follows the style of *Communication Monographs*.

& Kelloway, 2002: Perlow, 1997, 1998; Williams, 2000). This research rarely takes into consideration the relationship between work and family for members of the non-standard workforce (and their families), who make up over 15% of current employment (Presser, 2003a). The US Census reports that about 15 million people work evenings, nights, rotating shifts, or irregular schedules or hours (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Of the 15 million people employed in non-standard careers, 1.2 million of them are PSEs (800,000 police officers; 361,000 fire fighters) (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008), and the inherent danger of working in such careers creates stress and tension that is different from that experienced in traditional jobs. Employees, their partners, and their children feel these stresses. Thus, more research is needed on how PSEs and their families handle the relationship between work and family.

In addressing how PSEs and their families construct meaning regarding the relationship between work and home, Karl Weick's theory of sensemaking provides a framework not only to study how these individuals express or make meaning of their individual choices, but also how such sensemaking both supports and challenges collective (organizational, societal, and familial) thinking and action (Marshall, 1991; Weick, 1995). Therefore, operating from a sensemaking perspective, this dissertation reveals how both PSEs as well as their families make sense of the relationship between work and home. To that end, Chapter I begins with a review of literature on work-family research. Here, I also offer ways to problematize dominant constructs, terms, and metaphors often used in work-family literature. Constructs and metaphors including balance, conflict, tension, stress, incompatibility, boundaries, and role conflict are often used interchangeably and with limited conceptual development in discussions of the experiences people have with regard to their work and home lives. One of the major goals of this dissertation is to destabilize and reconceptualize these terms by recognizing how they are communicatively

constituted and used in the everyday experiences of individuals. Chapter I continues with a review of the literature on the career description of PSEs, a description of the PSEs families, and sensemaking. Chapter II lays out the methodological choices made for this study in order to answer the proposed research questions. Chapter III provides results from the data collection and Chapter IV provides a discussion of the results, details the gaps this research filled, proposes ideas for future studies, and offers suggestions for how PSEs and their families can better handle the relationship between work and family.

<div style="text-align:center">The Relationship Between Work and Family</div>

The concept of "work and family" emerged as a distinct area of research in the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1980s, what had begun as a narrow research area focused on dual-career families and "working mothers" had evolved into a sprawling domain of study involving researchers from several disciplines and theoretical perspectives. Menaghan and Parcel (1990) helped define the field in their decade review of research from the 1980s, and this review was supplemented by Perry-Jenkins, Repetti and Crouter's (2000) review of research in the 1990s. As we move into the second decade of the twenty first century, researchers continue to be intrigued by the relationship between work and family. Across disciplines, the body of research on the relationship between work and family is thorough and extensive. Most current research looks at the bi-directional relationship between work and family examining both the impact of work on family and the effect of family on work (Greenhaus & Buetell, 1985; Kirby, Golden, Medved, Jorgenson, Buzzanell, 2003; Loscocco & Roschelle, 1991; Voydanoff, 1989).

Although the relationship between work and family has been studied for decades, the past fifteen to twenty years have revealed huge changes worthy of consideration amongst work-family scholars. Dramatic demographic, technological and social changes are reshaping how

individuals experience family and work (Kirby et al., 2003). The increase in dual-career couples and single-parent households and the decrease in traditional, single-earner families mean that the responsibilities for work, housework, and childcare are no longer confined to traditional gender roles, with the proportion of stay-at-home mothers now less than fifteen percent (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Technological advancements, such as smart phones, laptops, and the ability to telecommute have changed the way work is done and blurs the line between work and home. There have also been swift social changes in the workplace with fewer individuals willing to accept an organization's lack of regard for home and family life.

Similarly, with regard to gender differences, research in the work, gender, and family arena continues to reflect a clear division of labor with women burdened by a "second shift" in their families once they return from their employment outside of the home (Artis & Pavalko, 2003; Hochschild, 1989). Greenstein (1996), for example, draws attention to the fact that although married women are more than twice as likely to work full-time today as in 1970, married men still do not participate in any significant manner in the day to day work in the household. Men have become more involved with childcare due to changing cultural norms, but when it comes to the daily maintenance of the home, women still assume the bulk of responsibilities. This finding is moderated by class differences. For example, Perry-Jenkins (1994) reports that working-class wives performed a significantly higher amount of housework than middle class wives while Risman and Sumerford (1998) found that among highly educated couples, role sharing has become the accepted norm. Interestingly, studies indicate that women of all classes want men to participate in a more equal division of labor by taking on child care and household responsibilities (Apparala, Reifman & Munsch, 2003; Thornton & Young-DeMarco, 2001). And, yet, many factors seem to stop men from participating more extensively

in family work. Some of these factors include the societal notion that family work is "women's work," a general devaluation of what women do, a lack of role models for participating in family work; men's inexperience with certain household chores, and "even women's difficulty in sharing control over the household domain" (Piotrkowski & Hughes, 1993, p. 191). As a result, research has suggested that women who are also mothers, experience more stress than men in trying to manage the responsibilities between work and home (Erickson, 2005; Gerstel & Sarkisian, 2006; Perry-Jenkins, 1994).

Taking these changes into consideration, current work-family scholarship has been devoted to the study of the household division of labor, methods of negotiating family-friendly benefits in workplaces, ways of circumventing negative career effects and ways in which productivity and motivation are influenced by work-family conflicts (Kirby et al., 2003). Although the study of work and family is well documented, a review of literature suggests that it is also characterized by an abundance of constructs and metaphors that have evolved since the area of inquiry gained prominence. These terms are often used interchangeably and with limited conceptual development in discussions of the experiences people have with regard to their work and home lives. As stated previously, one major goal with this dissertation is to destabilize and rethink these terms and metaphors by recognizing how they are enacted in and through communication and used in the everyday experiences of individuals. First, however, a brief introduction to the constructs and metaphors that dominate the study of work and family is provided. Then, I begin to challenge these constructs by foregrounding some of the problematics of work-family research.

Making "Sense" of the Relationship Between Work and Family: Concepts and Definitions

The study of work-family scholarship has evolved over time and has generated a variety of

terms, concepts and ways of talking about the relationship between work and family. The following discussion traces the development of the dominant metaphors and constructs informing the study of work and family, beginning with the earliest conceptualizations.

Boundary Management. Kanter (1977) first proposed the idea that there are two opposing spheres—work and non-work—present in every working individual's life. She claimed that we handle this dichotomy through either separation or integration. Separation implies there is no interaction between the two domains, whereas integration acknowledges that interaction does take place (Cowan & Hoffman, 2007). In a critique of work-family research, Kirby et al. (2003) reveal that this way of conceptualizing the relationship between work and family suggests an existence of boundaries (Gonyea & Googins, 1992; Kanter, 1977). Assumptions about what constitutes appropriate work-family boundaries are rooted in history and have evolved over time. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, the relationship between work and home was blurred with family—parents and children alike—carrying out work together (Kirby et al., 2003). The Industrial Revolution, however, marked a huge separation between the world of work and the world of family life with the demise of cottage industries in exchange for factories and assembly lines (Demos, 1979). By the 20th century, family interests were seen by employers as competing loyalties and caused further separation among family and work (Kanter, 1977). In addition, the boundary metaphor used in managerial practice began to serve as a form of organizational control by making a connection between how much time an employee spends at work with job commitment. Thus, "face time" or time spent in the physical confines of the organization, was an indication of commitment and productivity (Kirby et al., 2003). This idea of the total separation between work and family was further perpetuated by discouraging employees from talking about one's family, which might invite the assumption that one is not a serious employee

(Jorgenson, 2000; Kirby, 2000).

Spillover. By the 1970s, research on the relationship between work and family reflected an open-systems perspective (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Open systems are characterized by an interdependent relationship between the events at work and the events at home. From this perspective, "work and family are bounded by permeable membranes rather than exclusionary borders [boundaries], in the sense that an individual's experiences in one domain influences or carries over to the other domain" (Kirby et al., 2003, p. 7). One concept that is characteristic of an open system approach is *spillover*, which asserts that despite the physical and temporal boundaries between work and family, an individual's experiences, behaviors, and emotions in one sphere (i.e. home or work) carries over to the other sphere (Clark, 2000).

Compensation. In the same vein, a concept complementary to spillover is *work-family compensation*, which represents efforts by individuals to offset dissatisfaction in one role by seeking satisfaction in another role (Lambert, 1990). These efforts can take the form of decreasing involvement in a dissatisfying role and increasing involvement in a more satisfying role. Alternately, individuals may respond to dissatisfaction in one role by pursuing rewarding or fulfilling experiences in the other role. The latter form of compensation can be either supplemental or reactive in nature (Zedeck, 1992). Supplemental compensation occurs when individuals shift their pursuits for rewarding experiences from the dissatisfying role to a potentially more satisfying one. For example, individuals with little autonomy at work seek more autonomy outside of their work role. On the other hand, reactive compensation represents individuals' efforts to redress negative experiences in one role by pursuing contrasting experiences in the other role such as engaging in leisure activities after a fatiguing day at work.

Segmentation. This concept originally referred to the notion that work and family roles are

independent of one another such that individuals can participate in one role without any influence on the other role (Blood & Wolfe, 1960). More recently, segmentation has been viewed as an intentional separation of work and family roles such that the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of one role are actively suppressed from affecting the individual's performance in the other role (Lambert, 1990).

Conflict. After decades of examining the relationship between work and family from a boundary perspective and then an open-systems approach as described above, research in the 1980s and 1990s added another layer of complexity to the study of work and family. Research began to focus on competing, rather than enhancing role requirements of work and family as well as strains being experienced by individuals (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). *Work-family conflict,* or interference, refers to simultaneous pressures from the work and family domains that are mutually incompatible in some respect such that meeting the demands of one role makes it difficult to meet the demands of the other role. Sometimes referred to as negative spillover, work-family conflict can take different forms and can originate either in the work domain or the family domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Examples include missing a child's soccer game because one has to work late or having to leave work early to pick up a sick child from school. Research has found that about 70 percent of workers report conflict between their work and family roles, and half of those people are considering looking for new jobs because of problems coping with both personal life and work. (Brett, Stroh & Reily, 2002; Fortney, 2005; Westman, 2001). The managerial implications are quite clear with research showing the consequences of work-family conflict that include burnout and absenteeism (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998), low productivity, and poor performance appraisals (Kossek et al, 1999).

Balance.   One of the most recent and probably most recognizable concepts used to describe the relationship between work and family is the idea of balance. This metaphor refers to the extent to which individuals are equally involved in - and equally satisfied with - their work role and their family role (Kirby et al., 2003). Balance reflects an individual's orientation toward his or her involvement in different life roles (Marks & MacDermid, 1996). Because balanced individuals are highly engaged in work and family roles, they may be more likely to meet their needs in both roles, experience relatively little stress in participating in multiple roles, and derive high self-esteem from the competence they achieve in work and family activities (Marks & MacDermid, 1996). Work-life balance initiatives have been instituted by organizations to help relieve the stress employees feel when trying to juggle the demands of non-work and work responsibilities (Kossek, & Ozeki, 1998). Work-life balance programs may include on-site child-care, flexible working arrangements such as job-sharing, telework, and compressed workdays. Work-life balance programs may also include policies regarding leaves of absence, such as family leave, sick days, educational leave, and elder care leave. Some organizations offer emergency child-care, elder care assistance, stress management workshops, fitness classes, and employee assistance programs (Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1992).

However, despite these programs, Americans are working longer hours (Sutton & Noe, 2005) and are taking vacations less often than ever before (Galinsky, Bond, Kim, Backon, Brownfield, & Sakai, 2005). A survey found that employees would like to reduce the number of hours they work by approximately 30% (Galinsky et al., 2005). Although many organizations are offering helpful programs to their employees, they may not be offering them equally to all employees. Although some research has been conducted on how organizations implement work-life balance programs, relatively little research has been conducted on the process by which

individuals achieve work-family balance, and at least one recent study (Greenhaus & Buetell, 1985) casts some doubt on the virtues of leading a balanced life.

Border Theory. As a response to remedy the gaps in previous research, Clark (2000) formulated a new theory examining the relationship between work and family referred to as border theory. Central to border theory is the notion that while work and family constitute different domains and different spheres, they always influence one another (Clark, 2000). In most cases, work and family differ with regard to purpose and culture yet individuals are often able to shape the nature and experiences of work and family in order to achieve a desirable relationship between the two domains. The key components of border theory include domains (the differences between work and home), borders (characterized by permeability, flexibility, blending, and border strength), the border-crosser (characterized by influence and identification), and the border-keepers (characterized by other-domain awareness, commitment to the border crosser and domain differences) (Clark, 2000). This theory asserts that having flexible borders between work and home and plenty of interdependence between the two will lead to better work-family balance, satisfaction, and happiness.

Based on the preceding discussion, it is evident that the area of work-family scholarship is pervasive and encompassing. The metaphors and constructs described above permeate the discussion regarding the relationship between work and family but many of them are in stark contrast to one another. Some of these metaphors focus on total separation between the spheres (boundary management, segmentation) while others focus on the idea that each sphere is dependent on the other (spillover, compensation, conflict). Still others (balance, border) express the desire and ability to actually create flexible relationships between work and family. The problem then, lies in knowing when to apply which metaphor and in which situation, and if

doing so is desirable or even possible. Thus, the next section begins to problematize the current discussion on work and family by considering gaps in the research described above.

Problematizing the Relationship Between Work and Family

As described in the previous section, there has been extensive research on the relationship between work and family and the advancement of many different metaphors or constructs to help explain the dynamics of this relationship. These constructs, however, are not without their problems. As Kirby et al. (2003) describe, there are four central problems that underlie work-family research: boundaries, identity, rationality, and voice. Furthermore, current constructs support the assumption of the privileging of work over family and also suggest an either/or outcome regarding which sphere (work or family) gets privileged and when. Given these concerns, there are several problematics I wish to outline. As Mumby and Stohl (1996) inform us, problematics operate as tensions or concerns that inform a particular area of study but often operate in the background. By foregrounding some of the problematics of work-family research, this dissertation will present work-family issues and also find alternative ways of researching and understanding the relationship between work and family. The next section will discuss some ways that scholars are already problematizing this relationship and also points to other issues that researchers need to consider when conceptualizing the relationship between work and family. The problematics considered are (1) boundaries, (2) (lack of) choice and (3) voice.

Boundaries. With regard to boundaries, Kirby et al. (2003) articulate that the spheres of work and family have always been contested and are often ambiguous with regard to how the transition between work and family is negotiated. Many scholars who have studied the relationship between work and family assume a separation between the two domains, both in their physical locations as well as their values and psychological orientations (Hochschild, 1997;

Kanter, 1977; Nippert-Eng, 1996). However, this clear division between the family and work domains creates a potential for contradiction. In one respect, presupposing a separation between work and family places unwelcome stress and constraints on an individual's ability to negotiate the often conflicting commitments in each sphere. On the other hand, if boundaries are indeed thought of as creating separate, disparate entities, this could serve as a form of protection for an individual subjected to organizational commitments seeping into their personal life (Kirby et al., 2003).

Assumptions about the constitution of appropriate work-family boundaries are rooted in history and have evolved over time. The Industrial Revolution marked a huge separation between the world of work and the world of family life with the demise of cottage industries in exchange for factories and assembly lines (Demos, 1979). By the 20th century, family interests were seen by employers as competing loyalties and caused further separation among family and work (Kanter, 1977). In fact, during the early and middle portions of the 20th century, the only time the relationship between work and family got attention from members of an organization was if an employee's personal problems seeped into the workplace and affected their performance (Renshaw, 1976). Furthermore, the notion of boundaries has served as a subtle mechanism of organizational control (Kirby et al., 2003). How much time an employee spends at work versus how much time they spend away from work is measured, interpreted, and used as an indicator of commitment and productivity despite growing evidence that individuals tend to perform better at work and home when they have more control over their work hours and location (Bailyn, 1993; Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Perlow, 1997).

Thus, the usual trend in workplaces is the suppression of family commitments. Employees who elevate the role of family face the possible consequence of not appearing to be a

committed and serious employee by other organizational members (Kirby et al., 2003). Although this notion of the total separation between the boundaries of work and family has permeated contemporary workplaces, some businesses and organizations have responded with welcome programs and policies. Many of these policies, however, have been criticized for being more work support than family support; that is, they free the worker from their family obligations (e.g., child care, emergency child care, concierge services) or re-arrange existing work time (e.g., flextime, telecommuting) rather than freeing the worker up to fulfill their family obligations personally (Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Deetz, 1992). This type of situation creates a potentially contradictory and paradoxical experience for many individuals who try to negotiate the relationship between their work and home lives and appears to be even more complicated for women who want to have both a family **and** a career. Because women are almost always what is called "enfamilied" (Jorgenson, 2000) or first and foremost committed to their families, women may have to work harder than men to disguise family commitments (Kirby et al., 2003).

Harvard law professor Joan Williams found that jobs that pay well are structured around the "ideal worker," someone who starts employment in early adulthood and works for 40 consecutive years, taking no time off for child bearing or rearing (Williams, 2000). Fathers typically make trade-offs on the family side by following the ideal worker norm. As a result, they feel increasingly anxious about their lack of involvement with family life and pressure to be providers. For mothers, the trade-off is on the work side. They often suffer marginalization at work as a result of choices made to commit time and resources to family rather than work. Garey (1999) also found that, among mothers aged 25-44, two out of three were employed fewer than 40 hours a week year-round, and 95 percent work fewer than 50 hours per week year-round. What this means is that any job that requires a significant amount of mandatory overtime

virtually wipes mothers out of the labor pool. These issues clearly contribute to the demographic fact that 95 percent of upper-level management is made up of men. As a result, children suffer as their parents balance work and home life (Garey, 1999; Williams, 2000). If both parents work full time, families face the acute stress of "two adults and three jobs" as children spend less time with one or both parents (Williams, 2000). This 'ideal worker' norm, then, creates a double-edged sword for both women and men who seek to be both the best employee and the best parent and brings to the surface the inherent tension and contradictory nature of the separation of boundaries.

So how do we begin to problematize this notion of boundaries? Kirby et al., (2003) propose that we need to think about and speak about boundaries as a "continuous process of symbolic management, rather than to speak of boundaries in a static sense" (p. 8). From this perspective, researchers need to concern themselves less with the situations and content in each sphere and more with the way we move and transition between and among the spheres and how meaning gets enacted as we move through the domains. Kirby et al., (2003) suggest that we need to focus more of our attention on the linguistic choices and discursive crossovers (i.e. using dominant language from one sphere in another sphere) among work and family domains. Language that has typically been reserved for describing work environments is also helping individuals manage their home lives (Caproni, 1997). For instance, research has shown that parents in particular have used the term "micro management," a phrase typically used or associated with the workplace, to describe how they run their household activities (Caproni, 1997). Similarly, the language of spirituality and intimacy, two concepts typically reserved for the private or home sphere, is being used as a way to promote productivity and commitment at work, with some offices actually beginning meetings with a prayer, going on religious retreats as

an organization or allocating 20 minutes out of each work day for private meditation (Nadesan, 1999). This linguistic "crossover" between the work and home spheres that is being experienced by many individuals reflects a breakdown of the strict and artificial distinctions of work and family. Interestingly, not only do employees bring pictures of their loved ones to keep on their desks at work, but a new trend among employees is displaying pictures of co-workers in their homes (Westman, Brough, & Kalliath, 2009). The trend suggests that individuals may want to rethink the work and family borders within their lives (Bochantin & Cowan, 2008; Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Clark, 2000; Kirby et al., 2003). Considering these various "crossovers" between work and family might serve as "instruments for empowerment [or disempowerment]" depending on how they get used (Kirby et al., 2003, pg. 9).

(Lack of) Choice. The problematic of choice, or lack thereof, considers which sphere (work or family) gets privileged and when, and is related to the boundary problematic described above. As previously described, more and more individuals are utilizing discursive crossovers or using dominant language from one sphere in the other, which privileges both spheres simultaneously. Traditionally, work-family has been set up as a dichotomy with work being privileged over family (Bailyn, 1993; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998). In the last few decades, the way that people, especially women, in society spend their time has fundamentally changed from spending time primarily in unpaid dependent care and homemaking activities to spending significant amounts of time in paid labor force participation. However, very little about the way jobs are designed or structured has changed, and no consideration has been given to the fact that dependents still need to be cared for and homes still need to be created and nurtured. This may be due to the fact that businesses expect individuals to modify their private lives, and individuals do not often expect organizations to change or assist them in this

endeavor (Williams, 2000). It is interesting to note that the primacy of work and work organizations is pervasive. In almost all writings, this topic is called "work-family" not "family-work." Work comes first, as is even seen in Hochschild's (1989) title—"The Second Shift." As we know, the second shift refers to the care- and home- related work that comes after the first job.

Although the situation involving a forced choice between work and family is problematic for everyone, it is even further complicated for women who want to work and have a family. For women in the United States, employment and family have always been portrayed dichotomously--women are described as either "work-oriented" or "family- oriented," which is not typical for men. For example, Bochantin and Cowan (2008) found that female police officers often face a great deal of negativity from their male counterparts with regard to wanting to work and be a mother. This suggests what Garey (1999) has coined the 'orientation model' which asserts that there exists an ideology of separate spheres that divides the social world into two mutually exclusive areas: the public realm (i.e. economic and civic life) and the private realm of domestic life. This ideology relegates women to the domestic sphere and men to the public sphere. When a "working mother" enters the workplace, it juxtaposes two words (working mother) with antithetical cultural images: worker/mother, provider/homemaker, public/private, etc., making the "working mother" seem like a paradox. Clearly, when one goes from being a "working woman" to being a "working mother," it is "mother" that must linguistically stand for the essential self suggesting that women have less choice then we otherwise might have suspected. In other words, it is the mother who works, not the worker who has children. It is the mother who must fit into the workplace, not the workplace that must adjust to the needs of workers with children.

In dealing with this problem of being forced to choose which sphere is more important, we need to rethink the way the constructs of work and family are situated in the first place. One possible explanation is proposed by Joan Williams' "ideal-worker" analysis (2000), which points out that our work ideal, is not ungendered. It is framed around the traditional life patterns of men virtually wiping women out of the labor pool (Williams, 2000). Individuals need to begin identifying the problem in having to choose between the two spheres as something that exists outside of themselves. Moreover, women often draw on societal discourses to determine which "choices" should be made with regard to their work and home lives (Bochantin & Cowan, in press) which may help us reveal how choices are implicated in the first place. Fairhurst and Putnam (2004) refer to discourse as "general and enduring systems of thought" (p.7). These larger societal discourses influence our lives in various covert and overt ways and impact our choices and decisions. One discourse that many women, in particular, draw on is the notion of "total motherhood." Wolf (2007) argues that the ideology of total motherhood instructs mothers to prioritize their children and their children's needs above all else, reflecting a total subordination of the woman to the role of mother. Similarly, sociologist Sharon Hays (1996) asserts that the dominant motherhood ideology in the U.S. is that of "intensive mothering" which furthers this notion of womanhood and motherhood as synonymous identities and categories. This type of discourse suggests that mothers are not really individuals but rather they serve as "vectors of risk" for their babies (Wolf, 2007). A study regarding female police officers and their roles as mothers reveals that women drew on this discourse when faced with the tension they often experience between work and family (Bochantin & Cowan, in press) – the right choice was always the one that was best for the child.

In conjunction with the discourse of total motherhood, women rely on the contemporary discourse of wanting to have it all, or more specifically, the desire to be an ideal worker *and* ideal mother (Bochantin & Cowan, in press: Crittenden, 2001). However, many women find it nearly impossible to enact these roles simultaneously. Society offers poor choices for women, especially those who want both careers and families (Williams, 2000; Wolf, 2007). Furthermore, women are often encouraged to embrace the false hope of being able to juggle both a career and a family simultaneously and equally. There are even blogs dedicated to this topic such as www.thenewhavingitall.com and www.dilemoms.blogspot.com. These blogs are prescriptive in that they offer tips and quick fixes for how to achieve a perfect balance in one's life. As such, websites like these reinforce the idea that balance is both desirable and attainable for all women, which is often not the case (Bochantin & Cowan, in press; Williams, 2000). Since the notion of having it all permeates our society, it is no wonder so many women draw on this discourse to understand and make sense of their experiences. Too often society directs women into situations where they feel like they have to choose between being a model employee OR a model parent, but upon further reflection, women tend to privilege the work sphere. That said, it becomes clear that drawing on both the discourses to make sense of and understand their experiences sets up a paradox that is stifling and can affect women's (and even men's) choices.

Paradoxes are typically seen as situations wherein while pursuing one goal, another competing goal enters the situation and works to undermine the first goal (Martin, 2004; Putnam, 1986; Stohl & Cheney, 2001). The discourse of total motherhood says that a mother must subjugate her entire world to the needs of her children, subordinating all else in favor of the child's well being (Wolf, 2007). By contrast, the discourse of having it all informs women that they can achieve a perfect balance of being an ideal mother and a stellar employee (Williams,

2000). The goals of each discourse negate the other, yet many women draw from both discourses simultaneously and structure their worlds as if achieving both was the ideal situation. As a result, women can find themselves in situations where they cannot win, which then further constrains their choices.

With regard to this problematic of choice (or lack thereof), the goal of future research should be to identify discourses within society that might be more accessible and less paradoxical for individuals (especially women) to draw upon to help them re-structure and make sense of their situation. Furthermore, structural changes need to be enacted. Policies like the FMLA were implemented to protect people in situations needing work and home balance, yet, many organizations do not properly interpret the legislation and as a result, employees who need time off to care for a sick child or take time off for maternity leave, are often treated unfairly (Kirby & Krone, 2002; Buzzanell et al, 2005; Williams, 2000). Perhaps better training on what these laws entail would help to ensure equality in the workplace and better choices for employees.

Voice. The problematic of voice deals extensively with how certain interests and groups of people are privileged in work-family research. The voices of management, the traditional family, and white-collar employees, are the predominant voices heard in current discussions of the relationship between work and home (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Hochschild, 1997; Kirby et al., 2003; McManus, Korabik, Rosin, & Kelloway, 2002; Perlow, 1997, 1998; Williams, 2000). A major goal with this dissertation is for the voices of the marginalized (the employees of the public safety profession as well as their families) to have their chance to be heard. That said, many authors have called for research on the non-standard profession to be conducted (see Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Williams, 2000).

The corporate or the managerial voice is one that permeates work-family research. Extensive research has examined organizations that promote "family friendly" cultures and polices, such as on-site daycare, telecommuting, and flexible work arrangements (Allen, 2001; Thompson & Bunderson, 2001). However, attention in these studies is usually only centered on how these programs affect employee productivity, attitude (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005), and organizational commitment (Pettit, Goris, & Vaught 1997). Although few studies actually consider how the employee feels about organizational policies regarding work and family, Kirby (2000) analyzed the tension between the managerial voice and the employee voice through exploring the mixed messages that surround the use of family-friendly polices. She found a disconnect between what the managers said and employees heard. Managers claimed to be in favor of greater work-family balance, but they still placed emphasis on deadlines and being "workaholics." At the heart of most of these "family friendly" policies that organizations espouse is really just a perpetuation of the best interest of the corporation and the bottom line with actual little concern for family enhancement (see Kirby & Krone, 2002; Deetz, 1992). Therefore, management enacts these policies in order to remain competitive and to use as recruitment tools rather than because they actually care about these issues (Kirby et al., 2003).

The second voice that dominates research on work-family is that of the traditional, nuclear family. Research in and out of the communication field tends to rely on the experiences of single-earner, heterosexual couples with children (Smith, 1988). However, only about twenty percent of American families represent this type of situation (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). The term "family" has since been reinvented and is defined in rather loose terms to account for all the disparities. Family, once defined as "a group of persons sharing common ancestry" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1975) has been reconceptualized. The

National Institute of Mental Health defines today's family as: "a network of mutual commitment" (2005). This very broad definition of family has developed in response to the new structures that are the reality of families in the 21st century. Families in today's day and age include, but are not limited to, the following: single parents, blended families, unrelated individuals living cooperatively, and homosexual couples, among others (Crawford, 1999). Dual-career earners now make up the largest demographic of "family" (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). In addition, only fifteen percent of women are "stay-at-home" mothers. Single-parent homes are becoming more and more common with some forty percent of American's living this way (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

In terms of how these families experience the relationship between their work and family lives, little research takes into consideration the countless types of families that currently exist. While not extensive, there have been a few studies out there which have found that single parents are more susceptible to work-family conflict than dual-career families because 1) the work role is often central to the identity of single parents, 2) it is an economic imperative that single parents must work to provide for their children or dependents, and 3) single parents have fewer options to leave unsatisfactory employment (Belle, 1990; Norton and Glick, 1986). Further, role demands are greater in single-parent households because one person must perform most of the family tasks that are usually performed by two partners in a dual-income family (Lee, 1983). In addition, current research tends to privilege the voice of parents with regard to how they manage the relationship between work and family. Virtually no research takes into consideration other family members that may be influenced such as aging parents, extended family, and children.

As previously described, most work-family research concentrates on the "traditional family." To further complicate the discussion, even using the term "family" neglects a large part of the population, such as those individuals who are coupled but perhaps do not have children, single individuals, and homosexual couples which are not currently recognized as legal families. Research on homosexual family experiences with work and family is virtually non-existent within communication research and points to an important area of inquiry.

The last voice that is privileged in work-family research is that of white-collar professionals. Past research concerning the intersection of work and family has been concentrated in white-collar settings and has primarily uncovered middle class conceptions of work/life balance (Allen, 2001; Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, & Brinley, 2005; Kirby & Krone, 2002). White-collar settings are typically considered professions whose employees perform non-manual labor often in an office, with employees earning a yearly salary with bonus potential. Employees in this realm are not usually required to wear uniforms and do not typically engage in "dirty" work (Tracy & Scott, 2006). Because most white-collar workers are not paid by the hour, they can excuse themselves from work to fulfill family commitments (i.e. leaving work early to make it to a child's ballet recital, email from work to check in with family).

That said, changes in society and the economy affect different groups disproportionably. Low-income individuals and members of racial and ethnic minority groups often are more adversely affected by swings in the economy. They may work shift jobs, earn minimum wage, and are more subject to being laid off. More educated, white-collar individuals often are privileged by having more flexible work schedules and better access to child care (Kirby et al, 2003). While the use of Blackberries, laptops, email, and cell phones has eased the workload of some white-collar employees as far as their on-site workplace commitments; this may not be the

same case for blue-collar workers who perform very different types of jobs. For example, because most blue-collar employees are paid by the hour, they may have limited sick time or unpaid sick time which complicates the situation when they need to stay home to take care of an ill family member. Also, for some blue-collar employees who work in factory settings, the job may involve being part of an assembly line. Making phone calls home or leaving work early to attend a child's baseball game are tasks that are not easily negotiated in those kinds of settings and will most likely result in decreased pay. To date, the working class voice has largely been absent from research on work-family (Allen, 2001), which is something this dissertation takes into consideration with the study of PSEs. The problematic of voice can be dealt with by giving voice through research. When we privilege each of these voices that have been described above, we need to be conscious in deconstructing what we know about work and family to consider the alternative of the other voice.

To conclude this section on problematics, it is clear that the study of work and family needs to be deconstructed and reconsidered. The problematics of boundaries, choice and voice suggest that we may need to investigate the study of work-family in terms of an individual's own complex and emotional responses to situations. While there have been some recent studies within the field of communication that have advanced a more interpretative approach to the study of work-family (see Bochantin & Cowan, 2008; Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Jorgenson, 2000; Kirby, 2000; Putnam & Bochantin, 2009); much of the extant research has been done from a social scientific lens with little theoretical contribution by communication scholars. Instead, current theory is derived from psychology, management, and sociology and most of this work assumes very rational, causal positions regarding the relationship between work and home lives (Clark, 2000; Desrochers, 2002; Kossek & Oetzi, 1997; Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991). Shifting the

focus to allow more interpretive studies to address work-family will allow the emergence of critical understanding of knowledge not as rational, appropriate and realistic, but instead as "temporary, tentative, situated and socially constructed" (Kirby et al., 1999). We as communication scholars are in a unique position to address some of the items that the fields of psychology and sociology have failed to address. By looking at work and family as a meaning-centered process, we can help explain how discourse may serve as a catalyst for meaning-making and socially constructed realities. Examining how employees use communication to ask management and their families for things to help lessen any tensions they face with regard to their work and personal lives can illustrate the process of negotiation that individuals experience when dealing with any tensions instead of simply revealing only the *effects* of any conflict between work and family. That considered, this current study takes an approach to the public safety profession's experiences with work and family from a qualitative perspective that will allow for the close examination of language situated among tensions, ironies, metaphors and emotion to examine an alternate way of constructing understandings of work and family.

Thus, this dissertation is a first attempt to problematize and address several deficiencies within current work-family research. No research to date has examined how public safety employees as well as their families negotiate the relationship between work and family. Because a public safety employee's life is characterized by shiftwork, irregular schedules, danger and stress, PSEs represent a profession with unique experiences that differ from most standard professions. Police officers and fire fighters represent a group of employees who die in the line of duty more often than those employed in any other profession (Department of Defense, 2007). As part of their jobs, they respond to danger in order to protect others. But just like other Americans, these workers care about their homes and families as well. The next section provides

an introduction to the profession of public safety employees as well as other relevant literature as a way to situate the research.

<div align="center">The Public Safety Employee</div>

Public safety employees and their families exhibit several characteristics that set them apart from other professions and other families. Their lives are characterized by shiftwork, dangerous conditions while on duty, and stress both at home and at work. The following section will consider the following features of the public safety profession: the differences between public safety employees and non-public safety employees, shiftwork, stress and the emotion-work that characterizes a public safety profession.

Differences Between Public Safety Employees and Non-Public Safety Employees

There are many factors that differentiate PSEs from employees in other professions. First, PSEs are seen as authority figures. People deal with them differently and treat them differently, even when they are not working (Burke, 1997). For example, when a problem occurs, everyone looks to a police officer to take charge, and to solve the problem. In addition, PSEs can often feel isolated. Kirschman (2004a) found that wearing a badge, uniform, or gun separates a PSE from society and can cause those who wear the uniform to act more aggressively, both on and off work. The uniform of a PSE conveys the power and authority of the person wearing it. Clothing, including the PSE uniform, has been found to have a powerful psychological impact on those who view it (Borelli, 2010; Kirschman, 2004a). Humans often subconsciously search for clues about others they encounter, and the PSE uniform is a powerful clue as to the wearer's authority, capabilities and status (Borelli, 2010). Many PSEs suggest there is a mask that they put on along with their uniform (Kirschman, 2004a), and it is possible for this role to change the course of relationships and leisure time (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Another difference between PSEs and non-PSEs is that fire fighters and police officers work in a quasi-military, structured institution (Franz & Jones, 1987). Military organizations require the sacrifice of the individual for the good of society. The individual is not a consideration; the goal of the group is paramount. In a military organization, the focus is on punishing the individual if he or she is not up to standards (Franz & Jones, 1987). The public safety workplace takes the same attitude, and sometimes a step further. For example, when a police officer does a remarkable job of police work, perhaps even saves a life, s/he can still be reprimanded if s/he does not file the proper paperwork (Bochantin & Cowan, 2008). This quasi-military nature of police and fire work can cause a mental health situation that is undesirable and very stressful (Burke, 1997).

Aside from working in a quasi-military environment, the need to be in constant emotional control is also a difference from other jobs. PSEs have jobs that require restraint under highly emotional circumstances (Ellison, 2004). They are told that when they are excited, they have to act calm. They are told that when they are nervous, they have to be in charge. They are taught to project stoicism when emotional (Bochantin & Cowan, 2008). They are to interact with the world in a role that is prescribed by their workplace, a process Hochschild (1983) has referred to as emotional labor. The emotional constraint of the role takes tremendous mental energy, often more energy than expressing true emotions (Lerner, 1985). When the energy drain is very strong, it may make the officer more prone to exhaustion outside of work, such as not wanting to participate in social or family life (Burke, 1997; Ellison, 2004; Jackson & Maslach, 2007). This energy drain from performing emotional labor can also create a sense of job and social burnout (Miller, 2005).

Finally, the "at work" world of the public safety employee can be very negative. They see the bad actors of society - the criminals, the abusers of the rules – and can also see devastating effects from natural occurrences such as fires or hurricanes. For police officers in particular, this may skew opinions on the character of the average human being. It creates a cynicism and a critical view of the world (Burke, 1997). It can be difficult to adjust to trusting a fellow human being when so much of the day is spent with people who are not trustworthy. This lack of trust can manifest itself with people on a personal level, with neighbors, with a spouse. This view of the world can also be seen in the way children are raised, as police parents tend to be stricter in discipline and more careful with privilege (Jackson & Maslach, 2007).

Shiftwork and Non-Standard Work Hours

As outlined above, there are several ways in which PSEs and non-PSEs differ. One key distinction is with regard to work schedules. The schedule of a PSE is usually non-standard. While scholars may have slightly different definitions about what are considered non-standard work schedules, Harriet Presser, who has done extensive research in this area for the past 30 years, has consistently adopted the following definitions to identify non-standard work schedules (2003a):

- *Fixed day shift:* Working anytime between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

- *Fixed evening shift:* Working anytime between 2 p.m. and midnight.

- *Fixed night shift:* Working anytime between 9 p.m. and 8 a.m.

- *Rotating:* Schedule changes periodically from days to evenings or nights.

- *Hours vary:* An irregular schedule that cannot be classified in any of the above categories.

Certain occupations are more likely to require non-standard schedules, including service (e.g., janitors, waitresses, nurses), sales (sales workers, retail and personal services), and public safety careers such as fire and police (Beers, 2000; Presser, 2003a, 2003b; US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

The prevalence of non-standard work schedules among American families, particularly families with children, was first and extensively examined in Presser's early work. For example, Presser (1988) found that one-third of all dual-earner American couples with children under age 5 in 1980 had at least one spouse working an evening, night, or rotating shift. In addition, Presser (1988) found that, in 1984, about one-half of young couples (aged 19 to 26) with children under the age of 5 had a spouse working a late or rotating shift.

It has been noted that when parents work non-standard hours (e.g., early morning, late afternoon, evenings and nights) there is a negative effect on family time for breakfast, dinner, homework, activities and/or bedtime stories (Davis, Crouter, & McHale, 2006; Garey, 1999). Furthermore, strong associations have been found between working non-standard hours and problems with individual physical health and psychological and social well-being (Presser, 2003a). These issues warrant attention from researchers and policymakers to identify the challenges, choices and outcomes associated with the complexity of working non-standard schedules. Scholars should also consider the extent to which workplace policies, the governmental labor market and family and child policies may affect these families' well-being. Non-standard work schedules, particularly in terms of the PSE schedule should also be understood within the context of stress and emotional labor because their work lives are characterized by dangerous conditions and the need to be able to manage their emotions for the sake of the public they deal with on a regular basis.

Stress and Emotional Labor

Although organizational stress has been studied extensively (Jackson & Maslach, 2007; Miller, Ellis, Zook, & Liles, 1990; Ray & Miller, 1994), very little research has looked at the unique stress that PSEs experience (Patterson, 1992). Public safety employees experience a different kind of stress in their jobs, called "burst stress" (Howard, Donofrio, & Bowles, 2004; Patterson, 1992). Burst stress describes job situations that move from complete calm to high activity and pressure in one burst (Kirschman, 2004a). Examples include going into a fire that suddenly gets much worse than anticipated or being called in as backup in a situation in which a suspect or civilian suddenly draws a gun. The stress situation for most of the work force consists of a stress building process that can be either reduced or adapted to before it gets out of control (Beehr & Schuler, 1982; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). This is sometimes not the case for the PSE, because "out of control" can happen in seconds (Kirschman, 2004a). Another common cause of stress for PSEs is the "illusion of control" (Kirschman, 2004a). When people enter a public safety career, they expect to remain in control even when they encounter violence. Until actually faced with it, they have no real way to anticipate how it will feel to have a close brush with death or to take another person's life. This is a state of stress called the "adaptive state of denial" in which perceptions of the psychological and physical dangers of the job are minimized in order to allow adequate performance (Kirschman, 2004a). In addition, a recent study on police officers and stress found that those who scored high on the Maslach Burnout Inventory were more likely to display anger, spend time off away from the family, be uninvolved in family matters, and have unsatisfactory marriages (Jackson & Maslach, 2007), thus supporting the presence of spill-over stress among police officers.

Another common source of stress that PSEs typically experience is in relation to how they use emotion. An increasing number of scholars are realizing the importance of studying emotion in the workplace (Miller & Koesten, 2008; Miller, Considine, & Garner, 2007) and some have even focused on the public safety profession (Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Tracy, 2000; Scott & Meyers, 2005). Those employed in the public safety profession and other emergency response workers face the daunting task of negotiating the communication of calming and controlled emotions in highly volatile and dangerous conditions. They not only have to manage their own emotions but also the emotions of the public and those they are dealing with in any given situation, which can be a source of stress (Tracy & Tracy, 1998). Because a PSE's work life is characterized by dangerous and emotionally demanding situations, the use and management of emotion is an important area of inquiry. When emotions get commodified, it is known as "emotional labor." Emotional labor may also be defined as "the act of displaying the appropriate emotion" (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999, p. 90).

Arlie Hochschild argues that there are three characteristics shared by jobs that require emotional labor. First, they require direct contact with the public. In addition, they require that the worker "produce an emotional state" in the customer (1983, p. 147). For example, a fire fighter might need to make a victim of a fire feel safe and secure. Finally, jobs that require emotional labor involve the employer having some control over the emotion management of the employees through either supervision or training. During any fire or police academy, workshops are provided that familiarize police officers and fire fighters with "appropriate" displays of emotions. Display rules such as "professionalism" and "suppression of emotion" are mandated and reinforced by supervisors during role call. The explanation for this is because the general public looks to PSEs for guidance, security and most importantly, control over a situation

(Kirschman, 2004b). This is accomplished through emotion management.

Hochschild (1983) details two ways in which emotional labor is performed. "Surface acting" is when workers display (or do not display) various emotions in work interactions. Surface acting is truly acting, in the sense that workers are managing their *display* of emotions. "Deep acting" is when those emotions are actually evoked or attempted during interactions. Workers perform deep acting by either trying to evoke the appropriate emotion by thinking of various images or scenarios that will evoke those feelings (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). A number of organizational scholars have argued that emotion display rules are intended to benefit the organization but are potentially harmful to the long term well being and stress levels of employees. They maintain that emotional labor is potentially detrimental to those who must perform it (Hochschild, 1983; Tracy, 2000; Waldron, 2000). Given that PSEs routinely engage in emotional labor (Tracy &Tracy, 1998; Scott & Meyers, 2005) while on the job it seems possible that this surface or deep acting could affect their home lives as well if processes of emotional management are used in the family setting. It is this family setting that is explored in the next section of this chapter.

<div align="center">The Public Safety Family</div>

As previously mentioned, the experiences of public safety families are virtually absent from current research, yet the voices of these children and spouses are a crucial component to getting the whole picture. One goal of this dissertation is to allow their voices to be heard. That said, there are several concerns that may be particularly important for public safety employees and their families. First, there may be issues pertaining to the unique sense of loyalty that police, and fire employees have toward their job (Howard et al., 2004; Kirschman, 2004a, 2004b; Patterson, 1992). Unlike other occupations, many PSEs rapidly gain a deep connection to the job

and the brothers and sisters at their respective organizations. This close association among PSEs can create an extended family for many spouses and children in fire or police families (Howard et al, 2004). It is possible that some families might have problems adapting to the loyal attitude the PSE has toward the job. Families may become resentful about a wide range of topics, including additional training or extended shifts, and each family will have different needs with regard to adapting to the demands of the job. In addition, since the September 11th tragedies, many spouses and families have acquired a new set of fears about their loved one's occupation as a public safety employee, with an enhanced awareness of the threat of death or injury (Kirschman, 2004a, Kirschman, 2004b).

Although spouses are deeply affected by the PSE job, it has been found that the children of PSEs have a more difficult adjustment (Hurst & Frank, 2000; Jackson & Maslach, 2007). To a young child, the police or fire parent is seen as holding a prestigious, desirable position. Young children and their friends look up to the police officer or fire fighter as a minor celebrity, a person deserving great respect. To a teenager, the PSE parent is part of the authority structure in society. Because teens often rebel against authority, this can cause a double rebellion against the parent both in their role as caretaker and as a symbol of the authority of society (Hurst & Frank, 2000). Hart, Wearing and Heady (1995) found that children of PSEs are often overly compliant because of the rules imposed and teens are overly rebellious of the rule-oriented parent.

Finally, there is support for the "single-parent phenomenon" associated with PSE families. Maynard, Maynard, McCubbin and Shao (1980) found that a common family arrangement involves the spouse of the PSE parenting alone during long periods of separation such as a 24-hour shift for fire fighters. The responsibilities and pressures that come from solo parenting can add additional stresses to the family system.

It has been made evident in the discussion above that public safety employees as well as their families represent a unique profession whose lives are characterized by shiftwork, dangerous conditions and stress (both at work and at home). Furthermore, the ways in which the relationship between work and home is articulated among PSEs is unclear and often times imposed on participants. As mentioned, a major goal of this dissertation is to destabilize and reconceptualize how the relationship between work and home is articulated by and among PSEs and their families and allow them to describe that relationship in their own words. That considered, the next section describes the theoretical framework of sensemaking that informs this dissertation.

<div align="center">Sensemaking</div>

A PSE's life is characterized by stress, ambiguity and danger. Thus, Karl Weick's theory of sensemkaing is an appropriate theoretical framework for this study because sensemaking is most relevant in situations that are chaotic, stressful and shocking (Weick, 1995). When people encounter situations that are unexpected or surprising, or when they are presented with a shock, such as the day-to-day experiences of PSEs, the general scripts that guide behavior can fail, causing individuals to develop explanations for why the shock occurred. The attribution of meaning to that shock or surprise is known as sensemaking. Sensemaking starts with the individual: "someone notices something, in an ongoing flow of events, something in the form of a surprise, a discrepant set of cues ... spotted when someone looks back over elapsed experience" (Weick, 1995, p. 2). This discrepancy is a novelty or something out of the ordinary. It is not a "problem" because a problem is simply something to be solved (Buzzanell, Miesenbach, Remke, Meina, 2005). Rather, the impetus for sensemaking is a challenge to one's identity or way in which one believes life events should unfold. Furthermore, Weick (1995) suggests that

sensemaking is a necessity during situations of high stress, tension, ambiguity or paradox. These types of situations disrupt both the environment and the sense of self. In environments that are high-stress and unpredictable, such as in public safety careers like the fire department and the police force, the self also becomes threatened and insecure (Eisenberg, 2001; Scott & Myers, 2005).

Moreover, just as the public safety employees' environment and sense of self are threatened in a time of stress or ambiguity, so too is the environment and identities for the families of these employees who wait at home. Weick (1995) suggests that meaning making is constructed through interdependent relationships and constituted in the process of interaction. As meaning is interpreted and constructed among organizational members, particularly during chaotic situations, meaning is also made (and shared) between couples and families during situations of high stress and tension. PSE couples and families develop patterns of interaction much like other couples. However, the PSE family may be more likely to develop these patterns around job issues. For example, some PSEs will seek out their spouses to talk after a difficult shift. Others might set up an unspoken rule against talking about the job, and yet others will wait and seek out another PSE rather than talking to a spouse. These patterns or rules are initially constructed as the result of making sense of the stressful and equivocal situations that confront PSEs and their families. This sensemaking process is likely to vary depending on a variety of factors including specific job type, family structure, relational background, personality, and societal events. The goal of the sensemaking process then, though not an explicit one, is to create a shared, intersubjective account. Sensemaking has seven basic properties: it is grounded in identity construction, retrospective, enactive of sensible environments, social, ongoing, focused on and by extracted cues, and driven by plausibility rather than accuracy (Weick, 1995).

Sensemaking Is Grounded in Identity Construction

This suggests that a person's identity is fundamentally created and sustained through interaction with others. In the context of this study, the interaction and sensemaking that happens during a workday for PSEs impacts the identity of the PSEs as well as their families at home. Similarly, the interaction and sensemaking that happens while at home also has the ability to impact the identity for both PSEs and their families.

Sensemaking Is Retrospective

Being retrospective suggests that sensemaking occurs after the event takes place, not before it. Until something has happened that shocks people into a state of active conscious sensemaking, people simply continue along accepting the results of previous sensemaking episodes. For example, after a brush with death for a police officer or fire fighter, sensemaking can occur after the event actually takes place. Importantly, during sensemaking, many different meanings could be constructed (Weick, 1995). Because of this, not everyone makes the same sense out of the same situation.

Sensemaking Is Revealed Through Enactment

This third principle refers to the actual production of meaning. As opposed to being acted upon by their environments, people create their own environments through their actions and those environments, in turn, constrain their future actions. For example, when PSEs and their families develop rules for what can be discussed and not discussed pertaining to the PSEs job, they create environments that constrain their subsequent actions.

Sensemaking Is a Social Activity

A fourth principle of sensemaking is that it is a social activity. Here, social can be understood in a number of ways. First, meaning is created through sensemaking and this

meaning is intersubjective, or agreed upon between people. Second, sensemaking does not occur in a vacuum. Whether or not people engage in sensemaking collectively, action and meaning influence and are influenced by others, even when they are not physically present. For example, if a police officer had to take the life of someone holding people hostage, a spouse of a police officer might engage in a discussion with their loved one about this event as a way that they can make sense of the event together.

Sensemaking Is Ongoing

Sensemaking has no beginning or ending. Each action is linked to those before it and influences those after it. For example, if a PSE happens to work in a city where violence is encountered every shift, there may be less of a need to engage in conscious sensemaking after the occurrence of another violent act because such actions are taken for granted in the police department. The sense that was made of previous similar events affects how people understand current and future events. This is important to the present study because the experiences of the PSEs influence the sense that families make of their loved one's jobs. It is likely that a PSE may want his or her family to make a particular type of sense out of the job, but that is not a given. Family members may make completely different sense of the relationship between work and home than the PSE makes and vice versa.

Sensemaking Is Focused on and Extracted by Cues

A sixth property of sensemaking is that people tend to focus on cues in their environments. When a cue does not fit within the limits of ongoing daily interaction it creates shock or surprise. When people encounter shock they typically shift their focus to that cue in an attempt to understand what might be going on. For example, during a routine traffic stop for speeding, a police officer might run the license through the system and find out that this person has a warrant

out for their arrest or something else unexpected. In that situation, it goes from routine traffic stop to an arrest. However, as Dougherty and Smythe (2004) note, these cues are sometimes dismissed. Because they are novel they may be interpreted as a misunderstanding.

Sensemaking Is Driven by Plausibility Rather than Accuracy

The sense that is made of a surprising event does not have to be accurate as long as it is possible. For example, a group of coworkers may develop their own understanding of why a police officer quit the job, regardless of the "real" reasons for the person leaving. These understandings can come from official explanations, for example, "small children at home" and "recent medical conditions." Often these explanations are accepted as plausible explanations. Because these meanings are intersubjectively created and adopted within the group, the real or true reasons for the person's exit become secondary and virtually unimportant for the group. This idea supports Weick's (1995) notion that different people can make different sense of the same events.

Weick's dissection of sensemaking into seven properties provides a conceptual framework for understanding sensemaking processes. This framework includes an explanation of how cues appear in the environment (e.g., the enactment of sensible environments), how particular cues are singled out from an ongoing flow of experience (e.g., the identities that define and respond to extracted cues from the ongoing flux of the environment), and how the interpretations and meanings of cues from the environment become more explicit and sensible (e.g., the plausible retrospective explanations that emerge and become more comprehensive and resilient). Focusing on how we construct our explanations, the sensemaking perspective provides a conceptual framework for analyzing the relationship between work and home. Furthermore, because sensemaking is most relevant in situations that are chaotic, stressful or ambiguous it makes sense

to employ it as the theoretical framework for this study as a PSE's work-life is characterized by shiftwork, dangerous conditions and stress.

Given the various arguments and literatures that have been considered above, the rationale for this dissertation can be summarized as follows: First, the public safety profession has been neglected in work-family literature so this study brings attention to the important issues surrounding PSEs and their families in terms of how they make sense of their work and family lives. Second, this study allows the voices of spouses and children of PSEs to be heard because their voices and experiences are absent from current literature. Finally, this study problematizes and allows us to rethink key constructs, metaphors and dominant terms used in work-family literature and encourage PSEs and their families to explain, in their own words, how they view the relationship between work and family. This dissertation, then, provides a response to the call made by Golden et al. (2006) to incorporate a sensemaking based systems perspective to the study of work-family.   Sensemaking has the ability to provide an examination of the "mutual influence between personal life and work-life rather than assuming work as the dominant force" in one's life (Golden et al., 2006, p. 173). For the public safety profession, "work" and "family" operate jointly as framing contexts, co-determining environments for each other. Revealing how these interpretations and experiences are constructed, alternative ways of negotiating the relationship between work and home can be considered and articulated by PSEs and their families. In light of these goals, a general research question is proposed as well as subsequent questions:

GRQ: How do public safety employees and their families make sense of the relationship between their work and family lives?

RQ1: How do PSEs and their families articulate and describe the relationship between work and family? What metaphors do they employ to describe that relationship?

RQ2: Do PSEs, spouses, and children make sense of the relationship between work and family in similar or different ways?

RQ3: Do male and female PSEs make sense of the relationship between work and family in similar or different ways?

RQ4: Do police officers and fire fighters make sense of the relationship between work and family in similar or different ways?

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

As discussed in Chapter I, the relationship between work and family has been studied

extensively. However, only until recently has research looked beyond causes, effects, and

management strategies. Most research to date on work-family examines the bi-directional

relationship between work and family examining both the impact of work on family and the

effect of family on work as well as the study of the household division of labor, methods of

negotiating family-friendly benefits in workplaces, ways of circumventing negative career

effects and ways in which productivity and motivation are influenced by work-family conflicts

(Greenhaus & Buetell, 1985; Kirby et al., 2003; Voydanoff, 1989). While this body of research

is extremely valuable in explaining how *employees* construct the relationship between work and

home, virtually no research exists that illustrates how *families* handle that relationship. Further,

there is little research that addresses the processes through which both employees and families

make sense of the relationship between work and family. This dissertation is an attempt to

change that.

While there have been some recent studies within the field of communication that have

advanced a more interpretative approach to the study of work-family (see Bochantin & Cowan,

2008; Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Jorgenson et al., 1997; Kirby, 2000; Putnam & Bochantin,

2009); much of the current research has been conducted using a social scientific lens with little

theoretical contribution by communication scholars (Clark, 2000; Desrochers, 2002; Kosseck &

Oetzi, 1997; Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991). This dissertation advances a more interpretive study to

address work-family and allows the emergence of the critical understanding of knowledge not

necessarily as rational or outcome-oriented. Looking at work and family relationships as a meaning-centered process can help explain how discourse may serve as a catalyst for meaning making and socially constructed realities. Examining how employees use communication to ask management and their families for things to help lessen any tensions they face with regard to their work and personal lives can illustrate processes of negotiation rather than simply considering the effects of any tension between work and family. Because I am interested in an in-depth exploration of the sense-making processes and experiences of PSEs and their families, an interpretive approach seemed is the most appropriate way to begin to address my research questions. Such an approach allows PSEs and their families the space to voice their experiences and ideas on the relationship between work and family thus revealing how they have made sense of their experiences (Weick, 1995). That said, this chapter will describe my method for understanding the relationship between work and family. I will first detail information on key informants and how I gained access to the PSEs and their families who participated in this study, and then discuss data collection and data analysis procedures.

<center>Key Informants, Access, and Participants</center>

My interest in this particular project stems from being the spouse of a public safety employee. As a result, I had ample access to a sample of "key informants." According to Patton (2002), key informants "are people who are particularly knowledgeable about the inquiry setting and articulate about their knowledge--people whose insight can prove particularly useful in helping an observer understand what is happening and why" (p. 321). In order to gain a better understanding of the public safety profession, I initially conducted two semi-structured interviews with personal contacts as a way to pilot my interview guide at the beginning of my data collection. One interview was with a police officer and one with a fire fighter. In addition,

I also conducted a pilot focus group with members of the personal contacts' families as a way to gain valuable feedback on the discussion questions I created for the focus groups that will be discussed later in this chapter. All of the key informants I talked to believed the interview questions were well worded and would elicit thoughtful feedback from other PSEs and family members. These key informants also served as access points to the PSE population.

Sampling

For this study, a combination of purposive and snowball sampling was used to recruit participants (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). Purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling. In purposive sampling, the sample is "hand-picked" for the research based on specific characteristics a potential participant might possess. For this study, participants were recruited because they were either a public safety employee or a family member of a PSE. A subset of a purposive sample is a snowball sample, so named because one picks up the sample along the way, analogous to a snowball accumulating snow (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002). A snowball sample is achieved by asking a participant to suggest someone else who might be willing to participate and appropriate for the study.

Using purposive and snowball sampling, I accessed the public safety profession and their families in two ways: (1) through past participants of other research studies I have conducted on the public safety profession and (2) through personal contacts. When I began data collection I initially contacted several police officers that had participated in past research (see Bochantin & Cowan, 2008; Cowan & Bochantin, 2009). I sent an email (see Appendix C) asking for their willingness to participate in another research study regarding their job as well their home lives. I then mentioned that if they participate, I would also appreciate the opportunity to speak to their family members as part of the research project. Through purposive sampling, this method

resulted in 5 participants who had previously participated in my research studies and then an additional 10 participants through snowball sampling. After I exhausted that list, which resulted in 15 public safety employees (9 police officers and 6 fire fighters), I then contacted 3 close friends, all of whom are public safety employees (2 are police officers and one is a fire fighter). I phoned each one of them and described the research study in much the same way the email is constructed in Appendix C. They all agreed to participate and then provided me with names and email addresses of others they thought would be interested in participating. I contacted each of these individuals via email (see Appendix D). Through my 3 personal contacts, I was able to get in contact with another 18 public safety employees. After both the purposive and snowball sampling was complete, I had conducted 36 interviews with public safety employees (18 police officers and 18 fire fighters).

As mentioned previously, one major goal with the dissertation is to gain an understanding of the experiences of PSE families. Thus, as part of the requirement to participate in this study, all of the participants needed to be current public safety employees over the age of 18 and also needed to have some kind of dependent be it a child, spouse or both. The public safety employees that participated in this study came from a variety of family situations including nuclear, traditional families with a spouse and at least one child (n=18); single-parent families because of divorce (n=7); single-parent families because of being widowed (n=2); married partners with no kids (n=8) and one female participant who was married and pregnant with her first child during the study. In addition, I had a mixture of homosexual (n=9) and heterosexual participants (n=27) as well as both men (n=26) and women (n=10). Most of the participants worked in either a suburban police or fire department (n=14) or a major city police or fire department (n=19), though three participants were from more rural areas. Finally, with regard to

job titles among police officers, I spoke to 9 patrol officers, 2 school resource officers (SROs), 3 sergeants, 3 detectives, and one chief-of-police. Among the fire fighters, 13 participants were standard, uniformed firefighters, while three were lieutenants, one Battalion chief and one chief-of-fire. As previously mentioned, the sampling process was two-fold for this study. I began with the public safety employees but then asked them to volunteer their families' involvement as well (see Appendix D). After completing my sampling technique I talked to a total of 59 different family members. I spoke to 27 spouses (19 wives/partners and 8 husbands/partners) and 2 ex-spouses. In addition, 32 of those family members were children of public safety employees. 20 of these were under the age of 18 (9 under the age of 13). There were an equal number of female and male children. In total, I spoke to 36 public safety employees and 59 family members, resulting in a total sample size of 95 participants (see Appendix E for chart outlining each family).

All of the participants were assured confidentiality and before the interview began were asked to sign a consent form approved by the Internal Review Board (IRB) at Texas A&M (for a sample see Appendix F and G). The consent form was thoroughly explained to the participants before they made a decision to sign and participate. I also reminded each participant that they did not have to answer any questions that they did not want to and could discontinue the interview or focus group at any time without this affecting their current or future relations with Texas A&M University or their organizations. For children under the age of 18, I read them an assent form (see Appendix H) which explained the study in language they could understand and then had their parent sign a parent permission slip (see Appendix I). They, too, were told that they could cease participation at any point during the questioning. The next section will detail data collection procedures.

Data Collection

The data collection process for this study was two-fold. For the 36 public safety employees I spoke to, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured narrative/respondent interviews to give participants the best opportunity to detail their experiences in their own words (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002). For family members, I conducted a combination of focus groups and family interviews, depending upon what family members felt most comfortable doing. I will next detail both parts of the data collection process.

Narrative/Respondent Interviews

The first portion of data collection involved one-on-one interviews with public safety employees. Whenever possible, I conducted these interviews away from the workplace. Most of the interviews took place in person (n=32) while 4 others were conducted over the telephone due to geographical constraints. Interviews ranged in length from 40 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes with no considerable difference between those interviewed in person versus those interviewed over the telephone. My wish was to audiotape all of the interviews so that I would have the opportunity to transcribe the interviews and also be able to devote the majority of my attention to what they were saying rather than being bothered with taking extensive notes. In most cases, this was not a problem and participants consented to being audio-taped. However, in 3 cases, the participants did not wish to be taped. Interestingly, all 3 of the individuals who did not consent to being audio-taped were interviews I conducted over the phone and all of them admitted that they did not want any way for their identities to be compromised.

The one-on-one interviews I conducted were a mix of what Lindloff and Taylor (2002) describe as "narrative" and "respondent" interviews (see Appendix A for interview guide). Narrative interviewing is quite different than other types in that the process attempts to capture

the "whole story," unlike other types of interviews which take stories apart and reassemble the parts during analysis. Through their enduring patterns of representation (plots, scenes, characters, etc.), life stories enable people to make their experiences more intelligible to each other (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002). In conducting narrative interviews, the process constitutes a dialogue in which interviewees and interviewers jointly construct meaning (Mishler, 1986). When doing a narrative interview, it is often necessary to reformulate, reframe, and rethink questions as respondents simultaneously frame their answers in terms of their reciprocal understanding as meanings emerge during the course of an interview (Mishler, 1986). Hence, making sense of each other's questions and responses is achieved by engaging the other person in dialogue. The expectation is that interviewers and interviewees will achieve a mutually shared understanding. There were many times during each interview where the participant or I would ask a question of the other person based on something that was just said. By engaging others in dialogue in the interview process, my participants were able to recreate their "world" through discourse organized around time and consequential events. As a result, respondents were encouraged to speak in their own "voices" and to become active participants, rather than passive objects of the interview (Mishler, 1986).

While narrative interviews were an opportunity to get me acclimated to the initial experiences of PSEs, I also asked more direct, open-ended questions to make the interview sessions a bit more structured, especially toward the end. To do this, I employed what Lindloff and Taylor refer to as a "respondent" interview. The main goal of a respondent interview is to garner open-ended responses to interview questions. In addition, as opposed to other types of interviewing such as narrative interviewing, respondent interviews encourage participants to speak only about themselves and their personal experiences rather than the world surrounding

them (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002). That said, by employing a combination of narrative and respondent interviews, I was able to get an idea regarding how PSEs make sense of their personal world as well as the world around them.

During each interview, I took notes and made memos to myself about what I was seeing. I began to see patterns and repetition of responses right away. By the 25th interview, I was starting to reach saturation. Saturation occurs when the researcher is no longer surprised by the participants' understandings and meanings, the researcher is seeing no new explanations and much repetition during interviews, and the researcher has a heightened confidence in his or her interpretation based on checking interpretations with participants (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002). After I completed the interviews with the public safety employees, I then conducted focus groups and family interviews with children and spouses of PSEs.

Focus Groups and Family Interviews

Unlike traditional interviewing, a focus group relies on interaction within a group rather than a question-answer format in a one-on-one setting. The purpose of a focus group is to gather respondents of like kind and talk to them about some type of shared experience. Because focus groups are often described as group interviews (Morgan, 1988), they must be distinguished both from traditional interview formats and from group interaction in general. Morgan (1988) characterized focus groups as having multiple respondents, interacting participants, a moderator, and a discussion outline. She also distinguished between full groups (8-10 people), mini groups (4-6 people) and telephone groups. Typically, a focus group consists of 5-10 people who, with a moderator (who can also be the researcher), discuss a series of topics or questions prepared by the researcher for no more than two hours in order to provide insight regarding a particular research agenda. Thus, focus groups rely primarily on member interaction but are more focused

than a casual or spontaneous group interaction. According to Morgan (1988), the "hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group" (p. 12). In addition, the typical protocol for conducting a focus group usually requires that they take place in a "neutral" setting, such as a conference room, but it is not uncommon for a focus group to be held at the home of a researcher (Lindloff & Taylor, 2002). Some researchers choose to videotape and tape-record the focus group with the equipment set up in the interview room or hidden away behind a one-way mirror.

The focus groups I conducted contained anywhere from 5-7 people, usually containing a mixture of spouses and children (from the same family if applicable) combined with usually one other family. In every situation, I acted as the moderator and posed the questions to the group (see Appendix B for questions). I conducted a total of 8 focus groups, which lasted between 1.5 hours to 3 hours. To ensure a "neutral" location, I reserved space in a conference room at the university in which I work to make sure that everyone felt comfortable. I audio-taped every focus group. 52 out of the 59 total family participants took part in a focus group. The remaining 7 did not participate in a focus group either because they felt uncomfortable discussing their personal lives with strangers or because of logistical issues such as scheduling or location. In order to get those 7 individuals' perspectives, I conducted 2 family interviews and two one-on-one interviews, one with a spouse and one with a 21-year old daughter of a fire fighter. During the 2 family interviews, I met with the spouse and children at their homes and conducted it much like the focus groups I had been doing. I asked them the same questions and still acted like a moderator. For the two one-on-one interviews I conducted, I also stuck to the interview guide but instead of being able to relate their experiences to others, these 2 participants answered the

questions based on their own experiences and observations. Along with the interviews with the PSEs and the focus groups with the families, I also asked each participant to draw a picture.

Drawings

During both the interviews and the focus groups, I asked the PSEs and children and spouses to construct a drawing. I provided each of them with blank paper and colored pencils and asked for similar drawings of both the PSEs and the families. For the PSEs, I asked them to draw a picture of what they do for a living. I asked the spouses and children to draw a picture of what their parent or spouse does for a living. After they completed their drawings, I asked them each to write down 5-10 words on the back of the picture that describes how they feel when they look at the picture (Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik & Alberts, 2006). During both the one-on-one interviews and the focus groups, I had each participant share and describe their drawings with me and each other. Research that has used drawings as part of the data collection process revealed that drawings can enhance the capacity for research participants to make sense of and attribute meaning to things (Tracy et al., 2006; Vince & Brousine, 1996). Images and drawings, according to Vince and Brousine (1996) "bridge the gap between the apparently individual, private, subjective and the apparently collective, social, and political. Images tend to be seen as products of relationships, instinct, conflict, and emotion" (p. 8). This definition and rationale for using drawings as a tool during data collection allowed me to better assess conscious and unconscious emotions about the relationship between work and family for the participants involved in the study. There are several studies that have utilized drawings as part of their methodology that helped inform the use of drawings for this dissertation. For instance, Zubloff (1988) asked clerical workers to draw illustrations of how they felt both before and after the installation of a new computer system at their workplace. More recently, Tracy et al. (2006) had

employees from many different types of workplaces construct drawings of what it feels like to be bullied in the workplace. Similar to what I did for this study, these then had participants write down several phrases or words that they felt described their drawings. Both Zuboff (1988) and Tracy et al. (2006) felt that drawings acted as a catalyst to help their participants articulate feelings and emotions that were hard for them to define in words.

After finishing the interviews and focus groups, I began the process of transcribing. Upon receiving a small grant from Texas A & M University, I was able to pay a private transcriptionist to transcribe 30 of the 95 interviews and focus groups. I transcribed the remaining 65 myself. This resulted in 1,287 single-spaced pages of analyzable texts. As I transcribed the interviews and focus groups, I kept a record of initial categories and themes that seemed to be emerging and made notes regarding where certain quotations appeared within the transcript for an easy reference. The next section details the data analysis process.

Data Analysis

After conducting interviews with the public safety employees and focus groups with family members and then collecting drawings from each participant, I analyzed these data sets in an effort to answer my research questions. In this section, I will lay out the two analytical techniques—categorical content analysis and grounded metaphorical analysis—that were used in this study and then relate each analysis technique to the specific research questions they address.

Categorical Content Analysis

Because I anticipated a rich description and storytelling from the PSEs as well as their families, I decided to use a categorical content analysis approach to uncover how specific constructs (e.g., sensemaking, dangerous professions, family rules) are storied and made sense of by the public safety employees and their families. According to Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach and

Zilber (1998), a categorical content analysis focuses on the content of narratives as manifested in separate parts of the story irrespective of the contents of the entire story. I began the categorical content analysis by breaking the text into relatively small units of content and categorized them in terms of both extant and emergent conceptual themes. On the basis of my research questions, all the relevant sections of a text were marked and assembled to form a new file or subtext, which were seen as the "content universe" of the area studied (Lieblich et al., 1998). In order to organize this data, I used ATLAS qualitative software to help reduce and unitize the data. After I isolated the many stories into one "master narrative," or "subtext" I then defined the content categories.

As defined by Lieblich et al. (1998), the categories are various themes or perspectives that cut across the selected subtext described above and provide a means of classifying its units—whether words, sentences, or groups of sentences. In doing this step, I read the subtext as openly as possible and defined the major content categories that emerged from the reading. This process closely related to step three of the process, which involved sorting the material into the categories. I isolated certain key words or phrases that seem to be recurring in the subtext, noting both frequency and intensity. The fourth and final stage of categorical content analysis was to draw conclusions from the results. The sentences, words, or phrases that were found to continually be recurring were counted, tabulated, and ordered by frequency. The goal in this stage of analysis is to formulate a picture of the content universe, or in this case, how PSEs make sense of the relationship between work and family (Lieblich et al., 1998).

Ultimately, I wanted to understand how these divergent narratives are woven into a multilayered, meaningful, and rich social story. By uncovering the experiences of the PSEs, I was better able to understand how they, as well as their families, begin to negotiate the

relationship between work and family. The next section describes the second tool used—grounded metaphorical analysis.

Grounded Metaphorical Analysis

Because the process through which PSEs and their families make sense of the relationship between work and family can be difficult and complex, I went into this research study with a primary goal of understanding the ways in which participants describe that relationship. Research on work and family is replete with many constructs and metaphors to describe the relationship such as balance, conflict, well-being, segmentation, compensation, etc. (see Chapter I for additional examples). One problem with much of this research is that the metaphors used are those that pertain to a white-collar population. Prior to this dissertation, it was uncertain if these metaphors would transfer to professions that are not considered white-collar. Furthermore, most of these metaphors or constructs are manifested by the authors of the research and not really from the people involved in the research study. This dissertation was an attempt to rectify that. To accomplish this, I elicited metaphors and ways of articulating the relationship between work and home directly from my participants by asking them to draw a picture which represents what they do for a living (or what their parent/spouse does for a living) and I also had them finish the following statement: "The connection between work and family life is like

_____ for you?"

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have provided a broad definition of metaphor that has been considered the premier working definition. In Lakoffian terms, a metaphor is a piece of text that is seen to map between two or more domains. To clarify, the term metaphor is often defined by what it is not. A metaphor is not literally referring to something in the existing text, it is not pointing to a literal connection between two or more words nor is it intended to be literal (Lakoff

& Johnson, 1980). For example, when someone says that it is "raining cats and dogs," while it very well may be raining heavily, there is no implication from that message that there are animals falling from the sky. For the purpose of this study, metaphor is a word, phrase or concept that is not literally referring to the existing text but is intentionally mapping among domains (i.e. work and family).

Several researchers have elicited metaphors during their data collection, making it part of the qualitative process. Deacon (2000), in his market research, suggested that his participants describe either themselves or product- relevant happenings in terms of color, as a fairy tale, television show, object, piece of music, etc. By using this metaphoric transformation he was able to get valuable and surprising narratives. Christensen and Olson (2002), as well as Zaltman (2003), ask their research participants to provide several pictures showing their attitude and feeling towards the product at hand. They are then asked to explain each picture and what it means to them, thus treating the picture as a metaphor. In the current study, after I had my participants draw their pictures, I had them share their creations with me or the group. Most of the participants who took part in this research study drew much more than just a picture of a police officer or a fire fighter. For example, several firefighters that drew the iconic image of a Dalmatian dog to represent their job while police officers drew McGruff, the fictitious crime fighting dog. Spouses drew pictures of clocks which they explained stood for the large amount of overtime their wives or husbands were required to work while children drew pictures of their parents shooting at "bad guys" or pictures of tombstones. More detail regarding these findings will be provided in the next chapter.

I found that having participants both speak and draw in metaphors helped to frame how they view both the job the PSE does as well as how they make sense of the relationship between

work and home. In essence, these metaphors provided participants with a way to "express both

aspects of themselves and of situations about which they may not be consciously aware"

(Deacon, 2000, p. 156). To decipher how my participants used metaphors and what they meant,

I took a grounded approach to the analysis of the drawings and some of the textual data, similar

to that of Tracy et al. (2006). I first examined the spoken metaphors. Because I had prompted

the participants to finish the sentence: "The connection between work and family life is like

_____ for you" the metaphorical phrases and words were clear. To keep track of all

the metaphors I collected and to note any overlaps in metaphors (which there were many), I

again employed ATLAS qualitative analysis software to assist me in organizing this part of the

data. In this advanced stage of data analysis, ATLAS allowed me to help reduce and unitize the

metaphors and to help isolate metaphors that were separate from the rest of the transcript.

The next step involved creating a spread sheet which listed all of the metaphors. Using

open coding and the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), I

ultimately analyzed the data line by line with the guiding statement of "the relationship between

work and family is like…" During this process, an effort was made to merge similar

metaphorical intents to narrow the pool of data to a group of themes. After I organized the

metaphors I was left with 57 unique ways to describe the relationship between work and family.

After this, I began the process of isolating the two main parts of a metaphor—the tenor and the

vehicle as a way to decipher what was meant by each metaphor. Since its introduction in 1936,

I. A. Richards' tenor-vehicle model of metaphor has seen extended use in communication

scholarship (Foss, 1996; Osborn & Ehninger, 1962; Jordan & Adams, 1976; Frentz, 1974). The

idea of finding the tenor and vehicle of a metaphor is akin to Saussure's notion of the signifier

and the signified in that there is a very important relationship between the word or what is said

and its actual meaning. When trying to gain an understanding of metaphor, the separation of

tenor and vehicle is a basic first step (Foss, 1996). The *tenor* in a metaphor is the original

subject. For this study, work and family acted as the tenor of the metaphor in most cases. The

vehicle in a metaphor is both the words and concepts that are invoked by the words (Frentz,

1974). In this study, the way participants expressed the relationship between work and family

became the vehicle (Osborn & Ehninger, 1962). For instance, one participant described the

relationship between work and family as being like an island. In this case, "island" became the

vehicle for which the tenor (work and family) is expressed.

The next part of the analysis process was to dimensionalize the metaphors to extrapolate

meaning. The vehicle has a number of *dimensions, attributes* or *variables* which may be mapped

or transferred back onto the tenor and hence create new meaning and an explanation for the

metaphor (Foss, 1996). For the example given above (the relationship between work and family

is like an island), a grounded approach would dimensionalize this metaphor as representing a

separate or idyllic nature since to be on an island is to be separate from the mainland.

Furthermore, the experience of being on an island can be idyllic or just out of reach for some

people which suggests that work and family life, for this person, are two separate entities or

perhaps, this person is unable to have the relationship they really desire between the two

domains.

Once the metaphors were identified and the tenors and vehicles were isolated for both the

drawings and the prompts I gave them to finish the sentence describing the relationship between

work and family (see Appendix J for a full list of dimensions/categories), I began to categorize

and find themes among the existing metaphors and how they were embedded within their stories

and their drawings. After many readings of the metaphors, I constructed core metaphor

categories that best characterized the way participants felt about the relationship between work and family as well as what the PSE does for a living. The metaphors were grouped into the following core categories: competition, nature, change, protection/preservation, integration, opposition, ambiguity, and destruction. These categories/themes will be discussed in the next chapter.

When using the categorical content analysis, which was described in the section above, it was in an attempt to answer research questions 2, 3, and 4 to hone in on some of the key differences/similarities between family members and PSEs, male and female PSEs and police officers and fire fighters. Grounded metaphorical analysis was used to answer research question 1 which asks how public safety employees and their families articulate the relationship between work and home, in their own words and what metaphors they employ to describe that relationship.

<div align="center">Trustworthiness of Analysis and Findings</div>

To determine the trustworthiness of my findings, I employed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for evaluating qualitative research: credibility, transferability, and dependability. Credibility concerns whether the study's findings "ring true" for the study participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In order to ensure that my findings resonated with my participants, I contacted several of them to see if they would be willing to participate in one last focus group to discuss the initial results I had found. This process, also known as member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) allows the participants to decide if the preliminary findings are accurate and reasonable. I was able to conduct 4 additional focus groups consisting of 4 to 6 people. I had an even distribution of police officers (n=7) and fire fighters (n=7) and several family members as well

(n=8). In every focus group, it was determined by the participants that what I was finding resonated with them and "rang true," hence adding to the validity of the study.

Another criterion in establishing the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings is transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability refers to the idea that the researcher has supplied sufficient detail so that the reader can make the decision about whether to apply the findings elsewhere to a different group or context. I included numerous excerpts and examples of each of the categories from the interview transcripts to provide as "thick" a description (Geertz, 1973) as possible so that these findings could easily be transferred to another research study.

The last criterion used to establish the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings is dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Dependability concerns whether an external check can be conducted on the study's analysis process. More specifically, an outsider should be able to see how I went from subtext to actually creating a "content universe" described in the findings chapter. It follows that if an external check can be made on the analysis process then the study's findings should be seen as dependable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To demonstrate the dependability of the findings, I included several excerpts and quotations from the transcripts within this dissertation. The next chapter will detail the findings of this study.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The rich data provided by participants allowed for a deeper understanding of how PSEs and their family members make sense of the relationship between work and family. The purpose of this chapter is to review these findings. Research Question 1 asked how PSEs and their families articulate the relationship between work and family and what metaphors they employ to describe this relationship.

RQ1: Metaphors Regarding the Relationship Between Work and Family

Participants made sense out of the relationship between work and family in many ways. The drawings, coupled with comments made by each participant when asked to finish the statement, "the relationship between work and family is _____", revealed complex and rich results. Contrary to previous research that has focused on the relationship between work and family in white-collar professions (see Kirby et al., 2003), terms like balance and segmentation did not appear with great frequency among PSEs and their families. In fact, the word "balance" was only used 5 times out of the 95 people that participated in this study. Instead, participants likened the relationship between work and family to competition, nature, organism, change, integration, opposition, ambiguity, and destruction. In this analysis, these categories are not meant to be mutually exclusive; rather, several of the metaphors revealed by this study fit into more than one category, illustrating the complex nature of metaphors and their multiple interpretations.

Competition

More than any other metaphor, participants compared their experience in dealing with work and home as being some sort of a war or challenge. In fact, 20 of the 52 total metaphors were from the competition category. This metaphor was contained on a continuum ranging from more benign activities like being engaged in a "tennis match" or a "game of tug of war" to more serious events like "war" and "battle," resulting in death. On the more innocuous part of the spectrum, participants indicated that their experience in managing the relationship between work and family was less an outright war and more a battle of wits as participants "play a game" to outmatch opponents. In this "game," there are winners, losers, strategies, rules and consequences for rule-breakers. For example, Margaret, a fire fighter who happens to be married to a police officer, likened the relationship between work and family to the "Cubs vs. the Yankees." She used this metaphor to explain the love/hate relationship she feels between her work and home life. She loves baseball and the Cubs, but hates the Yankees. She elaborates regarding her baseball metaphor:

> In the game of baseball, there are rules that have to be followed, same when you   try to manage your work and home life. They don't always work out and they sometimes get violated which may cause stress either at home or at work, but nonetheless we follow them as best we can to create harmony in both worlds. In baseball, it's a tacit rule that you never steal third base when there are two outs. It's just not done, right. Well, at home, for instance, we also have rules. No talking about work on our days off and we never, ever take an overtime shift if it falls on a Sunday. Sundays are reserved for our date nights, no matter what. If one of us violates this rule, there are consequences.

Margaret's example, and others like it, suggest a relatively benign approach to the relationship between work and home by comparing it to a game or contest with a set of established rules. Similarly, most competitions or games involve strategy and shrewdness, with moves that are carefully thought out before acting. Edward, who describes the relationship between work and home as "escaping Alcatraz Island," explains that it takes a lot of planning and savvy to "get what you want." He reveals his strategies for dealing with potential conflict:

> At my job, we get to pick our days off each month. We get a total of 9 and we can take them however we want. When I know that I might want to take an additional day off of work ahead of time, like a sick day, I strategically schedule two days off just before that third day I want to take off and I plan ahead of time based on when the Commander is off. If I know he will be off on the 14th, I will take the 12th and 13th off just in case I decide to take the 14th as a sick day and that way, I won't have to answer to the Commander, just a sergeant who won't give me crap about taking a day.

Although strategy and wit are crucial to the public safety life, sometimes the game becomes unfair when one player continually violates the rules. Steve, a fire fighter, described the relationship as being something of a "tug of war" between him and his wife, especially when he has to work late or is forced to take overtime. He explains: "she has a real problem when the boss asks me to work an extra shift especially if she already has plans for us. On the one hand, I understand why she thinks it's unfair and I do want to spend more time with her but on the other hand, I have a responsibility. It's a struggle. I swear she has threatened to divorce me 100 times in 5 years of marriage!" Thus, Steve often feels conflicted when he has to work over-time. When he favors the job side of the equation, his wife perceives this as unfair and threatens him with divorce as a consequence to violating their established rules.

Just as perceptions of fairness and "game-playing" rules enter into the picture for PSEs and their families, there are times when the "competition" between work and home becomes dangerous, even life-threatening. Carl, a police officer, and Rachel, a fire fighter, describe the relationship between work and family as being the "survival of the fittest," in that being able to turn off one sphere or the other at various times requires skill and practice. Carl elaborates: "My wife would become very angry with me if I got caught up at work and in the beginning I would be so stressed about what's going on at home that I sacrificed my safety while on the job." Similarly, Rachel, who has three children in their twenties, remembered how hard it was to not think about home while at work, especially when her children were young. She talks about this ability to maintain separation in terms of athletic preparation: "I may not be Michael Phelps, training for the Olympics everyday, but it takes skill and a certain level of fitness to ensure you can do your job without interruption from your family and be able to be with your family without any interruption from work." She went on to explain how hard it was for her to get to that mindset, especially after she had her first child. Her husband decided to be a stay-at-home dad, but Rachel still felt the need to check in on her husband several times throughout the day. However, one of these times, this need almost cost her someone's life:

> It's not that I didn't trust my husband with the baby but I just had this bad feeling that he forgot to feed the baby this one night after we had responded to a house fire. All was well with the people we rescued and we were just waiting for another ambulance to arrive, so I figured I could make a quick phone call home. I went behind a building to make a phone call, and apparently one of the guys we rescued went into cardiac arrest. Back then, we were not all required to be EMTs and as it turned out, I was the only one on scene who could perform CPR. They looked all over for me, finally finding me after

the man had passed out. I rushed over and thankfully, I was able to save his life, but just

barely. This man almost lost his life just so I could call home when I knew my husband

was more than capable.

She goes on to mention that since then, she has never made another phone call home while on a

scene, though avoiding such calls has not always been easy. Both Rachel and Carl, as well as

other PSEs, echo the notion that a certain level of fitness, both physical and mental, is required

when one works in public safety. As Tony, a fire fighter says: "training your brain to separate

work and home ultimately determines your survival on the job and is just as important as lifting

weights and staying in shape."

As evidenced from the examples above, this idea of "competition" permeates discussions

surrounding work and family, especially in terms of being a game comprised of players,

opponents, strategy, and rules. On the more aggressive end of the competition continuum,

several participants likened the relationship between work and family as being much more than

just a game, instead describing it as a "war," and "a battleground," often resulting in severe

injury or death. In most cases, those that described the relationship between work and family in

these violent ways were spouses and children of PSEs. Many of these participants felt as though

they were on the losing end of the battle, while the PSE was victorious. Matthew, the 13-year

old son of a police officer describes his relationship with his father: "He has missed almost every

single one of my soccer games because he has to work. I constantly feel like I am losing a war

since he always picks work over me." Similarly, Lilly, the 10-year old daughter of a fire fighter

and Claudia, the 15-year old daughter of a police officer, both describe the relationship between

work and family for their parent as being "a battleground" yet articulate this metaphor in very

different ways. Ten-year old Lilly explains that when she thinks about her father at work, she

envisions "gunfights" and "bad guys" trying to hurt her father. In fact, the picture she drew
(Figure 1) illustrates a "war-like" scene with bodies strewn about and men shooting at each
other.
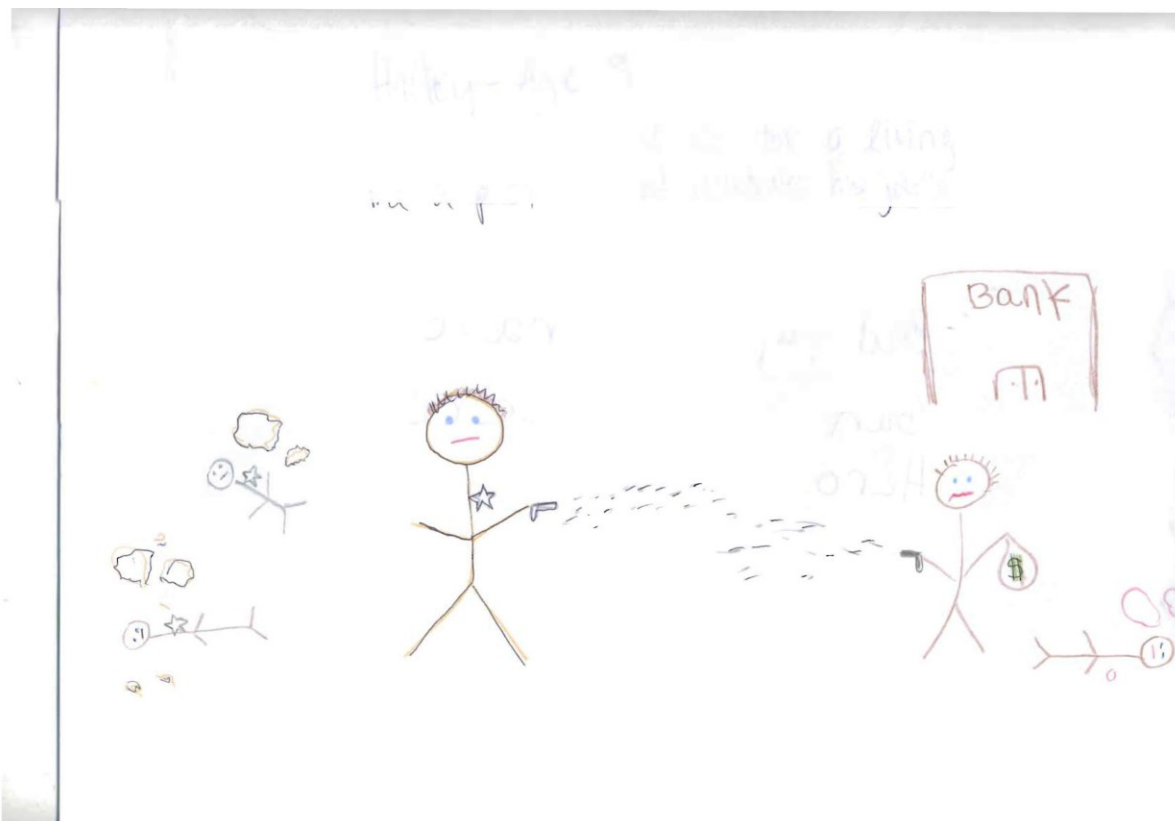
Figure 1. Lilly

She goes on to say: "I always think that my dad is going to die when he goes to work. I
see his job like a battleground with lots of death and guns." Fifteen-year old Claudia, however,
sees her mother's job and its relationship to home in very different terms: "I hate that my mom is
a police officer because I can't do anything. It's like a battleground in my house when all I want
to do is go to the mall with friends. She has to tell me stories about kidnapping and child
abductions that happen at the mall and then only lets me go if she can escort me. It's

embarrassing!" These contrasting statements reveal two very different impressions of work and family using the same metaphor.

Some participants that I spoke to were so frustrated with the competition between the two domains and some so overwhelmed with the possibility of danger (experienced by both family members and PSEs) that they began to speak about "forces of nature" to better articulate how they make sense out of their work and family lives.

Nature

When describing the relationship between work and family, many participants used nature metaphors, in both their drawings and their spoken words, to help portray their feelings. There were a total of 11 different nature metaphors that participants made reference to in order to describe the relationship between work and family, including, "a blizzard", "an island", "a tree", and "a spider web." Nature metaphors are often used to describe change, growth, and the passage of time (Kingsland, 1985). This is not surprising, as nature is full of examples of successful and unsuccessful growth, as well as examples of disaster, overwhelming force, uncaring elements, beauty, and peacefulness. Carla, a fire fighter, describes the relationship between work and family as being like a cluster of islands: pieces of land in a large body of water that are completely separate from one another. Furthermore, she goes on to explain how difficult in can be to actually maintain separation between the two spheres but that, ultimately, she sees this separation as the optimal solution. This relates directly back to "island" as a metaphor because an island is often seen as an idyllic place, a destination that we desire because of its separation and escape from our everyday existence.

Like Carla, there were several other participants that saw work and family as clearly separate entities. For example, two police officer participants (who were married to one another)

expressed that although work and home are separate entities, one sphere is usually responsible for destructive forces in the other. Janice, a police officer and mother of two children, likened the relationship between work and family to "fire and ice." She explains: "just when I think I am content and happy, something enters in and ruins my joy again. Usually it's something at work that pisses me off and affects me at home. No matter how hard I try, one negates the other. Fire and ice. Fire and ice." Janice mentioned during her interview that she only works as a police officer for the benefits and the money; a means to an end. She has suffered discrimination, demotions and sexual harassment at her job. As a result, her primary focus is on her children at home, rather than her job. Thus, in using this metaphor, she equates work with ice and home with fire. Home is her passion, her fire, while work is representative of a cold, icy landscape for which she feels hatred and anguish. Anger and hatred, like ice, have the ability to smother all that is around them, leaving behind what Janice called, "an emotionally barren world" both at home and at work.

Similar to the "landscape" of work and family as being desolate and cold, one participant described the relationship as a "storm." Sophie, an undercover narcotics police detective, explains that much like a thunderstorm, maintaining the relationship between work and home requires energy and runs the risk of ending in disaster:

> I never know how much to disclose to my husband about my day-to-day. I really can't tell him certain things, like the time when I was on a drug bust and I had a pretend make-out session with my partner, who was my supposed dealer boyfriend. Yeah, not going to tell him that one but I feel like he should understand because what was I supposed to do on the scene, 'um I can't kiss him right now because he's not my boyfriend but really my undercover partner and we are trying to bust your ass at this moment!' The job is a storm

waiting to happen. There are certain precautions I have to take, including not telling my husband everything in order to ensure he's not a casualty of the storm.

In a similar fashion, Christopher, a police officer, and Irene, the wife of a police officer, used the word "tornado" several times to describe the often tense and unstable nature of the relationship between work and family. Irene elaborates: "It's like a tornado runs right through our marriage when he goes out drinking with the guys after work and honestly, I really cannot stand it anymore. Before I know it, one of those 'copper hopper'[1] tramps at the cop bars is flirting with him and giving him their phone number. When I do his laundry and find these phone numbers, it's always a fight." This idea of the possibility of disaster or unintended consequences resonated with a few other participants, including Olivia, the 10-year old daughter of a fire fighter describing the relationship as being like a spider:

> For me, the relationship is a spider, weaving the web of life around all of us. The web can help you attract what you want, but sometimes it gets tangled. My dad works because he has to put food on the table but he also loves what he does. But our lives do get messed up and tangled as a direct result of his job. Having to celebrate Christmas, two days later, or bringing Thanksgiving dinner to the firehouse can get pretty complicated, especially as my sisters and I get older. What about when we have families of our own and can't continue to discount holidays?

For the most part, Olivia seems understanding toward her father's job but worries deeply about how his job will affect the family in the future.

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[1] This term, "copper hopper" was used several times by participants. From what I gathered by talking to police officers and asking them to define this term, copper hopper refers to single women who frequent local "cop" hangouts and bars in hopes of landing a police officer, either because they have some fascination with police officers or because they want to try and blackmail a married cop by threatening to tell their wives they are cheating if they don't pay them money. One of my participants likened "copper hoppers" to "police groupies."

Several of the nature metaphors that participants referenced were in relation to actual living beings. Metaphors such as "trees" and "spiders" are organisms that have strong survival skills and are in need of protection and preservation, which was another core metaphor category for this study.

Preservation

In this study, participants, both PSEs and family members, had a strong urge to protect and preserve both their home and work spheres and employed metaphors relating to survival and protection. Examples include "food for the human body," "a shadow," a "tree," and a "lion and his pride." It was clear through my analysis that protection and preservation of each sphere was key. Janice, a police officer, expressed the relationship between work and family as being that of "food for the human body." As she explains: "You need it to stay alive, but that's it. I need work for money so that I can enjoy my family life since I really don't enjoy my job." Here, Janice describes the necessity of work as being a means to an end; something she does because she has to, not because she enjoys it.

Participants such as Janice, Marlin, Tony, Kelly, Sonny, Jason, and Joshua believe work and family are "separate worlds" and that distance between them is required for preservation. However, others used their explanations and their drawings to illustrate, instead, the preservation of tradition and pride that they feel for the job. Both Steve, a fire fighter, and Sammy, the 10-year old son of a fire fighter, drew pictures that included the quintessential Dalmatian dog perched atop the bright red fire truck (Figures 2 and 3):
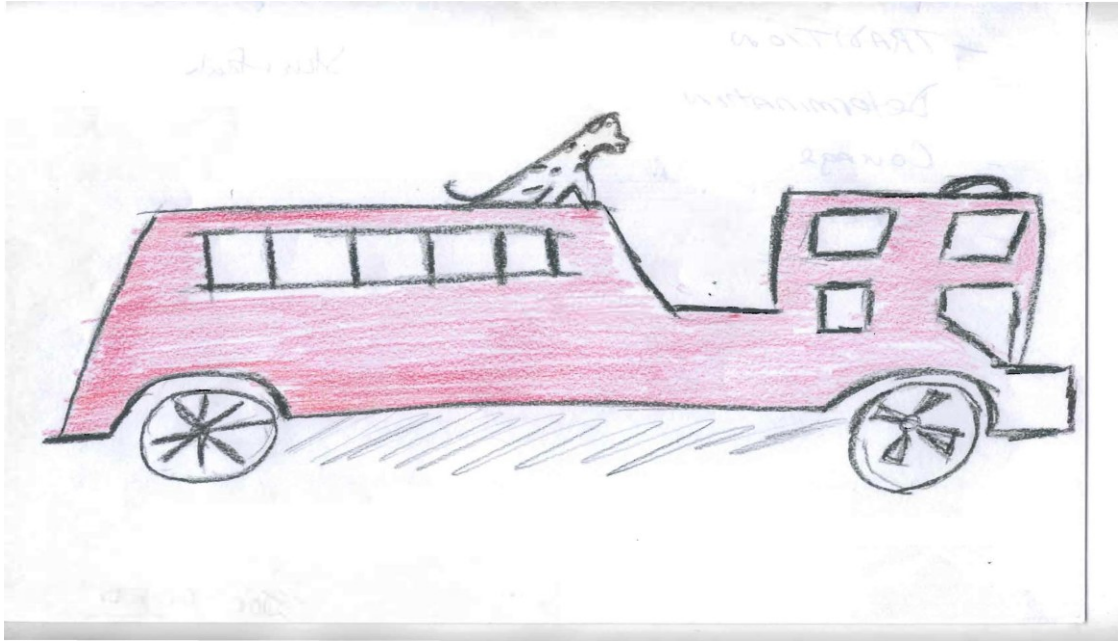
Figure 2. Steve

Figure 3. Sammy

When asked about their drawings, they explained that the Dalmatian represents tradition and pride that fire fighters feel toward their job. The firehouses with which Steve and Sammy are affiliated do not actually house Dalmatians, but this metaphor expresses the importance of preserving the long-standing tradition linking Dalmatians and the firehouse.[2] The words "pride" and "tradition" were used frequently by fire fighters and their family members. As mentioned earlier, after participants completed their drawings, I had them write down 5-10 words on the back that described how they felt when they looked at their drawing and about the public safety job. Ten of the fire fighters wrote down "pride" while 8 fire fighters wrote down "tradition" as one of their words. Similarly, a total of 6 children of fire fighters wrote down both "pride" and "tradition" to express one way they felt about their parent's job. Interestingly, there was not one reference to pride or tradition among police officers or their families.

Similar to preserving or protecting tradition, as described above or of the activities in each sphere, two participants likened the relationship between work and home to being that of a shadow. Walter, a fire fighter, explains:

> For me it's similar to a shadow because shadows are protected by the figure that stands in front of it. You can't always see what's in the shadow. My way of protecting my home life is by doing the best I can at work. I don't think about my family at work as not to distract me from the job. It only takes a second of distraction on the job for there to be devastating consequences.

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[2] My participants explained what the significance of the Dalmatian was to firehouses. Back in the 19th century, before fire engines had loud bells, whistles and sirens, the only way they had to warn people to move out of the way to get to a fire was to have a Dalmatian dog run in front of the engine, down the street, to clear people out of the way. Seeing the Dalmatian leading the way to a fire became an indication of a fire nearby to people on the streets. As a result, Dalmatians became part of the fire "family" and also part of a long-standing history.

Similarly, Anthony, also a fire fighter not only used "shadow" as his metaphor but also drew a picture of himself and his shadow to represent how he feels about his job (Figure 4):
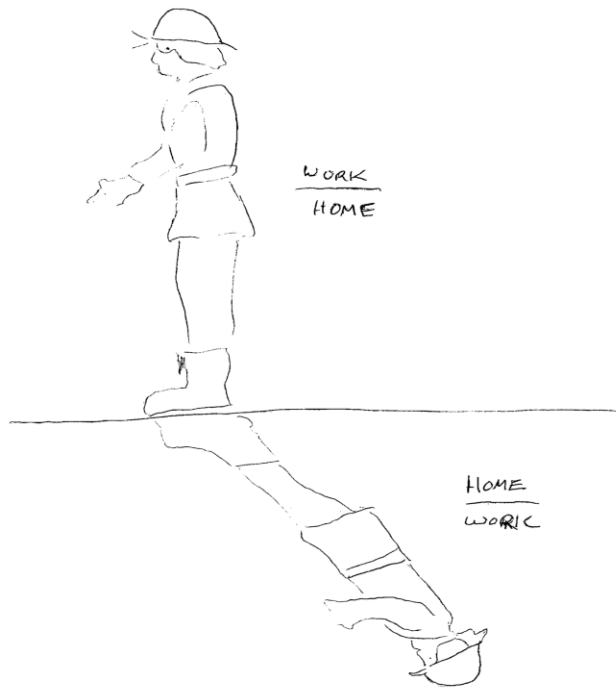
Figure 4. Anthony

He explains that both his home life and work life are integrated and connected:

I am what I do, and I do what I am. When I'm driving home, the fire department is in the shadow and vice versa. I talk about work with my family and I talk about my family with the guys at work. My family reminds me why I do what I do—to protect and serve the community and my work helps me provide for my family. They are always in each other's shadows, alive and well.

Walter and Anthony illustrated protection and integration through the shadow metaphor. Stacey, the daughter of a fire fighter furthered this idea of protection by describing the relationship between work and home as being that of a "lion and his pride." She goes on to explain that her father represents the "lion" while members of the "pride" are both his family at home and the fire family, consisting of his colleagues and good friends. Similar to a lion, her father is a provider, monetarily, to his family at home and also a protector to his second family— his work family. A thirty year veteran, he is a Battalion Chief, the second highest-ranking position you can have within the fire department. According to his daughter, he has an exceptional amount of experience and his colleagues "feel safe when he's on duty. Metaphors involving pride and protection were pervasive among PSEs and their family members. Participants in this study had a strong urge to protect and preserve both their home and work spheres employing metaphors relating to survival and protection. The next section considers a metaphor that could be seen as antithetical to the concept of preservation – change.

Change

Several participants incorporated metaphors pertaining to change to express the relationship between work and family. My analysis revealed 12 different metaphors representative of change. These metaphors reflected obvious types of change such as "a chameleon" or "from night to day." Other metaphors within this category referred to change in the sense of movement and going from one place to another such as "a roller coaster," while others were more about changing the shape of something. Examples of these include "a rubber band," and "a flexible straw."

To begin, many participants expressed a general sense of change in their metaphors. Glen, a police officer, used the metaphor of a "chameleon" to describe the relationship between

work and family. Chameleons change the color of their skin in order to blend in with their surroundings so that they are not easily visible. Like chameleons, Glen likened the relationship between work and home to being one that requires periodic adjustment and a camouflage. He explains:

> It's like a chameleon. You have to be able to turn it off easily, either your work or your home stuff. You know, I see horrific things all the time. I may have just come from a messy teenage suicide or was a first responder to a fatal car crash and I have blood all over me. I have to go home after going through all of that. My family expects me to be the happy father/husband. They don't want to see me sad and depressed because of when I just saw at work. It's a process of adjustment from one place to the next.

Feeling the need to "turn off" work while at home is not unique to Glen. Both Angela and Irene, the wives of fire fighters, have to constantly remind their spouses that they are not still at work. Irene, the wife of the Chief-of-Fire, explains: "the whole family hates when he tries to micro-manage us at home. Come on, we're not your guys at work that you need to delegate chores out to, we're your family." For some, it is difficult to adjust behavior, especially when moving from work to home. As Tom, a fire fighter explains: "how can I possibly 'forget' about my day at work when I wear home the soot and ashes of the little boy who died in the fire I responded to? It's in my hair, on my hands, in my lungs. I'm not okay when I go home after my shift under those circumstances."

A few PSEs used the metaphor of "night and day" to further illustrate this notion of contrast and change. When daytime ends, nighttime begins. Simon, a police officer and single parent of two, used this metaphor to explain how he feels about his job and home life: "I see a lot of stuff go down at work. I am just glad that none of those 'problems' I deal with at work, have

my last name attached to it." He went on to say that many fellow police officers' kids get into trouble constantly because they rebel against their police officer parents. He chalked it up to "teenage angst." He feels fortunate to have kids who respect the law. Steven, Chief-of-Police, also used this metaphor when asked to describe the relationship between work and family. However, he used it to express the extreme difference between his family at home and his family at work:

> It's night and day for me because while at home, I do all the husbandly things you do like take the wife to the movies, the ballet, go to my daughters' recitals and softball games, etc. Unfortunately, I never had a son but I feel like I get to experience that with my boys at work. We take fishing trips, we have a flag football team, we act like boys! I'm living in two totally different worlds. Not opposite worlds, just different. One starts the minute I leave the other behind.

While there were several overt examples utilizing change metaphors, other metaphors pertained more to change in terms of movement; going from point A to point B. For example, Douglas employed a "roller coaster" metaphor when asked to describe the relationship between work and family. He explains the shifts he has experienced with regard to his relationship with his children and how they feel about his job. At various points in their life, their feelings toward him as a police officer have waxed and waned:

> When they were young, they thought that what I did was admirable and used to brag to all their friends. Then, they got a bit older and suddenly, they were embarrassed when I'd pick them up from school in uniform. What their friends thought was more important. Then, when they got old enough to drive they loved me again when they needed me to get them out of a ticket. It's been a roller coaster!

Finally, several change metaphors considered issues of flux and stability. One example was when Julie, the wife of a fire fighter described the relationship between work and family as a "tree" which is constantly growing, yet remains in the same place. She explains: "my husband is not getting any younger. He has been on the job for 20 years and has been passed over for promotion time after time after time in favor of someone younger. He does not get the respect he deserves and lately he's been so cranky toward the family." In this situation, Julie's husband's "growth" is stagnant in that he keeps doing the same job, day in and day out.

Similar to a tree which grows constantly but remains planted in the same place, Ted, a police officer, used the metaphor of a "rubber band" to describe the relationship between work and home. Ted says his job is like that of a rubber band in that it is responsible for him being able to afford all of the luxuries in his home, a common theme that runs throughout this study. He claims that he does not necessarily "love" his job but feels fortunate to have one. According to Ted, like one function of a rubber band, the job has helped hold various aspects of his life together. Because he makes a decent living he is able to provide for his family and indulge in the finer things in life. This is something he would not otherwise be able to do if not for the job. In a similar fashion, Selma, the wife of a fire fighter, compared the relationship between work and family to "glue." As she says: "I think my husband likes his job just fine but ultimately, it's a means to an end. It's the glue that supports the family at home. His paychecks pay the mortgage and the bills and sends his kids to college." Similar to these notions of rubber bands and glue, participants also used metaphors related to integration in describing the relationship between work and home.

Integration

Another core metaphor revealed were phrases pertaining to integration. Kanter (1977) originally identified two opposing types of responses individuals have to work and non-work spheres: 'separated' and 'integrated.' Separation implies that there is no interaction between the two domains, whereas integration acknowledges that interaction does take place. Recent research has found that contemporary employees tend to favor integration, or a flexible border between work and the rest of life (Clark, 2000; Cowan & Hoffman, 2007). This analysis revealed integration to be a common theme in the metaphors of PSEs and their family members. It should be noted, however, that aside from one spouse of a police officer, the majority of integration metaphors were employed by PSEs rather than family members.

One common way that participants used metaphors of integration involved food and drink that illustrate the composition of many ingredients. Metaphors such as "cake," "a tossed salad," "a recipe for disaster," and a "cocktail on ice" were employed. For instance, Edward, a police officer, used the metaphor "cake" to describe the relationship between work and family. A successful cake is dependent upon ingredients working well together in terms of chemistry and flavor. Edward explains that work and home are "ingredients" always connected and informing one another: "My kids and wife are just one ingredient in the recipe. Work and all the stuff that goes with it are more ingredients. They all come together to make a finished product, good or bad." In another example of integration, Janice used the metaphor, "recipe for disaster" to explain her work and home. She feels frustrated working in a job that is so life-threatening, especially because she has small children at home. For Janice, home is always on her mind when she is working, making the relationship closely integrated:

I don't do more than I have to. I don't do a lot of traffic stops because I am afraid I will be injured. People might have a gun or knife in their car so I choose not to put myself in harm's way. There is no such thing as a "typical" traffic stop and the situation can go from calm to crazy in two seconds. You just never know so I do as little as possible while at work to lessen the chances of my children being motherless.

In a similar fashion, Ted, a police officer, used the integration metaphor of "a cocktail on ice" to describe the relationship between work and family. He elaborates about how this metaphor relates specifically to his life by sharing a story of how he chased down a bank robber, which ultimately led to a five-minute long gun fight. In the end, Ted shot the bank robber five times before killing him. Standard protocol in police departments requires psychological counseling and screening for anyone who discharges their weapon. One standard question that gets asked to police officers during the debriefing period is what was going through their mind when they fired the shots. Ted said that when asked that question his response was "his family," which is how his metaphor of a "cocktail on ice" becomes relevant. As he explained: "if I didn't shoot at him, he would have shot at me and then where would that have left my family? Husbandless, fatherless and without income. I generally don't think about my family at work but when faced with a life or death situation, you're forced to…they melt into one another like a cocktail on ice. That's why I fired." Finally, one last culinary example of an integration metaphor was "a tossed salad." This metaphor was used by Ryan, a tactical gangs undercover detective. Because Ryan's job requires him to look and act like a drug dealer, a physical transformation is necessary. He describes changes, which include not bathing, brushing his teeth, shaving, or cleaning his fingernails, as a "piss bum case" which involve dirtying oneself to blend in with the people he

deals with. However, his wife and family are often quite bothered by these physical changes.
Ryan explains:

> That's why it's a tossed salad. Elements of my job require certain things from me while
> at home. It's all blended into one salad, if you will. The dirty fingernails really bothers
> my wife so lately I have not been trying to make them dirty naturally but instead, I rub
> them on the wheel well of my car while on duty to get them dirty. Then I can wash up
> before I come home. She prefers that.

Although Ryan was able to make some accommodations for his wife, his home and work are
constantly integrated, especially when his work must be brought home as a matter of life or
death. He continues: "keeping myself unclean is something I have to do if I don't want to blow
my cover and unfortunately it requires me to start making myself unclean while on my days
off…how else are you supposed to get your hair dirty and greasy? It may seem silly but I would
lose my life in a second if found out by these guys." For Ryan, his job forces the integration of
work and family life.

Based on all of the examples above, integration metaphors illustrated ways in which
work and home are sometimes inseparable for PSEs and their families. However, other
participants talked about how different their work lives are from their home lives. This will be
discussed with the next metaphor category of opposites.

Opposites

While participants such as Edward, Ted, Janice, and Ryan expressed that their work and
family lives often inform one another, several other participants said that their two worlds of
work and home are so completely opposite one another that they cannot possibly ever relate one
sphere to the other. Here, metaphors such as "black and white," "two sides of a coin," and "fire

and ice" express the opposition between the two spheres. Metaphors within this category were employed for one of two reasons. First, participants used them to express how fortunate they feel to have a home life that is the complete opposite of the negative events they often see while working. Second, participants used opposition metaphors to illustrate two completely different personalities required by both work and family spheres.

Amanda, a patrol officer and single mother of two teenaged daughters, used the metaphor "black and white" to describe the relationship between work and family. She elaborates on this metaphor by describing how fortunate she feels that her work and home life are so different from one another:

> The kind of work I do, police work where you're dealing with people with problems, I've always been glad that I have good kids at home. So, not to say that I haven't had issues and problems in my family life, but um, we've never had to call the police. My kids are not even at all like the people I deal with while on the job. I feel lucky about that.

Lois, a fire fighter, also used the metaphor "black and white" to talk about her work and family life and how the terrible events she sees at work makes her feel grateful for what she has at home. Lois is an EMT as well as a fire fighter, so she responds to both medical calls and fires. One night she responded to a call involving a small child in a notoriously "bad part of town." When she arrived, she found an infant lying on the bed naked and crying. The father was yelling at the EMTs for some cream for a rash the baby had acquired in her private area. She elaborates:

> I take a look and it was just a regular rash, a diaper rash. I know that because I am a mother. I tell him that we don't have cream and he yells at me: 'what do you mean you got no cream?' I say: 'we're not a hospital, sir.' He then swears and storms off, leaving

the baby on the bed. It's crap like that which reminds how lucky I am that my home life is so opposite from what I deal with on a regular basis. I have a young baby at home and I can't imagine him in such conditions. The place was filthy and she probably hadn't been changed in days, hence the rash. Disgusting parenting-- I see it every day.

Both Amanda and Lois expressed the relationship between work and family in terms of "black and white" opposites. In contrast, Carol and Charlie, both police officers, used the metaphor "two sides of a coin" to talk about the relationship between the two spheres. Charlie and Carol believe work and home are closely related to one another yet still clearly distinct, suggesting a paradox where one sphere negates the other. For example, Charlie tells a story about a ride-along his neighbor did with him a few years back. Apparently, his friend always had interest in becoming a police officer and wanted to see what the day-to-day events were in the life of a cop. Charlie said that after the ride-along, his friend completely changed his desire to become a cop—not because of what he saw while out on the job but because Charlie's behavior totally changed while on the job. His friend told Charlie that he did not appreciate the way he spoke to and interacted with the public, always assuming they were up to no good or doing something wrong. Charlie's friend could not understand the contrast between home and work behavior required for a PSE.

It is not uncommon, especially for police officers, to act one way while at work and a completely different way when they are off work. Sean, the 18-year old son of a police officer, also went on a ride-along with his father and could not believe the difference in his father's personality and behavior. He used the word "bittersweet" to express the opposition between his father's work and home spheres. He went on to explain that "bitter" pertains to how his father acts while at work and "sweet" represents how his father acts at home. As he describes: "I could

not believe how different my father was at work. He yelled at a little old lady for jaywalking, swore and roughed up a man he was arresting, and he and his buddies made fun of a homeless man. He is not at all like that at home. He's nice, nurturing, and caring while with his family." For many PSEs, then, the job requires one to act in a completely different ways at work and at home.

Ambiguity

While many participants used metaphors of opposition to describe the relationship between work and family, several others used metaphors that reflected ambiguity with regard to how they feel about and make sense of the relationship between work and home. Seven participants employed a metaphor that suggested an uncertainty about work and family including "wild card," "mirage," "darker side of the color wheel," and "morning fog."   For instance, Renee, the wife of a police officer, used the metaphor "darker side of the color wheel" to express how she makes sense out of how her husband handles the relationship between work and family. She talked at great length about scheduling and how it could either be good or bad for family/work life. Her husband works for a department where the schedule changes every month and no one can pick their days off. The sergeant in charge of scheduling decides how days off are distributed. Renee explains that because the schedule varies, so do her feelings regarding how her husband manages work and family:

> The relationship is basically the darker side of the color wheel. Sometimes it's good but most times it bad. Some months are horrendous for scheduling while others are great. It's just really uncertain. Last month, his schedule did not allow him to see his daughter graduate high school. She was devastated and of course I had to be the one to smooth it all over. It seems like I am always the one having to deal with the negative repercussions

his schedule sometimes causes the family. But just two months ago, he happened to have these three days off in a row so when my mother died, we were able to fly to New York for the funeral, no problem. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't.

Renee employed the metaphor of the "darker side of the color wheel" to express her frustration with her husband's uncertain and erratic schedule. Like a color wheel, which gradually changes shades as you move through it, there is variation regarding how Renee feels about her husband's job, particularly when it comes to scheduling. More often than not, though, she feels negativity toward the schedule, hence the comparison to the dark side of the color wheel.

A common theme that cut across this study was the importance of scheduling, especially for the spouses and children of PSEs. Collete, also the wife of a police officer, used the metaphor "morning fog" to talk about how she makes sense out of her husband's management of work and family. Morning fog by nature is something that lacks clarity; it is ambiguous. In addition, oftentimes we are unable to see through the fog until it passes. For Collete, this metaphor was the best example for how she feels about how her husband manages his work and family life. Like Renee, she touched on scheduling while elaborating on her metaphor. At her husband's police department, officers do not find out about their monthly schedule until the week before that month begins. She cited examples of not being able to plan vacations or special outings because her husband is given such short notice regarding his days off. In a similar fashion, Jackson, the ex-husband of a police officer, drew a picture of a mirage when participating in the drawing exercise at the beginning of the interview (Figure 5):

Figure 5. Jackson

He also used "mirage" as he finished the statement I gave him about what the relationship between work and family was like for him. He elaborates: "Because my wife was a homicide detective, she would be called out at all hours of the night. I barely ever saw her because of her crazy schedule. I often even referred to her as 'the mirage' since one moment I saw her and the next I didn't. That's what led to the divorce. I couldn't take the schedule."

While several participants expressed ambiguity about the PSE's job through discussions regarding scheduling, Vicki, a police officer used the term "confusing" to finish the statement about the relationship between work and family. As a female police officer and mother, Vicki described the incredible amount of guilt that she feels for doing what she does for a living. This

feeling of guilt is common among police officers who are also mothers (Bochantin & Cowan, in press), and this emotion is even more common among single mothers like Vicki. She described a situation where she wants to be both the best mother and the best police officer she can be but realizes that the two roles often negate one another:

> My work and family life are both so confusing. On the one hand I absolutely love my job, being a bad ass, carrying a gun. Makes me feel powerful in an otherwise man's world. But, what kind of mother goes around *carrying* a gun, putting her life on the line daily? Obviously that doesn't make me a very good parent. So which do I choose? A career I love or the kids I love because you can't have both in this profession.

This idea of questioning one's parenting skills because of the profession she chose was relatively common among the female police officers that participated in this study. Of the ten female police officers I spoke to, six echoed this notion of feeling guilty and confused when thinking about the relationship between their work and family, finding themselves faced with the tension of choosing between being an ideal mother or an ideal employee. This tension is described in more detail later in this chapter.

Destruction

The final core metaphor category revealed by this study was that of destruction. Metaphors such as "a sinking ship," "torture," "tornado," and "hurricane" were employed to describe the relationship between work and family. Several of these metaphors relate closely to the metaphor category of nature described earlier. Here, in this section, the nature metaphors used were ones that pertained to natural forces, which cause total destruction and devastation. All of the metaphors used here referred to the relationship between work and family in very

negative ways, completely lacking balance or any kind of management. Interestingly, all five

participants that employed metaphors of destruction were either spouses or children of PSEs.

Sergio, the ex-husband of a police officer, used the metaphor "hurricane" to describe how

the police job ultimately "destroyed" his relationship with his wife. He elaborates: "For police

officers, the relationship between work and family is a hurricane. The job destroys everything in

its path. The family. The marriage. It crushes souls and wreaks havoc on all who intervenes.

There's a saying in the police biz: 'Join the force, get a divorce' and boy is that true!"

Similar to Sergio, Fred, the 13-year old son of a male police officer, used the term

"tornado" to describe how he perceives the relationship between work and family when it comes

to his father. He went on to say that his father, in his opinion, does not appropriately handle the

relationship between work and family, also saying that his father has "destroyed" their

relationship with his lack of regard for Fred's feelings. Fred explained that he does not like to

hear "scary" stories about his dad's job and especially hates when his father wears his work

shoes home: "I do not like the thought of the dirt and scum from the street that my dad deals with

on a daily basis to walk through my house. I hate when he wears his work stuff home, especially

his gun, and I have told him to stop but he doesn't."

Finally, Jackson, the ex-husband of a police officer, used two metaphors when talking

about how his ex-wife handled work and family. One of his metaphors, a "mirage," was

described above and the second one was "a sinking ship." Like Sergio and Fred, Jackson

believes his ex-wife's job in law enforcement "destroyed" their marriage. As he explains:

> It was like a sinking ship. I couldn't handle the thought of her out there putting her life
>
> on the line while we had a baby at home. Call me old-fashioned, but I didn't like the fact
>
> that my wife had a gun! I mean, she could kick my ass in a heart-beat! It's embarrassing

for your wife to be more of a bad ass than you. It seemed like role reversal. She was the

guy and I was the stay-at-home wife. That, and the fact that I never saw her really took a

toll on me and ultimately the marriage. Her job killed the marriage.

Jackson's example reveals tenuous feelings of destruction and despair that he felt while married

to his police officer wife. For his own reasons, he took issue with what she did for a living and

could not seem to get past it. Thus, the marriage ultimately ended in a devastating divorce. The

imagery described by all of the participants pertaining to destruction illustrates just how

damaging a PSE's career can be on the family.

Based on the results revealed above regarding Research Question One, participants

expressed many metaphors articulating how they make sense out of the relationship between

work and family.   The eight categories revealed were competition, nature, preservation, change,

integration, opposition, ambiguity, and destruction. This analysis revealed several ways of

talking about the relationship between work and family for PSEs and their spouses/children, and

the metaphors reflected emotions that ranged from benign to serious, from humorous to

heartbreaking, from hopeful to terrifying. The next section will answer the second research

question posed by this study, by considering the similarities and differences between PSEs and

their families with regard to making sense out of the relationship between work and family.

RQ2: Similarities and Differences Between PSEs and Family Members

Research Question Two asks if PSEs, spouses and children make sense of the relationship

between work and family in similar or different ways. This analysis revealed a variety of

similarities and differences between PSEs and their family members. In terms of similarities,

both PSEs and their family members use humor as a way to make sense of their situation both at

home and at work and do so in productive as well as unproductive ways. In addition, PSEs and

their family members both engage in various forms of emotion management and emotional labor on and off the job. With regard to differences, PSEs and their families seem to experience fear in different ways. In addition, there is a huge disconnect in terms of how risk is assessed by both PSEs and family members. The following discussion will first outline the many similarities between PSEs and family members and then turn to an examination of the differences regarding how they both manage the relationship between work and family.

Humor

In line with suggestions that humor research should move beyond focus on the causes, motivations, and effects of humor (Collinson, 2002; Lynch, 2002), this part of the analysis explores humor as an interactional, sensemaking practice in which PSEs and their family members frame and enact their situation, select a preferred interpretation, and then affirm and retain the information in memorable ways. Past research has suggested that humor is only beneficial in the short-term and used specifically for instant gratification (Pogrebin & Poole, 1991). However, this analysis revealed that humor has a much more lasting effect on PSEs and their family members. In may cases, humor aids PSEs in maintaining a preferred identity as they make sense of the people, situations, and tasks that characterize their work allowing them to go home happier in many cases. The following discussion will describe both productive and then unproductive uses of humor and then classify the various types of humor used by PSEs and their family members.

Humor as a Coping Mechanism. Stenross and Kleinman (1989) claim that the tragic consequences of crimes and accidents can place a great emotional burden on police officers and fire fighters to make sense of their work. To avoid being perceived as vulnerable for displaying emotion, police officers and fire fighters often couch their feelings in humor. In this way, they

are able to soften the immediate impact of tragic experiences and vent their emotions in an acceptable, indirect manner. Joking references to tragic events provide a way for officers to express emotions without damaging their professional image as confident and fearless (Pogrebin and Poole, 1988). As Pogrebin and Poole (1988) argue, such humor fosters a source of control for the participant on how to deal with threatening or embarrassing topics. For example, during an accidental death call involving an elderly man who had suffered a heart attack while masturbating, Tom, a fire fighter I interviewed, made an attempt to lighten the somewhat somber mood: "When we walk into the bathroom where the deceased was lying, naked, the police officers on scene seemed very uncomfortable by the whole thing so I said, 'I guess he didn't know whether he was coming or going!' That perked everyone up and we were able to have a good laugh." Humor in this instance allowed the police officers and fire fighters to continue their investigation without any emotional discontinuity. In addition to the use of humor on the scene of a tragic accident or crime, several of the PSE participants describe how humor helps officers cope after they have left the immediate scene. Fire fighters Kyle, Andy, Russ, Tom and Anthony all described how after a tragic call, when emotions have calmed down, the fire fighters on duty would sit around the kitchen table and share in a good laugh as a way of processing difficult emotions. Anthony elaborates:

> Being fire fighters, we work a 24-hour shift so usually, after a really bad call, we have hours and hours to help diffuse the emotions of the situation so we can go home in a better place. Even just joking about something funny we saw in the house of the victim or laughing about a victim who died while having sex, it helps us release pent up emotion through our laughter. We go home much better for it.

Indeed, 16 of the 18 fire fighters that participated in this study expressed the importance of "fire

house chatter" that occurs after a difficult call. Having the luxury of spending hours on end with

fellow fire fighters to vent any pent up frustrations or emotions seems beneficial for fire fighters

in particular because then, they do not end up taking their work situations home with them.

In contrast to the collective discussions of fire fighters, police officers are often left to

process their emotions alone after a tragic call. Most of the patrol officers in this study were

single-unit cars, which means they must drive around and attend to calls without a partner.

When these officers experience something sad or difficult, they only have a few moments while

on the scene to cope with fellow officers. After they are done with the call, they are forced to get

back in their cars alone and respond to the next call. However, several police participants,

including, Marlin, Edward, Simon and Sonny agreed that having the opportunity to socialize

with fellow police officers after their shifts, which are usually 8 or 10-hour shifts, is somewhat

productive in coping with stress. Most cities around the country have at least a few watering

holes where police officers gather after their shift is over. They are usually in close proximity to

the police department to make socializing after work easier and more tempting. Once at these

"cop bars," officers regale one another with humorous stories from their shift or poke fun at

some of the "copper hoppers" at the bar. Sonny explains:

> Police officers need the opportunity to vent with one another after a shift, especially a
>
> hard one, so they can find ways to cope with what they dealt with that day. My wife
>
> would never understand some of the stuff I see nor would she appreciate my poking fun
>
> at dead people. My fellow officers do.

For Sonny and other PSEs, having the opportunity to de-stress after a shift allows them to go

home to their families in a better state of mind. Humor as a coping mechanism seems one way

that PSEs navigate the relationship between work and family.

Humor Fosters Solidarity. Past research suggests that PSEs are emotionally detached and reluctant to express their emotions because they see such exposure as a character flaw (Jackson & Maslach, 2007). Matsakis (2005) notes that from the beginning of their careers, police officers and fire fighters are socialized to repress their emotions in order to maintain a professional image in the eyes of both the public and their fellow officers. However, this analysis reveals that exchanging humorous messages can help individuals feel more connected to one another and also acts as a socialization device for new employees. Edward, Kyle, Charlie, and Andy explained that they use humor as a way to create shared meaning and identity with their colleagues which then helps establish and nurture work relationships. Kyle, a fire fighter references a call that occurred several years ago which continues to serve as a point of humor among fire fighters in that department:

> We got a call to go to the house of this obese man, and I mean, really obese, probably 650 lbs. who had a mild heart attack. What normally only takes two medics to remove someone on a stretcher took five of us to get this guy out of his house. Half way down the stairs, one of the guys dropped his end of the gurney and it landed on my foot, proceeding to break my foot. I was so stunned when that happened that I dropped my end as well and it landed on another fire fighter's foot and then all of a sudden the patient goes sliding down the rest of the stairs while still strapped to the gurney. His weight propelled him down the stairs with such force, much like he was sledding! He was fine in the end but two of us were left with broken feet and toes! It was funny after the fact. Ever since, we have affectionately referred to this situation as the 'land whale event' since the guy was so overweight. As a result, whenever dispatch gets a medical call involving a larger person, they don't announce the call as the typical 'code 1' which tells us it's a medical call.

Instead, they say 'code 1 land whale' and we all just look at each other and laugh a bit as

we remember.

This humorous story has been retained for future use and adds a unique component to the

firehouse's culture. However, because this story is several years old, newcomers to the

department do not have the necessary knowledge to understand what a 'land whale' is exactly

and often find themselves confused when that call comes out. Anthony, a fire fighter who works

at the same department as Kyle explains the story's use as a socialization tool:

When I heard the land whale call come out for the first time, I had no idea what dispatch

was talking about. In fact, I figured that it literally involved a call with water so I grabbed

all of my diving and water gear before I took off, just in case. I didn't get it until I was on

the truck and the other guys explained it to me. I felt like an idiot with all my water gear

and they all just sat and had a good laugh at my expense! They thought it was hilarious.

Because Anthony was a newcomer, he was not initially part of all the shared jokes and stories.

He says it took almost a year until he was made privy to all the inside jokes and began to feel

like an insider at the department. In the situation described above, the individuals involved took

an unfortunate situation and turned it into something that helped foster solidarity, shared

meaning and socialization of newcomers.

Humor with Family and Friends. Of the 36 PSE participants involved in this study, 33

said they feel comfortable sharing the funny stories that happen to them at work with their family

members as a way to make them feel included in their job but still distancing them from some of

the atrocities of their worklife. In fact, George, Carl, Rose and Ted go out of their way to always

have a funny story ready to share with their families after the end of each shift to fend off any

potential concerns of their children or spouses. As Rose elaborates:

I've learned my lesson that I need to have a funny story ready when I get home so

that my 13-year old son doesn't bombard me with questions about bad guys. I don't want

to tell those stories so if I can beat him to the punch and tell him how I pulled over a car

for speeding only to find they were all dressed up as clowns on their way to a birthday

party, my son's curiosity and desire to know about any gory stories subsides until next

time. He's good with the funny stories. This makes me feel better and we are able to

share a laugh together…I don't want him to ever know what my day is really like. I

protect my children from that.

This idea of "protecting" their families was a common theme in the interviews. Charlie, a police

officer and father of four children, is constantly trying to shield his family from what he

experiences at work. His way of negotiating the relationship between work and family is by not

allowing any of his family members to watch television shows about police officers because he

feels it skews their view of the profession and he says that sharing only funny stories with his

family lightens the effects that the job can have on him and his family. He elaborates:

I work in a dangerous part of town so when I go home, I really don't want to relive my

day. But my family always wants to know something about what goes on. I want to

protect them so I only tell them the funny stuff like the other day when a crazy woman

stole an ambulance just to do donuts in a parking lot. My kids love that stuff!

Similarly, in considering the relationship between work and family, many PSEs used humor and

funny stories from the job as a way to teach their children valuable life lessons in a light-hearted

fashion, thus using the work sphere to help inform the home sphere. Marlin and Janice, both

police officers and married to one another, have three children. Marlin is always worried about

their teenage daughter falling in with the wrong crowd so he cautions her against dangerous situations she could potentially get involved in:

> I tell my daughter all of the stupid, embarrassing things that drunk and high people do while under the influence, hopefully, which will deter her from wanting to partake in drugs or alcohol. It is my hope that she won't want to end up looking stupid like some of the people I arrest on a regular basis.

The impact of these stories is not lost on Marlin and Janice's daughter, Selena. She discusses a story her parents once told her:

> My mom had to arrest a kid from my school when she actually found him lying naked on his parent's front lawn, so drunk from a party he had been at the night before. He had vomit all over himself. It was gross. Everyone in the neighborhood saw him being put in the squad car, naked and gross!! How embarrassing! I would be mortified if something like that happened to me so I just avoid that whole drinking scene.

While many PSE participants discussed the use of humor and embarrassing stories as exercises in self-preservation or as teaching moments, several spouses and children of PSEs said they use humor when talking with other people about what their loved one does for a living. Wendy, the same-sex partner of police officer Sophie, says she always tells her friends about the time when an elderly woman in the neighborhood where her partner works called 911 to report that there was a young woman going around town "dressed up in a policeman costume" knocking on doors and writing parking tickets. Apparently this woman had not realized that there are now plenty of women who work in law enforcement and had thought Sophie was pretending to be a police officer. Wendy says she jokes to Sophie about that incident all of the time, especially when friends are over. Wendy explains: "Everytime Sophie comes home from work in her uniform

and I have a friend over, I'll say: 'Where did you get that police costume? Did you steal it? I didn't know women could be police officers?!' It gets her so mad but then we all have a laugh about how ignorant society is." For Wendy and Sophie, as well as several other participants in this study, it seems humor can help lighten the mood and allow family members to feel included in what the PSE does on a daily basis.

While this sharing of humorous stories often created solidarity between co-workers and comfort with families, there were several instances where humor was unproductive with regard to making sense of the relationship between work and family.

Dysfunctions of Humor as a Coping Mechanism. For many of the PSEs that I spoke with humor served more as an all-purpose desensitizing tool and was sometimes used in inappropriate ways. For example, Sonny, a police officer, explains that his reliance on humor at work often spills over into his personal life. He elaborates:

> My aunt, who I was very close to growing up, died in a pretty bad hit and run accident
> and I really wasn't that deeply affected by it, which started to worry my family. In fact, I
> am so used to seeing these sorts of things at work and cracking jokes with other
> officers that I accidentally made a comment to my brother while standing by her casket
> that although the accident mangled her body pretty badly, at least her glass eye was still
> well intact to be able to still creep us out.

Sonny explains that he has difficulty "turning off" how he handles situations at work when something tragic happens in his own life. He also says that his brother was deeply insulted and offended by what he said about their aunt.

This use of humor as a way to diffuse stressful situations at work which then seeps into one's personal life was not unique to Sonny. Tony, a chief at a large, urban fire department,

relayed a story about a teenaged boy who committed suicide by jumping in front of a train. He continues:

> I was not on duty when the kid decided to kill himself but when something like that happens I get called to the scene. When it happened, it was during the last quarter of the Super Bowl so needless to say, I was less than thrilled. Before I left the house, I joked to my wife and daughter that I would kill this kid a second time if he causes me to miss any great plays. I was just trying to be funny since this is how I handle these situations but my wife's jaw dropped when I said that. I guess she didn't think it was that funny.

Interestingly, Tony's wife, Kara, and their 20-year old daughter Gabbi, both addressed this example during their focus group which then prompted other PSE family members to address their loved one's use of humor. Gabbi described her reaction to her father's use of humor in dealing with stressful situations at home: "I get that laughing and joking with his friends at work helps them cope at work but I don't understand why he thinks it's okay to use humor at home. I don't find death, destruction and dismemberment particularly funny." Emily, the 21-year old daughter of a police officer, agreed:

> Yeah, when my good friend died in a tragic car accident a few years ago during final examination week, my dad joked that at least she didn't have to worry about passing her exams! I was literally shocked by his comment and didn't speak to him for months. Upon reflection, I know that he was just trying to make light of the situation and make me feel better about the loss of a friend but honestly, it's just inappropriate!

For Gabbi and Emily, as well as Rebecca, Amy and Allyson, a loved one's use of "work" humor at home was particularly disturbing or, as 18-year old Calvin put it, "unnecessarily cruel in a time of tragedy."

In addition to the inappropriate use of humor, family members also discussed ways in which humor was simply ineffective in diffusing beliefs about the danger of PSE careers. As discussed previously, PSEs mention that they only talk with their families about humorous happenings in the workplace as a means of protection. As Amanda says: "I think my kids like hearing about the funny stuff I see at work. They always laugh and breathe a sigh of relief when I tell them that stuff because then I think that they think that my day wasn't too stressful or too dangerous." While family members themselves claimed they enjoyed hearing the funny stories, there was a disconnect between the perceptions of PSEs and their family members. Many of the family members I spoke to claimed that while they did ask to hear the funny stores, it did not always help them deal with the dangerous nature of the job. Mary, the 13-year old daughter of a police officer explains: "Yes, I like the funny stories my dad tells me about his job but I know that more goes on than he is telling me. He might think those stories help but I know he is hiding the bad stuff from me. I'm still scared everyday about what he does for a living."

Similarly, several other family members agreed that their loved ones think they deal with job dangers better when humorous stories are exchanged but their drawings reveal something different. Time and time again, the drawings by family members, particularly the children, reveal fear and worry about their loved ones job. When asked to draw a picture of what her father does for a living, 8-year old Alicia, drew a graveyard to depict her father's job (Figure 6):

Figure 6. Alicia

When asked to expand on why she drew the graveyard, she said that she is always afraid her father will end up getting hurt or killed on duty because she sees this happening on television all of the time. For Alicia, the way in which she makes sense of her father's worklife is a departure from how her father and mother view the job. Her mother, Carrie, who also participated in the focus group, asked her daughter why she felt that way about her dad's job and pointed to the humorous stories as examples that her dad is not necessarily in danger all of the time. Alicia responded by claiming she knows better than to believe her father's job is characterized by fun and laughter. Interestingly, Alicia's father, Robert, claims humor helps his family cope with his job activities: "I know my family feels better about what I do when I tell them the funny stuff. They don't worry about me." However, it is clear from his daughter's drawing that there is a disconnect between what Robert thinks his family's impression is of his job versus how they actually feel.

Humor is productive for PSEs in that it helps create solidarity among co-workers, it serves as a coping mechanism both at work and at home, and it provides opportunities for self protection and socialization. However, the use of humor can also be unproductive when it is seen as inappropriate by family members or simply fails to relieve fears about the job. Because humor was a common theme throughout the interviews, the next section examines the various types of humor employed by participants to help organize and categorize its uses. There were three types of humor used by participants: morbid humor, other-centered humor and innocuous humor.

Morbid Humor. There were many instances where participants, mostly PSEs rather than family members, engaged in morbid humor or dark humor. People who do not deal with life and death situations on a daily basis would likely view jokes made about injuries or death as demented, even cruel (Pogrebin & Poole, 1988). However, PSEs found that making light of a tragic situation through humor, even morbid humor, helps diffuse the stressful nature of their job. Several times during the interviews, participants uttered comments to me that were instances of morbid humor. For example, Stephanie, a fire fighter, recalled a story involving a young girl who committed suicide at a popular shopping mall by throwing herself over the railing and down seven stories, landing face down on a glass jewelry counter. She describes the scene as "a bloody mess" and explains how they handle these situations: "Oh, we just bagged her up and done. Bag 'em and tag 'em as we jokingly say, similar to branding an animal or something like that. It's just a body." She laughs as she tells this story explaining that she knows it sounds morbid but because she sees death on a regular basis, it does not really faze her anymore.

Morbid humor is almost always used in situations involving death, particularly a gory or tragic death, as a way to deal with the overwhelming amount of emotion PSEs can feel.

Douglas, a twice divorced father of two children, recalls a gory murder that he responded to a few years back. A new bride apparently castrated her new husband in the limo on the way back from the reception after finding out that he had an affair with her maid of honor. Douglas said he took this opportunity to deter some of the younger police officers from marriage since he had not had much luck with his first two wives: "There was this kid on the force who was thinking about proposing to his girlfriend, which I of course thought was a terrible idea so I said to him, 'If this Lorena Bobbitt situation doesn't deter you from popping the question, I don't know what will…marriage will literally, cut you off at the dick!'" Douglas clearly relished in telling this story, laughing and gesturing the entire time he spoke.

One would think that even with morbid humor, there is a line that should not be crossed by PSEs. In fact, past research on the subject has indicated that joking about the death of children or those killed in a natural disaster such as an earthquake, hurricane, or the terrorist attacks on 9/11 are off-limits (Kirschman, 2004a; Tracy et al, 2006). However, these standards did not seem to hold for many of the participants in this study. For example, Jason, a police officer, talked about a 10-year old boy who had found his father's gun and, while playing with it in his room with a friend, had accidentally shot and killed himself. When police responded they noticed bits of his eyeball stuck to the headboard of his bed. Jason said that the investigating officer got down next to the eye and said to the others on the scene: "Here's looking at you, kid." Jason explains that while others may have been outraged by what he said, the comment served to lighten the mood of officers who were literally shaking while writing their reports. The analysis and discussion in the previous section revealed that family members, in particular, have a difficult time with their loved ones' use of humor and are often disturbed by their casualness in dealing with death or severe injuries. However, as fire fighter Louie says, "If we don't laugh

we'll cry." Thus, morbid humor is a crucial way PSEs cope with tragedy and, more importantly, it allows the PSE to make sense of the relationship between work and family. It permits them to do their job without having to worry about bringing home their work.

Other-Centered and Distancing Humor. While the use of morbid humor was pervasive among the participants, the data also suggests that PSEs poke fun at the people they deal with on a regular basis as a way to create distance between themselves and ordinary citizens. Tracy et al. (2006) notes this pattern of "distancing and differentiating humor" among human service employees. Similarly, this study revealed that PSEs often try to distance themselves and focus their humor on members of society as a way to reinforce, as Christopher says, their "…superiority above all the morons we deal with on a regular basis." Discussions with PSEs were littered with stories about the ignorance of the people they serve on a regular basis. They told stories about "off the wall" calls that dispatch received and how they would replay them for days on end to laugh about them. Consider the following story from Reba, a fire fighter:

> Around 11 pm at night we got this call from a guy who says his teenaged son has gone crazy and won't stop dressing up like a girl and that we need to 'fix' the situation--that it is our civil duty to fix his son. Well, we are required to show up to every call, no matter how ridiculous it is. When we got there, sure enough the kid is dressed up in full female attire. His nails were painted, he was wearing high heels and fake eye lashes--he looked like a girl! All of us fire fighters weren't sure what to do and we tried telling the dad that there was nothing we can do to 'fix' his son. The police showed up as well and started giving the kid a hard time, threatening to arrest him for, I am still not sure what! The whole thing was ridiculous and until then I didn't realize that teenaged drag queens were part of my civil duty!

In a similar fashion, Sophie, a police officers shares a story about a 911 call where a man called the police to report a theft:

> This guy calls 911 to report that his brother had stolen something from him. The funny part was that he called the police to say his brother had stolen his marijuana pipe from him and that we needed to come and arrest his brother. He was probably high himself while making that phone call but nonetheless provided weeks of joking among the police officers that were on that night. Really??! What kind of idiot does that?!

Like Reba and Christopher, Sophie shares a story which illustrates humorous stories being told and re-told by PSEs as a way to remind one another how different they are from the population they serve.

Innocuous Humor. There are certain types of humor used by PSEs and family members that are characterized not by morbidity or distancing, but are almost harmless in nature. At the end of every roll call prior to each police shift, the sergeant on duty at Ryan's department says: "Be careful out there, remember they write books and movies about us for a reason." Ryan says that the patrol officers always chuckle when they hear this and it helps ease the tension before having to go out there. Similarly, Edward says that his dispatcher is notorious for cracking jokes on the air to help smooth over any anxiety. He recalls one particular example of innocuous humor being used by his dispatcher: "The dispatch gets on the air and says 'You've been invited to the party—grandpa's got a gun, grandma's naked and chasing the kids around with a wooden spoon, so grab your crazy hat and head to the circus.'" These types of humorous exchanges help affirm relationships and fend off any tension or frustration PSEs might feel while on the job.

While PSEs often engage in innocuous humor with one another, they also use it while dealing with members of the communities they serve. For example, Vicki tells a story about the

time she stopped someone for running a red light and when asked if he knew why he was being stopped, the man uttered the infamous line all police officers have heard: "You shouldn't be stopping me. I pay your salary." Vicki responds with some light humor by saying: "Well then, I guess I am just doing my job, boss." She explains that these little moments of harmless humor help her make it through the day. In a similar fashion, Charlie says that his response to members of the community who accuse him of pulling them over just to meet a department quota is: "Yeah, we do have a quota that I am trying to make. Just two more tickets and my wife gets a toaster oven!" Finally, Carol talks about a time when she was so frustrated by this kid who was running away after he had just robbed an arcade that she actually yelled to him: "If you run, you'll only go to jail tired." Most of the PSEs agreed that humor, even in it's most general form was a necessary and common occurrence while on the job. They all agreed that it helps them go home happier.

Based on the examples above, when PSEs engage in various types of humor, especially while on the job, it allows them the proper outlet to vent which in turn, affords them the opportunity to go home in a much healthier state of mind. For PSEs, utilizing different forms of humor in various situations, whether at work or at home, helps them as they navigate both their work and family lives. Thus far, this dissertation has revealed that humor is something that both PSEs and their family members engage in on a regular basis. Furthermore, their use of humor is both productive and unproductive depending on the situation. Like humor, another similarity between PSEs and their family members with regard to how they make sense of the relationship between work and family is the use of emotional labor and emotional management which is addressed in the following discussion.

Emotional Labor

Through an analysis of the data set for this study, I found several occurrences of PSEs and their family members engaging in emotional labor on and off the job illustrating one way they make sense of the relationship between work and family. Consistent with several other studies, I found that there are positive outcomes of emotion management or considered contexts in which emotion management may be a necessary and vital function. Conrad and Witte (1994), argue that emotion management may actually benefit employees, aiding them in coping with stress and avoiding negative contagion through the promotion of emotional equilibrium. Similarly, Scott and Meyers (2002) found that often times emotional management is necessary in socializing and assimilating new members to the fire fighting profession and Shuler and Sypher (2000) found that 911 call takers actively seek out opportunities to engage in emotional labor and refer to it as a fun and rewarding part of their job. This analysis also challenges what Hochschild (1989) says about emotion being more "real" in private lives when one is away from the confines of work. The data from this dissertation reveals that PSEs have to work even harder when at home to contain and manage their emotions for the benefit of their families. Finally, the results of this study reveal insight into the area of emotional labor by considering how *family members*, not just employees, engage in emotional labor with their loved ones. This discussion regarding emotional labor and emotional management begins first with examining how it applies to the PSE population followed by a classification of the various types of emotional labor/management PSEs engage in and finally, a discussion about how family members perform emotional labor.

Those employed in the public safety profession and other emergency response workers face the daunting task of negotiating the communication of calming and controlled emotions in highly volatile and dangerous conditions. They not only have to manage their own emotions but

also the emotions of the public, and this can be a source of stress (Tracy & Tracy, 1998). Like humor, emotional labor, both at work and with their families constructs the PSEs' identities and informs how they make sense of their stressful work. This can lead to job turnover, stress and burnout, as PSEs are so used to "faking emotion" in every aspect of life (with the public and at home).

This dissertation found that while PSEs work hard to manufacture emotion for the public, they do so for their families as well. For the participants involved in this study, there is a limit as to what PSEs can talk about with their families because families put restrictions and create rules for what PSEs can tell them. For instance, Michele, the wife of a police officer, explains that she takes serious issue with hearing about violence to animals or children as well as gory suicides, and thus she has put certain topics "off-limits" for family discussion. As a result, PSEs have to alter their identity and what they can say to their families by engaging in emotional labor when asked about work. Furthermore, several spouses explained that they do not feel it is their responsibility to provide social support for their PSE loved one after a hard shift. As Lori explains: "It's not my job to be a counselor or a therapist to my husband after a bad day. Let his co-workers or the counselors at work help him cope. I really can't relate to what he is going through." However, this sentiment (expressed by five other spouses, as well) creates a double-edged sword for PSEs: When they attempt to reach out to colleagues, they often have to do so at the expense of time spent with family members. As a result, the relationship between work and family becomes strained with their worklife and needing to vent with fellow PSEs causing stress and tension at home.

Based on the results found in this study it seems that PSEs perform emotional labor both on and off the job, which will be addressed next. Moreover, it seems that PSEs have to manage

their own emotions as well as control the emotions of their family members, whether it's through

the use of humor described earlier in the chapter or by engaging in emotional labor. I will refer

to this concept as *Bilateral Emotional Labor* (BEL), which asserts that PSEs attempt to manage

their own stress at work as well as ensure that their family members (and the members of society

that they deal with) do not also experience stress. Thus, they must control not only their own

emotions, but also the emotions of others. PSEs engage in BEL, first, as a way to manage

parallels between their work lives and family lives and second, to manage the public's and their

families' impression of them.

  Managing Parallels. For many PSEs, the events they see while on the job do not often

hit home on a personal level. However, when something does occur at work that affects them

personally, they must try very hard to not let it affect their ability to do the job. This is when

they must engage in BEL both at work and at home. Walter, a fire fighter, told a story that

deeply tested his ability to do the job when a call came out that involved a 6-year old boy—the

same age of his own son at the time. Walter explains how tough it was to deal with the situation

but that he had to be in control of his emotions in order to calm down the victims:

> When I arrived, I learned that a brick wall had fallen on two little boys—ages 6 and 9. I
>
> held the 6-year old boy in my arms while the rescue crew and police officers moved
>
> bricks off of him. I remember him looking up at me and asking if he was going to
>
> be okay. I told him that he was going to be just fine, knowing full well that he was
>
> probably not going to make it. It took every ounce of me to not start sobbing right there.
>
> Just after, the little boy nodded his head and passed away. My boy was also 6 at the time.
>
> After the call, I went back to the department and cried in the locker room for an hour.

Walter, and so many other PSEs sometimes experience situations at work that parallel their own lives. Engaging in some kind of emotion management becomes necessary in order to control their emotions on the scene and the emotions of others involved. When Walter lied and told the boy he was going to be fine, this gave the child, in some capacity, the peace he needed. Walter mentioned that when he went home that next morning, he was still covered in the soot and residue from the falling brick wall, and his wife commented on his clothing. Instead of explaining the situation, Walter engaged in emotional labor on the homefront, claiming that he and the other fire fighters were doing some "spring cleaning" at the fire house.

Impression Management. Many of the PSEs in the study agreed that because they work as civil servants, a huge part of their job is "keeping up appearances" and ensuring that the public sees them in a favorable light. They accomplish this by doing their best to keep those that they deal with calm and maintaining control of their own emotions. Recall Stephanie, the fire fighter who responded to the mall suicide. Stephanie was the first on the scene and had to perform compression and CPR on the girl who was already dead. When asked why she did this, Stephanie said, "It was all a show. A show for the tourists at the mall. It's what they want to see. The public image is very important so could you imagine the uproar if the patrons at the mall did not see us attempting to do everything we could do to save this already dead girl's life?? We would have all lost our jobs!" When asked how it would have been different if there had not been any witnesses or done in public, Stephanie says, as quoted earlier in this chapter: "Oh, we would have just bagged her up and done. Bag 'em and tag 'em. That's what we do in private. No shows. No frills. It's like a circus when you are in public." She goes on to explain the end result of that call: "That day, the people were happy with what they saw. They were coming up to us and shaking our hands and taking pictures with us. Tourists."

Managing the impression that the public has toward PSEs is crucial to both fire fighters and police officers. As George, a police officer, says: "No one calls the police when they are having a good day. They call you when they need you or when something bad is happening. It's important to keep the public happy because if they see something they don't like, they will call the chief to complain." Indeed, several of the PSEs in this study explain how society's perception has changed toward those employed in public service and that they are always having to do their best to uphold an image acceptable to the communities in which the serve. Tony, Raymond and Christopher spoke at great length about how the public's impression has changed toward civil servants. Fire fighters can no longer play basketball outside or go grocery shopping in the ambulance and police are no longer allowed to sleep during the midnight shift because people are constantly commenting on how their tax dollars should not be spent on PSEs sleeping, shopping or playing sports. As Stephanie explains:

> Yep, that's how it is now and what we are told to do by the chief. Can't do anything that might look like we are using tax dollars 'inappropriately.' We are at the mercy of the public. That's why we put on these facades when people die in public. To boost our image.

Thus, PSEs consistently engage in emotional labor both on and off the job to manage parallels to their own lives and also manage the impressions of others. However, PSEs are not alone in this effort, as family members also participate in emotional labor for the benefit of their PSE loved one in an attempt to manage the relationship between their loved one's work and family lives. Both spouses and children perform emotional labor but do so in very different ways. Further, PSEs are typically in the dark about the emotional labor performed by family members.

Many of the children I spoke to were very worried about what their parent does for a

living, but would never tell their parent about this concern. 15-year-old Claudia and 18-year-old

Terry have a mother who is a police officer and expressed to me their concern for what she does

for a living. Terry said his fears about her job were worse when he was younger. Because he

was the eldest and his mother worked the midnight shift, he was left in charge of his younger

sister, Claudia, when his mother left for work at 11 p.m. He recalls being tucked in before she

left for work and "putting on a brave face" and telling her to "go kick some bad-guy butt." As

soon as she left, he cried himself to sleep, riddled with fear and worry. When asked why he did

not tell his mother his concerns, he said that if she knew how worried he was about her and that

he cried himself to sleep every night until he was 18, she would not have been able to

concentrate on her job and could open herself up to danger and risk. He said by "faking

enthusiasm for the job" he was indirectly saving his mother's life. Several other children agreed

that they often fake being okay with what their parent does for a living just to ensure their safety

at work. As 18-year-old William (son of a fire fighter) says: "What good is it for my dad to

worry that I am worrying about him while he is at work? If he knew that, he wouldn't be in the

right mindset and I need him to come home after his shift. I'm all smiles when he leaves for

work so he doesn't suspect."

Like children, spouses also engaged in performances of emotional labor but not necessarily

for the same reasons. While children performed emotional labor by putting on "brave faces" for

their parents regarding the public safety job so as not to distract their parents from doing their

job, several spouses said that they performed emotional labor to keep their spouses happy.

Renee, the wife of a police officer, recalls the time when her husband was hospitalized in critical

condition for three months after being shot while on duty. She says she remembers feeling like

she could not take all the emotions she was experiencing at the time and even contemplated

running away while he was lying in the hospital bed. However, as she says:

I couldn't run away from him, nor could I ever tell him how scared I was that this could

happen to him again. I knew if I did that, he would quit his job so I would be happy.

That's just the kind of man he is. But policing was and still is his life and I couldn't take

that away from him so I pretended I was okay and strong.

Lynette, Katherine, and Julie all express a desire for maintaining the idea that they are totally

accepting of what their husbands do for a living. Because their husbands are completely

dedicated to the profession of public safety these women engage in emotional labor.

The discussion above has focused on the many similarities between PSEs and their family

members with regard to how they make sense of the relationship between work and family in

utilizing humor and emotional labor. However, there are also a few differences in the way PSEs

and their family members think about work and family. The next two sections will address these

differences, by considering the concepts of fear and risk.

Fear

Fear is experienced differently by PSEs and family members with regard to how they

make sense of the relationship between work and family. Based on discussions with police

officers and fire fighters, PSEs internalize fear on a practical level, with concerns centering on

family safety, as well as physical and economical implications.

Family Safety. Charlie, Ted, Marlin and Vicki all spoke about incidents where they ran

into someone they had arrested while out with their families. In all of these instances, the PSEs

became immediately concerned with the safety of their families since the activities and situations

they deal with at work have now spilled over into their time with family. As Vicki says: "When

you arrest someone, they are never like, 'Yay, I am so glad you arrested me. I think I will add

you to my Christmas card list.' They are pissed off so if they ever run into you while you are

off, it can be bad." Both Vicki and Marlin mentioned that the person arrested is usually so

embarrassed that he or she pretends not to notice the arresting officer. However, Charlie

describes a time when he went into panic mode after seeing a former arrestee while at the

grocery store with his family:

> When I saw him at the store, I instantly worried about the safety of my family
>
> since I could tell he was high on something. He came right over to us, before I even saw
>
> him and said, 'Oh look at the family man. Not too tough when you're not in your
>
> uniform.' I quickly shoved my family away and told him that he was going to get hurt if
>
> he didn't leave the store. He rolled his eyes and then I motioned to the off-duty gun on
>
> my belt. Needless to say, he left but it was still pretty tense.

Many of the PSEs in this study mentioned how afraid they sometimes are in terms of the safety

of their families. Police officers and fire fighters almost always wear either name tags or shirts

that display their last names, making it easy for someone to find out more information about

them. Ryan, an undercover detective who works with drugs and gangs, constantly fears for the

safety of his family in the event that his identity is ever compromised. In fact, he told a story

about an undercover colleague whose cover was compromised, resulting in him and his family

being placed in the witness protection program. Because of safety concerns, almost all of the

PSEs that participated in this study have unlisted telephone and address information, and many

of them even register their personal cars to their workplaces as further protection. When asked if

family members are ever concerned about retaliation by perpetrators, most of the PSEs revealed

that they do not share this information with their families, so there is never a concern among

their spouses and children. In fact, not one of the family members I spoke to ever mentioned

being worried about a perpetrator coming after them. As Ted says: "It's not like I am going to tell my family that the bad guy daddy just arrested might come knocking on our door. That would terrify them. It's not necessary since I take so many precautions to ensure that doesn't happen." It seems PSEs often must go to extreme measures as a way to handle any negative interference from their work lives into their home lives.

Physical Fitness Concerns. While PSEs usually have their families' safety in mind while on and off the job, they also sometimes worry about getting hurt while at work, especially when injury could have been avoided. In many of the police departments that participated in this study, staying in shape, physically, is not a requirement. As a result, many police officers "let their figures go," making foot chases and fights a challenge. Janice, a police officer and mother of three young children, tries very hard to stay in shape in order to avoid putting herself at risk while working: "I see these fat men that I work with and their huge bellies and I ask myself, 'What will they do if they have to chase someone?' I know I don't want them as my backup."

Interestingly, while police officers have no requirements regarding physical fitness, fire fighters have physical training sessions almost every single day. Kelly, a fire fighter, explains her day:

> On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday we have drills and training that really work you out, physically. I'm literally sweating by the end of them. But it's important that we can carry heavy hoses and be able to lift larger individuals to put them on a stretcher. It's imperative fire fighters stay in shape. If not, the consequences can be deadly for the fire fighter or those we help.

Drills and training exercises were not unique to Kelly as many of the fire fighters in this study shared similar schedules.

Economic Fears. Finally, while PSEs fear for the safety of their families as well as the physical implications of not staying in shape, one last concern they voiced was with respect to the state of the economy. Many of the participants in this study expressed concern for the security of their job and, subsequently, the ability to provide for their families. Once thought of as "some of the most stable jobs out there" (Daum & Johns, 1994), many police officers and fire fighters are losing their jobs due to budget cuts made by villages and cities across the country. This is a real concern for many of the PSEs in this study. Edward, a police officer in a major, urban department, says that 35 officers where he works have already been laid off and there are plans for another 15 to go by the end of the year. He added that he is constantly afraid his job will be in jeopardy.

In the same vein, Reba, a fire fighter with only two years at her department fears for her job: "I am the least tenured employee in the whole village so if a cut happens, it's going to be me. I know it." Layoffs are becoming more and more pervasive among PSEs, and Carl, a police officer, has already been given dismissal papers with his job ending in five months. He elaborates: "You aren't safe anymore in this profession in terms of job security. The union is a joke nowadays and anyone is at risk of getting the ax. You don't even have to screw up anymore…because of the economy, you can get let go for any reason. Since I am junior at my department, I was the logical choice to let go." When asked how this will affect his family he says: "I don't have another job lined up so I am not sure what will happen with my family. My wife, who is currently a stay-at-home mom, has made arrangements to go back to her old job. But that will be an adjustment for both of us and our children. It's a mess." It is evident that Edward, Reba and Carl, as well as other PSEs worry about the state of the economy and how it will affect their jobs and families.

While it seems PSEs fear for the safety of their families, the implications of not staying in shape and the consequences of the current state of the economy, the families of PSEs also have their concerns about their loved ones job. However, family members have very different fears, which include, *catastrophizing* fears as well as *domestic* fears which pertain to extra-marital affairs, alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

Catastrophizing Fears. Many fears among family members of PSEs show a pattern of *catastrophic thinking* in which one negative event inevitably sets off a domino-effect of more negative effects resulting in the death or injury of the PSE loved one. *Catastrophic thinking* is erroneous because it arrives at negative conclusions without sufficient evidence, and it disregards the possibility that taking action may avert a tragic ending. For example, Renee, the wife of a police officer admits to some rather exaggerated conclusions she came to one night her husband was late coming home:

> When he first got to work that night, he called to tell me that there was a pretty big gang fight going on and that he would be detained the rest of the evening taking care of that. When I tried calling him four or five times and not hearing back from him, I panicked. I immediately thought he got shot during the fight and was laying in a hospital bed somewhere or worse, that he was dead. As it turns out, he was fine but his cell phone had died so he had no way to talk to me that night. But my mind went right to the worst case scenario which I think happens with a lot of police wives, I think.

For Renee, panic set in when she could not reach her husband, especially given her knowledge about a gang fight that was going on where her husband works. She did not consider other alternatives to her husband not answering his phone and immediately thought the worst. Janice, a police officer and also the spouse of one, shared a similar experience:

When he didn't come home after his shift, I absolutely panicked. I am not sure why given the fact that I am a cop, too, and know what can happen on any given day. We have a police dispatcher in our home so I knew there had been a shots fired call that night and that was the last time I talked to him. I became so desperate after not hearing from him that I called his department, begging for information. I sounded so desperate thinking back but I was so worried. He was fine, of course, and the reason he was late was because he had to transport a prisoner 80 miles from his jail to a jail in another city. We didn't have cell phones back then so there was no way I could know this!

Catastrophic thinking occurs especially when a family knows ahead of time about a potentially dangerous situation occurring in their loved one's city. Similarly, many children of PSEs feared the worst, especially after watching television. Joshua, the 13-year old son of a fire fighter says that he cannot even watch the news without worrying about his father, especially when there is a fire reported in the city in which his dad works. As he explains: "There are always fires in this city and when there's a big one, with many deaths, I watch it on the news and just pray that my dad wasn't hurt. I always think he's not going to come home." Adam, Grace and William, all children of PSEs, admit to having at least one catastrophic thought a day about the possibility of something bad happening to their PSE parent.

Domestic Fears. While fearing the injury or death of their PSE loved one, many family members, particularly the spouses of PSEs, also described fears they have pertaining to the possibility of their PSE spouse getting involved in an extra-marital affair, abusing alcohol or engaging in domestic violence. Seventy-five percent of police marriages end in divorce (Kirschman, 2004a), with about 50% of these the result of infidelity, alcohol abuse or domestic violence. Several of the spouses had concerns about the likelihood of their husband's cheating

on them. In fact, during one of the focus groups, this topic took center stage as Katherine, the wife of a police officer, offered her experience in dealing with her husband's infidelity several years ago:

> You know, I don't think I ever really suspected anything until he started staying out way past when his shift was over, frequenting the cop bars nearby. He told me he needed time to de-stress after his shift and drinking with his friends after work helped him come home happier. Well, there are plenty of women who frequent those cop bars in hopes of landing one, and apparently, one night it worked on my husband. He was very drunk and he claims it only happened that one time. I found out the next morning when he still wasn't home yet. He had no choice but to come clean.

Several of the other women in this focus group empathized with Katherine, claiming they too have suspected that their husbands have cheated on them. Lori told the group that her husband has cheated on her four different times, and every time she has forgiven him because they have children. Michele, offered an explanation for why infidelity occurs so often among police officers: "They really aren't given much opportunity to vent after a shift so they go out to do that. And you know what happens when alcohol enters the situation, they do stupid things. Plus those damn 'copper hopper' tramps at those bars don't make things easy. You know how weak men can be." It is interesting that these women have adapted to their husband's behavior. Instead of divorcing them or holding them responsible for their actions, they make excuses for why they went astray, blaming it on "male weakness" and the seduction tactics of "copper hoppers."

An equally important concern that spouses of PSEs have is alcohol abuse. Out of the 29 spouses (including two ex-spouses), only two had actually witnessed their PSE loved one get

into trouble with alcohol. One of the spouses that came forward was the ex-wife of a police

officer, who said alcohol abuse was what ultimately ended the marriage. As Angela explains:

> I get that they see horrific things at work but why do they turn to drugs and alcohol to
>
> cope. I remember telling him time and time again to talk to me rather than go out
>
> drinking. In the end, he felt more comfort with the bottle and I couldn't take it anymore.
>
> I packed up the kids and never looked back.

Since their divorce, Angela's husband has successfully completed rehabilitation and is no longer

drinking. However, as Angela said during the focus group, "It's just too late for apologies or a

second chance. He's a good father and I am glad he is not drinking anymore but I can never bear

witness to that self-destruction again."

In discussing concerns about alcohol and drug abuse, Lynette, Marcus and Amy all tell

stories about the unique risk factors faced by PSEs. For instance, Marcus, talks about how his

wife is notorious for not trusting anyone she meets because of her job, making her quite jaded.

As a result, he is afraid that in order for her to release stress and tension, she might come to rely

on alcohol rather than people. Similarly, Lynette mentions that she is afraid her husband's

"invincibility attitude" will lead him to turn to drugs or alcohol. As she explains:

> Since he started the job 16 years ago, he has increased the amount of alcohol he
>
> consumes. Almost every day after his shift, he has three or four bottles of beer and he
>
> says it's just to relax and debrief from the day. When I tell him that I am worried about
>
> this leisurely occurrence turning more into a destructive habit, he tells me that nothing
>
> will ever happen to him, that if the streets haven't killed him, then certainly alcohol
>
> won't.

Other spouses of the PSEs involved in the study share this "invincibility" concern. Amy, the wife of a fire fighter says: "My husband has the 'God complex' while at work, always bragging that nothing will bring him down. That's because he is in such good physical shape, me and the kids should not worry about him at work or his ability to hold his liquor."

While infidelity and alcohol abuse were major concerns for the spouses of the PSEs in this study, another fear families have is domestic abuse. Although none of the spouses admitted to having been battered by their PSE spouses, a wife disclosed during a one-on-one interview that she was afraid of her husband's often aggressive behavior toward her, particularly after a rough shift. She says that he verbally assaults her if she asks the wrong questions or if his laundry for his next shift is not done. She goes on to say: "There was this one time a few months ago where I forgot to put his turtleneck in the dryer for his shift the next day. He was so enraged that he threw the box of fabric softener in my direction. I don't think he wanted to hit me with it…he just wanted to throw something. Things like that have been happening more and more."

Domestic violence is not a unique phenomenon to the PSE profession. However, because of the greater negativity experienced on the job, police families are more susceptible to domestic abuse than fire families (Matsakis, 2005). In fact, some 100,000 to 120,000 police families are affected by domestic abuse, or just over 10% of the police population (Kirschman, 2004a). Many of the spouses in this study have at least heard of a friend being abused by his/her police officer spouse either physically or verbally, making it a real concern. Many of the younger spouses in this study admit that they fear their PSE loved one could, as Colette says, "snap at any moment because of the nature of their job." As Janice explains:

> Since I am both a cop and the spouse of one, I can understand how someone can
>
> completely change because of the effects of the job. Cops and fire fighters, over time,

become desensitized to verbal, emotional and even physical violence because these are things we deal with everyday at work. Cops know how the legal system works, they carry guns and are accustomed to using verbal and physical threats to get what we want out of citizens. It's a dangerous game and fine line we walk. Almost like a ticking time bomb waiting to go off.

In sum, fear is something both PSEs and their families experience, though they do so in very different ways. The concerns of PSEs pertain to family safety as well as the physical and economical implications of their job. On the other hand, families manifest catastrophic fears as well as domestic fears such as the possibility of infidelity, alcohol abuse and domestic violence due to the stresses of their job. The next section examines the differences in how PSEs and families asses the level of risk involved in the public safety profession.

Risk Assessment

While it is evident that a PSE's job is characterized by a certain amount of risk, employees and their families assess levels of risk in very different ways. Through discussions pertaining to risk as well as participant drawings, I discovered a substantial disconnect in risk assessment. Most of the PSEs involved in this study agree that the majority of their job is to "babysit" society. As Ted, a police officer, says: "I can't tell you how many times a day I am sent to examine a car alarm that went off or a teenager receiving prank calls. Most of my day is such a joke." Or as Raymond, a fire fighter, says, "Our shifts are about 12 hours of calm and only 2 minutes of sheer chaos." Indeed, about 90% of police work is comprised of paperwork, parking tickets, wellness checks and prisoner transports (Kirschman, 2004a) and only 4% of all calls at fire departments are for confirmed fires (Matsakis, 2005). Tony, a fire fighter, classified all of the various codes of emergencies they get ranging from a Code 1 call, which is a medical

emergency to a Code 4 which is a confirmed fire. About 80% of all calls made to 911 are

because someone is injured or needs medical attention (Heightman, 2000). However, according

to the National Data of Emergency Dispatch, about 20% of those medical calls are considered

non-life threatening and comprised of "frequent flyers," (Heightman, 2000) a phenomenon

explained by Rachel, a fire fighter:

> You cannot believe how many times a day we respond to someone with a toothache or
>
> nosebleed. We call them, 'frequent flyers' since the same person will call us every time
>
> they have a headache. In most cities, when you respond to a medical call and provide
>
> treatment at their home or wherever, that person doesn't have to pay for the care
>
> provided. Charges only kick in once they get in the ambulance, which they always
>
> refuse, so essentially they are getting free care.

While the majority of a PSE's day is characterized by frequent flyers and false alarms, this is not

to say that there are not risks associated with their job. As discussed in Chapter I, about 300 U.S.

lives are lost each year in fire fighting and policing (Department of Defense, 2007). Causes of

death for police officers include traffic accidents (40%), fatal gunshot or stab wounds (25%), and

heart attacks and strokes while on the job (30%). Causes of death for fire fighters include stress

and over-exertion (46%), vehicle incidents (42%), falls (7%), and deaths in fires (5%). Thus,

while the public safety job is definitely characterized by risk, it is mostly with regard to the stress

resulting in heart attacks or the occurrence of traffic accidents. Simon elaborates: "We may not

be in a gun fight everyday or stop a bank robber, but we deal with such negativity and hatred in

society, multiple times a day, it's no wonder we drop like flies from heart attacks and strokes."

Reba, a fire fighter expresses similar sentiments: "Even though it doesn't happen everyday, we

see our fair share of death." Indeed, the stress and pressure PSEs face while on the job puts them at great risk for injury, burnout and even death.

While PSEs face risks such as vehicular collisions and stress-induced heart attacks and strokes, family members of PSEs have a completely different notion of the "high risk" nature of the profession. Although PSEs do deal with violent offenders, high-speed chases, shoot-outs and dangerous fires, these events are a small part of the workday. However, family members, particularly children of PSEs, believe that their PSE loved one is ALWAYS involved with these extreme and often dangerous conditions. This was made clear in the drawings done by children. When juxtaposed against what their PSE parent drew, there is a huge disconnect for the impressions each has toward the job. For instance, 8 year-old Megan, drew a picture of her police officer father fighting with a "bad guy," complete with guns and tombstones (Figure 7):

Figure 7. Megan

Her father, George, on the other hand drew a completely different representation of his job with him driving around in his squad car, drinking coffee and smoking a cigarette (Figure 8):

Figure 8. George

In the same vein, while Marlin, a police officer, drew a picture of himself in uniform visiting with some younger students (Figure 9):

Figure 9. Marlin

his daughter Selena drew him shooting his gun at someone in the distance (Figure 10):
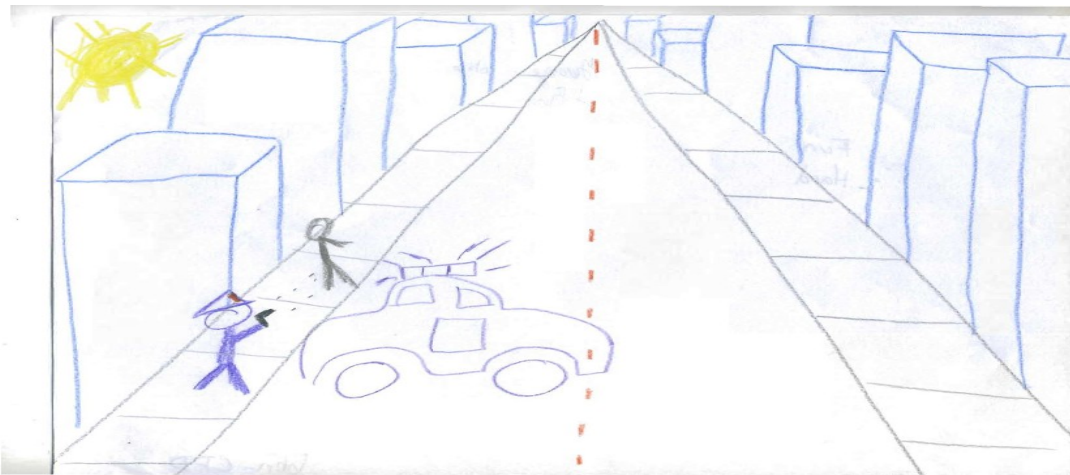
Figure 10. Selena

This disconnect between PSEs' drawings and their children's drawings also occurred with fire families. Of the 15 children of fire fighters, 13 included some kind of fire scene in their drawings almost always complete with rescuing someone from a fire as illustrated with the following three examples (Figures 11, 12 and 13):

Figure 11. Calvin

Figure 12. William

Figure 13. Evelyn
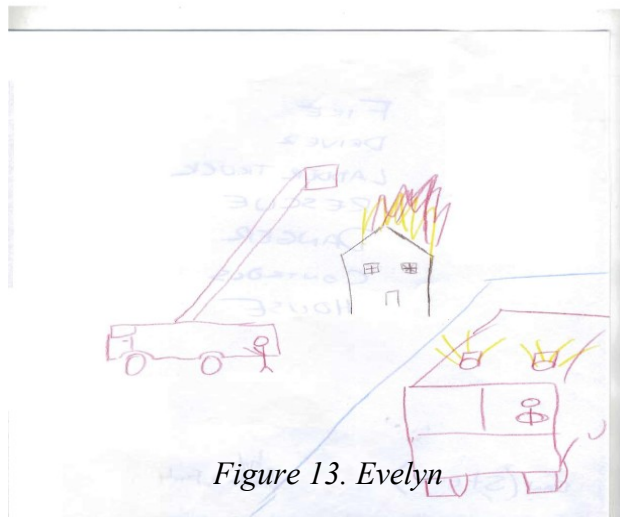
In contrast, the fire fighters in this study typically drew a picture of a fire engine or ambulance (Figures 14 and 15):

Figure 14. Reba
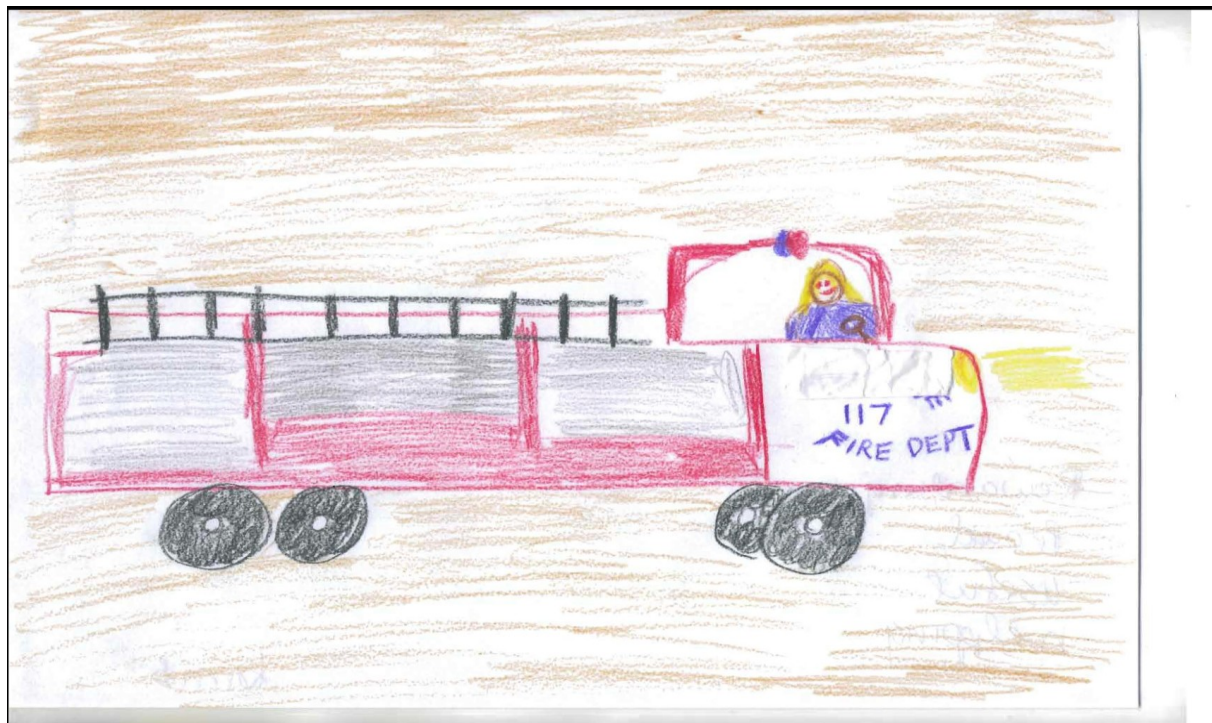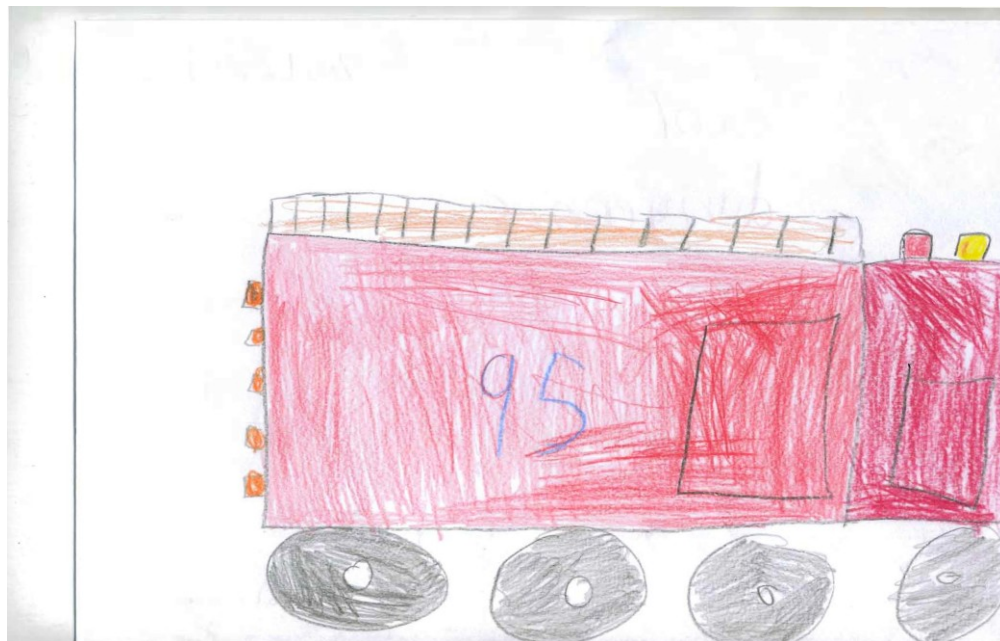
Figure 15. Tony

In addition, there were several fire fighters who drew pictures that depict fire safety and education (Figure 16):
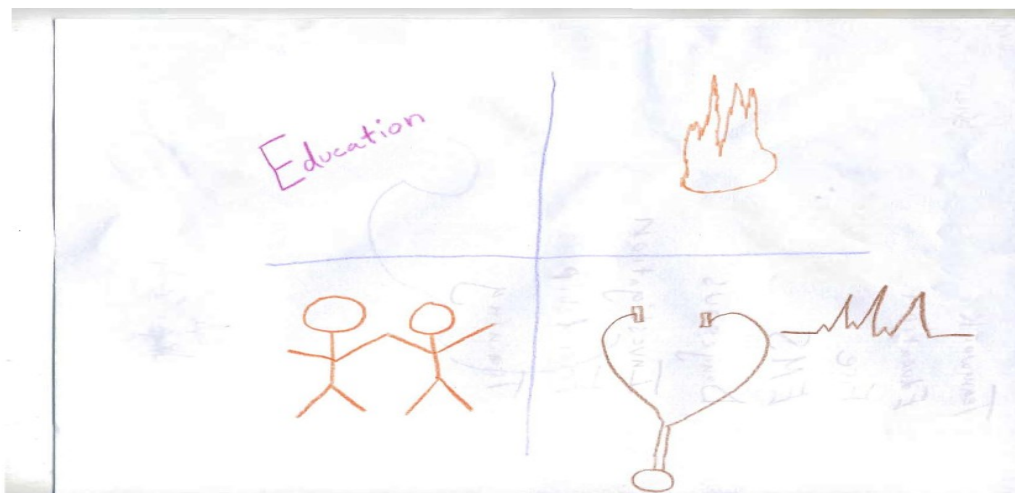
Figure 16. Tom

as well as an exit strategy in the event of a fire (Figure 17):
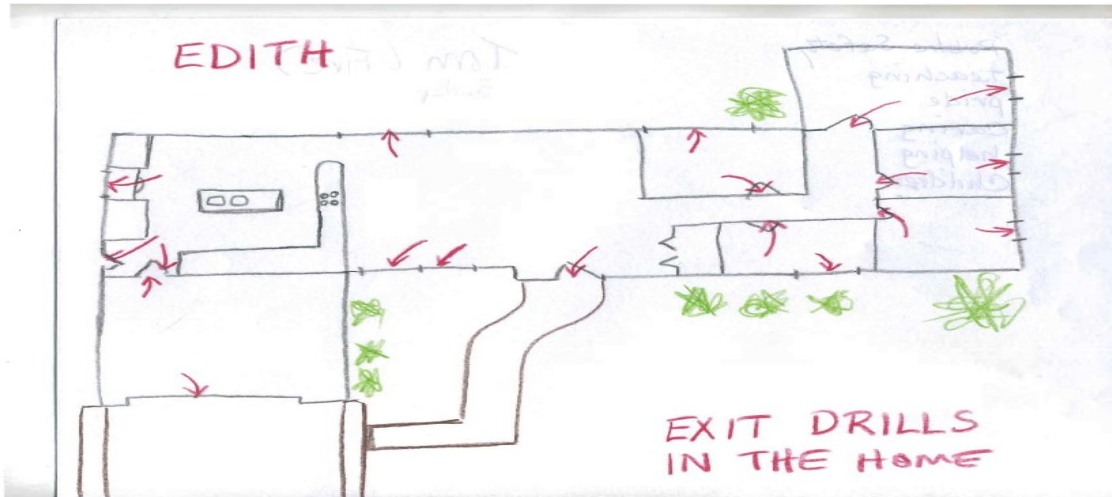
Figure 17. Raymond

Based on these drawings, there is a sharp differentiation between how PSEs think of their job and how their families at home, especially children, assess risk on the job. During interviews and focus groups, children and spouses alike were worried about the safety of their PSE loved one while at work. As 10-year old Lilly says: "I don't sleep when my dad is at work if he's working the midnight shift. I always think something bad will happen to him." Or, as 11-year old Margret and 13-year old Joshua say about their fire fighter dad, "We always do the sign of the cross whenever an ambulance drives by our house or if we see one on the street just in case our dad is lying inside." For these children of PSEs, they make sense out of the relationship between work and family by letting the stress they feel about their parent's job affect their own daily lives, such as not sleeping or constantly worrying.

Another common discussion that occurred during the focus groups was the influence the media has on family impressions of the job. Beatrice, the wife of a fire fighter and mother of two children in their 20s, explains:

My kids grew up thinking that reality TV depicts the actual day-to-day for their father. That fire fighters deliver babies in the morning, rescue a family of four from a burning house in the afternoon and then save a boy trapped in a well at night. While they do save lives and all, it's not an everyday, all day occurrence like they think and as a result, our kids grew up scared for their father.

Beatrice's 21-year old daughter, Stacey, adds to this discussion:

Yeah, I pretty much thought my dad was going to die in a horrible fire or from smoke inhalation almost every day. In fact, when I asked him to tell me what he does for a living, when I was like 8, all he said was, 'I save lives and help those in need.' That was it. Well, that made things worse for me because I started watching all these shows on TV and the news, thinking the worst all of the time. Then, when *Rescue Me* came on a few years back, that really had me worried. I would ask him everyday if he has checked his equipment to make sure it works right. At one point, I was in therapy because of all the stress. I finally did a ride along with him last year and only after doing that, can I sleep at night now. I know he is brave and that he helps people but that a large part of his job are medical calls and alarms accidentally being set off. Yes, he has put out fires, but I think I now realize that it doesn't happen quite as often as I had thought!

Families of police officers described similar situations pertaining to how their job is portrayed through the media with regard to risk. Mary, the 13-year old daughter of an undercover police officer, explains the parallels between her father's job and that of what she sees on the FBI

drama, *Criminal Minds*: "My dad does exactly what Morgan and Gideon do: He goes after serial killers and bank robbers and catches them. He saves lives." In contrast, when I spoke to Mary's father, Simon, about the nature of his job during a separate interview, he explains that his job description requires him to go undercover trying to catch prostitutes. Before he took that assignment, he was undercover at an elementary school to investigate physical abuse toward students by a teacher.

Based on this discussion, PSE spouses and children have a very different idea of what risks are involved in the public safety profession than PSEs themselves. Moreover, many of the PSEs involved in this study have no interest in adjusting the impressions their families have toward the job. In fact, Edward says: "If my kids think I am always running, gunning and chasing the bad guys, well that's okay. It can't hurt that they think their dad is a hero." Marlin echoed this idea: "I like that my kids brag about my job to their friends. They play cops and robbers because of me and I think that's cool." Finally, Heather, a fire fighter describes how she thinks her husband views her job: "I know he thinks what I do is sexy! I mean, come on, your wife is a fire fighter. He probably imagines me drenched in sweat, putting out all those fires, saving people's lives and being a hero. Come on, what man wouldn't be turned on by that!" Thus, in the most basic assessment of risk, family members are typically concerned with unlikely and dire scenarios, while PSEs take a more practical view of risk on the job. However, in addition to the physical concerns PSEs have with regard to heart attack, stroke, or being killed in a car crash, PSE respondents in this research also talked about concerns with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Andy, a fire fighter who was present during the September 11th terrorist attacks on New York City, spoke at great length about the effects and ramifications of a high stress incident:

We saw horrific things that day and for days after. I saw mutilated bodies, singed children, arms, legs, clothing, hair, strewn all over the place. I did not sleep for six months. I am still on strong anti-depressants and yet I feel like I am pretty normal considering all that I witnessed. Some of the other guys were not so lucky. My department was not even the first to respond or anything like that and by the time we got there, several hours had already passed but it was still a horrible scene. One guy in my department committed suicide about a month later after being diagnosed with PTSD. I know of at least three other fire fighters who were there that day who also killed themselves. We may not see this kind of stuff everyday but when you do, it stays with you-it's in your bones. You can't shake it. But it's a risk we take to do a job we love.

While the nature of the job puts PSEs at great risk for developing PTSD, it still remains unclear as to the amount of those that are diagnosed with full blown PTSD. Some say it is as much as a third of the public safety profession that is affected while other sources say the number is quite small, with only about 5% of PSEs being diagnosed with the disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2008). It is clear, however, that PTSD is a job risk that terrifies many public safety employees. Amanda, a police officer, explains how terrified she is about getting the disorder since her father, who was also a police officer was diagnosed with it five years after he retired. Similarly, Glen, also a police officer, feels like he is already experiencing symptoms of the disorder after the death of his co-worker:

My best friend in the whole world, who was a police officer with me, crashed his squad car into a telephone pole chasing after a speeder. It was such an unnecessary death-stupid people speeding, and even worse, I was the first to arrive and had to see his body all chewed up. I still have that image burned in my mind. I am having trouble sleeping, I

feel depressed a lot of the time and I really have just sort of shut down emotionally.

Totally desensitized to everything. I know it's probably PTSD and I am getting help.

Charlie, who has been a police officer for almost 15 years, talks about how much they warn

police officers about the dangers of the job, especially developing PTSD, when going through

the police academy:

> You know from the beginning that this disorder is a real threat. Our job is more than just
>
> putting our bodies at risk during a possible gun fight or high speed chase. I see so many
>
> bad things on the job that I am so much more afraid of getting some kind of mental
>
> disorder, like PTSD, than I am getting shot. I sometimes feel like I am one more teenage
>
> suicide away from a straight jacket.

Finally, one last risk that PSEs in this study described involved being exposed to an

illness which could then afflict their family members. Several of the PSE participants talked at

great length about their exposure to AIDS, tuberculosis and other highly contagious diseases

while on the job. Janice, a police officer, was bitten by a woman who had Hepatitis B while she

was trying to place her under arrest. Janice was rushed to the hospital and provided with every

shot and test imaginable in order to ensure she did not contract the disease. Similarly, fire

fighters and police officers alike are constantly exposed to people who have less life-threatening

diseases such as Scabies but are still put at risk of transferring these diseases home. As Douglas,

a police officer explains:

> We picked up this guy who, at the time, we had no idea he had Scabies. He was in the
>
> back of the squad car and I kept seeing him itching himself feverishly, thinking that he
>
> was just dirty or something. When we brought him in, my sergeant took one look at him
>
> and said, 'Get him outta here! He has Scabies!' Thank God I was wearing my gloves

while handling him but still, I was petrified I was going to bring those disgusting mites home to my small children. Right after, I practically gave myself third degree burns in the shower before I went home. I wanted to burn my skin off to rid it of any bacteria! Indeed many of the PSEs in this study talked about their methodical behavior to rid themselves of any bacteria before going home. Janice, Marlin, Simon, Heather, Kyle and Robert all said they never bring their work clothes or work boots home with them as a way to "protect" their loved ones at home from any germs or bacteria that might remain on their uniforms. Interestingly, family members never addressed their PSE loved one's exposure to illness as a major concern.

Based on the discussion above, it is evident that PSEs and their families view the "risky" part of their job in different ways. For families, the risk of bodily injury or death is tantamount to their concerns, while PSEs feel they are more at risk in terms of acquiring a physical ailment, such as having a heart attack or stroke while on the job, or acquiring a contagious disease from those they encounter on the job. They also spoke at great lengths about the risk involved with acquiring mental ailments such as PTSD.

In responding to Research Question 2, this analysis revealed many similarities and differences between PSEs and their family members. In terms of similarities, both PSEs and their family members use humor as a way to make sense of their situation and do so in productive as well as unproductive ways. In addition, PSEs and their family members both engage in various forms of emotion management and emotional labor on and off the job. With regard to differences, PSEs and their families seem to experience fear in different ways. In addition, there is a huge disconnect in terms of how risk is assessed by both PSEs and family

members. The next section will examine Research Question 3 by considering differences between male and female PSEs and their family members.

<div style="text-align:center">RQ3: Similarities and Differences Between Male and Female PSEs</div>

Research Question 3 asks if male and female PSEs make sense of the relationship between work and family in similar or different ways. This analysis revealed many similarities and differences between male and female PSEs. In terms of similarities, both men and women have a heightened sense of the risk their job poses to their physical and mental well-being once they become parents. In addition, both the men and women that participated in this study believe the role of parent is devalued and discouraged in the public safety profession. With regard to differences, women have a more difficult time negotiating a healthy relationship between their work and family life. Second, the competency levels of female PSEs are called more into question by family members more often than for male PSEs. Finally, women and men communicate the relationship between work and family very differently with men assuming "superhero" rhetoric to discuss the relationship and women using socio-emotional and empathic messages to talk about work and family. The following discussion will first outline the many similarities between male and female PSEs then turn to an examination of the differences regarding how they both manage the relationship between work and family.

Risk

As discussed in the previous section, the public safety profession is characterized by risk, and both male and female PSEs internalize risk in much the same way regarding the relationship between their work and family. Moreover, the riskiness of their job becomes tantamount once they become parents. As George says:

Before I had kids, I thought I was such a bad ass and I was actually pretty, well, careless

on the job. Then, the moment I became a father I realized that I have this whole other

person I have to take care of. Really put things into perspective for me.

Louie, a fire fighter, echoes this idea about the impact of a dangerous job on the family:

I am the only one who works in the family so I am the sole breadwinner. What would

happen if I got killed at work? Pensions are a joke these days, plus I haven't been on

long enough for my wife to collect any substantial amount of money. We don't have any

extended family so my biggest fear is that they would lose the house and be out on the

street. I can't have that for my family. I really try to limit the risks I take in the name of

the job. Let's face it, it's just a job and my family is more important.

Similar to George and Louie, other PSEs including Glen, Reba, Simon, and Walter felt the risk

of the job to be so intense that they actually left jobs in large metropolitan cities in favor of a

smaller and less crime-ridden suburban or rural area. They did so because, as Jason says:

"Nothing every happens in the 'burbs." Most of the PSEs that participated in this study shared

similar sentiments about how the precautions they take while on the job changed once they

started a family. From changing departments or not wearing work shoes home to locking up

guns in a safe place out of reach of their children, their priorities changed when children entered

the picture. Glen, a police officer, elaborates:

When I first started the job, I would, well, take my gun home with me and just set it on

top of the fridge. It was just me and my wife back then, no kids. I didn't have to worry

about someone getting a hold of my gun. Even when we had our first baby, I still didn't

lock the gun up or anything. It actually took me responding to a really bad call several

years that made me decide to lock up my gun. This kid, who's dad is a cop, had found

his dad's gun, which was just laying in his dresser drawer, wanted to play with it and

accidentally shot and killed himself with it. The image of that boy and their family is

burned in my mind forever. No way will my kids ever get near my gun. I actually

stopped even bringing it home a couple of years ago and just keep it at work. It's safer

there than in my home.

Like Glen, several other PSEs keep their duty weapons under lock and key while in the home,

and none of the female participants admit to ever bringing their duty weapon home. Vicki,

Janice, and Amanda make sure to keep their weapons at work to completely eliminate the

likelihood of one of their kids coming across the weapon. As Vicki, mother of three says: "I

don't understand why so many coppers bring their guns or Mace home with them. If I haven't

had to use my gun at home in my 35 years of life, why would I think that would change now? I

don't want my kids anywhere near it."

While gun safety is one precaution PSEs take once they have children, they also take

precautions while on the job. For example, Amanda describes a time when she actually put off

breaking up a gang fight until her back-up arrived:

It's not totally uncustomary to wait for backup to respond to something, especially if it's

dangerous and requires more units. Where I work, there are a lot gangs, which equals a

lot of shots fired calls and bad fights. Now I am not saying I can't take down a big gang

member, after all, I work out six days a week, but I have kids at home. So, this one time,

there was a fight involving about 50 gang members, all equipped with guns, knives,

whatever. I waited for backup because let's face it, the world would probably be better

with one or two less gang members in it. Let them duke it out. I refuse to endanger my

own life to save a scumbag who will probably go out and kill someone else the next day.

Like Amanda, many other PSEs do not like the idea of putting their lives on the line especially in order to save the life of a criminal or "less appealing" member of society. Reba, a fire fighter, expresses her disdain for car fires set by juvenile offenders and gang members:

> I get so ticked off when we respond to a code 2 car fire. These are almost always set off by some stupid punk kids who think it's funny. Well, car fires can be so incredibly dangerous, especially if there is still fuel in the tank but of course, these kids don't think about that. Just last year, a guy at our department died while responding to a car fire. The whole thing exploded while he was investigating. If I can help it, I don't go near a car fire.

Reba later refers back to the car fire story mentioning again that she avoids certain situations, specifically car fires since she has a family at home that rely on her to "leave the shift in one piece." This story reveals a common theme that emerged throughout the analysis, which is that parents, in particular, whether male or female, take fewer risks while on the job in order to ensure their safety in coming home to their families. In contrast, there were nine participants in this study who were partnered but had no children, and most of them admitted to the thrill they experience that goes along with a high-risk job. Sophie, a police officers explains:

> I think there are a lot of police officers that are afraid to take risks on the job because they have their families' best interest in mind. Well, I don't think that is the right mindset to have in this job. You don't join the police department to avoid calls and sit in your car waiting for backup, which we have some on the force that do that. We are not chasing girl scouts; we're nabbing rapists, child molesters, burglars—bad guys. People should, you know, keep that in mind when they sign on to the job. If you don't like risk, become a kindergarten teacher!

While risk is a theme shared by the male and female participants in this study, another similarity

is with regard to parenthood being devalued in the public safety profession.

The Devaluing of Parenthood

Consistent with Bochantin and Cowan's (in press) finding that motherhood in public

safety organizations is both devalued and discouraged, this study found this pattern with regard

to motherhood and fatherhood. While most of the women who are mothers that participated in

this study took maternity leave, more and more male police officers also want extra time with

their families, with several either taking paternity leave or advocating for it in their department.

However, in most departments, any type of FMLA[3] leave is frowned upon for both men and

women. For women in this research, the choice to become pregnant and start a family was

accompanied by efforts to distance the officer from her profession. This distancing occurred

through ambiguity regarding pregnancy (i.e. not knowing what to do with a female PSE once

they become pregnant) and not allowing them to perform certain duties any longer.

Ambiguity Regarding Pregnancy. Several of the female participants in this study

describe their experiences at their specific departments once they announced their pregnancy.

Many of the women mention that they were either the first, or one of the first, to get pregnant

within their department so their supervisors did not know how to handle their situation since it

was so unprecedented. Rose, a police officer describes her experience when she became

pregnant with her first child over 20 years ago:

> When I got pregnant, it was back when so few women were in law enforcement to begin
>
> with that pregnancy was just, like, completely taboo in this profession. When I told them

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[3] The Family and Medical Leave Act requires employers to grant up to twelve weeks of unpaid
leave each year to eligible workers who have serious health issues, who need to care for a new
child, or who need to care for a spouse, child, or parent with serious medical concerns (Willborn,
Schwab, Burton and Lestor, 2007).

I was pregnant, I had no idea what accommodations they would need to make or what I needed to do—I was just a kid myself, and pretty stupid I think! They sent me home, without pay, for my entire pregnancy. They told me they didn't know what to do with me. I didn't ask questions because I was so afraid of losing my job. I was just feeling lucky since they didn't fire me on the spot. No one considered the law back then!

In Rose's case, because she was the first to get pregnant in her department, her supervisors did not know how to appropriately handle the situation nor did they consider policies such as the FMLA or the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA)[4] which serve to help manage issues pertaining to work and life. This pattern was not unusual in this study. As Amanda relates:

When I got pregnant with my first child, I did not really understand how I was supposed to take leave nor did anyone at my department let me know. I had been able to work up until I gave birth without taking any sick days. Just before that, I talked to my sergeant to see how long I would have after I had the baby and he said that I would need to come back to work 8 days after I had the baby or else I would lose my job! There was no way my doctor would ever clear me to go back to work in such a short amount of time. After reading something in the newspaper about FMLA, I found out that I actually was entitled to 12 weeks unpaid leave and that there was no way I could get fired for taking it!

Both Rose and Amanda faced situations in which they were being punished for becoming pregnant by their departments not knowing what to do with them. In Rose's case, they sent her home without pay and for Amanda, they threatened to fire her if she did return eight days after giving birth. Both these situations illustrate the practice of pushing women out of the public safety profession once they become pregnant.

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[4] The PDA amended the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42U.S.C. § 2000e(k)) in 1978.

Demotion and Punishment. Another common experience of female participants is having job responsibilities taken away or transferring women to positions that others consider to be "weak work." When Reba, a fire fighter, became pregnant, her lieutenant no longer let her drive the fire truck. Instead, they moved her to sit in the backseat of the truck when responding to calls. Concerned with her "demotion," she finally asked her lieutenant why she had been transferred and he responds by informing her that the fire department "cannot be liable for any sudden contractions or cramping" she might get while she is driving the truck. Reba continues: "I was in total shock when he said this to me! I was only three months pregnant at the time! What pregnant woman gets contractions at three months along?! They were just worried about their image." Indeed, image and the implications of a pregnant public safety employee seemed to play an important role in many of the experiences of several women in this study. Rachel, a fire fighter explains:

> At my department, the second you tell Lieutenant you are pregnant, you are relieved from any and all of your job duties. Done. But you get paid 100% of your salary while you are off whether it's three months or nine months, they definitely compensate you while you are off. They do this because there really is no "light duty[5]" that they can assign you as a fire fighter. But the real reason they send you home is to hide you like a dirty secret. They just don't want to have to deal with any comments and complaints they will get from members of the community seeing a pregnant fire fighter. Obviously when you are pregnant you cannot be around the smoke because it could harm the mother or the baby but no one seems to consider the fact that that most doctors would clear us to continue

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[5] Light duty is characterized as being transferred to a "less arduous position for the duration of an employee's illness which may include being transferred to lower job classifications or lower salary levels" (Wheatstone, 2001).

working as paramedics or even allow us to drive the truck. Nope, the damn politics get in

the way just because a woman gets pregnant.

While image plays a crucial role in the treatment of pregnant PSEs, another way they are pushed

out the profession is being transferred to positions that other may consider "weak" police or fire

work. When Vicki became pregnant with her first child, her sergeant took her off the S.W.A.T.

team and instead, assigned her to be a D.A.R.E. officer, educating school-aged children about

drug abuse prevention. She elaborates:

My sarg. actually told me that the reason he was transferring me to crime prevention was

to 'give me practice being around kids' now that I was going to be a new mother. He

also figured that since I was a woman and expecting a child, my maternal instinct would

kick in and make me better at relating to kids over the male crime prevention officer they

had at the time. I hated being that stupid crime prevention officer…it's weak police

work and they did not let me forget that.

Based on the preceding discussion, female PSEs are often subjected to unfair practices and

maltreatment once they decide to start a family. However, male PSEs are not exempt from such

scrutiny either. In other professions, especially more white-collar settings, recent research

reveals that many men desire to take and do take paternity leave (Buzzanell, D'Enbeau, &

Duckworth, in press; Waller, 2009) and enact involved fatherhood (Wilkinson, Magora, Garcia,

& Khurana, 2009). However, the current study reveals that men in the public safety profession

are still ridiculed and ostracized if they request paternity leave. There are two ways the male

PSEs were treated with regard to their desire to better parent their children and to be more

available for them. First, their masculinity and sexuality was called into question, especially by

superiors. Second, if they requested paternity leave, much like many of the female participants

in this study, they were punished by their employers by either being demoted or having certain job responsibilities taken away.

Masculinity Called into Question. There were several men in this study who had either taken paternity leave just after their child was born or had asked for it and been denied or subject to harsh criticism. Those that took paternity leave agree that the experience was largely negative and difficult to navigate especially when their masculinity was called into question. Ted, a police officer explains his experience:

> When my wife had our first child, I really wanted to be there to help support her and the baby. Plus, my wife had a job that really required her to go back as soon as she could so I wanted to take time off from work and do the whole 'stay-at-home' parent thing. In any case, when I explained the situation to my boss, he immediately busted out in laughter. They granted me the leave but not without consequence. I couldn't go a day without someone calling me Mr. Mom or putting a Ms. in front of my last name.

Louie, a fire fighter shares a similar experience:

> Right up until the day before I took my paternity leave, which was about a week before my wife's due date, the guys were filling my locker and car with ladies underwear, make-up and Tampax. They thought they were so funny and you know I just tried to stay cool. After they left the Tampax tampons on the hood of my car, I told them what a bunch of idiots they were, that pregnant women don't get their periods and hence, don't require the Tampax. That shut 'em up.

Walter, a fire fighter, explains that after he requested paternity leave, his lieutenant actually re-wrote his name on the back of his fire coat as a woman's name. He said that his fellow fire fighters could not understand why he was doing what they referred to as, a "woman's job" and

teased him constantly. The pressure got so bad for him that he opted not to take the leave in the end. Similarly, when Marlin, a police officer, requested time off after his second child was born, his sergeant asked him if he was "growing a vagina." Several other officers, usually the veterans, joked to him while on a call, asking if he needed to take a break to pump breast milk. Like Walter, this bothered Marlin so much that he retracted his request to take leave.

Demotion and Punishment.   Aside from their masculinity called into question by other PSEs and supervisors, men, like women, were often "punished" for requesting paternity leave, schedule changes, or time off to be with family. Similar to Vicki's story being demoted from S.W.A.T. to D.A.R.E., Douglas recounts:

> After our second kid was born, my wife decided that she wanted to go back to work. She had been a stay-at-home mom for six years and wanted to go back to nursing. Her schedule was going to be the night shift, which was what I was working at the time when I was doing undercover policing. When I explained the situation to the commander and asked if I could change my schedule to days he actually said to me, "You know what, since it seems like you are done doing *real* police work, I am going to put you where you seem to want to be, with the kids as a D.A.R.E. officer." I was so offended but at the same time, I really needed that change in schedule to days so I took it but not without feeling like I was being punished for not wanting my kids to have to end up in day care!

Like so many women in public safety, Douglas was in a Catch-22 situation where he was "damned if he did, damned if he didn't." He needed the change to his schedule but not necessarily at the price it cost of drastically shifting his career trajectory. Steve, a fire fighter, faced a similar situation:

I missed every single birth of my other two children not to mention the fact that I hardly spent anytime with them once they were born. A friend of mine, an accountant, had told me I could take paternity leave via the FMLA so I requested it and boy did I get tortured at work! I am part of basketball team at the fire house and after I came back from my 12-week leave, I was no longer on the team. They said it was because they had to fill my spot while I was gone but I know better. I started that team 10 years ago…no way the captain gets replaced.

The preceding discussion examined some similarities between male and female PSEs with regard to how they make sense of the relationship between work and family. Both men and women in this profession internalize and deal with the risk involved in their job in much the same way once they become parents. In addition, parenthood is devalued and discredited for both mothers and fathers the public safety profession. While there are many similarities between men and women in public safety, there are also many differences regarding how they make sense of their work and family lives. These include, first, the notion that women have a more difficult time negotiating a healthy relationship between their work and family life. Second, the competency levels of female PSEs are called more into question by both family members and co-workers than for male PSEs. Third, women and men communicate the relationship between work and family very differently, with men assuming "superhero" rhetoric and women using socio-emotional and empathic messaging to talk about work and family. These differences are discussed in the following section.

The Gender Gap: Women and Work-Family

Past research reveals that women experience more stress than men in trying to manage the responsibilities between their work and home lives (Erickson, 2005; Gerstel & Sarkisian,

2006; Perry-Jenkins, 1994). Consistent with those findings, the current study finds that women often feel that they have two full-time jobs with raising a family and being part of the paid labor force—roles that they must enact simultaneously. More often times than not, the women in this study express the need make a choice regarding which sphere to privilege and when. Some women privilege the work sphere which causes tension at home while others privilege the home sphere resulting in their competency at work being called into question. Rachel, a fire fighter with children in their 20s, explains that for the most part she opted to put the majority of her energy into advancing at her job. She elaborates:

> Unfortunately, this job does not allow you to be both a mother and an employee. It's, well, kind of constraining in that way. You have to pick what is more important. I love my kids more than anything but I was lucky enough to have a husband who stayed at home with them while they were younger so I was able to focus on my career and move through the ranks. It's a shame that I had to pick one over the other, but me picking work has allowed me to become a lieutenant in the fire service—not something that happens very often for women in this type of work. But that wasn't without it's consequences. I can't tell you how many holidays, birthday parties and time with family I have missed.

Janice, a police officer, is the opposite of Rachel in opting to spend more time with her family, doing as little overtime work as possible. She explains: "These days I am stretching myself thin to be the best mother and employee that I can be. But I can't be both so I am now doing as little as possible while at work and never working overtime because I would rather be a good mother. This is just a job for me." While Rachel and Janice believe they have to choose one sphere over the other, four other women in this study mention that they actually prefer more flexible borders between their work and family. Reba, a fire fighter as well as Vicki, a police officer, talk about

how they have pumped their breast milk from work as a way to save time and ensure that their nursing baby would have milk when they got home from work. Reba continues:

> In between calls at the fire house, I would just excuse myself and go pump in the bathroom, which of course is unisex. I don't have my own bathroom so the guys are always walking in on me. I have to put up a sign when I am in there but they still walk in anyway. I think they do it on purpose when they know I am pumping…gives them a chance to see me topless!

In the same vein, Vicki describes her experience with pumping breast milk while at work:

> I am not stupid enough to do it at the station, even in the ladies' room. They would have a field day with that if they knew I was pumping. No, I go to Starbucks bathrooms or the library to use their bathroom during my shift since those are both in my zone. I think it's convenient to do this while at work. I kill two birds with one stone this way. It's kinda cool to get paid to pump milk for my child!

Both Vicki and Reba describe flexibility and their attempt to blend work and home spheres. Kelly, a fire fighter, attempts to do this as well by having her partner stop by the fire house as often as possible while she is working in order to spend more time with her. Similarly, Sophie, a police officer, makes a point of stopping home for lunch during her break to spend time with her partner. Attempting to blend the work and home spheres has gotten a few of the women in this study in trouble while at work. Amanda, a police officer and single mother, tells a story about the time she tried to sneak away from work to take her daughter to the dentist, subsequently missing a crucial call that she was supposed to respond to. She elaborates:

> It was the dead of winter with nothing going on and my daughter needed a ride to the dentist. My sister, who was supposed to take her, couldn't make it and I figured I could

swing by and pick her up and drop her off at the dentist. My sister said she could pick her up. Well I picked her up from home when I was in between calls and when I got her there, the lady at the reception needed me to sign something so I ran in for a minute. In that minute I was gone, there was a really bad car crash in my zone that I was supposed to be the first to respond to. Well, I missed it since I left my radio in the car. Long story short, by the time I got the call again, 10 minutes had already passed and when I got to the scene of the accident and the car had actually just exploded.   All but one of the passengers had managed to get out. I still don't sleep over that incident. I can't help but think that if I had gotten there sooner, if not for my daughter's dentist appointment, that woman wouldn't have died.

Based on the above examples, women PSEs have a difficult time trying to negotiate the borders of work and family. They either must choose one sphere over the other or if they attempt to blend the spheres and make them more flexible, they face possible negative consequences.

In contrast, although family conflicts can be stressful for men, the fact that a male PSE is sometimes the sole breadwinner often makes it more acceptable for him to miss a birthday party or holiday so he can go to work due to traditional, stereotypical roles. For instance, Abigail, the wife of a fire fighter explains: "My husband is the man of the house and was taught at a very young age that men provide for the family. Because of that, I cut him slack all the time in exchange for him bringing home the bacon!" Similarly, Katherine, the wife of a police officer says: "We have really gotten used to him missing Christmas Eve or family parties and all that. I mean, how can I really complain? He is the only one bringing in money so I can't say much about him missing things. I expect that he misses things. The family gets it." For these women,

they have not only accepted the fact that their male spouses work schedule takes priority over family commitments, they also justify why it is okay to miss these functions.

Competency Questioned at Work and at Home

The second major difference between male and female PSEs is with regard to levels of competency being called into question either at work or at home. For the participants in this study, only the female PSEs have their competency and abilities questioned.

Competency Questioned at Work. Several of the women in this study mentioned that their workplace abilities are often questioned by their police or fire departments, especially if they have children. For example, female PSEs are consistently placed in positions that value motherhood and nurturing on the job. Sometimes they are assigned as D.A.R.E. officers described earlier in this chapter where they work toward educating young students about "stranger danger," crime prevention and drug abuse. Others, including Rose and Amanda, served as School Resource Officers (SROs) at some point during their career, which essentially means being a security guard in either junior highs or high schools in the community. As Rose says: "When they made me do this, I was so offended. They told me I would be best at dealing with children since I was a woman. Is this all they think I am capable of? Babysitting a bunch of rich kids who fight in the lunch room over a pudding cup? It's offensive." Both Vicki and Rachel echo a similar trend in the public safety profession with females being called to help deal with domestic situations or situations involving children. As Vicki explains:

> I was shocked at the honesty of the dispatcher this one time. She was giving me my call orders, which was a domestic abuse situation involving a husband beating on his wife, and said the sergeant wants me there because I was 'the only woman on duty that night.' They think we are the best at calming down the battered wives. I find myself constantly

assigned to domestics because they think because I am female, I can relate or something

to these women. I am not a victim of abuse so why do they think I can relate?

Indeed, Vicki and several other women complain about not being able to do, as Sophie says,

"real police work," when they are constantly assigned to domestics abuse situations and positions

within the organization that cater toward children. Many of them feel that their competency

levels are questioned the moment they are called in for situations involving women and children

over situations that are more violent.

Competency Questioned at Home. Several female PSEs also express their disdain for

family members questioning their ability to do the job. For example, Carla's parents often refer

to her fire fighting job as "a phase" when speaking to their friends about what their daughter

does for a living. Carla jokes that her parents constantly ask her when she will "come to her

senses" and find a different job. Similarly, after Kelly, a fire fighter, suffered third degree burns

on her arm while saving a family dog from a burning house, her mother asked if she was now

ready to get a "real job." Many family members of PSEs have said that they do not feel it is a

woman's responsibility to chase bad guys and put out fires. Marlin, the husband of Janice, a

police officer, said during his interview that he was upset when his wife first told him that she

wanted to change jobs and become a police officer. She had grown tired of working in corporate

America and wanted a better schedule and better money so she chose law enforcement. Because

he was a police officer as well, he had his concerns about her ability to rise above the sexual

harassment and discrimination typically faced by female police officers. As he says: "I just

didn't think she could handle it. She's so nice and unassuming; she's not a mean person by any

stretch of the imagination and I thought she would have trouble telling people off. It's not her

nature nor should it be. I don't like how jaded women in policing can get." While parents and

spouses are often concerned about the safety of female police officers and their ability to do the job, many male spouses are often put off by females in public safety, claiming it's role reversal for a woman to be in a position where they must be aggressive, physically fit and saving people's lives. Rico, the husband of a fire fighter, explains:

> I work in an office all day nice and clean and I hate thinking about my beautiful wife getting dirty while at work. She sometimes comes home with soot and residue from fires or medical stuff and I just think to myself that a man should be the one getting dirty, not a woman.

Rico clearly struggles with what his wife does for a living and assumes stereotypical roles for men and women. Both Rose and Amanda are single parents whose husbands left them for similar reasons. Rose explains that her ex-husband could not handle the thought of her carrying a gun and chasing "bad guys," telling her constantly that a woman has no place in policing. Kelly, a fire fighter, talks about how her ex-husband had a huge issue with her sharing sleeping quarters with her mostly male co-workers. He always accused her of cheating and eventually this led to the divorce.

Based on the preceding examples, there are many times when female PSEs competency levels and abilities are called into question by either supervisors at work or by family members at home. The last notable difference between the sexes is that women and men communicate the relationship between work and family very differently with men assuming "superhero" rhetoric to discuss the relationship and women using socio-emotional and empathic phrases to talk about work and family. This is discussed next.

Superhero vs. Empathic Rhetoric: Male and Female Communication About Work and Family

Male and female PSEs communicate the stress of the job differently as well as how they

manage the relationship between work and family. Men tend to engage in "superhero" rhetoric with both their families and their co-workers while women use emotional-based empathic phrases to talk about work and family. The differences will be discussed next.

Superhero Rhetoric. The male PSEs involved with this study almost unanimously admit that they never really talk to families about their jobs so to not worry them. They engage in separation between work and home as often as possible. However, as described in the analysis of Research Question 2, it is not always possible to leave families in the dark. Children, especially, often question their PSE parent and when that occurs, PSEs (male and female) tend to tell humorous stories to ease their families' minds. For male PSEs, these stories often involve talking about themselves as being invincible to harm or endowed with immense physical strength. For example, both George and Edward admit that the have referred to themselves as "Superman" while on the job and have communicated that to their families. As Edward says: "Whenever my son gets concerned about my job, I ask him if he ever worries about Superman catching the bad guy. When he says no, I tell him that I am like Superman and not to worry." Similarly, Robert, who is part of the dive team responsible for recovering bodies, has referred to himself as "Aquaman" to his children, which he claims helps to ease their anxiety about his job.

While male PSEs talk to their families about their jobs using language that suggests invincibility or superhuman abilities, they also use this type of communication when de-stressing with other PSEs. Tom, a fire fighter, is affectionately known as "Hulk Hogan" around the fire house because of his muscular physique and his ability to lift heavy people and heavy items. He once lifted an entire cement wall off of a young boy that was trapped underneath it. Similarly, Glen, a police officer, recalls a time when he and fellow police officers gathered at a bar to talk about a really tragic event that had occurred while working that day. There had been a hostage

situation at a convenience store where a male offender held several patrons at gunpoint, including young children. Apparently the offender was high on drugs and shot one of the hostages. When this occurred, Glen and fellow police officers returned fire. After about 30 seconds of gunfire, Glen's friend had made the fatal shot to the assailant's head, taking him down. When Glen and other officers gathered at the bar afterward to talk about it, they shared "war stories" about the various strategies and tactics they employed. As Glen says: "We talked about how my buddy dove behind the car to get a clean shot of the guy. We teased him that he flew behind that car like he was Batman. I swear the guy must have shot at us 100 times but we were like immune to his bullets or something."

Empathic Rhetoric. Sharing war stories and engaging in "superhero" rhetoric is, for the most part, a male endeavor. In contrast, the female PSEs in this study rarely talk to other PSEs about stressful events because the majority of their co-workers are male and often exclude women from sharing stories and dealing with stress. As a result, female PSEs often talk to friends outside of work to help cope with stress and do so in ways that emphasize empathy and emotion. Amanda, a single parent, talks to her sister quite often about stressful events she sees at work. She elaborates:

> Since I am not married and I don't want to talk to my kids about all this stuff, my sister is really a good shoulder to cry on. I can't talk to people at work, even the women because there is this tough guy mentality there. When I witness child abuse or something like that, I want to cry. I don't do it at work but the minute I get in my car on the way home I cry to my sister. She's there to support me.

Similarly, Sophie, a police officer, also relies on support from her sister when dealing with something especially troubling. There was an incident at work involving animal cruelty, and her

partner had created a rule that she did not want to hear anything involving cruelty to dogs, cats, or other animals. As a result, Sophie has to find other ways to vent after witnessing animal abuse. She tells a story about the time she got a call about a possible organized dog fight going on at that moment. She elaborates:

> When we got there it was chaos. To try and hide the evidence guys were throwing dogs and puppies into this huge furnace contraption while we were walking in. I swear I felt like I was in the Holocaust. You could hear the dogs whimpering in agony and the smell. The smell is something I won't ever forget. Needless to say, I needed someone to talk to since I was wrought with emotion and so very upset. I knew I couldn't talk to Wendy (her partner) so I called my sister. I never, ever cry but I just let it all go and had to get it all out there. It felt good to share all that with someone and she is so good at calming me down. I felt much better afterward. The guys I work with just don't deal the same way. I need to cry and they need to beat something, or someone up.

While receiving empathic concern from others and being able to share their stories from work seems crucial for female PSEs, the way they talk about their job to family members is also full of emotion and rarely includes superhero rhetoric. Like men, most women do not often tell their families about the horrors they deal with at work, opting instead to share humorous stories. However, several female PSEs mention they have shared more significant details with family members. Janice recalls telling her 14-year old daughter about an orphan girl she helped while at work one day. She elaborates:

> I had a pretty rough day one time and was in the bath after work and I was sobbing. Well, my daughter walked in and saw that and instantly wanted to know why I was crying. I told her that there are times at work that I feel very sad for some of the people

that I see. That today, there was a little girl, only 10-years old, that was living on the

street in a cardboard box with no parents or supervision. She was cold, dirty and

starving. I told my daughter how heartbroken I was for this little girl and that I wanted to

do everything I could to help so I picked her up and carried her back to the station. When

she asked what would happen to the little girl all I could say was that I didn't know. I

know full well that little girl will get tossed around the system, from foster home to foster

home but I couldn't tell my kid that. Well, she ended up being furious with me that I

couldn't do more for the little girl. She yelled to me that I was the police and I am

supposed to help everyone. I was trying to explain the reality of the situation…that we

are not these superheroes everyone thinks we are and sometimes we are unable to help.

In this example, Janice attempts to diffuse the "superhero" image that so many children have

toward the public safety profession, but she failed to make a lasting impression on her daughter.

Thus, based on these examples, men in this research communicate to each other and to family

members the idea that they are somehow indestructible and invincible against the danger in

crime, while women communicate emotion and often their powerlessness in solving the

problems of the people they encounter. In responding to Research Question 3, this analysis

revealed many similarities and differences between male and female PSEs. In terms of

similarities, both men and women have a heightened sense of the risk their job poses to their

physical and mental well-being once they become parents. In addition, both men and women

believe their role as a parent is devalued and discouraged in the public safety profession. With

regard to differences, women have a more difficult time negotiating a healthy relationship

between their work and family life. Second, the competency levels of female PSEs are called

more into question both at work and at home. Third, women and men communicate the

relationship between work and family very differently with men assuming "superhero" rhetoric to discuss the relationship while women use socio-emotional and empathic messaging to talk about work and family. The final section of this chapter will examine the similarities and differences between police officers and fire fighters with regard to how they make sense of the relationship between work and family.

RQ4: Similarities and Differences Between Police Officers and Fire Fighters

Research Question 4 focuses specifically on the similarities and differences between police officers and fire fighters with regard to how they make sense of the relationship between work and family. This analysis revealed many similarities and differences between police officers and fire fighters. In terms of similarities that have not yet been addressed in this dissertation, both police officers and fire fighters engage in taint or "dirty" work which has an effect on their home lives. In addition, members of both professions establish rules with their family members pertaining to their job or schedule. With regard to differences, police and fire deal with stress, trauma, and tragedy in different ways, and most of the police officers that participated in this study agree that if given the opportunity, they would have chosen a career as a fire fighter instead.

Taint/"Dirty" Work

Everett Hughes (1951) conceptualized the term dirty work to refer to tasks and occupations that are likely to be perceived as disgusting or degrading. Emerson and Pollner (1976) extended the concept of *dirty work* to include aspects of the job that are shameful, disliked, or serve to challenge the self-image of the worker (Tracy & Scott, 2006). Work can be tainted physically, socially, or morally (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). *Physical taint* takes place in jobs associated with dirt, garbage, sewage, death, bodily fluids, or dangerous conditions (Tracy & Scott, 2006).

Social taint occurs where an occupation involves regular contact with people or groups that are stigmatized. Last, *moral taint* occurs when an "occupation is generally regarded as somewhat sinful or of dubious virtue" (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999, p. 415), such as pawnbrokers, casino employees, or strippers (Murphy, 2003; Rambo Ronai, 1992).

Based on interviews with police and fire fighters in this study, both occupations experience some level of physical and social taint, and this taint can have a detrimental effect on life at home as they try and navigate the relationship between work and family. To begin, both police officers and fire fighters are exposed to physically disgusting and degrading situations on a regular basis. Police officers often transport "pissbum" prisoners to and from facilities, having to search and handle them on a regular basis. As Edward explains: "We call 'em pissbums because they pee and shit all over themselves because they are either too drunk to get to a bathroom or because they are so doped up on drugs they don't notice. Either way, I have to touch that filth and potentially, take disease home to, well, my family." Sophie shares a similar experience:

> Oh this one time, I had picked up a prostitute on the street and she was all high on heroin and was only wearing a nightgown, no underwear. I put her in the back of my squad and when I got to the station, she had her period blood all over the backseat of my car! I was the one who had to clean it up since our department's so cheap, they don't want to pay someone to do it. The really disgusting part was that I somehow managed to get her blood on my pant leg and when I wore it home that night I was like, 'gross there's period blood all over me!' My partner didn't want to come near me after that for like a week.

As evidenced from Edward and Sophie's stories, police officers have to deal with "disgusting" and "degrading" situations constantly at work. Moreover, this "physical taint" becomes magnified if it manages to come home with them.

While police officers are constantly dealing with physical taint, fire fighters share similar experiences. For the most part, the public has romanticized fire fighters, especially since 9/11 associating this profession with skill, heroism, and bravery (Tracy & Scott, 2006). However, fire fighters also deal with dead bodies, dismemberment, and bodily fluids, especially when responding to medical calls. Louie elaborates:

> We have a ton of EMT calls a day and we have to, under law, respond to them all. We had this one where a son called us about his crazy father who was sitting in the bathroom playing with his, you know, his poop, his feces. I guess he was going senile, but in any case, we had to clean him up, physically, and then take him to the hospital in the ambulance. The smell was so disgusting on this guy and touching his feces—I just wanted to puke.

Physical taint also occurs after responding to a fire. As Reba elaborates, "When you get a fire, especially one that takes someone's life and the house is just ash, you wear that soot and residue home with you. I swear it takes a month to wash ash and the remains of some poor guy or girl off your skin." Steve agrees, "You always smell like burnt coal when you are a city fire fighter responding to fire after fire. It stays with you even after work and after a million showers."

Aside from physical taint, both police and fire experience social taint as well. Police officers face social taint because their work requires service to stigmatized clients. As Janice explains: "We are the ones who uphold the law which means our sole responsibility is to arrest and punish lawbreakers. We deal with the scum of the earth everyday." Simon extends this by saying: "The public doesn't call on us when they are having a good day. Society hates the police. In fact, I sometimes think they hate us more than the child molesters, the bank robbers, the drug dealers." Referred to as a "contagion effect" (Brodsky, 1982), Simon sees the public

equating police officers with the population they control. Many of the police officers echo this notion. As Glen says, "The public image of the police has really changed. Our cars get egged, we get flipped the bird by people, and yelled at on a regular basis by those we serve and protect. It's really sad how much we are disliked by the very people we are trying to protect." Vicki continues in the same vein with a shocking story:

> We were actually once poisoned by this sweet little old lady! Yeah, she brought in cookies to the department that she supposedly home made, telling us we deserved them for being such good civil servants. Well, we all dove in and scarfed 'em down only to get violently ill later that night. The twelve of us who at the cookies were throwing up violently and a few even went to the hospital to have their stomachs pumped. What did the toxicology report find in their stomachs? Rat poison!! Yep, that lady actually tried to kill us with poison-laced cookies!

Vicki continues to talk about how much this upset her children. When they found out why she had gotten so sick, they were outraged that the public could have such disdain for the police. It apparently made them even more apprehensive about their mother's job. As her husband, Erwin explains:

> My kids, especially the older one, the 8-year old, swore she would never accept cookies from strangers or anyone she didn't know well just in case they were poisoned. One of the little girls in her class at school brought cupcakes to school for her birthday and she refused to eat it, proceeding to lunge it into the trash can. She got sent to the principal because of it! She is still so untrusting as a result of what happened to Vicki. She now thinks everyone is out to get her and her mom. Only 8 and she is already so jaded.
> Like police officers, fire fighters also experience social taint or "courtesy stigma"

because they must serve all members of society, regardless of their social status. They often respond to medical or fire calls in dangerous parts of the city in which they work where they must provide care for individuals who are known felons, gang members, and even child molesters. As Stephanie elaborates:

> Where I work is rough and when we get an EMT call to go help someone who we know is a bad person, it sucks because then we are perceived negatively by the rest of society. This one time, I had to perform mouth to mouth on this guy in this neighborhood who had just been released from jail after serving 10 years for the sexual molestation of his own daughter. I literally saved his life but I got spit on by an onlooker asking me how I can feel good about saving the life of someone who rapes children; that I am no better than the rapist. I don't feel good about it. But it's my job. I can't just let people die if I can help it.

Although police officers and fire fighters both deal with physical and social taint on a regular basis, only police officers have the unfortunate experience of dealing with moral taint. As previously mentioned, jobs that possess moral taint are those in which outsiders consider the job to be immoral, devious, or sinful (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). Similar to how police officers experience social taint when they are equated to the disenfranchised individuals they serve, there is also often moral taint associated with the job. As Marlin explains: "I am really tired of all these stories on the news about us being portrayed as bullies and racial profilers. We are not all bad yet society and people in it think we are. No one ever likes seeing a police officer unless they are being stabbed, robbed or chased." Sonny continues along the same line: "The Rodney King thing has caused us to be totally stigmatized among the public we deal with. That situation almost never happens yet people still assume that we are all racist bastards." In addition, Janice

adds:

> Whenever I stop a person of color, they almost always say that I only stopped them
> because they are black. That I am discriminating against them. It's such a load of crap
> and gives us a bad name. I can't even see the color or race of the person I am stopping
> when they are speeding by me at 100 mph!

Finally, Rose puts things into perspective by illustrating the guilt that certain individuals subject police officers to for just performing their job responsibilities:

> I pulled over this woman after finding out there was a warrant out for her arrest because
> she stole a car and was driving without a license. When I pulled her over and placed her
> under arrest, she said that now her kids were going to be motherless if she goes to jail and
> how can I feel good about my job knowing her children are going to be put out on the
> street. She was hysterical, yelling "my babies, what will happen to my babies?" and
> throwing herself on the ground. I actually started to feel really bad. This job really gets
> to you sometimes when you realize just how much pain you cause people even when they
> are the ones breaking the law!

Interestingly, several fire fighters in this study expressed concerns with the moral taint of police officers. As Russ says: "I know this sounds bad but police officers don't just deal with the bad guys, they are the bad guys to a lot of people. No one is ever happy to see a police officer. But they are always happy to see a fire fighter." Kelly continues in the same vein:

> We literally save lives on a daily basis. What do police officers do? Write parking
> tickets and harass people who are just trying to get by? I would feel bad about myself if I
> knew I was writing someone a huge ticket that would cost them a month's rent or grocery
> money. I'm glad I am not a police officer. That job is frowned upon.

While police officers are subject to moral taint and fire fighters seem exempt from this kind of scrutiny, it is still clear that both professions experience various levels of dirty work, including physical and social taint, and that these circumstances often affect home and family lives.

Family Rules

The second similarity that police officers and fire fighters share with regard to making sense out of their work and family lives is in establishing rules with and for their family members in terms of their job and schedule. Police officers and fire fighters that participated in this study all agree that they have made certain requests of their family members to help accommodate their schedule or needs. For instance, Ted, who works the midnight shift as a police officer, requests that his wife do her best to keep their two children quiet after he gets home from his shift at 7 a.m., particularly on the weekends and over summer break. Similarly, Andy, a fire fighter asks his wife, who teaches English to Mexican immigrants, to conduct her sessions at coffee shops or in her clients' homes if one of her work days falls on a day he is home from his 48-hour shift. As he explains:

> I am the type of person who needs complete and total silence when I sleep. We have a small apartment and hearing her say: "The weather is chilly today" over and over again as she teaches her clients English, can get pretty annoying. I feel like it's the least she can do. She only has to work part-time since I make a decent living. Give and take you know?

In Andy's mind, his wife's compliance and accommodation to his schedule is a fair trade-off, almost a reward, for not having to work a full-time job. Reba, a fire fighter whose husband is a stay-at-home dad, shares a similar mindset:

> I kind of feel like, you know, I am out there all day for two days straight taking care of

the sick, saving people by putting my life on the line on a daily basis, the least he can do

is have the dishes done and the children quiet when I get home. His job is so easy—he

gets to play with the kids all day and spend precious time with them that I don't. I love

my kids, don't get me wrong, but I love 'em a lot more after a good night's sleep after my

shift! It's really the least he can do. I don't ask much but keeping them quiet so I can

sleep is a rule we live by.

From the other side of the relationship, Carrie, the wife of a police officer and the mother of four

young children, feels resentment toward her husband's "rules":

He works midnights so when he comes home after 7 in the morning, he absolutely

requests a quiet house and all the shades drawn so no light gets in. Do you know how

hard it is to keep three toddlers quiet for seven minutes, let alone seven hours?! He's

made it a rule of sorts that when daddy comes home, everyone needs to be quiet. He tries

to frame it like a game but you know what I feel like saying? I am with these kids all

day, everyday, waking up in the middle of the night to feed the baby while he is at work

or sleeping. Where is my "quiet time"? Where are my rules?

Carrie and other spouses in this study express disdain for some of the rules that have been

established and some respond with their own set of rules. Julie, the wife of a fire fighter, decided

six years ago that every second night of the three nights a week her husband is off is dedicated to

"date night." She explains that establishing this as a rule allows them something to look forward

to and to be committed to completely. Similarly, Lynette, the wife of a police officer, created a

rule with her husband that he is only allowed to go out with his police friends one night per week

after his shift is over. She explains that his "drinking and partying" with friends after every shift

was starting to take a toll on their marriage and his relationship with his children. Thus, both fire

fighters and police officers, as well as their family members, create rules to either help accommodate sleep schedules or provide added time with family. While police and fire share similar experiences as described above, there are also several differences between the two professions in how they make sense out of work and family, which will be described next.

Coping Mechanisms

The first notable difference between police and fire is with regard to how they cope with the stresses of their job or family. As discussed in the analysis of Research Question 2, many PSEs find it helpful to have the opportunity to vent frustration and tension from the shift with fellow PSEs either during or after the shift, often through humorous interaction. For fire fighters, there is the luxury of being able to debrief a stressful situation with one another back at the fire house after the incident. Because the typical shift of a fire fighter is 24 hours on and 48 hours off, they usually have plenty of time to cope before having to go home. As Rachel says: "At my department, it's like a fraternity. Especially when something bad happens on duty, we have each other to talk about it with and that way, our families don't have to burdened with our problems." Kyle agrees: "It's just like a frat house because we essentially are living together. And on my shift specifically, there are no women fire fighters so it really is just all us guys goofing off and getting rowdy in between calls. I sleep like a baby when I finally go home!" Indeed, many of the PSE participants in this study claim that fire fighters are much more group-oriented, whereas police officers have a more isolated, solitary existence. As Anthony explains: "We have 24 hours where we are together the entire time. This gives us plenty of time to bond and talk about or deal with any stress we feel. I feel like police officers are so lonely and have no one to vent to." Many of the fire fighters in this study agree that they are provided with ample time to cope with stress from the job and to establish relationships with one another. In fact, they spend so

much time together that it is not usually necessary to spend any extra time together while they are not working. As Raymond says: "These guys are my family—my second family and I love 'em. They have gotten me through a lot of hard times but I think my job requires me to spend more time away from my actual home that I really don't feel the need to see them much outside of work." Tony continues along the same lines:

> We are all best friends. And you have to be. You have to trust the guy or girl who is coming in with to a dangerous situation. They have to have your back and you have to have theirs. But after our shifts, we all go home to our families and don't really see each other aside form the occasional BBQ or holiday party. We bond plenty at work.

Thus, the schedule of fire fighters allows them to foster relationships with one another and this helps them cope with the stress of the job. As a result, fire fighters find it easier to go home after the shift. As Reba says: "Thanks to these guys, I go home happy almost every single shift. Even that time I dragged a dead 14-year old kid out of the river to see his face covered with leeches and fish. My guys are the ones who got me through it before I had to leave for home."

In contrast, police officers are often left to fend for themselves in dealing with stress. Most of the patrol officers in this study worked in single-unit squads, driving alone in their squad cars for 8 and 10-hour shifts. For these officers, there is a Catch-22 situation when it comes to coping with job stress. If they do not take the opportunity to cope with stress before they go home, many end up bringing it home and taking it out on their family members. As Ted explains:

> Sometimes it can be so frustrating, you know? I just spent 10 hours away from my family so obviously I want to go home. But how do I get that image out of my mind when I had to respond to a call where there was this little boy, living in his own filth

because his parents are drug addicts and don't care about their son? I certainly can't talk about that kind of stuff with my wife and I can't talk about it at work since I am by myself most of the shift.

Similarly, Robert explains the effect a stressful day can have on his time with his family:

When I get forced to work overtime because some stupid guy wants to beat on his wife or kids, yeah, I get pissed and I stay pissed even when I am home. My wife gets mad at me when I am in a bad mood telling me that she is not the bad guy. I know she is not but if I have a bad day, I sometimes bring it home. What else am I supposed to do? I'm sure accountants have bad days, don't they?!

While releasing one's stress on family members is certainly not ideal, several other participants mention that the only other option is to vent frustration with other police officers after the shift has ended. However, many of the spouses and children feel resentment when their loved one spends these added hours away from home. Grace, the 16-year old daughter of a police officer, describes how upset it gets her when her father spends extra time away from home after his shift has ended. He works the 8 a.m.-6 p.m. shift and often spends several hours with fellow police officers after his shift at a local bar. Grace elaborates: "My dad has missed softball games and gymnastics meets that are held after school. He's done with work at 6 p.m. so there is no reason he can't make it. Sometimes I feel like his cop friends are more his family than we are." In the same vein, Stephanie, a wife of a police officers says:

He is already gone 8 hours for six days out of the week so I barely see him as it is. Then, after he gets done at 11 p.m. he wants to go grab a beer with his cop buddies. Don't you spend enough time with these guys? Meanwhile, I have four kids to worry about while he's out partying.

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Thus, Stephanie sees her husband's time spent with colleagues after work as unnecessary and just an excuse to "party." When I interviewed her husband, George, this is what he had to say:

> It's really a problem for my wife when I go out after a hard shift with the guys for a beer. I think she thinks I am laughing and hitting on other woman. We are constantly fighting about it. Little does she know that more often times than not, me and some guys from work are trying to make sense out of something tragic we saw while working. How could a mother abandon her children? How does someone burn a kitten alive? Why does a 12-year old kid put a bullet in his head? This world is so incredibly cruel and I, I am on the front lines dealing with this everyday. I can't talk to my wife about it and plus, my guys from work get it. They live it just like me.

Like Stephanie, other spouses believe their police officer loved one is making a choice to spend more time away from their families in order to "party," cheat on their spouse, or shirk their parenting responsibilities. Lisette, the ex-spouse of a police officer explains:

> Those bars he would go to were littered with those trashy badge bunnies and copper hoppers just looking to land a cop. He would go there after almost every shift since the damn bar was literally across the street from the department and party it up with god knows who while I am watching his kids. That's why we didn't make it.

These examples suggest that dealing with stress creates a double-edged sword for police officers: they either come home after their shift and run the risk of taking their stress out on family members or they attempt to release tension after work with other police officers but run the risk of upsetting family members by not being home. Only one participant described an option that seemed more productive. Ryan explains that his second wife threatened to leave him because she feared he had developed a drinking problem due to the amount of time he was spending at

bars after work. To protect his marriage, he quit going to the bars to deal with a tough shift.

Instead, he takes a two-hour drive to debrief and de-stress. As he says, "It gives me a chance to

deal. To really think about my day and center my thoughts. I now go home happier after that

and my wife's not pissed anymore. It was actually her idea and it works great." Ryan was

afforded the opportunity to save his marriage while still having a healthy outlet to vent his

emotion from work. However, in many cases, the pressure of the situation wreaked havoc on a

marriage to the point where a divorce was the only option. Eight of the ten participants who

have been divorced at least once were police officers, exemplifying the conundrum police

officers are faced with when trying to cope with stress and make sense of the relationship

between work and family.

Job Satisfaction

While fire fighters and police officers differ with regard to coping mechanisms, they also

differ greatly in terms of job satisfaction, which affects family life. Out of the 18 police officers

that participated in this study, only three of them would still choose a career in law enforcement

if they could do it all over again. When the remaining 15 police officers were asked what they

would have done instead, 12 of them said they would have chosen to be a fire fighter. As

Charlie says: "Fire fighters are the greatest thing since sliced bread. No one wants to ever see

the police." Many of the police officers agreed that the negativity they experience on a regular

basis is enough to make anybody regret a career in law enforcement. Many of the police officer

participants shared stories about being spit on, having their cars keyed and tires slashed, and

being sworn at, shot at, and abused almost every shift. Vicki says: "It's not fun to have people

hate you. And that's what it is. People hate the police…until they need us of course." Glen

continues that line of thinking: "If you have never needed the police, you don't respect the

police. You only need them when you are in trouble. Every other time, we are just there to annoy you." Finally, Janice explains:

> It's just so defeating to go to work everyday. I hate my job because I know that today, I am going to ruin someone's day or even their life if they can't pay a speeding ticket or something like that. It's almost never rewarding to be a police officer. I swear if it weren't for the schedule, I would have quit like six times!

While most police officers share this mindset, it seems most of their families do as well. Sentiments such as: "I hate his job," "I hate his schedule," "I wish she would have been a doctor," "I don't like my dad carrying a gun" were spoken by many spouses and children of police officers. Renee, the wife of a police officer sums it up:

> What kind of wife wants her husband to put his life on the line regularly? What kind of wife knows her husband is literally a target of violence and danger? I never sleep and my kids worry constantly. This is no life for anyone. What's the point anyway? Is he even helping anyone? It seems to me he is more just pissing people off than helping.

Renee explains that she never approved of the job her husband does but that when she met him he was a police officer so she knew what she was getting into. Unlike Renee, Katherine's husband was not a police officer when they met but decided to become one after almost five years of marriage. She elaborates:

> When he came to me and told me he wanted to be a cop I just froze. Fear and panic washed over me and then disgust. What am I going to tell my friends? No one likes a cop. It's just that, well, that it's not a job people respect anymore. Why couldn't he have been a fire fighter? I never tell him this though.

This lack of pride and respect was also clear when I asked what they tell strangers or acquaintances about the job. 17 out of the 18 total police officers in this study admit that they would never tell a stranger what they do for a living. Interestingly, 13 out of the 17 police officers said that they lie and say they are in construction. When asked why they do not disclose this information they said it is to protect themselves and their families because as George and Marlin explain: "No one ever really likes cops." Douglas explains that the reason he does not tell people what he does for a living is because you can never be sure what someone's feelings are toward law enforcement. He elaborates: "What if I meet someone who was just released from a 10-year prison stay? The last thing they are going to want to hear is that I am a copper." Simon, a single parent, thinks along the same lines:

> I know that some women think it's hot to be a cop but every woman that I have met at a bar or something either tries to take advantage of me by having me get her out of a ticket or they ask for legal advice. I'm telling you, I have never landed a girl by telling her I am a cop on the first date or when I first meet her. I only tell them after several dates and I am sure they like me for me.

While many of the police officer participants either regret their job or the image that is attached with it, three of the participants spoke very highly of their jobs, citing the rewards of saving a life or coming to someone's rescue. As Rose says:

> How many other people out there can say they have stopped a burglary in action? Or was the arresting officer of a known serial killer on the loose? Or was able to return diamonds and jewelry back to the store that had just been robbed? Or talked a 16-year old kid out of jumping off a bridge? That's why I do this job and I wouldn't have chosen anything else.

Jason shares similar feelings: "Do most people hate us? Some. But the thrill of getting the bad guy or helping someone out is enough to compensate for that animosity." Finally, when discussing the appeal of fire fighters Edward says:

> Everyone loves a fire fighter. That is one thing I know for sure. It's almost like they are worshiped like Gods. But, me, I think they are crazy to run into burning buildings as people are running out! I will take my chances with the drug dealers and gang bangers over fires any day!

  Based on the examples above, there are some police officers who value their job and feel they provide a crucial service, but the majority of police officer participants would have chosen a different career, and many of them would have chosen fire fighting. As Janice, Marlin, Edward, Carl, Glen, Ted and Robert claim: "Everyone loves a fire fighter."

Indeed, every single one of the 18 fire fighters that participated in this study expressed gratitude and passion toward their job. Many of them claim "it's the best job on Earth" and say they would never have chosen a different path. In fact, Louie says: "The only thing I would have done differently is to start this career earlier in life. Instead of wasting time as a banker for four years after high school, I would have gone straight for it." Similarly, Tom, who is nearing retirement says: "My only regret is not being able to start this job all over again." From the discussions I had with fire fighters, there is an overwhelming sense of pride about the job. Many of them referred to themselves as "saviors of society," "heroes," and "God-like." As Raymond says: "It's almost like you are a celebrity. Little kids want to hug you. Grown men want to shake your hand and women bat their eyelashes at you. It's awesome!" Walter continues in the same vein: "We are put up on a pedestal in society. We are heroes and do-gooders. I think we

are respected way more than cops." Walter, and several other fire fighters, bragged that society

seems to have more respect for fire fighters than police officers. As Rachel says:

> People cringe when they see a police officer. It's written all over their face. When they
>
> see us, especially in the fire trucks blazing down the street, they have a totally different
>
> look. Like more respectful or something like that. They know we are off to save a life
>
> most likely and not to stop someone speeding.

Thus, fire fighters clearly enjoy their job, and most of their family members share their

excitement. About three-quarters of the spouses and children of fire fighters say that if they

could pick a different career for their parent or spouse they would not. In fact, many of the

children of fire fighters mention that they are proud of their parent and brag to their friends.

Margaret, the 11-year old daughter of a fire fighter, explains: "My friends think that my dad is a

hero. He has a whole room decorated with fire stuff so my friends always want to come over to

see it. It's cool." Stacey, the 21-year old daughter of a fire fighter, explains that she loves

talking about her dad's job. She has written papers on the subject for school and even wrote an

article about him for her college newspaper. She goes on to explain that the fire fighter job is not

like any other job and that people respect this job more than most. As she elaborates:

> My dad has a whole room in our house that is decorated with everything fire fighting.
>
> But he can get away with it because his job is so exciting and so dangerous. People
>
> recognize that. My mom is a dental hygienist and you don't see her having a room full of
>
> teeth! His job is not like most others.

Based on the examples above, it is evident that fire fighters feel a huge sense of pride toward

their job. Unlike police officers, most of the fire fighters that participated in this study mention

that they have no issue disclosing their profession to strangers and that they often wear their fire

T-shirts out in public when dining with family or running errands. Tony claims he does this because he loves his job so much and the respect that comes with it:

> Even when I am just wearing the fire department's T-shirt or hat on my day off, people still look at me and they, you know, feel safe when I am with them. I even had a guy shake my hand in line at the grocery store thanking me for my service. It feels good to be needed.

Like Tony, Christopher, who is a single father, likes the public's impression of his job. He also claims that being a fire fighter is an excellent way to meet women: "Girls go crazy over the fact that I am a fire fighter. They always make some crack about sliding down the pole, and so on and so on. I think the big truck turns them on! I guess it's quite masculine if you think about it!" Unlike Simon, the single police officer mentioned earlier, Christopher is able to use his job as a way to attract women to him rather than repel them.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The preceding analysis chapter reveals several important findings regarding how public safety employees and their family members make sense of the relationship between work and family. To reiterate, the goal of this dissertation was three-fold. First, this study aimed to examine the public safety profession, a population that has been previously neglected in work-family literature. Second, this study extended the scope of traditional work-life studies by adopting a dyadic approach wherein the researcher interviewed both the public safety employee and his/her family member(s), allowing the voices of spouses and children of PSEs to be heard since their voices and experiences are absent from current literature. Finally, a goal of this study was to problematize and rethink key constructs, metaphors and dominant terms used in work-family literature and encourages PSEs and their families to explain, in their own words, how they view the relationship between work and family. This dissertation, then, provided a response to the call made by Golden et al. (2006) to incorporate a sensemaking based systems perspective to the study of work-family. This chapter begins with a summary of the study findings, and then considers both theoretical and applied implications of the research.

What Are the Dominant Metaphors PSEs and Their Family Members Employ to Make Sense of the Relationship Between Work and Family?

Prior to this dissertation, constructs and metaphors such as balance, conflict, tension, stress, incompatibility, boundaries and role conflict have been used interchangeably and often with limited conceptual development in discussions of the experiences people have with regard to their work and family lives. One of the major goals of this dissertation was to destabilize and

reconceptualize these terms by recognizing how they are communicatively constituted and used in the everyday experiences of individuals.

Participants in this research made sense of the relationship between work and family in many disparate ways. The drawings, coupled with comments made by each participant when asked to finish the statement, "the relationship between work and family is

_____", revealed complex and rich results yielding 52 unique metaphors to describe the relationship. Contrary to previous research that has focused on the relationship between work and family in white-collar professions (see Kirby et al., 2003), terms like balance and segmentation did not appear with great frequency among PSEs and their families. In fact, the word "balance" was only used five times out of the 85 people that participated in this study. Instead, participants likened the relationship between work and family to competition, nature, organism, change, integration, opposition, ambiguity and destruction.

Competition was the most commonly used metaphor type among participants as they saw their experience in dealing with work and home as being some sort of a war or challenge. This metaphor was contained on a continuum ranging from more benign activities like being engaged in a "tennis match" or a "game of tug of war" to more serious events like "war" and "battle," resulting in death. The second most common type of metaphor was in relation to nature. There were 11 different nature metaphors that participants used in describing the relationship between work and family, including, "a blizzard," "an island," "a tree," and "a spider web." Nature metaphors are often used to describe change, growth and the passage of time (Kingsland, 1985) as well as disaster, overwhelming forces, uncaring elements, beauty and peacefulness.

The third most common metaphor type employed was preservation. In this study, both PSEs and family members had a strong urge to protect and preserve their home and work spheres

and expressed metaphors relating to survival and protection including "food for the human body," "a shadow," and a "lion and his pride." The fourth dominant metaphor type revealed by this study was change (12 specific metaphors). These metaphors reflected straightforward change such as "a chameleon" or "from night to day," as well as movement (e.g., "a roller coaster") and shape (e.g., "a rubber band," or "a flexible straw").

The fifth metaphor category employed by participants in this study (though almost exclusively by PSEs and not family members) was those pertaining to integration. These integration metaphors often involved food and drink such as "cake," "a tossed salad," "a recipe for disaster," and a "cocktail on ice." The sixth metaphor category is opposites. Several participants used metaphors such as "black and white," "two sides of a coin," and "fire and ice" to express that the worlds of work and home are so completely opposite one another that they cannot possibly ever relate one sphere to the other. Metaphors within this category were employed to either express how fortunate they feel to have a home life that is the complete opposite of the stress of work or to illustrate the radically different personalities required by work and family spheres.

The seventh metaphor category in this study is ambiguity (seven metaphors) including metaphors such as "wild card," "mirage," "darker side of the color wheel" and "morning fog." Finally, the last metaphor group revealed through this analysis is destruction, including "a sinking ship," "torture," "tornado" and "hurricane." All of the participants using this group of metaphors were spouses or children of PSEs, and all described the relationship between work and family in very negative ways.

Do PSEs and Their Family Members Make Sense of the Relationship Between Work and Family

in Similar or Different Ways?

This analysis revealed several similarities and differences with regard to how PSEs and their families make sense of the relationship between work and family. In terms of similarities, both PSEs and their family members use humor as a way to make sense of their situation and do so in productive as well as unproductive ways. With regard to productive uses, PSEs and their families rely on humor as a coping mechanism, as a way to create solidarity between co-workers, and as a way to bridge the divide between family and work. The use of humor was not always productive, however, as it can cause negative spillover into the family sphere and is not always helpful as family members attempt to deal with the nature of the public safety profession.

The second similarity revealed between PSEs and family members is that they both engage in various forms of emotion management. This dissertation found that while PSEs work hard to manufacture emotion for the public, they do so for their families as well. This finding challenges Hochschild's (1989) notion that individuals are free to express their "true" emotions in private, among family members. For the participants involved in this study, there is a limit as to what PSEs can talk about with their families, at times because of rules instituted by family members. As a result, PSEs alter their identity and communication by either lying when asked how the day was or withdrawing from family members. The interaction patterns revealed in this research suggested a concept referred to as *Bilateral Emotional Labor* (BEL) in which PSEs attempt to manage their own stress at work as well as the emotions of others (family members and members of society). PSEs engage in BEL as a way to manage parallels to their own lives and to manage the public's and their families' impression of them.

This study also revealed that family members often participate in emotional labor for the benefit of their PSE loved one. Both spouses and children perform emotional labor but do so in very different ways. Children described a pattern of emotion management in which they cover up their intense worry about their PSE parent. In contrast, while children performed emotional labor by putting on "brave faces" for their parents, several spouses said that they performed emotional labor to keep their spouses happy. There were many examples where spouses admit that they really did not like the public safety job, yet because their loved one enjoyed it they "faked" happiness.

With regard to differences, PSEs and their families experience fear in different ways. Specifically, PSEs experience fear on a practical level, being concerned about family safety, physical well-being and economics. Family members, on the other hand, express fear related to the catastrophe that would ensue if one negative event sets off a domino-effect, as well as *domestic* fears about extra-marital affairs, alcohol abuse and domestic violence.

Another difference revealed in this study between PSEs and their families was with regard to risk assessment. Much of a PSE's day involves situations that pose little or no threat such as writing parking tickets, responding to medical calls or educating students about the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. Indeed, most of the risk for public safety jobs involves heart disease, car accidents, contagious diseases and PTSD. However, family members of PSEs have a very different notion of the "high risk" nature of the profession, and are especially worried about bodily injury or death. Sadly, several of the children I spoke with admit that they lose sleep over what their parent does for a living, and a few of the children have been prescribed anti-depressants to help cope with their stress.

Do Male and Female PSEs Make Sense of the Relationship Between Work and Family in

Similar or Different Ways?

There are several similarities and differences between male and female PSEs in terms of making sense of the relationship between work and family. Both male and female PSEs experience risk in much the same way, and beliefs about the riskiness of their job becomes paramount once they become parents. Many PSEs – both male and female – attempt to minimize risk to family through behaviors including changing departments, not wearing work shoes home, or locking up their guns in a safe place out of reach of their children.

Another similarity between male and female PSEs was the experience that parenthood is consistently devalued in the public safety profession. Bochantin and Cowan's (in press) recently concluded that motherhood in public safety organizations is both devalued and discouraged, and the current research found a similar pattern with regard to fatherhood. For women in the public safety profession, the choice to start a family led to confusion in the department and less desirable work assignments. For male PSEs, a request for paternity leave resulted in their masculinity being called into question by superiors and colleagues, as well a decrease in job responsibilities.

There were also differences in the way men and women make sense of their work and family lives. First, women have a more difficult time negotiating a healthy relationship between their work and family life, as they feel they must simultaneously enact the full-time jobs of PSE and mother. Though a few women attempted to blend work and home lives, most women in this study felt they must sometimes make a choice regarding which sphere to privilege and when. Some privilege the work sphere, causing tension at home, while others privilege their home sphere resulting in their job competency being called into question. The second major difference

between male and female PSEs is that only female PSEs have their competency and abilities questioned – both at work and at home. Female PSEs are almost consistently placed in positions that represent nurturing and "motherhood" on the job (e.g., as D.A.R.E. officers or School Resource Officers). Several women in this study mention that these assignments prevent them from being able to do "real police work" and perpetuate the stereotype that women serve best being caretakers. The questioning of female PSE competence also came from the home front. Many parents think their public safety daughters are going through a phase while male spouses of female PSEs often cannot handle the thought of their wives engaging in dangerous situations. Finally, male and female PSEs communicate very differently about the relationship between work and family and the stress of the job. Specifically, men tend to engage in "superhero" rhetoric with both their families and their co-workers while women use emotional-based empathetic messaging to talk about work and family.

Do Police Officers and Fire Fighters Make Sense of the Relationship Between Work and Family in Similar or Different Ways?

This analysis revealed many similarities and differences between police officers and fire fighters. In terms of similarities, both police and fire fighters engage in taint or "dirty" work which has an affect on their home lives. Both police officers and fire fighters engage in physical taint while on the job constantly being exposed to physically disgusting and degrading situations. They also both engage in social taint or "courtesy stigma" in which they must serve all members of society, regardless of their social status. However, this analysis revealed that only police officers have the unfortunate experience of dealing with moral taint in which outsiders consider the job to be immoral, devious or sinful (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). A second similarity that

police officers and fire fighters share is with regard to establishing rules with and for their family members in terms of their job and schedule.

While police and fire share similar experiences, there are also several differences between the two professions. The first notable difference between police and fire is with regard to how they cope with the stresses of their job or family. Because a fire fighter's schedule typically requires 24 hours on the job then 48 hours off, there is time to foster relationships with one another and cope with the stress of the job before going home after the shift. However, this is not an option for police officers. Instead, police officers are often caught in a Catch-22 in which they can either take the stresses of work back home or debrief with other officers after work and miss out on valuable time with family (which often frustrates spouses and children). The final difference between police and fire fighters revealed in this study is how satisfied they feel toward their job. Of the 18 police officers interviewed, only three would choose a career in law enforcement if they could do it all over again, and the vast majority would prefer a career as a fire fighter. These sentiments were echoed by the spouses and children of police officers. On the other hand, all of the 18 fire fighters that participated in this study expressed gratitude and passion toward their job, and their family members share in their excitement and pride.

This summary points to many issues that could have both theoretical and practical implications for public safety employees, the organizations in which they work and their families. These ideas will be considered in the remaining sections of this chapter.

<div align="center">Implications, Limitations and Directions For Future Research</div>

Theoretical Implications

There are four theoretical implications that can be derived from the present study. They pertain to metaphors of work-family, sense*taking*, humor and emotion management.

Metaphors of Work-Family. After having summarized the findings of this study above, it has been revealed that the central purpose of this dissertation is to examine how participants articulate and make sense of the relationship between work and family. In considering this issue, the first research question asks what metaphors PSEs and their family members employ to understand how work and family is experienced and made sense of by the participants. As mentioned above, the most commonly used metaphor within this study was competition.   Uses of this metaphor ranges from the feeling of complete loss and annihilation to a partial victory providing a sense of control over one's life. Many spouses and children felt they were in a lose-lose situation either in terms of never getting to spend time with their PSE loved one or experiencing a stricter childhood filled with rules and consequences. In these situations, participants expressed disdain and despair with regard to how the PSE managed the relationship between work and family. On the other hand, there were several discussions among participants describing situations where they felt somewhat victorious with regard to "getting what they want" out of the relationship between work and family. However, victory comes with a price. Several of the public safety employee participants said they often "fought" for days off with their superiors in order to spend more time with their family members or had to fight with family members to get them to be more understanding toward their schedule.   Interestingly, it seemed as though none of the participants involved in this study ever clearly "won" a match or fight. In fact, this cycle of conflict sometimes led to resistance among PSEs in the form of calling in sick for shifts or blowing off family commitments. Although sometimes effective, employing resistance is not without its consequences as being a "subordinate fighter" within an organization often leads to labels such as "trouble maker" or "problem employee" (Waldron, 2000, p. 79). As

a result, likening the relationship between work and family to that of a competition suggests a feeling of powerlessness because, in most cases, the battle is a losing one.

Likewise, nature metaphors often signaled a sense of powerlessness. In most cases, participants used nature metaphors to describe parts of nature that are cruel and unforgiving such as tornadoes, blizzards and storms. When participants used nature metaphors, it was usually in relation to how devastating the "forces" of their jobs can be on family life.

In addition, the last category of metaphors pertained to ambiguity. Here, participants expressed confusion and uncertainty about what to make of the relationship between their work and family lives. Research in the past has been quick to suggest that when people do not know how to reconcile the demands of one sphere with the demands of the other, they automatically assume a conflict orientation to the relationship between work and family (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). However, the examples described within this category of ambiguity suggest a more nuanced understanding of this concept. In some situations, the ambiguity that accompanies a PSE's job can be both a blessing and a curse. For example, having a non-standard work schedule sometimes allows for more flexibility to attend to family but can also cause tensions when an event has to be missed due to the work schedule.

In contrast to this "either/or" orientation, ambiguity was described by some in terms of lacking clarity or blocking the ability to see through to the other side. A few participants, particularly family members of PSEs, believed that the often ambiguous and uncertain nature of the job could cause so much stress on the marriage that divorce became the only option. Of the 36 PSEs that participated in this study, ten were either divorced and single parents or were re-married for the second or third time, and many of these individuals and their family members used ambiguity metaphors to describe their lives. Huston, Caughlin, Houts, Smith and George

(2002) assert that individuals with jobs characterized by stress or danger (i.e. the public safety profession) will have a higher likelihood of divorce. Thus, the ambiguous nature of public service can reap devastating consequences on family life.

Focusing on the subjective experiences of PSEs and their families highlights the ways in which individuals make sense out of work and family. This is in stark contrast to the large body of research that attempts to delineate work-family constructs into neat and orderly categories. This study has revealed that these "cookie-cutter" ways of viewing the relationship between work and family are expressed quite differently by members of the public safety profession as well as their families.

Moreover, this study has found that metaphor use is symbolic and not direct. It has the power to show the same situation from many vantage points, some very close and some more distant. It also provides a dictionary of words and phrases with which to describe a situation. This study found eight unique ways of describing the relationship between work and family and aids in our current understanding and conceptualization of work-family. This study also adds to and builds off of current work-family metaphors. The following discussion will explore similarities and differences to current work-family metaphors, which were discussed in the first chapter.

Segmentation. PSEs use of both "nature" metaphors and "opposites" metaphors indicate a commonality to past research on the link between work and family. As discussed in Chapter I, segmentation has been a common way of examining the relationship between work and family. However, most of the research we have on segmentation comes from white-collar settings. Segmentation in white-collar settings has been thought to occur when one finds either the job or the home dissatisfying or too demanding and hence, attempts to gain greater satisfaction in the

other sphere to compensate for any conflict they feel between the two domains. Past research has indicated that segmentation between work and family is a "natural" process for when people are unhappy in one sphere they naturally attempt to find happiness in the other (Blood & Wolf, 1960). However, this dissertation found that although metaphors of segmentation were expressed by participants through their use and descriptions of nature and opposites, they were not used in the same way that past research has suggested and most definitely did not occur "naturally." Instead, some participants in this study actively separated work and family spheres in order to deal with work-related stress. In their discussions pertaining to work and family being similar to nature and opposites, PSEs actively separated or segmented either because their job and family are completely independent and different from one another, or they attempted to keep them that way. From refusing to discuss any work-related events with family to taking on a totally different persona while at work, metaphors aligned with segmentation (as revealed through nature and opposites) illustrate the two spheres as being completely independent of one another.

Furthermore, when using nature metaphors, some of the female police officers in this study mention that because they are mothers, they choose not to put themselves in danger while at work in an attempt to protect themselves from danger so they go home at the end of their shift. Janice explained on several occasions that her job is just a job to her and fundamentally different than her time spent at home. As a result, she never does more than she has to at work and instead, seeks satisfaction at home. She used the nature metaphor of "fire and ice" to reflect this notion that work represents a cold, distant place for which she feels no significant attachment to while home is her passion. Similarly, Carla utilized the "island" metaphor to explain how difficult in can be to actually maintain separation between the two spheres but that, ultimately,

she sees this separation as the optimal solution. She uses "island" as a metaphor because an island is often seen as an idyllic place, a destination that we desire because of its separation and escape from our everyday existence. For Carla, her "escape" is from work and is accomplished through spending time with her family. These processes described above did not occur naturally the way past research on segmentation has suggested. Both Janice and Carla, like others, actively made the decision to seek satisfaction in the family sphere over the work sphere suggesting a disconnect from current work-family scholarship.

Spillover. Another common metaphor expressed in current work-family literature and which was discussed in Chapter I is that of spillover. Although my participants never likened the relationship between work and family directly as "spillover," their metaphors pertaining to "integration" and "preservation" suggest a spillover mentality. Research on spillover asserts that employees often carry the emotion, feelings, attitudes and skills that they acquire and establish at work, into their home lives (Crouter, 1984). Spillover can be either positive or negative.

Spillover was reflected positively in the current study when participants mention that they have used the skills acquired at work to help either discipline or educate their children. For instance, Walter likened the relationship between work and family to a shadow, which was subsequently grouped with the preservation core category. When explaining his reasoning behind this choice of metaphor he mentions that he protects both his home and work life at various points depending on the situation. He explains that shadows are protected by the figures that stand in front of them. He mentions a story about how he has used knowledge acquired at work to help protect his children from danger such as never talking to strangers and coming up with code words if his child is ever in trouble. The things that he sees at work have allowed him to better protect his family. This concept was not unique to Walter, as Anthony and Marlin also

incorporated preservation metaphors, which suggest that work has helped them better educate and inform their children.

Spillover can also be experienced negatively when employees take out the frustrations of either the job or family on the other sphere. For example, Janice incorporated the metaphor, "recipe for disaster" to describe the relationship between work and family explaining that because her home life is always on her mind along with the stress of being both a mother and a police officer, it often distracts her from the job. She admits that while her second child was still just a baby, she refused to make traffic stops or take "dangerous" calls in order to ensure her safety in going home to her newborn child. This caused resentment in both her superiors and co-workers deeming her as an unreliable employee since she has let the stress from her home life affect her ability to do the job.

Conflict. Conflict, as discussed in Chapter I occurs when the goals in one sphere completely negate the goals in the other sphere. Work-family conflict can be time-based, strain-based, or behavior based (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Time-based conflict occurs when role pressures stemming from the two different domains compete for the individual's time (e.g., requiring employees to work late with little notice might make it difficult for employees to meet family obligations, like picking up a child at daycare). Strain-based conflict occurs when the strain experienced in one role domain interferes with effective performance of role behaviors in the other domain. For example, a father who is anxious about his child's illness might not be able to fully concentrate on his job as a police officer, causing him to make mistakes in his work. Behavior-based conflict is described as conflict stemming from incompatible behaviors demanded by competing roles. For example, a police officer might be expected to be aggressive,

unemotional, and hard-driving, but these same behaviors in the family domain would most likely lead to conflict with family members.

Consistent with past and current research, it seems participants in this study experience time-based and behavior-based conflict the most. However, the participants that seem to be experiencing conflict the most are the spouses and children of PSEs. They expressed this conflict through metaphors of "competition" and "destruction." This is a departure from current research since most studies of work-family and work-family conflict do not consider the experiences of spouses and children. This study has found that although none of the participants ever used the term "conflict" when describing work and family, they likened the relationship to a "cage match," "battleground," "tug of war," "hurricane," "tornado," "sinking ship," etc. All of these metaphors (spoken by spouses and children) are negatively charged and almost all of these metaphors pertain to time-based conflict they have with regard to their PSE loved one's work schedule and time spent away from home. Moreover, Hocker and Wilmot (2000) suggest a "conflict assessment guide" which includes three schools of metaphor categories. The competition metaphors presented in this dissertation reflect a "conflict of interest metaphor" in which the parties treat conflict as fixed sum and always in competition with one another—one person's loss is another person's gain (Hocker & Wilmot, 2000). For example, Matthew, the 13-year old son of a police officer used the metaphor "war" to talk about always "losing" his father to his work schedule resulting in missed soccer games and family activities. Claudia, the 15-year old daughter of a police officer uses the metaphor "battleground" to address her mother's over-protective behavior toward her. In both of these situations, it seems one party (the child) "loses" while the other party (the parent) "wins." In contrast, many of the destruction metaphors presented in this dissertation fit into the "disruptive metaphors" category presented by Hocker

and Wilmot (2000). When espousing metaphors within the "disruptive metaphors" category, the participants in this study want to either eradicate or get rid of conflict in its entirety--they see it as destructive. In some cases, the only way to get rid of the conflict was to end a marriage. As mentioned in Chapter III, Sergio, the ex-husband of a female police officer used the term "hurricane" to describe the relationship between work and family for his ex-wife elaborating that her job "wreaked havoc on their marriage" much like the destruction and devastating forces of bad storms and hurricanes. For Sergio, the "destructive forces" of his ex-wife's job (i.e. scheduling, role conflict) were enough to ultimately end their marriage.

Most of the metaphors that pertained to conflict were provided by family members. It seems many of the PSE participants do not internalize a conflict perspective the same way family members do. This contrast could be attributed to the experiential base of PSEs and their families. Because family members are not engaged in the day-to-day activities that their loved one performs while at work, all they have to work with in thinking about the relationship between work and family is how their loved one's job affects family life. It has been made clear that many PSEs often do not disclose much about their work days with their families. As a result, family members are often left to make sense of situations and circumstances on their own. When a PSE has to work late and miss a family function perhaps because of a tragic fire that claimed many lives, all the family members hear and see is that their spouse or parent will not be coming home when they promised. Or, when trying to save for an expensive vacation, a PSE might take on extra shifts to get paid overtime. While this PSE is working extra hours for the benefit of the family, all the family sees is the added hours away from home. These situations create an environment ripe for conflict being experienced by family members.

Balance. As previously mentioned, "balance" as a metaphor was only used 5 times by participants to describe the relationship between work and family. Based on this, it seems notions of balance do not transfer to the population that was examined in this study. To account for this, it could be that past research on balance has found that individuals that lead "balanced" lives are those that have jobs which afford them flexibility with regard to work schedule and hours (Cowan & Hoffman, 2007; Kanter, 1977), creativity and innovation while on the job and the ability to choose how work gets done. Many of these characteristics comprise white-collar professions. For the PSEs that participated in this study, their work lives are characterized by shiftwork, irregular hours, and a strong para-military structure where the hierarchy and chain-of-command determines how work gets done. For these reasons, it seems intuitive that "balance" as a metaphor may not transfer to the public safety profession.

It is evident from this study that there is not just one way to talk about the relationship between work and family and that this relationship is especially complicated for members of the public safety profession. However, the opportunity to articulate these metaphors helped participants make better sense out of their experiences by assigning meaning to constructs that might otherwise be hard to understand.   One crucial contribution that can be realized from this study is the understanding that there are huge differences between the way white-collar and blue-collar families describe the relationship between work and family and also the ways in which employees versus family members experience the relationship. A PSE's job is characterized by danger, stress, and risk, which is in stark contrast to that the jobs of most white-collar professions. As a result of these different experiences, the relationship between work and family should be thought of as a *kaleidoscope of meaning*. As opposed to the container metaphor of work-family expressed in the past (Thompson & Bunderson, 2001) which is constraining and can

reach a breaking point once the "container" gets full, a kaleidoscope allows for myriad variations and explanations. A kaleidoscope of meaning recognizes that the relationship between work and family is layered, three-dimensional and multifaceted and oftentimes that relationship cannot be thought of in one specific way, but rather should be thought of as a range of emotional experiences different for each individual. Most importantly, the metaphors that are used in similar situations may have vastly different meanings, vastly different interpretations and may have vastly different implications if these dynamics are not understood and explored. For example, both Lilly, the daughter of a police officer and Claudia, the daughter of a fire fighter utilized "battleground" as their metaphor when describing the relationship between work and family yet articulated its meaning and relevance to their specific situation in very different ways. Similar to that of looking through a kaleidoscope, what one sees through the lens can be in total contrast to what someone else might see. In addition, several of the participants were married but did not have children when they participated in this study. If a child should enter into the picture, the way they describe the relationship between work and family might change as well as the metaphors they employ similar to that of turning a kaleidoscope just one click to the right resulting in the entire image changing. Communication may be the only way to turn the relationship to a new kaleidoscope of meaning, or as this study revealed, the relationship may end.

To conclude this discussion of metaphors, instead of asserting that one metaphor is best for understanding the relationship between work and family, it is important that we begin to think of these metaphors as overlapping, as the kaleidoscope suggests, not as competing and explore how each can help us understand and examine processes related to the relationship between work and family. Furthermore, something else this dissertation asserts by the use of

metaphors is that an individual's use of metaphors changes at various points in their lives

depending on the situation. To date, research has been limited in terms of longitudinal

examinations of work-family but some of the participants in this study expressed this notion that

the metaphors they articulate to describe the relationship between work and family changes as

life changes. These metaphors are not stable. For example, Heather, a fire fighter, exemplifies

this notion when she was prompted for her metaphor. Since she is pregnant with her first child,

she explained to me that she was having difficulty coming up with one metaphor to describe the

relationship especially considering that how she perceives this relationship will change once she

becomes a mother. She opted to express two metaphors to reflect her personal situation. The

first metaphor she employed was "bittersweet." She explains that while she loves being pregnant

and is excited about the prospect of motherhood, she has always been quite committed to the job,

which she loves. She fears motherhood will change her impression of the job or of motherhood

(she could not decide which it would have more of an impact on). In thinking about her future,

once she has the baby, she used the metaphor, "wild card" to exemplify the change. Because she

is uncertain as to what to expect once she has the baby, both in terms of her job and her role as a

mother, she describes the relationship in uncertain terms. Heather, like several other

participants, was fully understanding of this idea that the way we come to view and understand

the relationship between work and family is layered, complex and subject to change, which again

suggests that work-family metaphors overlap one another.

Sensetaking. Weick (1995) suggests that meaning making is constructed through

interdependent relationships and constituted in the process of interaction. Similarly, as meaning

is interpreted and constructed among organizational members, particularly during chaotic

situations, meaning is supposed to be made (and shared) between couples and families during

situations of high stress and tension. This key component to the notion of sensemaking is necessary if employees and families are to deal with ambiguity or stress. Moreover, one crucial principle to the theory of sensemaking is that it is ongoing and social. Meaning is created through sensemaking and this meaning is intersubjective, or agreed upon between people. However, this study revealed that PSEs often do not share the happenings of their job with loved ones as to not scare them and also because they often do not want to relive their days. This, in turn, does not allow for meaning to be jointly constructed and agreed upon. As a result, the families of PSEs are forced to formulate their own ideas of what goes on at work, and these ideas are often inaccurate. The drawings presented in this study revealed a huge disconnect between what PSEs actually do on a day-to-day basis versus what their family members believe they do while at work. Because of the lack of disclosure on the part of PSEs, family members are unable to collaboratively make sense of the PSE job. As a result, sensemaking becomes "sense*taking*" in that the process of attributing meaning to events and the job of PSEs is no longer a joint process. Instead, families choose their own interpretations to the PSE job no matter how inaccurate. To further this notion of sensetaking, when PSEs do tell families about their job, they expect their family members to take the information and accept it. If families do not respond in a positive way, PSEs vow to never tell them anything again, claiming that family members are not coping well with the stress of the job and a vicious cycle ensues. PSE families also contribute to the process of sensetaking by imposing communication rules on PSEs regarding what they can say at home; topics such as violence against children are labeled as taboo. Because of these rules created by families, PSEs are left to keep feelings and emotions bottled up, even when they want to discuss what they are going through.

Humor. Another theoretical finding is that researchers studying humor in the past have typically considered the effects of humor (Bryant, Comisky, & Zillmann, 1979; Gorham & Christophel, 1990) rather than its production. For example, researchers have studied how humor is used to enhance teaching effectiveness (Downs, Javidi, & Nussbaum, 1988), maximize learning (Gorham & Christophel, 1990), increase affinity between students and teachers (Schwarz, 1989) and focus thinking skills (Wandersee, 1982). This type of study focuses primarily on how humor affects its recipients. Relatively few studies in our field have addressed specific humorous messages or how such enactments may be productive for the source. Most of the PSEs in this study enjoy a culture of humor. Every time I visited a fire station or police department, humorous exchanges were observed. Whether they were joking to one another about their driving abilities, their cooking skills, their laziness or using humor following a tragic call, humor was utilized as a cultural norm for members of the public safety profession. Humor serves the PSEs as a culturally accepted method to vent emotion, regain a feeling of control and reinforce shared values. Furthermore, humor helps to ensure that PSEs go home a bit less stressed by the events of the day, thereby making family life easier in some cases. By enacting humor or simply laughing along, PSEs were able to demonstrate their assimilation to in-group norms by managing their emotions in a culturally prescribed way. Humor also served as a way to socialize new members of the organization. As a social performance, the newcomers' involvement in humorous exchanges signaled their belongingness to the group.

Furthermore, past research has suggested that humor is really only beneficial in the short-term and used specifically for instant gratification (Pogrebin & Poole, 1991). However, this study has revealed that humor has a much more lasting effect on PSEs and their family members, perhaps changing their emotional make-up in profound ways (i.e. using inappropriate humor at

home that would otherwise be used at work like joking about death with family or becoming desensitized to tragic situations at home as a result of the effects of the job). The fact that humor allows messages to become more memorable has the potential to influence future behaviors by those who use humor (Scott & Myers, 2005). Results from this study revealed many instances where humor was employed and illustrates how humor is a communicative process that helps PSEs and family members learn about and make sense of their work and home environment. In this way, humor enacts a sensemaking perspective by providing a memorable and fun vehicle through which employees learn, select, confirm, challenge and transform identity (Tracy, et al., 2006).

Understanding the sensemaking characteristics of humor contributes to theory in two ways. First, humor from a sensemaking perspective helps illustrate the changing and dynamic nature of workplaces, and specifically the public safety profession. The results of this study indicate that the use of humor does more than just get employees through the stress or tension of their day. Rather, humor, like sensemaking, is retrospective in that it occurs after the event takes place. When PSEs refer to overweight patients as "land whales" or repeat callers as "frequent flyers," they have labeled an incident after it happens in a way that affectionately and lightheartedly reminds each other that the job often requires contact with members of society who are perhaps different from the norm; this has the potential to craft an identity that could help ease stressful situations. Consistent with Tracy et al's (2006) findings, humor does more than just help PSEs feel better in situations of heightened stress. Instead, humor aids employees in maintaining a preferred identity as they make sense of the people, situations and tasks that characterize their work.

Second, humor as a sensemaking tool reveals that its use is a social activity that has the

ability to influence others, even when they are not physically present. This has the potential to influence organizational socialization by exposing newcomers to the humorous stories of a workplace. For example, by joking about the ''teenaged drag queen," employees can pass along an interpretation that the event is not tragic or stressful, but funny; thus, PSEs should not feel sad or guilty about the situation. Humor also helps newcomers eventually feel like an "insider" to the organization once they understand and become privy to the joke. Consistent with Tracy et al. (2006), the empirical analysis offered here indicates how humor is a communicative process that helps employees learn about their work environment, make sense of their job duties and clarify their organizational role.

While humor was quite productive in helping PSEs make sense of their work roles and deal with stress, there was a disconnect between how PSEs use humor at work and at home. PSEs share humorous stories with their family members as a way to allow them to feel more included in PSE experiences and to diffuse the desire for family members to know more about the job. However, discussions about humor with children and spouses reveal a different story. In many cases, the children of PSEs think their parent overcompensates for the dangers of the job by telling funny stories and they are savvy to the fact that their parent's day is not just "fun and games." Because parents and spouses are unwilling to share more accurate details about the PSE job, family members never really know what goes on during the workday and end up worrying more about the PSE. Thus, even the sometimes productive tool of humor often contributes to "sensetaking" in that family members are forced to formulate their own impression of their loved one's job when PSEs do not fully disclose the activities of their job.

Emotion Management. This dissertation found that both PSEs and their families engage in emotion management while working and at home. In addition, family members contribute to

stress by imposing "communication rules" on their loved ones with regard to what they can talk about and not talk about regarding the job. As a result, PSEs are engaged in emotional labor both on and off the job. This challenges Hochschild's (1983) notion that people's "true feelings" are experienced at home and instead, is consistent with Tracy & Trethewey's (2005) "crystallized" theory which posits that there does not exist one "true self", rather, identities are understood as neither real nor fake but as multidimensional and layered. Based on the results of this study, PSEs identities emerge out of reflexive social interactions with others they encounter in their lives such as their families and organizational members.   At work, they negotiate a preferred workplace identity (i.e. engaging in emotional labor for the benefit of their job), which is oftentimes mandated by their organizations, while at home, they adjust their emotional management strategies to be in accordance with the expectations of their family members. Certain situations at home require them to keep their emotions bottled up with no outlet to vent pent up emotions. Moreover, family members also engage in emotion work by denying their own feelings to their PSE loved one. Instead, they hold questions to themselves and put on "brave faces." Because PSEs do not have the ability to talk about their job and talk about their emotions to their loved ones, they become emotionally detached. This emotional detachment could potentially explain the higher divorce and alcoholism rates among PSEs, particularly among police officers. The literature suggests that it is the nature of the job (e.g. violence, dealing with disenfranchised individuals, and a masculine work environment) that causes PSEs to become bitter and hard, forcing them to turn to alcohol or to commit suicide (Kirschman, 2004a; Pogrebin & Poole, 1991). However, the findings of this study suggest a more complex situation.

This study suggests that the lack of a safe outlet for expressing emotions and being forced

into emotional labor both on and off the job might be an important cause of PSE dysfunctions such as alcoholism, divorce and suicide. However, this research also points to an alternative model that avoids these pitfalls of emotion management. This safe outlet, which serves fire fighters well, is having each other to vent to by using humor and debriefing regarding tragic events. The divorce rate, suicide rate and alcoholism rates among fire fighters is far less than for police officers (Matsakis, 2005). This could be due to the nature of their schedule and being able to spend ample time with one another making sense of work events. All the fire fighters I spoke to said they rarely bring work home nor feel emotional exhaustion when they are home, even if they have to engage in emotional labor for the sake of their family. They claim this was because they were able to deal with their emotions in a safe way with their colleagues at work. Unfortunately, because police officers do not have the luxury of spending a significant amount of down-time with one another, they are not able to vent with fellow officers as fire fighters do. Taking the time to debrief after the police shift rarely works, as this increases tension at home. While engaging in emotional labor seems to be par for the course among PSEs and their families, all is not lost if the emotion is allowed to be exposed in some fashion.

Applied Implications

Based on the results of this study, two practical implications are introduced below. The first pertains to new ways of talking about and dealing with the relationship between work and family in practice while the second advocates for training and development within police and fire academies.

Talking About Work and Family. This analysis reveals that participants could benefit from identifying and reflecting upon the metaphors they employ to talk about work and family. Moreover, metaphors have the potential to create new meanings for individuals and provide new

ways to see their worlds (Grant & Oswick, 1996). Because the competition metaphor permeated

discussions among participants, it seems a fitting area to begin in considering how PSEs can

achieve better relationships between work and family. The discussions among participants when

using competition metaphors were replete with examples of "survivors" and "victims," and, in

most cases, there were no winners or survivors in the competition between work and family.

This could be because PSEs and their families have assumed a victim orientation rather than a

survivor orientation. A victim orientation suggests a lack of control. For example, with regard to

scheduling, the job dictates what days off are given and what shift one is put on. Operating

under this mindset, the PSE (or family member) has relinquished control to the workplace. On

the other hand, survivors, unlike victims, have a clear sense of personal control. For example,

survivors could develop and use techniques of personal time management that permit them to

harness the available time in their personal lives to accomplish whatever goals they choose. A

PSE's job is not 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the whole year. However, it is often hard for

young PSEs to accept the limited control they have over the work schedule and use that control

to their advantage.

Although most metaphors revealed negativity or hostility, there were a few instances

where participants used metaphors that could suggest a more hopeful outlook on the relationship

between work and family. For example, Edward, a police officer, employed the metaphor of

cake to talk about work and family: "the relationship is like cake. And cake is so good when all

the ingredients are measured correctly and appropriately." Edward has found a healthy way to

experience both his work and family spheres by ensuring each "ingredient" is tended to and

handled appropriately. He, along with Julie, the wife of a fire fighter, offered suggestions for

ways that could make the relationship between work and family healthy and successful. As

mentioned earlier in this study, Julie decided six years ago that every second night of the three nights a week her husband is off is dedicated to "date night." She explains that establishing this as a rule allows them something to look forward to and to be committed to completely. By achieving this balance between work and family, Julie's relationship with her husband is thriving. Similarly, other PSEs and family members have suggested that in order to foster a healthier home life, PSEs need some "downtime" when they come home from work, especially after a hard day.

Training and Development in Academies. The second practical implication stemming from this research is the need for issues of work and home to be addressed early on in the PSE's career. I advocate the institution of training workshops within police and fire academies that require both PSEs and their family members to participate in "mock" role-play situations that typical PSE families encounter as a way to introduce both the employee and family member to possible responses to these situations. "Mock" situations might include learning about how to handle scheduling disputes and the inevitable tragedies encountered by PSEs. Providing an opportunity for PSEs and family members to learn about the expectations of both the job and the family members early on in their careers may help curb future negative repercussions of not appropriately managing the relationship between work and family. Furthermore, PSEs and family members participating in this type of workshop together may create stronger bonds and healthier relationships by being able to communicate openly.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While this study revealed pertinent information regarding the relationship between work and family, it is not without its limitations. Although spontaneous communication was encouraged during the interviews and focus groups, discussions pertaining to metaphors were

more constrained. In most cases, metaphors were used by participants when encouraged to do so

by finishing the statement: "The relationship between work and family is like

_____ for you." In some cases, specifically asking for participants to describe the

relationship between work and family in metaphorical terms caused confusion. At times,

participants were unsure of how to finish the statement either because they could not think of

something off the top of their head or they were unclear about what I was looking for. However,

this was dealt with by providing additional time to think about the statement and the opportunity

to revisit it again toward the end of the interview. All but five participants had very little

difficulty articulating and providing a metaphor to finish the statement provided for them.

Future research might take a more spontaneous approach to extrapolating metaphors from PSEs

and their family members by asking questions that could prompt metaphorical language, but not

explicitly asking participants to provide a metaphorical comparison.

Second, although the drawings employed in this study provide fruitful and interesting

ways to examine the emotional responses individuals have toward the public safety profession,

future research might consider other visual representations of data. As Lugten-Sandvik et al.

(2006) suggest, performance or creative writing might be another way to get at the emotional

responses of PSEs and their families. Having all participants keep a diary or journal of their day-

to-day experiences with regard to their feelings toward the public safety profession and how

work and family are being handled each day might produce an interesting and comprehensive

view with regard to the relationship between work and family. In addition, private journaling

allows participants more freedom and confidentiality to express themselves as opposed to a focus

group or interview (McAuliffe, DiFranceisco & Reed, 2007).

Third, although this study consisted of 95 total participants from urban, suburban and rural locations, most participants were from midwestern states. Future research might expand the sample to include PSEs and family members from other parts of the country. Furthermore, future research might do a comparative analysis between rural, suburban and urban PSEs and family members to consider the similarities and differences in these work settings.

Fourth, while this study examined what makes up a huge portion of high-risk jobs, it only pertains to two professions within this category of employment. There are other professions, which may share similar experiences due to the high-stress and high-risk nature of their jobs, which could include paramedics, military, FBI agents, etc. These professions represent a group of employees who also put their lives on the line on a daily basis so future research should try to examine their experiences as well as the experiences of their family members.

Conclusion

Golden et al. (2006) assert that "sensemaking has the ability to provide an examination of the mutual influence between personal life and work-life rather than assuming work as the dominant force in one's life" (p. 173). Consistent with this view, this dissertation examined how "work" and "family" operate jointly as co-determining environments for both PSEs and their family members. This study found that there are several ways to describe the relationship between work and family and that it may be time for researchers to allow participants the opportunity to describe this relationship rather than imposing limiting or outdated constructs. In addition, results indicate that both PSEs and their families make sense of the relationship between work and family through humor, emotional labor, fear and risk assessment. Results found that parenting is devalued in the workplace for both men and women, but that male and female PSEs have different experiences with regard to work-family management abilities,

competency issues and ways of communicating about the stress of the job. Finally, there were notable similarities and differences between police officers and fire fighters with both professions dealing with "dirty work" and family rules. Differences between police and fire include coping strategies and job satisfaction.

Based on the findings presented above, first, this study suggests that we should be thinking more in terms of a *kaleidoscope of meaning* in that the relationship between work and family is layered and multifaceted and oftentimes that relationship cannot be thought of in one specific way, but rather should be thought of as a range of emotional experiences different for each individual. On a similar note, the results of this study reveal that many of the current metaphors or constructs to describe work and family do not quite transfer to the public safety profession, which has huge implications for how we should study populations such as these. Furthermore, the process of attributing meaning to events and the job of PSEs does not seem to be a collective, joint process between individuals. Instead, families attribute their own meaning to their loved one's job no matter how accurate. This process, referred to as sensetaking, proves to be quite counter-productive and causes inconsistencies between PSEs and their families. In addition, this study revealed many instances where humor was employed and illustrates how humor is a communicative process that helps PSEs in particular, learn about and make sense of their work and home environment, which can also help inform organizational socialization processes. Finally, emotion management seems to be something both PSEs and their families engage in at home which is a departure from previous research (see Hochschild, 1983) which suggests "true feelings" are almost always able to be revealed in one's personal time at home. Instead, this study, consistent with Tracy & Trethewey (2005) found that rather than being fixed or possessing a "true" identity, a PSEs identity and emotional management strategies are in

constant flux and conform to the expectations in both their home or work spheres accordingly. Family members of PSEs share a similar experience in that they adjust their behavior and emotion while in the presence of their PSE loved one. Future research is necessary to understand how other professions (and their families) who operate under high-stress conditions or work in high-risk jobs negotiate the relationship between work and family to see if comparisons can be drawn to this study. With the results of this study in mind, communication between PSEs and their families necessitates a healthy relationship between work and home. Without communication and open dialogue, the possibility for sensemaking and the joint construction of meaning is lost.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Protocol for Public Safety Employees

PROJECT INTRODUCTION: This study is being conducted to try and get a better understanding of the relationship between work and home lives for public safety families. HAVE PARTICIPANT SIGN CONSENT FORM.

I: DRAWING ACTIVITY
A. Before we begin, I would like to ask you to draw me a few pictures on the paper provided. On the first sheet of paper, please draw a picture illustrating what you do for a living. Stick figure people are just fine. Now, on the back of the drawing, please write 5-10 words describing how you feel when you look at the picture. These words should be the first words that come to your mind.

II: DEMOGRAPHICS/IDENTITY
B. First, let's cover some basics about your job and how you got into this line of work.

* What is your current job title/position?
* How many years have you been with this org? How long have you been in the industry?
* What is your work schedule?
* What is your marital status? What is your partner's job status?
* Do you have any children? Y/N? How old are they?
* What factors influenced your decision to take this job?

III: WORK/NON-WORK ACTIVITIES
C. Now, I would like to get an actual feel for your day-to-day activities both on and off work.

* What is it like for you while at home. Walk me through a typical time when you are off work as well as when you are on).
* If a friend asks you what you do or to describe your job what would you say?
* Walk me through a typical shift at your job.
* Summarize here: Some of your key responsibilities are…any others?
* What do you like to do when you are not working? Hobbies?

IV: INTERACTION OF WORK AND HOME LIVES
D: Let's move on to discuss how your home life and work life interact.

* How does your personal life interact with your work life and vice versa? Tell me what happens when your home life encounters your work life and vice versa. What is the typical result?
* When have both your home life and work life been in sync with one another?

* When have your home and work lives not been in sync with one another?
* How does (insert the stories they have referenced) this and your job influence your relationships with your children, partners, friends, other family members?
* What aspects of your job do you talk about at home? What aspects do you leave out, if anything? Does this vary for each family member (i.e. children, spouse, parent, etc.)? Why?
* How is work talked about/described to children, significant others, family, strangers?
* The relationship between work and family has become a popular topic. What does this mean to you? If you had to fill in the blank: "The connection between work and family life is like _____," what would you say?

V: CLOSING
E. To close is there anything else you would like to talk about?

* What lessons have you learned along the way? If you could do it all over again, would you still pick a public safety occupation? Why?
* What advice do you have for those thinking about a career in public safety?

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Interview Guide for Public Safety Families

PROJECT INTRODUCTION: This study is being conducted to try and get a better understanding of the relationship between work and home lives for public safety families. HAVE PARTICIPANT SIGN CONSENT FORM.

I: DRAWING ACTIVITY
A. Before we begin, I would like to ask each of you to draw me a picture on the paper provided. On a blank sheet of paper, please draw a picture illustrating what your spouse/parent does for a living. Stick figure people are just fine. Now, on the back of each drawing, please write 5-10 words describing how you feel when you look at the picture. These words should be the first words that come to your mind.

II: DEMOGRAPHICS/IDENTITY
B. First, let's cover some basics about you and your family/spouse

* For children: How old are you? For spouse: How many years have you been with your significant other?
* For spouse: Was your partner doing this job when you met? If so, for how long? If not, when did your partner decide to become a PSE? Why did your partner decide to become a PSE?
*For spouse: Are you currently employed?

III: INTERACTION OF WORK AND HOME LIVES
C. Let's move on to talk about how your spouse/parent's home and work lives interact

* What happens when your spouse/parent's job encounters your home life and vice versa. What is the typical result?
* How does (insert the stories/situation they have referenced) this influence your relationship with your spouse/parent?
* When have both your home life and your parent/partner's work life been in sync with one another?
* When have your home and your parent/partner's work lives not been in sync with one another?

IV: ATTITUDE TOWARD PUBLIC SAFETY JOB
D. Now I would like to get a sense of how you feel about your parent/spouse's job

* How do you feel about what your parent/spouse/family member does for a living? If you had the ability to pick a new job for your spouse/parent, would you? If yes, what would it be? If no, why not?

* How do you describe or talk about your parent/spouse/family member's job with other people? What kinds of stories do you tell other people about their job?

V: CLOSING

E. To conclude, is there anything else you would like to talk about?

* What recommendations do you have for families where either a parent or spouse has just recently started a career as a public safety employee? What kind of advice would you give to the family members and to the public safety employee themselves?

APPENDIX C

Hello!

My name is Jaime Bochantin and I am a graduate student in the Department of Communication at Texas A & M University. You recently participated in a research study examining the experiences of female police officers and work-life balance and am writing to request your participation in another study. I am currently working on my dissertation, which examines the work-family intersection and experiences of public safety employees and their families. My study will include police officers and fire fighters. The reason for this letter is to invite you to participate in my research study since you are employed as a public safety employee.

Your participation in this study would be two-fold. Provided your consent, you would participate in one individual interview with me. This interview would only last about an hour and would be completely confidential. I assure you that your name as well as the name and location of your police department/fire department will be changed and kept confidential. Once we have completed the interview, I would greatly appreciate you allowing any available members of your immediate family, including your spouse (if applicable) and/or your children (if applicable) to participate in a focus group with other public safety family members as well as myself. Please be assured that the questions that I will ask your family members during this focus group will pose minimal risk to everyone who participates. This focus group would last about two hours and everyone who participates will be kept confidential. Again, all names and departments will be changed and no one other than myself will have access to the transcripts.

As the spouse of a police officer, I understand your reluctance to involve your family members in a research study, but please know that this study is important and necessary since virtually no research has been done looking at the joint experiences of public safety employees *and* their families. Because the purpose of this study is to examine experiences of both public safety employees and their families, in order to participate in this study, at least one of your family members (preferably all) must participate. The family members that participate can be a spouse and/or children over the age of eight. I have enclosed the consent form as well for more information regarding the study. Please understand, that your participation in this study is voluntary. You or your family members may withdraw from this study at anytime, for whatever reason. If you would be willing to participate, please contact me by any of the means below so that we can schedule a time for our first interview or if I can answer any questions you may have. I really appreciate your time in reading this and are hopeful for your participation. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Thank you,

Jaime Bochantin
JBochantin@tamu.edu
(847) 322-3682

APPENDIX D

Hello!

My name is Jaime Bochantin and I am a graduate student in the Department of Communication at Texas A & M University. I am currently working on my dissertation, which examines the work-family intersection and experiences of public safety employees and their families. My study will include police officers and fire fighters. The reason for this letter is to invite you to participate in my research study since you are employed as a public safety employee.

Your participation in this study would be two-fold. Provided your consent, you would participate in one individual interview with me. This interview would only last about an hour and would be completely confidential. I assure you that your name as well as the name and location of your police department/fire department will be changed and kept confidential. Once we have completed the interview, I would greatly appreciate you allowing any available members of your immediate family, including your spouse (if applicable) and/or your children (if applicable) to participate in a focus group with other public safety family members as well as myself. Please be assured that the questions that I will ask your family members during this focus group will pose minimal risk to everyone who participates. This focus group would last about two hours and everyone who participates will be kept confidential. Again, all names and departments will be changed and no one other than myself will have access to the transcripts.

As the spouse of a police officer, I understand your reluctance to involve your family members in a research study, but please know that this study is important and necessary since virtually no research has been done looking at the joint experiences of public safety employees _and_ their families. Because the purpose of this study is to examine experiences of both public safety employees and their families, in order to participate in this study, at least one of your family members (preferably all) must participate. The family members that participate can be a spouse and/or children over the age of eight. I have enclosed the consent form as well for more information regarding the study. Please understand, that your participation in this study is voluntary. You or your family members may withdraw from this study at anytime, for whatever reason. If you would be willing to participate, please contact me by any of the means below so that we can schedule a time for our first interview or if I can answer any questions you may have. I really appreciate your time in reading this and are hopeful for your participation. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Thank you,

Jaime Bochantin
JBochantin@tamu.edu
(847) 322-3682

APPENDIX E

Public Safety Employees (Police)	Public Safety Families (Police)
Jason	Widowed, 3 children—Emma, 13 yo; 18 yo M; 19 yo M
George	Wife (Stephanie), 3 children—Megan, 8 yo; Olivia, 10 yo; and Lisette, 15 yo
Robert	Wife (Carrie), 4 Children—Alicia, 8 yo; 16 mos F; 3 yo F; 4 yo M
Carol	Husband (Marcus), 1 child—2 yo F
Janice	Husband (Marlin), 3 children—Selena, 14 yo; 18 mos M, 3 yo F
Marlin	Wife (Janice), 3 children—Selena, 14 yo; 18 mos M, 3 yo F
Edward	Wife (Lynette), 2 children—Stephen, 16 yo; 13 yo F
Vicki	Husband (Erwin), 3 children—2 yo F, 4 yo F, 8 yo F
Charlie	Wife (Lori), 4 children—Sammy, 12 yo; 5 yo F, 6 yo M, 14 yo M
Ted	Wife (Katherine), 2 children—Lilly, 10yo; 8 yo M
Glen	Wife (Renee), 2 children—Matthew, 12 yo; 7 yo M
Simon	Single Parent of 2 children—Mary, 13 yo; Emily, 21 yo
Amanda	Single Parent of 2 children—Claudia, 15 yo; Terry, 18 yo
Douglas	Single Parent of 2 children—Rebecca, 19 yo; 13 yo M
Rose	Single Parent of 2 children—Fred, 13 yo; Miranda, 22 yo
Carl	Wife (Michele), no kids
Sonny	Wife (Collete), no kids
Sophie	Same-sex partner (Wendy), no kids

Public Safety Employee (Fire)	Public Safety Family (Fire)
Steve	Wife (Amy), 3 children—Margaret, 11 yo; Joshua, 13 yo; Michael, 19 yo
Tony	Wife (Kara), 2 children—Sean, 18 yo; Gabbi, 20 yo
Rachel	Husband (Jeremiah), 3 children—Evelyn, 20 yo, Trent, 24 yo F, and 26 yo M
Louie	Wife (Julie), 1 child—Adam, 16 yo
Walter	Wife (Leah), 2 children—Ashton, 9 yo; 15 yo M
Reba	Husband (Nicholas), 3 children—1 yo M; 3 yo F; 7 yo M
Raymond	Wife (Abigail), 4 children—Grace, 16 yo; 18 yo F; 20 yo M; 27 yo M
Tom	Wife (Beatrice), 2 children—Stacey, 21 yo; 24 yo F
Christopher	Single Parent, 1 child—Calvin, 18 yo
Kyle	Single Parent, 2 children—Marsha, 10 yo; 6 yo F
Russ	Single Parent, 1 child—Clay, 14 yo
Anthony	Widowed, 2 children—William, 18 yo; 12 yo F
Andy	Wife (Allyson), no kids
Kelly	Wife (Stephanie), no kids
Tony	Same-sex partner (Jake), no kids
Chloe	Same-sex partner (Gail), no kids
Carla	Husband (Rico), no kids
Heather	Husband (Paul), expecting first child

APPENDIX F

CONSENT FORM FOR PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE
Sensemaking in a High-Risk Lifestyle: The Management of Work-Family Conflict for Public
Safety Families

Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to
whether or not to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate in this study, this
form will also be used to record your consent.

You have been asked to participate in a research project studying how public safety employees
and their families experience the relationship between the public safety employee's work and
home lives. Moreover, this study is an attempt to bring attention to understudied and
underrepresented professions—police officers and fire fighters. You were selected to be a
possible participant because you are employed as a public safety employee (i.e. police officer or
fire fighter).

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in one interview. This
interview will be between you and me and take anywhere from sixty to ninety minutes. Shortly
after this interview (anywhere from one to four weeks later), I will ask your permission to allow
any applicable family members (i.e. spouse, children, etc.) to participate in one focus group with
family members of other public safety employees. The focus group will consist of 4-6 people
(spouses and children of public safety employees) and I will be facilitating and videotaping the
session. I will ask questions to the group and your family members can participate as much or as
little as they wish. This focus group will last about two hours.

Your participation during the interview will be audio recorded.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks you ordinarily
encounter in daily life. Although, there is a minimal chance that the interview questions could
evoke feelings of discomfort or negative memories.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
One benefit for you is the opportunity to share your feelings about the relationship between your
job and home life. This could serve as a positive experience as you will be given the opportunity
to "tell your story" and perhaps offer suggestions for how to navigate the relationship between
work and home.

Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any
time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University or your place of
employment being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is confidential and I will ensure that none of the participants are identified in anyway in the transcripts, presentations, or in the final, published results of the findings. I will be using pseudonyms in lieu of participants' real names in interview transcripts, presentations, and published results. Research records will be stored securely and only myself and Dr. Katherine Miller, who is my advisor for this research project, will have access to the records.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be audio recorded. Any audio recordings will be stored securely and only I will have access to the recordings. Any recordings will be kept for three years and then erased.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jaime Bochantin at (847) 322-3682 or JBochantin@tamu.edu.

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Signature
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in this study.

_____ I agree to be audio recorded.
_____ I do not want to be audio recorded.
_____ I agree to allow my family members to participate in a focus group.
_____ I do not agree to allow my family members to participate in a focus group.

Signature of Participant: _____
Date: _____
Printed Name:

_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____
Date: _____
Printed Name:

_____

APPENDIX G

CONSENT FORM FOR PUBLIC SAFETY SPOUSE
Sensemaking in a High-Risk Lifestyle: The Management of Work-Family Conflict for Public
Safety Families

Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you information that may affect your decision as to
whether or not to participate in this research study. If you decide to participate in this study, this
form will also be used to record your consent.

You have been asked to participate in a research project studying how public safety employees
and their families experience the relationship between the public safety employee's work and
home lives. Moreover, this study is an attempt to bring attention to understudied and
underrepresented professions—police and fire. You were selected to be a possible participant
because you are the spouse of a public safety employee (i.e. police officer, fire fighter, or
military personnel).

What will I be asked to do?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in one focus group. This
focus group will consist of you, your children (if applicable), as well as family members of other
public safety employees. I will be facilitating the session. I will be asking questions to all of
you at various points during the focus group. You and your children (if applicable) can
participate as much or as little as you wish. This focus group will last about two hours.

Your participation will be audio recorded.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks you ordinarily
encounter in daily life. Although, there is a minimal chance that the questions posed during the
focus group could evoke feelings of discomfort or negative memories.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
One benefit for you is the opportunity to share your feelings about the subject. This could serve
as a positive experience as you will be given the opportunity to "tell your story" and share
experiences with other people who are in a similar situation as you.

Do I have to participate?
No. Your participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate or to withdraw at any
time without your current or future relations with Texas A&M University or your spouse's place
of employment being affected.

Who will know about my participation in this research study?
This study is confidential and I will ensure that none of the participants are identified in anyway
in the transcripts, presentations, or in the final, published results of the findings. I will be using
pseudonyms in lieu of participants' real names in transcripts, presentations, and published

results. Research records will be stored securely and only myself and Dr. Katherine Miller, who is my advisor for this research project, will have access to the records.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be audio and video recorded. Any audio and video recordings will be stored securely and only myself and Dr. Katherine Miller will have access to the recordings. Any recordings will be kept for three years and then erased.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jaime Bochantin at (847) 322-3682 or JBochantin@tamu.edu.

Whom do I contact about my rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Signature
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to participate in this study.

_____ I agree to be audio recorded.
_____ I do not want to be audio recorded.

Signature of Participant: _____
Date: _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____
Date: _____

APPENDIX H

ASSENT FORM FOR CHILDREN 8-17

<u>**REQUIREMENT #1:**</u>

ELEMENT #1 - How will you introduce yourself?

"Hi, my name is Jaime. I do research at Texas A&M University. What's your name? It's nice to meet you."

ELEMENT #2 - How will you engage the child?

"What grade are you in?' AND/OR "How's school going?" AND/OR "What do you do for fun?"

ELEMENT #3 – How will you tell the child about the research activity?

"I am doing a study about kids like you have a parent that works as a police officer (or fire fighter or military personnel). I am trying to learn how you feel about your parent's job and how it affects you. I want to know how you feel about your parent's job so that I can find ways to help kids like you deal with any stress you are facing. If you decide to be in this study, I will ask you to participate in a focus group with other kids like you. In that focus group, I will ask you questions about you and your family like, "how do you feel about your mom/dad's job," "how do you talk about your mom/dad's job to your friends," "what do you think about when your mom/dad is away at work," "how does your mom/dad's job interact with your home life." The focus group should last about two hours.

ELEMENT #4 - How will you invite the child?

"Do you have any questions about the study or what you would be asked to do if you decide to be in the study? I would like for you to be in the study, but you don't have to be. The choice is yours. Do you have any questions about the study?

I will then answer any questions.

"Take some time to read over the things we've talked about (*hand them information sheet*) and let me know what questions you have."

 "Would you like to be in the study?"

If child indicates they do not want to be in the study, they will immediately be thanked for their time and released back to their regular school activities.

"Thank you for talking with me. I understand your decision.

If child says yes, I will reinforce that they can stop at any time.

"You can decide that you want to be in the study now, and change your mind later. If you decide later that you don't want to be in the study, just let me know."

"Then if it is okay with you, I would like to begin the focus group." If you feel at all uncomfortable answering any questions just let me know!"

REQUIREMENT #2:

QUESTION #1 - What will constitute assent denied?
If the child verbally denies when asked to be in the study.

QUESTION #2 - What will constitute assent given?
If the child verbally agrees when asked to be in the study.

QUESTION #3 - How can the child withdrawal assent?
The child can withdraw participating by verbally telling me or if they just stop responding to the questions that I ask.

APPENDIX I

PARENT PERMISSION FORM
Sensemaking in a High-Risk Lifestyle: The Management of Work-Family Conflict for Public Safety Families

Introduction
The purpose of this form is to provide you (as the parent of a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to let your child participate in this research study. Also, if you decide to let your child be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your consent.

If you agree, your child will be asked to participate in a research study about their experiences dealing with a parent that works as a public safety employee. The purpose of this study is to explore how public safety employees and their families experience the relationship between work and home life. He/she was selected to be a possible participant because they are the child of a public safety employee.

What will my child be asked to do?
If you allow your child to participate in this study, they will be asked to participate in one focus group with any other applicable family members (including yourself) as well as members of other public safety families. I will be facilitating the focus group. The focus group will take about two hours.

Your child will be audio-recorded.

What are the risks involved in this study?
The risks associated in this study are minimal, and are not greater than risks your child ordinarily encounters in daily life. Although, there is a minimal chance that the questions during the focus group could evoke feelings of discomfort or negative memories. In addition, if during the focus groups or interviews there is any indication that your child is a victim of child abuse, I am obligated by federal law to report any mention of abuse to the proper authorities.

What are the possible benefits of this study?
One benefit for your child is the opportunity to share their feelings on the subject and to "tell their story." This could serve as a positive experience as your child will be given the opportunity to share their story and input and describe how they may feel about their parent working as a public safety employee.

Does my child have to participate?
No, your child doesn't have to be in this research study. You can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty.

What if my child does not want to participate?
In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study. If your child does not want to participate they will not be included in the study and there will be no penalty. If

your child initially agrees to be in the study he/she can change their mind later without any penalty.

Who will know about my child's participation in this research study?
This study is confidential and I will ensure that none of the participants (including your child) are identified in anyway in the transcripts, presentations, or in the final, published results of the findings. I will be using pseudonyms in lieu of participants' real names in the focus group transcripts, presentations, and published results. Research records will be stored securely and only myself and Dr. Katherine Miller, who is my advisor for this research project, will have access to the records.

If you choose to allow your child to participate in this study, they will be audio and video recorded. Any recordings will be stored securely and only myself and Dr. Katherine Miller will have access to the recordings. Any recordings will be kept for three years and then erased.

Whom do I contact with questions about the research?
If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Jaime Bochantin at (847) 322-3682 or JBochantin@tamu.edu.

Whom do I contact about my child's rights as a research participant?
This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Signature
Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the consent form for your records. By signing this document, you consent to allow your child to participate in this study.

_____ My child MAY be audio recorded.
_____ My child MAY NOT be audio recorded.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____
Date: _____

Name of Child: _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Permission: _____
Date: _____

APPENDIX J

Name	Original Metaphor	Tenor	Vehicle	Dimension	Theme
Stacey FF Daughter	"lion and his pride"	Work= Family=	Lion (dad) Pride (family)	Protective	Protection/ Preservation
Steve FF	"a game of tug of war"	Work- Family	Tug of War	Challenging; Competition	Competition/ War
Tony FF; Louie FF; Joshua FF son; Sonny PO; Jason PO	"separate worlds" (5)	Work- Family	Separate	Separate Preservation of each sphere	Protection/ Preservation Separation
Lois FF; Amanda PO; Selma FF daughter	"black and white" (3)	Work= Family=	Black White	Opposite; Absence of Color (black)	Opposites
Margaret FF daughter	"Cubs and Yankees"	Work= Family=	Cubs Yankees	Love/Hate; Competition	Competition
George PO; Raymond FF	"Non-Existent" (2)	Work- Family	Non-Existent	Absent; Invisible	Absent Invisible
Christopher FF; Irene PO wife	"Hurricane/Tornado" (2)	Work- Family	Hurricane/ Tornado	Instability, destructive, nature	Nature Destruction
Rachel FF	"All One"	Work- Family	All One	Whole; Integrated	Integrated
Walter FF; Anthony FF	"a shadow" (2)	Work= Family=	Shadow Shadow	Protection; Behind; Blocking Agent	Protection/ Preservation Nature
Angela FF Wife; Kyle FF; Russ FF; Andrea PO ex-wife; Lori PO wife	"balancing act" (5)	Work- Family	Balancing Act	Competition	Competition

Steven FF; Simon PO; Robert PO; Sarah PO	"night and day" (4)	Work-Family	Night and Day	Opposite	Opposites Nature
Janice PO	"food"	Work=	Food	Survival; Necessity	Protection/ Preservation Food/ Integrated
Marlin PO	"sliding scale"	Work-Family	Sliding Scale	Fluctuation; Change	Change
Kara FF wife	"inconsistent"	Work-Family	Inconsiste nt	Fluctuation; Change	Change
Edward PO	"cake"	Work-Family	Cake	Indulgent; Multifaceted; Blended	Integrated/ Food
Michael FF son	"inconsistently balanced"	Work-Family	Inconsiste ntly Balanced	Fluctuation; Change; Competitive	Change Competition
Carla FF	"island"	Work-Family	Island	Separated; Idyllic	Nature
Sophie PO	"storm"	Work-Family	Storm	Energy; Danger	Nature
Vicki PO	"confusing"	Work-Family	Confusing	Unsure; Stressful	Ambiguous
Renee PO wife	"darker side of the color wheel"	Work-Family	Darker side of the color wheel	Danger; Dark	Ambiguous
Sean FF son; Evelyn FF daughter	"bitter sweet" (2)	Work-Family	Bitter sweet	Unpleasant; Pleasant; Opposites	Opposites
Charlie PO; Carol PO	"2 sides of a coin" (2)	Work-Family	2 Sides of a Coin	Different but Closely Related	Opposites Integrated (Paradox?)
Tom FF	"natural transition"	Work-Family	Natural Transition	Movement	Change
Ted PO	"rubber band"; "cocktail on ice"	Work-Family	Rubber Band	Flexible; Holds Objects Together; pliable; responsive to	Flexible Change

				change	
Matthew PO son	"losing a battle"	Work-Family	Losing a Battle	Competition	Competition
Gabbi FF Daughter	"a tennis match"	Work-Family	A Tennis Match	Competition; Game	Competition
Marucs PO husband	"in sync"	Work-Family	In Sync	Blended; Integrated	Integrated
Jackson PO ex-husband	"a mirage" "a sinking ship"	Work-Family	A Mirage A Sinking Ship	Just Out of Reach; Idyllic; Invisible Destruction; Ill-fated; death	Nature Invisible Destruction
Stephen PO son	"a flexible straw"	Work-Family	A Flexible Straw	Flexibility; pliable; responsive to change	Flexible Change
Rose PO	"traffic jam"	Work-Family	Traffic Jam	Movement; Stress Point A to Point B; Necessity	Change
Douglas PO	"roller coaster"	Work-Family	Roller Coaster	Ups and Downs; Movement;	Change
Glen PO	"chameleon"	Work-Family	Chameleon	Adaptation	Nature Change
Julie Wife of FF	"a tree"	Work= Family=	Trunk Leaves	Survival; Nurturing	Nature Protection/ Preservation
Emma Daughter of	"a sinking ship" (2)	Work-Family	Sinking Ship	Survival; Demise;	Destruction

				Destruction	
PO; Jackson PO Ex-Husband					
Leah Wife of FF; Kasia wife of PO; Jeremiah Husband of FF	"fire and ice" (3)	Work-Family	Fire and Ice	Fire (desire) Ice (hate); Nature; Cancels each other out; opposite	Nature Opposite
Lilly Daughter of FF; Claudia PO daughter	"a battlefield" (2)	Work-Family	Battlefield	Competition	Competition/ War
Stephanie FF; Andy FF; Allyson Wife of PO; Trent FF son	"political" (3)	Work-Family	Political	Competing Interests;	Competition Politics
Collete Wife of PO	"morning fog"	Work-Family	Morning Fog	Lacks clarity; Unable to see; Nature	Nature
Sammy PO son	"a blizzard"	Work-Family	Blizzard	Erratic movement; cold; lacks visibility	Nature Change
Megan Daughter of PO	"a recipe for disaster"	Work-Family	Recipe for Disaster	Bad ingredients; Not mixed well	Food/ Integration Destruction
Olivia Daughter of PO	"spider"	Work-Family	Spider	Survival; Tangled	Nature

Sergio Husband of PO	"rat race"; "hurricane"	Work-Family	Rat Race Hurricane	Competition; Negative Destruction; Devastation	Competition Nature Destruction
Adam Son of FF	"torture"	Work-Family	Torture	Painful; Death	Destruction
Fred Son of PO	"tornado"	Work-Family	Tornado	Destruction; Devastation	Nature Destruction
Ryan	"tossed salad"	Work-Family	Tossed Salad	Combination of elements; Integrated	Integrated/Food
Selma	"glue"	Work-Family	Glue	Holding objects together; Adhesive	Change
Erwin	"a wild card"	Work-Family	Wild Card	Unknown; Ambiguous	Ambiguous
Katherine	"a ball of wax"	Work-Family	Ball of Wax	Flexible; pliable; responsive to change; malleable	Flexible Change
Michele, FF wife; Lisette PO daughter	"a battle" (2)	Work-Family	A Battle	Competition	Competition/ War
Carl PO; Nicholas PO husband	"survival of the fittest" (2)	Work-Family	Survival of the Fittest	Competition; Perseverance	Competition

Reba FF	"trying to escape Alcatraz"	Work-Family	Trying to Escape Alcatraz	Impossible; Challenging	Competition
Lynette PO wife	"midnight"	Work-Family	Midnight	The time between night and day; opposites; past and future	Nature Opposites

VITA

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Educational Background

Ph.D.   Communication, August 2010, Texas A&M University, College Station
Primary Area: Organizational Communication
Secondary Area: Conflict Management and Negotiations

M.A.   Corporate and Multicultural Communication Studies, *With Distinction*, June 2006, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

B.A.   Communication Studies; Minor: History, *Magna Cum Laude,* June 2005, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

University and Professional Experience

Fall 2010-present   Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL
Assistant Professor

Fall 2008-Summer 2010   DePaul University, Chicago, IL
Adjunct Faculty

Publications (Most Recent)

Bochantin, J., & Cowan, R. (2010). Total motherhood & having it all: Reproduction, maternity, and discourses of choice among female police officers. In L. O'Brien Hallstein & S. Hayden (Eds.), *Contemplating Maternity in an Era of Choice: Explorations into Discourses of Reproduction*. Maryland: Lexington Press.

Cowan, R. and Bochantin, J. (2009). Pregnancy and motherhood on the thin blue line: Female police officers experiences as mothers in a highly masculinized work environment. *Women and Language, 32,* 67-88.

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Bochantin, J. and Cowan, R. (2008). On being "One of the Guys:" How female police officers manage tensions and contradictions in their work and their lives. *The Ohio Communication Journal, 46*, 145-170.