

**Cultures of Difference: Examining the Career
Experiences and Contributions of Lesbian, Gay and
Bisexual Police Officers post-Macpherson**

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Abstract

This thesis examined the occupational experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) police officers in post-Macpherson police constabularies across England and Wales. It reports the findings of a qualitatively-driven mixed method study conducted between September 2010 and November 2011 combining a national online survey of LGB police officers (n = 836) with 43 semi-structured qualitative interviews. The research found that the workplace experiences of LGB police officers have been radically transformed since last empirically explored on this scale, now twenty years ago. These changes have been brought about by new political, social and economic climates of inclusivity and protection for LGB individuals that collectively induced a new policing 'field' in England and Wales at the turn of the new millennium, one that placed diversity and difference at its core. Drawing upon police cultural, symbolic interactionist and organisational perspectives, the thesis highlights how despite still being psychologically saddled by a complex cauldron of identity management strategies, LGB officers make legitimate contributions to the contemporary policing mission as internal agents of cultural change and as intermediaries between the public police and LGB communities. However, the research also highlights small pockets of resistance towards the inclusion of LGB officers evidenced by continued episodes of discrimination and prejudice. Similarly, the research identified anxieties and insecurities amongst LGB officers themselves related to the longevity of police diversity reform efforts. Although predominantly looking at the experiences and contributions of LGB officers in England and Wales as a collective, this research promotes the need for a heterogeneous and malleable understanding of policing by providing examples of how the experiences of LGB officers differ according to rank, area of police work and constabulary type.

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To persistence and determination.

Abbreviations

ACPO	- Association of Chief Police Officers
BME	- Black and Minority Ethnic
BOS	- Bristol Online Survey
CEO	- Chief Executive Officer
CID	- Criminal Investigation Department
DCI	- Detective Chief Inspector
DS	- Detective Sergeant
ESRC	- Economic and Social Research Council
GPA	- Gay Police Association
GSN	- Gay Staff Network
HEFCE	- Higher Education Funding Council for England
IPCC	- Independent Police Complaints Commission
HMIC	- Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HR	- Human Resources
IPLDP	- Initial Police Learning and Development Programme
LGB	- Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual
LGBT	- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
NPIA	- National Policing Improvement Agency
PC	- Police Constable
PCC	- Police and Crime Commissioner
PSS	- Police Service Strength
SOIT	- Sexual Offences Investigative Techniques
TSG	- Territorial Support Group
UK	- United Kingdom
USA	- United States of America

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction to thesis

In his seminal paper *Perverse Criminologies: The Closet Door of Doctor Lombroso*, Groombridge (1999) highlighted the consistent neglect of sexuality from the criminological enterprise. Drawing upon Messerschmidt (1997, p. 532), he stressed the need to bring criminology ‘out of the closet’ by promoting empiricism that incorporates and acknowledges the role that sexuality plays in constructions of deviance and understandings of the criminal justice response to it. Instead, he observed the historical tendency of criminologists to knock on the closet door and then walk away.

The empirical ‘neglect’ to which Groombridge refers is certainly evident in socio-legal scholarship that explores the relationship between [homo]sexuality and one of our key social/criminal justice institutions – the police. It has been twenty years since the workplace experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) police officers in England and Wales were last explored (Burke, 1993, 1994). Burke painted a bleak picture for those officers as they were branded professional deviants by colleagues and as a threat to the celebrated police occupational culture that fuelled discriminatory behaviour and attitudes – sometimes even extreme violence – towards them. However, since then, a new era of policing has emerged, one that has placed diversity and respect for ‘difference’ at the core of its modernising reform agenda. At the same time, LGB individuals have also witnessed positive transformations in their private and professional lives.

This new era of policing – referred to throughout this thesis as ‘post-Macpherson policing’ – has sparked a plethora of empirical work that has examined the impact of these diversity reform efforts – of which the active recruitment of police officers from minority social groups was a central aim. However, despite growing and nuanced insight

into the impact and career experiences of women and black and minority ethnic (BME) police officers in this new policing climate, the experiences and contributions of LGB police officers have been overlooked.

Media insight has portrayed conflicting experiences of LGB officers nationally. On the one hand, we have witnessed the five minutes of fame afforded to Brian Paddick, an ex-Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police, who marketed himself as the UK's most senior openly gay officer as part of the launch of his autobiography, *In the Line of Fire*, in 2007. This was followed by an appearance on ITV's hit entertainment show *I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out Of Here* in 2008. Similarly, we have seen images and reports of senior officers leading LGB pride events across England and Wales and full-page advertisements in the LGB press calling on community members to join the newly 'gay-friendly' policing ranks. Despite this, news reports of institutional homophobia, bullying and discrimination still appear periodically, recent examples being '*Why Kevin Maxwell refused to be the Met's gay poster boy*' (O'Neill, 2013) and '*Black and gay police officer hounded out like an enemy of the state*' (Dodd, 2013).

Responding to Groombridge's call and this contemporary empirical neglect, this research puts sexuality at its core by exploring the experiences and workplace dynamics experienced by LGB police officers in 'post-Macpherson' constabularies¹. This thesis presents the main themes and findings of my mixed method research for which my data collection took place between September 2010 and November 2011. In order to do this, I draw upon and contribute to a wide range of interdisciplinary debates and theoretical insight. For example, criminological constructions of police culture; sociological explanations of sexuality and identity formation; anthropological and historical views of changing social climates for LGB individuals and communities; organisational

¹ Throughout the policing literature, 'police force' 'police service' and 'police constabulary' are used interchangeably when referring to each of the forty-three territorial police organisations. For consistency and clarity, 'police constabulary' will be used although some direct quotes from participants use 'force' and 'service' although referring to the same thing.

perspectives of the commodification of diversity and responses to the active inclusion of LGB staff; jurisprudential perspectives on the impact of anti-discrimination legislation and new LGB recognition; and finally, developing ‘policing studies’ scholarship which examines the role of the police and the nature of police work in post-Macpherson climates, are all utilised throughout this thesis in order to outline what I found to be, on the whole, improved workplace climates for LGB officers.

1.2 Research Aims and Questions

My aim in this research was to explore how post-Macpherson workplace climates shape the career experiences, trajectories and contributions of LGB police officers in England and Wales. Specifically, I wanted to discover whether or not altered societal and policing climates relating to homosexuality have created improved career experiences for LGB officers and whether the new policy rationale for their inclusion within the contemporary policing mission has been realised. Accordingly, I entered the field in 2010 fuelled by the main research question – ‘How does sexuality impact on the experiences and career trajectories of police officers in England and Wales today?’ In this broad context, I was keen to address the following sub-questions:

1. What is the nature of the professional working environments experienced by LGB police officers today? Is it still characterised by resistance?
2. How do LGB officers manage their sexual orientation at work?
3. What contributions do LGB officers make to contemporary policing?

These questions were at the heart of my methodological strategy and steered the conduct of my research. They will be revisited throughout the thesis to inform my discussion and analytical strategy. They will also be revisited in my conclusion so that I can reflect on answers to these questions as a whole.

1.3 Thesis Organisation

Throughout my studentship, my supervisors have regularly reminded me that writing a thesis should be like telling a story. Accordingly, the following chapters tell the story of my sometimes turbulent and stressful research journey exploring the occupational experiences and contributions of LGB officers in post-Macpherson policing.

In chapter two, I ‘set the scene’ by introducing the main theoretical, policy and police operational climates that informed the rationale for this research, the climate of the ‘field’ as I entered, and my subsequent analytical strategy. I begin by highlighting how the relationship between the public police in England and Wales and LGB communities/individuals has been historically confrontational. In this context, I outline the work of Burke (1993, 1994, 1995) which I draw upon quite considerably as a contextual comparison throughout this thesis. I then consider the ‘transformative’ climates that have been experienced by LGB individuals in the UK in recent years in order to provide a rationale for why the relationship between [homo]sexuality and policing is a criminological concern that needed empirically revisiting. I also present, in this chapter, the three main theoretical perspectives that I draw upon extensively in this thesis – the role and impact of police occupational culture; interactionist perspectives on the management and development of LGB identities; and organisational perspectives related to the growing commodification of minority identities.

In chapter three, I set out the methodological parameters of my research. I discuss how my qualitatively fuelled mixed method design was underpinned by interpretivist and feminist views on what research is and how it should be done. More practically, I reflect on my experiences in the field and discuss how researching sexuality and ‘the police’ both threw up distinct methodological hurdles that needed to be mitigated against and reflexively managed. I did not want this chapter to be a solely positive and idealist

account of my research so – in the spirit of the research ‘apprenticeship’ for which a PhD provides – I made a conscious effort to also discuss instances in my research journey that were challenging and problematic, where I made mistakes and how I learnt from them.

In chapter four, the first of my empirical chapters, I study the contemporary workplace environments experienced by LGB officers to establish whether or not they continue to be exclusionary and resistant to homosexuality. Using Chan’s (1996) Bourdieuan differentiation between ‘field’ and ‘habitus’ to help understand police culture, I identify how post-Macpherson policing has brought about a new organisational culture in policing that has fractured the dominance of the once powerful informal occupational culture of the policing rank and file and introduced a new climate of inclusivity for LGB officers. In contrast, I also identify and discuss elements of the policing ‘habitus’ which promotes small pockets of resistance to the inclusion of LGB and other minority officers in policing. In this chapter, I also present the concept of the ‘psychological contract’ – a reconfiguration of which I argue has been the driving force behind post-Macpherson reform efforts.

In chapter five, I discuss how these policing climates shape the identity management strategies of LGB police officers. Drawing on interactionist perspectives on sexuality, I highlight how the invisibility of sexuality dictates a ‘process’ of identity development for LGB officers that is moulded by their environment, biography, interaction with others and related attempts to insulate themselves against possible adverse reactions to the disclosure of their potentially stigmatised actual social LGB identity in the workplace. In this chapter, I attempt to ‘model’² identity management for LGB officers by discussing the importance of police environments, perceptions of the police occupational culture, colleague interactions and workplace friendships in facilitating a positive identity formation for LGB officers so that they come to feel comfortable to ‘come out’ and draw

² I use ‘model’ in a qualitative framework sense here, not statistical.

upon their actual social LGB identity at work. Acknowledging the limitations of modelling, I also discuss examples from my research of where this common path was not followed by my participants.

Chapter six then evaluates the policy rhetoric that champions the active inclusion of LGB police officers in post-Macpherson policing. First, I consider the ‘business case’ rationale and outline some areas of policing where LGB officers felt they make a unique contribution. Next, I evaluate the perceived effectiveness of efforts to facilitate the representation of LGB officers in the higher policing ranks – efforts which I found to be dampened due to anxieties and perceived mismanagement of promotion processes. Finally, I present a discussion of organisational efforts that have aimed to give LGB officers ‘voice’ in constabularies – specifically the role, impact and engagement of LGB officers with the national Gay Police Association (GPA) and local Gay Staff Networks (GSNs). I stress that despite efforts to include and draw upon the unique skill sets of LGB individuals in post-Macpherson policing, the realisation of these aims rests on the ability of constabularies to make these officers feel comfortable to disclose and utilise their actual social LGB identity in their daily policing roles.

In chapter seven, the last of my empirical chapters, I draw attention to the limitations of discussing ‘the police’ and ‘policing’ in a monolithic sense. Instead, I promote the acknowledgement of ‘difference’ in future policing empiricism and scholarship by showing how three contextual variances observed within my research data impacted the experiences, identity management strategies and contributions of those LGB officers. First, I discuss variability in constabulary ‘type’ and show how geography and the demographic composition of communities within which constabularies and LGB officers are located impact the importance that is placed on diversity reform agendas. Second, I consider how different areas of police work present different challenges and considerations for LGB officers before finally outlining the experiences of participants

with rank and how their seniority has influenced their outlook and identity management strategies at work.

In chapter eight, my conclusion, I revisit my research questions and reflect on some of my principal research findings. I explicitly highlight some of the areas where my thesis has made a unique contribution to knowledge – in terms of my theoretical and methodological contributions, but also to understandings of operational policing and how my research can be used to underpin future evidence-based agendas. I then acknowledge some of the limitations of my research, inherent with its broad remit and exploratory nature. Finally, I discuss my postdoctoral research aims and how I intend to maximise the impact of this research through further peer-reviewed publications, before applying for postdoctoral funding to further investigate some of the intriguing areas of police diversity that have emerged during this research.

1.4 An Injection of the Personal: Acknowledging ‘me’ in My Research

I finish this introduction with an acknowledgement of the personal roots that this research has in my own biography. The formality of socio-legal research often dictates that writers are trained to detach themselves from their writing – a criticism echoed in the work of the late Jock Young (2011) who accused criminologists of being abstract empiricists. However, Epstein and Johnson (1997, p. 6) argue that academic work is ‘written from particular standpoints ... [and it is therefore] important for readers to understand where [the writer] is coming from, in terms of who [they] are as much as in terms of what [they] think’. Consequently, in keeping with the feminist underpinnings of my methodological strategy (to be outlined in chapter three), I acknowledge that my standpoint as a researcher has influenced how I came to research this topic; how I designed and executed my methodology; and my analytical lens – as such they should be acknowledged and celebrated. It is thus important for me to take a few moments here to outline some of the

key influences of ‘me’ (Davies, 2012) that are situated ‘within the frame of the picture that [I am] attempt[ing] to paint’ (Harding, 1993, p. 58).

(a) Matt as a gay man

I should first start by saying that I am what my little sister so endearingly calls me, ‘a big homo’. However, like all of my participants, I did not wake up one morning and decide to be gay but rather it is the consequence of almost two decades of stressful subjective and intersubjective negotiation that has been shaped by my environment and life experiences. I grew up in South Wales in an area famously described by a politician in the 1980s as a breeding ground for single mothers. Well, I am the product of that breeding ground and yes, for the first few years of my life, I was the other half of my mother’s single parent set-up. When I was seven, she married my sister’s father – a self-confessed homophobe – and there began a period of my life where I would be forced to play rugby several times a week and I was only allowed to do things that ‘real boys are supposed to do’.

I do not look back at this part of my life fondly (aged six to seventeen) because I was living it according to an agenda set by others. I did not want to be playing rugby; I wanted to learn to play the violin, go to the theatre, sing in a choir, all of which I was banned from doing (but which I attempted to do without detection). At fifteen, I remember the launch of the rather racy Channel 4 drama series, *Queer as Folk*. Every week, I would stay up to watch it on a small TV screen under my bed sheets, wracked with nerves that one of my family might walk in and find me when I should be asleep. Despite public outcry that such a programme could be aired, it completely changed my perspective on homosexuality – it showed me that there was a life out there where you could be legitimately gay; that there was such thing as a gay ‘scene’; and that you could be gay without being an effeminate stereotype. This went against everything that I had been told and heard about gay people in my everyday life.

Although it would be another five years until my invisible desire for the same sex would translate into a tangible reality, this period (in retrospect) marked the initiation of my development (or ‘process’) into a fully-fledged gay man. During that time, I nervously bought my first gay magazine (I hid it inside a newspaper that I also bought so that no one would see it); I walked past gay clubs on multiple occasions on my way home from nights out with friends – never with the intention of going in, but just to get a glimpse of what might be inside; and I tested the water with close friends by posing hypothetical questions about different people’s sexualities in order to indirectly gauge their attitudes and responses. I also dated several girls during this period even though I knew I was not attracted to them but I thought that if I did not, people might suspect I was gay which at the time I thought was the worst thing that could ever happen.

(b) Matt as the aspiring police officer

Ironically, given that I am writing this as part of my doctoral thesis, I was not very academic at school so I never thought I would ever have an academic career (my teachers definitely did not!). Instead, I always had a nagging desire to join the police. I did not want to go to university unlike the rest of my friends who were flocking there; I wanted to sign up to the police as soon as I could, at 18. But I did unexpectedly well in my A-levels and was persuaded by my mother to go to university to get a law degree which I secretly thought would do me no harm if I wanted to climb the ladder in the police, but she thought I was going so that I could become the next Lord Chancellor.

After almost three years reading law, I returned home for the final Christmas break and announced to my poor mother that I would not be spending the next year preparing for the Bar, but that I had just submitted my application to the police instead. She could not hold back the look of disappointment! Several months passed and eventually an envelope displaying the constabulary’s postage frank arrived. I was so excited! It read along the lines of ... ‘Dear Mr Jones, Thank you for your application. We are sorry but due to

government cuts in this sector, we are cancelling the current recruitment call'. I was devastated! What would I do with my life now?

After I got over the devastation, I decided to think strategically about what I could do to enhance my application by the time they reopened their recruitment gates. So I moved back home and enrolled on a Master's course in criminology at Cardiff University. It was during this period that I started reading some of the academic discussion around police diversity. Previously, I had not really considered how my sexuality might impact my career in policing. The research did not paint a pretty picture. But I was not satisfied that what was written about homosexuality and policing was reflective of what my experiences considered 'modern policing' – it all seemed a bit old-fashioned and past its expiry date. I was also frustrated that there was a lack of research compared to other diversity strands – so much so that I got a bit carried away and started discussing possible PhD topics that could remedy this. One year later, that was it – I was locked in, funding secured. I was embarking on a journey that I would never have predicted in my wildest dreams. But I still wanted to join the police afterwards!

(c) Matt as a Policing Studies Lecturer

This final consideration of 'me' relates to an event that happened after I had left the field for this project, just as I was starting to transcribe my data and beginning the process of analysis and writing up. After three years of the full-time 1+3 studentship, I had started to get a little frustrated with being a student – it was all a bit unstructured and lacking the excitement of immediacy for me. So, in the first semester of my final year, a job popped up in my email box for a lectureship in policing studies. The position was part of a funding arrangement between HEFCE and a northern police constabulary that was trialling the impact of higher education on the professional practice and competencies of serving police officers. I was being somewhat cheeky, applying before I had finished my doctorate, but I did and somehow I got the job.

This was important to my thesis because once I started the job, I began working with (or teaching should I say) police officers on a daily basis – I got to know them as people, beyond the uniform. Prior to this point, I had seen my doctorate as a predominantly theoretical contribution – I had only considered academic perspectives in the subject matter and therefore my aim when writing up my thesis at this juncture was to unpack, challenge and contribute to grand theories on police culture. However, as I discussed and drew upon my research insight during my teaching, these students started to highlight or refute my observations with comparisons from their own professional practice and even started to suggest areas of policing where my research may have particular relevance (or indeed exception). Because of this, I had a *eureka* moment – that theory and practice are not mutually exclusive but rather co-dependent; the one would not exist without the other. As a result, I started to consider the practical contributions of my research and how I might write my thesis in a way that could help police officers explain and understand why certain behaviour and practices occur. Similarly, it made me consider sources beyond the academic and it was my students themselves who directed me (indirectly) to several policing reports that would subsequently inform my analytical discussion. I am in no doubt that had I written my thesis before having this job, it would have been completely different to what you are reading today.

Chapter Two

Introducing [Homo]Sexuality and Policing

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I set the core empirical and analytical scene for this thesis by identifying the main academic, policy and police operational climates on which my thesis is built, situated and theoretically characterised. I begin by addressing the theoretical construction of sexuality, outlining classic symbolic interactionist perspectives that help explain how LGB identities are formed and developed in the private lives of LGB individuals. I then move on to outline the antagonistic factors that have historically hindered relationships between the police and LGB communities, contrasting this with new social and professional climates of recognition that have emerged for LGB individuals. I introduce the theoretical concept of police occupational culture and highlight how it has been used to rationalise negative police behaviour towards LGB officers (and other minority groups), before explaining how the demise of the negative traits of this culture has been at the heart of contemporary police reform efforts. I then present the principal themes that have characterised recent police diversity reform efforts and highlight how, despite the growth of empirical insight that examines the impact of these reforms on race and gender in policing, research into [homo]sexuality has been neglected. Finally, I return to a consideration of symbolic interactionism and highlight how changing climates for LGB individuals have fuelled its resurgence as part of a new wave of literature that examines the management of LGB identities in the workplace.

2.2 Theorising Sexuality and LGB Identity Management

When writing this contextual chapter, I was conflicted by where to locate my discussion of the nature of sexuality and its manifestations. At first, I put it near the end of the chapter in an attempt to symbolically represent the dominant focus of ‘policing’ in this thesis. However, although operational and empirical policing climates are at the heart, sexuality and how it is shaped by these operational policing environments (and indeed how this in turn shapes the career experiences of LGB police officers) is also a dominant and interrelated consideration.

Consequently, I finally decided to place it at the helm in order to emphasise to the reader its impact on, and sensitivities to, the other areas of debate in this chapter.

I begin by emphasising that sexuality is a complex construct, one that is difficult to define and one that academics, researchers and policy makers have only recently begun to consider as important a demographic variable as race and gender (Parks et al., 2009). Its complexity lies within the ontological and epistemological challenges that derive from its unavoidable invisibility; unlike gender and ethnicity (although some exceptions could be argued), sexuality lacks tangible and visual cues that can identify and label individuals as heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. As such, in recent decades there have been growing attempts to identify what determines an individual's sexuality. Biological (Bancroft, 2002; Houtt, 1984), physiological (Lorber, 2007) and psychological (D'Augelli and Patterson, 2001; Freud, 1962) perspectives have rationalised sexuality as a form of internal mechanical determinism (and in some cases dysfunction). However, these perspectives are inherently dogmatic, failing to consider how sexuality shapes identities and life courses beyond these initial deterministic factors. However, as Weeks (2003, p. 18) argues, citing Cherfas and Gribbin (1984, p. 4):

the physiology and morphology of the body provides the preconditions for human sexuality. Biology conditions and limits what is possible. But it does not cause the patterns of sexual life. We cannot reduce human behaviour to the mysterious workings of the DNA.

Accordingly, social scientists champion an understanding of sexuality that goes beyond physiology and psychology, arguing instead that factors such as social and political climates, age, class, gender and historical experiences collectively shape an individual's sexual orientation and subsequent identity trajectories (Giles, 2006; Skidmore, 2004; Taylor et al., 2010; Weeks, 2003). Thus, sexuality in this thesis is not conceptualised as temporally static and monolithic, but rather as a social malleable construct that is continually changing and shaped over time in response to these competing factors.

This is not to say that social scientists are unanimously agreed on how the concept of sexuality should be theoretically rationalised. Recently, for example, we have seen the fashionable rise of

Foucauldian, post-structuralist, feminist and queer scholarship that have all put forward competing stalls on how sexuality should be theoretically explained. However, despite being overlooked in recent years by these vogue perspectives – described by Jackson and Scott (2010, p. 812) as akin to ‘theoretical amnesia’ – this research resurrects contributions of symbolic interactionism as a persuasive theoretical tool to help understand how LGB identities are developed and shaped.

The symbolic interactionist tradition finds its origins in the work of George Herbert Mead who argued that an individual’s concept of self is a social product, but that it is still purposeful and creative. Mead’s student and interpreter, Herbert Blumer, coined the term ‘social interactionism’ and published an influential summary of the key tenets of the perspective (Blumer, 1969). Thus, according to Blumer, the interactionist position is widely characterised by three main perspectives: (i) individuals act towards things based on the significance that they ascribe to those things; (ii) these significances arise from, or out of, meanings that individuals have with others and society; and (iii) these meanings are processed and modified through an intersubjective interpretive mechanism within individuals. The interactionist tradition is therefore concerned with social processes, reactions, meanings and subjective and intersubjective realities which are exhibited through the dramaturgical ‘performance’ of individuals in varying contexts and environments (Goffman, 1959; Scheff, 2005; West and Zimmerman, 1987). In this regard, Plummer (1988) argues that symbolic interactionism is not concerned with individualism, but rather a collaborative phenomenon that conceptualises individuals as ‘thinking beings’ (p. 224) who are active stakeholders in, yet shaped by, their environments.

A key contributor to the interactionist tradition was Ervin Goffman and his work on stigmatised identities. In his classic work *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identities*, he examined the world of people that society does not deem to be ‘normal’ (i.e. the stigmatised) who are therefore prone to social rejection, isolation and victimisation (Goffman, 1963). He defined stigma as a special discrepancy between virtual and actual social identity. The former refers to the initial assumptions and associations that are made about others when we first meet them (based on aesthetic cues and surface level judgments), whereas the latter refers to the less obvious and subjective traits of individuals that only come to be known as we get to know them and become aware of their biography and regular behaviour. For Goffman, two types of stigma exist: (i) ‘discredited stigma’ where the socially denounced ‘difference’ of an individual is

already known or is visually evident; and (ii) ‘discreditable stigma’ where the denounced ‘difference’ is not known or immediately identifiable – the category in which [homo]sexuality falls. In an attempt to compensate for stigmatised identities, Goffman contended that individuals with discreditable stigmatised identities either attempt to ‘pass’ by managing ‘undisclosed discrediting information about self’ (p. 42); or ‘cover’ by making ‘every effort to keep the stigma from looming large’ (p. 102). He distinguishes passing from covering by noting that passing pertains to the visibility of a characteristic, while covering pertains to its obtrusiveness. To illustrate this distinction Goffman used the example of how former US President Franklin D. Roosevelt positioned himself behind his desk before his advisers and guests came in to meet him to play down and cover (not pass as people already knew he was in a wheelchair) his disability, so that people would focus on his professionalism and qualities as President, rather than his disability.

In a previous work, Goffman considered how individuals manage their identities and how we present ourselves to others (Goffman, 1959). In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, he argued that we have two different modes of presenting ourselves. Using the metaphor of identity formation and social interaction being akin to a theatrical stage (a common tool within interactionist scholarship), he claimed that our concept of self is the product of premeditated performances that we, as individuals, deliver in different situations and contexts. As central to this metaphor, he discusses the differentiation between our ‘on’ or front-stage performative selves where we try ‘to define the situation for those who observe the performance’ (p. 32), and our ‘off’, backstage selves where we are more relaxed and not so concerned with the reactions of others to our behaviour. In this regard, individuals and wider sociocultural histories can be seen to provide multiple ‘frames’ (or stages) for our performative and subjective selves to operate within, thereby creating ‘definitions of the situations [that] are built up in accordance with principles of organisation which govern events ... and our subjective involvement with them’ (Goffman, 1974, pp. 10–11). Scheff (2005) argues that Goffman’s work was collectively ‘interactionist in the Cooley line’ (p. 149) as he illustrated how we ‘live in the minds of others without knowing it’ (Cooley, 1902) when negotiating and ‘performing’ our identities in different contexts and frames (see also Plummer, 1995). Although not directly related to sexuality and LGB identities, the work of Goffman is drawn upon considerably in this thesis, given the social stigma that homosexuality has historically attracted.

Beyond the ‘generic’ interactionist literature, sexuality more specifically has been conceptualised by interactionist scholars as a concept that cannot be understood in isolation from the reactions of society which potentially stigmatised it (Plummer, 1988, 1995, 1996). Accordingly, homosexuality has been defined as a ‘process emerging through interactive encounters (part of which include a potentially hostile reaction) in an intersubjective world’ (Plummer, 1996, p. 65). Again, using a dramaturgical metaphor, interactionists consider homosexuality to be a form of ‘role’ taking, where the performative self of LGB individuals is influenced by the social context and the potential reactions of central ‘role agents’ – often close friends and family members – in different contextual ‘frames’ (Jackson and Scott, 2010; West and Zimmerman, 1987).

Adams (2010) usefully identifies and presents the main, interrelated premises on which interactionist understandings of homosexuality are built:

- That LGB identities are contentious and stigmatised;
- That the homosexual identity is inextricably tied to the metaphor of the closet and that ‘coming out’ is ‘the most canonical expression of being gay’ (citing Perez, 2005, p. 177);
- The invisibility of sexuality dictates that LGB identities are discreditable (in Goffman’s sense) and that ‘coming out’ is necessary for a positive LGB identity to be formed (and known about);
- That the closet draws meaning only in relation to heteronormative contexts;
- ‘Coming out’ can be dangerous – physically, emotionally and psychologically;
- ‘Coming out’ is an inescapable, ever-present, repetitive process and reality.

In addition to the above, one of the theoretical observations from interactionism that I draw upon in this thesis is the identification and modelling of key ‘career stages’ that are said to occur in the subjective and intersubjective process of negotiating positive LGB identities. Cass (1979), for example, presents a *Model of Homosexuality Formation* which outlines the process by which a person comes first to consider and later to acquire the identity of ‘homosexual’ as a relevant aspect of social self. This modelling is based on an understanding of sexuality as an ongoing, sequential accomplishment and not a finished product or an abrupt leap from ‘heterosexual’ to

‘homosexual’. Similarly, Plummer (1996, pp. 70–74) argues that the narrative of homosexuality incorporates three defining stages – ‘sensitisation’ where an individual has their first conscious or semi-conscious thought that they might be homosexual which they keep completely private due to feared stigmatisation by close family and peers; ‘disorientation and signification’ which involves high personal anxiety, confusion and a heightened sense of self-awareness; and ‘coming out’ where an individual is reborn into the organised aspects of the homosexual community. Both of these ‘models’ affirm the degree of agency involved in the personal negotiation of sexuality (i.e. in terms of level of disclosure) but also show how decisions underpinning this agency are shaped by a cocktail of external factors that persuasively inform an individual’s subjective and intersubjective assessment of the consequences that disclosing aspects of their potentially stigmatised actual social identity might bring.

2.3 Pre-Macpherson Policing: Hostile LGB Histories

In introducing the ‘policing’ focus of my thesis, I should begin by stressing that the relationship between the public police in England and Wales and LGB individuals/communities has been historically antagonistic and fraught – so much so that homosexuals were once ranked by police officers as one of their most disliked clientele (Fretz, 1975; Niederhoffer, 1967). Recognition and understanding of these fraught histories is important as they (i) explain some continued hostilities towards the police within certain areas of LGB communities; and (ii) provide a useful benchmark when assessing the importance and impact of diversity reform efforts, the nature of which I outline later in this chapter. The cause of such hostilities has been found to predominantly originate from the police – manifested within the academic literature as three different areas of hostility and discrimination.

First, as offenders, LGB individuals were subjected to overly aggressive and hostile behaviour from the police (Power, 1993; Valverde, 2003). Numerous studies have highlighted the antipathy of police officers towards gay men in particular and how they often exhibited hostile, negative and stereotypical views towards homosexuality during the course of their duties (Burke, 1993; Leinen, 1993; Pratt and Tuffin, 1996). This proved particularly problematic in the policing of public sex offences – specifically gross indecency offences between consenting same-sex adults – and of recreational drug consumption in ‘gay social spaces’ (Seabrook, 1992; Valverde, 2003).

In terms of the former, the police have been found to employ intensive and hostile practices that are akin to unlawful entrapment (Power, 1993). Consequently, the police have been accused of being overzealous and arbitrary in the application of the legal provisions governing these offences, influenced by their personal aversion to homosexual conduct and lifestyles, made possible by the high levels of discretion conferred on police officers when executing their roles.

Second, as victims of crime, LGB individuals reported feeling unprotected and unsupported by the police. As a result, many have been reluctant to report incidents of victimisation due to fear of further hostility, harassment and discrimination (Stonewall, 2008, 2013; Williams & Robinson, 2004). Specifically, research has highlighted the reluctance of LGB victims to ‘come out’ to the police due to a fear of further victimisation by predominantly male, heterosexual officers (Mason and Plamer, 1996), and a fear that they would not be believed (Galop, 1998) and that they would be treated as an offender rather than a victim (Lewisham Gay Alliance, 1992). In some ways, those fears were met with those LGB individuals who braved approaching the police for help reporting a negative reception and general disinterest from officers (Davis, 1992; Mitchell, 1992).

Finally, given this aversion and hostility towards LGB individuals as ‘clients’, it is also not surprising to highlight the negative and resistant workplace experiences of LGB individuals who choose to join the police ranks – the focus of this thesis. The first and only UK study to ever empirically examine the workplace experiences of LGB police officers was conducted by Marc Burke at the beginning of the 1990s (Burke, 1993). Now twenty years old, his research, rather bleakly, concluded that homosexuality was antithetical to British policing – describing the status and perception of LGB officers as ‘deviant’ in the minds of their colleagues and as representing ‘the most serious kind of contamination and worst possible threat to the integrity of the service’ (Burke, 1994, p. 194). Burke highlighted how identifiable LGB officers were faced with turbulent and stressful workplace experiences characterised by a myriad of prejudice and discrimination. Examples provided of the former include refusal by some heterosexual officers to work in close proximity with LGB officers; being subjected to derogatory discourse from colleagues; being humiliated and professionally discredited by colleagues in professional settings; and being the victim of privacy violations/vandalism. In relation to the latter, respondents reported adverse treatment during the recruitment process and training, unfair

allocation of duties based on perceived views that LGB officers are unfit for traditional police work, and bars to promotion and development.

Against this backdrop, a central tenet of Burke's thesis was the identification of the 'double life syndrome' strategy employed by the majority of LGB officers in the face of considerable hostility and resistance at work (Burke, 1994, pp. 199–200). Specifically, he identified how the invisibility of sexuality allowed LGB officers to camouflage their true sexual orientation at work – choosing instead to pass themselves off as heterosexual in order to integrate with ease into the dominant policing order. This allowed them to escape the workplace stresses associated with being an 'out' LGB officer within these climates of resistance, resorting back to their LGB identities in their private lives. This route, despite its reported popularity, came with its own cautionary risks – most notably detriment to mental health, an inability to give maximum attention to police duties, difficulty in forming satisfying personal relationships, and a collective adverse impact on job satisfaction levels.

At the same time as Burke's research in the UK, a handful of international studies also emerged which provided useful insight into the career experiences of LGB officers. In the USA, for example, Leinen (1993) and Buhrke (1996) conducted almost identical studies to Burke and also found that LGB officers held a discredited status within police departments, often being treated as social pariahs by their colleagues. Leinen (1993) reported particularly emotive examples of ill-treatment and prejudice, including the branding of gay male officers as paedophiles, anti-gay graffiti on the walls of police buildings, openly gay slurs/anti-gay humour and extreme privacy violations – all of which were reported to have occurred in full view of senior officers, but were left unchallenged. These officers similarly chose to conceal their sexuality at work with both Leinen and Buhrke providing emotive examples of the psychological risks of this practice. Interestingly, they also explored the difficulties this caused for the private, intimate and family relationships of these officers who were compelled to become active players in the spiral of deceit required for the successful execution of the double life strategy – a strategy that needs to be sustained for many years.

Research from New Zealand (Pratt and Tuffin, 1996) focused exclusively on attitudes towards gay men in the police, with the majority opinion being that they are unsuitable. This view was

steered by a stereotypical social construction of the homosexual including reference to overt feminism, physical weakness, paedophilia, sexual promiscuity and deviance. Respondents in this study did not blame the police or themselves for fostering these negative views, but rather wider social attitudes towards homosexuality which officers felt obliged to reflect as representatives of the people. Thus, even those officers who were not homophobic felt that they could not defend and challenge negative behaviour due to the risk of being branded gay sympathisers – a label attracting adverse rejection on a par with those they would have defended.

2.4 Police Culture as an Explanatory Concept

In order to understand police officers' behaviour towards, and their aversion to, LGB communities and other minority groups, it is imperative to consult theoretical perspectives around police culture – a concept defined by van Maanen (1978, p. 322) as a 'hodgepodge of cliques, cabals and conspiracies'. Ubiquitous within policing scholarship, it is commonly drawn upon to explain police corruption, hostilities towards certain social groups, discriminatory behaviour and resistance to reform – providing gravitas to claims of its persuasiveness and control over police environments, behaviour and practices (Brown, 1998a; Chan, 1997; Holdaway, 1983; Manning, 1989; Waddington, 1999; Young, 1991).

Despite its importance, the parameters and ingredients of 'police culture' are at times unclear and confusing, due mainly to the existence of interchangeable references within the scholarship to which it refers. For example, Bacon (2014, pp. 103–104) identified that it is referred to as 'police culture', 'police sub-culture', 'occupational culture', 'cop culture' and 'canteen culture' but argues that they all denote the same thing. Beyond these ambiguities however, the concept represents the existence of an informal, unwritten, set of core values and beliefs amongst lower-ranking officers (commonly referred to as the 'rank and file') that are passed on from generation to generation through a fraternal acculturation process and is said to underpin their 'working personality' (Skolnick, 1966, p. 42), divorced from the formal and autocratic standards that are expected by management within hierarchical police organisations. Some useful and iconographic definitions of the concept include 'a patterned set of understandings that helps officers cope with the pressures and tensions confronting the police' (Reiner, 2010, p. 118); 'a residual core of beliefs and values, of associated strategies and tactics relevant to policing [that] remains a

principal guide for the day-to-day work of the rank and file officer’ (Holdaway, 1983, p. 2); and a ‘set of generalized rules of conduct, cognitive rationales of how the world is to be viewed, and socio-political norms and values’ (Innes, 2003, p. 14).

Components of Police Culture	Core Characteristics/Manifestations	Examples from the Literature
<i>Sense of Mission: ‘Crime Fighters’</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The police exist to preserve law and order in society. Police officers are crime warriors motivated by the excitement and action of the policing mission. Police work occurs within violent and potentially life-threatening situations; scenarios that police folk tales are made of. A belief that police work that is not exciting and adrenaline-pumping is not ‘real’ police work. 	Reiner (2000); Loftus (2008); Punch (1979); Smith and Gray (1985); van Maanen (1978).
<i>Machismo: Masculinity as a defining requirement of police work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police work is best carried out by white, heterosexual men. Police officers must be able to engage in physically aggressive and confrontational situations. Physical and emotional toughness is a must. The ‘cult of masculinity’. 	Brown (1998); Walklate (2000); Smith and Gray (1985); Fielding (1994).
<i>Conservatism</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The police are the moral agents in society. They represent dominant social morality. Those who do not conform to their conservative standards are rejected. 	Skolnick (1966); Burke (1994); Reiner (2000); Crank (2004).
<i>Prejudice</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative attitudes towards subaltern social groups amongst officers – especially women, BME, LGB. Altered behaviour and levels of protection towards these groups. 	Brown (1998); Westmarland (2001a); Holdaway and O’Neill (2004); Burke (1994).
<i>Stereotyping</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opinions, beliefs and exclusions grounded in social stereotypes rather than lived experience. Police officers learn to respond to aesthetic and behavioural cues. 	Brown (1981); Smith and Gray (1985); Brown and Heidensohn (2000).
<i>Suspicion</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A natural consequence of the danger and spontaneity of police work. Being cautious with what you do not know. 	Skolnick (1966); Reiner (1997); Holdaway (1983).
<i>Cynicism and Pessimism</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A product of working within the most challenging and socially deprived areas of society. The development of a ‘thick skin’. Becomes ingrained into all areas of police work, including interaction with colleagues and superiors. 	Waddington (1999); Westley (1970); Van Maanen (1978).
<i>Isolation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The police are divorced from the civilian population. The private and work lives of officers are deeply entwined. Police officers are held to a moral higher standard because of their position of privilege in society. 	Young (1991); Holdaway (1983); Loftus (2009).

Figure 2.1: Main Ingredients of the Police ‘Occupational Culture’

Figure 2.1 is a condensed summary of the commonly referred to ‘core values’ that have been empirically observed to inform the ‘occupational culture’³ of the rank and file⁴. Collectively, they represent a syllabus of behavioural expectations that must be met in order for an officer to be afforded professional recognition and associated protections from their workplace peers. They include: a sense of mission; machismo; conservatism; prejudice; stereotyping; suspicion; cynicism and pessimism; and isolation – all of which unite to provide one of the most powerful and influential occupational cultures in existence (Kleinig, 2000; van Maanen, 1978).

Given its unwritten and ‘unofficial’ origin and status, it is surprising that such a persuasive mechanism in policing had been left relatively unchallenged and unregulated. However, a dominant rationale for its existence has been that it provides an outlet for police officers to vent their frustrations and anger and to build up emotional support mechanisms to help them process the stresses and strains of police work (Hoyle, 1998; Waddington, 1999). Nevertheless, a central tenet of academic discussions of police occupational culture and its dimensions highlight its predominantly exclusionary nature and its use to legitimise bigoted and problematic attitudes and behaviour amongst police officers (Brown, 1998a; Holdaway and O’Neill, 2007a). A common rebuttal to this claim is that although elements of the culture manifest themselves as negative views and attitudes amongst officers, particularly about marginalised social groups, this rarely translates into negative attitudes and behaviour during their professional interactions with members of the public (see e.g. Smith and Gray, 1985; Hoyle, 1998).

This argument is reflected in Waddington's (1999) Goffman-esque (although strangely, he does not refer to Goffman in his paper) differentiation between the ‘front’ and ‘back’ stages of policing – the former referring to the official conduct of officers in their interactions with the public, whereas the latter refers to ‘canteen’ spaces within constabularies where expressions of the culture are most evident. He specifically used the example of expressions of homophobia amongst officers and argues that despite the existence of homophobic attitudes and behaviour amongst officers within the ‘backstage’ of policing, this did not translate to homophobic

³ Given the confusion that the interchangeable references to police culture can cause (as previously discussed) throughout this thesis, it will be referred to as the police ‘occupational culture’.

⁴ The main ‘components’ are taken from Reiner’s (2010) discussion of cop culture. However, the ‘core features/manifestations’ are based on a condensed interpretation of the core literature.

behaviour towards members of the public during their ‘front-stage’ duties. However, I argue that what is overlooked in this conception is the consequence of this ‘backstage’ (where homophobic attitudes and behaviour are rife) on colleagues, police officers, who are LGB themselves. How does this impact their working environment and ability to process the stresses and strains of police work?

In this vein, Burke (1994) identified three ways in which the components of the rank and file’s occupational culture acted as a rationale for negative exclusionary behaviour towards LGB police employees as well as towards LGB victims and offenders identified in the previous section. First, he discussed the deep-rooted stereotypical views of heterosexual officers towards ‘non-heterosexual identities’. Linked mainly to sexual promiscuity and moral turpitude, this behaviour was seen to clash with the conservative, conformist ‘role-appropriate behaviour’ expected of police officers (p. 193).

Similarly, he highlighted the central importance of masculinity and heteronormative traditions to police work and police officers’ professional identities, which homosexuality was seen to directly threaten. In this regard, Burke discussed how heterosexual officers wrongly associated homosexuality with weakness and effeminacy with the cost to those who are open about their homosexuality being the automatic forfeit of their masculinity in the minds of their colleagues. Thus, policing according to Burke (1993, p. 19) is characterised by a ‘masculinity complex’ whereby the acceptance, integration and progression of officers rests on their ability to sustain, celebrate and conform to prescribed masculinist role behaviour and standards required by their occupational culture.

Finally, he presented the ‘criminality hypotheses’ (Burke, 1994, p. 193) as a justification for resistance. With his research being conducted only twenty years after the legalisation of homosexuality in 1967, he found that a ‘memory of criminality’ pertaining to homosexuality as criminal/illegal still resonated in the minds of some respondents who were in the infancy of their police careers at the time of this legislative turn. Beyond the memory of homosexuality as illegal, Burke also addresses the reality that, at some point, most officers have experienced, and continue to do so, the antagonistic relationship between LGB communities and the police through the policing of public sex environments (e.g. cottaging) and drug consumption within gay social

spaces (see e.g. Moran, 2012). Thus, the amalgamated consequence is that the LGB community is seen as a legitimate target for suspicion in the minds of officers who associate homosexuality with criminality – a reality that is hard for heterosexual officers to overlook when faced with members of this traditionally deviant community becoming colleagues.

Despite its ubiquity and analytical persuasiveness when trying to rationalise police officers' attitudes and behaviour, in recent years the academic credibility of these police culture debates has been called into question. Specific criticisms relate to its collective preoccupation with uniformed policing (Bacon, 2014; Innes, 2003); its failure to acknowledge and respond to shifting internal and external contextual climates and priorities that impact its manifestations (Chan, 1996, 1997); its inability to offer nuanced insight that responds and reflects the diversity and complexity of police work (Hobbs, 1991; Loftus, 2007); and its failure to recognise the impact of punitive measures that have been introduced to dilute aspects of this culture (Jones, 2014; Terpstra & Schaap, 2013). Accordingly, throughout this thesis I draw upon the theoretical perspectives of police occupational culture as a tool for explanatory utility, but I also respond to these growing criticisms by empirically exploring its impact and resonance within more nuanced areas of contemporary policing.

2.5 Police Culture in Crisis

Until the end of the 1970s, the ingredients of this police occupational culture remained unchallenged. In fact, they were iconographic and celebrated ingredients of 'traditional' British policing that permeated all areas of police work – symbolic of the elevated status given to the police officers as 'crime fighters' on a moral crusade (Holdaway, 1983; van Maanen, 1978; Reiner, 1997; Smith and Gray, 1985). However, by the end of the 1970s, the socio-demographic composition of the UK population had changed – due mainly to post-war immigration and the subsequent expansion of the European Union – creating a multi-ethnic and culturally diverse Britain (Hall, 1993; Weeks, 2007). This newfound heterogeneity within British communities proved antagonistic to the homogeneous insularity of the police occupational culture, initiating a period of criticism, diminished public confidence and associated calls for reform to public policing that would continue for two decades. Particularly, between 1981 and 1999, there were three damning reports that proved instrumental in reshaping policing priorities and mindsets.

The first was the Scarman Report (1981), commissioned by the government in the immediate aftermath of two days of social unrest and violent confrontation between the police and members of the community in Brixton, London. Lord Scarman, who authored the report, declined to identify one single cause for the unrest, but rather argued that it was underpinned by complex political, social and economic factors. Within his report, he was critical of the police relationship with BME communities, particularly highlighting how their disproportionate use of stop and search powers on BME individuals, and the failure of the police to engage and consult with BME communities before and during the social unrest in Brixton, had contributed to its occurrence. However, Scarman was keen to stress that the police as a whole were not racist, but rather were being tarnished by the bigoted views and behaviour of a small minority of officers – later termed by Bowling (1999) as the ‘bad apple thesis’. Accordingly, within his report, Scarman presented a comprehensive list of recommendations which would dominate the policing agenda for years to come (Reiner, 2010). Specifically, he called for the identification and removal of these ‘bad apples’, a transformation of the white masculine middle-class sub-culture, and reconsideration of how the police engage with diverse communities. In order to achieve this he called for:

- The recruitment of minority ethnic officers;
- A discipline process that holds officers who demonstrate racist behaviour to account;
- Training for existing and new officers on the cultural and racial backgrounds of minority communities;
- The proactive integration of police officers into minority communities;
- The use of the special constabulary to help police constabularies reflect their communities.

Unfortunately, the years following Scarman were dominated by the social and political unrest fuelled by Thatcherism, allowing for only a muted and sporadic attempt at implementing these recommendations (McLaughlin, 2007). Ultimately, this meant that these initial calls for reform were neither fully implemented nor realised. However, the benefit of historical hindsight has shown that this was somewhat irrelevant. Instead, what was important was the symbolic achievements of Scarman, namely that policing is best understood against the social, political

and economic frameworks in which it is located (Loftus, 2009; Reiner, 2010). Scarman was successful in disrupting the dominant policing mindset and has ‘subsequently become a synonym for police/community relations’ (Rowe, 2008, p. 154).

Twelve years after the recommendations of Scarman (1981), Stephen Lawrence, a London schoolboy, was killed in a racist attack, launching a murder inquiry by the Metropolitan Police. In June 1997, the newly elected Labour government launched an investigation into ‘the matters arising from the death of Stephen Lawrence’ (p. 6) which culminated in a report by Lord Macpherson (1999). The case and the Macpherson Report subsequently became a ‘public relations catastrophe’ (McLaughlin, 2007, p. 148) for the police. Macpherson identified significant failures during the investigation of the schoolboy’s murder, failures that he argued were fuelled by ‘institutional racism’ (p. 321) across all levels of the Metropolitan Police. Specifically, he highlighted how the recommendations of Scarman (1981) had been ignored, representing a failure by management to respond to changing policing priorities. Reiner (2010) argues that Macpherson was much harder-hitting of police failures than Scarman, due to the claims of Macpherson of institutional racism that Scarman had refused to accept. As a consequence, Macpherson put forward over seventy recommendations for reform (not all of which focused on the police but also highlighted the responsibilities of other public organisations), most of which mirrored the recommendations of Scarman and stressed the importance of recruiting a more diverse workforce and the need for diversity and culture training for officers throughout the organisation⁵.

Although focused on issues of race and policing, the critical findings and recommendations presented by both Scarman and Macpherson were widely interpreted to refer to negative police attitudes and responses to social ‘difference’ more generally including variances in gender and sexuality (Loftus, 2009; McLaughlin, 2007; Rowe, 2008). This implied interpretation was cemented in an independent report into *Police Integrity: Securing and Maintaining Public Confidence* conducted by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC, 1999) which found that the police were failing many minority communities across England and Wales –

⁵ It is worth noting that as I prepare to submit this thesis, the Home Secretary, Theresa May, has announced a new public inquiry into the undercover policing practices used in the investigation of the Stephen Lawrence case.

including LGB communities – and as such, confidence in the police was at an all-time low. The report highlighted the need for police constabularies to try harder to engage with minority communities and to identify and understand variations in their policing needs. Importantly, the report found a lack of confidence in grievance procedures amongst officers, especially middle-ranking supervisors, and called for further support to educate and support these officers to professionally reprimand officers under their management who continued to exhibit negative and discriminatory attitudes and behaviour.

By the end of the century therefore, the police had come under considerable attack and were placed under extreme scrutiny by the public, government and the media. The components of traditional policing were fractured and were no longer fit for purpose. Consequently, constabularies across England and Wales were placed under enormous pressure to seek ways of rebuilding damaged relations with the public and restoring dwindling confidence.

2.6 Post-Macpherson Policing: Establishing New Policy Directions

After a period of institutional reflection, the new millennium saw the introduction of a fresh policy direction in policing, one that placed diversity and its potential to bring about change at its core. This is not to say that this was the first time that the concept of diversity had been considered (McLaughlin, 2007), but rather the severity of Macpherson and its damage to police reputation provided the impetus for it to be taken seriously and made an operational priority – described by Loftus (2009, p. 35) as the start of a ‘new politics of policing diversity’.

There were four noticeable policy tenets that shaped this new diversity-centred mindset: placing the ‘public’ and concept of ‘community’ at the centre of the policing mission; workforce modernisation; creating an ‘ethical conscience’ and mechanisms of accountability; all of which have been underpinned by what has been referred to as a ‘new managerialism’ in policing (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003). Hall et al. (2009) identified three ‘orders of change’ concerning police reform that related to the nature and impact of the proposed initiatives. ‘First order’ reform represents a continuity of quantitative initiatives that have been utilised in the past (e.g. increasing police numbers in problematic areas); ‘second order’ reform refers to less common but still ‘normal’ reform initiatives (e.g. changing the way that an area of policing is delivered);

‘third order’ reform refers to more radical initiatives that represent a fundamental change in police direction. In this regard, the new diversity reform agenda was described by Hall et al. as a ‘third order’ programme representing ‘a paradigm shift relating to fundamental ... changes in the police mindset and in external expectations of what the police are there to deliver’ (p. 5). Similarly, Reiner (2010), citing Shearing and Bayley (1996, p. 585), argued that ‘future generations will look back on [this] era as a time when one system of policing ended and another took its place’. Given these claims, it is appropriate to now isolate and discuss the four main tenets of these new policy mindsets identified above.

(i) *Placing the ‘public’ and the concept of ‘community’ at the centre of the policing mission*: One of the fundamental criticisms of the reports previously discussed was that the police had become too insular and disconnected from, rather than part of, the social communities within which they are located. Accordingly, reinforcing the concept of ‘policing by consent’ – whereby the police are conceptualised as representatives of the public tasked with maintaining social order – and rebuilding public trust and confidence in the police through proactive engagement and consultation has been a central aim of the new diversity agenda (Home Office, 2004; Jones and Newburn, 2001). This is based on the realisation that without the cooperation of the public, their legitimacy is called into question and their effectiveness compromised (Davenport, 2006). As one of the central policy documents stated:

We police with the consent and the cooperation of all members of the community. Consent is vital and cannot be taken for granted. For consent to be earned and sustained, the public need to have absolute confidence in us and the service we provide. The cooperation of the public is just as vital. Without cooperation we will not be given the intelligence and assistance which we need to maintain order, solve crime and keep communities safe (ACPO, 2005, p. 4).

Fundamental to this new mindset was the realisation that a monolithic ‘public’ does not exist but rather there are multiple ‘communities’ all of which have individual needs and expectations of what the police exist to do. For example, HMIC (2003, p. 168) highlighted that while the issue of race and BME community relations was a prominent focus in both the Scarman and Macpherson

reports, there are at least thirteen other community groups – including LGB – that should be considered as part of the diversity agenda. As a consequence, the need to move beyond a reactive police ‘force’ to a flexible and proactive police ‘service’ was highlighted so that the distinctive needs of these ‘segmented markets’ (Rowe, 2008, p. 171) can be responded to. This aimed to allow constabularies to engage with, build relationships with and empower these communities and not just come into contact with them when, as classically referred to by Bittner (1974, p. 249), ‘something-is-happening-that-ought-not-to-be-happening-and-about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now’.

(ii) *Workforce modernisation*: In order to realise this community engagement philosophy, it was acknowledged that the dominance of white, heterosexual men in British policing must be disrupted so that constabularies can come to truly ‘reflect the communities that [they] serve’ (ACPO, 2005; Davenport, 2006). As such, a central aim of the new reform agenda was to develop a diverse and representative police service through the active recruitment of officers from a broad spectrum of cultural and demographic backgrounds. This was based on a belief that such individuals would bring with them certain ‘benefits’ that could contribute to the diversity mission. These ranged from a potential to disrupt and dilute negative expressions of the aforementioned police occupational culture (e.g. discriminatory attitudes and behaviour); acting as intermediaries between the police and hard to reach groups; to bringing an innately unique skill set that can be utilised as a creative organisational ‘resource’. These are commonly referred to as the ‘business case’ for diversity in policing.

It’s about drawing on education and culture and all the available skills, knowledge and experience that our society has to offer to make the British police service the best in the world (p. 5) ... Diversity is simply another piece of equipment that can help when solving problems, finding advice to give, or using the benefit of your experience in a particular situation. Think of it as an essential in-house bank of knowledge and skills which everyone in the service can use to improve their performance (p. 6) ... Evidence shows that a diverse workforce and a culture that includes and supports everyone within the organisation leads to: a reduction in absence from work; a reduction in grievances and complaints; access to a broader range

of skills and experience; efficiency, creativity and growth; and increased staff morale (p. 9) (ACPO, 2005).

(iii) *Creating an 'ethical conscience' and mechanisms of accountability*: Beyond the legal and business cases for diversity in policing, diversity reform was also pursued because it was 'the right thing to do' (Clements, 2008; Davenport, 2006). Bowling (1999) argues that officers who engage in discriminatory behaviour, either towards the public or towards other colleagues, represent an abuse of position and responsibility afforded to police officers and that police constabularies who failed to address such behaviour risk damaging public trust and confidence in the police, which have been found to be highly influenced by perceptions of procedural justice (Jackson and Bradford, 2009). Accordingly, as well as new legislative provisions that establish external recourse to employees who experience discrimination, police constabularies were tasked with composing and installing internal punitive frameworks that lay down formal disciplinary and dismissal procedures against any officer who is found to be engaging in 'negative' behaviour that goes against the diversity mission.

(iv) *Towards a 'new managerialism'*: Although not a direct product of the police diversity agenda, the establishment of a new public management philosophy championed by the Labour government was a characterising driving force behind its implementation. This promoted the need for organisations to establish regular mission statements, targets and goals that made the expectations and performance of public organisations (in this case, the police) more transparent and publically accountable (Loader and Mulcahy, 2003). Examples of how this new managerial philosophy impacted police diversity agendas include:

- The establishment of quantitative targets for the recruitment and progression of minority officers – predominantly related to the recruitment of BME and female officers;
- A requirement for all chief constables to compose and publish publically (a) their short- and long-term equality and diversity aims and objectives; and (ii) annual reports on their diversity performance.

There is limited academic discussion of the impact of this new policing managerialism on diversity agendas specifically. However, the new perspective of policing as a ‘service’, previously observed by Rowe (2008) as being key to its aims – whereby senior police officers are seen as the CEOs of a limited company obliged to communicate their aims and performance to their shareholders annually – is useful. This concept of new managerialism brought an end to local autonomy amongst constabularies which, it could be argued, contributed to their demise in the run-up to Macpherson. Now, the risk of non-compliance and failure to transpose diversity policy rhetoric into operational reality by individual constabularies is somewhat minimised due to the micromanaging of activity established through this bureaucratic obligation which creates a minimum national standard.

2.7 Changing Climates for LGB Individuals

In parallel with these changing policing priorities, the turn of the new millennium also witnessed radical changes in relation to the treatment, acceptance and integration of LGB individuals in the UK. Specifically, three areas of LGB ‘transformation politics’ (Moran, 2012) are central to discussions within this thesis: social, political and legislative inclusion; victim recognition and criminal justice protections; and the active inclusion in contemporary policing. I now discuss each of these areas in turn.

Social, political and legislative inclusion

Prior to 1997, LGB individuals in England and Wales were denied protections by the law, were politically shunned (as evidenced by the controversial s.28 of the Local Government Act 1988 which banned the promotion of homosexuality by local authorities), and were stigmatised by society, often being the target of prejudice and discrimination. However, due to passionate LGB activism in the late 1980s by organisations such as Stonewall, a change of political direction in 1997 with the election of a Labour government, and the legal establishment of fundamental rights and freedoms in Europe, the new millennium saw a myriad of changes which has positively impacted the private lives of LGB individuals.

Table 1.7 Views on homosexuality, 1983–2012

	83	84	85	87	89	90	93	95	98
Sexual relations between two adults of the same sex	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Always wrong	50	54	59	64	56	58	50	44	39
Mostly wrong	12	13	10	11	13	11	14	11	11
Sometimes wrong	8	7	7	8	9	8	7	10	11
Rarely wrong	4	2	4	2	4	4	5	7	8
Not wrong at all	17	16	12	11	14	15	18	22	23
<i>Weighted base</i>	1719	1645	1769	1391	1469	1353	1493	1180	1079
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1761	1675	1804	1437	1513	1397	1484	1172	1075

	99	00	03	05	06	07	10	12
Sexual relations between two adults of the same sex	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Always wrong	38	37	31	27	24	26	20	22
Mostly wrong	11	9	9	12	9	10	10	6
Sometimes wrong	9	9	9	8	11	7	8	7
Rarely wrong	7	7	7	9	11	10	8	10
Not wrong at all	27	34	37	37	38	39	45	47
<i>Weighted base</i>	1056	3426	2148	2101	1089	1042	1083	1099
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1052	3426	2139	2102	1093	1030	1081	1103

Figure 2.2: Changing Public Attitudes Towards Homosexuality (Park et al., 2013)

Born in 1983, I belonged to a generation which was one of the first beneficiaries of this newfound LGB inclusivity. As a young(ish) gay male, I can enter into a civil partnership or marriage with a member of the same sex, I can adopt a child, I can leave my estate to my civil partner or husband without the estate being liable to inheritance tax, and I can join the military as an openly gay man, all of which I am mindful were not automatic options for preceding LGB generations. Jeffrey Weeks argues that this newfound recognition is a product of an ‘unfinished yet profound revolution that has transformed the possibilities of living our sexual diversity and creating intimate lives’ (Weeks, 2007, p. 3). For Weeks, this newfound recognition for LGB individuals has been brought about by social secularisation, but also the ‘democratisation of

everyday life’ where historical constructions of some forms of homosexuality as perverse have been replaced with the potential for agency and the tailoring of intimacy according to egalitarian principles rather than ‘biological necessity’ (Weeks, 2009, p. 1). In this regard, he highlights how social perceptions of LGB individuals have changed from predominantly ‘sexual’ and deviant to individuals who are capable of love, intimacy and commitment (Weeks, 2007, 2009).

Figure 2.2 shows a historical overview of social attitudes towards homosexuality recorded by the British Social Attitudes Survey (Park et al., 2013). It illustrates how positive measures towards the recognition and integration of LGB individuals in recent years have contributed to a positive change in social opinions – with 57 per cent reporting in 2012 that sexual relations between two adults of the same sex is ‘not wrong at all’ or ‘rarely wrong’ compared to 21 per cent of those sampled in 1983 and 34 per cent of those sampled in 1999.

This trend of transformed social attitudes was further reflected in a Stonewall study into British attitudes to lesbian, gay and bisexual people (Stonewall, 2012). Although the empirical rigour of these types of reports (or lack thereof) should be acknowledged, they are useful in obtaining a snapshot of social trends. Some key statistics from this Stonewall report were:

- Three in five people still say that there is still public prejudice against LGB people in Britain today;
- 61 per cent think that religious attitudes are responsible for continued prejudice and discrimination against LGB people today;
- 63 per cent think that lack of acceptance in places such as schools is responsible for wider prejudice against LGB people;
- 83 per cent now believe that LGB people should be open about their sexual orientation, in any circumstances;
- 19 per cent acknowledge having relatives who are LGB;
- 81 per cent would be comfortable if their child was LGB;
- 78 per cent would feel comfortable if their GP was gay;
- 17 per cent reported having a ‘low opinion’ of LGB people.

Acknowledgement as a potential victim within the criminal justice system

Previously in this chapter, I highlighted how LGB individuals, particularly gay men, have historically been the target of an overzealous application of the criminal law and discriminatory practices by the police due to their conceptualisation of homosexuality as deviant (Seabrook, 1992; Valverde and Cirak, 2003). Johnson (2007) claims that this is symptomatic of a preoccupation of the criminal law and wider criminal justice system with same-sex sexual activity that has been institutionally ingrained. However, as part of the new politicised diversity agenda in policing, the new millennium saw the introduction of fresh guidance on the policing of public sexual activity (of which LGB individuals were a main focus) that acknowledged the responsibility of the police and partner agencies to protect those LGB individuals who become victims of crime. Moran, (2012) argues that this represented a new ‘recognition politics’ within the criminal justice system, one that champions the improved treatment of LGB victims of crime from ‘bad victims’ – where victimisation is seen as an inevitable consequence of deviant behaviour engaged in by the individual and therefore is undeserving of resources and protections from the criminal justice system – to ‘good victims’ – where victimisation of any sort is seen as a threat to social order and therefore worthy of attracting all criminal justice resources that can help end this disorder and protect the emotional well-being of the victim. Further examples of this transformation of LGB individuals into ‘good victims’ include the recognition of same-sex rape within the Sexual Offences Act 2003⁶; the acknowledgement of sexual orientation as a protected characteristic under offences against the person legislation and resultant sentencing powers⁷; the recognition of same-sex domestic violence⁸; the acknowledgement within victim support services that the nature of crime and impact on the victim can be different for LGB individuals; and the launch of specialist LGB services within key criminal justice organisations, a pertinent example being the introduction of LGB liaison officers within police constabularies (see e.g. Godwin, 2007).

⁶ S.2 (1)(a).

⁷ Introduced under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 (Amended by Section 65 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012).

⁸ Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004.

The active pursuit of LGB officers

Finally, as part of the new politicised diversity policy changes, LGB individuals have been actively pursued by constabularies to join and climb the policing ranks. Similarly, those LGB officers who were already officers at the time of this policy change were encouraged to disclose and draw upon their sexual orientation during the pursuit of their police duties. Figure 2.3 is an example of the innovative marketing campaign that was published nationally throughout the LGB media as part of the Metropolitan Police's 'Policing Diversity: Protect and Respect' initiative in 2001 (McLaughlin, 2007, pp. 150–151).

Less than ten years after the dramatic findings of Burke (1994), LGB officers were being actively pursued to join an organisation that was marketing itself as a 'gay-friendly' employer. The 'business case' for this newfound inclusion – linked to the commodification of identities within organisations that I outline later in this chapter – rested on a belief that such officers would help rebuild fraught relationships with LGB communities and contribute something 'different' to the policing mission that would help dilute the dominance of the aforementioned police occupational culture (ACPO, 2005; HMIC, 2003), although in what way this difference would manifest itself was left unexplained.



Figure 2.3: National Recruitment Poster for LGB Officers

This inclusion of LGB officers within this new policy direction was not completely accidental. Sadly, on 30 April 1999, the LGB community was thrown into disarray when a popular gay pub in the district of Soho, London, was nail-bombed by David Copeland. Directly afterwards, as a result of the unwillingness of LGB witnesses to engage with the police due to their historically hostile relationship, the Metropolitan Police called upon their LGB officers to come forward and engage with these reluctant community members. This radical manoeuvre did secure the cooperation of the LGB community and allowed for sufficient evidence to be collected to prosecute Copeland for his crimes. Although tragic, the events of April 30th did provide a precedent for how the subjective and intersubjective identity characteristics of LGB officers could be drawn upon as an organisational resource. Blackbourn (2006) highlights how this was the first time that a large group of LGB officers had been deployed to support a police constabulary anywhere in the world, representing a ‘tipping point’ (p. 30) in both police/LGB community relations and in how LGB officers are utilised.

In an attempt to facilitate the integration of LGB officers into contemporary policing, investment was made into the expansion of the national Gay Police Association – a voluntarily-run staff organisation representing the interests of LGB officers that was initially set up in the bedroom of a Metropolitan police officer – as well as local investment from individual constabularies to establish constabulary-specific Gay Staff Networks (Blackbourn, 2006; Godwin, 2007). Funding was also allocated for the establishment of the aforementioned LGBT liaison officers within constabularies – specialist officers whose remit was to respond to LGBT victims of crime and to proactively build relationships with the LGBT community⁹. Unfortunately, the sexual orientation strand of the post-Macpherson agenda escaped the clutches of the aforementioned ‘new managerialism’ with no specific targets set as to how many LGB officers would be recruited and promoted, unlike the case for their female and BME counterparts. However, by 2010, as I was entering the field, fifteen of the 43 constabularies in England and Wales appeared on the

⁹ It is appropriate here to acknowledge why I have chosen to exclude transgender police officers from this research despite trends in the equality and diversity literature to talk of ‘LGBT’ as an analytical collective. I felt, however, that the inclusion of transgendered officers would bring with it its own unique substantive and methodological complexities that I would not be able to address sufficiently given the already broad parameters of this research. I do, however, acknowledge that research is needed to shed light on the occupational experiences of transgendered police officers that have so far been ignored.

Stonewall 'Top 100 employers' list – 'the definitive national benchmarking exercise showcasing Britain's top employers for gay staff' (Stonewall, 2010, p. 3). Was all now well in the working lives of LGB police officers?

2.8 Half-Time Review: Who Forgot LGB Police Officers?

These new internal and external climates in policing have initiated a fresh wave of evaluative and empirical work that has sought to assess the nature and impact of politicised diversity priorities on operational policing and associated theoretical debates. In the initial period after Macpherson, police stakeholder sensitivities were particularly rife given increased media and public scrutiny – nothing was being left to chance and the police were adamant to be 'seen' to be tackling the diversity shortfalls for which they had been so vehemently criticised and called into question. Accordingly, in 2004 the Metropolitan Police Authority commissioned an independent review into their employment practices, of which the organisational responses to diversity reform were a central focus (Morris, 2004). Unfortunately, the findings of the report were not positive. Despite acknowledging that efforts had been made to introduce a philosophy of diversity into police practices and environments, the report's author, Sir Bill Morris, was 'left with a number of concerns' (p. 100). Specifically, the report highlighted: that too many diversity initiatives were initially introduced, which was diluting and discrediting the overall diversity message; a failure to translate these diversity policies into practice; a lack of understanding throughout the organisation of what diversity is; fear and anxiety amongst middle management when dealing with diversity issues; and a 'top heavy' approach to diversity reform. This had led to 'a culture of 'ticking boxes' that was allowing people to act in a way which goes through the motions and implies a commitment to valuing difference but which lacks any real substance' (p. 105).

Similarly, a year later, the Home Office published an evaluation of the impact of Stephen Lawrence and the subsequent reform efforts on eight police constabularies in England and Wales (Home Office, 2005). In this instance, the efforts of constabularies in relation to race were acknowledged and commended, but the study found that other forms of discrimination and prejudice, targeted mainly at women and LGB officers, were still widespread and not subject to the same scrutiny or disapproval as racism by supervisors and senior officers. Consequently, those women and LGB officers reported feeling excluded by their colleagues and unprotected by

their employer. It was felt that perceived changes to the cultural climate of policing were largely cosmetic and that more substantive and sincere efforts were necessary if the rhetoric of police diversity was to achieve the desired impact.

As well as the above, academic perspectives exploring the aims and impact of diversity in policing emerged in the immediate aftermath of Macpherson – all of which are drawn upon and utilised throughout this thesis. These perspectives can be divided into three themes. First, some ‘broad’ empiricism emerged in that it offered empirical insight into the impact of diversity across the board. Loftus (2008), for example, looks at the effects of diversity reform on all areas of a ‘Northshire’ police constabulary. She argued that the ‘classic’ tenets of the police occupational culture still had persuasive resonance in the contemporary policing mindset, despite reform efforts, especially in the attitudes and behaviour of the dominant rank and file. In this regard, she identified the growing professional resentment towards diversity amongst non-minority officers – especially towards new proactive policing models and priorities which they felt were eroding traditional police work – and she discussed the emergence of new forms of resistance and exclusion that aim to protect the place of the rank and file within the new policing order. Related, was the emergence of literature exploring new, proactive, community policing philosophies and the contributions that minority officers make to this new way of policing. Here, Innes's (2005) and McCarthy's (2013) differentiation between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ to delineate between traditionally reactive and new proactive policing responsibilities and priorities is an analytical distinction I utilise throughout this thesis in order to distinguish between the two policing models and to highlight contributions that LGB officers make to these dichotomous policing roles.

Second, academic contributions specifically relating to race and contemporary policing have emerged. Rowe (2004), for example, explored the contemporary, often turbulent efforts of constabularies to reconnect with BME communities and the role that BME officers have played in achieving this. Simon Holdaway, a key contributor to police culture debates in the 1980s (Holdaway, 1979, 1983) also revisits the role that police occupational culture plays in shaping the newly inclusive policy climate for BME officers post-Macpherson (Holdaway, 2009). He empirically assesses the political impact of the Black Police Association in facilitating their integration and found that despite good intentions and efforts, BME officers continue to experience prejudice and discrimination – from both colleagues and members of the community

– albeit in new, more evolved forms and expressions that aim to minimise potential for detection within newly established punitive workplace climates (Holdaway and O’Neill, 2007a, 2007b).

Third, perspectives relating to gender and policing have developed considerably in recent years offering sophisticated, nuanced analysis of the impact and experiences of women officers in post-Macpherson policing. In this regard, the continued impact of the police occupational culture – particularly the role of masculinity in shaping the acceptance, behaviour and professional ‘performance’ of females – has been explored (e.g. Brown, 1998; Rabe-Hemp, 2008). Additionally, the aforementioned ‘business case’ for including women officers in policing has been empirically examined identifying that they bring more emotional and ethical considerations to traditional policing practices (Brown and Heidensohn, 2000; Rabe-Hemp, 2008; Westmarland, 2001a). Their ability to facilitate and lead the way in new proactive areas of the police diversity mission has also been highlighted (McCarthy, 2013). This has fuelled consideration of whether women officers are more suited to certain types of police work (Brown and Heidensohn, 2000; Westmarland, 2001a). Silvestri (2003, 2007) also explores the resonance of these competing factors amongst senior female police officers and found that rather than the nature of occupational resistance diminishing as female officers climb the ranks, it actually becomes more complex, requiring what she terms a ‘smart machismo’.

However, despite the existence of a sizable evidence base relating to the experiences of women and BME officers in post-Macpherson policing, no similar research has been conducted – symbolically some might argue (Jones, 2014) – in regard to the experiences and contributions of LGB officers in post-Macpherson policing. This empirical neglect appears to be a British shortfall as other jurisdictions, most notably the USA and Australia, have witnessed a resurgence in debates relating to LGB policing, all of which report positive developments, albeit to different extents, in the career experiences of LGB officers in their jurisdictions (Belkin and McNichol, 2002; Bernstein and Kostelac, 2002; Colvin, 2008).

This empirical drought has had a profound effect on the analytical strategy of this research in that I have been forced to rely heavily on theoretical and empirical perspectives from other strands of contemporary police diversity (mainly ethnicity and gender), and to think broadly and poach theoretical ideas from other disciplines that explore sexualities in more theoretically nuanced

ways (mainly sociology, education and organisational studies). This paucity of LGB policing research also meant that I went into the field without any evidence-based clues about what the climate might be for LGB officers at that time (which, in hindsight, was quite beneficial methodologically – more on that in the next chapter). More positively, however, this drought acted as a motivating rationale for this exploratory project which is underpinned by an aspirational strategy to satisfy the empirical ‘thirst’ for research on [homo]sexuality and policing that is of similar quality and analytical sophistication to that of insight into BME and women officers. Thus, just as we talk about procedural and social justice in socio-legal research, this thesis is concerned with achieving empirical and professional justice that provides a previously neglected empirical voice to LGB officers that can be utilised to fuel subsequent evidence-based policing strategies and reform.

2.9 Sexuality within Organisational Settings: Interactionism Revisited

New inclusive climates and the resultant expansion of environments where LGB individuals feel comfortable to draw upon, disclose and utilise their sexual orientation have impacted how sexuality is responded to by organisations. In this regard, Giuffre et al. (2008) highlight the emergence and growth in the number of ‘gay-friendly’ organisations which market themselves as employers who embrace and protect LGB and other minority workers. Consequently, Rumens and Kerfoot (2009) identified the emergence of the ‘gay professional’, referring to LGB employees who disclose their sexuality at work but who aim to craft a positive workplace identity which is characterised by their professional competence and credibility. These new organisational trends have sparked a fresh wave of LGB empiricism and literature which examines organisational responses to new LGB climates and how LGB employees manage their sexual orientation and contribute to these new positive, rather than previously exclusionary, settings.

Several reasons have been presented as to why organisations have sought the label of being a ‘gay-friendly’ employer. A dominant driving force has been the introduction of anti-discrimination and equality and diversity legislation that has created employer obligations and

employee protections around sexual orientation¹⁰ (Clements, 2008; TUC, 2000; Ward and Winstanley, 2003a). However, a less explicit rationale, which this thesis explores in some depth, is the aforementioned ‘business case’ for employing LGB staff, linked to wider sociological and organisational perspectives of the commodification of sexuality and identities. Commodification of employee identity is not a new concept or trend. The shift from viewing the worker as an ‘automaton’ to a person with subjective and intersubjective characteristics that can be ‘monetized’ dates back to the 1950s (Williams and Vaughan, Forthcoming). For example, Bunting (2004), in her research into identity commodification in the service industries, identified the ability of workers to strike up an enhanced rapport with customers based on their shared identity – described as a form of ‘emotional empathy’. In relation to sexual orientation, Adkins (2000) argues that the targeting of LGB employees has been driven by a reconceptualisation of LGB identities as a new form of ‘workplace capital’ which has particular commercial benefits for organisations that are trying to connect with, and market themselves to, LGB communities and individuals. This has been observed as being part of a new role-playing process of service work (McDowell, 1997) where organisations are increasingly requiring employees to market their personal as well as professional attributes – not only in the recruitment process but also in their service delivery strategy (Crang, 1997). This is reflected in the new policy rationale for minority officers in contemporary policing (discussed above) within which diversity is described as ‘simply another piece of equipment that can help when solving problems, finding advice to give, or using the benefit of your experience in a particular situation’ (ACPO, 2005, p. 5).

One of the challenges for contemporary organisations, given the aforementioned invisibility of sexuality, is providing a reassuring and positive environment for their LGB staff so that they feel comfortable enough to disclose and draw upon their sexuality at work – failure to do so prevents the realisation of this commodified rationale for the inclusion of LGB employees. Accordingly, a plethora of initiatives have been introduced by organisations that aim to increase the visibility of LGB staff, promote their unique skill sets and contributions, and provide them with a facilitated ‘voice’ given their minority status (Colgan and McKearney, 2012; Colgan et al., 2007). These efforts can be seen as active attempts by employers to reconfigure the ‘organisational contract’ between the organisation and their LGB staff (Millward and Hopkins, 1998). According to

¹⁰ Most notably, the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Equality Act 2010.

Millward and Hopkins, two types of relationship – or ‘psychological contract’ – exist between organisations and their employees. A ‘transactional’ relationship is one that is characterised by low expectations between the two parties fuelled by the motivation for economic exchange of labour for monetary reward. In contrast, a ‘relational’ bond between organisations and their employees is characterised by long-term commitment, workplace protections, benefits, opportunities and rewards in return for loyalty, investment, commitment and the embracement of organisational values. Accordingly, I argue that a core aim of post-Macpherson diversity efforts has been the realisation of a ‘relational contract’ between police constabularies and their LGB officers so that these officers feel comfortable and willing to draw upon their unique subjective and intersubjective skill set (Jones and Williams, 2013).

A further focus of this new wave of LGB organisational empiricism and literature has been a consideration of how the generic LGB identity theories and perspectives discussed in the previous section of this chapter, translate into organisational workplace settings. Woods and Lucas (1993), for example, introduced the concept of the ‘corporate closet’ and identified how negotiating an LGB identity within traditionally heteronormative organisational climates can be very stressful for LGB professionals, causing many to ‘cover’ their sexual orientation at work in order to avoid professional stigma. However, what distinguishes workplace identity considerations from previous perspectives is that LGB employees have often gone through a process of LGB identity management in their private lives prior to coming into professional employment. Accordingly, the process of ‘coming out’ at work has been described as a ‘second adolescence’ for many LGB employees (Ward, 2008, p. 43).

Mirroring interactionist principles, the process of negotiating LGB identities at work is still seen to be fundamentally shaped by contextual environments, personal histories and professional interactions with colleagues (King et al., 2008). In this regard, sexuality in the workplace has been described as ‘always in a process of being constructed and continually subjected to change as the relations, practices and discourses which surround [LGB employees] change’ (Halford and Leonard, 1999, p. 14). This is a particularly pertinent issue in workplace settings where moving teams, new people joining the organisation, reorganisations and changing client bases all create complex and transient ‘frames’ which underpin how LGB employees manage knowledge of their sexual orientation at work.

Goffman has been widely drawn upon to model the management of LGB identities in organisational settings. However, rather than conceptualising stigma and its management as a fear of social isolation and rejection, this new wave of literature has introduced the idea of professional stigmas based on an assessment of workplace risks. In this vein, Clair et al., (2005) examined interpersonal and organisational diversity-related dynamics involved in the disclosure of stigmatised identities at work. They found that the management of stigma in these settings is underpinned by an intersubjective risk assessment by LGB employees of anticipated 'career related costs'. Examples of these 'costs' included a fear of not being seen as authentic by colleagues, being discredited as a competent professional and professional isolation.

It still remains that 'coming out' is the defining moment of LGB identity management in the workplace – the success and consequences of which are dependent on the reactions of others. However, given the invisible and intersubjective sensitivities of sexuality, it is also the case that 'coming out' is a performative action, enacted by LGB employees and found to occur in multiple ways according to the contextual frame.

Ward (2008) argues that the process of 'coming out' at work distinguishes LGB employees from all others due to the added, unique burden of having to psychologically consider factors such as when to 'come out' and the potential professional consequences of doing so, as well as navigating non-sexuality related stress in the workplace. Still, 'coming out' at work has been described as an essential requirement for LGB employees in order to achieve a positive workplace identity. Alternatively, those who choose to permanently conceal (or 'cover') their sexuality are those who have often been let down by their employer due to failings in providing an inclusive – or 'relational' – workplace environment. Such failings are often seen as symptomatic of the health of the organisation and are problematic given that non-disclosure has been found to hamper team integration, fuel psychological stress and workplace-induced sickness, and restrict organisational creativity (DeJordy, 2008). Accordingly, 'gay-friendly' organisations have become increasingly keen to understand the dynamics of LGB identity management so that they can remedy any anticipated hurdles and encourage their LGB staff to embrace rather than hide their sexual orientation at work.

2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the main police operational, policy and theoretical perspectives that have shaped my motivation to enter this field and my subsequent experiences, as well as the lens through which I have attempted to interpret and rationalise my findings.

A core theme of this chapter was continuity and change. As police officers, LGB individuals have witnessed professional transformations where they have been upgraded from ‘deviant’ and a perceived ‘contamination’ of police constabularies in England and Wales – as per the ‘pre-Macpherson’ empirical observations of policing by Burke (1994) – to an actively pursued demographic of officer that has something to offer ‘post-Macpherson’ policing. In parallel, LGB individuals have undergone a ‘profound revolution’ pertaining to new social, political and legislative recognition that has led to greater social acceptance and a reconceptualisation of LGB individuals from sexual deviants to those capable of commitment, sincerity and morality.

This new climate of recognition and protection for LGB individuals – in private, social and workplace contexts – directly contradicts the contextual parameters within which existing empirical insight into the occupational experiences of LGB police officers in England and Wales was situated. As such, questions pertaining to their experiences and professional contributions within these new climates of recognition have emerged, but until now have remained unanswered. This is despite the development of a sizable evidence base that has explored the workplace dynamics experiences of other minority officers within contemporary policing – namely women and BME officers. As a consequence, this chapter has shown how the motivation for this research is rooted within this empirical void and my corresponding personal aim to achieve empirical justice for LGB officers.

In this chapter, I have also identified how the theoretical core of this research is shaped by three main perspectives. First, I introduced the nature of sexuality and outlined interactionist principles that help understand LGB identities as products of environmental/social interactions and histories. Second, I presented the notion of ‘police occupational culture’ – a concept that finds resonance in the ‘classic’ police scholarship of the 1970s and 1980s – referring to the historically-fuelled yet celebrated informal code of conduct that is said to exist amongst the

policing rank and file, commonly utilised to explain 'negative' behaviour and resistance to reform. Finally, I presented contemporary perspectives on interactionist LGB identity management in organisations and the associated 'business case' for the active inclusion of LGB employees. It was these climates, considerations, aims and debates that shaped my methodological strategy for this research – a strategy that will now be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter Three

Bi-Methodological? A Mixed Method Approach to Researching [Homo]Sexuality and Policing

3.1 Introduction

Researching both ‘the police’ and ‘sexuality’ are inherently complex and as such the methodological strategy that I outline in this chapter was characterised by my aim, as the sole researcher in this project, to overcome two central hurdles. First, the public police are infamous for their suspicious mindset and reluctance to engage with ‘outsiders’ – not surprising given that suspicion is one of the central ingredients of their occupational culture (see figure 2.1). Historically, researchers have warned of the difficulties of negotiating access to police organisations and of the multiple conditions that are often placed on those who are granted rare access by policing gatekeepers (Loftus, 2009; Reiner and Newburn, 2009). Brown (1998) identified four ‘types’ of research investigator – ‘inside insiders’, ‘outside insiders’, ‘inside outsiders’ and ‘outsiders’ – all of whom experience different levels of resistance as police researchers given their position (current and historical) within policing spaces. I fell into the category of ‘outside outsider’ – an ‘external commentator’ who has no formal affiliations with the police, has never been employed by the police and is therefore likely to experience the most resistance in gaining access to participants and police information. This resistance was likely to be more concentrated given the focus of my research, historical antagonisms between the police and LGB communities and associated police sensitivities to diversity since the aforementioned damning criticisms of Macpherson. The subjective and intersubjective complexities of managing and performing LGB identities outlined in the previous chapter (especially given its historically stigmatised status in policing) presented the second hurdle. Parks et al. (2009) highlight that to take part in research on LGB identity, participants must be ‘out’ or open enough about their sexual identity to receive or respond to recruitment efforts. However, an important aim of my research was to include a heterogeneous sample of LGB police officers, including those who are not ‘out’ so that the motivations, nature and impact of pursuing an alternative virtual social identity in policing could be explored.

With these hurdles in mind, I lay out in this chapter the nature, aims and practical execution of my mixed method research design. I begin by presenting the philosophical and interrelated theoretical positions that formed the initial foundations for this design, before rationalising my associated decision to employ a *qualitatively fuelled* mixed method research blueprint. For the bulk of the chapter, I reflect on my experiences of practically implementing this two-stage process. Specifically, I discuss how I immersed myself in the subjective world of my participants through semi-structured qualitative interviewing; my struggles and solutions related to research access; how I analysed my data; and finally, how I employed a reflexive approach to research ethics and politics. The chapter also discusses the aims and experiences of using an online survey method. Throughout, I present some personal reflections related to my experiences of researching both policing and sexuality, and I consider the role that my own personal biography has played in shaping all aspects of the research process.

3.2 Establishing a philosophical and theoretical core

By asking the central question ‘How does sexuality impact on the experiences and career trajectories of police officers in England and Wales today?’, this research was concerned with exploring how traditionally heteronormative police structures and environments – referring to a ‘suite of cultural and institutional practices that maintain normative assumptions that there are two and only two genders, that gender reflects biological sex and that only sexual attraction between these “opposite” genders is natural or acceptable’ (Kitzinger, 2005, p. 479) – influence the experiences and individual identity strategies of LGB police officers. My research focus was therefore on the extent to which post-Macpherson police reform efforts have impacted and changed these formal and informal heteronormative frameworks in order to ascertain whether or not LGB officers still feel the need to ‘do’ [hetero]sexuality (Nayek and Kehily, 1996) as they go about their day-to-day police work in order to conform to dominant police behavioural expectations and to avoid disrupting the heteronormative equilibrium. Given this focus on police organisational structures and culture and how individual identity management strategies are shaped by them, in this section I introduce the dual epistemological approach that underpinned my research design. These two approaches, although presented individually, should not be considered as antithetical to one another, but rather overlapping and complementary.

A complex aspect of social research is the differentiation between ontological and epistemological positions – mainly because they are deeply entwined. This thesis is characterised by a constructionist ontological position that subscribes to the viewpoint that different people in different situations have different internal perspectives and viewpoints, all of which are valid in their own right. Thus, for the purposes of this research project, I argue, reflecting Collins (1986, 1990) , that the marginalised are in the best ontological position ‘to know’ which is why the substantive aim of my research has been dedicated to understanding the realities of police environments and practices from the situational lens of LGB police officers. Related to this ontological position, my epistemological viewpoint is one that is considerably influenced by a theory of knowledge advocated by both interpretivism and the feminist standpoint.

3.2.1 We’re All in This Together: Embracing Interpretivism

An interpretivist theory of knowledge is one that does not advocate the existence of a single objective and measurable reality, but rather that reality is relative, multiple and fluid (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Thus, reflected in the work of symbolic interactionist scholars that I outlined in the previous chapter (e.g. Blumer, 1969; Goffman, 1959; Plummer, 1995), interpretivists see knowledge as a product of socially constructed and subjective/intersubjective interactions and interpretations between individuals and their environments. As such, interpretivist knowledge is perceived through socially constructed and subjective lenses which are inherently difficult to interpret due to their dependence on multiple systems and contexts to give meaning (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Interactionist-driven research therefore acknowledges the relative, transactional and subjective nature of social realities and aims to understand and interpret the diversity of human behaviour and multiple interpretations of the world rather than to produce generalizable data based on principles of cause and effect (Angen, 2000). Given this, interactionists champion naturalistic methods that allow for these multiple perspectives of the world to be explored, but which establish the researcher and his/her participants as collaborative architects in the translation of these individual subjectivities into tangible representations of the world as it is seen through their collaborative perspectives. Thus, Cohen et al. (2007, p. 19) argue that the role of research in

interactionist empiricism is to ‘understand, explain, and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants’.

Accordingly, in this research, I have not seen my personal role as the researcher as a challenge or threat to the credibility of my methodological strategy and data, but have rather embraced placing myself as a co-producer of knowledge with my participants as I attempt to represent through words their heterogeneous experiences and perspectives as LGB police officers in post-Macpherson policing. Thus, I do not claim that this research has a generalizable impact as it is based on the interpretive experiences and unique accounts of my relatively small sample. Instead, I argue that it is only once we understand how LGB officers interact with, interpret and make sense of their professional environments that we will be able to gain insight into why they behave and manage their LGB identities in the workplace as they do and why police organisations, their frameworks and their cultures function in the way that they do.

3.2.2 Looking in from Below: Embracing the Feminist Standpoint

Somewhat complementing the dominant philosophy of interpretivism, I am also influenced by a theory of knowledge promoted by feminist standpoint scholars. A standpoint theory is generally one that acknowledges how ‘people occupying a subordinate social location engage in political struggle to change the conditions of their lives and so engage in an analysis of these conditions in order to change them’ (Potter, 2006, p. 133). Accordingly, the aim of the feminist standpoint is to identify a theory of knowledge that is specific to the marginality of women (as a collective), one that acknowledges their social context as ‘knowers’ providing a unique contribution to epistemological thought by rejecting the excessively male dominated perspectives. Feminist standpoint epistemology is unique because it challenges us to see and understand the world through the eyes and experiences of the oppressed and to apply the vision and knowledge of oppressed women to social activism in order to facilitate social change. Feminist standpoint epistemology therefore requires the fusion of knowledge and practice (Brooks, 2007, p. 54).

Initially, feminist standpoint perspectives were built on the notion that ‘experience’ should be the foundation on which all claims of knowledge should rest (Hartsock, 1983; Rose, 1983). However, this view was discredited on the grounds that experience is shaped by social reality

and is therefore not immediately given but presupposes some prior understanding of social relations (Harding, 1991). Instead, feminist standpoint shifted to advocate a process through which knowledge claims ‘start out from and look at the world from the [marginal] perspectives of women’s lives’ (Harding, 1991, p. 124) in order to draw attention to the mechanisms of oppression which are faced by the marginalised whilst also providing a sound starting block to understand the processes which have created social reality and the cultural character of phenomena which current ideology takes to be natural.

Thus, at the heart of feminist standpoint theory is a call for ‘strong objectivity’ – referring to claims that the subordinate position of women allows them to produce a more accurate, comprehensive and objective interpretation of the world. For example, Jaggar (2004, p. 56) argues that women’s ‘distinctive social position’ makes possible a ‘view of the world that is more reliable and less distorted’ than that available to the ‘ruling class’. As such, it places ‘the relationship between knowledge and politics at the centre of its account in the sense that it tries to explain the effects that different kinds of politics have on the production of knowledge (Harding, 1991).

The most recent development in standpoint theory has been fuelled by the acknowledgement by its own subscribers that gender as a single analytical category is restrictive, as it overlooks the intersectional nature of the social realities faced by the marginalised (Geertz, 1991; Collins, 1986, 1990). Consequently, feminist standpoint has evolved to acknowledge that ‘women experience oppression in varying configurations and varying degrees of intensity’ (Ritzer, 2007, p. 479), and that they also experience oppression as a direct consequence of other aspects of social inequality, not just their gender.

Although not fully subscribing to this feminist standpoint due to the gender determinism of its focus, I do poach its main ingredients to champion an LGB standpoint epistemology in this thesis – one that acknowledges the minority status of LGB individuals, embraces the unique perspectives that LGB minority status affords and therefore places the experiences of LGB individuals at the forefront of the research process. This is a position similarly championed by Homfray (2008) in his research into gay and lesbian communities in the North-West of England within which he advocates the use of a gay and lesbian standpoint epistemology for research

with emancipatory aims. Thus, this research is characterised by the philosophical position that LGB police officers are in the best position ‘to know’ about their experiences and working environments; that their subaltern position within heteronormative police frameworks allows them to provide an enhanced critical lens of these frameworks in comparison to the dominant rank and file and that as such, an understanding of the personal experiences and accounts of LGB police officers should be the starting point of any research in which sexuality and diversity is a focus.

As well as being a theory of knowledge-building, feminist standpoint theory also refers to a way of doing research. In this regard, there are certain practical ways of approaching methodology which feminist researchers advocate and which I have embraced and integrated into my research.

First (and most distinguishing in my view) is the injection of the personal and explicit acknowledgement of the researcher and my biography in all stages of the research process (reflecting my introductory comments about the politics of writing and the acknowledgement of ‘me’ in my research in chapter one). Accordingly, personal transparency has become an ingrained aspect of feminist research, often used as a form of leverage to build trust and rapport with research participants and stakeholders.

Second, and related, is a feminist preference for hyper-reflective praxis to be embedded within the practical execution of research design. This refers to the need for researchers to be continually aware of the politics of empiricism and the inherent power dynamics that exist between research stakeholders. Equally important in this reflexivity is the need for feminist research to be conducted ethically.

Finally, despite a lack of guidance in the literature as to what exactly constitutes a ‘feminist method’, we can take from the feminist literature some ‘unofficial’ criteria of what is expected when conducting feminist-inspired research (Harding, 1993; Westmarland, 2001b). Most obvious is an aversion to methods that place researcher objectivity and generalizability at their core. Instead, an ‘ideal’ feminist method is one that (i) maximises discovery and description of difference, (ii) incorporates opportunities for explanation, clarification and discussion, and (iii) offers researchers access to people’s thoughts, ideas and recollections in their own words. It is

therefore proportionate to claim that, in the main, feminist social scientists (although not exclusively e.g. Kelly, Regan, & Burton, 1992; Harnois, 2012;) prefer qualitative research designs due to their ability to ‘describe life-worlds from the inside out, from the point of view of those who participate, contribute to a better understanding of social realities and to draw attention to social processes, meaning patterns and structural features’ (Flick et al., 2004, p. 1). However, and following on from Kelly’s work (Kelly et al., 1992) contemporary feminist scholarship has started to acknowledge the place of feminism in quantitative research advocating ways that feminist researchers can put their ‘stamp’ on traditionally feminist-sparse areas of positivist empiricism (Harnois, 2012).

3.3 Methodological Mixology: Qualitatively-Driven Research Design with a Quantitative Twist

In light of these ontological and epistemological foundations, it will not be a surprise to readers for me to confess that my initial intention was to explore my research questions through a quintessential qualitative research design – one that is concerned with ‘qualities of entities, processes and meaning’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p. 115) in the pursuit of a ‘kind of description and quotation that moves the researcher “inside” ... the world under study’ (Loftland, 1972, p. 2). To a certain extent, that was the case. However, given the social justice aims of this research, I was also swayed to consider the wider epistemological palate of dominant police policy architects in order to maximise the potential impact of my thesis and to provide an evidence-based voice for LGB police officers. Accordingly, given the evident positivist preferences of these policy architects (a claim which I will defend in just a moment) I decided that including a quantitative element to my research design would be empirically and politically prudent. However, I must stress that the decision was not one made on epistemological grounds, nor would the quantitative element of my research design play a dominant role in my overall thesis. Instead, I employed what Mason (2006) calls a ‘qualitatively-driven’ mixed method research design.

Although often discouraged, the use of quantitative data in qualitative research is not unprecedented. Becker (1970), for example, supported the inclusion of what he termed ‘quasi-statistics’ to make statements such as ‘some’, ‘most’ and ‘usually’, often used by qualitative

researchers, more precise. However, in recent years, the use of integrated mixed method research has grown, due mainly to its ability to generate triangulated perspectives, to maximise the generalizability of research findings and to mitigate against critics who prefer one form of research design over another (Bryman, 2006).

Mason (2006) champions qualitatively driven mixed method research on the grounds that it acknowledges the multi-dimensional realities of social life and overcomes some of the limitations of viewing social phenomena only along a single dimension. As such, a growing motivation for mixed method research – a rationale to which I subscribe – is to champion transformative change. For example, Hesse-Biber (2010) observed the growth of mixed method research that tackles ‘thorny issues’ (p. 467) as the mixing of methods allows for the presentation of a ‘dual perspective’ (i.e. both words and numbers) to policy makers whilst also uncovering new knowledge about those who have been traditionally disempowered.

As symbolically represented by figure 3.1, this research therefore employed a two-stage mixed method research design. ‘Stage one’ involved the composition and execution of an online self-completion quantitative survey to generate a national perspective of attitudes and experiences of LGB officers that would appeal to the palate of policy makers as well as provide a backdrop of wider patterns of LGB officers’ experience to my thesis. This was then followed by ‘stage two’, the dominant stage, of qualitative interviewing to explore the subjective intricacies experienced by LGB police officers in post-Macpherson police constabularies, the translation and representation of which informs the bulk of my discussion in this thesis.

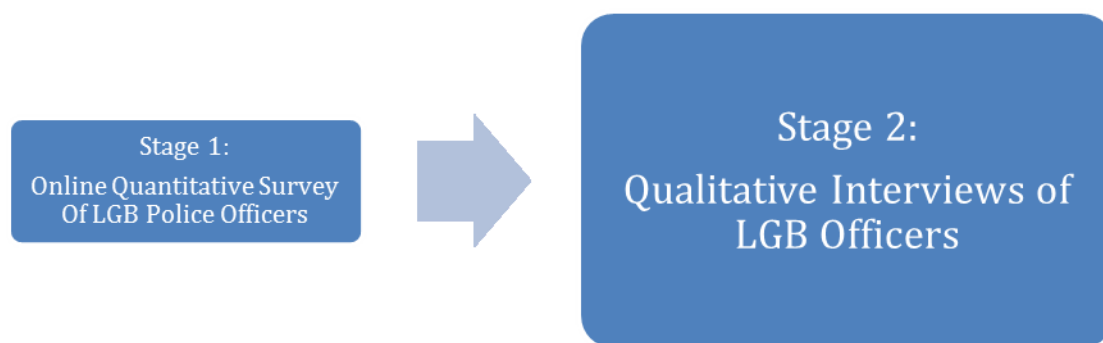


Figure 3.1: Symbolic Representation of the 'Two-Stage' Mixed Method Research Process Employed

3.4 ‘Stage 1’ – Designing and Executing a National Survey of LGB Officers

The use of survey instruments within policing and wider criminal justice research is nothing new. In fact, Reiner and Newburn (2009), when discussing the different ‘types’ of policing research, draw attention to a recent shift away from ‘academic’ contributions being the dominant form of policing empiricism towards policy-oriented and ‘in-house’ projects today. These forms of policing empiricism are often underpinned by quantitatively-fuelled methodologies in their pursuit to identify national trends, attitudes and behaviour that can inform and speak to centralised policy agendas. Thus, for example, police relationships with communities are measured through public satisfaction surveys; each year we wait in anticipation for the result of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (formerly the British Crime Survey), and more recently, in collaboration with the Cabinet Office, the new College of Policing has launched its *what works?* evidence-based research agenda which is largely driven by quantitative and systematic research philosophies. Surveys are also becoming increasingly common in sexuality studies – in chapter two, for example, I made reference to the British Public Attitudes Survey (Park et al., 2013) and Stonewall’s recent publication of their second ‘British Gay Crime Survey’ (Stonewall, 2008, 2013) that aims to highlight the national experiences of LGB victims of crime. Given the persuasiveness of these quantitative data sets, and their aim to identify national perceptions and dominant trends, ‘stage one’ of my research design included the development and execution of a survey instrument that could generate an unprecedented national perspective on the attitudes and experiences of LGB officers.

Andres (2012) observes that different types of survey instruments exist – telephone surveys, postal surveys, interviewer-administered surveys etc. However, in recent years the growing use of online methods in social research has been observed due to their ability to offer a cost-effective, environmentally friendly and aesthetically pleasing way of reaching large-scale sampling populations (Fielding et al., 2008; Bryman, 2008). Online self-completion questionnaires have proved particularly popular for research involving stigmatised populations as they allow for participants to complete the survey at a time and place where they feel comfortable and can be assured that their participation is completely confidential and anonymous (Hash and Spencer, 2009; Wright, 2006). This latter point was particularly alluring for this

research especially as I was trying to attract and include LGB police officers in my sample that are not ‘out’ at work. I therefore decided to host and design my survey online using the Bristol Online Survey (BOS) tool – a user-friendly online platform hosted by an academic institution and therefore providing a level of authenticity needed to gain trust with hard to reach groups that offers several functionalities and formats that help simplify the design and distribution of surveys and the management of the data collected.

The design and composition of survey instruments is complex. For example, the methodological literature discusses the importance of different ‘types’ of questions and formatting that can be used when designing surveys, setting out a myriad of ‘rules’ that survey researchers must adhere to if their survey instruments are to be effective (Andres, 2012; Fink, 1995; Singleton and Straits, 2001). Mindful of these warnings, I began by brainstorming the main ‘themes’ that I wanted my survey to include which I derived from my consideration of the existing literature, outlined in chapter two, so that I could assess whether or not some of the historical observations from the literature relating to LGB officers continue today.

The survey instrument can be seen in appendix one. It was made up of twenty-seven questions divided into five main themes, the focus of each I have summarised in the following table (figure 3.2). One of the commonly cited limitations of self-completion survey methods is their often low response rates (Baruch and Holtom, 2008). I decided that a possible way to address and overcome this in my research was to design a survey that would not take respondents more than ten minutes to complete – a practical claim that I tested in my sampling strategy to try and encourage participation.

To achieve this, I adhered to Bryman's (2008) ‘rules’ of designing a good survey by making sure that I: (i) included clear instructions for respondents at all stages of the survey so that there was no confusion; (ii) only asked questions related to my main research questions; (iii) avoided ambiguous terms, technical terms, long questions, asking about more than one thing in each question, leading/loading questions, and questions that require respondents to think too far back in the past. As such, the majority of the questions within my survey were ‘closed’ – i.e. where respondents are asked to choose an appropriate answer(s) from a fixed list determined by me. However, given my commitment to qualitative research, I also included questions related to

‘soft’ indicators (Harnois, 2012) and incorporated ‘other’ options for questions which asked for key ‘perceptions’, allowing respondents to bypass the predetermined list and to write an alternative qualitative response that was meaningful to them (e.g. Q3 – what is your sexuality?; Q18 – have you ever had any concerns about being open about your sexuality to your police colleagues?). The literature warns against this as it adds an analytical burden for quantitative researchers who then have to code these qualitative responses (Andres, 2012; Fielding et al., 2008). However, the potential of identifying some interesting variances in responses and the possible avoidance of making my participants feel like I was trying to lead their answers/put them all into the same box justified this extra burden. Finally, in order to test the mechanics and suitability of my survey design, I conducted a small pilot with four of the LGB police officers who had participated in my MSc dissertation research (Jones, 2010). This proved useful as they pointed me towards some questions where my language could be simplified and one question that they thought might not be sensible to include, which I then removed.

	Theme Name	Areas Covered by Theme
<i>Theme 1</i>	‘About You’	Key demographic information; sexual orientation; LGB identity management factors outside of the police.
<i>Theme 2</i>	‘Police Career’	Key professional information (e.g. rank, length of service); satisfaction levels; career aims.
<i>Theme 3</i>	‘Individual’	Engagement with LGB initiatives; LGB identity management at work; any concerns about being ‘out’ at work.
<i>Theme 4</i>	‘Organisational Factors’	Experiences of discrimination; reporting of discrimination; constabulary LGB efforts.
<i>Theme 5</i>	‘Policing LGB Communities’	Professional involvement with LGB communities; disclosure of LGB status to these communities; reactions from members of the public.

Figure 3.2: Overview of Five Main Themes Included in the Online Survey

In order to recruit respondents to complete the survey, a non-probability convenience sampling strategy was employed - the practicalities of which I outline in the next section of this chapter as it was closely linked to my access tactics. This type of sampling approach prevents me from claiming that the survey data has generalizable results. However, as Meyer and Wilson (2009) observe, this is often the only option available to researchers embarking on exploratory research with LGB populations. The survey remained open for the whole duration of the fieldwork period and had attracted 612 valid responses by the time I started 'stage two'. At this stage, I took an initial cut of the data to identify any interesting trends that I could explore in my qualitative interviews. By the time 'stage two' of the research had concluded, 836 LGB police officers had completed the online survey making it one of the largest data sets today that focuses on LGB police officers in England and Wales.

Once the survey had closed, the collected data was downloaded and transferred to create an SPSS data set. Bar the need for some administrative tasks to label the data, this process was very simple – mainly due to the enhanced functionality of the BOS tool that helped with this. Initially, I explored the data using univariate and descriptive statistics, tables and graphs (Field, 2009) - it is these that I mainly use as contextual tools to inform my discussion during the presentation and discussion of my qualitative findings throughout this thesis. The crescendo of my survey analysis was reached by building multivariate regression models (logistic and ordinal) that explored the statistical significance of key factors related to LGB officers' opinions and perceptions, while controlling for other factors of influence (appendix five). These models related to (a) being 'out' at work, (b) feeling comfortable to talk to line managers about LGB issues, (c) disclosure of LGB status to members of the public and (d) whether LGB officers think that their constabulary does enough for their LGB staff. More complex quantitative analysis of the data can be found in Jones and Williams (2013) where we explore quantitative predictors of discrimination reported by LGB officers within the survey (see appendix six for a replication of these regression tables).

As stated earlier, the findings presented from these regression models are based on a non-probability sample. An assumption of most statistical procedures is that the sample is random to ensure it is not biased towards certain groups in the population. This is particularly important if measures of prevalence are to be estimated. However, in this survey research the focus was on 'soft' measures of opinion and perception and on the existence of inter-variable relations and

strengths of association. In these circumstances, the use of non-probability sampling does not fundamentally weaken the design of the study (Dorofeev and Grant, 2006).

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coding</i>	<i>Sample</i> %/mean
Constabulary Size	1=Small	30%
	2=Medium	36%
	3=Large	34%
Uniform	0=Non-uniformed	18%
	1=Uniformed	82%
Length of Tenure	1=1 to 5 years	32%
	2=6 to 10 years	32%
	3=11 to 15 years	13%
	4=16 to 20 years	11%
	5=21 years and above	12%
Rank	1=Constable	76%
	2=Sergeant	16%
	3=Inspector/Chief	6%
	4=Superintendent and above	3%
Sexual Orientation	1=Gay Man	38%
	2=Gay Woman	46%
	3=Bisexual Man	9%
	4=Bisexual Woman	7%
In a relationship	0=No	24%
	1=Yes	76%
Age	-	36.2
Ethnicity	0=White	95%
	1=BME	5%
'Out' at work	0=No	21%
	1=Yes	79%
GPA member	0=No	70%
	1=Yes	30%
Constabulary GSN member	0=No	54%
	1=Yes	46%

Figure 3.3: Description of LGB Police Officer Sample (N = 836)

The sample consisted of 836 LGB police officers from the 43 constabularies in England and Wales. The sample was roughly equally split between small, medium and large constabularies (see figure 3.3). Of the respondents, nearly a fifth were plainclothes officers and the majority had

between one and ten years of service. The rank profile of the sample matched the police service strength (PSS) statistics for England and Wales (Dhani, 2012) with just over three-quarters of respondents reporting constable rank (see figure 3.4). A large proportion of the sample identified as being lesbian or gay women (just under half), followed by gay men (38 per cent), bisexual men (9 per cent) and bisexual women (7 per cent). 5 per cent of the sample identified as being Black Minority Ethnic which mirrors the figures for the PSS in England and Wales (Dhani, 2012). Female respondents were over-represented in the sample compared to these same figures. Over three-quarters of the sample had disclosed their sexual orientation to colleagues at work, with just under a third reporting membership of the Gay Police Association and just under half reporting membership of their local GSN.

	LGB Officer Sample		PSS 2012	
	N	%	N	%
<i>Rank</i> ^T				
Constable	636	75.9	105068	77.0
Sergeant	130	15.5	21623	15.8
Inspector/Chief	45	5.4	8357	6.1
Superintendent and above	25	2.5	1481	1.1
<i>Race</i> ^T				
White	798	95.2	127437	95.0
BME	40	4.8	6664	5.0
<i>Gender</i> ^T				
Male	400	47.8	98139	73.2
Female	437	52.1	35962	26.8

Figure 3.4: Sample Compared to Police Service Strength, 31 March 2012

3.5 Third Time Lucky: Negotiating Access and Sample Recruitment

Before I move on to discuss ‘stage two’ of my mixed method design, it is appropriate here to outline and reflect on my experiences of gaining access to the policing ‘field’ and recruiting a sample for both stages of my research, as the two were not mutually exclusive. It is also the area of the research process where I experienced the most difficulty due in part to the broad parameters of my research and the personal investment needed to overcome my previously identified ‘outside outsider’ status.

One aspect of researching the police that the existing police methodological literature overlooks is that beyond the different types of subject matter, there are two types of research project that

can exist based on their established parameters – ‘micro’ and ‘macro’. Micro studies set the parameters of their ‘field’ to the confines of a single or small collection of constabularies and therefore are tasked with negotiating access with one or two gatekeepers from within those constabularies in order to ‘get in’. Macro studies on the other hand (to which this research project falls) include all 43 constabularies in England and Wales within their empirical span. As a consequence, the researchers in macro research projects are tasked with seeking access and cooperation from at least 43 different gatekeepers – a time-consuming and daunting task. In this study, I attempted three different ways of accessing constabularies¹¹ and recruiting a sample. It is these stages which ultimately represent a convenience snowball sampling strategy that I will now outline.

Attempt one: a naive top-down approach

I initially thought that the best way to obtain access was to seek the permission of central gatekeepers in each of the constabularies and closely associated national bodies. I therefore sent letters (on Cardiff University letter headed paper) to all 43 chief constables, ACPO, the Police Federation and, of course, the Gay Police Association. In these letters, I explained who I was, what my research was about, and why research on LGB officers was needed. I then asked that they formally support the research and give permission to approach officers from their constabularies/organisations to participate. Embarrassingly (due to the joy of hindsight), I was expecting them to reply within days, incorporating praise for my intentions and giving me an ‘access all areas’ pass. However, weeks and then months passed without even an acknowledgement, which made me question my approach and what I could do differently.

Attempt two: injecting the personal in a more concrete plan

Whilst naively waiting for replies to these initial letters, I used the time productively by composing the self-completion survey for ‘stage one’ (discussed previously) of the research. By the time I had finished and piloted it, I had given up hope that I would ever get a reply from these

¹¹ Unlike observational and ethnographical research, I was not seeking ‘access’ to become embedded into police constabularies in any way. Instead, the aim of access in this research was to obtain symbolic backing for my research, for gatekeepers to send details of my research to their officers, and for them to provide express permission and support for LGB officers to participate.

main gatekeepers, so I decided that I would be more direct and send more concrete details about my research to more specific departments and contacts within each of the constabularies.

I decided that the best way forward was to advertise both stages of the research together in an attempt to recruit participants. I therefore composed a 'Participant Information Sheet' (appendix two), which included details of the research in a 'common questions' style format to make it more personal. There were certain things that I was keen to include in this information sheet to reassure participants and quell any anticipated anxieties.

- That the research was a funded doctoral project that would have impact and help provide a voice for LGB police officers – not just an undergraduate study that would not see the light of day after submission.
- Details about 'me' so that they knew that I was a gay man who had aspirations to join the police and therefore was not a complete 'outsider'; I was an 'outsider' who was trying to become an 'insider'.
- Practical details of the two research 'stages' including the link for the survey and how to include their contact details in the final question of the survey (Q28) which I had included at the last minute, asking participants if they would be happy for me to contact them to be interviewed for 'stage two' of the research.
- Details about the research process. Specifically, I stressed that the survey could be completed anywhere with web access (not just at work); that if they chose to take part in 'stage two' (i.e. the qualitative interviews), the interview could be conducted where they felt most comfortable. Importantly, I stressed that their participation would be confidential, that my research was absolutely independent from the police and that 'management' would not know who had participated and that they would never be identified in any of my research output.

I converted this factsheet into a PDF file and sent it as part of a very friendly email to all of the equality and diversity directorates within each of the 43 constabularies. Within the email, I again outlined the nature of my research, why research of this nature was needed and asked that they send the included participant information sheet to ALL (not just LGB) police officers within their remit encouraging them to participate where applicable. I was keen for information to be

sent to all officers so that those who might not be ‘out’ or comfortable to disclose their LGB status on their HR records could be reached.

This strategy was initially more successful than my previous attempt. Many had started to acknowledge my email and informed me that either (i) they had sent details of my research to all officers including members of their GPA and GSN groups; or that (ii) they had put my request on an agenda to discuss at their constabulary’s next equality and diversity directorate meeting. After a month, approximately 120 LGB officers had completed my online survey and a handful of officers had either expressed interest in being interviewed by leaving their details under Q28 of the survey or had sent me an email to say that they would be happy to be interviewed. However, despite this brief moment of positivity, one morning I woke up, looked at my email account on my phone, and found that I had been cc’d into an email sent to all GPA leads in the individual constabularies sent by the chair of the national GPA. The email stated that the GPA executive were aware that I was contacting constabularies asking for details of my research to be circulated, but that they felt that academic research of this nature rarely has impact and that given their already stretched resources, they did not endorse the research and did not give permission for GPA membership lists to be used to circulate details about my project. I was devastated, my heart sank when I read it – the organisation which represents the officers that I was trying to research had felt the need to restrict my efforts. At the time, I thought this was the worst possible outcome especially as in the weeks following this email, completion levels of my survey were very low and none of the remaining equality and diversity directorate contacts had got back to me, making me suspect that the news of the email had gone beyond the GPA reps. Is there such a thing as ‘researcher depression’? If so, by now I had it. It felt like my research had been blacklisted and was heading for failure.

Attempt three: never underestimate a friend of a friend

One bank holiday weekend, after a glum few weeks of trying to come up with ideas of how to overcome my access and recruitment stagnation, I was standing outside a pub with some of my ‘homo’ friends when I was introduced to a friend of a friend, also a ‘homo’, who was a police officer (and a pretty senior one at that). Later on in the evening, in a slightly tipsy state, we started talking about my research and I had a minor rant about how none of the senior officers I had contacted had replied to my access request and how I had received ‘that email’ from the

GPA. He shared my frustration, especially in relation to the GPA, and asked me to email him some details of my research which I did the very next day. To my surprise, later that week he gave me a call and said that he had talked to, and sent my participant information sheet to his contacts in ACPO, the Police Federation, the Superintendents' Association and the NPIA (now the College of Policing) and that I should hear from them soon. Over the coming weeks they all contacted me, positively informing me that details of my research had been sent to all of their members and that they had also asked their members to promote my research in their individual constabularies. I could not believe it! This was a pivotal moment in my research as in the following weeks and months participation numbers in my research rocketed – both in terms of numbers of officers completing my national survey and those giving permission for me to contact them to be interviewed. The experience taught me that the formal/official way of approaching research access is not always the most productive, reminding me that research is a human undertaking and that aspects of 'me' and my interaction with 'insiders' can be used to enhance and help facilitate more productive access and sampling strategies.

3.6 'Stage Two': Qualitative Interviewing

In 'stage two' of this research, the dominant phase of my research design, I explored the experiences of LGB police officers through semi-structured qualitative interviews. Cohen et al., (2007) outline an interview 'continuum' with intervals between 'structured' and 'unstructured'. Semi-structured interviews are a trusty member of the qualitative family of methods, often described as akin to a 'guided conversation' (Kvale, 1995, p. 42) between the qualitative interviewer and their participant. The defining characteristic of a semi-structured interview is its flexible and fluid nature (Mason, 2002) which encourages and allows participants to provide 'an account of the values and experiences meaningful to them' (Stephens, 2007, p. 205).

Prior to conducting the interviews, I translated my 'research puzzle' (Rubin and Rubin, 2005, p. 152) – an amalgam of my research questions, deductive observations from the existing literature and some noteworthy cuts of my initial survey data – into several generic themes to create what is commonly referred to as the 'interview guide' (see appendix three). Emphasis is added on the term 'guide', as its role was to offer a list of 'memory prompts' (Wengraf, 2001, p. 63) for me to refer to during the interviews if needed, not to set a prescribed timetable. The success of the

semi-structured interview rests on the ability of the researcher to communicate effectively, listen attentively to participants, craft questions that explore their unique experiences and encourage them to talk freely (Gillman, 2000; Mason, 2002; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Silverman, 2005).

Between January and November 2011, I travelled all over England and Wales and conducted 43 of these interviews. The sample was drawn predominantly from officers who had left their details at the end of my online survey, indicating that they were happy to be contacted by me. Hesse-Biber (2010) observed the growing use of mixed method research to recruit hard to reach samples in this way – where an initial survey ‘casts the net’ (p. 465) to a wider population from which a subsample can be identified and explored in more depth. The benefit of this convenience sampling strategy was that I could, by using the filtering function within the BOS tool, ensure the recruitment of a heterogeneous sample - one that included LGB officers from different constabulary ‘types’, different areas of police work, different ranks, different demographics, and most importantly, different stages of LGB identity management at work.

The experience of conducting these semi-structured interviews with my participants was far less systematic and predictable than presented above. I therefore now isolate and reflect on some of the distinct stages of the interview process below in order to stress the complex and negotiated realities of engaging with and representing the data collected using this method.

3.6.1 Setting the Interview Scene: Choosing a Location

Selecting a location to conduct a qualitative interview should not be oversimplified. In the first instance, there are practical considerations that inform this decision, e.g. ease of access for both the researcher and participants and the suitability of the environment for recording the interview (as I painfully learnt in one of my initial interviews held in a coffee shop where we sat next to a coffee grinder – this made transcription very long and frustrating!). However, beyond these practical considerations, the environmental context of the interview can also play a role in shaping the interview conduct of the participants. Reflecting interactionist perspectives on research ‘ideals’ discussed previously, Elwood and Martin (2000) argue that the interview location itself embodies and constitutes multiple scales of spatial relations and meaning, which construct the power and positionality of participants in relation to the people, places, and

interactions discussed in the interview and should therefore be carefully considered by qualitative researchers.

Mindful of feminist ethical obligations (discussed below), I therefore gave my participants complete autonomy over where and when they wanted to be interviewed. My only guidance was that it should be where they felt comfortable to talk about their sexuality and associated workplace experiences. However, given the macro nature of my research, this did have the potential to cause logistical problems as I had to travel to these locations, many of which I had never been to previously, so had no geographical bearings concerning them. Thankfully, most of my participants picked up on this from my participant information sheet (they saw that I was from Cardiff) and were very helpful in choosing locations that were easily accessible and provided detailed directions for me to find the place they had selected. Given these considerations, three ‘sites’ were used overall.

1. Participants’ place of work: Just under half of the interviews were conducted in the police stations where participants were based. The nature of police work meant that they could book an investigation room for our interview with ease. This made the interview process quite exciting for me, the researcher, as I had never been inside a police station before. However, it also made the research process quite daunting at times, an example being my interview with a senior officer where I was escorted by her PA into a big conference room and instructed to wait there until she arrived. I had not envisaged the environment being so formal and so I had turned up wearing jeans and a jumper which made me feel very unprofessional and anxious (I did not make that mistake again!).

What was quite common in interviews conducted in these settings was other (probably non-LGB) police officers walking into the room, which disrupted the flow of our interview interaction. This happened during my interview with *Sergeant Frank, Large/City*¹² where junior members of his team, pretending they did not know that people were occupying the room, popped their head in every twenty minutes asking Frank, “*all right boss?*” After a few times,

¹² As the reader will see in my subsequent chapters, this is the format that I use to represent my participants’ data throughout the thesis. It combines a pseudonym with indicators of their professional rank and constabulary ‘type’.

Frank chuckled to himself and informed me that this was because he had not told them who I was so they were just making sure that he was okay. In some instances, these disruptions were counterproductive. For example, it made one officer, who was not 'out' to all of her colleagues (but only to a select few), evidently anxious, to the extent that she whispered parts of the interview where she made explicit reference to being LGB just in case one of her colleagues was listening outside.

Overall however, conducting interviews in these settings was beneficial as it allowed officers to use the environment to contextualise and illustrate the discussion. One participant for example described how he had 'come out' to two of his closest colleagues on a night shift. Before the interview, we had gone to make a cup of tea in a small kitchen which was the location where he had 'come out' to those two officers. When he was recalling this experience to me during the interview, he was physically pointing at the kitchen and describing where he was standing and what he was doing – it was evident that he was visualising the environment and then reliving the experience in his head in order to describe it.

2. At a local coffee shop/café: Most of the other interviews were conducted away from participants' place of work, in local cafés/eateries. Although outside of the police environment, they were all near to the police stations of officers who had either been given permission to come off duty to participate in my research or were about to begin/had just finished their shifts, hence the close proximity. I always made sure that I was the first to arrive for these interviews so that I could choose a place to sit which was away from lots of people (i.e. an isolated booth or corner) and not near any noises that would compromise the recording of our interactions (e.g. music or a coffee grinder!).

Despite my initial fear that officers would find it difficult to talk about LGB issues in these public settings, on the whole they were very relaxed and fully embraced the interview process. The environment actually helped at times as its transient nature threw up unpredictable scenarios for us to talk about (e.g. a baby crying or a couple arguing), giving the participant short breaks from the intensity of the interview. One example of where the environment was problematic however, occurred when, halfway through an interview, a member of the public had her bag stolen by someone within the coffee shop. When they shouted for help, my participant went into

police officer mode and gave chase leaving me sitting there for twenty-five minutes wondering if he was coming back (thankfully, he did).

3. *A local park*: Two interviews were conducted sitting on a bench within a local park. One was because it was a nice day so the participant suggested that we stayed outside (I was somewhat apprehensive because I am ginger and burn within five minutes, but it is what they wanted!). The other was because the participant was not 'out' at work and would only agree to an interview if it was away from their workplace and a place where people would not see them being interviewed. After discussing several options, the local park was suggested – as they were walking their dog – and agreed upon. Some practical issues arose in both of these settings mainly related to wind and nearby sound interference with interview recording. However, providing another example of how police officers are never off duty, just as we got started in one of these interviews a local homeless person started to be sick in a bin nearby. We tried to ignore it initially but my participant felt obliged to go and check that he was okay and to move him on.

3.6.2 Building Rapport with Participants: Unlocking the Personal

In order for researchers to understand and represent the experiences and perspectives of their participants, they must first develop a level of mutual trust so that they feel comfortable to disclose and discuss aspects of their lives that are personal and might not have been discussed with anyone else prior to the interview. Denscombe (2007) observes that the success or failure of qualitative interviews can be determined by the ability (or lack therefore) of interviewers to build rapport with their participants, as they are likely to respond differently depending on their perceptions of the interviewer and their motivations. In a policing context, both Reiner (1991) and Loftus (2009) reflect on the considerable efforts needed within their fieldwork to breakdown perceptions of them amongst participants as 'management spies' which initially hampered the willingness of officers to open up to them. Given my 'outside outsider' status in this research, I was therefore mindful throughout the interview process of making an extra effort to establish rapport with my participants.

These efforts began at my first point of contact with them. I tried to make my initial email contact as friendly as possible, outlining the nature of the research and asking them to think of a

suitable time and place for the interview. This initiated a series of email interactions that became less formal as they progressed. Opie (2004) suggests that humour is a great way of building rapport with participants and this was something that I naturally introduced into our email interactions as they developed (and subsequently into the interview itself). For example, I would say things like, *“of course, you can choose the biggest cake you want, it’s on me”* in exchange for their time; and when we were discussing how we would recognise each other on the day I often said, *“I’ll be the giant bald-headed one with the ginger beard, you can’t miss me”*, all of which were responded to positively and generated some pre-interview banter.

Similarly, on the day of the interviews, the locations (outlined above) were ideal as they provided an opportunity for us to talk informally and for participants to ask me any questions before the digital recorder was activated. When I arrived at police stations for example, participants would often give me a tour of the facilities or we would go to get a cup of tea from the station café to take to the investigation room. Similarly, coffee shops often got us talking about our favourite cake or the places we like to go to spoil ourselves when not working etc. It was during these informal, off the record periods that officers informally quizzed me about my intentions, asked about my aims to join the police and were quite direct in asking me if I was gay. I was happy to go through this initiation process as participants were noticeably more relaxed and more at ease once I had reassured them and quelled some of their anxieties.

Thus, an overarching method that allowed me to build rapport with participants was to disclose that I was a gay man myself (and that I had aspirations to join the police). So, just as I discussed the growing commodification of sexuality in organisations as part of efforts to build a tailored rapport with different types of customers in chapter two, I drew upon my own biography and experiences throughout the research process in order to enhance my relationship with my participants. For example, I have already discussed how I included details of my sexuality within the initial participant information sheet that was sent to all officers. Despite this, it was also something that I reiterated within my initial emails when arranging the interview logistics. I also disclosed it in the interview itself – as part of my role as a co-architect in the representation of LGB officers’ experiences – by introducing questions that were grounded in the context of my own experiences (this was particularly useful during the discussion of identity management) and reaffirming points made by participants by giving an example of a situation where I had

felt/experienced something similar. I felt that my ability to do this enhanced the interview process as it allowed me to demonstrate symbolically to my participants that what they were discussing was important and had similarly impacted my life and associated strategies. It also showed that I was listening attentively to what they were saying and tailoring the interview to their experiences, not just going through a list of predetermined questions.

This is not to say that attempts to build rapport are always successful. Luckily however, I had only two experiences in this research where my efforts to build rapport were not positively responded to. The first was with a middle-ranking male officer who was the lead for his constabulary's GSN. I got the impression that he thought the aim of my research was to criticise the police and their diversity efforts. As a consequence, his responses were very short, often only a couple of words some of which were quite hostile. Alternatively, when his answers were longer, they were just the 'official' position of the constabulary towards diversity and were therefore very political. Despite many attempts to change this impression, I have to admit that I failed. As a result, the interview only lasted thirty minutes which was frustrating for me as I had to leave my house at 5.00am that day to then sit on a train for three hours to get to the interview location. In direct contrast, the other officer was not shy in providing long answers but unfortunately they were not about his experiences. Instead, because he had completed a master's degree in sociology in 1988, he felt compelled to keep reminding me of this and rationalised his experiences through the critical lenses of eminent sociological scholars. This was a really challenging interview and required me to constantly try, politely, to move the participant away from this 'academic' discussion towards a more personalised account of his experiences.

3.6.3 The Qualitative Interviewer: A Flexible Yet Active Conductor

As previously identified, the aim of a qualitative interview is to provide a flexible platform on which participants feel comfortable and empowered to reflect upon and discuss their experiences. Mindful of this participant-focused ideal, my role as the researcher within these qualitative interviews was to orchestrate and manage the interview process and to draw upon techniques that would help obtain the richest possible account of the participant's experiences. I began and subsequently employed a series of 'open-ended questions' in order to provide scope for participants to respond and steer their answer in a way that was personal to them (Bryman,

2008; Kvale, 1995; Rubin and Rubin, 2005). However, I made the initial question intentionally light and neutral (e.g. ‘so tell me a bit about you and what your current role involves’) to give participants an opportunity to relax, get used to my interview style and to become less conscious that they were being digitally recorded. Beyond that, my role was to listen to what was being said and to be attentive to the ‘variety of meanings that emerged in the research process’ (Warren, 2001, p. 86). This attentiveness translated into interjecting at certain points of the interview with ‘prompts and probes’ to facilitate the direction and depth of the quasi-conversation and to encourage participants to expand on points made where necessary. Another technique I used was what Kvale (1995, pp. 133–135) called the ‘follow-up question’ where I asked participants to go back and further consider a point they had made at a previous stage of the interview. For example, when PC Sian, Small/Rural was talking about the emotional burden of ‘coming out’, she touched on many interesting points which were evidently emotion-evoking to her, so I did not want to disrupt the flow of her discussion at the time. Later on however, I asked her to expand on some of the anxieties she felt when talking about how she struggled to ‘come out’ to one of her close colleagues. As such, my role as researcher was not passive, but rather as a key facilitator in assuring the requisite depth of response required of qualitative research, which is often difficult to achieve in research of this nature because of the wide array of caveats and the multifaceted nature of the subject matter being discussed.

The role of an interpretivist researcher is also to think creatively in order to ‘make the familiar strange and interesting again’ for those being interviewed (Erickson, 1986, p. 121). On the whole, I think my research strategy proved effective in doing this. However, I did notice during some initial interviews that some officers, especially lower-ranking officers and those who had not been in higher education previously, were very anxious about participating in my research because they did not feel like they had anything interesting or ‘clever’ to say. To tackle this, I composed some flashcards that represented the main themes included in my interview guide so that when such participants emerged, I could offer them the option of using these cards to facilitate the interview process (see figure 3.5).

This involved laying out all the flashcards on a table to allow participants to choose the order that they discussed the themes presented. Once they had finished talking about the theme on one flashcard, I would then get them to select the next theme – a process we would continue until no

flashcards remained. Unlike criticisms of using vignettes in qualitative research (Jenkins et al., 2010) – i.e. that they require the participants to discuss the possible behaviour and attitudes of others, not their own – the flashcards still required participants to discuss their experiences but empowered them by having the option to personally choose the order of themes to discuss. Only four officers chose to use this method and by about the fourth flashcard they had all overcome their anxieties and built up enough confidence to embrace the organic nature of the qualitative interview to the extent that the need for the flashcards was then forgotten.



Figure 3.5: Example of Flashcard Themes Used

The flexibility and aims of qualitative interviews can also be emotionally-laden for participants, especially for research on subjects like [homo]sexuality where the interview platform might be the first time that participants have talked openly to someone about these subjective issues. This was particularly the case for two of my participants who had only recently ‘come out’ after a long period of maintaining a virtual social identity based on heterosexual performance. They presented some really personal discussions about their feelings and emotions, most of which were unrelated to their work life, but which I felt obliged to let them talk about, without interruption. As a consequence, one interview lasted over three hours during which my role was more of a counsellor than an interviewer. However, I was happy for this to happen, as it is an

example of researching the realities of human emotions and life. Practically and ethically, most of the data from these interviews were disregarded, not even transcribed.

3.6.4 Analysing Interview Data

The process of analysing qualitative data is systematic but not rigid, it is not an exact science but involves the ‘translation’ of the raw collected data, and as such, places the researcher as an instrument in the process by requiring hyper-reflexive engagement on their behalf that results in a second level data document (Tesch, 1990). Fittingly therefore, also reflecting Coffey and Atkinson (1996), the analytical strategy of this research was not a ‘distinct stage’ but a reflexive and overarching activity that was embedded in all aspects of my research design and strategy.

It is often recommended that qualitative researchers decide on their analysis strategy before they go into the ‘field’ so that it can inform their research conduct (Bryman, 2008; Mason, 2002; Silverman, 2005). Given my epistemological persuasions, the centrality of a participant-focused interview strategy and the associated aim for my research to provide an unprecedented ‘voice’ for LGB officers in post-Macpherson policing, I decided to use a thematic analysis tradition for this project. Thematic analysis goes beyond a consideration of specific words and phrases within collected data and instead focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas with the data. This involves the ‘fracturing’ (Strauss, 1987, p. 55) of the data into individual ‘codes’ so that these ‘individual pieces can be classified or categorised’ (Babbie, 2009, p. 402) and then situated within broader ideas and themes (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996).

The origin of my analytical journey within this research can be traced back to the conception of my initial research idea, as it was at that point that I established the characterising theme and parameters of my research against which all other decisions were situated. However, less tentatively, the impact of my decision to employ a thematic analysis framework could be seen at different stages of the research process.

Stage 1: Reading and exploring the existing literature

My systematic and critical review of the existing literature and the establishment of my theoretical core presented in chapter two deductively informed the composition of my ‘interview guide’ which was a tangible record of the main themes from the literature that I wanted to explore with my participants. Although informal and situated within a flexible interview framework, these themes shaped my understanding of the subject matter and have therefore influenced my subsequent interpretations and engagement with and presentation of my collected data.

Stage 2: ‘Listening’ and responding during the interview

Throughout this chapter, I have identified that ‘listening’ was one of my main roles within the interview process. This ‘listening’ was informed by the above themes and my use of different interview techniques (e.g. ‘prompts and probes’) were attempts by me to encourage participants to further explore these existing themes, but also helped me to consider and identify new themes relating to participants’ contemporary experiences.

Stage 3: Transcribing

All of the interviews were digitally recorded so that I could dedicate myself to interacting with participants at the time and not get distracted by having to make notes. Afterwards, I used these records to transcribe the interviews verbatim – a monumental task given that all of the interviews (bar one) lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. I therefore got into a routine of transcribing the data in the immediate days after the interview so that my interaction with the participant was fresh in my mind. Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005) advise researchers to start informally coding their data during the transcription process by ‘jotting’ down notes away from the main body of the data in brackets or by using capital letters and also underlying/making bold parts of the data that the researcher wants to revisit as the analysis progresses. I did this by writing short observations and suggesting themes and categories encapsulated with data extracts using the ‘comments’ function in MS Word. This was particularly useful as it presented my comments in the margin of the document so that I would not confuse my comments with the raw data. Further, I kept a notebook throughout this process in which I recorded my observations and ideas that came to mind as I was transcribing the data – the whole process ignited an intellectual firework display of ideas in my head that I had to transpose onto paper to keep me sane.

Stage 4: Broad coding using NVivo

Once I had transcribed all of my data, I was able to start exploring it cumulatively and to initiate multiple processes of coding. Coding is, in essence, a heuristic tool, an exploratory technique that lacks any formulaic guidance on how it is done – it is up to the researcher to approach coding in a way that best suits their data. This is not to say that academics have not postulated on what the process of coding is/should include – Richards and Morse (2007, p. 146), for example, humorously advise that ‘if it moves, code it’. More appropriately, Coffey and Atkinson (1996, pp. 29–31) suggest that ‘coding is usually a mixture of data [summation] and data complication ... breaking the data apart in analytically relevant ways in order to lead toward further questions about the data’.



Figure 3.6: Overview of Main Themes and Sub-Codes Generated using NVivo

Initially, I uploaded all of my transcripts into NVivo 8 – a software package designed to assist in the analysis of qualitative data – which helped me to categorise the data into three main initial themes: ‘pre-joining and motivations to join the police’, ‘individual experiences’ and ‘the police organisation’. After this initial broad sift, I went through the data for a second time, developing more specific codes within each of these three themes. The main themes and sub-codes composed are illustrated in figure 3.6. At this stage, the data was driving the creation of these themes/sub-codes, nothing else. Of course, these categories are not mutually exclusive and to dichotomise the data in this systematic way would go against my epistemological leanings and ignore the realities of the interview interaction. Because of this, where appropriate, I used the functionality of NVivo to place the data in more than one theme (i.e. using the data once did not exclude it from being used for another theme). This is a common criticism of using computer-aided analysis software more generally – that ‘the researcher risks losing contact with the context and meaning of raw data by too much data manipulation by computer’ (Roberts and Wilson, 2002).

Stage 5: Critical coding manually

After managing the data broadly on an electronic platform, I then printed all of the themes and subthemes, got my coloured pens out, and initiated a period of in-depth and critical manual coding exploring relationships between, and creating further themes within, each of the subthemes previously established (this is where it got complicated!). This stage of analysis extended ‘beyond the data’ (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; Silverman, 2005) by employing both ‘in vivo’ and ‘sociologically constructed’ codes (Strauss, 1987), combining what participants actually said in their interviews with wider theoretical insight and interpretations from the existing literature (e.g. exploring how participants’ accounts confirmed or refuted historical conceptions of police occupational culture).

Reflexively managing this process of analysis was imperative to ensure that the critical integrity and representativeness of the data was maintained. To achieve this, I regularly revisited the data as a whole so that the contextual and interrelated realities of talk were not overlooked in my analytical interpretations. Practically, I achieved this by keeping a hard copy of my transcripts at the side of my bed and reading extracts before going to sleep and when I woke up each morning. Similarly, I transferred the digital recordings of my interviews onto my iPhone (which is

password protected) and listened to them as I walked into university or when I was on the train etc. This really helped to remind me that my data was not abstract (which the textual representation of transcripts can fuel), but was in fact human accounts of real life experiences.

Further, although I have embraced aspects of ‘me’ in shaping and executing this research, it was also important that I reflexively acknowledged how different aspects of my own biography and associated experiences might impact my interpretation and analysis of the data. Lasala (2009) highlights the risk of LGB researchers researching ‘family’ (i.e. other LGB individuals). Specifically, she warns that when analysing the data, LGB researchers might overlook or misinterpret important aspects of the participants’ accounts due to their close proximity to the subject matter. I inbuilt safeguards against this by regularly revisiting the data; critically comparing similarities and differences between participants’ accounts; and by discussing the accounts of officers with my supervisors to make sure that I was not misinterpreting what was being said.

3.7 Ethical Reflections

Both policing and sexuality are areas of empirical inquiry that traditionally attract unique ethical hurdles. Here, I differentiate between ‘procedural ethics’ and ‘ethics in practice’ as a framework to outline some of the ethical considerations that were presented and addressed throughout this research.

‘Procedural ethics’ refers to the formal organisational processes that must be considered and satisfied before official permission is given for researchers to commence any practical empiricism within the field. Boden et al. (2009, p. 738) powerfully describe these processes as ‘new ethical bureaucracies [that] define items such as interview transcripts or observation records as synonymous with babies’ hearts; they are ‘personal’, parts of people, rather than inanimate research artefacts’ that exist to satisfy legal and wider organisational risk anxieties of higher education institutions. Diener and Crandall (1978) argue that these formalities are underpinned by four central considerations – whether there is harm to participants; whether there is a lack of informed consent; whether there is an invasion of privacy; and whether there is deception involved.

As a doctoral candidate of Cardiff University, a recipient of an ESRC studentship, a member of the British Society of Criminology (BSC) and as a law abiding citizen, there were therefore a host of these ‘procedural’ ethical requirements that I had to demonstrate consideration of, and adherence to, before the green light for me to execute my research design was given – a process that I consider to be a series of professional ‘promises’. So, before even sending my online survey or approaching an officer to be interviewed, I promised that:

- i. I would not place either myself or my participants in a position of harm – physically or professionally;
- ii. Participants would not be deceived into partaking in my research – that the aims and nature of the research would be communicated to them and they would always know when they were in a research setting;
- iii. Informed consent would be sought from all participants before engaging in any research activity with them;
- iv. The privacy of my participants would not be violated;
- v. I would store and use their data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998;
- vi. I would conduct myself in a manner expected by the ethical codes of conduct of Cardiff University, the ESRC and the BSC.

These were promises that the Ethics Committee at Cardiff University was satisfied that I had considered and therefore granted my project ethical approval in July 2010.

However, given my subscription to a feminist way of conducting social research, I employed an ‘ethics in practice’ approach to research conduct – one that goes beyond the formality and static nature of procedural requirements and instead conceptualises ethics as situated, dialogic and political (Renold et al., 2008). Thus, ‘ethics in practice’ is driven by an acknowledgement that ‘few research projects proceed as expected; many ethical issues are unforeseen in advance; and that ethics, as a general concern, resides in specific situations within the complex histories of individuals’ (Cannella and Lincoln, 2007, p. 327). Guillemin and Gillam (2004) therefore champion an ‘ethics in practice’ that is inbuilt into the reflexive conscious of social researchers who deal with and consider ethical research conduct and all that it encompasses on a day-to-day basis throughout the research process.

Thankfully, my research was not impacted by too many ethical challenges once I had satisfied my procedural obligations. Practically, the need to adhere to these formal ‘promises’ resulted in me embedding details of the research and its ethical commitment into the initial page of my online survey which participants could not move beyond until they had confirmed that they had read and understood this information and were giving their informed consent to participate (the functionality of the BOS tool facilitated this process). During my qualitative interviews, I explained the nature of the research, informed participants that I would be digitally recording the interview and reassured them of privacy and anonymity – both in terms of how I stored their data and when I wrote up my findings. Before the interview commenced, I made sure that they fully understood these issues which they confirmed by signing an informed consent document (the template of which can be found in appendix four). I also used pseudonyms for participants from the first point of transcription so that their identities and locations would be protected.

Some ‘ethics in practice’ considerations worth noting all relate to the difficulties of conducting ‘macro’ police research that includes all 43 constabularies in England and Wales within their empirical remit. First, given that there was no central police gatekeeper to seek permission from (and that individual formal gatekeepers had not replied to my initial request for access permission and symbolic support), I had to constantly remind participants and stakeholders in my research of my ‘outside outsider’ status. For example, when requesting that details of my research be distributed to all officers, I was explicit in highlighting that my research was not commissioned or endorsed by the GPA (or other body) and that I was an independent academic researcher. The nature of my online survey instrument helped with this, as only officers who had been sent the survey from an ‘inside’ gatekeeper would have received the link to allow them to complete it. However, for participants who volunteered to be interviewed for ‘stage two’ of the research, I initially informed them of my access difficulties and suggested that they might want to seek permission from their line manager to participate in my study, especially when I was coming onto police premises and conducting the interview during their ‘on duty’ time (this was just informal advice, not an absolute requirement as I appreciated that for officers who were not ‘out’ this would not have been possible). This raised minimal issues and only one officer told me that her line manager had asked to see details of my research before he gave permission. Additionally, I was mindful of my own safety when arranging the location of interviews – especially as I was travelling to areas of the country that I was not familiar with, and meeting

officers of whom I had no prior knowledge of. Because of this, although keen to allow participants to choose a location where they felt comfortable, I ruled out the possibility of conducting the research in their own homes and stated my preference that it was either in a professional setting (i.e. a police station) or in a public area. The decision to conduct two of the interviews in a park challenged that rule, although I made sure that the park was not in an isolated location – they were both in the middle of a built-up location with plenty of people in contactable distance.

3.8 Political Reflections

As well as ethical considerations, there are also personal political considerations – inevitably given the human nature of research undertakings – which have impacted this research and are therefore worthy of acknowledgement.

Throughout this thesis (and indeed throughout this chapter), I acknowledge how influences of ‘me’ have shaped my research conduct – from my initial choice of topic, right up to and including my analysis and representation of my data. However, my embracing of the feminist standpoint and its call for ‘strong objectivity’ in social research directs me to acknowledge such personal influences, but in a positive way, recognising how my social and demographic positioning as a social actor and researcher has enhanced my research in the pursuit of providing an empirical voice for LGB police officers.

Rossman and Rollis (2003, p. 192) refer to this intersection of the empirical and personal as the ‘politics of position and personality’ in social research, referring to the professional and social lineage of social actors, its impact on research processes and the subsequent need for reflexive acknowledgement of how these macro affiliations might influence accounts of social reality. So, for example, I have already discussed how my own biography has influenced my research strategy, how it facilitated my navigation of access with gatekeepers, how it was used to build rapport with my participants and how I embedded reflexive praxis into my analysis to make the acknowledgement of politics in social research more transparent.

A consideration of political influence is not confined to the researcher however, and as such the political dimensions of participants’ conduct in social research and how it influences their involvement, engagement and the quality of their data should be reflexively acknowledged. In

this regard, one aspect of participant politics that has influenced this research relates to Goffman's (1959) differentiation between the 'front' and 'back' stages of individuals' identity performances. This raised a dual hurdle for this research because as Waddington (1999) argues, police officers have a 'front' and 'backstage' which affects their professional behaviour and attitudes; but also LGB individuals have virtual and actual social identities which affect the extent to which they 'perform' aspects of their sexuality. A central question of concern for me throughout this research has therefore been which aspect of these dramaturgical variances have been presented in this research and how this has impacted the accounts of officers and the picture that I am attempting to paint of their experiences. Reiner and Newburn (2009) argue that policing research is never likely to be politically free, but that this is something that researchers have to acknowledge and accept. Bar practical efforts to try and encourage 'backstage' insight from participants when engaging with my research instruments (e.g. by building rapport), I can therefore only acknowledge the likely political variances as potential limitations of my research. In reality, policing is a complex undertaking that takes place in a multi-dimensional milieu of environmental contexts – all of which have included stakeholders with their own unique experience of policing based on their positional lens. Ideally, I would triangulate my data by including representation of these varying lenses in my research design to explore possible political variances and the representativeness of accounts provided by my LGB officers. However, in reality this is not practically possible and as such the insight and contributions of this thesis are based solely on the experiences and political variances of my sample.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced the epistemological and theoretical foundations of my research and outlined how these influenced my decision to employ a mixed method research design to pursue my research questions. Further, I discussed how my theoretically-informed research 'blueprint' was practically executed in the field and the situational dynamics that shaped this.

I emphasised that despite being mixed method, this research strategy is qualitatively-driven and that my inclusion of an online survey instrument was to maximise the political impact of my research by appealing to the positivist palate of policy makers. Thus, whereas the aim of my national survey was to identify national attitudes and trends of LGB police officers, my qualitative research – the dominant aspect of my research – explored underlying subjectivities

and personal meanings that individual officers place and experience as players within heteronormative police environments. Collectively, these methods aimed to place an empirical light on LGB police officers, their contributions to post-Macpherson policing in England and Wales and the formal and informal police organisational frameworks that shape their experiences, which have previously been neglected.

In the chapters that follow, I present the analysis of my collected data – bringing together quantitative and qualitative perspectives to represent the experiences of LGB police officers that my chosen methods have captured and observed. This process of ‘writing up’ and the representation of research findings is often overlooked as an important stage in the research process (Bryman, 2006; Wolcott, 1990). However, I acknowledge its importance and the responsibility that has been placed on me by my participants to effectively represent and tell the story of their experiences and associated perspectives. Accordingly, throughout my thesis I make continued reference to the importance of my data collection methods and how they are the source and quality hallmark of the information presented.

I begin, in the next chapter, with a broad analytical lens, by outlining the environmental and police cultural parameters in which LGB officers are located. Then, in chapter five, I focus my analytical lens on examining how LGB police officers manage their individual identities within these climates and the subjective/intersubjective processes that shape this. I then explore the combination of individual and formal organisational factors by evaluating how officers engage and respond to police diversity initiatives, before zooming the analytical lens back out in chapter eight to examine how shifting environmental factors influence all of the issues previously discussed.

Chapter Four

A Tale of Two Cultures? Exploring Contemporary Workplace Climates for LGB Police Officers

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with identifying and exploring the workplace environment experienced by LGB police officers in post-Macpherson policing. As discussed in chapter two, only twenty years ago the mere suspicion of an LGB officer within the masculine policing ranks provoked a torrent of prejudice and discrimination from across the organisation that blighted the workplace experiences and career trajectories of these officers, leading many to pursue a psychologically strenuous workplace persona based on heterosexual performance to avoid the risk and consequences of professional rejection. However, only ten years later, as a consequence of a plethora of criticisms peaking at Macpherson (1999) and shifting social climates, a new policy direction was launched, one that placed organisational diversity and workforce modernisation at its core. Subsequently, at the level of policy rhetoric at least (ACPO, 2005; HMIC, 2003), LGB officers started to be actively sought in policing on the grounds of the innate skills and benefits that they could potentially bring to the reconfigured twenty-first century policing mission. Yet, despite this new found policy recognition, the nature and impact of workforce modernisation and diversity agendas on the working lives of LGB officers remain unknown due to the lack of empirical evidence about this niche topic of police studies.

Workplace climate is a central concern for any discussion of LGB police officers given the invisible and subjective sensitivities of sexuality discussed in chapter two. The success of contemporary policy rationales with regard to sexuality rests on the ability of contemporary police constabularies to offer LGB officers a workplace environment that is welcoming, free from hostility and inclusive so that they feel comfortable to disclose and utilise their unique skill set in policing settings. Yet, as the work of Burke (1994, 1995) pays testament, the historical relationship between LGB officers and the police has

not been a conducive one. In fact, the invisibility of sexuality, selective disclosure and the availability of the ‘dual persona’ pose the biggest threat to the successful achievement of new police perspectives on LGB staff. Due to their fraught histories, without radical transformation and reassurance, LGB police officers are unlikely to be forthcoming in translating policy idealism into operational reality.

As a consequence of this disclosure conundrum, a central aim of the post-Macpherson police reform has been to call time on the insularity and dominance of antiquated and counterproductive police occupational cultural practices and attitudes. In chapter two, I introduced the theoretical and empirical perspectives around police culture and identified that, as a profession, the police inhabit an extremely strong and highly concentrated set of values and beliefs, which collectively form their occupational identity (van Maanen, 1978). These informal values and beliefs, which are historically embedded, celebrated and passed on through the generations, have acted as a persuasive guide to the day-to-day work, interactions and conduct of the rank and file (Holdaway, 1983). Skolnick (1966) claims that it is these police sub-cultural ideologies that provide the foundations on which the ‘working personality’ of police officers is built and developed. Importantly however, although often rationalised as a coping mechanism through which police officers collectively negotiate the stresses of police work, it is through subscription and application of this cultural syllabus of expectations that sexism, racism and homophobia are manifested by police officers – both in relation to their policing and interaction with the public and amongst colleagues in occupational settings (Brown, 1998a; Burke, 1994; Holdaway, 2009). It was the universality of this occupational culture – namely its masculinist, conservative, insular requirements – and the perceived inability of LGB individuals to conform to these cultural expectations and standards, that was identified by Burke (1994) as the dominant reason why LGB officers were branded antithetical to British policing and as representing the greatest form of contamination and threat to the integrity of the police service by the police majority. Given the strength and persuasiveness of these cultural practices to characterise and dictate police environments and behaviour, the success of the post-Macpherson reform agenda rests on its ability to bring about meaningful change, to eradicate the negative traits associated with police occupational culture, so that ‘difference’ becomes an embraced rather than resisted

resource in modern policing. It is only once this has been achieved, when LGB officers feel like accepted members of the modern police family and are able to disclose their LGB status at work, that their skill set can be fully maximised for the benefit of the newly written policing mission.

Given the above, this chapter is tasked with establishing whether the post-Macpherson diversity reform agenda has been successful in improving the occupational climate for LGB police officers. The remit and structure of this chapter is driven by three central questions:

- Has the working environment for LGB police officers in England and Wales been improved since Burke? If so, what has brought about these changes?
- What resistance and challenges (if any) are faced by LGB police officers in professional settings today?
- Are LGB officers currently content with the pace of change and their likely future?

In the following discussion, I draw upon the mixed method accounts provided by my sample in order to identify common trends and experiences reported in relation to the workplace climate faced by LGB police officers today.

I outline how the contemporary working environment for LGB officers has been radically transformed in recent years, due mainly to the establishment of a distinct ‘organisational police culture’ that has emerged as a result of a reconfiguration of the policing ‘field’. Yet, despite positive strides, pockets of resistance towards LGB officers still exist due to the resonance of certain elements of the police occupational culture. These are coupled with insecurities amongst LGB officers themselves with regard to the longevity of organisational protections that they have been recently afforded. Both of these factors, I argue, drawing upon the work of Chan (1996), signal antagonism and resistance between the newly established ‘field’ of public policing and its historically informed ‘habitus’. I conclude by arguing the diversity agenda should not be seen as complete, but instead as

at a pivotal moment in its development requiring investment and organisational longevity.

A further perspective drawn upon in this chapter is that of the ‘psychological contract’ outlined in chapter two; a concept that distinguishes between the positive and negative (or ‘transactional’ and ‘relational’) relationships that exist between organisations and their employees (Millward and Hopkins, 1998). Transactional relationships are characterised by low expectations between the two parties fuelled by the mere economic exchange of labour for monetary reward. In contrast, relational bonds between organisations and their employees are characterised by long-term commitment, workplace protections, benefits, opportunities and rewards in return for loyalty, investment, commitment and the embracement of organisational values. I suggest that the success of including LGB officers in post-Macpherson policing was, and continues to be, dependent on the ability of constabularies to reconfigure the psychological contract with their LGB officers in order to create a workplace environment where they feel part of the modern police family and comfortable to contribute to the new diversity mission.

4.2 Towards a New Organisational Culture: A New Era of Recognition and Acceptance for LGB Police Officers

A consistent and dominant theme within this research was that the working environment experienced by LGB officers today is in radical contrast to that experienced twenty years ago. Notably, within the quantitative data set, three-quarters of those LGB officers sampled (75.1 per cent) reported the belief that their police constabulary currently does enough to support LGB police officers. The multilevel ordinal regression analysis shows that, holding all other factors constant, those in medium-sized constabularies were more likely to think this, compared to those in small and large forces (see appendix five). Just under three-quarters of respondents (74.1 per cent) reported that they were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘satisfied’ with being a police officer; 79 per cent considered themselves to be ‘out’ at work; 82.6 per cent had never experienced discrimination at work due to their sexual orientation; 36 per cent had talked to a senior officer about LGB issues and only

17 per cent felt very uncomfortable about raising such issues. The regression analysis showed that gay males (compared to gay women and bisexuals), those with longer service, and members of the GPA and local LGB staff network were most likely to talk to their manager about LGB issues. This trend of positivity was substantiated in my qualitative data, with all participants (even where some negativity and organisational discrimination had been experienced) reporting that “*massive strides*” have been taken by the police in relation to diversity and inclusivity over the last decade. Those LGB officers who had been employed within the police prior to post-Macpherson reforms talked of witnessing and experiencing a plethora of explicit changes – differentiating between the dichotomy of “*policing today*” and “*policing in the bad old days*” within their accounts. Similarly, those LGB officers who were sworn in as a constable post-2000 acknowledged their relief and gratitude to be working within a “*different era*” of policing where LGB officers are accepted, encouraged and experience minimal professional negativities. The extent of these changes is illustrated in the following extract.

Matt: *So what is it like for LGB officers today?*

DS Joe, Large/City: *Well I joined in the 80s, which wasn't a good time to be gay in the police. But in the last ten years the police have taken massive strides to try and change that. Now there is more awareness in the organisation. Any racism, homophobia, sexism or any other ism will just not be tolerated, not at all. The job has wholeheartedly been brought into this new age where we are equally worthwhile and valued no matter what our background. But it's all been about reconfiguring people's minds – educating them on what they can and cannot say and do. Because everyone remembers the bad old days when the police were homophobic, racist or sexist and for older generations we have a very bad name which is going to take a long time to put right. But now the police really are taking steps in the right direction.*

This positive transition from “*policing in the bad old days*” to “*policing today*” has brought about a complex mix of internal and external changes and reform which, drawing on Chan (1996), collectively represents a change to, and establishment of, a new contemporary policing ‘field’. This ‘field’ refers to the organisational and wider societal parameters within which public policing in England and Wales is situated and is said to be characterised by formal resources and constraints which include, not exhaustively, factors such as legislation, political agendas and policies, social climates, policing philosophies, priorities and resource availability (for further discussion see Chan, 1996, 1997).

In the next section of the chapter, drawing upon the qualitative responses of officers, I identify and discuss the main factors that have collectively contributed to the establishment of this new policing ‘field’ and related improved workplace environment from the perspective of my LGB officer participants.

4.2.1 All Change: Reconfigured Policing Philosophies

Reflecting academic claims that Macpherson (1999) represented a watershed in British policing (Hall et al., 2009; McLaughlin, 2007; Rowe, 2002), my participants explicitly acknowledged and cited Macpherson as the point after which they had witnessed several major changes in their operational policing environments which had positively impacted their experiences; changes which established foundations on which the inclusivity of LGB officers was built (some of the policy aims for which I outlined in chapter two).

First, the move from a police ‘force’ to a police ‘service’ mindset was discussed (Reiner, 2010; Rowe, 2008; Savage, 2007). This had marked a symbolic retreat from traditional masculinist ‘crime fighting’ models of policing to more intelligence-led, proactive community models within which participants had been encouraged to be central players. An important consequence of this, was the need and expectation for machismo in policing – a central ingredient of the policing occupational culture which LGB officers have been stereotypically seen to oppose (Belkin and McNichol, 2002; Bernstein and

Kostelac, 2002; Burke, 1994; Colvin, 2008) – being diluted and, instead, new proactive and ‘soft’ areas of policing had emerged and grown (Innes, 2005; Loftus, 2008; McCarthy, 2013; Rabe-Hemp, 2008) to which LGB officers felt they had something unique to offer. The nature and consequences of LGB officers’ engagement with these new forms of policing will be developed further in chapter six.

Second, participants talked about the newfound importance of diversity and growing efforts within their constabularies to: (i) recruit a diverse workforce that ‘reflects the public it serves’ and to move away from the assumption that policing is a job that can only be done by white heterosexual macho men; (ii) provide support for these new minority officers; (iii) change promotion and development structures to facilitate and increase the representation of minority officers in the higher ranks; and (iv) create formal organisational rules that place respect for diversity at their core. In the following accounts, participants reflect on the extent to which diversity has become an important consideration in the contemporary mindset.

***PC Sian, Small/Rural:** Often, the police are very slow to change. But I think because of the Stephen Lawrence shambles and the Macpherson report, they had to change as an organisation. Since then, diversity is treated as a very serious thing.*

***PC Edward, Large/City:** Diversity is massive in the police now, well in my [constabulary] it is anyway. I recently attended a diversity meeting and it was chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable. So when you have got that kind of ranking officer supporting diversity type issues, the organisation has to treat it seriously and has to put changes into place, which we have done.*

Finally, new ways of responding to and tackling the policing mission, particularly the move towards multi-agency and collaborative models of working, were also seen by participants to have challenged the insularity of the policing occupational culture and its negative expressions. As one participant noted, “today there is much more to policing

than just the police”. Reiner (2010) highlights how the nineteenth century Peelian model of state policing has been recently usurped by a move towards pluralisation of policing provision and the establishment of collaborative relationships between the police and a variety of other agencies. Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, all police constabularies in England and Wales now have a statutory duty to work with other local agencies and organisations under the umbrella of ‘community safety partnerships’ in order to develop strategies to tackle local crime and disorder. In light of this, LGB officers talked about how this new form of collaborative working has been helpful in promoting police professionalism and eradicating once accepted and unchallenged expressions of police occupational culture.

***DCI Wayne, Large/City:** At the moment, I am working on a big project with victim support and the probation service. Now, if I was to go into one of those meetings and be racist, sexist or homophobic to anyone in that room, firstly I would look completely unprofessional and anything I say from that point would be completely discredited, but also before I get back to the station I would guarantee that members from each of those organisations would have made a complaint about me to my senior officer. I’d be out on my arse, or suspended and investigated as a minimum. We’re all professionals; you just can’t behave like that anymore.*

In this context, participants felt that a move towards multi-agency working should not just be championed on the grounds of economic efficiency, but also on its ability to facilitate and encourage positive organisational and cultural reform.

4.2.2 Power by Number: Recognition Policing for LGB Officers

Within this new overarching organisational commitment to diversity, attention, resources and investment have been provided to facilitate the integration of LGB officers into the ranks (Davenport, 2006; van Ewijk, 2011; Home Office, 2005). As outlined in chapter

two, this has included their active recruitment, police presence and engagement at LGB events, investment in and development of the GPA, establishment of local GSNs, the introduction of LGBT liaison officers, and compulsory diversity training, which includes an LGB element, for all staff. The dynamics, engagement and impact of these initiatives are individually explored in chapter six.

The consequence of these reform efforts is that there are now more LGB police officers in policing than ever before. As part of my research strategy, I tried to establish how many LGB officers currently disclose their sexuality at work in each of the 43 constabularies across England and Wales through the submission of a freedom of information request. However, only fourteen constabularies were able to provide the requested data, with the remainder failing to reply to my request or stating that they do not record sexual orientation of staff as part of their monitoring processes.

Despite the exact number of LGB police officers being unknown, it has been estimated that there could be up to 20,000 (Blackbourn, 2006). As one participant commented, *“I used to be the only gay officer in my station, now there are four on my team alone”*. As a result, the novelty of only having one gay officer in a constabulary and the targeted stereotypical resistance that this attracted, as documented by Burke (1994), is no longer commonplace. Instead, participants postulated that most, if not all, police officers in England and Wales are likely to have had some experience of working professionally with LGB officers, a reality which allows these officers to base opinions on LGB suitability for police work on these experiences, rather than derogatory social stereotypes. Some participants reflected on their integration into predominantly white, male, heterosexual police teams and noted the fascination that their traditional macho colleagues often have with their LGB status, which often manifested itself in deeply personal yet genuine questions about the logistics of same-sex coitus and their dating rituals. Rather than being offended, LGB officers were encouraged by these types of questions, as they felt they allowed them to break down barriers and preconceptions on what it means to be LGB and ultimately to discredit police occupational-cultural resistance to them. In line with Weeks’ (2007) arguments, participants felt that this has allowed colleagues to now see LGB officers as emotionally competent, good police

officers, rather than sexual stereotypes or predators. These experiences also help facilitate genuine friendships and professional bonds between LGB officers and their heterosexual colleagues. As one LGB officer disclosed:

PC Edward, Large/City: I have a picture of my boyfriend on my desk; colleagues ask how he is on a daily basis. I tell them when he has pissed me off and when we have a row and they do the same about their wives and girlfriends.

Similarly, participants identified how new LGB policing initiatives have disrupted the homogeneity of policing and its iconography. In the next section, I highlight the difficulties of overcoming masculinity in policing due to the continued homogeneity of the police image (uniforms, equipment, estate aesthetics etc.). Yet, although subtle, LGB officers have noticed that having posters about the GPA and Gay Staff Network on most station noticeboards, having the multi-coloured pride flag flying to recognise LGB History Month in February, and some LGB officers wearing small rainbow badges to acknowledge themselves as LGB, have facilitated interesting and professional conversation and debate about LGB issues and about how LGB officers benefit and bring something to policing. This is in direct contrast to Burke (1994) and the wider international evidence base at the time (Buhrke, 1996; Pratt and Tuffin, 1996) where narratives relating to LGB officers were negative, abusive, discriminatory and based on sexual stereotypes.

4.2.3 Recognition with a Bite: Diversity with Consequences

Overt discrimination and prejudice, often seen as negative expressions of police occupational culture, have also been subjected to a tripartite framework of measures that collectively aim to manage and eradicate their occurrence by establishing them as new forms of professional deviance subject to internal and external investigations, sanctions, professional reprimands and dismissal. Within my research, participants acknowledged that these new measures have significantly contributed to removing previously dominant resistance and negativities towards LGB officers and instead have contributed to the

empowerment of LGB officers within the workplace (Jones and Williams, 2013). The nature and impact of each of these tripartite measures will now be discussed.

In the first instance, participants viewed the introduction of workplace anti-discrimination legislation as a central mechanism through which the police have been forced to address the issue of discrimination within their organisations. Workplace recognition of this nature for LGB staff was first established by the Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, which was more recently brought under the umbrella of the Equality Act 2010. Since 2003, LGB officers who experience direct discrimination from their police employer have recourse to the law with the potential for financial compensation where damages are incurred. In their study into the organisational consequences of workplace equalities and anti-discrimination legislation for LGB staff, Colgan et al. (2007) found that it: (i) makes LGB people feel more confident to challenge discrimination and harassment; (ii) creates a form of parity where LGB individuals are afforded the same protection as other groups; and (iii) provides a 'statement of intent' and some confidence for LGB employees that things are moving in the right direction. These consequences were certainly reflected in this research and provided further comfort for LGB officers knowing that even if their constabulary/employer failed to protect them, they still have the external protection of the law to call upon if needed.

Inspector Maria, Mid-size: It's because of things like the Equality Act that things have got a lot better recently. People can't act inappropriately or make stupid comments anymore because if they do they are going to lose their jobs. It's not lip service in terms of the organisation just saying it is diverse, and there are actual measures that are in place to protect us if we need them.

The second strand of the tripartite framework relates to a revision of the police code of conduct. As a consequence of The Police (Conduct) Regulations 2008, a new code places factors such as respect and courtesy, honesty and integrity, personal autonomy, lawfulness and professional equity at the core of police organisational ethics. This revised code also

provides a platform and process through which LGB officers can formally record discriminatory behaviour, allocates specialist internal resources to investigate such claims, and includes the power and remit to impose professional discipline upon those who are found to act outside of the required standards. The effects of this revised code of conduct are similar to the effects of external protective legislation as outlined above by Colgan et al. Yet, what this new code represents is the first form of internal redress that has been afforded to LGB officers, offering an unprecedented hierarchy of recourse as a consequence. The importance of this policy recognition for LGB officers is reflected in the following response.

***Sergeant Yvonne, Small/Rural:** What is different to before is that I know now that if anyone says anything offensive to me, or if I'm treated differently, I have legislation and policy to protect me, and I will utilise them if I have to. Not as a first resort though. I generally will challenge behaviour first which usually rectifies the situation and results in a personal apology from whoever said something offensive. If that doesn't work then I'll report a formal complaint to one of my senior officers. If it gets this far then it is usually taken very seriously and resolved. But I always have in the back of my head that if I'm not happy with what was done, then I could take it further again.*

Data on the number of internal complaints and cases pursued under these legislative provisions are not publicly available, preventing discussion on the extent to which such provisions have been implemented. Within my research, none of my participants had pursued a legal claim of discrimination against their constabularies on the grounds of sexuality. One had initiated legal proceedings on the grounds of discrimination in police human resource policy, but at the eleventh hour the police settled this claim out of court. Several other participants had informally reported grievances to senior officers due to expressed prejudices by colleagues (the nature of these prejudices will be explored further in the next section of this chapter).

The third strand of the tripartite framework relates to a new zero tolerance commitment of senior officers towards the diversity mission. Firm leadership has always been cited as a prerequisite to diversity reform success and meaningful change (Adlam, 2002; Dobby et al., 2004; HMIC, 2003; Home Office, 2005), yet LGB participants described initial responses by senior police managers between 2000 and 2005 as “sterile” and “ineffective”. This reflects the findings of Morris (2004), who stressed the ineffectiveness of a ‘tick box’ approach and an unclear commitment towards diversity in policing at that time. Positively, “significant differences” have been observed since then, leading to a sincere and genuine commitment by a new wave of senior officers to champion diversity reform.

***DS Joe, Large/City:** You know, there is a real organisational desire now to be seen, not in a cynical way, to be inclusive. In my current role, I have to meet a lot of very senior officers and they do seem to be genuine people who want all backgrounds in the organisation and for them to feel part of it. That sounds very utopian [laughs] but that really is a desire they have and they won't take any shit from anyone who isn't on board with that. It would just be professional suicide for anyone to be homophobic these days; there are measures in place just to get rid of them, no exceptions.*

This new punitive climate in constabularies across England and Wales is another example of the experiences of LGB officers today being in direct contrast to those reported by Burke (1994) where prejudice and discrimination against LGB officers was viewed as an inevitable and unchallenged consequence of the nature of police work and the strong, unifying occupational culture amongst the dominant rank and file. However, the progress made in recent years illustrates that policing is not static or insular, but rather underpinned and influenced by a myriad of social, political and legislative factors within which the mandate of policing is executed.

4.2.4 Generations in Transition: Make Way for a New Hybrid Police Officer

In his 2006 article, aptly entitled *Not Your Father's Police Department: Making Sense of The New Demographics of Police Enforcement*, Sklansky (2006) explored the revolutionary, yet empirically overlooked, realities of a new generation of police officers who have emerged as a consequence of wider social diversity and police reform efforts over the span of a decade. Although an American publication, the observations of Sklansky now find resonance in the demographics of police workforces across England and Wales as the effects of the aforementioned 'profound revolution' (Weeks, 2007) for LGB individuals, as well as changing social demographics more widely, start to reflect in the policing ranks.

Within the current research, participants talked about policing being a relatively young profession and the emergence of a new hybrid recruit in recent years, one that is "*part of a new accepting era*". These officers have been brought up within, exposed to, and experienced first-hand contemporary social diversity and so come to the policing ranks having been socialised around diversity sensitivities, rather than needing to be formally taught diversity by the police as was the case for previous generations of police officers. Participants noted that these new recruits are more accepting, less likely to subscribe to discriminatory and prejudicial police occupational culture behaviour and, in the case of new LGB recruits, are more likely to be open and vocal about their sexual orientation from day one (this is explored further in chapter five).

As well as possessing a natural appreciation of diversity, it was also observed that these new recruits are also joining with higher levels of formal education than had previously been the case, which participants believed was contributing to a new type of police officer who show higher levels of tolerance, greater appreciation of diversity and difference, and a tendency to challenge historical police conventions that appear to be disproportionate and professionally inequitable. Traditionally, policing has been seen as an 'artisan trade' with no formal educational standard required prior to joining. However, with 75 per cent of working age adults in the UK now holding a minimum of a Level 2

qualification, and 35 per cent holding a Level 4 qualification or higher (National Statistics, 2010), the profession is experiencing a rise in the pre-join attainment of recruits. Ohlander et al. (2005) explored educational influences on attitudes towards homosexuality generally and found that higher educational attainment impacts an individual's cognitive sophistication and complex reasoning, as well as their ability to evaluate and postulate new ideas, understand and appreciate reasons for nonconformity and develop support for civil liberties. Accordingly, they concluded that those with higher educational attainments demonstrate greater tolerance and understanding of homosexuality and diversity issues. In relation to policing, Punch (2007) explored the effects of university education on police officers' competency, attitudes and career trajectories identifying that those with higher level qualifications are more likely to engage in reflexive police conduct, are more open to organisational change and reform, and are more likely to challenge established occupational-cultural practices. This supports the view of participants that these new highly educated officers are positively impacting police reform efforts, and substantiates the recommendation of Neyroud (2011) that a modern professional police service should have established higher educational requirements for officers¹³. As one participant notes:

Sergeant Frank, Large/City: The officers that have come in over the last few years are much more liberal and accepting. That's mainly because society has become much more liberal. But it's also because the educational level of officers has increased – most coming from university or at least having A-levels. I left school at 16, which I think most officers in my generation did and that has an impact on life experiences, appreciation of difference and acceptance.

A consequence of this growing demographic of new police recruits has been the gradual dilution of officers at the other end of the spectrum, referred to many times by participants as “dinosaurs”. These are officers, typically recruited pre-Macpherson,

¹³ This reflects the mission statement of the new College of Policing launched on 1 December 2012 (See www.college.police.uk)

neering the end of their careers who are the biggest subscribers and champions of negative cultural attitudes and practices. As discussed by O'Neill et al. (2007), subscription and demonstration of police occupational culture is not absolute, but rather influenced by the personal histories and reflexive autonomy of individuals to accept or reject them. In recent years, new “*diversity-savvy*” and educated officers have been seen to reject negative cultural traits, which has positively impacted the integration of minority officers into the ranks. Participants acknowledged that organisational reform and the fulfilment of this generational transition is time-dependent, but that after more than ten years of reform efforts a tipping point is being reached whereby the white, masculinist, heteronormative majority, the “*dinosaurs*”, are now becoming the minority. However, it was stressed that only with more time and the continuation of reform investments could such “*dinosaurs*” become fully extinct. The following two responses illustrate the motivations and impact of this generational transition.

***PC Edward, Large/City:** Yes. I mean fundamental changes have taken place. After 2000, new officers were recruited that were a bit more savvy with what the real world is like. And the recruitment strategy at the time was to recruit people from a diverse background. So what the police service is seeing now is that older officers who joined in the 70s and 80s are being culled off, and the younger generations, who have a little bit more understanding and tolerance, are beginning to filter through.*

***Sergeant Emma, Small/Rural:** They are getting less and less every year. And what you find as well is that the balance is tipping. I would suggest officers with about my length of service, about fourteen years, are the pivotal balancing point – where it still wasn't acceptable to be gay, but it was more acceptable than it ever had been previously – and we are like the tipping point. So a lot of officers from my length of service onwards aren't interested whether you are gay or straight or whatever. And the older officers, the dinosaurs as we call them, are falling by the*

wayside every year. And as there becomes less of them, they become more tolerant if that makes sense. So it's a bit of a waiting game as well, waiting for these older officers to retire to get rid of some of the old-fashioned views.

This insight highlights the temporal nature of police cultures and reform efforts, a factor which fuels some of the insecurities experienced by LGB police officers today – that police organisations are often temporally premature in retreating from reform efforts and investment. This perspective is developed further in the final section of this chapter.

4.3 Resistance to the New Order: Exploring Occupational-Cultural Realities

Despite considerable improvements in their workplace environments, my research identified that “*pockets*” of resistance – towards LGB officers specifically as well as the policing diversity agenda more broadly – are still evident amongst the dominant rank and file. This section of my discussion is tasked with identifying and exploring the nature, rationale and consequences of this resistance.

Again utilising the framework of Chan (1996), I argue that, collectively, this resistance represents the habitus of policing – the historical and cultural knowledge of the organisation and its members which persuasively impacts the interpretation, application and acceptance of policing rules (established by the ‘field’). Bourdieu (2001) acknowledged that ‘field’ and ‘habitus’ are never identical as the cultural knowledge of habitus works on the basis of the premises established in the previous state. Accordingly, I argue that the following resistance discussed by my participants represents a lag between pre- and post-Macpherson cultural dispositions within the policing habitus. This confirms the continued existence, although considerably diluted, of a police occupational culture and the corresponding attempts of a policing minority to protect and sustain their once dominant and celebrated informal cultural identity (Breakwell, 1986).

Importantly, this resistance disrupts and threatens the fulfilment of the aforementioned relational psychological contract between LGB officers and their police constabularies

(Millward and Hopkins, 1998), limiting the extent to which LGB officers feel protected by their employers and therefore their associated willingness to disclose and utilise the unique skill set that derives from their sexual orientation and associated histories is negatively impacted.

4.3.1 Continued Dominance of Masculinity

In 1985, Smith and Gray published a classic text which introduced the concept of the ‘cult of masculinity’ to debates on police occupational culture. Their research highlighted the centrality of masculinity to the police identity and mission and the subsequent subordination of those who failed to live up to these masculinist ideals (Smith and Gray, 1985). Almost thirty years later, after much critique and reform attention, LGB police officers within this research believed that the cult of masculinity is still alive and well in post-Macpherson policing.

Despite a move towards more service-oriented policing philosophies, masculinity as a central component of the police identity continues to be promoted on the rationale that police work is violent, confrontational, and requires individuals with the physical and mental ability and willingness to embrace this occupational reality. In this vein, Loftus (2007, p. 187) observed the emergence of a symbolic separation amongst dominant rank and file between constructions of ‘real police work’ and the ‘bullshit tea and sympathy’ requirements of the more service-led necessities of the job. Similarly, my research identified that the modern test of a “*good police officer*” is often not one that excels in the aforementioned ‘soft policing’ skills, but one who can default and live up to the machismo requirement of the ‘crime-fighter’ at a moment’s notice.

Sergeant Steve, Mid-size: You need to be a certain type of person to join the police. If you get called to an incident, you can’t be afraid of physical confrontation, you can’t be afraid of asserting yourself because clearly that is what police officers have to do more often than not. At the end of the day, on any given shift we might deal with some anti-social behaviour, an old

lady who is partially sighted and needs help, some community patrolling, but then if we get a call to say that there is a mass fight outside a pub you have to be able to get in there and sort things out, even if it means getting a bit rough and ready.

It is those officers who satisfy and demonstrate these masculine requirements, regardless of sexual orientation and gender, that have the title of “good police officer” bestowed upon them and who are accepted by their professional peers. Those who failed to demonstrate these standards were deemed unfit for the realities of police work, were denied the protections afforded by the police occupational culture, and were more likely to be a target of prejudice, discrimination and professional ridicule. As discussed in chapter two, Skolnick (2008) compared the occupational culture of policing as akin to the bonds of friendship and family. Particularly, he highlighted the obligation of officers to back each other up and follow each other into violent and dangerous situations. As such, the reality of rejection from this fraternal bond is significant – even life-threatening – and one that LGB officers are mindful of.

***PC Edward, Large/City:** Not being accepted in the police is not just about then being called names and having to sit by yourself in the canteen. It's about knowing that when you press the emergency button on your radio on a busy Saturday night, when you're getting your head kicked in by a load of drunken yobs, that your colleagues will put themselves in danger to come and drag you out. If you're not accepted and someone else has pressed their button down the next street, they are going to help them, not you. So in reality the consequences of not fitting in could be death. That's a sobering thought.*

As a consequence, LGB officers in contemporary climates felt burdened by the need to gain acceptance by their colleagues. Therefore, many admitted to ‘doing’ masculinity at some point in their career – uncomfortably and after much subjective debate – by making

a conscious and premeditated effort to conform. This performance of masculinity is reflected in the following account.

PC Roman, Large/City: I am always happier doing the more caring parts of the job. I hate the heavy-handed public order stuff which has to be done, so on the occasions that I have to do it, it becomes a sort of psychological challenge. And when I look back, I know that I always overcompensate in terms of being extra macho in order to fit in.

In this regard, mirroring the findings of Burke (1994), participants highlighted that it is those LGB officers who perform effeminacy, especially gay men, who commonly experience turbulent workplace experiences and professional isolation. In this vein, many of my female participants acknowledged that the career experiences of their gay and bisexual male counterparts were often more turbulent than their own and resistance was more extreme. As highlighted in chapter two, this is due to the direct threat that male effeminacy poses to the heterosexual integrity of male officers (Burke, 1994). What distinguishes the current situation from that found by Burke, however, is that today it is acceptable to be an LGB police officer in policing, as long as you are a masculine one. Interestingly, this has given way to the “*heterosexual homosexual*”, a hybrid officer who lives and exudes a predominantly heterosexual lifestyle, save for the fact that he or she just so happens to be LGB.

This continuance of masculinity as a defining factor of the police identity was observed within the current research to be driven by four environmental factors. First, policing is an occupation made up predominantly of men – currently 74.3 per cent of all police officers (Dhani, 2012). Although this is a significantly diluted figure, Brown and Woolfenden (2011) argue that until this is reduced further, the potential benefits that minority officers bring to policing cannot be fully realised. As it stands, a male majority controls the politics of policing. Second, as Garland (2001) and Loftus (2010) observe, despite claims of change, the image and iconography of the public police has remained the same since its formal conception by Sir Robert Peel in 1829. In particular, LGB

officers discussed the bland homogeneity of the police uniform as problematic, forcing lesbian and female bisexual police officers to defeminise themselves and making it difficult for LGB officers as a whole to stand out and do things differently. Yet gay and bisexual male officers acknowledged the benefits of the uniform when psychologically preparing to 'do' masculinity as a performance, describing wearing the uniform as akin to a theatre costume. Third, the prescribed journey that new recruits take through policing was seen as counterproductive to challenging masculinity in policing. Within the two-year probationary period, new police recruits spend a small amount of time in the classroom being taught law and procedure, before being released on a long period of experiential learning within a police team, commonly a response team. As I discuss in chapter seven, these teams typically exude highly concentrated masculinist behaviour due to the type of work that they are assigned. Participants, reflecting on their own experiences of this process, believe this to be a counterproductive requirement for new recruits who are unlikely to challenge behaviour and bring about change when they are so new to the job, but are more likely to be disheartened by police work, or even finding that performances of macho masculinity becoming normalised within this period. Finally, in a similar vein to Dick and Cassell (2002), LGB officers acknowledge that policing is largely characterised by symbolism, rituals and nostalgia that reinforce and construct the traditional police occupational-cultural identity. Accordingly, participants talked of a continual subjection and dominance of police stories and "*myths*" which find origin in "*policing in the bad old days*" and which reinforce the importance of masculinity to the successful execution of police work. Shearing and Ericson (1991) in this regard, describe the police occupational culture as a 'poetic system that enables action through a trope and precedent-based logic' (p. 500). Importantly, they highlight that the art of policing is not tangibly prescribed, but rather taught through contextual narratives and stories. However, ironically, Westmarland (2001a) observes that despite the dominance of masculinity within these tales of occupational nostalgia, they are often conflated and unrepresentative of the mundane realities of most police work.

4.3.2 New Forms of Prejudice and Discrimination

Despite the aforementioned tripartite of measures which aim to eradicate prejudice and discrimination in contemporary policing, I found that they continue to persist for LGB officers, albeit rather less overtly and in a less concentrated form than was reported by Burke. Just as Clements (2008) highlighted how legislation to tackle sexism and racism has failed to completely eradicate such expressions from occurring in policing, so too have similar measures aimed at LGB discrimination and prejudice.

This punitive tripartite framework has been successful in eradicating overt expressions of homophobia and discrimination, but has motivated the emergence of new forms of these expressions that are more sophisticated, covert and difficult to detect, record and prove.

***PC Colm, Small/Rural:** Anyone with half a brain wouldn't be stupid enough to be homophobic within the police today. They know they'd lose their job or get into serious shit. What you will find though is that people are a lot cleverer about it and will make a sly comment when you are in the locker room or when you bump into each other out on patrol at 3am, or in the pub when the team goes out for a few after work. They won't do it in front of the managers or in a briefing. But how do you prove that? Most of the time you just have to let it go because trying to do something about it is more trouble than it's worth.*

This covert and developed nature of discrimination and prejudice was similarly observed by Holdaway and O'Neill (2007) in their study of BME officer's workplace experiences. They discuss how, although all police officers are now professionally obliged to accept and conform to the ethical organisational rationale for the newly established diversity policies, there is no obligation for them to translate these into their own moral code or outside behaviour or, indeed, any possibility of enforcing such translations. Accordingly, when officers do hold strong prejudices against LGB officers they "*play the game*" by presenting the illusion of conformity in formal police settings, where propensity for

detection is too high, but reverting to discriminatory behaviour in settings where managerial presence and probability of witnesses and detection is at its lowest. Ironically, this is remarkably similar to the ‘double life thesis’ put forward by (Burke, 1993, 1994), but instead represents a bigotry ‘double life’ employed by some heterosexual officers resistant to diversity and its impact on policing.

Recent experiences of covert prejudice and homophobia reported by my sample include: stereotypical and derogatory name-calling in private spaces (e.g. faggot, nancy, shit-stabber, dyke, queer); the submission of an anonymous letter to a senior officer which included a screen print of a gay male officer’s *Gaydar*¹⁴ profile detailing their disgust that such officers are allowed to work for the police; the most extreme example was a gay male officer leaving work to find that battery fluid had been poured over his car. However, these instances were rationalised by participants as “*one-off events*”, often executed and reflecting the views and protests of one individual within a station or team, and not a reflection of the views of the majority or of the organisation. This echoes the ‘bad apple’ thesis put forward by both Scarman (1981) and Bowling (1999) that the negative behaviour of a small pool of individuals can adversely impact and damage the reputation of the police as a whole.

Despite the severity of these examples, the most common example cited, and the biggest form of frustration and subjective grappling for my participants, relates to the increased use of ambiguously discriminatory humour amongst officers. As one LGB officer notes, “*sometimes someone will make a joke or a humorous comment and I’m left thinking, was that a homophobic comment aimed at me?*” The use of humour is well documented as a central component of the police occupational culture (Dick and Cassell, 2002; Holdaway, 1983; Loftus, 2007; Reiner, 2010; Skolnick, 2008). It is often described as the glue that holds teams together, a form of validation and a platform for officers to collectively process the stresses of police work (Hoyle, 1998). Waddington (1999) notes how police officers often use quite dark humour that might be seen as inappropriate and insensitive by the outsider looking in, but that such humour is a form of cathartic release

¹⁴ Gaydar is a dating and social media website for gay men.

for officers rather than an indication that an officer is racist, sexist or homophobic. This is a viewpoint that was acknowledged by participants.

***PC Max, Large/City:** We banter in our team all the time. I take it in the spirit that it's been intended. And I like it, because it's a form of validation. In this job, people take the piss out of you when they like you.*

***PC Roman, Large/City:** And you know, it shouldn't matter what is said, you're just having a bit of banter. At the moment, my sergeant is an ex-TSG officer and they are all real manly men, but he makes loads of jokes and laughs at me, and he gets involved when I do the same.*

***PC Andrew, Mid-size:** To do the job we do, there has to be humour because that's how you keep yourself level. So I think unless you see the humour in elements of yourself, then you are going to walk into all sorts of trouble.*

***PC Edward, Large/City:** I remember a few months ago we attended a really horrendous incident, lots of deaths, blood and things like that. We'd been there for hours and by the end everyone was really glum. As we were packing up, our senior said over the radio to a lesbian PC on our team, "get the teas in you slag". And it was funny, although it shouldn't be, it was, and it was taken that way, and everyone laughed, she laughed, she got the teas in, but she knew it was just meant in jest.*

Yet, despite acknowledging the benefits and rewards of humour in police settings, my participants consistently reported personal struggles with establishing a level of tolerance, and the point at which "[a] line is crossed" and the joke turns into, or is driven by, prejudice and/or homophobia.

Inspector Maria, Mid-size: In terms of interaction with colleagues, I have never received anything more than banter. The thing with banter though is that it can always cross a line, but where that line is varies from person to person. It can vary from friendly piss-taking to something more cynical.

PC Max, Large/City: I've noticed that there is a tendency recently for some people to say something racist, homophobic or non-PC, but then to follow it with a cackle of laughter and a friendly tap on the back to the person who it was directed at to imply that they didn't mean what they said. Like that will make it ok.

Kehily and Nayak (1997) explore the dynamics of humour as an expression of homophobia between schoolboys. They argue that humour is a technique utilised for the regulation of masculinities and for the negotiation of gendered hierarchies and dominant/subordinate positioning. Thus, a growing use of homophobic humour in policing could be explained as another indirect way of officers resisting challenges to heteronormative and masculinist cultural norms in policing, as well as covertly expressing individual prejudices.

As well as the continuation of individual prejudices, my research also found the persistence, albeit less common, of formal discrimination within police constabularies. This rests on an understanding of organisational discrimination occurring when individual prejudices impact the nature and application of formal organisational structures and rules (Ward, 2008; Jones and Williams, 2013) – the latter does not exist without the former.

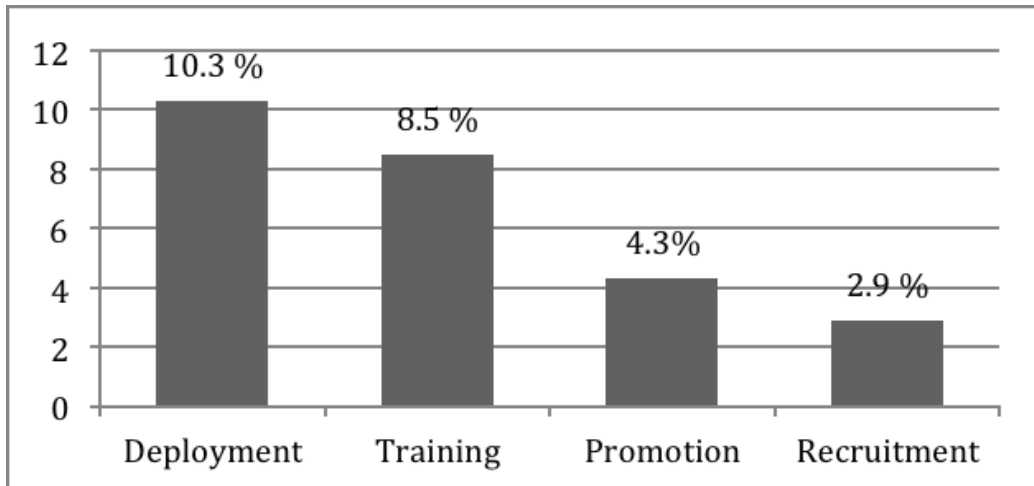


Figure 4.1: Experienced Discrimination: Breakdown by Policing Area [Yes/No Binary]

Within the quantitative data set, 17.4 per cent of LGB officers reported experiencing discrimination by their police employer due to their sexual orientation. Figure 4.1 breaks down the reported discrimination further illustrating that it is most prevalent in deployment processes, followed by training, promotion and recruitment. In Jones and Williams (2013), we provide a detailed examination of those most likely to experience discrimination in training, deployment and promotion using the same data set. In brief, we found that in terms of training, several groups of officers were more likely to suffer discrimination: those in smaller constabularies compared to those in larger constabularies (by over three times); plainclothes officers compared to uniformed officers (by over four times); gay men compared to gay women and lesbians (by nearly three times), those 'out' at work compared to those who were not 'out' (by nearly ten times), and BME LGB officers compared to white LGB officers (by over ten times). In terms of deployment, we found the following groups were more likely to report discrimination: those in larger constabularies compared to those in medium constabularies (by nearly three times), those of higher rank compared to those of lower rank, gay men compared to gay women and bisexuals (by two times), and BME LGB officers compared to white LGB officers (by over six times). In terms of promotion, the following groups were more likely to report discrimination: those of higher rank (around twice as likely) and gay men (around nine times as likely). We also estimated multiple discrimination (suffering more than one type of discrimination) and found that those in

larger constabularies compared to those in medium constabularies, gay men compared to gay women and bisexuals, and BME LGB officers compared to white LGB officers, were significantly more likely to suffer two or more types of discrimination (for ease of reference see appendix six for a reproduction of the results tables from Jones and Williams, 2013). These trends were also echoed within the qualitative accounts of participants.

***Matt:** So your career aims and the level that you'd like to reach is something that you think about a lot?*

***DCI Wayne, Large/City:** It used to be. Interestingly, I recently went to a promotion board, which I passed, but I was the only member out of the group of five who passed who wasn't put forward by a borough commander.*

***Matt:** Why?*

***DCI Wayne, Large/City:** Well, without a doubt, it was homophobia. My borough commander is extremely religious; he goes to Bible classes, he meets with his vicar a few times a week so he is very religious. He claims he is a diversity champion and claims to treat everybody the same, but I don't see that in his day-to-day actions.*

***Matt:** And did you experience any direct homophobia from him?*

***DCI Wayne, Large/City:** No, he's much too clever to do anything so openly. However, he'll do other things; for example, he'll give me all of the shit jobs, and he'll make the smallest things I do a big issue where usually he wouldn't bat an eyelid. He'll then bring this up in a meeting and say that I'm not being very effective and efficient, so that everybody knows. He's very clever about the way he goes about it.*

Colvin (2008), when exploring the workplace experiences of LGB police officers in the USA, observed that discrimination commonly occurs where supervisory discretion is greatest. This is further developed by Holdaway and O'Neill (2007) who discuss how

the implementation of policy ‘begs the use of discretion, allowing officers to mould good practice to a particular context or discriminate negatively’ (p. 408). It therefore followed that it is in areas of operational policing, where supervisory discretion continues, that LGB officers face, and continue to experience, direct negative discriminatory treatment. This was reflected in figure 4.1, which illustrates how, for those LGB officers who reported discrimination in my national survey, it had most commonly occurred in deployment and training processes.

Despite the evidence of prejudice, homophobia and direct discrimination, participants demonstrated a high tolerance of such behaviour and a reluctance to draw upon newly introduced punitive measures to seek recourse, only using these formal measures as a last resort. For example, within the quantitative sample less than a quarter (24 per cent) of those who had experienced discrimination formally reported it. When explored qualitatively amongst participants, this was due to: (i) personally challenging or having a quiet word with the author of such behaviour which was usually sufficient to prevent reoccurrence; (ii) a belief that reporting this behaviour could hamper the LGB officer’s personal integration and acceptance into working teams; and (iii) a wider acceptance that whilst homophobia persists in society, some expressions of resistance are going to be inevitable in the workplace.

***Matt:** And how do you deal with it when people are bordering on the homophobic?*

***PC Sian, Small/Rural:** I think they just didn’t think about what they were saying. And I think that had I challenged it, they would have been mortified so I just let it go or when everyone else has left the room I have a quiet word. In my mind, they just hadn’t engaged their brain with their mouth and they didn’t realise it was offensive. And in some respects, if you start challenging things it can make your life really difficult, just because of the nature of the job.*

***Matt:** But what about your feelings and embarrassment?*

***PC Sian, Small/Rural:** I don’t think about that. But you know, let’s be real about this, gay people experience discrimination in most*

walks of life, that's just a reality. And when I joined the police I knew what I was letting myself into which is why I didn't come out for so many years. I am just thankful that in the most part we are now accepted. You just get the odd bigot, which I can deal with.

4.3.3 It's not me, it's you! Wider Resentment and Anxieties Expressed by the Policing Majority

As well as discussing deviant resistance targeted specifically at LGB officers, participants also acknowledged and discussed perceived tensions and anxieties and resentments amongst rank and file colleagues pertaining to post-Macpherson diversity reform efforts more generally. Although relating to the rank and file majority, knowledge of these anxieties and manifestations of this resentment from their colleagues had directly and indirectly impacted the conduct, disclosure and professional interactions of these LGB officers at work. Specifically, three main anxieties and resentments were discussed.

First, the previously discussed creation of punitive measures to combat discrimination and prejudices, which also include provisions relating to gender, ethnicity and other diversity strands, as well as sexuality, was seen to have created a psychological burden for white, male heterosexual officers who now fear saying or doing something that might cause offence, subject them to a professional standards investigation, or even result in them losing their job. As a consequence, a climate of political correctness had been observed in some areas of policing where colleagues have become overly mindful of their conduct around LGB and other minority officers, resulting in insincere and insecure professional interactions and friendships for these minority officers. As one participant reflects:

Sergeant Yvonne, Small/Rural: *But now everybody is absolutely terrified about saying the wrong thing. But then you have the situation where someone says the wrong thing because they are trying so hard not to say it. It's kind of like in their mind they are thinking they can't mention me being gay, then I do something and*

they call me a poof – then they are like ‘oh shit I said they were gay’ [laughs].

Matt: *And what is the consequence of that?*

Sergeant Yvonne, Small/Rural: *I find myself questioning what people say to me, you know, did they mean that or are they just blowing hot smoke up my arse because they have to? Especially when you know someone is career-hungry and after promotion, they have to be seen toeing the party line. Those people are obviously playing the game.*

Matt: *How does it make you feel when you suspect that?*

Sergeant Yvonne, Small/Rural: *Like shit to be honest. It makes it hard to know who is a friend and who is just being false. But I appreciate it must be tough for my colleagues who are genuine as well, having to process everything they say before they say it. Policing is stressful enough without all that shit to consider.*

Similarly, participants recalled growing hypersensitivities and overzealous initiation of punitive procedures by middle-ranking officers in situations where potential discriminatory behaviour is suspected, when in fact they are harmless expressions of colleague banter, humour and camaraderie. Because of this, some participants felt that some of their colleagues had become apprehensive of including minority officers in forms of harmless workplace banter, posing a threat to the synergy of LGB officers with their team members and wider colleagues.

PC Max, Large/City: *One thing I do notice now though is that people always jump to too many conclusions. You know, one time I left my email open on my computer, I thought I had shut it down, but I was in a rush and hadn't. This is when I was uniformed on response. Then someone on my team sent an email from my account to everyone with lots of rubbish in it and at the end it said, “and from now on my name will be Shirley”. So then I got called into the office by an inspector and three or four sergeants asking if I wanted*

them to launch an investigation into this incident. But I was like, “no”; I just saw it as, because they know I am gay, they had jumped to the conclusion that it was a hate incident. But it was the fact that they called me in that made me feel really uncomfortable. They were like, “we see it as this...” and I was like, “well I don’t ... I just see it as I didn’t log off properly and someone has played a practical joke on me.

This hypersensitivity was rationalised as a consequence of a continued lack of effective training and understanding by middle management on how to deal with reports or occurrences of diversity violations (as per HMIC, 2003; Home Office, 2005; Morris, 2004) combined with an aforementioned preoccupation by the police post-Macpherson to micromanage and contain risks to the organisation’s reputation.

Finally, growing dissidence amongst members of the rank and file who see the diversity reform agenda as a direct attack and devaluation of the policing majority was discussed. Similarly, Loftus (2008) identified growing resentment amongst the rank and file in regard to the marginalisation of white advantage, factions between white male officers and minority officers, promotional and development anger, and the branding of reform efforts as excessive and unwanted. Chan (2007) considers such views as indicators of workplace stress for the policing majority who have seen their workplace practices directly criticised and transformed as a consequence of the diversity agenda and are struggling to acclimatise to these new workplace practices. The following extract is an example of such anxiety observed by LGB officers, the focus of which I explore further in chapter six.

DS Richard, Large/City: *Positive discrimination and the fact that we have the GPA and our own local group causes so much anxiety with the organisation. It actually creates divides between staff, which seems counterproductive to me. But you know what, I understand that.*

Matt: *How does that anxiety show itself?*

DS Richard, Large/City: There are lots of digs and sly comments. The other day, someone said that he was going to put on his promotion application that he is a black, one-legged lesbian so that he gets the job. It was a joke, but we all knew there is more to it. I've even had serious conversations with straight friends in the job who have said that they have ticked the gay box on the monitoring form, just because they know it will get them shortlisted. That's a turnaround, straights pretending they are gay in the police. That's what it's come to!

4.4 Commitment Issues? Wavering Confidence in Diversity Futures

In this third and final substantive section of this chapter, I explore the growing anxieties and concerns expressed by my LGB officer participants in regard to the longevity of post-Macpherson diversity reform efforts, investment and protections. Collectively, these anxieties and concerns pose further threat to the fulfilment of a relational contract between LGB officers and their police employers, due to an overarching concern that architects of the new policing 'field' are beginning to see organisational diversity reform in policing as complete, when in fact it is seen as far from complete in the minds of LGB officers. With the memory of "*policing in the bad old days*" fresh in the minds of LGB police officers, changing priorities and the uncertain future of policing fuel the real possibility of policing defaulting into a pre-Macpherson era. Consequently, some LGB officers are becoming reluctant to disclose their sexual orientation at work and embrace the policy rationale for their inclusion, due to doubts over the longevity of workplace protections. Thus, resting on concerns that 'incomplete revolutions can easily escape notice' (Sklansky, 2006, p. 1242), the main anxieties and concerns expressed by LGB officers were threefold.

First, participants highlighted the fallibility of policing reflected in cycles of reform and organisation investment in policing that have been historically observed to be reactive to media coverage and public criticism of the police, rather than a long-term, proactive, evidence-based strategy. This reflects claims by Neyroud and Beckley (2003) that

policing has come to be driven by 'events' rather than proactive agendas. Thus, despite diversity being vogue in policing since Macpherson, the recurring question amongst LGB officers is, 'how long will this last?' In this regard, one respondent compared his young son's attention deficit disorder to policing priorities: "*they start focusing on one thing, it becomes a priority, and before you know it the priority has changed to something completely different*". Reiner (2010) acknowledges that such knee-jerk reactionary police priorities are a consequence of the politicisation of policing since the 1970s, as well as the growing number of stakeholders that police decision-makers have to satisfy. Because of this, police reform agendas are perceived as unpredictable, time-sensitive and similarly to Beck's (1992) conception of the risk society as a 'catastrophic society', police reform can be conceptualised as a catastrophic reform, with LGB officers left insecure as to when the next policing catastrophe will occur and move the direction of police efforts away from diversity.

***PC Angela, Large/City:** Well, LGB officers became the flavour of the month because of some very nasty things that happened. Undoubtedly, the GPA helping out after the bombings in Soho was where the conception of having LGBT liaison officers came from – having gay officers there to communicate with the gay community. When you think about it, the concept is a no-brainer; you would want to have someone dealing with you who you can relate to. So that certainly changed things. The Jody Dobrowski incident was a real eye-opener because people thought things had improved, but that was a big slap in the face and a 'you need to try harder'. I think the murder of Stephen Lawrence and the Macpherson report was the ultimate kick up the bum and told us that we had to change. The job is a bit of a laborious creature which takes a long time to change so Macpherson did actually allow these changes to come about a lot more quickly than they probably would have done. But the challenge is if something isn't flavour of the month in policing then it gets the money taken away from it. So where it is no longer a big issue, when you take*

away the resources it suddenly becomes a big problem again. And you know, I've started to see diversity losing its favour; when I was a full-time LGBT liaison officer there were five of us but I don't think there are any full-time LGBT liaison officers now. And that's because the focus has changed and it's changed onto other things. And it's sad to say, but it'll probably take another nutter to plant a nail bomb in a gay pub somewhere, and then they'll start throwing money at it again. And that's wrong. It needs to be consistent.

Second, and related, the threat and consequences of current government austerity measures were a concern for LGB officers, specifically the impact that 20 per cent cuts will have on the diversity agenda in policing (HMIC, 2003, 2011). Emerging literature in this regard highlights the real threat that austerity poses to existing and continued improvements in the working environments of minority police personnel (Bailey et al., 2012; J. Brown and Woolfenden, 2011; Brown and Bear, 2012). Reiner (2011) more generally argues that policing cuts will inevitably lead to retaliation from the aforementioned 'soft' areas of policing – of which diversity reform has been central – back towards traditional masculine crime control models which contemporary reform efforts have attempted to dilute. These concerns have recently become more real for LGB officers with the Home Office announcing the withdrawal of funding for all diversity support associations from 1 April 2012 fuelled by the rationale that it is time for 'new ideas' (Clemence, 2011). Further, LGB officers expressed concerns regarding recent recruitment freezes as a consequence of cuts, and the threats that this continued freeze poses to the organisational improvements achieved as a consequence of the modernisation agenda.

PC Andrew, Mid-size: *Well, force-wide, we are in an environment where there are massive financial cuts and there is a freeze on recruitment. In my own [constabulary] it was the Minorities Recruitment Officer post that was recently cut. So, unless they keep their fingers on the pulse in terms of keeping in*

touch with communities – because there wouldn't have been any adverts in gay publications or literature for several years advertising police recruitment – when it comes around to them needing them, most people will have forgotten the old adverts and there will be the need to start again because it would have been so long. The momentum of recent years would have been lost. So, unless they keep their fingers on the pulse, without these specialist diversity roles because they have been cut, there might be difficulties in recruiting people from diverse communities in the future. But we have raised this issue and they have said that officers in HR now have a broad remit of which one is embracing diversity and connecting with diverse communities. But I suppose it is a difficult one because how do you maintain the profile of the [constabulary] when we are not recruiting?

Finally, ambiguities and uncertainties were evident in regard to the uncertain role diversity will play within what Nick Herbert, the previous Conservative policing minister, described as 'a new era for policing' (Herbert, 2011). Since coming to power in 2010, the coalition government has set itself on a radical, yet somewhat muted, police reform agenda that represents a *volte face* in the way government thinks about and regulates the police (Loader, 2014). Specifically, LGB officers expressed concerns over the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) through the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. Radically transforming police accountability structures, the role of the PCC is to hold their chief constable to account for the performance of the police within their constabulary's remit. They also hold the authority to determine a constabulary's budget and operational priorities (Lister and Rowe, 2014; Lister, 2013). Yet, what was unclear at the time of this research, and continues to be so as personally witnessed during my recent attendance at an event attended by several newly elected PCCs, is the remit and influence PCCs have over diversity issues and whether they see

diversity as a police priority today¹⁵. Similarly, concerns were raised about the current reviews of pay and conditions of police officers more generally¹⁶ and the impact that anticipated, and subsequently realised, reductions in basic police pay and pensions might have on the calibre of police recruits as a consequence.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explored the working environment faced by LGB police officers today and have highlighted the importance of workplace climate to the successful translation of contemporary diversity policy rhetoric into operational reality.

A central hurdle to this translation has been the centrality and persuasiveness of a police occupational culture; an informal set of beliefs and ideologies that have historically underpinned the professional conduct and behaviour of the policing rank and file. It was subscription to and manifestation of this occupational-cultural syllabus that was seen to fuel racist, sexist and homophobic police behaviour that was widely criticised at the end of the twentieth century. Accordingly, the turn of the millennium saw a change in policing priorities, initiating a transformative reform agenda that placed diversity and workforce modernisation at its core. However, given the fraught histories between the police and issues of LGB diversity, I argue that the success of these reform efforts, and the solution to the disclosure conundrum amongst LGB officers, rested on the ability of constabularies to renegotiate the psychological contract between themselves and their minority staff which the current research suggests they have taken positive strides in achieving.

In direct contrast to previous research, I have found that LGB police officers today experience a largely positive workplace climate giving rise to claims that utilising diversity as an agent of change in policing has been largely successful. An overwhelming

¹⁵ This was a concern recently raised by Lord Stevens in his Independent Police Commission Report investigating the future of policing (Stevens, 2013)

¹⁶ When this research was being conducted, Sir Tom Winsor had been commissioned by the Home Secretary to review the pay and conditions of police officers in England and Wales. He reported his findings including several controversial recommendations in March 2011.

majority reported high levels of occupational satisfaction, empowerment, synergy with colleagues across the organisation, disclosure of their sexual orientation at work and a genuine belief that they bring something different, worthwhile and appreciable to the modern police family. As one participant noted, *“this has been the closest I have ever seen to the police getting it right, and providing that diverse working environment where it doesn’t matter what you are”*.

I identified and discussed that this upgrade from *“policing in the bad old days”* to *“policing today”* has been brought about by a portfolio of internal efforts, specifically the establishment of new policing priorities and philosophies, investment in resources and initiatives to increase the representation, protections and development of LGB staff, and the commitment of senior officers to make the diversity reform agenda a success. These efforts signal the establishment of a new and distinct organisational police culture. However, as a reminder that policing is a socially prescribed institution, the improvement in workplace climates for LGB officers cannot be attributed to internal police efforts alone. A wider social revolution relating to the treatment and acceptance of LGB individuals (Weeks, 2007), the introduction of protective and anti-discrimination workplace legislation, and the emergence of a new *“diversity-savvy”* and educated hybrid new police recruit have all contributed to the considerable dilution of negative occupational-cultural behaviour that had once blighted the experiences of LGB officers. As a combined consequence of this new policing ‘field’, the generational equilibrium in policing has now been tipped, with those who demonstrate prejudice and discriminatory behaviour towards the inclusion of LGB officers within the policing ranks now finding themselves in an organisational minority.

Despite this predominantly improved workplace climate, I identified that some LGB officers still continue to experience *“pockets”* of resistance, prejudice and discrimination, representing continued hurdles for LGB officers in the workplace today which limits the complete fulfilment of a relational psychological contract between constabularies and their LGB staff due to inabilities and failures to fully eradicate such behaviour. These include, despite the development of ‘soft’ areas of policing, the continuance of hegemonic masculinity as a defining characteristic of the police identity and the

emergence of covert forms of prejudice and negative discrimination. These, I argue, represent attempts from a small number of the dominant rank and file to protect and resist challenges to their historically embedded occupational identity and culture, but may also be symptomatic of a time lag between the newly established organisational culture and the occupational norms established by the policing ‘habitus’.

As well as traditional third party resistance, this chapter has also identified several insecurities and doubts amongst LGB officers themselves relating to the longevity of newly improved and inclusive policing environments. Specifically, I outlined concerns about the reactive nature of police reforms and organisational investment; the feared demise of diversity investment as a consequence of austerity; and ambiguities around the role of diversity within the emerging reform agenda of the new coalition government. These concerns remind us again of the socially constructed realities, competing interests and sensitivities of policing that impact on the workplace securities and engagement of minority staff. It is this continued resistance and anxiety and the failure to fully achieve a relational contract between LGB officers and police constabularies that gives rise to claims that the police reform agenda is not, and should not be seen as, complete.

In this core chapter, I present and discuss those complex environmental foundations on which more nuanced debates around the occupational experiences of LGB police officers are developed later in the thesis. In the next chapter, for example, I explore how the contemporary workplace climate faced by LGB officers impacts the negotiation and development of their LGB identity, both in terms of the process of ‘coming out’ at work and the development of professional networks and friendships.

Chapter Five

Modelling Workplace Identities: Negotiating the Risk of Professional Stigma within Contemporary Policing Contexts

5.1 Introduction

This second of my empirical chapters is concerned with how my participants manage their LGB identities within the parameters of contemporary police workplace settings. As outlined in chapter two, twenty years ago LGB officers were conflicted by two antithetical identities; being an LGB individual and being a police officer. Burke (1994) argued that this conflict was underpinned by a fear of professional stigma linked to dominant masculinist police ideals underpinning behaviour and attitudes, stereotypical associations of homosexuality with effeminacy, and the consequential professional discrediting of those who were even suspected of being homosexual. As a consequence, Burke's data revealed 'the pursuit of carefully negotiated double lives in a great many cases, and various intricate combinations of exposure and disguise' (Burke, 1995, p. 544) by LGB officers throughout their police careers in an attempt to camouflage their sexual orientation at work and avoid the adverse professional consequences of nonconformity. Yet, despite the invisibility of sexuality providing an avenue for LGB officers to avoid detection and professional stigma, these 'combinations of exposure and disguise' have been found to be fraught with personal hazards and professional limitations such as, psychological breakdown, barriers to workplace friendships/bonds and detriment to personal relationships outside of the police (Buhrke, 1996; Burke, 1994; Leinen, 1993). However, given the positive shifts in societal and police organisational climates towards LGB individuals and professionals over the last decade as outlined in chapter four, I was keen to examine whether this complex process of identity management continues to be an occupational reality for LGB police officers in post-Macpherson police settings.

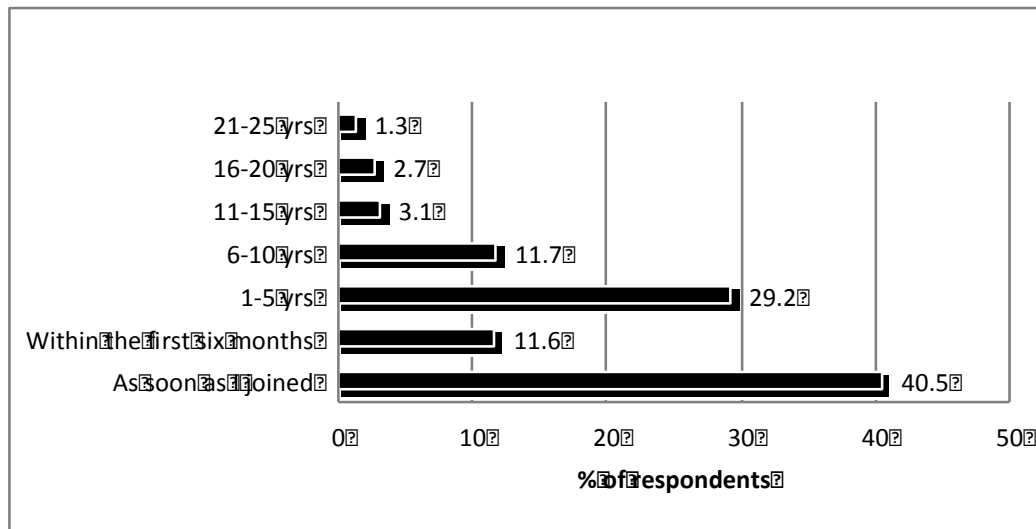


Figure 5.1: Career Period at which ‘Out’ LGB Officers Disclosed their LGB Status at Work for the First Time

Data from my national survey of LGB police officers suggests that these complexities do continue. For example, figure 5.1 shows that of the 79 per cent of those considered ‘out’ at work, 40.5 per cent disclosed their LGB status within the police from day one, with the remainder ‘coming out’ at different points over a 25-year span. In this regard, a statistically significant association was observed in the bivariate analysis, between length of service and the time taken to ‘come out’, with those in service for longer being more likely to have taken more time to ‘come out’, while those in service for a shorter period (having joined in the last ten years) being more likely to ‘come out’ quickly¹⁷. The multivariate logistic regression analysis on the dependent variable ‘out at work’ showed further statistically significant associations. Holding all other factors constant, uniformed officers and those of lower ranks were nearly three times as likely to be ‘out’ at work compared to plainclothes and higher-ranking officers. Conversely, respondents in small police constabularies were over four times as likely *not* to be ‘out’ at work compared to those in large constabularies and those reporting BME status were just over nine times as likely *not* to be out at work compared to white officers (see appendix five). As figure 5.1 only represents 79 per cent of officers, 21 per cent of those surveyed had chosen not to be ‘out’ at work at all. Consequently, my qualitative research was concerned with exploring the following questions:

¹⁷ $r_s = .587, p = .000$

1. What are the factors that characterise identity management for LGB police officers today?
2. Do all LGB police officers follow and experience the same identity management process?

This chapter is underpinned by symbolic interactionist perspectives on identity management, outlined in chapter two. Here, I explore and demonstrate how LGB identity management is neither static nor monolithic, but rather a continually evolving construct in which an individual's decision to 'come out' or not is a central and defining moment (Adams, 2010; Ward and Winstanley, 2005). I argue that LGB police identities are socially constructed, contextually sensitive, malleable and, although subjectively and intersubjectively negotiated and personal to the individual, are shaped by the perceived and actual reactions of others and the anticipated professional consequences of disclosing a potentially stigmatising personal trait in different policing 'frames' (Blumer, 1969; Goffman, 1959, 1963; Jackson and Scott, 2010). Specifically, I utilise contemporary insight from Clair et al. (2005) who consider and transpose Goffman's conception of 'stigma' and associated identity strategies as a form of professional risk assessment amongst LGB individuals in organisations whose identities are shaped by an intersubjective evaluation of anticipated 'career related costs' that disclosing their actual LGB social identity in the workplace might bring.

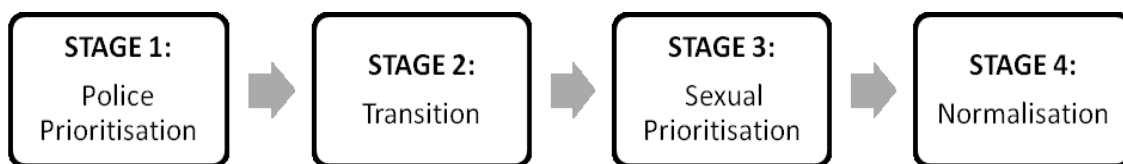


Figure 5.2: Burke's (1995) Career Model of Identity Formation

I have structured this chapter into two parts. In the first (5.2), I consider the interactionist position that LGB identity management is a 'process' involving agency on behalf of the individual but is fashioned by external, socio-environmental factors. For this, I use Burke's (1995) idea that LGB identity management can be seen as a 'model' (see figure

5.2) in order to put forward my own model¹⁸ of career identity formation that reflects the experiences of the majority of my participants in contemporary policing climates. In the second part of the chapter (5.3), I outline the experiences, strategies and rationales of those officers whose LGB identity management fell outside of this normative path, specifically discussing those officers who saw the anticipated ‘career related costs’ of ‘coming out’ in post-Macpherson policing climates as being minimal, as well as those who saw the costs as being too great so chose to keep their actual social identity hidden.

5.2 Modelling LGB Identity Management in the Workplace

This first part of the chapter is concerned with establishing a contemporary model of career identity management for LGB officers. I draw upon Burke’s (1995) ‘career model of identity framework’ to inform my discussion (figure 5.2), introducing more recent scholarship on LGB identity management strategies and stigma management in the workplace to put forward a six-stage model (rather than Burke’s four) of career identity management (figure 5.3).

My model is based on an understanding of stigma management in organisations involving a subjective and intersubjective risk assessment which evaluates the anticipated ‘career related costs’ (Clair et al., 2005) of disclosing an actual LGB social identity in different professional ‘frames’ – an assessment that is characterised by a cauldron of interpersonal and organisational environmental factors. As per the interactionist tradition, my model stresses the importance of ‘coming out’ in an individual’s identity management process, an action that all other ‘stages’ of the model are either preparing for or responding to. However, I argue that it is stage six, normalisation, that post-Macpherson constabularies are aiming to facilitate for their LGB staff as it is only at this stage that LGB officers are willing to draw upon and utilise their ‘workplace capital’ – a concept that I explore more in the next chapter.

¹⁸ I reiterate that I use ‘model’ not in a quantitative sense, but rather to refer to a qualitative framework.

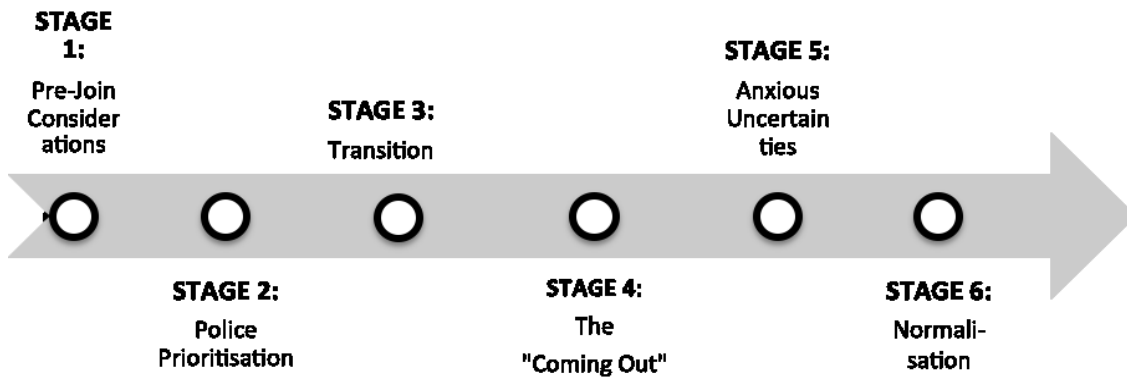


Figure 5.3: Six-Stage Career Model of Identity Formation

Before I begin, it is important to acknowledge some of the limitations inherent in using ‘models’ in social research. First, by referring to ‘stages’, some might be falsely led to believe that identity management is logical and linear. This is not the case. Each ‘stage’ that I discuss gives rise to a progressive understanding of identity management for LGB police officers but does not define a time frame or concentration of officers that are commonly situated within each of the stages. Nor does my use of such a model dictate that each stage has to be logically completed in order to achieve a successful unification of virtual and actual social identities at work. This ‘model’ is merely an analytical framework for the purpose of this thesis that has allowed me to clearly present common themes from within my qualitative data in relation to discussion of identity management in the workplace.

5.2.1 Stage 1: Pre-join Considerations

Unlike Burke (1995), whose model of career identity management began on day one of becoming a police officer, my research gives rise to an understanding of identity management for LGB police officers that begins prior to this point. In this vein, personal motivating factors to join the police and individual preconceptions of the police more generally played an important role in the subsequent management and construction of LGB police officers’ professional identities.

Reflecting Ward’s (2008, p.43) claim that navigating sexuality in the workplace is akin to

a 'second adolescence' for LGB employees, the majority of officers within this research had 'come out' to family and friends prior to joining and had therefore progressed through the majority, if not all, of Cass's (1979) six stages of homosexual identity formation, achieving unified virtual and actual social LGB identities within their private lives. Despite this, the majority of participants were keen to stress that their sexuality played no role in their motivation to become a police officer.

PC Max, Large/City: I didn't join to be gay in the police force, I joined to be a police officer, who happened to be gay and I think you'll hear similar stories; I hope so because I think that is important. I think if you're joining the job to be a gay police officer, to me personally, that doesn't sit very comfortably.

Instead, reflecting research by Raganella and White (2004), who examined whether gender and ethnicity impact applicants' joining motivations, the motivations for joining the police cited by my participants were consistent with the joining motivations of white, heterosexual male officers (see also White et al., 2010). This is despite the policy and marketing rationale by constabularies to target LGB press and community events, which I outlined in chapter two, in an attempt to increase the representation of LGB officers within the policing ranks. Instead, the following 'types' of applicants and joining motivations were observed within the current research.

1. **The Childhood Dreamers:** applicants who had always been fascinated by what the police do and had always wanted to be a police officer from as far back as they could remember. As a child, they had dressed up as police officers and had all of the police paraphernalia. By applying to join the police, they were taking steps to fulfil that childhood dream.
2. **The Excitement Chasers:** applicants who wanted to avoid a desk job and were attracted by the prospect of driving fast cars, chasing criminals and locking up the bad guys on a daily basis.

3. **The Good Samaritans:** applicants who wanted to give back to society and help people who were vulnerable and unable to help themselves. Becoming a police officer was seen as a logical way to achieve these personal motivational desires.
4. **The Sensible Seekers:** applicants who were drawn to policing because of the good salary, pension and career prospects on offer. These applicants acknowledged that policing was not a vocation, but rather the best option out of a list of careers that they had considered pursuing.
5. **The Graduates:** applicants who had completed a degree, often in a subject completely unrelated to policing (examples include music, astrophysics, chemistry), but thought that their degree would provide them with leverage to climb the ranks through the high potential development scheme offered by the police.
6. **The Dysfunctional:** applicants who felt that their lives were not going in the direction that they had hoped; in fact, they were engaging in activities that if continued would get them into trouble, for example partying, promiscuity and general excess. Applying to the police was therefore motivated by a belief that it would provide some discipline and focus and enable applicants to get *“back on the straight and narrow”*.
7. **The Drifters:** this was a term used by Raganella and White (2004) to describe those applicants who become police officers after several other different careers and roles. Within my research, drifters included those who had previously been in the military and saw applying to the police as a natural next step, and those who had tried several other careers (for example farmer, chiropodist, counsellor) but were still looking for the career that gave them a desired fulfilment.
8. **The Specials:** applicants who had been volunteer special constables for many years, alongside another full-time career, and wanted to upgrade to become a full-time police officer. These applicants were unique in that they had previous experience of policing and police environments.

The majority of these participants only started to consider the compatibility of their LGB identity with a policing career once they had been successful in the application process

and had been given a date to start their residential training period. As one participant noted, “*it was only when I got my letter to say I was in that it all suddenly became real*”. Subsequently, two factors ignited a reflexive consideration of how their LGB status might impact their chosen career. First, a large proportion of participants kept knowledge of their initial application to join the police private. However, once they had been formally offered the role and accepted it, they began a process of informing family and friends that they were soon to become a police constable. It was at this point that some of these family and friends expressed concern about them joining the police, specifically questioning the suitability of policing for someone who is LGB.

***PC Eric, Large/City:** There were certainly some questions, erm, from friends and family who perhaps had a negative view of the police, and couldn't comprehend why I would want to be a police officer. They just assumed that I would have some kind of problem and wanted to make sure that I had fully considered what I was letting myself in for. I have to admit, I was quite surprised by that and didn't know how to respond. It was like they felt I needed an intervention.*

Second, having not considered how their LGB status might be problematic in their chosen career until this point, the intervening period was characterised by further research into the validity of these objections. Some used the internet and others befriended people who were already police officers in pursuit of answers to the question – do LGB officers still experience problems in the police today? Interestingly, in a similar vein to Cass's (1979) second stage of homosexual identity management, respondents talked about becoming more aware and sensitive of discussions and debates relating to homosexuality and the police at this point. As one participant observed:

***PC Leanne, Small/Rural:** You know what, when I applied to join I didn't even think that my sexuality might cause me problems. But with only weeks to go until I started my training there were stories on the news about police racism, sexism, homophobia and every*

other bloody ism. There were even storylines about gay cops on the telly. It was crazy. I felt like I was going mad.

By the end of the pre-join stage, with day one of initial police training imminent, participants reported conflicting information and a personal uncertainty about how they should broach the issue of their sexuality with their new colleagues. Yet, by this point most anticipated that the inherent conservatism and masculinity of policing was unlikely to embrace LGB recruits who chose to boldly flaunt their sexuality at work from day one.

5.2.2 Stage 2: Police Prioritisation

On commencing their police careers, LGB officers are faced with the decision of whether or not to ‘come out’ from day one or, alternatively, to conceal their LGB status, if only for a short while, whilst they conduct their own risk evaluation of police values and attitudes towards homosexuality and the likely ‘career related costs’ that disclosure might bring.

Accordingly, throughout the initial stages of police training, the majority of my participants did not disclose their LGB status, but instead immersed themselves in the stresses and demands of the initial police learning and development programme (IPLDP), the intensity of which was seen to prevent any real reflexive consideration of LGB identity management. Burke (1995, p. 545) described this period as the stage of an LGB police officer’s career that is ‘totally eclipsed by the authority of the police training establishment, the thrill of joining the profession and the overwhelming motivation of the recruit to succeed during a lengthy period of probation’. Similarly, the decision of participants in this research not to disclose their LGB status at this stage in post-Macpherson police settings was personally legitimised by two distinct rationales. First, the initial fifteen weeks of often residential training was described as a period of such intensity that the mere thought of disclosure, or even a subjective risk assessment of policing environments to inform future disclosure decisions, was made redundant. As one participant noted:

PC Adele, Large/City: Yes. Well, at training school it was irrelevant anyway. You spend your first fifteen weeks at training school. You are just all bundled together in a small college and the most important thing that is on your mind is passing your exams and fitness test. If you don't get through that then the rest doesn't matter, you'd be gone.

Sexuality was not completely void from participants' minds during this initial period, however the prescribed time frame of this initial training period (i.e. fifteen weeks – however, this changes between constabularies and accordingly to different policy climates) helped them to psychologically prepare to get through this period of non-disclosure. Further, a realisation that they were unlikely to work with the people in their training groups after the initial fifteen weeks allowed for emotional detachment and reduced any feeling of professional betrayal or emotional guilt by not disclosing their true social LGB identity at this stage. As one participant said, *“during training I just got my head down, I didn't get too attached to the people in my group and just kept on saying to myself ‘just get through these fifteen weeks’”*.

Second, after this initial training period, new recruits are assigned to an operational team to complete the remainder of their two-year probationary period under the watchful eye of a tutor constable. It is at this point that officers described being exposed to the ‘habitus’ of policing outlined in chapter four (e.g. the myths of *“policing in the good old days”* and ingredients of the police occupational culture). By this point, the rationale for non-disclosure changed from *“just get through these fifteen weeks”* to first prove that you are a *“good police officer”*. What is problematic with this rationale is that the criteria for being a *“good police officer”* were often based on a syllabus of behaviour underpinned by elements of the police occupational culture that LGB officers were being recruited to dilute and eradicate. Nonetheless, this change in rationale – similarly observed in international research into LGB police officers (Colvin, 2008; Pratt and Tuffin, 1996) – was fuelled by a perceived fear amongst participants that by ‘coming out’ they would not be seen as competent police officers by colleagues, would be labelled and typecast *“the gay officer”*, and would subsequently be refused membership of the fraternal bonds of

‘the team’ from the outset. This was similarly observed by Rumens and Kerfoot (2009) who found that LGB individuals in these new climates of social and professional acceptance still face the challenge of negotiating heteronormative workplace frameworks which have traditionally discredited LGB employees, so that they can be seen as *bona fide* ‘professionals’ by their colleagues. Thus, by proving their ability to satisfy the criteria of being a “*good police officer*” first, participants felt that they were reducing the propensity for this discrediting taking place.

PC Mike, Large/City: Yes, definitely. I think it's the type of job that you have to prove your worth anyway. But I did feel a little extra pressure, that I had to really prove myself, so that people couldn't speak and couldn't say that I couldn't do the job because I was gay. I don't mean fighting or anything like that, because that's not the type of person that I am and I wouldn't try to prove myself that way anyway. But I just got on with it and got stuck in really; trying to do everything I did to the best of my ability. I didn't feel any pressure to be macho or anything like that but I did want to make sure that I proved myself in all the different aspects of the job, so that people could see that I was trying, that I was a good officer, and so that there couldn't be any criticisms when I did eventually decide to come out.

However, as highlighted by Ward and Winstanley (2005), those who choose not to disclose their sexuality at work for any length of time burden themselves with the need to manage, juggle and perform a conflicting and discreditable virtual social identity (Goffman, 1959, 1963). Within this research, the nature and maintenance of a virtual social identity was facilitated by two forms of what Clair et al. (2005) call ‘passing techniques’ (which appear to amalgamate Goffman’s differentiation between ‘passing’ and ‘covering’).

1. **Concealment:** where LGB officers actively prevent colleagues from learning about their actual social LGB identity. This was the most common technique cited by

participants, referred to by one as the “*pronoun game*” – never referring to gender or identifiable traits when talking about her private life. By pursuing this option, participants psychologically and morally legitimised it as a route that does not involve professional deception, but rather embraced and used the heteronormative default that exists within policing to their advantage.

2. **Fabrication:** where LGB officers deliberately provide false information to colleagues in order to construct a fabricated, non-stigmatised, virtual social identity. Where this occurred, it involved participants explicitly saying to colleagues that they had a heterosexual partner of the opposite sex and inventing fictitious scenarios about their personal life in order to create the false illusion of heterosexuality.
3. **Discretion:** where LGB officers distance themselves from any potential interactions and environments that would require the disclosure of personal information. This is akin to the strategy discussed above in regard to the fifteen-week training period, where the reality of not working with training colleagues in the future facilitated personal detachment and non-disclosure. This will be discussed further in the second half of this chapter.

By ‘passing’ and not disclosing their actual social LGB identity at this stage, some participants witnessed first-hand a rare insight into the mindset, values and behaviour of their dominant rank and file colleagues when in informal settings. As their colleagues had subscribed to their virtual social identities at this point, they assumed that they were heterosexual and some engaged in conversations and behaviour, expressing some negative views towards diversity reform efforts and homosexuality more generally, that participants felt would not have been expressed if they had known there was an LGB officer present. This is akin to Waddington's (1999) Goffman-esque (1959) differentiation between the ‘front’ and ‘backstage’ of police behaviour; the former referring to police officers’ public behaviour that adheres to the formality of police organisational culture and standards, the latter being unofficial sub-cultural behaviour between officers that manifests out of view from the public and senior officers. This rare opportunity to view colleagues’ behaviour through a heterosexual lens, especially when observing negative attitudes and behaviour towards other LGB officers at this point, significantly influenced the aforementioned reflexive risk assessment of participants

when considering disclosure. Accordingly, where negative behaviour was witnessed first-hand by participants during this period, the ‘career related costs’ of disclosure were deemed to be too high due to a perception that homosexuality continued to be stigmatised in post-Macpherson policing climates and that disclosure might cause professional detriment.

5.2.3 Stage 3: *Transition*

At this stage, LGB officers had begun to question the longevity of managing two conflicting identities at work. They had been consumed by ‘police prioritisation’ for at least one year, during which they had become an integrated member of their assigned team and had started to form emotionally invested workplace friendships. Significantly, they had experienced, and had begun to process, the police occupational culture and had come to see that negative views towards the inclusion of LGB officers in policing are often that of a weakening minority.

Moreover, by this stage officers reported feeling psychologically restricted and frustrated by their decision not to have ‘come out’ at work earlier, causing them to subjectively debate and consider (a) the personal and professional consequences of sustaining their virtual social identity performances at work, and (b) the possibility of disclosing their actual social LGB identity. Particularly at this point, the anticipated ‘work related costs’ of not ‘coming out’ at work had shifted to the consequences of betraying workplace friendships, being perceived as a professional deviant and “*liar*” by colleagues, as well as a wider personal concern for psychological stability. These were important considerations for participants and as such will be discussed in more detail below.

The most commonly discussed concern by participants at this stage of their identity management related to fears about professional integrity. This was connected to a significant concern that colleagues would interpret their decision not to disclose their actual social LGB identity from the outset as a form of professional misconduct. This fear of being labelled a professional “*fraud*” as a consequence of a period of non-disclosure is well documented as a common anxiety for LGB employees in other professions

(DeJordy, 2008; King et al., 2008; Ward, 2008). However, the nature and mission of police work was seen to further intensify these anxieties for LGB officers.

***Sergeant Steve, Mid-size:** The fact that I was misleading colleagues used to play on my mind a lot – that’s not what police officers are supposed to do. I was very aware that I had two lives – my private life and my work life. A big thing in the police is trust and integrity. We deal with people on a daily basis that lie to us about what they have done and our job is to be able to identify and disprove these lies so that we can lock them away. What stands us apart from those people is that we don’t lie and we are completely transparent. The worst thing any police officer can do is be dishonest. You become an instant leper. My concern was that people would think, “well he lied about his sexuality for all this time, what else has he been lying about?”*

A second and related concern expressed by participants at this stage, was that the management of two conflicting identities limited the extent to which they were able to commit to and develop workplace friendships. This was explored by Woods and Lucas (1993) who found that the preoccupation with maintaining a dual identity at work hindered the development of workplace friendships from ‘co-worker’ to ‘friend’ amongst gay professionals in the USA. This was further investigated by DeJordy (2008) who argued that the maintenance of a alternative ‘performed’ identity at work is counterproductive because, despite the emergence of such friendships on the grounds of common interests and special proximity, long term, relationships are limited to the extent that core identity characteristics remain hidden. These are concerns that were echoed by officers in my research.

***Sergeant Jennifer, Mid-size:** Well, it’s always a challenge. It adds stresses and strains. And policing can be tricky as it is. And all that ethos around being a “team” but you end up slightly separating yourself, inevitably. If you’re not out, you’re not able to talk about*

your weekend at home, what you did when you were on holiday or why you might be in a bad mood when you start your shift that day. Instead, I act as a sounding board for my straight colleagues and their lives, but I didn't respond or compare their experiences with anything specific from mine. That starts to get you down after a while.

A final overarching concern at this stage related to the personal stress and psychological burden of continually managing a conflicting identity at work. In this regard, Ward (2007), in his discussion of the 'workplace closet', highlighted the constant pressure, stress and isolation that 'passing' places on an LGB employee. DeJordy (2008) and King et al. (2008) identify that long term this leads to (i) cognitive dissonance where actions contradict personal values and beliefs, and (ii) inhibited self-actualisation – the reduction of authenticity which leads to the undermining of self-esteem at work and an increased propensity for ego depletion. Consequently, reflecting Burke (1995), participants reported feeling unmotivated, isolated and plagued by workplace paranoia at this stage of their identity development.

DCI Phillip, Mid-size: *I think that the stress comes from not talking about it or knowing what other people are thinking. You are thinking what do people know or talk about you that you don't know about, which is not very positive for you and potentially damaging. And whilst you don't know, you suspect that that stuff is going on but you pick up on stuff, and in terms of your self-confidence and ego, it isn't very good. It makes you very self-conscious and paranoid.*

Sergeant Paul, Mid-size: *I got to a point where I was walking into the canteen, a group of people would be laughing and I was thinking, "oh god, they know about me". It was completely irrational because they weren't talking about me at all. You just lose it. It was when I got to that point that I thought enough is enough, this can't go on.*

5.2.4 Stage 4: The ‘Coming Out’

Faced with the growing anxieties outlined above, participants reached a point where voluntarily disclosing their actual social LGB identity, by ‘coming out’ to colleagues, became a logical remedy. As identified by my national survey however (see figure 5.1), reaching this stage can take months, years or even decades for LGB officers to get to. This is because the process of ‘coming out’ is acknowledged as one of the most important decisions taken by LGB employees and also one of the most stressful that they will have to make in their careers (King et al., 2008; Ward and Winstanley, 2005). In fact, as previously identified in chapter two, the decision to ‘come out’ is unique and an added burden for LGB employees as it is one that many others within organisations do not have to take (Ward, 2008).

To ‘come out’ is central to interactionist conceptualisation of sexuality as a negotiated ‘process’ requiring a performative act that discloses the actual social LGB identity of an individual that they previously camouflaged (Adams, 2010; Plummer, 1996). Despite the apparent linear simplicity of this performance, in reality the process is complex and fraught with subjective and intersubjective considerations of when, where, how and who best to disclose this ‘discreditable’ information to in the workplace (Ward and Winstanley, 2005; Weeks, 2003).

Against this backdrop of complexity, my participants discussed three different ‘coming out’ strategies. First, and by far the most commonly utilised, was a strategy that I label ‘controlled selective disclosure’. Those who fell into this category describe policing environments as ones that “*thrive on rumours and speculation*” and feared that by disclosing their LGB status at work, they would become the subject of workplace gossip. They also feared that rather than being known for their efforts during the previous ‘police prioritisation’ stage – where LGB officers made considerable effort to prove themselves as a “*good police officer*” – instead rumours would default into, and construct them as, LGB stereotypes. In order to overcome this, and to retain some control over the process of disclosure, these LGB officers reported only disclosing to selective colleagues with

whom they had formed quality workplace friendships and with whom they had worked in close proximity. It was these relationships that were most important for LGB officers to protect, in order to minimise the risk of damage.

***Sergeant Oliver, Large/City:** I think a big thing for me was being able to control the message. You know, for me, it goes back to this – if people gossip between themselves, they'll fall back on these stereotypical views about gay people, rather than looking at me and formulating views about me as an individual. Although, I do realise that by assuming that, I am being harsh on a lot of people ... and I [know] that most people that I know in the police will probably be fine about it. It's just, I have nagging doubts, not about prejudice or discrimination or anything like that, but about how other people will talk about me.*

***DCI Sean, Large/City:** I never told anybody. I would never have come in and announced it. It was always on a need-to-know basis. It's only after a while, and there's only so many times you can be asked if you're married, and it goes on and on and on, and after a while I may open up about my situation. And that's how I deal with it today; if somebody asked me if I am married I will just say no. But if I have a longer working relationship with that person, then I might start to open up after a while and confide in them.*

By confining knowledge of their actual social LGB identity to a close circle of colleagues, and by 'coming out' to them individually, these LGB officers were able to 'frame' the process of 'coming out' strategically (Woods and Lucas, 1993) often by choosing a location and time where they were least likely to be interrupted and where potential adverse reactions could be managed (either a location outside work or when alone in a police car on a night shift). Yet beyond preparation, the actual act of disclosure was continually described by respondents as one of the most nerve-wracking experiences of their career.

PC Adam, Small/Rural: *Working in the police is quite intense anyway, just because of the nature of the experiences that you have with people. And I think that shifts develop close bonds as a result of that intense environment. The dramatic nature of the events that you have to go to can crystallise the relationships. So there was certainly a couple of people that I got close to that I wanted to tell and I didn't feel comfortable with them not knowing.*

Matt: *What was it like when you did come out to them?*

PC Adam, Small/Rural: *Well, once I decided I wanted to do it, it took me about six weeks of building myself up until I eventually told my best friend in the job. We were in the pub one night after work and he could see that I was getting worked up about something – my hand was literally shaking when I was holding my pint. He kept on asking if I was ok, and then I eventually said something like, “I’ve got something I really need to tell you but I don’t want you to freak out”.*

Matt: *What happened then?*

PC Adam, Small/Rural: *He said, “if it’s that you’re gay, it’s ok, I’m fine about it”. Apparently, he had guessed months ago and was just waiting for me to tell him. I couldn’t believe it. All that stress about telling him and he already knew.*

The next two ‘coming out’ strategies discussed by my participants are closely linked in that they were driven by a personal desire not to perform the act of ‘coming out’ themselves. Individual factors including the psychological strength of individuals to navigate one-to-one disclosure techniques and defend possible adverse reactions have been found to shape ‘coming out’ strategies (Clair et al., 2005). In both of these ‘coming out’ tactics, my participants did not feel emotionally competent to manage this stressful process themselves so instead relied on the actions of third parties to convey and infer their LGB status for them.

The first strategy I refer to as ‘disclosure by gossip mill’. Simply put, utilising the above-mentioned tendency of policing environments to “*thrive on rumours and speculation*”, LGB officers identified a potential gossipmonger amongst their colleagues, ‘came out’ to them, and relied on the likelihood of that person conveying the news throughout the constabulary. This was a strategy employed by Mike:

PC Mike, Large/City: So when I went onto shift, I told one of the girls that I was working closely with, and then she naturally told other people on the team. But I was happy for that to happen because I wanted everyone to know. I feel quite awkward when I have to tell people individually so I am happy to tell one person and for them to spread the word (laugh). So now a lot of people at work know that I’m gay, but they have never felt the need to discuss it with me. Now I talk about my partner and my boyfriend, and they ask questions about him even though I have never had to tell them directly to their faces that I am gay.

Next, ‘disclosure by implication’ was discussed whereby colleagues of participants became aware of their sexual orientation by inference from their participation in certain LGB events and activities. Ward (2008) discusses this strategy in relation to a gay fireman who ‘came out’ by participating in a Mr Gay UK competition wearing his firefighter’s uniform, and then being interviewed on the local news when he won. Although not directly ‘coming out’ to colleagues, the firefighter was aware that this would be seen by his colleagues and did nothing to prevent it. Within the current research, two similar occurrences were discussed, both in reference to participation in gay pride events. Reflecting my quantitative data (i.e. that those officers with longer service were more likely to have taken longer to ‘come out’), this was a route pursued by more senior-ranking participants who had not felt able to ‘come out’ at the beginning of their careers due to police hostilities towards homosexuality at the time, but had started to consider the possibility of disclose in new, LGB-friendly post-Macpherson climates. Here, despite previously being married to a woman and having a child, Peter discusses

how participating in a gay pride event in uniform made colleagues aware of his sexuality which he welcomed because he never thought he would be able to ‘come out’ voluntarily.

***DCI Peter, Mid-size:** Well, unless you are one of the chief officers, the only reason why you are going is because you are gay. I suppose there was two reasons why I did it; one, I had never done anything explicitly around acknowledging my sexuality, whether in the police or not, apart from going to a few gay bars, but second, in terms of the police, it was an opportunity which I thought might start a journey that maybe I can’t control. And I knew that there was probably going to be photos of me marching in my force’s newsletter, which freaked me out at first. But you know what? It’s done; people can think what they want.*

***Matt:** So how did it feel once you had done the march?*

***DCI Peter, Mid-size:** Really, really good. Mainly for the fact that I had actually made myself do it, but also because it was a really positive experience. I also came across another Inspector that I knew but didn’t know was gay, so we had a bit of a chat and what not. So yes, it was a really positive day.*

This insight collectively illustrates the complex and heterogeneous experiences that characterise ‘coming out’ at work for LGB police officers. However, what unites these accounts is that my participants report an immediate post facto feeling of liberation and ease of the psychological burden, experienced once the initial act of ‘coming out’ was complete.

5.2.5 Stage 5: Anxious Uncertainties

Despite ‘coming out’ being an illocutionary speech act, it is also perlocutionary with the reactions of the audience and impact of the act being just as important an ingredient, if not more so, than the isolated episode of ‘coming out’ itself (Austin, 1975; Ward, 2008). So, despite reports of consistently positive and supportive responses from colleagues at

the time of the initial performative disclosure, an important yet anxious stage in identity management for LGB officers in this research – which was overlooked by Burke (1995) – was the initial weeks and months after ‘coming out’ where hypersensitivities about being treated differently by colleagues and the aforementioned professional fears associated with discrediting their previously built virtual identity were rife. In this regard, there were three common occurrences outlined by my participants.

In the first instance, a period of professional disorientation was described, as colleagues reconfigured and processed the consequences of a significant change in the knowledge foundations and dynamics of their professional friendships and interactions. As one participant noted:

Inspector Tom, Large/City: It was always going to be strange at first. I moved from being straight Tom, one of the lads, to no, actually, I'm gay Tom. It was like we had to get to know each other from scratch again. But there was no certainty that they would like gay Tom, or would want to return to the same level of friendship with me. That was the time that really bothered me.

Additionally, reflecting my discussion in chapter four about the growth of political correctness as a consequence of the police diversity agenda, some participants at this point frustratingly noticed changes in ways that colleagues included (or excluded) them within workplace banter and humour, or when talking about diversity issues. Post ‘coming out’ silence was the focus of a paper by Ward and Winstanley (2003) within which they explain such silence as being predominantly a fear amongst heterosexual colleagues of offending, but also a fear of finding out too much (in relation to sexual and intimate details which would make them feel personally uncomfortable). Additionally, with the introduction of a tripartite structure of punitive measures to combat organisational discrimination and prejudice (outlined in chapter four), such silence was rationalised by participants as a likely fear amongst colleagues that if they were to say anything that caused offence, they might be professionally reprimanded. The following text is an example of such a silence as discussed by Jay.

***PC Jay, Large/City:** Well, everyone knew. But it was a bit of a nightmare though. But in an opposite way to what most people would say. I came out when I was coming to the end of my probation and I remember a few weeks later I was in a little office doing some paperwork, and some of the team came in to the small tea area outside. One of the women started saying, “oh, I just dealt with two gay guys etc etc” and then all I could hear was, “shhh, shhhhhh”, and I came out of the office and asked, “why are you shhhhing?” They were just so worried about offending me that they went to the opposite end of the spectrum.*

After this initial period of altered behaviour, which many said they challenged directly, a move towards a period of intrigue with continual questions about LGB lifestyles and practices was observed, as colleagues attempted to learn more about their new LGB way of life. I initially discussed this in chapter four when considering the impact of increased numbers of LGB police officers in post-Macpherson policing. Reflecting research by Bowen and Blackmon (2003) and Creed and Scully (2000), who found that the ‘coming out’ process can be a powerful means of effecting wider organisational change, participants reported personal satisfaction and empowerment in engaging with this process due to its ability to change colleagues’ attitudes and behaviour around [homo]sexuality as a result.

***PC Angela, Small/Rural:** Yes, I have had a couple of positive experiences. Individuals who, because they have got to know me first, on disclosure they were very positive. They said that I smashed some of their views and stereotypes about gay people, and that I have made them rethink and reanalyse their views on sexual orientation. Particularly, I have been able to have a few in-depth discussions with straight officers which has allowed me to break down some barriers.*

DCI Peter, Mid-size: *I always think back to the guy who was my professional partner; he was an ex-squaddie from Northern Ireland. He found that I was gay after we'd been working together for quite a long time. And he admitted that he used to be very homophobic, but after working with me, it really transformed his opinions. What blew me away is that after working with me, it made him ashamed of the way that he had treated some gay men in the past. And that's very motivating and positive; the fact that you as a person have changed somebody's perception and views of what being gay is today.*

Finally, after a period of trepidation, reorientation and education, participants experienced a positive move towards their reintegration into the protective folds of their team's dynamics. This was an interesting observation in their responses as they were not concerned by reactions of people outside of their immediate team or department at this point, even if they were extreme or adverse. More important to them were the attitudes and reactions of their immediate team members, who they saw as friends, rather than colleagues prior to 'coming out'. The importance of workplace friendships and feeling protected by team dynamics is discussed by Tom.

Inspector Tom, Large/City: *Yes (laughs). And it went really well. I had the support from those few officers that I had told who were close friends. And people made their jokes and slagged me off a bit around the station. But woe betide anyone who said anything about me to members of my team, whether it be "poof" comments or gay banter, because they would stick up for me big time. I remember one member of my team saying, "leave him alone, he may be a poof but he's our poof" (laughs). So it was kind of interesting, because my team became very protective of me in their own special way. And it was all quite endearing, but also quite bizarre; the fact that it was ok for my own team to take the piss out of me, but anybody else in the station better not dare.*

As a final caveat to this stage of identity formation, beyond interactions with colleagues, participants discussed the irony of having to personally learn how to become an LGB officer for the first time. They began to engage in LGB and wider police diversity initiatives (e.g. attending gay staff association meetings, joining the GPA and/or attending gay pride and marching with colleagues in uniform); experimented with injecting personality and life experiences into their police styles (as will be discussed in the next chapter); and made efforts to avoid ‘passing’ techniques by introducing, albeit slowly, personal details of their LGB life into everyday workplace conversations.

PC Eric, Large/City: I was actually having that conversation with my partner last night. I was saying how, now that I have come out, it's kind of like I am having to relearn and reprogram. I trained myself to be a straight man, so I don't know how to react in this new environment. But because I have lived that straight life, like when you start in a new job, you see things through different lenses. It's a strange experience.

5.2.6 Stage 6: Normalisation

After a period of anxiety and stress, participants then achieved the optimal point of identity management, normalisation. Here, both the virtual and actual social identities of LGB officers unite and operate alongside each other with limited friction and minimal anticipated risk. As a consequence, participants at this stage felt connected, part of and protected by the organisation and that they had something to offer the contemporary policing mission. In sum, referring back to the discussion in chapter four, this point of identity formation is underpinned by the achievement of a relational contract between the police and the LGB officer (Millward and Hopkins, 1998). In what follows, I elaborate on some of these points and identify factors and experiences discussed by my participants that signal entry into this optimal level of the identity management journey.

First, participants talked of the psychological liberation that came with ending the need to manage the ‘front’ of two conflicting identities. In contrast, they were then able to talk freely with colleagues about aspects of their personal and professional lives on a daily basis, without the need or even a thought for selective disclosure or fear of compromising their professional integrity.

***DCI Peter, Mid-size:** Yes, hugely. There is no doubt about it. Once everyone knows, there is nothing to hide. You don’t have to live that double life. And so now, it’s just like talking about what you did at the weekend really, and life is a lot easier since people have known. And I think that being open and being yourself is a lot easier than it used to be, but people still shouldn’t underestimate how difficult it is to come out to people; it’s a very personal hurdle. But having taken it now I think, should I have done it earlier? And yes, I probably should have done.*

Second, participants acknowledged and talked about the genuine and unique contribution that they make to policing, and felt a considerably diminished need to subscribe and conform to traditional expectations of police behaviour and conduct underpinned by the informal rituals and expectations of the police occupational culture in order to be deemed a “good police officer” (these contributions will be explored further in the next chapter).

***Sergeant Emma, Small/Rural:** You get to a point where you think “bugger this, I don’t have to pretend to be a butch dyke any more”. I knew I could do the job better if I could just be myself, which I am now. And that is what I’ve really noticed recently; there isn’t that pressure for everyone to be robots like before, being different and a bit quirky is actually encouraged. So now I come in with my lipstick on, it’s the only way to stand out [laughs], and I do my job to the best of my ability. Yes they call me “Emma the lesbian” sometimes, but more often they say “that Emma is bloody good at her job”.*

Next, participants talked about their enjoyment of mutually beneficial and open workplace friendships and how personal traits and outside interests, as well as professional respect, are key to forming those friendships, rather than issues of sexuality. This resonates with research by Rumens (2007, 2010) who investigated workplace friendships between gay men and heterosexual colleagues. He found that as well as signalling acceptance for gay men, mixed sexuality friendships can also be beneficial to heterosexual colleagues as they provide them with a platform for exploring alternative viewpoints and with a valid social space where they do not feel the need to sustain the performance of machismo. Rumens (2010) was keen to stress that mixed sexuality friendships within the workplace are possible as long as all parties are reflectively competent to continually negotiate issues of gender and sexuality as they arise. The following extract is an example of positive mixed sexuality friendship groups cited by one of my respondents.

***Sergeant Steve, Mid-size:** Yes, a big thing. I have always been quite a sociable person anyway. But I thought that people wouldn't want to go out for a drink with me, that it would make them feel uncomfortable etc. But actually it was completely the opposite. I am comfortable enough now, and pretty quickly after I had come out we continued socialising together and went out drinking and that kind of thing. And actually, a few times some of the guys have said that "ok, so we always go to a straight bar, why don't we go to a gay bar?", and I remember me practically falling off my seat the first time that was suggested, but I was quite happy to do it. And it was a new experience for them and for me, and I actually think doing things like that have actually brought us together a lot more.*

A final signal that LGB officers had reached a point of normalisation in their identity development concerned their active inclusion and participation in positive aspects of the police occupational culture that characterise and underpin police work beyond some of the negative expressions of the culture that I discussed in chapter four. In particular, being subject to and involved in episodes of humour and workplace banter was a persuasive

indication of acceptance and normalisation for participants, as highlighted in the following examples.

PC Max, Large/City: *Yes, all the time. And I take it really well ... I take it in the spirit that it's been intended. And I like it, because it's a form of validation. In this job, people take the piss out of you when they like you. If there's nothing interesting or endearing about you, then you're usually just left alone. But I get a lot of flak, even though I'm supposed to be supervising these officers. You know, a few years back, they started the whole thing of calling all the guys in our team "she", which is something which is really prevalent on the gay scene. When I'm on the gay scene I don't like it that much. But at work, you've got these big burly straight men calling each other and me "she", like "no she didn't". And I just always think back of when I didn't have that banter when I first joined, and I'm glad now that I do. And now, one of my closest colleagues, a straight male officer, has even admitted after a few pints that he didn't know how to take me when I first joined, and he's being honest now by opening up and telling me that.*

PC Ian, Large/City: *On the whole, one-to-one relationships with them have been fine. There have been no real differences really, rather than the conversations I have with them are different. Although saying that, with some of my straight colleagues we now play a game called spotting when we are on patrol. They point out people that they think I will fancy and I do the same for them. They are like, "he's a looker, what do you think of him?" Probably not terribly professional, but endearing nevertheless.*

PC Colm, Small/Rural: *I do now. I didn't. Silly things, like if the Sun newspaper is in the canteen, lots of them will crowd around to perve at the page three. So then I'll just roll my eyes and say*

“whatever” (laughs); they just know that I’m not interested. But that’s not to say that they think any less of me. But equally, especially now, if there was a hunk in a magazine with half of his clothes off, I would wind them up and say, “phwoar, look at him”. It would spark some banter, but it would all be harmless.

Despite the perceived ideal of reaching this normalised level of identity management, it should be stressed that the experiences of LGB officers, like other minority officers, are never completely free from resistance or subjective considerations. This is explained by two claims put forward by Ward (2008): (i) that whilst discrimination exists within society, there will always be examples of discrimination experienced by LGB employees (as shown in chapter four); and (ii) that ‘coming out’ in organisations is a constantly repeated act as employees are constantly put into new situations where the ‘frame’ of their identity management is regularly changing. This latter point is particularly pertinent to policing, where police officers experience a wide spectrum of social spaces and interactions on a daily basis. However, what is unique at this stage of career development is that my participants did not feel burdened by these realities and were able to rationalise them as an unavoidable part of police work (and being an LGB individual more generally). Further, by this stage, they felt that they had developed a level of emotional maturity where they did not need consistent positive reassurance and acceptance from all and were instead fully accepting that some people will not like them, and that this feeling might be reciprocated.

***PC Adam, Small/Rural:** In terms of negative experiences that I have had, a few were down to heightened assumptions made on my behalf – officers who would only speak to me when necessary, who were resistant to me trying to build up a professional relationship with them, not wanting to engage in chit-chat and avoiding me wherever possible. All of these were my own perceptions because I wanted their acceptance back then. But now, I just think “bugger it”. Some people are going to take a dislike to me because of my sexuality and ignore me. But you know what? I’m kind of glad because I didn’t*

really like them either. As long as I have a core group of people who know that I am a good person and that I'm good at my job, that's all I need.

5.3 Exceptions to the Model

This part of the chapter outlines some noteworthy examples from my data of where the common path of career identity formation outlined above was not followed or was not an option for my participants. Still examples of reflexive risk management, I argue, the following examples are illustrations of how varying and conflicting environmental and individual factors can impact and disrupt common paths of identity formation in the workplace.

5.3.1 A New Generation of LGB Police Officer

As I keep reiterating, the existing literature that has empirically explored the career experiences of LGB police officers constructs the relationship between homosexuality and policing as problematic (e.g. Burke, 1994; Miller, 2003; Pratt and Tuffin, 1996). However, as a consequence of transformative political, social, legislative and professional recognition for LGB individuals (Weeks, 2007), I observed the emergence of a new demographic of LGB police officer in this research, one that discloses their actual social LGB identity at work from day one, or at least within the first few weeks of their police careers. These are part of the 'new hybrid' of police officers that I discussed in chapter four (4.2.4). My national survey of LGB police officers, for example, identified that of those who considered themselves to be 'out' at work, 40.5 per cent had been so since day one of their police careers. Related, participants who fell into this category had all been recruited in the post-Macpherson policing era, offering a possible explanation to my bivariate observations that those LGB officers with shorter service are more likely to have 'come out' more quickly compared to their more experienced colleagues. I now outline and discuss some of the rationales given by these participants for such early disclosure, which highlight the importance of police training environments in shaping LGB identity management strategies.

First, several officers in this category felt that the residential and full-time nature of the initial fifteen-week training period was not conducive to the continual psychological management of two conflicting identities. Accordingly, disclosure from day one was seen as a strategy for these officers to avoid an adverse psychological burden – observed within the literature (Burke, 1994; King et al., 2008; Leinen, 1993) – which had the potential to distract them from engaging with and successfully completing the demanding requirements of the IPLDP. Additionally, revisiting Clair et al.'s (2005) claims that identity management in the workplace rests on the psychological strength of individuals to manage the potential threat of a discreditable identity, some of those participants who fell into this category doubted their personal ability to sustain the illusion of heterosexuality for the duration of the initial residential training period. As one participant discussed:

Sergeant Mary, Small/Rural: But as I said, it was residential, I was in a class of twenty training officers, and it was intense. We were based in an old army barracks about three miles away from our HQ. We were kinda in each other's pockets and it was hard to keep things to yourself. I was on a night out, and I just couldn't deal with it any more. I just knew I couldn't go through fifteen more weeks of living so closely to people, and not being the person that I really was. It was too difficult for me.

Similarly, participants in this category talked about the importance of the initial 'introductions' session during their first day of training in shaping their decision to 'come out' on day one, after they had received a welcome talk from the Chief Constable and a general introduction to the police and its philosophies from the trainers. Those who had experienced a positive induction, and where they were convinced that diversity was an important and serious issue in their constabularies, shocked themselves by feeling the need to 'come out' and be open about their actual social LGB identity to the rest of their training cohort. In this vein, they saw the anticipated 'career related costs' of disclosing

their LGB status as minimal and that ‘coming out’ was a way of avoiding unnecessary complicated identity strategies in the future.

***PC Liam , Large/City:** I went in, and to be honest when I went in my perceptions of the job made me think I would never tell anyone, I would keep it to myself. But within hours, I could see that everyone was laid back, that any kind of racism or homophobia wouldn’t be tolerated. Like I said, I didn’t think I was going to do it at all, then we were sat in the classroom, and then for some reason, and I don’t know why because I am not usually spontaneous, I decided to just do it. They went around everyone in the class and you had to give a short spiel about yourself. So I said, “I am Liam, I have come from etc etc and I am a gay man”. I just felt that doing it that way, everyone knows at the same time and I didn’t have to go around telling different people individually. I was really nervous, but then the girl sitting next to me came out after me. Afterwards, she said she was glad that I had, because she wasn’t going to otherwise.*

Finally, reflecting the end of Jay’s conversation above, some respondents talked about the benefits of having other LGB officers in their training group as it acted as a catalyst in their decision to ‘come out’ themselves. In such situations, the potential for negativity as a consequence of disclosing their actual social LGB identity was offset and insulated by the support and potential of a shared experience. This is unique and directly contrasts Burke (1994) who found that LGB officers who did ‘come out’ at work were often the only known LGB officers within their constabulary or station, resulting in extreme professional isolation and targeted discrimination. These are factors highlighted in the following account from Colm, who found that a lesbian officer ‘coming out’ to him during training was an encouraging factor in him ‘coming out’ to the rest of his training group.

***PC Colm, Small/Rural:** I think I came out on day four actually (laughs). I distinctively remember it because I went down to the*

girl's corridor because we were all going on a night out, and one of my girlies on the course started talking about "the club" that me and her were in – so she made an assumption that I was gay. So she was coming out to me that she was a gay woman. It was quite strange because when I was a special [constable] I didn't come out at all. And I did come out in a job once, and I had a bit of a bad experience. So I was treading on eggshells in terms of whether to come out or not. But because this girl was coming out to me, I thought "bugger it", and came out to everybody in my group that night.

A further reassuring and persuasive factor in the decision to disclose at such an early career point was the availability of legislative and internal anti-discrimination provisions, as outlined in chapter four, that had not been available to previous generations of LGB officers. These measures were seen to mitigate any anticipated 'careers related costs' that had traditionally been associated with 'coming out' in the police. As such, I observed an unprecedented and refreshing empowerment amongst participants in this grouping.

Interestingly, most officers within this category noted disappointment due to a lack of surprise or shock by colleagues when they did 'come out'. After all, it is well documented that the surprise, shock and excitement expressed by the audience at a 'coming out' is highly persuasive in the perceived success of the act for those who are disclosing this discreditable personal information (Austin, 1975; Goffman, 1963; Segwick, 1991; Ward, 2008). However, rather than being seen as a negative silence – as previously discussed in relation to the work of Ward and Winstanley (2003) – these officers were reflexively aware that this was likely due to the reduced novelty of homosexuality within newly configured social and policing contexts. What was abundantly evident in my research was that early disclosure by these LGB officers was linked to subsequent expedited positive identity formation and career experiences within their constabularies.

5.3.2 The Continuation of the ‘Double Life Syndrome’

A further common assumption in the literature on interactionist workplace sexualities is that the developmental ‘process’ of identity management inevitably leads to a ‘coming out’ and the subsequent positive union of an LGB employee’s virtual and actual social identities. However, some participants in this research challenged this proposition by choosing to camouflage their LGB status for the duration of their policing careers. 21 per cent of participants in my national survey of LGB officers fell into this category. For these officers, the anticipated ‘career related costs’ associated with a continued pursuit of a discreditable virtual social identity at work were far less than the consequences of ‘coming out’ at work. Accordingly, they had never ‘come out’ to their police colleagues nor anticipated ever doing so. Reasons underpinning this mindset of my participants who fell into this category were threefold.

First, and again substantiating the previously referred to temporal observations from my survey data analysis, the majority of these officers had more than fifteen years’ police service having joined their constabularies in pre-Macpherson policing climates. As such, their initial police careers and related identity formation were situated and shaped within hostile workplace conditions for LGB officers, as outlined by Burke (1994). Accordingly, by the time that the police diversity agenda started to take effect post-Macpherson, these officers felt that they had passed the point of no return, and that the psychological burden of disclosing their LGB status to colleagues after such a long time would be too much and that it could threaten the prospects of achieving their twenty-five-year pensionable service limit.

Second, some questioned the sincerity and actual impact of post-Macpherson police diversity reform efforts. Reflecting observations from Morris (2004) and the Home Office (2005) in the initial period after diversity reform efforts had been introduced, these officers believed that contemporary police diversity initiatives lack substance and had brought about minimal change beyond organisational cosmetics. As such, the negative climate for LGB officers as described by Burke was seen to be still very much alive amongst these officers, providing them with a continued rationale to conceal their LGB

status due to a real fear of homophobia, discrimination and a lack of protection from colleagues. These sentiments are outlined in the following extract.

***Sergeant Huw, Large/City:** I am not out in the police. And my rationale for not coming out in the police is easy to sum up – canteen culture. It's very much still in existence today, as it ever was in the 70s and 80s. The only thing that they are better at is talking the talk; saying the right thing to the right people. But when the doors are closed, when you are in the canteen, or if you are in a group of the boys, people revert to their kind, and they can be quite cruel. So I am not going to put my head above the parapet, just to get it cut off. And it is not just people in the lower ranks that are hypercritical, I am also talking here of officers at SMT level, who can be injurious. But believe you and me, whether or not I do something right or wrong, if they see me as a troublemaker they will find a way of getting rid of me. And you know, I am five years away from my nice pension. So I don't want to rock the boat. I'm not going to give them any ammunition.*

A third justification for not 'coming out' rested on a passionate belief amongst some participants that a clear divide between private and work lives is logical and that discussions of sexuality, which they crudely constructed as who a person is having sex with, should not be a consideration in the workplace. This was similarly found by Rumens and Kerfoot (2009) in that within the new found climate of LGB acceptance, some LGB employees see it as 'unprofessional' to disclose and discuss issues of sexuality at work. However this differentiation is problematic, particularly as it naively confuses differentiations between 'sexuality' and 'sex'.

***Inspector Mark, Mid-size:** Well, the easy option is to dichotomise, or compartmentalise your life, because that is manageable. But what I actually like to do is to justify it by saying that my life is rounded and that not everybody comes to work and says who they have had*

in their bed the night before. So if they can get away with it then why can't I? Why can't I just turn up for work, do my work, be pleasant to people, then walk away? Why do people have to make such a big issue of sexuality? So I will not let anyone say that what I do is wrong. My life is rounded, and my sex life is what I do in the comfort of my own home, and my work life is my work life.

Finally, non-disclosure was a strategy pursued by both of the bisexual officers who took part in stage two of this research. This was because they felt that bisexuality is not understood or taken seriously in policing (or in wider society). As a consequence, they discussed examples of where heterosexual and exclusively homosexual colleagues had made stereotypical and inappropriate assumptions about bisexuality, which they had made clear they did not think was a legitimate sexual orientation. Bisexuality in the workplace was subject to a recent report and guidance by Stonewall (2009) who identified that it is often, falsely, seen by colleagues as a form of sexual indecision or 'greed', and that as a consequence, bisexual employees often feel misunderstood and marginalised. The report therefore championed the need for more effort by employers to promote bisexuality as a legitimate and equally protected sexual orientation in the workplace. As a consequence of perceived lack of understanding, both of my bisexual participants had made a decision to present the heterosexual element of their bisexuality as the dominant characteristic of their virtual social identity at work, due to the anticipated complications and stigma that revealing the non-heterosexual aspects of their actual social identity would bring.

Matt: *So why don't you feel comfortable disclosing that you are bisexual at work?*

PC Rob, Large/City: *I would just feel really uncomfortable. I think it comes down to the fact that I don't feel that being bisexual is accepted here – because I am not either, you know; I'm not 100 per cent gay nor am I 100 per cent straight. And people don't understand that. They find it harder to understand someone who is bisexual, even compared to someone who is gay, because at least they are in one*

particular category, so they understand that. But somewhere in the middle, that's where they don't understand.

In my national survey of LGB police officers, 16 per cent of respondents considered themselves to be bisexual. Initial bivariate analysis identified that these officers were concentrated in small/rural constabularies and were disproportionately concentrated in the lower ranks. Further, only 26 per cent considered themselves to be 'out' at work; only 8 per cent were members of either the GPA or their constabulary's GSN; and 61 per cent had 'concerns' about being open about their sexuality at work. However, given the small number of bisexual officers in the sample compared to lesbian and gay officers, statistical significance of bisexuality was not identified in any of the four regression models.

Of course, the pursuit of an exclusively undisclosed LGB work persona has its consequences; mainly that it allows only for a transactional relationship between these officers and their constabularies (Millward and Hopkins, 1998). Within the current research, three main consequences of pursuing this strategy were observed.

First, it was evident that these officers were psychologically detached from the mission and ethos of their constabularies, instead seeing their relationship as purely transactional. This is evident from a basic discourse analysis of Sergeant Huw's response above. In it, he clearly delineates between discussion of his own perspective as a detached singular ("I am not...") and a construction of his employer as a conflicting 'other' ("the only thing that *they* are better at"). This is further reinforced by his claim that his main concern is being able to claim his "*nice pension*" rather than taking any risks by disclosing his LGB status in order to create lasting workplace friendships, or to engage with new organisational diversity initiatives.

Second, the psychological burden of non-disclosure is not only confined to the parameters of being at work. In fact, the realities of managing a potentially discreditable identity extend beyond the workplace and can extend expectations and stresses to external relationships and friendships.

***Matt:** Do you think that not being open about your sexuality has any negative effects on you?*

***Sergeant Huw, Large/City:** Erm, no I don't think so. I certainly don't remember any. I don't think that it affected my ability. I was lucky enough to be in a relationship that was very supportive. The only consequences that I did have were in relation to my partner. I know a lot of people in my area. I have lived here for a number of years. So when I was out socially with my partner and I saw people from work who didn't know about my sexuality, I felt myself totally ignoring my partner so that I wouldn't have to introduce him which is not a nice thing to do. It's got to a point where my partner has threatened to leave me because of it.*

Third, some participants within this category acknowledged the negative consequences that pursuing this long-term path of identity management has had on their professional development and progression. One officer even discussed how staying in the lower ranks throughout her career was an active strategy to avoid potentially being “found out” by colleagues, despite a personal desire to seek promotion.

***Sergeant Sarah, Small/Rural:** Well, good luck with it. Ok ... my journey. Well, I have been an officer for 26 years and I was gay when I joined. I joined when I was 22, and it was difficult. I was in a relationship when I joined, but thankfully it was a long-distance relationship, so it didn't create that many issues for me as such. But the fear of people finding out was immense. I believe to this day now that it has had an impact on my career progression – which might be psychological really – but I felt that I have stayed in the lower ranks rather than climbing the ladder, which I wanted to do, just because I didn't want to get any exposure that might out me; it was all about people not finding out I suppose.*

The career aims of LGB officers and the impact that identity management strategies have on these aims will be further explored in the next chapter.

5.3.3 ‘Forced Out’

Finally, another common assumption when considering the identity formation of LGB employees is that they all experience a developmental crescendo leading to a voluntary ‘coming out’. However, as Ward (2008, p. 59) notes, ‘the act of coming out is not always one which is desired or intended by the individual concerned; sometimes coming out at work is forced’. Within my research, examples of ‘forced’ disclosure were discussed where LGB officers were afforded reduced autonomy over their decision to ‘come out’ at work. This denied them time to subjectively and intersubjectively negotiate and ‘frame’ the parameters of this important stage of identity formation thus creating a need for a reactive rather than proactive response to the potential discrediting of their initial decision to conceal their LGB identity. Three examples of such non-voluntary disclosure were identified and I outline these in summary to avoid revealing any identifiable information.

Participant 1: A gay male police officer. He had joined the police after several years in another career. Despite being ‘out’ in this previous career, he had not yet ‘come out’ in the police. Whilst on annual leave, a police colleague of his had attended a sporting event during which he became acquainted with a colleague from Participant 1’s old job. During a conversation, his old colleague mentioned something about Participant 1 being gay, not knowing that he was not similarly ‘out’ in his subsequent role. On learning this information, his police colleague returned to work and started to tell people that Participant 1 was gay. On the latter’s return to work after leave, he was shocked to learn that people were aware that he was gay and that he was the subject of gossip.

Participant 2: A lesbian police officer. When she joined the police, she was married to a man but subsequently entered into a relationship with a woman after her divorce. She decided not to ‘come out’ at work and used her previous marriage and divorce as a smokescreen. When her ex-husband, who was also a police officer, found out by hacking

into her private email account that she was in a relationship with a woman, he sent her letters threatening to tell everyone at work that she was a “big dyke”.

Participant 3: A gay male police officer of senior rank. Several years ago, when he was married with children, he was involved in investigating a high profile hate crime. Several years on, the IPCC launched an investigation into his conduct during this investigation due to a public complaint. Since the investigation, he had gone through a divorce from his wife and had started a relationship with a married man. He feared that, although not relevant at the time, he should disclose this new information to the investigating panel and his employer as it might be publically revealed as part of the new investigation.

These three examples illustrate the multiple forms that a “forced coming out” can take; one (Participant 1) shows how the naming of someone as LGB can occur ‘in absentia’ (Butler, 1993); another (Participant 2) shows how the motivations for naming can be driven by malice with the desire to cause professional detriment; finally, as discussed previously, issues of sexuality and related decisions to conceal or disclose are informally linked to personal assessments of professional integrity and conduct (Participant 3). However, what unites these examples is the high concentration of stress that was placed upon these officers when the possibility of non-voluntary disclosure arose, often further intensified as the source of this knowledge and duress is from another emotionally- and stress-laden event; and the immediacy of response required by the LGB officers in question in order to mitigate possible negative impacts that sudden and contradictory knowledge of their actual social LGB identity might have had on close professional friendships and team members, as well as their professional integrity and reputation. As Participant 1 discussed:

So when I came back, he told me what had happened so I went and spoke to some of the people that I was closest to at work, those I had the closest relationships with, and told them. But I made a particular point of who I chose; it wasn't like an open exposure. It was just me saying to people that I respected, that I wanted them to know, and that I didn't want them to find out through gossip, because I

respected them too much. And you know, they didn't say anything, because it wasn't something that was going to affect my work performance. And you know, I think that I am very well regarded in terms of how I do my job, so it wasn't a big issue for them. And since then it hasn't caused me any problems.

After these events, these officers described a period of insecurity and heightened emotional reflection – an extended period of ‘anxious uncertainties’ (as discussed previously in this chapter). However, the lack of personal development and progression in the lead up to ‘coming out’ made these officers feel like they had to work doubly hard afterwards to rebuild what they saw as damaged reputations. This is in contrast to voluntary disclosure (discussed at the beginning of this chapter) where those officers are able to ‘prove themselves’ as good police officers prior to ‘coming out’ in order to insulate anticipated reactions from colleagues. Nevertheless, after this extended period, these LGB officers reported achieving identity ‘normalisation’, where their LGB and policing identities positively united without subsequent recourse. Some even expressed gratitude for being forced out, as they doubted whether they would have ever disclosed their LGB status at work otherwise.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored whether or not the new workplace climate for LGB police officers, outlined in chapter four, has given rise to new forms of identity management strategies for these officers.

I have shown that despite positive environmental change, fear of anticipated ‘career related costs’ associated with the perceived consequence of being LGB in the police is still common amongst LGB officers. This gives rise, in the main, to a complex developmental ‘process’ of identity development based on an assessment of these ‘career related costs’ in different policing ‘frames’. I found that this process of reflexive risk management is one that is often initiated prior to joining the police and can subsequently

characterise the career experiences of LGB officers for a substantial portion of their police careers. Thus, a central contribution of this chapter has been to highlight and better understand what amounts to an additional psychological burden that is placed upon LGB officers on top of the normative demands of police work.

In direct contrast to previous research in this area (Burke, 1995; Miller, 2003; Pratt and Tuffin, 1996), I have shown in this chapter that the majority of LGB police officers in my sample achieved, albeit eventually, positive identity formation where their private LGB and professional police identities exist alongside each other openly without resistance. This specifically contradicts research by Burke (1994, 1995) in which the construction of LGB identities in policing settings was seen as problematic, forcing the majority to pursue a psychologically damaging strategy of heterosexual performance which resulted in such officers leading a ‘double life’. This is not to say that the pursuit of two conflicting identities is no longer a reality for LGB officers today. In fact, 21 per cent of LGB officers responding to my national survey actively choose not to ‘come out’ at work.

When considered as a whole, the chapter has highlighted a complex mixture of LGB identity management strategies that concurrently exist for LGB officers in constabularies across England and Wales. Thus, in order to fully understand and effectively integrate their LGB officers into the modern police family, senior police stakeholders need to fully comprehend these identity nuances and implement an evidence-based policy rationale that offers malleability to accommodate these varying – and in some cases conflicting – intricacies. This is a prerequisite for achieving a relational contract between police constabularies and their LGB police officers – an aim which I argued in chapter four is a central objective of the post-Macpherson workforce modernisation agenda.

It is evident that a central requirement for LGB officers in the development of their workplace identities today is reassurance. Unlike prior research, this is not reassurance that they will not be formally discriminated against because of their sexual orientation per se; the tripartite portfolio of anti-discrimination measures outlined in chapter four has established mechanisms to address this. Instead, it is a reassurance that they will not be

seen and treated differently by colleagues once they disclose their actual social LGB identity. In this regard, naming can be seen as a persuasive tool in policing, with a fear that being branded a “*gay police officer*” is somewhat inferior to being merely a “*police officer*” (this will be further explored in chapter six). Similarly, this chapter has also highlighted how the management of LGB identities in post-Macpherson policing is closely linked to issues of professional integrity, team integration and workplace friendships.

Positively, this chapter has identified a new demographic of police officer, one that discloses their actual social LGB identity at work from the outset. Often new in service, these LGB officers are joining when post-Macpherson reform efforts are starting to impact police practice and mindsets and therefore they experience minimal resistance as the novelty of recruiting LGB police officers into the ranks starts to wear off and is instead normalised. It is these officers that experienced the most efficient path to a positive unity of their actual social LGB identity and professional police identity and subsequently report the richest concentration of job satisfaction – void of the aforementioned psychological burden and extended developmental process. Yet, within their accounts, the importance of reassurance and framing of diversity as an important organisational priority was seen as a key facilitator in their decision to ‘come out’ from the outset; accounts and recommendations which should be considered in future policy and practice directions.

Chapter Six

Translating Policy into Practice? Evaluating Officers' Perceptions of LGB Organisational Initiatives

6.1 Introduction

In chapter two, I highlighted how post-Macpherson policing was characterised by a new policy mission, one that championed the potential that a new diversity-centred organisational mindset could bring to the public police of England and Wales. Central to this was the aim that workforce modernisation and the active recruitment of minority officers would repair and rebuild legitimacy between the police and hard to reach groups; bring a unique skill set to police work; strengthen leadership across the ranks; and encourage constabularies to start thinking innovatively about police work (ACPO, 2005, 2010; HMIC, 2003; Home Office, 2004; Jones and Newburn, 2001). However, a criticism of that new policy direction is a lack of an evidence-based foundation. Instead, it was built on a portfolio of desirable 'possibilities' that outlined the benefits of 'diversity' as a whole, but failed to delineate the inclusive complexities and contributions of officers from each of the separate diversity strands. Subsequently, a plethora of empirical projects have set about remedying these evidential shortcomings in the development of policy by exploring the experiences, support mechanisms and contributions of BME and women police officers. However, as I have repeatedly highlighted throughout this thesis, similar research exploring these factors in relation to LGB police officers has, until now, failed to emerge.

Accordingly, this chapter has a direct policy focus as it is driven by following three central questions that aim to evaluate diversity policy claims and provide nuanced understandings relating to the organisational inclusion of LGB officers in post-Macpherson policing.

- What, if any, are the unique contributions made by LGB police officers?
- How effective are current promotion and development frameworks for increasing the representation of LGB police officers in across-the-rank structures?

- How effective are the internal police associations that represent LGB officers?

Given the broad remit of these questions, there are three distinct parts within this chapter, each of which is framed by its own contextual literature, discussion and argument. What unites these parts, however, is that they are, severally and collectively, a unique contribution to knowledge, as research that drills down into each of these questions relating to LGB police officers does not currently exist. Therefore, in what follows, I present each of these parts before reflecting on the chapter as a whole and establishing some concluding thoughts.

6.2 Unique Contributions: What do LGB Officers Bring to Policing?

In this first part of the chapter, I examine what Clements (2008, p. 72) refers to as the ‘business case’ for diversity in policing. Specifically, I explore what, if any, unique contributions LGB police officers make to contemporary police work. As discussed previously, only twenty years ago LGB individuals were professionally discredited as police officers – fuelled by stereotypical associations between homosexuality and effeminacy that were seen to directly oppose the masculinist criteria required to become a competent police officer. In contrast, post-Macpherson policing has seen considerable investment by the police in order to actively increase the representation of LGB police officers in constabularies.

Similar professional discredit was also experienced by women and BME police officers, whose gender and ethnicity were once seen to prevent them from successfully fulfilling the requirements of a warranted police role (Holdaway, 2009; Westmarland, 2001a). However, post-Macpherson, growing empirical work in these areas has transformed such views, providing nuanced examples of how both women and BME officers make unique and valued contributions to the policing mission.

This new found inclusivity and acceptance of minority police officers has increasingly been afforded to the disruption of predominantly coercive and reactionary policing

models – where the police only interact with the public when, as classically referred to by Bittner (1974, p.249), ‘something-is-happening-that-ought-not-to-be-happening-and-about-which-someone-had-better-do-something-now’ – towards an alternative reassurance and proactive policing philosophy that favours ‘a visible presence of authority, persuasion, negotiation and community interaction’ (Innes, 2005, p. 157). Some authors analytically differentiate these styles as ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ policing (Innes, 2005; Loftus, 2009; McCarthy, 2013) – the former being associated with traditional masculinist ‘crime fighting’ policing that has been attributed to traditional police occupational-cultural values, whereas the latter has been described as a recent move towards an ‘ethics of care’ in policing (Brown and Heidensohn, 2000, p. 98). Research exploring relationships between gender and policing has increasingly identified the suitability and growing contributions made by women officers to these new ‘soft’ policing practices (Brown and Heidensohn, 2000; McCarthy, 2013; Rabe-Hemp, 2008), namely that they bring greater empathy, communication skills and fewer forceful behaviour traits. Yet, although it is often assumed that LGB officers bring a similar skill set, their contributions have until now remained empirically unexplored. In this vein, a key aim within this research project was to seek answers to the question, what is it that LGB officers contribute to policing today?

I argue in this section that the ‘business case’ rationale for the inclusion of LGB officers in post-Macpherson policing is linked to wider sociological and organisational perspectives around the commodification of identities. As discussed in chapter two, there has been a conceptual shift in organisations from seeing the worker as an ‘automaton’ to a person with subjective and intersubjective characteristics that can be ‘monetized’ (Williams and Vaughan, forthcoming). McDowell (1997), for example, in her study of professional workers in the service industries, observed that the marketing of personal attributes, including sexuality, as part of the product being marketed has become a common practice. Adkins (2000, p. 214) suggests that this is because employers are increasingly seeing LGB identities as a new form of ‘workplace capital’ that has particular commercial benefits, especially to those organisations that are trying to market themselves to, or build connections with, LGB communities. This, as argued by Bunting

(2004), is due to the ability of workers to strike up an enhanced rapport with customers based on their shared identity – described as ‘emotional empathy’. Accordingly, in this section I explain how the personal histories, membership of a minority social group and the subjective/intersubjective negotiation of identity discussed in the previous chapter equip LGB police officers with a broad skill set that allows them to make valued and enhanced contributions to relationships and cooperation between the police and LGB communities; to offer alternative solutions and enhance traditional ‘hard’ policing; and to facilitate organisational change, cultural reform and innovation. However, I also highlight how these potential contributions are not assured, but rest on LGB officers feeling comfortable in disclosing their social LGB identity in workplace settings. In this vein, I argue that the invisibility of sexuality and the option of performing an alternative virtual social identity when the anticipated ‘career related costs’ of disclosure are deemed too high (Clair et al., 2005), pose a direct threat to the ‘business case’ of LGB police officers in policing being realised.

When initially asked if their sexual orientation allowed them to make a unique contribution to policing, almost all participants in this research responded with a definite “no”, resonating the ‘I’m just a police officer who happens to be gay’ mindset observed in chapter four. However, surprisingly without prompting, participants then reflexively deconstructed this response and subsequently presented a detailed collection of ‘but...’s’ which amount to a portfolio of distinctive perceived contributions¹⁹. I have themed the contributions discussed into three sections and will now present them in turn.

6.2.1 Policing LGB Communities

Logically, and substantiating policy rhetoric (ACPO, 2005; HMIC, 2003; Home Office, 2004), my participants saw that the greatest benefit their sexuality affords to their role as a police officer is when policing LGB communities. In my national survey sample, 47 per

¹⁹ As discussed in chapter three, the discussion presented in this thesis is based on data collected from the sole perspective of LGB officers. As such, in this instance, it should be highlighted that these perceived contributions are just that, personal perceptions, which have not been triangulated with perspectives from other players in these environments (e.g. the colleagues, managers or members of the public with whom these LGB officers interact).

cent reported being involved with policing the LGB community regularly or occasionally. Of these, 70 per cent disclosed their own LGB identity always or sometimes, with only 22 per cent never disclosing. Over a third (35.8 per cent) reported that their LGB identity definitely helps with dealing with these communities while half (50.2 per cent) said that it sometimes helped. The regression analysis showed that only those officers in a committed same-sex relationship were significantly more likely to disclose their LGB status to the public in the course of their police duties (see appendix five).

As discussed in chapter two, relationships between the police and LGB communities have been historically fraught. Indeed, research has highlighted a lack of confidence amongst LGB communities towards the police and their investigative efficacy relating to LGB-related crime – impacting the willingness of LGB individuals to report crimes and to disclose their sexual orientation when engaging with policing processes and initiatives (Mason and Plamer, 1996; NAGS, 1999; Stonewall, 2008). However, my participants felt that investment in and an increased visibility of LGB officers in policing since the turn of the millennium had improved trust and confidence between the two parties, facilitated by a tailored ‘soft’ operational skill set that LGB police officers bring to the policing of these communities today. Three different aspects of this ‘skill set’ are now explored.

1. Responding to and Supporting LGB Victims and Witnesses: reflecting the transformation of LGB victims of crime from ‘bad’ to ‘good’ in recent years which I outlined in chapter two (Moran, 2012), my participants discussed examples from their operational experiences where LGB victims and witnesses were visibly more at ease, comfortable and willing to engage with them because they had been assigned a police officer who was of the same sexual orientation. This links to Bunting’s (2004) discussion of ‘emotional empathy’ and the ability of minority employees to build an enhanced rapport with customers based on shared identities. In this regard, LGB officers described how they are often able to respond more compassionately to LGB victims and witnesses, compared to their heterosexual colleagues, because of their own understanding of how they are feeling as a result of their personal experiences of prejudice and discrimination. This equipped these officers with an emotional empathy that allows them to provide a

personalised service, by drawing upon some of their own life experiences to calm, to reassure and support LGB victims who then come to see these LGB police officers as supportive allies, rather than potentially hostile individuals in uniform. Consequently, as observed by Rabe-Hemp (2008) in regard to the contributions of women to policing, the increased visibility of LGB officers within policing was seen to reduce the likelihood of LGB victims of crime experiencing ‘double victimisation’ by both the perpetrator(s) of the initial crime and by the police themselves. This perceived benefit to LGB victims is reflected in the following response.

PC Angela, Large/City: Well, we ensure that the police have a better representation of the community. One of the things that I dealt with as a SOIT was a gay guy who had been sexually assaulted, and he refused to even talk to his first SOIT [officer] because he felt that as a gay man he couldn't talk about it to the police. So I went in, thinking I wasn't having any of this nonsense, and I sat and befriended him, and the first thing that I had to do was come out to him – as an LGBT liaison officer and as a gay officer. And that made him feel comfortable and he started to open up.

2. *Contributing Specialist Knowledge of LGB Issues:* here, LGB officers outlined how their own life experiences as members of the LGB community equips them with unique knowledge of LGB issues, which often helps and enhances police response to LGB-related crimes and their investigation. Examples of this included awareness of nuanced LGB terminology, understanding of same-sex sexual practices/conduct and familiarity with LGB services and social spaces that allows them to see such crimes through a tailored professional lens. This was described as akin to speaking a different language and as valuable a contribution to policing as an officer who can speak Chinese or sign to members of the deaf community. The following extracts illustrate some of these knowledge contributions.

PC Katharine, Large/City: *Well, like we just said it allows me to come to the job with knowledge of certain activities and communities. For example, there is a club in Vauxhall which caters for BME girls. When they are on the way to the club, there are often reports that there's a big gang of BME boys heading into the gay area, but when I turned up I highlight that no, they are actually girls, they just look like boys. That then starts a load of questions about why they look like that, and I am able to explain it. That's just a small example, but my background and experience allows me to give my colleagues a better understanding. Because it actually feels like it's a totally different world to them.*

PC John, Mid-size: *So you know, the other day we had a gay guy who had been sexually assaulted and he was worried about infection. He was being chaperoned by a straight male colleague who didn't really know how to deal with the situation, so I went in and talked to him about HIV and what he needed to do, and things like that. So it's not something I do full-time, but I suppose I'm just a conduit to help when LGB issues come up. Because a lot of straight officers don't know how to deal with gay people. They see them as this entity that they don't understand. What they don't realise is that we are not all the same. So if I can help improve that, then I will. And it is an added workload, but for me, I have a passion for those kinds of things so I don't mind doing it.*

PC Max, Large/City: *Well, the only thing that I can think of is that I obviously have an understanding of gay issues. But then again, my colleagues would still be adept; a crime is still a crime, whether it be a man hitting a man or a man hitting a woman. Would I be extra sensitive to it? ... probably. I remember going to a call years ago when a guy was being harassed on Gaydar, and because I was a*

member of the site and knew how it functioned etc. I was asked to deal with it.

3. *Building Relationships with LGB Organisations and Stakeholders:* participants also discussed how they often use their sexual orientation as leverage to build and facilitate professional relationships with LGB organisations and stakeholders. This has proved particularly beneficial to them when collecting evidence about crimes that had occurred in LGB associated spaces (e.g. requesting CCTV footage), when working with LGB stakeholders in a multi-agency and partnership capacity (e.g. responding to same-sex domestic violence or organising an LGB public event), and when proactively engaging with LGB stakeholders to further improve the safety of LGB individuals (e.g. discussing situational crime control strategies in public-sex/hate crime target areas). In these situations, LGB officers can be intermediaries between the police and third parties who have historically been wary and uncooperative with the police due to perceived hostilities. However, officers in my research talked about the noticeable change of attitudes and cooperation amongst these stakeholders since they have been able to deal with LGB officers who have an understanding and appreciation of their lifestyles, aims and associated anxieties towards the police.

***Sergeant Jennifer, Mid-size:** The only advantage that I have found is when I was dealing with the gay venues, and the fact that these venues accepted me. And now, as a diversity officer, I have to deal with LGBT individuals and venues, and there was a sigh of relief that a gay officer had been assigned to the diversity role at last. So it is an advantage in terms of creating relationships with LGB communities, because they see someone, one of them, within the ranks. And I think that comes down to understanding – the feeling that LGB officers know more about what LGBT communities are all about; it's a kind of bond I suppose. They know that if a police officer went into a gay venue years ago, people would have scurried out, but now it is a lot more relaxed, and they know that we are there to look after their*

interests and to protect them. And it's kind of like, because I am gay as well, they listen to me more which is silly really because I do the same things as my heterosexual colleagues would do in that situation. But also, I have got a lot more information and intelligence from these gay venues compared to what any of my colleagues had in the past but that's because I am very open, I am completely upfront with them, but that's the way that I police. So I go to these venues and explain why they have to do certain things, whereas other officers I find go in and be very abrupt and authoritative, which the venues didn't really like. So I suppose as a gay officer I listen more and offer a different approach to policing.

The realities of police work dictate that it is unlikely that an officer will only ever police an isolated community – for example, one of my participants discussed how she is predominantly a territorial response officer, but on occasion has to work a Saturday night patrol shift where is she sometimes called to an incident within/involving the LGB community. When officers do professionally intersect with LGB individuals and communities however, the examples in this section show how they are able to offer an enhanced and more efficient service, alongside and in collaboration with the alternatively diverse skill sets offered by their non-LGB colleagues.

6.2.2 Not so 'Soft': LGB Officers' Contributions to 'Hard' Policing

In her research into the effects of diversity reform within one UK police constabulary, Loftus (2009) found that the introduction of 'soft' policing had, in effect, created a two-tiered system of police work in the mindset of officers. 'Hard' policing was seen to be the remit of 'real' police work, whereas 'soft' policing was seen as inferior, often assigned to officers as a form of professional penance attracting ridicule from colleagues. However, five years on, my research directly contradicts Loftus with my participants reflecting on scenarios where they contributed skills in both 'soft' and 'hard' policing contexts. Accordingly, in what follows, I present two contributions made by LGB officers which

support claims by Innes (2011) that the future health of policing rests on the ability of both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ policing models to work together simultaneously.

First, participants described how they are able to employ less hostile and forceful responses to policing public disorder. In contrast to the machismo of traditional ‘hard’ policing, they saw benefit in their ability to remain calm and quell public confrontations with the police through discourse in these emotionally charged situations, rather than engage in the traditional use of force. This reflects scholarship examining the organisational benefits of women police officers which claims that their ability to offer non-confrontational responses dilutes the expectation of, and engagement with, negative police occupational-cultural-fuelled behaviour, which in turn reduces public complaints and accusations of misconduct against the police (Brown and Woolfenden, 2011; Silvestri, 2003; Westmarland, 2001a). Interestingly, substantiating the perspective that ‘soft’ policing responses are no longer inferior but rather an embraced operational tool, participants described their ability to ‘talk down’ and diffuse confrontation as one skill in a wider portfolio of contributions made by different members of their teams. This was seen to benefit a new ‘patchwork’ approach to the composition of policing teams where each member has something different to offer.

PC Adam, Small/Rural: Well, I’m certainly not macho. But I don’t think I deliberately go out of my way to try and be something different because of my sexuality. I think I just try to be the type of person I am – and there are officers that I work with who flare up quite easily and get into fights, whereas I’m not that type of person. I’ll try my best to talk somebody down as much as I can really. I’ve always done that and that’s the way that I work. And some of my supervisors have commented on how I can calm down quite bad and ‘tempered’ situations, which they see as a strength of mine. But then again, sometimes you do need someone who is macho to get in there straight away. So that’s why the police need all different types of

officers – we all have different skills that can be useful in different situations.

Next, the subjective and intersubjective experiences associated with the management and development of an LGB identity – discussed in the previous chapter – were seen by participants to provide them with unique skills and insight as investigators of crime. In particular, periods of juggling two conflicting identities within their private lives and/or police careers – referred to by Burke (1994, p. 199) as the ‘double life syndrome’ – had equipped them to better understand and identify disparities between what people (especially offenders and potential suspects) say and what they are actually thinking or have done when interacting with the police. This was described as an intuitive skill that LGB officers bring to the job from day one, which has to be trained and developed over several years amongst their heterosexual colleagues. As explained by Richard below, this is also a skill that LGB officers who are not ‘out’ at work also bring to policing.

DS Richard, Large/City: *You know, one of the things that I learned from choosing not to come out until later on in life is that there is a lot that goes on behind people’s masks, and everybody has masks to different degrees. This is invaluable to me as a detective, because I go into a scene or an interview asking myself what it is they aren’t telling me. Sometimes I even see people doing things, or saying things in a certain way, that reminds me of things I used to do to throw people off the scent about me being gay. It’s funny really, but still, it helps.*

Specifically, participants talked about their ability to intuitively spot when someone is lying or being deliberately evasive in an attempt to hide something from the police – because they too had employed similar practical tactics when trying to ‘pass’ as heterosexual at certain points of their career (and personal lives) through performance of their virtual social identity

6.2.3 Internal Organisational Benefits

Here, participants discussed the overarching benefits that their LGB status brings to the internal dynamics, effectiveness and human resource capabilities of their individual constabularies, all of which support an argument that LGB officers are key agents in post-Macpherson reform efforts to bring about internal police cultural and organisational change. Specifically, the following three perceived contributions were discussed.

1. That they are more communicative and approachable colleagues. Participants felt that they are often more friendly and communicative with colleagues in comparison to their heterosexual male counterparts who are often insular and reluctant to engage in conversations that require an emotionally supportive dimension. In contrast, participants represented themselves as having “*natural*” ability to be sensitive and responsive to the different emotional needs of colleagues – a skill that is particularly important given the psychological and emotionally challenging realities of police work and cases that police officers have to deal with. This reflects Pratt (2003) who argued that diverse organisations help facilitate collective rather than individual support mechanisms for employees and, as a consequence, teams which are diverse provide more of a psychologically safe environment for their members.

2. That they are naturally able to ‘practise’ diversity in the workplace. As members of a subaltern community, participants felt that they were better informed of diversity issues than their non-minority colleagues. Post-Macpherson, compulsory diversity training was introduced across constabularies to support workforce modernisation and its aims. However, since then, the effectiveness of this training and its ability to change internal attitudes and behaviour has been severely criticised (HMIC, 2003; Home Office, 2005; Morris, 2004; Rowe, 2002). In contrast, participants described their ability to “*practise*” and be responsive to diversity agendas in policing without the need for training or monitoring. As I discussed in the previous chapter, some even saw the increased visibility of LGB officers in teams as an effective training mechanism due to their ability to

educate and challenge negative behaviour amongst colleagues in practical policing settings rather than abstract classroom environments (as discussed in chapters four and five). Many participants, for example, felt that challenging negative attitudes and behaviour of colleagues when they arise is their professional and moral duty, even if it is personally uncomfortable for them to do so, so that they become aware that what they did/said was offensive, can reflect and learn from the experience, and therefore avoid manifesting such behaviour in future.

As a consequence, participants saw themselves as representing a lower ‘risk’ to their constabularies due to the significantly reduced likelihood of them engaging in and manifesting negative sub-cultural behaviour which often damages the police’s reputation. It was because of this mindset, in contrast to the findings of Morris (2004), that middle-ranking participants highlighted their ability to address diversity issues within the team that they manage without awkwardness or anxiety.

***Inspector Tom, Large/City:** I think I am a bit more well informed. I have a bit more of an understanding about diversity in general, but I also have an understanding of what it is like to be a minority. So I am able to manage staff in a way that is more efficient and effective in terms of (a) I can better understand diversity issues when people come to talk to me about them, but also (b) on the flip side, I can also see when someone is trying to have me over by using the diversity card when they shouldn’t be. I’d have no hesitation in challenging anyone who does that.*

3. *That they bring different perspectives and encourage innovation.* Finally, participants discussed how their alternative histories and associated life experiences allowed them to contribute different strategic perspectives to their teams. This was seen to be another contribution to the ‘patchwork’ approach to team composition discussed previously. As one participant commented:

DS Zoe, Large/City: I suppose being a gay officer makes you more aware of the broad range of challenges that different people face, and you have a broad range of empathy and greater understanding of why people behave and do things in certain situations. And an understanding of the impact of being institutionalised. And so I bring different approaches to the table and different ways of thinking about things due to my different life experiences. Just as colleagues who are black, dyslexic, disabled and even traditional big beefy skinheads on my team bring different ideas and solutions to the table on a daily basis.

This feeds into police policy rhetoric (ACPO, 2005, 2010) and wider empirical claims that teams with a diverse membership are more productive and dynamic within organisations compared to those whose demographic composition is homogeneous. For example, Roberge and Dick (2010) found that organisational teams which are culturally and demographically diverse are more likely to be driven by a collective identity which is dynamic, innovative, mutually communicative, supportive, in touch with the ethos and mission of the organisation and are therefore likely to be more productive. Thus, although the burden of team heterogeneity cannot be fulfilled by LGB police officers alone, they can and do play a central role in creating diverse policing teams and are key players in the creation of these positive diversity-fuelled consequences.

6.2.4 Unlocking Potential Contribution: Some Challenges

Despite highlighting above the unique contributions made by LGB officers in post-Macpherson police constabularies, it should be emphasised that these contributions should not be automatically assumed; in fact, the invisibility of sexuality and the option of non-disclosure amongst LGB officers constitute a direct threat to the realisation of the ‘business case’ for including LGB police officers in contemporary policing. However, my research found that non-disclosure is not exclusively due to a fear of colleague rejection and/or discrimination, although this is a dominant concern as outlined in the previous

chapter. Instead, some further factors were discussed as to why some choose not to utilise and draw upon their actual social LGB identity for professional benefit.

First, some felt that the nature of police work is not always conducive to LGB officers disclosing their sexual orientation to members of the public. This was reflected in my quantitative data where 22 per cent of my sample never disclosed their LGB status to members of the public. Exploring this qualitatively, participants described how, due to the nature of police work and the types of incidents that they are regularly called to, police officers are naturally suspicious of all members of the community that they come into contact with, due to concerns for their own personal integrity and safety. Some felt that the role of a police officer is to be professional and impartial and that by disclosing their personal sexuality to members of the LGB community, they would be showing unprofessional bias. These views were represented in my conversation with Andrew.

***PC Andrew, Mid-size:** Most of the time I think it is best to stay neutral and professional. And that is probably a selfish thing. But I don't for my own protection. Because victims that we come into contact with, we only know what they have told us. And as we know, there are a lot of strange people out there, and I don't want somebody to know personal things about me that could ultimately be used to my detriment. I am empathetic with anybody who has suffered a crime because I know that crime has a big impact on people, so whether there is a homophobic element to it or not won't make any difference in terms of how I will deal with it.*

Next, just as Moran (2007) stresses that the differentiation between the community and the 'LGB community' could be in itself problematic, participants noted a concern that the engagement and improved relationships with LGB communities should not just be the remit of LGB officers. For that reason, it was felt that more effort needs to be placed on equipping heterosexual officers with knowledge of LGB culture and practices, so that all officers can offer a malleable skill set when dealing with a wide variety of communities.

Because of this concern, some participants discussed how they are strategically selective about who they disclose their sexuality to due to a fear that their employer will typecast them into only conducting LGB-related work, and also to avoid members of the LGB communities thinking that they are a first point of contact for all police matters. An example of the latter is provided below.

***Sergeant Emma, Small/Rural:** I had a few bad experiences so I've made the decision recently to not tell members of the public that I am gay, just because they can latch on to a certain officer and consider them as 'their officer'. And I've had that occur where I had a gay female who was assaulted, which looked like it was a hate crime so I helped her with that. But then she had her bag stolen, and then some issues with neighbours – all nothing to do with her being gay, but she only wanted to deal with me. It was as if she had latched on to me, and I think part of the reason for that is that she knew I was gay and thought I should understand. However, all of the other issues, any officer could have dealt with them.*

Finally, those participants who did not feel comfortable to be 'out' at work logically offered limited, if any, additional contributions to policing, simply because knowledge of their actual social LGB identity is not known in professional settings. In fact, in order to avoid their virtual identity being discredited, participants who fell into this category actively avoided associations with a 'soft' skill set, due to fears that demonstrating such skills would raise questions of their sexuality amongst colleagues. Increased emphasis needs to be placed by constabularies on achieving a relational contract with this type of LGB employee so that their potential contributions can be unlocked.

6.3 Representation in the Ranks: Navigating Diversity Anxieties

An important aspect of the police's post-Macpherson reform agenda has not just been the recruitment of minority officers into the position of police constable, but also the

promotion and development of these and existing minority police officers so that diversity and the unique contributions made by these officers, as with those discussed above, are utilised across all levels of the organisation (ACPO, 2005, 2010; HMIC, 2003). In order to achieve this, investment has been made in initiatives that help and encourage under-represented minority groups to consider and prepare for promotion and development opportunities. However, despite this, Van Ewijk (2011) highlights that diversity in the policing ranks across Europe continues to diminish as a police officer's rank increases. In this second part of this chapter, I therefore examine LGB officers' long-term career aims and their associated perception of existing promotion and development frameworks, in order to assess the extent to which this policy aspiration is being realised.

I show that the majority of LGB officers within this research aim to seek direct promotion or lateral development through specialism but feel that current failures in the management and governance of promotion and development frameworks within constabularies is preventing these career aims being realised. I argue that action is needed to clarify, improve and educate all officers on existing policy and practice regarding promotion and development; failure to do so is causing resentment and division amongst officers and is likely to damage and overturn positive police cultural developments highlighted in previous chapters.

In what follows, I outline apparent failures and anxieties around the existing promotion and development frameworks discussed by my participants, before moving on to consider perceptions of facilitated promotion for minority officers and the consequences of these perceptions.

6.3.1 Perceptions of Current Promotion and Development Frameworks

Confirming Van Ewijk's claims, figure 6.1 shows that, within my quantitative data, the majority of LGB officers occupied the rank of constable (76.1 per cent) – this mapped almost perfectly with cumulative constabulary strength at each rank when this research was being conducted (Dhani, 2012). Of those sampled, 42.4 per cent identified that their

current career aim was to seek promotion with a further 24 per cent identifying the aim to seek lateral development through specialist roles – aspirations which were reflected and substantiated by participants during their qualitative interviews. Despite these positive career aspirations, participants overwhelmingly expressed the view that existing frameworks regulating promotion and development in policing are poorly managed and that, as a result, a dark cloud of confusion, anxiety and resentment currently exists which is preventing these aspirations being realised. This is coupled, and not unrelated, to my discussion in chapter four where I identified that discrimination within promotion and development processes was the third most commonly reported type of discrimination within my national survey of LGB officers (see also Jones and Williams, 2013).

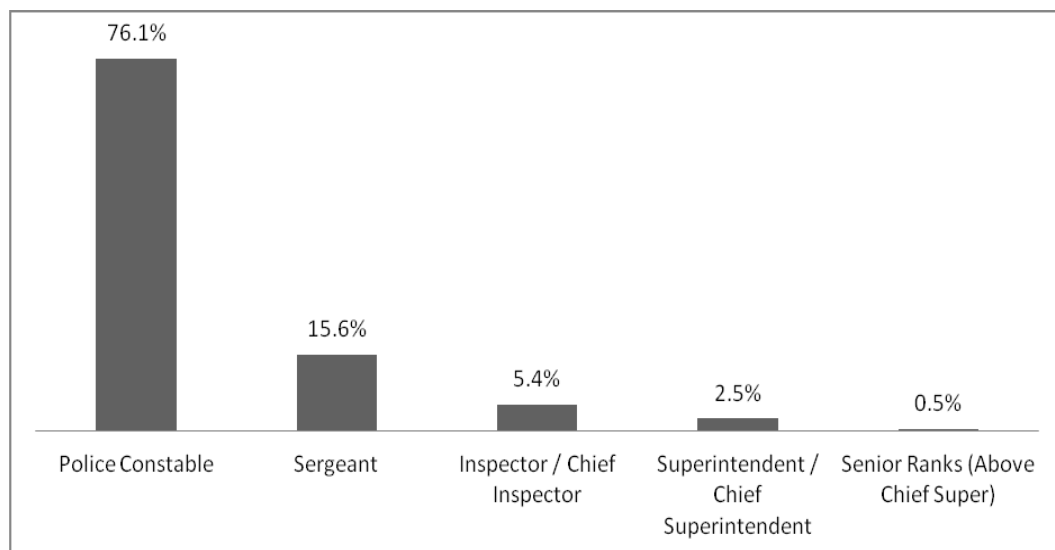


Figure 6.1: Ranks of Surveyed Police Officers

The biggest failure was seen to be a lack of education amongst all officers with regard to how diversity is treated within current promotion processes. In this regard, participants discussed the existence of a false belief across constabularies (including amongst LGB officers themselves) that since Macpherson all LGB officers (and other minority officers) are afforded an unfair advantage in promotion – being elevated to positions not because of merit or competency, but because of positive discrimination targets that aim to make constabularies look, from the outside at least, more inclusive. Noon (2011) found that this is a common misconception within organisations and that objections/tensions exist

because of a lack of knowledge amongst employees of the differences between positive action and positive discrimination. This was reflected amongst my participants who did not know that positive action existed but discussed how positive discrimination had become an emotive term in policing circles. Noon goes on to usefully differentiate between the two and I have converted his guidance into figure 6.2 as a tool to clarify the differences between them.

Positive Action	Positive Discrimination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A generic term for policies aimed at encouraging and supporting under-represented groups within a workplace, such as a recruitment campaign to increase the proportion of ethnic minority applicants, or a mentoring scheme for women in management roles to improve promotion prospects. • Under-represented groups may benefit from measures that seek to redress their existing disadvantage but they do not have the right to have these disadvantages specifically taken into account when decisions are made by managers about selection, promotion, pay and so forth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specific recognition of certain characteristics (typically sex, race/ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation and age) considered to have disadvantaged a group of people through no direct fault of their own. • It brings consideration of the disadvantage into the formal decision-making process by making these characteristics legitimate criteria for evaluating candidates.

Figure 6.2: Adapted from Noon (2010, pp. 728-729) – Difference between ‘Positive Action’ and ‘Positive Discrimination’

The legal framework of the Equality Act 2010 – the current legislation that regulates organisational diversity initiatives – allows for both positive action and positive discrimination in organisations for individuals with ‘protected characteristics’. However, in regard to the latter, it is only permissible in the event of a ‘tiebreak’ between candidates during the recruitment and selection process. Thus, under section 159 of the Act, it is only when two equally competent candidates are shortlisted for a position that a ‘protected characteristic’ of an applicant can be used as part of the decision to differentiate between them, when such a decision would help to redress the under-representation of that protected characteristic within the given organisation.

A review of policy and publicly available documentation relating to recruitment and promotion in policing revealed that it is only positive action that is currently utilised in constabularies – i.e. measures that merely encourage applications from under-represented groups but not formally considered within promotion and development processes and decisions. Examples of such measures for LGB officers are examined in the next section of this chapter when discussing the remit of the GPA, but they include assistance with writing application forms and mentoring from senior officers. Thus, a belief that LGB officers are promoted merely because of their sexual orientation, to the detriment of non-minority officers, is both factually incorrect and, in any case, illegal. However, the failure of constabularies to clarify these anxieties and to educate officers on the differences, remit and consequences of positive action and positive discrimination continues to cause divisions and resentment between minority and non-minority officers – linked to what Loftus (2009, p. 229) refers to as the perceived ‘erosion of white advantage’ amongst the dominant rank and file. For example, some participants in the current research, who had recently engaged with and been successful in the promotion system, had experienced accusations of unfair advantage and incompetence from non-minority colleagues, some even explicitly undermining their new authority within professional settings in protest.

Further anxieties and confusion concerning promotion and development were also discussed by participants in regard to unclear relationships between newly introduced sexual orientation monitoring in constabularies and its impact on promotion and development decisions. Blackburn (2006) and Loveday (2007) both discuss how sexual orientation monitoring has been included within initial police application forms since 2004 and that in recent years some individual constabularies have included sexual orientation monitoring within their internal promotion materials and annual staff survey. However, beyond some initial data protection concerns, specific anxieties were expressed by participants with regard to the lack of understanding amongst officers of how this data is used during promotion and development processes. Because of this perceived lack of assurance from their constabulary as to how the bureaucratic knowledge of their LGB status would be used, many chose to not disclose this information or were reluctant to engage with promotion and development as a consequence.

Sergeant Bill, Large/City: *I think, sometimes, the promotion aspect within the police is very poor. It is a very poor process for how it is done. In the old days, it was down to who you know and how well you got on with your senior managers. And nowadays, I don't really think it's a much better process because it often comes down to what diversity group you are from. Personally, I don't tick the sexuality box on forms. Just because I don't know who sees that information. I assume it is confidential, but can the panel see that I have ticked the minority box? Can they look at my HR record and see that I have disclosed that I am gay? It's just too uncertain for me to take that risk.*

Matt: *Why is that?*

Sergeant Bill, Large/City: *I would be gutted if I found out that I got a promotion just because I am gay. It would totally demoralise me and I wouldn't feel like I deserve the respect of my colleagues.*

6.3.2 Professional Morality: Perceptions of Utilising Sexuality within Police Promotion and Development Processes

Because of confusion and anxiety around the issues discussed above, debate developed amongst my participants about the morality of using sexuality for professional advantage when applying for promotion and development. Therefore, in what follows, I give an overview of the two dichotomous opinions presented in this regard.

A small minority said that they would, and in some cases had already, disclosed their sexuality when applying for promotion. However, this was not because it was seen as the moral and right thing to do, but rather because of a form of Darwinian professionalism; survival of the professionally fittest. These officers acknowledged the limitations of the current promotion and development frameworks discussed above, but felt that they had no option but to pander to the post-Macpherson diversity thirst of constabularies in order

to develop their careers. The alternative was seen to be developmental stagnation for the immediate future.

***Sergeant Steve, Mid-size:** I remember when I was recently sitting my sergeant exams and there was one of those computer ‘tick the box’ monitoring forms, and I think because I knew it would have no outcome on my score because it was just going to be read by a computer, I disclosed I was gay on that. But would I have been given the option in 2003 when I applied? ... No, I probably wouldn’t if I’m honest. Now would I? ... Possibly, but maybe for reasons which aren’t as professional as they ought to be. As I said, the police is very keen to have a force that is representative of the community ... and I would be lying today if I said I wouldn’t disclose it if I thought it would increase my chances of applying for something. And that sounds unprofessional, and I know it does, and it is, because at the end of the day we would all like to be accepted into a role on merit.*

Despite this, participants who fell into this ‘pro-sexuality as leverage’ camp were still influenced by professional morality. In particular, most said that they would only apply for promotion or development and use their sexuality as leverage if they were first personally satisfied that they were qualified and competent for the position advertised. This addresses Noon’s (2010) work. He highlighted a major concern expressed by non-beneficiaries of positive action and discrimination that it leads to incompetent appointees – a concern that is further fuelled by the dangerous and life-dependent nature of some aspects of police work. The following extract is from a participant who was a supporter of using sexuality as leverage, but only when they personally feel competent for the position advertised.

***DS Joe, Large/City:** People do use the tools they can to get what they want – as with most other facets of life. And I certainly think I have been given opportunity because of my sexuality; when I was asked by*

my Superintendent to run the LGBT liaison network, I was only twelve months into my career then. Had I not been gay, I obviously wouldn't have been asked that. But that was great evidence when I was then applying for promotion and the police are all about evidence and competence demonstration. So it probably helped me to get my foot in the door for subsequent jobs that I had after that. But it is a competitive world, so I can see why people do it. And I think people do it in all other careers. I would like to think that morals would stop me from using it to the extreme, but if I have been given opportunity, and I have done good work, and I can say hand on heart that I think that I am qualified to do the job that I am applying for, then I'm happy to do it.

In opposition, the majority of my participants fell within an alternative 'anti-sexuality as leverage' camp, with one feeling so strongly about this issue that he described those who do use their sexuality in this way as “*sycophants that will use anything they can to clamber up that greasy pole*”.

For these officers, the decision of whether or not to utilise sexuality in this way was seen as one of professional integrity. As discussed in chapters four and five, teamwork and team synergy are big components of police work. Thus, using one's LGB status for professional advantage was described as disrespectful to non-minority team members to the extent that forfeiting team membership and the protections that it affords was seen as suitable retribution for those who decide that their own personal development is a greater priority than the synergy and health of their team. Similarly, participants discussed the importance of reputation in policing. In this regard, using their sexuality for personal advantage was not a professionally credible thing to do for these officers, which they linked to corresponding levels of trust and respect afforded by colleagues.

Matt: *So what is your opinion of using sexuality as leverage in a promotional context?*

PC John, Mid-size: *My view, good question. Well, I qualify for promotion and have been for almost three years now. I shot myself in the foot really by moving into an investigative role just when I was ready for promotion. I decided to specialise and then apply for promotion, during which time promotional prospects have dried up nationally, and it isn't a good time for anyone. I am aware of women in policing and LGB police initiatives because they want to increase the number of minority groups in management. But I can't help but think that even if I wanted to, I just couldn't do it (laughs). I just couldn't say, "so I am ready for promotion now, by the way I am gay". I couldn't and I wouldn't. In this job, everything that you do is about your reputation and whether you are a safe pair of hands in that people trust you and you have the respect of your colleagues. So a lot of people get themselves promoted before these things are in place, and find it a lot harder. I feel that I am ready for promotion anyway, but it happens when it happens. You know, if any of your colleagues find out that you've pulled that card as it were, then you'd instantly lose all credibility, regardless of your performance. If I get promotion, I want it to be because I am a good detective, not because of anything else.*

Finally, some participants within this category felt that the prospect of using sexuality for advantage in promotion was in itself counterproductive to the diversity mission as it encouraged such officers to conform to an organisational expectation of what it is to be a 'minority officer', rather than to just celebrate and recognise difference. Those utilising their sexuality for personal gain were therefore seen by these officers to be strategically 'performing' diversity rather than representing a true reflection of self.

DCI Peter, Mid-size: *I think they should promote people on talent and ability, rather than some of the bollocks reasons that they currently do, excuse my French. Chief officers seem to have a view*

that they have to promote people because they fit into a certain box. But if people are going for promotion, based on a caricature of themselves, then it might leave a sad legacy for the future.

6.3.3 Unintended Consequences

As a consequence of the ambiguities and anxieties discussed above, most of my participants felt that it is now harder for LGB officers to realise their promotion and development aims, which is ironic as this contradicts the ethos of positive action and associated initiatives that have been central to the post-Macpherson reform agenda. A particularly worrying trend was observed amongst a pocket of participants who provided further examples of where the full potential and contribution of LGB officers was not being realised.

First, some officers had made an active choice not to disclose their actual social LGB identity at work (and therefore to pursue an alternative virtual social identity), not because of fear of negative discrimination, but because of their desire to achieve rank on merit and not to be accused of achieving promotion because of their minority status. As one participant who fell into this category said:

***Inspector Mark, Mid-size:** I work really hard and I personally think that I am a good police officer. I put the hard graft in because I am career-minded and I want to retire at least as a Chief Super. But I know that if I tell people at work that I'm gay their opinions will change of me and it will make them think that I have only been promoted because I have ticked a diversity box. When I am at work, I am just a police officer. I do what I need to do and after my shift finishes, I go home, take off my uniform, get in the shower and resume my private life with my partner. That probably sounds a bit fucked up to you (laughs), but it works for me.*

Similarly, despite still disclosing their actual social LGB identity at work, some had decided to fully disengage from any future development and promotion plans as a form of personal protest to perceived injustices.

Inspector Maria, Mid-size: But in my view, promotion should be totally based on ability and performance. I have made the decision that I am not going to go for any more promotions in my career – I have a few years left – because I am sick and tired of seeing people use any kind of bloody tactic to get up the greasy pole. And my personal integrity is worth more to me, and I'm not going to sacrifice my values to get promoted. And hanging onto a diversity strand in order to get promoted is not something that would sit well with me.

This discussion provides a further example of the idealised homogeneity of policing – due mainly to the team ethos and associated occupational culture that informally holds these teams together. In these settings, individualism is conceptualised as deviant as it goes against this team protectionism. Instead, those who are career-orientated are branded as professional ‘outsiders’ as there is no assurance as to their temporal commitment to the ‘team’ ethos. This is why a lack of clarity around these issues is proving professionally problematic for LGB officers, as the underlying motivation for their anxieties is that they do not want to be seen as being treated differently by their professional peers as doing so will likely cause them professional detriment and rejection from the fraternal nature of police work.

6.4 Representative Voices for LGB Officers

In this third and penultimate part of this chapter, I explore the perceived role and effectiveness of the national Gay Police Association (GPA) and individual constabulary Gay Staff Networks (GSNs) in providing support and representation for LGB police officers in post-Macpherson policing. Bell et al. (2011) advocate that organisations today need to take a proactive stance to ensure that mechanisms are in place so the ‘voice’ of

LGB officers and wider minority staff can be heard, considered, accommodated and encouraged. Hirschman (1970, p. 30) defines voice as an attempt ‘to change, rather than to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition to the management directly in charge’. In this regard, LGB police officers are unique in that the sparse literature examining LGB voice in organisations places emphasis on the historical role that trade unions have played in the improvement of LGB working practices. However, police officers are barred from becoming members of trade unions, linked to their inability to strike, and as such have been left to establish their own mechanisms to ensure that their voice is represented and heard within changing policing structures.

Stonewall (2005, p. 2) defines an LGB employee network as ‘a formal mechanism for enabling lesbian, gay and bisexual staff to come together to share information and support ... it is a valuable workplace resource that can benefit the organization, employees, customers and clients’. The key activities of these networks range from social events and advocacy to policy development, consultation and training (Stonewall, 2005). The benefits of such networks to organisations identified by Stonewall include promoting diversity, encouraging compliance with equality and anti-discrimination legislation, establishing and enhancing employee communication channels and enriching customer relations. Similarly, benefits to the employee are better workplace communication, peer support and career development. Such groups can therefore be seen to exist in order to provide peer support and a ‘voice’ to LGB employees, but also to facilitate the commodification of identity rationale – or the ‘business case’ for diversity – as discussed previously (Williams and Vaughan, forthcoming).

Since 1990, the GPA (until 2001, the Lesbian and Gay Police Association) has been the ‘national association that represents the needs and interests of gay and bisexual police officers and police staff in the United Kingdom’ (www.gay.police.uk). Its website claims that its remit is to:

- Work towards equal opportunities for gay police service employees;

- Offer advice and support to gay police service employees;
- Promote better relations between the police service and the gay community.

Its membership levels are currently unknown (due to the reluctance of its chair to engage with academic research). However, Blackburn (2006) identified that at its fifteenth anniversary event in 2004 it claimed to have 2000 subscribed members. What is clear is that the association has a persuasive profile; representatives often appear in the national media when cases of homophobia and discrimination are brought against the police by individual officers; they were part of the *'the only difference you see is the difference we make'* (figure 2.3) marketing campaign in collaboration with the Home Office which I gave an example of in chapter two (see McLaughlin, 2007); and I have seen them marching in large numbers at gay pride events across the UK.

As well as the GPA, there has also been a move in recent years towards the establishment of gay staff networks (GSNs) – set up by each of the individual police constabularies to give 'voice' and provide representation to LGB police officers at a local level. Both Godwin (2007) and Colgan and McKearney (2012) have identified that this move is likely to have been implemented because of guidance from Stonewall as part of their Workplace Equality Index in which police constabularies have invested considerable resources in an attempt to transform negative historical associations between the police and LGB communities. However, beyond this 'business case' rationale, Godwin (2007) notes in relation to Staffordshire Police (voted best gay employer nationally in the 2006 Stonewall Equality Index), that their local GSN plays an active role in championing LGB inclusion and has a healthy membership and attendance at its monthly events.

Assessing the membership of these two different representative groups was one of the aims of my national survey of LGB officers. Interestingly, only 29.6 per cent of those surveyed were members of the national GPA in contrast to 44.2 per cent who reported being a member of their constabulary's GSN. Membership of either was significantly associated with being more likely to talk to managers about LGB issues. Membership of GSNs was significantly associated with being 'out' at work, but interestingly membership

of the GPA was not (see appendix five). Within my qualitative research, I therefore explored perceptions of these two representative platforms amongst the LGB officers I interviewed.

In what follows, I present a critical overview of the participants' views relating to the GPA and their GSNs. I argue, reflecting Colgan and McKearney (2012) and Phillips (2005), that this unique two-tier framework of representation collectively provides effective visibility and community as well as individual and collective voice mechanisms and support for LGB police officers across England and Wales. Despite this, I identify some common criticisms and concerns about these groups, but contend that these can be remedied and are underpinned mainly by subjective anxieties amongst officers linked to perceived police behavioural expectations and wider professional LGB identity management variances amongst these officers.

6.4.1 Perceptions of the GPA

Participants' views of the role and effectiveness of the GPA were mixed. For this reason, I identify and discuss some of the positive contributions raised in the first instance, before moving on to some of the criticisms.

Generally, participants saw the association as a formal political platform which provides a representative voice and critical lens for LGB police issues within ACPO, the Home Office and with architects of national police policy. Officers acknowledged that this political role was an important one, without which the national interests of LGB officers would likely be overlooked. This resonates with research by Holdaway and O'Neill (2007) who found that the central roles of Black Police Associations was to act as an intermediary between senior officers and BME officers in operational ranks and to constantly remind those senior police stakeholders of the 'business case' for the utilisation of BME police officers.

Participants also acknowledged the protective role of the GPA, discussing the representative services that they provide for LGB officers who are the target of

professional discrimination or prejudice. In that regard, the GPA was seen to provide a tangible platform through which information could be sought, representatives identified and services provided. Even for those who did not agree with the wider remit of the GPA, or who were not active members, this was an essential and persuasive contribution provided by the association.

***PC Adam, Small/Rural:** Yes, this set-up allows me to identify who my representatives are if I did ever need to speak to them which gives me lots of confidence to be who I am within the organisation, because I always know I have somebody to fight my corner if things were ever to go wrong.*

***PC John, Mid-size:** I haven't been to any of the drinks, but I think that it is important that these associations exist, to help those who aren't so happy and give them support. For me, it's just a protection organisation that is good to have, just in case.*

The positive action services provided by the association (as previously discussed) were also acknowledged and discussed, such as mentoring and application-writing assistance which had helped LGB officers with promotion and development opportunities. Some even discussed how this extra support had given them the confidence to engage with the promotion system which they had previously been reluctant to do due to insecurities about their competencies and because of fears of discrimination within the promotion system (Jones and Williams, 2013). As one participant noted:

***Sergeant Emma, Small/Rural:** They offer support with promotion applications which really helped. I was put in touch with a senior officer who was LGB and they talked about my expectations of the promotion system and gave me tips on how to stand out and structure my responses to the application questions etc. I don't think I would have got through the process without it.*

Finally, participants discussed the benefits and quality of national events and initiatives held by the GPA. These events provide training and development on LGB-specific issues. Officers who had attended these events had used the knowledge acquired on these courses to positively impact their individual constabulary's LGB approaches and standards. They were also seen by some as a great networking occasion and an opportunity to meet other LGB officers, especially for those within smaller constabularies where the visibility of LGB officers was low.

Sergeant Yvonne, Small/Rural: Well, they have training days and once or twice a year they have events where people can meet up and learn about any issues or developments that might be going on. It's also at these events that you actually get to meet some other LGB officers, whereas for the rest of the year I don't see any. So for me it provides a good networking opportunity.

As a collective consequence of this national remit of the GPA, those participants who were members discussed the non-committal nature of this affiliation and how they had only subscribed in a bureaucratic sense, just in case they needed the association's support services at some point, rather than the criteria for membership requiring any active involvement.

However, despite these positive perceptions of the GPA, participants raised the following criticisms, which appear to overshadow the above.

First, many felt that the role of the association today – when the experiences of LGB police officers are largely positive – was unclear and that beyond a short introduction by a GPA representative during initial training, participants reported rarely coming into contact with the association. Many acknowledged the historical importance of such an association within the Burke climate of policing, when resistance towards LGB officers was extreme. In fact, many showed gratitude to the association for being a key facilitator

of organisational change. Despite this, a dominant view was that the GPA had failed to evolve and to establish a role and function within the ‘new era’ of policing for LGB officers outlined in chapter four.

***Matt:** So does the GPA have much of a presence in your constabulary?*

***PC Roman, Large/City:** Not at all. To be honest, I don’t know what they do or what they are for. We had a talk from someone during my initial training, but after that, nothing. Sometimes I see a poster in the corridor with GPA on it, but nothing more. I actually have friends who are in it, who have said to me that they don’t know why they are in it because it’s rubbish.*

Associated with this, some participants noted that when they do receive information from the GPA today, it is overly negative and focussed on a perceived inevitability of discrimination and adverse experiences for LGB officers. Although officers felt that the need for awareness of these issues was important, they also felt that the association could do more to celebrate the positive contributions and new working environments experienced by LGB officers.

Next, some believed that the association had become overly political and that as a consequence, it had created factions and micro-political divisions amongst LGB officers themselves. Specifically, claims that the association had become more about individual personalities in recent years and that it is dominated and run by those who are out for personal gain were common. As a result, it was feared that the good intentions and ethical mission of the association had been diluted and overshadowed. Therefore, some participants discussed a premeditated decision to distance themselves from the politics, with some choosing not to become members.

***ChiefSuper Luke, Mid-size:** Well, I am getting the impression that people don’t think that it is very good. It’s interesting, because there*

seems to be a gay politics within the police that I was completely unaware of. And I am trying to stay separate from that, I want to understand it, but I need to make sure that I don't get sucked into it in the wrong way. But the politics all seems to be about self-interest and the bigger picture of helping people has been lost.

DS Zoe, Large/City: *Yes, you have like the GPA events, which are big schmoozing events, which I don't go to because I feel that it's all about the politics. And with all the best will in the world, I just find these events as being made up of power-hungry gay men. They are there strategically to make friends in the right places, and there are hardly any women ever there, and I hate it. The GPA, I think, is very political and so I don't go to any of their events.*

Further, building on the theme that the association has become linked with the self-interest of individuals, a worrying perception amongst participants was that the GPA had developed a reputation for being overtly sexual, providing a legitimate environment within which older male officers make sexual advances on younger naive recruits.

PC Max, Large/City: *No, I'm definitely not a member. When I joined the job, I met a senior member of the GPA. He told me about what the organisation does, and then later he tried to have his wicked way with me [laughs]. I was very young, naive, and in hindsight he didn't treat me particularly well. And it made me think, well if you're supposed to be protecting the interests of gay officers, then ... So it's a very bad and embarrassing example, but it kind of put me off them and what they do.*

Sergeant Jennifer, Mid-size: *While I am sure that the GPA does do good work, being very candid, it does appear to me that it is an organisation that male officers join to see who in the organisation*

they could possibly have sex with. And that is fine, but I would rather keep out of all that, because I kind of think, “where is your professionalism?” But yes, I get the impression, and I say impression because I haven’t actually experienced it myself, that it is made up predominantly of older gentlemen, who when some young fresh meat comes along are like, “hello sonny, let’s go and have a cinzano and a chat” [laughs].

As a collective consequence of these concerns, many questioned the role and demand for the GPA today. Instead, numerous participants expressed the view that they felt sufficiently protected and represented by the national Police Federation – the official representative association for officers up to the rank of chief inspector – and that the existence of a separate association for LGB officers actually creates barriers and resentment between LGB staff and their heterosexual colleagues. As a consequence, it was suggested that the remit of the GPA and its associated resources might be better suited and enhanced under the umbrella of the Police Federation.

6.4.2 Perceptions of Gay Staff Networks

In contrast to perceptions of the GPA, many participants praised the emergence of local GSNs due mainly to their non-political nature. Instead, reflecting Stonewall’s (2005) guidance on what a gay staff association should encompass, GSNs were described as social platforms where LGB officers come together, share experiences and create workplace friendships with like-minded people. This helps explain my modelling of collected survey data (appendix five) which found that those LGB officers who were members of their constabulary’s GSN were more likely to be ‘out’ at work than those who were not. Examples given of GSN events include an annual ball, a comedy night in a local LGB venue, a camping weekend and a monthly coffee morning. This reflects Brown and Heidensohn (2000) who highlighted that local branches of the British Association of Women Police were empowering for female police officers as they

provided a unique legitimate time, space and rationale for them to come together on a regular basis.

Participants described how this creation of a legitimate social space and resultant group identity provided them with effective, informal and emotional support. This was contrasted with the predominantly formal support and services that are provided by the national GPA. Phillips (2005), in her review of BME associations within the criminal justice sector, found that peer support was one of the most important ingredients of an effective professional association for minority staff. Interestingly, as illustrated in the following extract from a chair of a GSN, such support was seen as a mechanism to reduce formal grievances and litigation within constabularies.

***PC Colm, Small/Rural:** And for me, the network isn't political – it's a way for me to get to know other gay people that I wouldn't do on a day-to-day basis at work. Because we still have a big way to go, in terms of creating an inclusive working environment for LGB officers – homophobia still exists. So we need to be able to have a support mechanism for each other, so that we can bounce off each other and have a chat. So as the network chair, I get phone calls asking if I want to go for dinner, or organise a social event, but I also get calls where officers are crying their eyes out because they have just been involved in a homophobic incident. And very often, if officers have experienced homophobia, they don't want to report it or take it any further – they just want a mechanism where they can offload and get some support.*

Despite this dominant informal/social element, GSNs still have a political function and were seen by participants to be effective in representing and giving a voice to LGB officers at local constabulary levels. In this regard, examples were cited of GSNs assisting their constabularies to compose hate crime and diversity policies; taking the lead

on constabulary's Stonewall Equality Index applications; challenging HR policies; and being invited to brief senior management teams on LGB issues and developments.

PC Andrew, Mid-size: In the last year, we have had one. Someone went to an interview panel which required the completion of a form. On that form there was a discretionary question about sexuality, but a compulsory question where you had to detail anyone that you were in a relationship with within the constabulary. Well obviously, if you decided to not tick you were gay but then listed you were in a relationship with someone of the same sex, that would be outing you. So there was a big issue with that. So we took it to HR with our concerns and within two weeks it was changed and the question was gone.

A final benefit of GSNs mentioned was their regular emails and newsletters sent to people on their mailing list. These emails highlighted recent events and provided updates relating to equality and diversity within their constabularies. These resources were particularly praised by LGB officers, who are not generally comfortable in attending LGB-specific events (mainly as they were not 'out' at work or were at the early stages of professional LGB identity development outlined in chapter five), as it allowed them to assume online avatar membership of their GSN which in itself appeared to be a supportive mechanism for these officers.

Despite predominantly positive perceptions of GSNs in this research, there were also some criticisms expressed. The most common was their perceived failure to represent the heterogeneity that exists amongst LGB officer contingents. Specific examples included the tendency to hold the aforementioned social events in LGB 'scene' locations and not in a diverse set of locations to appeal to different social preferences. Further, some GSN events had failed to accommodate the needs of officers with families and children. As a consequence, instead of feeling protected and included by their local GSN, some reported feelings of ostracism and isolation from these networks.

***Sergeant Bill, Large/City:** Yes, I am. A very bad member I must say because I have only ever been to a few meetings and that was several years ago. I find that I don't necessarily have the time to do that. And again, being brutally honest with you, I am the type of person that doesn't actually have a large number of gay friends. I don't enjoy being out in social situations with a large number of gay people – which sounds awful and I don't mean it to be that – I just prefer more mixed company. But because of that, I always get the impression that they regard me with a bit of an air of suspicion, because I am a gay officer who has no interest in the gay scene or gay groups. I know a few people that are in the same position as me, and by chance over the years we have got to know each other and now occasionally we meet up and talk about things. But it's just finding the right kind of forum that people feel comfortable in.*

Next, despite providing support and a voice for LGB officers, participants involved in the organisation and governance of their constabulary's GSN discussed how their contributions are voluntary and a considerable added workload because GSNs are not part of a formal police framework and are therefore unfunded. This was discussed by Colgan and McKearney (2012, p. 361) who claimed that it is often left to the goodwill of voluntary LGB groups to fill the 'vacuum of responsibility' for LGB issues within organisations. As a consequence, these participants discussed the struggle of often working an extra twenty hours per week on GSN responsibilities and often experienced conflict with line managers when asking for time off to attend LGB-related events/meetings. Similarly, they highlighted the struggle to get more people involved with the GSN when there is no remuneration or professional recognition to offer as an incentive. This relates to the discussion in chapter four where the longevity of commitment to LGB and wider diversity issues in policing is questioned by officers, creating professional anxiety and preventing the fulfilment of a purely relational contract between LGB officers and their employers (Millward and Hopkins, 1998).

Finally, some participants expressed concerns in regard to the security and data protection mechanisms that come with being an avatar member of these GSNs. Some examples were discussed of emails being sent which accidentally detailed the names and email addresses of all members – posing a risk and creating anxiety for those who are not ‘out’ at work. Accordingly, for GSNs to be truly representative, it was felt that they must establish a malleable platform that has utility for all within a secure and safe environment.

6.4.3 Overarching Observations

Finally, an overarching observation from my research data is that non-membership of either the GPA or their GSN amongst LGB officers is not solely symptomatic of their perceived failures or inefficiencies, although my discussion above does highlight some areas for future development.

Instead, reflecting similar observations throughout this chapter and wider thesis, the most common reason for non-membership to either of these representative groups amongst my respondents was linked to homogeneous behavioural expectations of police officers and the claim I made in chapter four, that it is those LGB officers that conform to traditional expectations of a “*good police officer*” that are afforded team membership and the professional protections associated with this. Thus, when considering membership of one or other of these representative groups, some participants discussed a perceived fear that heterosexual colleagues might see their membership as a form of activism, or that it might facilitate previously discussed accusations that their membership of such a group affords them unfair advantage in promotion and development. Accordingly, in these scenarios, some viewed non-membership as another premeditated attempt to develop through the ranks on personal merit and to avoid the label of ‘professional deviant’ amongst colleagues.

***PC Mike, Large/City:** I've sort of deliberately kept away, to be honest, because I am trying to get promoted and things like that. Well, firstly because that kind of thing doesn't interest me, but I've kept away as well because I know that there are things said on the job about certain people getting promoted, and that they only got promoted because they are gay or black or a woman. Whereas if I do get promoted, I want to, as best as I can, get promoted on my own merit, and not for anyone to be saying, "you know he only got the job because he is gay". And I do think that maybe I do have a bit of paranoia about that, and that is just my own personal preference. But I do know an officer on my team who is a member of the Black Police Association and a lot is said within the team behind her back, about her only getting on courses and things like that because she is black. I don't want that said about me because I am gay, so that is one of the reasons why I shy away from getting involved with any of the gay networks.*

A second, related reason for non-membership was linked with professional LGB identity development (as discussed in the previous chapter). For example, those participants who were not 'out' or within the initial non-disclosure period of 'police prioritisation' did not seek membership of these groups, as an association would discredit their virtual social identity. Conversely, it was those participants in 'transition' – i.e. who were considering disclosing their LGB status at work – that were more likely to become avatar members of their GSN as this allowed them to educate themselves on LGB issues in their constabulary and become aware of key players within the network, from a distance, without having to physically engage and disclose their LGB status. Similarly, it was those participants who had 'come out' and were seeking support from those in a similar position, and those in 'normalisation' who had no subjective resistance to the idea of interacting with LGB colleagues in professional settings, who appeared to be the biggest subscribers to local GSNs – providing another possible explanation as to why, within my quantitative data, it was those who reported membership of their constabulary's GSN that

were more likely to be ‘out’ at work and more comfortable to talk to their manager about LGB-related issues. These considerations however, are further testament to the empirical complexity of evaluating sexuality and related measures in organisational settings.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with evaluating and substantiating police policy rhetoric relating to diversity and workforce modernisation reform by exploring some of the nuanced contributions and supporting frameworks that underpin the active inclusion of LGB police officers within post-Macpherson policing. This in itself was a unique contribution as the limited literature in this area has traditionally focussed on resistance and the discriminatory struggles of LGB officers within policing settings.

In the first part of the chapter I was able to explore the ‘business case’ for the inclusion of LGB officers in post-Macpherson constabularies within which I illustrated how the personal histories and life experiences of LGB officers allows them to bring a broad skill set to policing – as a different form of ‘workplace capital’. This was due to the ability of these officers to flexibly respond and contribute to both ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ policing philosophies. For example, I found that LGB officers are key agents in transforming relationships between the police and LGB communities due to their ability to offer a tailored and empathetic police service to its members. I also found that LGB officers also make valued contributions to wider, traditional policing practices as part of a new “patchwork” approach to team composition employed by police constabularies today. Similarly, I found that LGB officers make valued contributions to the internal dynamics of police constabularies and are particularly effective in encouraging and facilitating communication and support amongst colleagues. However, I should acknowledge that these contributions are grounded in the professional lens of my participants as LGB police officers, and therefore the ways in which LGB community members and non-LGB officers view these influences and climates might differ considerably.

Beyond this note of ontological caution, identifying these contributions allows me to stress the importance of LGB officers as facilitators of change in post-Macpherson policing. In particular, their inclusion has disrupted the dominance of traditional machismo behaviour and occupational-cultural practices amongst the rank and file – behaviour that has been the target of reform since severe criticism by Scarman (1980) and Macpherson (1999). In this regard, LGB officers have been able to show how the role and expectations of the public police can be fulfilled in different, more effective ways than has been historically the case. In this vein, heterogeneity can be seen as a key ingredient of effective policing, and not homogeneity as previously thought.

Next, in the second part of the chapter, I suggested that despite a thirst for promotion and development amongst LGB officers, the contributions of LGB officers are concentrated in the lower ranks. This is despite a policy rationale and efforts by constabularies to increase representation of minority officers in management roles. Reasons for this relate to the perceived failures of constabularies to educate and address current anxieties with regard to the role of diversity in promotion and development decisions; specifically fears that LGB (and other minority) officers receive an unfair advantage because of a current desire of constabularies to be seen as diversity-friendly employers. Because of these anxieties, I have found that the current promotion and development of LGB officers is stagnant preventing the potential impact that diversity could bring to the strategic levels of policing.

In the final part of the chapter, I argued that, unlike other minority groups in policing, LGB officers are offered a supportive and representative ‘voice’ in post-Macpherson policing through two different platforms – nationally through the GPA and locally through their constabulary’s GSN. Despite some criticisms of both, this dual set-up was seen to be particularly beneficial to police officers today, given the challenges of responding to, and giving voice to, LGB officers within policing structures that have both central/national and local dimensions. Further, the current two-tiered system of support was deemed to be complementary with the GPA providing formal representation whereas

local GSNs were seen to offer a tailored platform characterised by informal, social and emotional support.

An important contribution made in this chapter was the overarching identification of a growing strategic approach to identity management and sexual orientation disclosure amongst LGB officers today. Previous research has rationalised non-disclosure of sexual orientation at work by LGB officers as a fear of discrimination. However, this chapter has highlighted further reasons for non-disclosure; namely, to avoid accusations of unfair treatment in promotion; to avoid being typecast in LGB policing roles; and to avoid accusations of impartiality. These were seen to be underpinned by failures of constabularies to take charge of diversity agendas and to clarify and address confusion and reservations surrounding diversity understanding amongst its employees. This links to my discussion in chapter five, where I argued that LGB identity formation amongst LGB officers is largely underpinned by reassurance – reassurance that ‘coming out’ at work will not cause them to be treated differently by colleagues.

Consequently, despite highlighting the positive contributions that LGB officers can bring to policing, this chapter has also shown that their full potential is not currently being realised. This can be related to growing resistance between the new organisational culture in policing and the historical occupational-cultural rituals and behavioural expectations that I discussed in chapter four. The former is underpinned by an abstract understanding of the potential that diversity can bring to policing, whereas the latter is fuelling a false need for homogeneity amongst officers, where difference is conceptualised as negative and self-fulfilling. Currently in a cultural stalemate, this chapter has therefore raised a need for constabularies to further address the relationship between these two cultures and to promote the value of ‘difference’; failure to do so poses further threats to the realisation of a transactional relationship between the police and its LGB employees.

Chapter Seven

Beyond the Monolithic: Towards a Nuanced Understanding of LGB Police Officers

7.1 Introduction

Therefore we must return to the notion that it is the enacted environment that provides the heuristic frame for policing. Consequently it is probably more fruitful to tease out variations in policing styles than to promote the perverse practice of identifying similarities across departments, cities, regions and countries. The assumption that there is something called ‘police culture’ is at best naive, and results in crude generalizations in the quest for common characteristics so as to make the results virtually meaningless ... Locating ‘core characteristics’ is hazardous, for as Fielding (1989, p. 80) has noted, ‘police are not disembodied and culture free, but are more or less imbued with values and norms embedded in their milieu’. There is no homogeneous milieu of policing. The police work in different ways. Even individual police institutions then, are not concrete monochrome entities, but merely segmented spheres of activity that occasionally brush each other at information pick-up points and are bonded by a skeleton of concentric hierarchies. (Hobbs, 1991, p. 606)

Over twenty years ago, Hobbs made the above claim as part of his research into detectives in the East End of London, calling for future policing scholarship to take into account nuances that exist as a consequence of the broad contextual parameters within which public policing takes place. Since Hobbs, this argument has reared its head on several occasions (Chan, 1996, 2007; Loftus, 2009; O’Neill et al., 2007), yet still contemporary policing research continues to fall into the trap of modelling new works on

the blueprint of the ‘classic’ policing ethnographies of the 1970s and 1980s at which Hobbs targets his criticism.

Although the exploratory nature of this research has resulted in the presentation of dominant themes and perspectives from my data thus far, in this final empirical chapter I take these dominant themes as a collective and highlight examples of where changes in the contextual parameters (or ‘frames’) of police environments have impacted the career experiences and associated identity management strategies of my participants. Specifically, in three distinct parts, I discuss how the size and geographical location of constabularies, the different types and areas of police work, and the seniority/rank of officers impacts these factors.

Reflecting Hobbs (1991), I argue that the culture, operational environments and practices of police constabularies are not monolithic and fixed, but rather exist in many forms and are influenced by variances within the formal parameters of ‘police work’ itself, as well as the wider social climate in which ‘the police’, as a prescribed social institution, is located. Thus, to revisit Chan’s (1996) Bourdieuan differentiation of ‘field’ and ‘habitus’ used in chapter four, I argue that these are not static and universal, but rather can exist in multiple and conflicting forms according to a cauldron of variances within which they are located. The conceptualisation of police culture, environments and practices in this way is important as it informs my second, related, argument in this chapter that the career experiences of LGB police officers are not homogeneous, but rather characterised by these changing contextual standpoints which influence their identity management strategies and career experiences, to varying degrees, at different points in their careers.

7.2 Size Matters: Exploring Effects of ‘Constabulary Type’

In this first part of the chapter, I discuss and show how constabulary ‘type’ – taking into consideration factors such as its size, geographical location and community characteristics – impacts the career experiences and workplace strategies of LGB police officers. A common error (I argue) in policing-related scholarship is the discussion of

‘the police’ in England and Wales as if it were a singular organisation. In reality, there are 43 distinct police constabularies, each with its own chief constable and resources, operating within a diverse geographically-determined territorial framework.

Given these situational factors, Fyfe (1991, p. 265), championing future scholarship that acknowledges the national, regional and local factors that underpin policing realities, argues that ‘policing cannot be understood in isolation from the contexts in which it, quite literally, takes place’. Showing the importance of considering situational factors in policing scholarship, Christensen and Crank (2001), in their study of non-urban policing in the USA, found that individual police departments carry their own set of sub-cultural beliefs, predispositions, stories and artefacts which impact and add variance to policing policies, practices and officers’ experiences. However, despite growing acknowledgement of the importance of geography and situational variances in policing debates, Mawby (2004) makes the bold claim that contemporary policing scholarship continues to be essentially a debate about urban policing.

Reflecting my earlier comments, Yarwood (2007) contends that the neglect of geographical/situational factors in policing scholarship is unlikely to be remedied while contemporary academics continue to follow in the tracks of ‘classic’ policing research. Instead, he calls for researchers to start forging tracks of their own. Because of this, I was keen to consider the potential impact of geographically determined ‘constabulary type’ within the current research. In what follows, I present some contextual findings from my national survey before moving on to explore, using insight from my interview participants, how differentiations between urban and rural policing can impact the career experiences of LGB police officers.

Figure 7.1 displays the results of some initial descriptive analysis that explores the effects of constabulary type on some of the key variables included within my national survey²⁰.

²⁰ Home Office police service strength statistics (31 March 2012) were used to derive size categories. Small constabulary = less than 1500 officers, mid-size constabulary = 1501 – 3000 officers, and large constabulary = 3001 officers or more.

Survey Response	Large-size		Mid-size		Small-size	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	%		%		%	
<i>Considered to be 'out' at work</i>	84.6	15.4	79.7	20.3	72.2	27.8
<i>Felt their constabulary does enough for LGB officers</i>	72.4	27.6	82.2	17.8	69.7	30.3
<i>Would feel comfortable talking to their line manager about LGB issues</i>	52.6	47.2	54.6	45.4	48.8	51.2
<i>Would feel comfortable disclosing their sexuality to members of the public</i>	76.4	23.6	68.2	31.8	60	40

Figure 7.1: Key Survey Responses by Constabulary Size

Overwhelmingly, it shows that experiences and perceptions of LGB police officers from large and mid-sized constabularies were more positive than those of officers from small constabularies. Similarly, a multiple regression analysis of the survey data (see appendix five) identified that even when controlling for all other factors, constabulary size is still statistically significantly associated with being ‘out’ at work – with those in smaller constabularies being over four times more likely to be not ‘out’ at work and two times less likely to disclose their LGB status to members of the LGB community in their police role compared to those in larger constabularies. I set about exploring reasons for these variances within my qualitative data, the main themes of which I present below.

7.2.1 Progressive v Non-progressive Constabularies

Participants in this research were very aware that different ‘types’ of constabularies exist and were able to identify and rationalise which type they were located in. Those from large constabularies described being part of a progressive organisation, one that often leads the way in terms of national police diversity debates and standards. Of course, this is somewhat logical given that both Scarman (1981) and Macpherson (1999) were the products of events that occurred within the Metropolitan Police, the largest constabulary in the UK. The perceived benefit of being part of a large constabulary was the strong, sincere leadership on diversity issues that senior officers in these constabularies demonstrate. As one participant acknowledged:

***PC Katharine, Large/City:** I don't know many other people in other forces. But I do get the feeling that I work for an organisation that is very progressive – whether or not they get it right is another issue. I do think there is more overt leadership here. The chief constable and chief officers go on the gay march during 'pride' and they are represented in all of the gay staff events and initiatives that we have. I get the impression that they really want to be a diverse organisation.*

In contrast, some participants from small constabularies described being part of a less progressive organisation, one that associates itself with 'traditional' policing and has been slow to respond proactively to diversity reform and associated initiatives. Yarwood (2007) highlights that the move towards centralised policing policy under New Labour ensured that all constabularies conform and are held accountable to a minimum standard – to which the plethora of Home Office guidance and policy that has been cited throughout this thesis provides testament. However, unlike those in large constabularies, those in smaller constabularies felt that little is done to go beyond this bare minimum and as such, felt that their constabulary's publicised commitment to making the working environment of minority officers truly inclusive and free from discrimination was insincere. This was thought to be fuelled by – ironically, as it was a key target of diversity reform to dilute and eradicate – a higher concentration/resonance of occupational-cultural values and beliefs amongst officers at all levels of these constabularies and an associated aim to preserve the 'traditional' policing heritage (as per my discussion of Breakwell, 1986 in chapter four). These views were reflected in the following extract from an officer located within a small constabulary, within which she differentiates between her small constabulary and 'hip' large constabularies.

***PC Leanne, Small/Rural:** So I would say now, recently, we have come on leaps and bounds ... And we are continually evaluating and seeing how we can become even better. But don't get me wrong, we're not at the forefront leading the way; we tend to just follow the*

bigger [constabularies]. And there are some things that we do that does make me question if it is part of ticking the box, rather than it being something that we really want to do or make happen. But as we develop, that is something that I have started and felt comfortable to do, asking why we are doing certain things. I think that our culture is sometimes at odds with our policies and procedures, and I think police culture in general is lagging behind the curve of more progressive leading forces. We are not like all 'cool hip' [large constabulary]; we are an organisation that is probably 75 per cent male and 25 per cent female, with a very small representation of BME officers, and a very small representation of LGBT officers.

7.2.2 Location, Location, Location

The contrast made by participants between 'progressive' and 'non-progressive' constabularies was underpinned by the geographical and community characteristics within which they are located. This reflects an observation by Mawby and Yarwood (2010) which debates policing geographies relating to the 'positioning' of the local bobby within their assigned communities. In this vein, participants from large constabularies described being situated in diversity-rich urban locations, often large cities, where they live and work in culturally diverse communities. As a consequence, they described being constantly immersed within a multicultural social milieu that equips them to 'practise' and show appreciation of police diversity standards, when interacting with the public but also with colleagues, almost unconsciously without a need for training or organisational direction. Further, these officers described being surrounded by colleagues from a wide range of cultural and demographic backgrounds, including a rich pool of LGB officers who felt comfortable being 'out' at work. Despite this, participants in these large constabularies described their private and professional lives being divorced, as the vastness and enormity of urban settings allowed them to work in one area/community where their work and private personae can remain completely separate.

***PC Ian, Large/City:** So what I like about working in the city is the anonymity – people don't care about you really, their lives are too busy and the city is too big for you to bump into people. It's nothing like being a country bumpkin. I come to work, put my uniform on and be a 'rougthy-toughy' cop for twelve hours. But then at the end of my shift, I take my uniform off, put my jeans and hoodie on, then jump on the tube home to my boyfriend where nobody in our area has a clue what I do. It's a bit like being a superhero [laughs].*

In contrast, participants from small constabularies described being situated within rural towns and villages that have not been exposed to diversity, especially homosexuality. Consequently, they reported being part of a constabulary that does not have to deal with issues of social diversity on a daily basis, and whose human resource composition often mirrors the demographically homogeneous rural communities that they serve. As such, the impetus for organisational reform is diluted in small constabularies, as social diversity is not seen as a pressing concern. The social composition underpinning non-urban policing was explored by Neal (2002) in her research into representations of racism within rural communities. She argued that rural locations are characterised by white, middle-class ideals and that common portrayals of rurality as 'civilised retreats' with a 'village mentality' are ways of legitimately reasserting a preference for 'sameness' amongst their inhabitants in the wake of post-colonial anxiety. Similarly, she observed an assumption within these rural settings that diversity/difference is a product of the urban environment which 'outsiders' bring and impose on them in their communities. Accordingly, she concludes that it is likely that all forms of difference, not just BME individuals, will experience resistance and rejection in such communities, even today. Here, Yvonne discussed the challenges of diversity in small constabularies highlighting the challenges that the socio-demographic characteristics of communities pose for LGB officers.

***Sergeant Yvonne, Small/Rural:** There is only so much organisations can do. Ultimately, they reflect the communities in*

which they are based. But it comes down to exposure – you know there are communities here that are in the back of beyond and haven't been exposed to diversity. They don't even have Sky or cable TV so they wouldn't have even seen TV programmes that portray characters from diverse groups. If you are in a large city [constabulary] you are dealing with a multicultural society, and so by seeing so much diversity you have totally different perspectives and perceptions compared to officers in a rural force, because you are seeing it every day.

7.2.3 Situational Consequences

Overall, participants from large/urban constabularies reported the most positive career experiences. They were most likely to disclose their sexuality at work (to both colleagues and members of the public); reported the most diverse and supportive working environments; and were represented across the rank structure. However, as my quantitative data found, it was officers within these constabularies that reported the highest level of discrimination and were more likely to be subject to more than one form of discrimination (see appendix five) – likely to be due to the increased visibility of LGB officers in these organisations. Those participants from mid-size constabularies reported a mixture of conflicting views due to constabularies of that type usually including both urban and rural spaces. More problematic and complex however, were the experiences and identity management strategies of those from small/rural constabularies. In particular, two unique challenges were discussed relating to a perceived reduced 'margin of error' and the potential for negative consequences when considering 'coming out' and utilising their sexual orientation at work.

First, participants discussed the small parameters of rural police work – often working with only a handful of colleagues; located in small village police stations/houses; and reliant on these small numbers of colleagues for almost all policing tasks, including response and backup when in dangerous situations. Accordingly, when considering the possibility of 'coming out' in this climate, participants described the need for an extended

period of first proving themselves as a “good police officer” so as to minimise and insulate against the propensity for an adverse response from these colleagues. As one participant noted, “you don’t have anywhere to hide when you are a rural bobby”. Similarly, the lack of other minority officers in smaller/rural constabularies also meant that these officers lacked the important support mechanisms of developing a positive LGB identity, making the process more psychologically challenging for officers in these settings. The challenges of ‘coming out’ faced by LGB officers working in small/rural settings were reflected in the following response.

***PC Conor, Small/Rural:** Well, I suppose you don’t really have the room in a rural setting to have colleagues that you don’t get on with. You know, I could be working on a shift and there are only two other people on that shift. So if you don’t get on, that makes it kind of difficult to do your job properly. So I suppose it means that people have to quickly accept who I am, and me them – we have a job to do. But it also allows them to see what I am really like quickly, and the fact that I am quite good at my job. But equally, if someone does have some opinions or hostility towards me and my sexual orientation, I know about it very quickly. But I just have to accept that, and try not to put it in their face. You have to remember, people in my force don’t come across gay people very often; I am the only out police officer in my station, either male or female. So people are going to be intrigued, you are going to get some resistance, people are going to be weird for a while but we all know that we have to get on, because there is such limited backup if things go wrong.*

The second factor that impacted the decision of participants from rural constabularies to ‘come out’ at work related to the challenges of working and living within the same communities – communities that are often non-progressive and hostile towards minority social groups. Because of this, some participants feared that by ‘coming out’ at work, knowledge of their sexual orientation was then likely to become public knowledge,

opening them up to a potential double form of rejection and hostility – from their work colleagues and from the communities where they live. This also could explain why, in my quantitative survey findings, LGB officers from small constabularies were less likely to disclose their LGB status to members of the public (see figure 7.1). Consequently, those participants who chose not to ‘come out’ at work in these settings were forced to continue this dual persona – or conflict between their virtual social identity and actual social LGB identity – in their personal lives, further intensifying the psychological risks highlighted by Burke in relation to this path. The following extract is from an LGB officer who started his career in a small/rural constabulary, but had recently moved to a large/city constabulary to work and live in a more progressive environment.

***Sergeant Frank, Large/City:** Well, I started my career working in a small town. The demographics were very sparse – low populations and the people get to know who you are in and out of the job. The word I use to describe it is incestuous – everybody knows your business. Before, my town was very religious and made up of the older generation. And you know, being gay is a negative in society, especially those societies. And having a uniform on doesn’t make any difference to that. As a result, the officers within the police have a similar mentality in those areas, because the force recruits people from these areas. That’s why I needed to get away. I couldn’t be myself and after a while that starts to make you a bit crazy and angry at the world.*

A final concern for participants within small/rural constabularies related to a fear of tokenism and heightened anxieties around positive action/discrimination in promotional and development processes (similar to those discussed in chapter six). Both of these concerns were heightened by the under-representation of minority groups within these types of constabularies. In terms of the former, some participants feared that – due to pressure on constabularies to look (from the outside at least) like sites of diversity post-Macpherson – by ‘coming out’ at work senior officers would single them out and call on

them to act as an ambassador for diversity. This fear was rooted in observations of how other minority officers had been treated, prompting some not to have ‘come out’ at work in order to avoid becoming a “*poster boy*” for diversity within their small/rural constabulary. In terms of the latter, participants felt that the lack of diversity within small/rural constabularies intensified claims of unfair promotion/development by colleagues because those officers who are ‘different’ are rare and therefore more easily identifiable. This was a challenge discussed by Emma.

Sergeant Emma, Small/Rural: Well, in a bigger force, you may have twenty people applying for an inspector’s post, eight of which are LGBT. Whoever gets that post, because they have such a wide diversity to pick from within that twenty, if an LGBT person gets that promotion, nobody is going to turn around and say that they only got it because they were gay, because there was seven other gays who could have got it. When it comes to our force, it’s a different picture; you may have three people applying – two blokes and one woman who happens to be gay – then if the female gets it there are three questions. Did she get it because she is female? Did she get it because she is gay? Or did she get it because she actually deserves it?

These added pressures on LGB officers from small/rural constabularies help explain why, as previously identified from my quantitative data, they were four times less likely to be ‘out’ at work and two times less likely to disclose their sexuality to members of the community when carrying out their police duties.

7.3 Different Areas of Police Work and their Consequences

In this second part of this chapter, I show how being located in different types and areas of police work impacts the career experiences and workplace identity strategies of LGB police officers. Just as Mawby (2004) argued that the classic police culture scholarship is

essentially a discussion of urban policing, I similarly argue that it is also predominantly a discussion of front-line uniformed policing. In reality, the policing mandate is much more complex. For example, the Metropolitan Police currently acknowledges twenty-six different branches of policing under their remit (Metropolitan Police, 2013), each of which is likely to have its own unique history, cultures and ways of working which are currently empirically overlooked.

This empirical oversight was observed as part of my own recent contribution to the Independent Police Commission. Led by Lord Stevens (an ex-Metropolitan Police Commissioner), I was invited to report my findings from this research project as part of a consideration of ‘policing futures’ (see Jones, 2014). The academic panel of the Commission, made up predominantly of eminent criminology and law professors, all met – along with me, a hugely intimidated and nervous PhD student – at an event hosted by the London School of Economics to engage in fruitful evidence-based discussion about future policing directions. At the eleventh hour of this event, someone raised the point that we had spent all of the time talking about front-line uniformed policing, overlooking other equally important areas of police work; a point which was agreed reflected an academic trend relating to policing research more generally. Similarly, when writing this chapter, I was frustrated by the lack of theoretical insight that I could draw upon to frame my discussion. I therefore contacted a leading policing scholar outlining my plight and I asked him politely to recommend some research that I might have overlooked. His reply was apologetic, highlighting that scholarship on police culture and practice has so far failed to reach a level of sophistication where it credibly acknowledges variances in different types of police work.

This is not to say that the existing evidence base is void of perspectives related to plainclothes/specialist policing. Indeed, there are a handful of studies that either exclusively look at the culture of Criminal Investigation Departments (CID) or are ‘generalist’ studies that allow for inferences to be drawn (e.g. Hobbs, 1991; Innes, 2003; Jackall, 2005; Maguire and Norris, 1994; Young, 1991). This research implies that the culture of these plainclothes areas of police work predominantly mirror that of uniformed

policing, but that certain aspects are heightened resulting in a ‘radicalized and concentrated version’ of it (Innes, 2003, p. 14). What is unknown however is (i) whether or not post-Macpherson police reform efforts have impacted plainclothes policing departments and their working cultures; and (ii) the occupational experiences of LGB officers working within these departments.

	<i>Uniformed</i>		<i>Plainclothes</i>	
	%		%	
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>% Considered to be 'out' at work</i>	79.7	20.3	76.9	23.1
<i>% who reported experiencing discrimination because of their sexuality</i>	16.6	83.4	21.7	78.3
<i>% who would feel comfortable disclosing their sexuality to members of the public</i>	76.5	23.5	66.38	33.62

Figure 7.2: Key Survey Responses by Area of Police Work

Data from my national survey of LGB police officers suggested that this claim that plainclothes police departments are underpinned by a more ‘concentrated’ occupational culture (ingredients of which I have previously argued are hostile towards LGB officers) continues to be valid today. For example, figure 7.2 shows how those LGB officers in plainclothes roles are less likely to be ‘out’ at work; are more likely to experience discrimination; and are less likely to disclose their sexual orientation to members of the public. These patterns remained even when controlling for the impact of other contextual factors (see regression results in appendices five and six). Specifically, uniformed officers were found to be over three times more likely to be ‘out’ at work and one and a half times more likely to think that their constabulary does enough to protect their LGB officers compared to plainclothes officers. However, providing an example of the methodological and epistemological complexity of conducting mixed method research, my qualitative

research directly contradicted these perspectives. In this next section, I therefore present some key themes from my qualitative findings which explored why, apart from some notable exceptions from those in rural constabularies, plainclothes policing was deemed a more attractive area of work amongst my participants²¹.

7.3.1 Getting through Uniformed Policing

Regardless of background or future career aims, all police officers are required to complete an initial two-year probation period in a uniformed role – usually emergency response and/or neighbourhood policing departments. As such, all participants in this research had experienced working in uniformed policing for at least two years of their careers.

This period was described by many of them as one of the most challenging of their careers causing many to actively choose not to ‘come out’ at work for all, or most, of their time in uniformed policing. Reasons for this related to the homogeneous nature of uniformed police work and concentrated manifestations of the policing occupational culture experienced by officers at this stage of their careers, both of which were seen to go against and challenge the idea of diversity and ‘difference’ in policing that underpinned the contemporary reform rhetoric of post-Macpherson policing. I now deconstruct these explanatory viewpoints in turn, most of which reflect some of the existing empirical ‘classics’ on policing occupational culture.

First, participants stressed how everyone in uniformed policing is treated ‘the same’; the biography and previous achievements of individuals when they enter a uniformed role is irrelevant. Instead, uniformed officers are expected to engage in, and conform to, a standardised regime where senior officers tell them what they should do, how they should

²¹ I acknowledge that a differentiation between ‘uniformed’ and ‘plainclothes’ policing can be seen as over simplistic. In reality, what this is referring to is a differentiation between operational policing and detective work, a divide that is reflected in the professional titles of police officers (e.g. police constable or detective constable). However, given that the majority of my participants used this uniformed/plainclothes binary, I consider it sensible to reflect this in the representation of my findings. However, in practice, I acknowledge that some elements of uniformed policing can be specialist and require similar skills to plainclothes police work, and vice versa.

do it, where they should be and how they should behave. In this vein, when talking about their initial police training and two-year probation period, participants reflected on strong personal feelings that they were being “*programmed*” into becoming “*blueprints*” of stereotypical police officers, described by one as being “*turned into police robots*”. As a direct consequence, the potential for LGB officers to make a distinct contribution, or to draw on the benefits of previous life experiences in order to make a bespoke contribution to uniformed police work, is restricted. As one participant observed:

PC Jay, Large/City: It is funny how, when you start, everybody is treated as a blank canvas. So the fact that I was a gay man, that I had done huge amounts of travel and been a professional musician, that didn't matter – you are new to the job, so you are a numpty and you know nothing.

As discussed in chapter four, the nature of uniformed police work was also described as physically challenging, often violent, confrontational and emotionally-laden – traits that have previously been used to discredit minority officers in traditional police work (e.g. Brown and Heidensohn, 2000; Burke, 1994). As a consequence, it was in uniformed roles that participants observed the highest concentration of overt occupational-cultural-fuelled behaviour, particularly expressions of machismo. Many reported feeling uncomfortable and out of place in these situations or alternatively admitted to feeling pressured to mirror these cultural expectations in their own behaviour in order to fit in. Some specialist areas of uniformed police work were deemed to be so concentrated with machismo behaviour that participants warned against LGB and other minority officers from considering these areas of police work. Examples given include firearms units, territorial response and the Matrix Unit²². Yet, as argued by Westmarland, (2001a), areas of policing do exist where officers are required to be heavy-handed and aggressive because of the nature of the crime/scenario that they are responding to, but entry into them is purely voluntary and in no way forced upon minority officers as part of their compulsory duties. Despite this,

²² A specialist public order response team responsible for the policing of large-scale public disorder (e.g. riots).

reflecting my discussion in chapter six, some participants still felt that they had been able to make a contribution to uniformed police work, or ‘hard’ policing as I previously referred to it, but warned that the integration of ‘soft’ skills associated with LGB officers into these areas of policing is challenging due to initial resistance from colleagues. The following extract is from a participant who was asked to contrast her experiences of uniformed and plainclothes policing.

***Matt:** What is the difference to you as a police officer in terms of the two different departments?*

***DS Zoe, Large/City:** Now, in uniformed response, I am a lot more butch than I am normally. I become a lot more tomboyish and I'm a lot more ready for a fight than I am normally. And that's not really my style at all. Whereas in a [plainclothes] environment, I want to build up a lot more of a rapport with prisoners, and not just be the heavy. I'm more myself in a CID environment whereas at the moment, I just won't make myself look vulnerable because of the environment that I am in. Whereas in CID, you can show the softer side to your personality. But in front-line policing, you can't really be like that. Because ultimately, the rest of my team need to have trust in the fact that I can go into a situation, be strong, and deal with it. So you can't really afford to have a vulnerable day.*

Next, as reflected in Zoe's response above, participants described the working culture of uniformed policing as one fuelled by an ethos of ‘fitting in’, along with the assumption that those who do not ‘fit in’ are not good police officers. Throughout this thesis I have shown how team synergy, team protections and the provision of emotional support by team members is a central requirement and expectation of police work, particularly uniformed police work. But further, my participants described how the boundaries of these expectations and behaviour are not restricted to official policing spaces, but also cross over into their private lives as teams often socialise with each other after work due to the anti-social nature and patterns of shift work. But again, these off-duty interactions

were portrayed as fertile ground for the promotion of occupational-cultural expectations that dilute the potential for individualism, unique contributions and diversity, but instead often discouraged participants from disclosing their sexual orientation at work due to a fear of rejection from their team. The nature of this team ethos is summed up below.

***Sergeant Joshua, Mid-size:** When I started in uniform, I was much younger and I was single. The culture of the uniform response was doing everything together, going out all the time, lots of drinking, working together, playing together – that becomes your unit, your family. One of my teammates actually lived with me for a few weeks when he broke up with his girlfriend.*

Of course, a discussion of uniformed policing cannot overlook the symbolic and facilitating role that the actual police uniform plays in the above debates. Linked to the ‘blank canvas’ claims above, participants highlighted how the iconographic, standard issue black and white police uniform, which has remained virtually unchanged since 1829, has a visual consequence; all police officers look more or less the same. This was discussed by Brown and Heidensohn (2000) in relation to how the police uniform defeminises women officers and how, coupled with rules on make-up and how women officers should style their hair, it makes them conform to a restrictive masculine police standard. Interestingly, a small number of participants who were ‘out’ at work described how they wear a small rainbow flag pin badge on the lapel of their uniform as a useful way of differentiating themselves and making their sexual orientation visible to colleagues and members of the public. However, for those officers who are not ‘out’ at work, the standardisation provided by the uniform proved helpful for the successful execution and management of a ‘dual persona’. Described by one as akin to a performer’s ‘costume’, for these ‘non-out’ officers, the police uniform helped them to ‘perform’ the role of a heterosexual police officer at work, based on police cultural and wider societal expectations/standards of how police officers should behave. This dramaturgical analogy of the police uniform was similarly discussed by Brown and Heidensohn (2000) in relation to female officers’ performance of masculinity at work. In this research, the

uniform facilitated the transition between officers' performed virtual social identity and their actual social LGB identity by providing a physical point at which one begins and the other ends (and vice versa). Equally, Latimer (2000) found that the traditional nursing uniform was not just a practical resource but also a symbolic tool which psychologically prepared and facilitated nurses to exhibit behaviour that is traditionally associated with the caring professional.

Even with the above 'challenges', a career in uniformed policing was not ruled out by all LGB officers in this research. Despite acknowledging likely hurdles, some felt that the excitement associated with uniformed policing – such as “*chasing bad guys in fast cars*” – outweighed the challenges and potential resistance. Further, a mitigating argument was that because all officers have to complete their initial two years in uniformed police roles, the environment in these uniformed departments is quite transient. Thus, although some admitted to experiencing resistance from individual colleagues because of their sexual orientation, they found comfort and emotional strength in the realisation that they would be unlikely to work with that individual for any considerable period of time.

7.3.2 Plainclothes Policing

Plainclothes policing was described, in contrast to the above, as a “*Mecca*” for LGB officers who are often “*itching to end their probation and become a detective*”. Reasons for this relate to the specialist nature of plainclothes police work, the associated working environment and the demographics of officers who typically enter these roles. Collectively, these factors create a mature, non-judgmental environment where LGB officers feel comfortable in injecting their own life histories and tailoring their role and working practices in a way that best suits their working preferences. Some of these factors will now be discussed below.

Participants described how the environments in plainclothes police departments directly contrasted the hierarchical and paramilitary nature of uniformed police work. Termed by Bayley (1994, p. 57) as the ‘privileges of detectives’, these departments gave LGB

officers a great deal more autonomy and control over their workload, encouraged them to contribute ideas and, of course, did not require them to wear a uniform. Not having to wear a uniform was important for participants, as it was a way for them (and their colleagues) to inject some of their own personality into their working environment. For example, one male detective described how he often wore vibrantly coloured shirts to work, a style which had become the subject of jest between him and his colleagues. This adds a new, personal and internal organisational element to claims by Manning (1980) who argued that the plainclothes component of detective work allowed for a neutral identity – referring to how, in the absence of a visual cue (i.e. the traditional police uniform), detectives can go about their roles without being identified by members of the public as police officers at all. So, whereas this neutral element of plainclothes police work allows officers to engage in covert operational police work, LGB officers use this neutral identity to craft a distinctive workplace personality amongst their colleagues. Similarly, because most plainclothes officers have an office base within constabularies, participants working in that area of policing reported including pictures of their partners and children on their desks to help craft a positive LGB identity amongst their colleagues – something that is not possible in uniformed policing due to the unpredictability of shift patterns and the number of uniformed officers. Importantly, plainclothes roles also allow officers to work more sociable hours, with participants in these roles describing how they mainly work 9-5, unless there is a major incident, which paved the way for a healthier work/life balance. This allowed these officers to have friendships outside of the job (in contrast to uniformed officers who described how the nature of shift work meant that they often ended up socialising with colleagues) which, consequently, diluted the concentration and parameters of the traditional police occupational-cultural in these areas of police work. The following extracts are examples from participants of the distinguishing factors of plainclothes specialist police work.

***DS Joe, Large/City:** It is massively different coming into CID and specialist roles. You become less and less ‘policey’, which might sound odd. But at the start of your career, it is all about doing things that you are told, complying with things and being public-facing and*

confrontational. Then, you go into your first investigative role, and you find that you are doing less fighting and more thinking – and then as you specialise that becomes the case more and more. So now, I forget that I am what the public would see as police, because here it is more of a think tank kind of place, where people make suggestions to senior officers and it is welcomed. It is all about first-name terms, open discussion, thinking outside of the box and using intuition and gut instincts – which in other parts of policing is probably frowned upon.

DCI Wayne, Large/City: *Well, CID is given a lot more freedom, because they're not responding to immediate emergencies. If you are a uniformed officer, you have to start your shift at a set time, because you are scheduled to be in a car patrolling from that time and there needs to be 24-hour coverage, 365 days a year. In CID, you are treated a bit more like a grown-up, in terms of you're assigned a case which is being brought in overnight, and then you go out and investigate it. And in CID you don't get messed around as much. For example, if there was a sudden student demonstration tomorrow, uniformed officers would get a call to say that their shift had been changed and they had to come in straight away. Whereas in CID, we would be responsible for investigating what happened at that student demonstration the next day. Also, CID requires a lot more independent working. So when you walk into a CID office, you can instantly see that the culture is different from traditional uniformed policing.*

PC Eric, Large/City: *I really enjoyed my time in CID. It was long days. And interestingly, it was kind of a step back, being in a new department, because people started asking me loads of questions again because I was the only gay in their village, and they didn't*

understand. But the atmosphere was very tolerant, possibly more tolerant than what uniformed response was. But I suppose it is because in CID, they deal with a lot of sexual cases, so they are constantly with victims and offenders talking about their sexual behaviour and practices. So I suppose, because of that, nothing really phases them. Whereas when you are on response, if someone starts talking about sex, it's a bit weird, and you are not quite immune to it as if you were in CID. But also, in CID you can wear your own clothes, and you can inject a bit of your personality into how you look whereas on response, wearing a uniform totally takes away your personality – the only personality I can have is putting a bit of gel in my hair. Whereas when I was in CID, I could portray my personality through what I wore. It was quite interesting.

The nature of plainclothes police work and the associated intellectual skills, education and analytical competencies required of officers in these areas was also identified as an important reason why LGB officers are drawn to these areas of police work. Innes (2003), in his research into murder detectives, described crime investigation as a complex form of ‘sense-making’ requiring detectives to ‘routinely identify, interpret, and construct information, sometimes contested ... derived from an array of sources, attributing particular legal and social meanings to the incident concerned’ (pp. 6-7). The increased intellectual and ‘critical’ mindset required for plainclothes police work was further reinforced by my participant below.

DCI Phillip, Mid-size: *And I think it's down to, as I said earlier, level of education. You know, anyone who had any intelligence about them, and a creative mind, is not going to stay walking the beat, driving cars around, being a traditional bobby, because it's not going to be a challenge to them. To go into CID, you have to have a brain; for example, if you're putting a case file together, you need to have excellent written work. You'll be presenting your cases to*

Crown Court, you'll be interviewing some very dangerous individuals, and it's all about cracking a puzzle and a conundrum. So you instantly have that difference in intellectual skill in capacity compared to most uniformed officers.

The importance of these increased intellectual and educational competencies amongst plainclothes officers relates to my discussion in chapter four, where I highlighted how educational attainment is a persuasive determinant of an individual's appreciation for diversity, respect for difference and reflexive abilities (see Ohlander et al., 2005). Consequently, participants from plainclothes departments discussed the benefit of working with colleagues who do not take things at face value, have the intellectual maturity to work with LGB colleagues without fear or perceived threat and who get to know a colleague over an extended period before making judgments about their character or professional proficiencies. Because of this, these officers felt more comfortable in disclosing their sexual orientation from the outset due to a belief that it was significantly unlikely to provoke an adverse reaction.

PC John, Mid-size: *Well, if I'm honest I'm a bit of a policing snob, and you probably find this with other detectives. I work now alongside people who use their brains, and that is the reason why they are here – people who think and don't make assumptions and don't take things at face value. Otherwise, they wouldn't be doing this part of the job. Here, in CID, I know that if anyone was surprised with something that I said, for example if I said I was gay again for the first time, I know that they would think about it, there would be no sort of knee-jerk response ... so generally, I would like to think that I work in a part of the organisation where people have a brain, where they realise that sexuality has no bearing on the professional setting, so move on. So there is an outward difference between uniformed and CID departments – and I would certainly be more cautious around people in response, traffic and firearms, just*

because they have an image to uphold there, whereas in detective work that is less so. For me, that Life on Mars image I can say doesn't exist in this force. And the only thing that shines out in CID here is that it is full of people who consider things properly before making judgments and who want to know more about stuff before making assumptions. So it's the ideal place really for someone in my position.

That is not to say that participants were unanimous in their praise for plainclothes departments. In fact, providing another example of how geography and 'constabulary type' can impact LGB officers' experiences, and supporting my quantitative data, some plainclothes officers from small constabularies provided accounts of non-progressive plainclothes policing that reflected insight from previous literature.

Sergeant Yvonne, Small/Rural: *Well, I've worked in a few departments over the last few years and CID was one that wasn't particularly diverse or welcoming. You know, it is very much a boys' club, they work long hours, and they have a bit of camaraderie between them – so if you are anything out of the ordinary you don't really fit in there. But things like neighbourhood policing, or ordinary front-line policing, there didn't seem to be an issue. The weird thing about CID is that they are part of the police but they are not part of it at the same time. They seem to get away with just doing their own thing.*

Of course, my discussion in this section has been focussed predominantly on insight from my qualitative participants, whose views and experiences directly contradicted the quantitative data collected from my national survey of LGB police officers. This is not problematic as the aim of pursuing mixed method research is not to generate data that is complementary (Bryman, 2008; Hesse-Biber, 2010; Mason, 2006). But it does indicate

that this is a complex area requiring further exploration and therefore this mixed insight provides a rationale for further empirical attention in the future.

7.4 LGB Officers of Rank

In this final part of this chapter, I explore the career experiences of those LGB officers with 'rank', highlighting ways in which their professional authority and positioning within the professional rank structure impacts their contextual working environment and associated LGB identity strategies.

Police constabularies across England and Wales are hierarchical organisations characterised by a nine-stage ranking structure from police constable to chief constable (eleven in the Metropolitan Police). As such, Jefferson (1990, p. 62) described police officers as 'disciplined agents expected to follow orders within an organised bureaucracy with militaristic leanings'. Marks and Flemming (2004, p. 785) highlight how police officers of all ranks attach deep cultural significance to this hierarchical structure, describing police environments as 'havens of discipline, restraint and authority in a milieu of chaos'. Similarly, research by Adlam (2002) and Silvestri (2007) has shown how police environments are characterised by rituals and routines that serve to ensure that officers know their place within this ranking structure and that officers quickly come to learn the expectations and behavioural norms that are required for their position. However, despite growing understandings of the official roles, responsibilities and histories of senior officers in contemporary policing (e.g. Adlam and Villiers, 2003; Charman et al., 1999; Loader and Mulcahy, 2001; Wall, 1998), there has been little research into the personalities behind these senior positions and how personal demographics and related personal histories impact their roles and career experiences.

Modelled data from my national survey of LGB officers found that rank did represent a statistically significant factor when all other factors were kept constant. For example, officers in lower ranks were nearly three times more likely to be 'out' at work compared

to higher-ranking officers and, similarly, were one and a half times more likely to ‘come out’ to members of the LGB community in the course of their duties (see appendix five). These trends were mirrored by my qualitative data. In this section, I therefore discuss how the hierarchical nature of policing has presented unique occupational challenges to the LGB officers with rank in this research. Predominantly focussed on those with senior rank (i.e. superintendent and above), I explore ways in which their career experiences and identity management strategies are characterised by a complex mix of altered contextual settings, unique protections and additional pressures and scrutinies.

7.4.1 Altered Workplace Settings

LGB officers in senior management roles felt that the nature and context of their working environment contrasted significantly with their operational subordinates whom they saw as carrying out “*real police work*” on the streets. In contrast, these officers described their work as predominantly office-based, chairing meetings to steer the strategic direction of the constabulary and meeting with stakeholders and members of the public in an ‘official’ capacity. The significance of this was that the working environment and experiences of their subordinates was seen to be influenced by collective rituals, bonds and behavioural expectations that are derived from a police occupational culture (as discussed in chapter four). In direct contrast, their working environment was characterised by their personal relationships with the small pool of senior colleagues that make up the management board of their constabulary. As such, I found that the individual management and negotiation of sexual orientation amongst my senior LGB officer participants was moulded by individual histories and personal synergies between each of these individuals, rather than by a collective management culture per se. This is not to say that culture is void from the higher echelons of policing, but rather it exists in different forms (see Reuss-Ianni and Ianni, 2005). This was reflected in Luke’s discussion.

ChiefSuper Luke, Mid-size: Yes totally. And that’s not to say that I wasn’t authentic before. I just had multiple layers and masks, and was someone that I thought a police leader should be like. In a way, I replicated behaviour of senior officers that I thought was

successful. But what coming out has allowed me to do is, when appropriate, show a caring side. I don't believe in mischief-making, in terms of playing up the gay card if you like, because I think that probably just causes more damage. But I think what I am giving myself permission to do now is to access the softer side and use it when appropriate, access my creative side when I think that is appropriate, and I do have different tools that I bring to the senior management team, which I wouldn't necessarily have brought to the table before, because actually I thought they might have perceived them as weaknesses, or a little bit left field, and all those kinds of things.

However, a further distinguishing factor discussed by senior LGB officers is that their role and workplace parameters are not confined to their own constabulary, but extend to national and international settings as a consequence of their involvement within senior officer associations (e.g. ACPO), interactions with a diverse portfolio of stakeholders, as well as the wider internationalisation of policing frameworks (Loader, 2014; Reiner, 2010). As such, 'colleagues' of senior officers are not just those from their constabularies, but also from external organisations, all of which have different histories, experiences and opinions of homosexuality and represent organisations that have varying positions on equality and diversity. Thus, given that the role of senior officers is to network and build relationships with these external stakeholders, participants described how the 'career related costs' (Clair et al., 2005) of 'coming out' in these settings included the potential to cause professional alienation, but also to damage the future strategic inclusion of the constabulary that they are representing. Consequently, a situation was observed in this research (not observed in any of the other LGB policing literature) where some senior officers were 'out' to colleagues in their own constabularies, but were strategically not forthcoming with this information when working within broader, external settings. Some of these factors were reflected in the following response from a senior officer.

***DetSuper Byron, Large/City:** I think it is a lot harder for a PC to come out, and I don't envy the guys who come out in the lower ranks. But the thing is with lower-ranking officers, they can focus more on the personal journey, and are not tied into the organisational journey. Whereas for men, and for senior men, to come out, it is quite difficult. And for senior officers as well, the working environment isn't just local, it's national. So when you go to conferences, and collaborative meetings, you also have the rumours of who is gay there and who isn't. So it adds another dimension. For example, there is a chief superintendent in a small [constabulary] that I had heard might be gay, and I went to an event where he was speaking. I couldn't tell he was gay and he didn't mention it, which I thought was very interesting. There are also other more senior officers than me who are gay in other [constabularies], who I would like to have as mentors or role models. But for the life of me, I wouldn't know how to go about that, or even if things like that are done. You know, going up to someone at a conference and saying, "hello my name is Byron and I am gay" is a bit forward for someone you have never met before. And there is also the fear, which I know other senior officers have, that if you identify yourself as gay and embrace that label, you might reduce your influence with other people within the organisation because actually then they'll just see you as a campaigner.*

As a consequence of holding rank, participants also described their workplace environment as lonely and isolated at times. This was because of the added scrutiny of senior officers (both internally and externally), the professional power that they hold over others within their organisation and the requirement for them to symbolically 'lead' their constabulary. Being a senior officer was described by one participant as akin to playing a game of chess, requiring utmost scrutiny and contemplation before making a move that could have grave consequences for their careers. A human consequence of this was that

senior officers in this research found it hard to develop friendships, and thus failed to receive some of the important peer support previously associated with negotiating a positive LGB identity at work. As one senior officer discussed:

***Matt:** So do you find it difficult to form friendships with people within the organisation because you are a senior officer?*

***DeputyChief Victoria, Mid-size:** It depends how you define friendships, in terms of acquaintances, people you'd go for a drink with. But in terms of proper close friends, I would say I had no more than four or five people. It is very challenging though and I am mindful of who I socialise with at work, and here, I would say that there is only one couple that me and my partner would go out with and socialise with outside work, and that is only very occasionally. But I have been here twelve months and I am the deputy chief constable, so it's difficult for people to form that friendship with someone maybe of a much greater rank.*

7.4.2 Protections of Rank: The 'Management Bubble'

Despite the added pressures that their senior roles bring, my participants with rank who were 'out' at work acknowledged the protections that their senior status affords them from potential prejudice or discrimination from colleagues because of their sexuality – termed by some as a “*management bubble*”. As participants' rank increased, so did the assurance that they were 'protected' from potential hostilities and adverse treatment, due to a parallel increase in professional detriment that they could inflict on those who dared to direct bigoted behaviour towards them. The essence of this 'management bubble' was aptly summarised by Peter.

***DCI Peter, Mid-size:** Yes, well it's the ability to flex the stripes and pips as it were. You feel more protected. As you climb higher up the ranks you feel that fewer and fewer people are going to do anything*

to cross you, because you have the rank to back it up. But when you are a PC, you are so young in service, you again always feel like you've got something to prove. But you also know that you haven't got the comfort blanket of rank.

This notion of a punitive gradient was dominant within my data, with those 'out' middle-ranking LGB officers discussing how they are still regularly challenged by subordinate officers as a way of testing their suitability, as LGB, for a management position within the organisation. These challenges were often overlooked or confronted by these middle-ranked participants on a one-to-one basis with the culprits. In contrast, the most senior officer interviewed as part of this research acknowledged the protections that their senior rank affords and claimed that – when asked whether or not they had been the target of any hostilities from colleagues because of their sexual orientation – *“they wouldn't do it, they wouldn't dare out of fear of losing their jobs”*. Recent research by Haarr and Morash (2013) which examined the effect of rank on police women coping with discrimination and harassment has particular explanatory utility here. They found that middle-ranking women officers were more likely to use 'straight talk' (p. 7) by challenging adverse behaviour directly or rely on their male allies to similarly challenge behaviour, whereas senior-ranked officers were found to be more likely to use unions, legal provisions or formal grievance procedures. As a consequence however, Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (2005) highlight the growth of a 'management cop code' amongst lower-ranking officers who are aware of this punitive gradient and therefore abide by the criteria of prescribed behavioural rules when in the presence of senior officers so as to minimise their risk of being professionally reprimanded. Figure 7.3 summarises Reuss-Ianni and Ianni's observation of traits that characterise a 'cop code' and the 'management cop code' within an American police department in the 1980s. Although unlikely to be valid today, it is a fascinating insight into how the policing mindset can respond to policing hierarchies.

The 'Cop Code'	The 'Management Cop Code'
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watch out for your partner first and then the rest of the guys working that tour 2. Don't give up another cop 3. Show balls 4. Be aggressive when you have to, but don't be too eager 5. Don't get involved in anything in another guy's sector 6. Hold up your end of the work 7. If you get caught off base, don't implicate anybody else 8. Make sure the other guys know if another cop is dangerous or 'crazy' 9. Don't trust a new guy until you've checked him out 10. Don't tell anyone else more than they have to know; it could be bad for them 11. Don't talk too much or too little 12. Don't leave work for the next tour 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protect your ass 2. Don't make waves 3. Don't give them too much activity 4. Keep out of the way of any boss outside of your command 5. Don't seek favours just for yourself 6. Know your bosses 7. Don't do a boss's job for him 8. Don't trust a boss to look out for your interest

Figure 7.3: Summary of Reuss-Ianni and Ianni's (2005) Differentiation between 'Cop Code' and 'Management Cop Code'

It would be misleading, however, to represent the 'management bubble' as a completely positive concept for LGB officers. In fact, participants noted two adverse consequences that it brings. First, despite providing a deterrent to lower-ranking officers who alter and manage potential adverse behaviour according to the presence of senior officers, this does create a potential environment of insincerity for LGB officers of rank, who start to question the sincerity of how subordinates behave and talk around them and become sensitive to what they are likely to be saying behind their backs or when not in their immediate vicinity. Many of my middle-ranking participants described how this started to

make them feel paranoid and insecure, to the extent that they became frustrated about the unknown. Tom provided a good example.

***Inspector Tom, Large/City:** The team I manage is quite big, I think there are about forty of them all together. Every morning, I come in and have a briefing with one of my sergeants and then come out and address the whole team to establish the priorities for that day. I often get some banter and cheek thrown back at me at some point during this, especially from the more cocky ones in my team. Sometimes, I go back to my office and try to secretly listen out to hear anything else being said about me. Other times, I go back to my office and spend half the morning being frustrated by a joke that was thrown at me, replaying it in my head and questioning if it was just banter or whether it was more of a personal attack. As you can see, it makes me a bit crazy sometimes; you just don't know [laughs].*

Second, as a consequence of this insincerity, senior officer participants feared that they were often provided with a distorted insight into the health of operational policing environments. This was another form of frustration for these officers who felt that this distorted insight was counterproductive to their professional responsibility to detect and identify solutions for areas of policing where negative occupational-cultural behaviour is rife. In order to overcome this, one participant discussed how they had started to make unannounced visits to different areas of their constabulary so that they could engage with and observe officers in their natural policing settings. By catching officers “off guard” in this way, the participant felt that they could have real – rather than staged – conversations with officers, which often involved talking about aspects of their personal life including their sexuality.

7.4.3 Disclosure under Scrutiny

I also found in this research that senior LGB police officers are faced with added pressures to ‘come out’ at work which go beyond the personal and autonomous ‘process’

experienced by the majority of their lower-ranking peers. These pressures are linked to a form of professional morality where the decision not to ‘come out’ and to pursue a career characterised by a conflicting virtual and actual social LGB identity at work, has the potential to cause detriment to their professional authority and integrity as well as the strategic and organisational health of the constabularies for which they are responsible.

One of these pressures is caused by an increased scrutiny that is placed on senior officers, both by the media and by accountability mechanisms within policing itself. On a basic level, this is encapsulated well by Wayne who talked about how scrutiny becomes more intense as officers climb the ranking structure.

***DCI Wayne, Large/City:** It definitely gets worse. As you climb the ranks, there becomes less and less of you in that position and you become more and more high-profile. If you think there are 450 chief inspectors, there are only 150 superintendents, after that there are only 50 chief superintendents, so people soon start to see who you are. So you really start to have to watch what you do, what you say, where you go, everything. So to me, it raises the question of, have I reached as high as I want to go? Because they really do want to be in a position where I'm intensely scrutinised, both internally and externally. As you get higher and higher, there are more restrictions on your life and your behaviour and lots of other things.*

Interestingly, all the senior officers who participated in this research had at some point been placed under professional investigation as a result of their involvement in high-profile cases that had attracted considerable media coverage and scrutiny. These investigations had placed pressure on these senior officers to ‘come out’, or to be more open about their sexual orientation than they had previously been, due to a fear that the media would “*dig up dirt*” on their personal life that would ‘out’ them, without their permission, in a sensationalist way. I provided an example of this in chapter five when discussing examples of when officers had been forced ‘out’ at work.

Another consequence of climbing the policing hierarchy is a proportionate increase in bureaucratic ‘vetting’ at each level in order to allow officers access to increasingly sensitive or restricted information as an element of their new role. As part of this vetting process, officers are required to answer questions about their personal lives, which become more in-depth and personal as the level of vetting increases. This was, and continues to be, a cause of concern for those participants who choose not to ‘come out’ at work, as this decision moved from being a personal one to being a possible form of illegal misrepresentation or professional misconduct by omitting details of their LGB status within the vetting process.

***DCI Peter, Mid-size:** ... but it did cause me a lot of stress not being out, especially being a senior officer because I had to be vetted to quite a high level, and I had to bend the truth a lot on those vetting forms so that I didn't out myself, which didn't sit easily on my conscience. And that whole process was very stressful because vetting is a review of your credibility really, so if they find something that you haven't disclosed, you don't get the job, and there is a black mark on your reputation. But saying that, it wouldn't be your sexuality that would stop you getting the job, it would be your lack of transparency throughout the process, which is where the difficulty was for me, psychologically anyway.*

Finally, some senior-ranking participants discussed the moral conflict about the personal nature of their sexual orientation and their professional responsibilities as a senior officer. These concerns reflected recent academic debates of whether it should be the role of senior police officers to be ‘leaders’ or ‘managers’ (e.g. Dobby et al., 2004; Neyroud and Beckley, 2003; Pagon, 2003). The consensus within academic discussions of police diversity reform is that senior officers play a pivotal and symbolic role in driving organisational change (Brown and Woolfenden, 2011; Hall et al., 2009; Home Office, 2005; Sklansky, 2006) and as such should embrace ‘transformational’ leadership styles

(Dobby et al., 2004). In this regard, one senior-ranking participant discussed their initial struggle to negotiate their identity as an LGB officer and as a ‘leader’ – in particular they questioned whether being LGB meant that they should take the lead on all issues of diversity as part of their role. Eventually, they came to the conclusion that in order to remain professional, their role should be to support, rather than to lead such groups and initiatives. This is reflected in her following response.

***DeputyChief Victoria, Mid-size:** When I arrived here, I did some initial research and found out that we have SPECRUM in force, but I have to say that other than knowing who is responsible for it, I have had very little to do with it. But I have never been asked to do much with them. When I arrived, the women’s forum came to see me and said how I could help them – so I do some stuff with them. But even with the women’s network, I am very clear that I am here to help and support, not to lead that for them. And it would be inappropriate for me to do so.*

Alternatively, those senior officer participants who choose not to disclose their LGB status at work described being morally conflicted by this decision in relation to what this might imply in regard to the credibility of their ‘leadership’. For example, a study by the Home Office on the expectation and impact of police leadership (Dobby et al., 2004) found that police officers want their leaders to be inspirational and to have the ability to make them feel proud of their constabulary. In contrast, senior officers who were not ‘out’ in this research questioned whether this personal decision was symbolic and restricted their ability to be both inspirational and transformational leaders. This was an issue highlighted by some of my lower-ranking participants, some of whom talked about knowing that some of their senior officers were LGB, but that they chose not to disclose this at work. These officers expressed disappointment in this and felt that it was symbolic of their constabulary’s commitment to diversity and contemporary police reform. Consequently, these officers felt uninspired to ‘come out’ at work themselves.

7.5 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to take the main themes from my earlier discussion of LGB officers' experiences in previous chapters and to 'tease out' (Hobbs, 1991) examples of how variations in policing environments and practices can influence and create variances in how they manage their sexuality at work. Specifically, within this chapter I have provided examples and discussion of how the career experiences of LGB officers are influenced by their standpoint within different 'types' of constabularies across England and Wales; different areas of police work; and different ranks within the police hierarchy. These discussions have shown that the experiences of LGB police officers are not monolithic, but rather are part of a nuanced pool of complex situational factors that LGB officers must simultaneously negotiate.

I began by discussing how different 'types' of constabulary provide varying opportunities and challenges for LGB officers. I found that clear differences existed between the workplace climate and experiences of LGB officers in large/urban constabularies compared to those in small/rural constabularies – a difference that is influenced by their geographical positioning and the socio-demographic composition of communities within which they are positioned. For example, I found that as a consequence of social diversity, there is a demand for large/city constabularies to be sites of 'difference'. As a consequence, LGB officers situated within this climate reported progressive and supportive workplace environments, although my quantitative data found that because of the increased visibility of diversity in these constabularies they also reported higher levels of discrimination. In contrast, I found that small/rural constabularies are often situated within socially homogeneous communities, ones that value their homogeneity and see diversity as a disruptive threat to this ideal. As a consequence, demand for diversity in these small/rural constabularies is considerably diluted – reflected in my findings that LGB officers in these settings are less likely to be 'out' at work, are less likely to feel comfortable to draw upon their sexuality as an operational resource and are more likely to feel isolated from colleagues and members of the public in which they often live and work.

Next, I showed how different areas of police work provide different situational frameworks for LGB officers to navigate their LGB identity at work. Conflicting with my quantitative data, my qualitative data found that uniformed policing poses the biggest challenges for LGB officers today, due to a perceived higher concentration of occupational-cultural behaviour and an associated requirement for ‘sameness’ – the kryptonite of ‘difference’. I found plainclothes policing, on the other hand, to be the preferred area of police work for my participants due to its ability to allow a professional LGB identity to be forged and because of the intellectual requirements of plainclothes policing work that complement and encourage tolerance and respect amongst colleagues. However, because of the conflict between my qualitative and quantitative data, I flagged the need for further in-depth research on this neglected area of policing studies.

Finally, I outlined how the hierarchical nature of policing impacts the career experiences and strategies of LGB officers. My survey data found that senior officers are three times less likely to be ‘out’ at work compared to their subordinates. My qualitative insight suggests that this is due to senior officers experiencing a contextual workplace framework that contrasts greatly from their rank and file subordinates and found that they are faced with additional standards and expectations that add to the complexity of negotiating an LGB identity at work. Despite this, I also found that senior officers are protected by the punitive powers that increased rank affords which in some ways insulates them from potential prejudice and discrimination but also creates insecurities and anxieties that are unique to senior LGB officers.

This chapter also provided some indirect examples of how sexuality is gendered. For example, in Zoe’s discussion of uniformed police work it was not clear whether she was being ‘butch’ and ‘heavy’ to overcompensate for her gender or for her sexuality, both of which have been historically discreditable traits in policing (Brown, 1998a; Burke, 1994). This adds to the complexity of researching and theorising sexualities but reflects growing calls for empiricism that acknowledges the intersectional nature of demographic identities, their manifestation and their impact (Nagel, 2001; Taylor et al., 2010). This is

one of several examples of intersectional ambiguity in my data – especially in relation to considerations of how masculinity in policing impacts identity management – and despite the limits of space restricting me from exploring this in any depth here, it is an observation that I acknowledge and highlight as any area of future development and research in my postdoctoral plans, to be outlined in my conclusion.

Collectively, the discussion in this chapter can be seen as a unique contribution to knowledge. Throughout, I have highlighted and situated my discussion within the limitations of the existing evidence base, drawing attention to the tendency of socio-legal scholars to present policing debates through a monolithic lens. Certainly in relation to debates of sexuality in policing, this is one of the first empirical projects that has acknowledged the consequences that analytic variances in constabulary type, areas of police work and rank can cause to the career experiences of LGB officers. It is because of this fertile ground that I intend to focus my postdoctoral research strategy on substantiating these perspectives through additional research; specifically, I am keen to develop the maturity and analytical sophistication of perspectives that examine working cultures and practices that exist in different areas of police work.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

In this research, I set out to explore, through a qualitatively-driven mixed method research design, whether or not LGB police officers in post-Macpherson police constabularies across England and Wales continue to experience the same levels of professional resistance, exclusion and resultant psychological burden as their peers twenty years before them. The rationale for contemporary research into this niche area of criminology/policing studies related to (i) transformed social, political, legislative and professional climates for LGB individuals which raised unanswered questions as to their impact for LGB police officers in policing; and (ii) a connected political desire to achieve empirical justice for these officers who had been overlooked by contemporary police diversity empiricism and scholarship. Accordingly, although coming late to the [empirical] party in comparison to research on gender and ethnicity in these new policing contexts, I aimed to evaluate the impact and credibility of new policy directions and to explore whether or not the idealistic policy ‘vision’ of post-Macpherson diversity reform – within which LGB officers and their potential contribution to this new policing mindset was cited – had translated into operational practice.

The central question that I aimed to address was ‘how does sexuality impact on the experiences and career trajectories of police officers in England and Wales today?’ In this broad context, I also pursued the following, more specific, sub-questions.

1. What is the nature of the professional working environments experienced by LGB police officers today? Is it still characterised by resistance?
2. How do LGB officers manage their sexual orientation at work?
3. What (if any) contributions do LGB officers make to contemporary policing?

It is these set of questions that I revisit in this final part of my thesis. I begin by bringing together and highlighting some of the main themes and contributions that I have presented throughout this research. I then acknowledge some of the limitations of the study – mainly related to the consequences of its broad and exploratory nature. Given these limitations, I end this chapter with a discussion of how this research will be used as a springboard for further research projects as part of my postdoctoral research strategy.

8.2 Dominant Themes and Contributions

In answer to my main question, this research has shown that sexuality continues to play a central role in the workplace experiences, trajectories and contributions of LGB police officers in post-Macpherson policing. However, unlike Burke (1994), the dominant message from my research is that on the whole LGB officers feel like important, embraced and protected members of the modern police family who are able to bring and utilise an enhanced ‘toolkit’ to police work that is a product of their personal biographies and associated experiences as members of a minority and often stigmatised social group. As a consequence, the majority of LGB police officers in this research reported positively ‘transformed’ workplace climates – claims that were reflected in my national survey in which 79 per cent considered themselves to be ‘out’ at work; 75.6 percent felt that their constabulary does enough or more than enough to support their LGB employees; and 74.1 per cent reported being satisfied or very satisfied with being a police officer. In this section, I reflect upon some of the central themes and contributions that have helped explain this dramatically improved workplace climate.

8.2.1 Continuity and Change in Police Environments and Culture

Unlike twenty years ago when resistance and hostilities targeted at LGB officers were due to their alleged threat to the widely celebrated, historically embedded and highly concentrated police occupational culture, this research has shown how an improved workplace environment for LGB police officers has been brought about by a portfolio of

external and internal changes in the policing ‘field’ that collectively represent the emergence of a new, strong, distinct, organisational culture in policing.

Due to external legislative and political protections now afforded to LGB individuals, police constabularies are under a legal obligation to actively pursue a discrimination-free workplace environment for their staff. This has provided, for the first time, protections for LGB officers in the workplace. In response, police constabularies have introduced a portfolio of anti-discrimination measures internally, as well as investing in several measures and initiatives that aim to promote and facilitate the active integration of LGB officers into the policing ranks. As a consequence of these new protections, negative ingredients of the once dominant police occupational culture have been rebranded as a form of professional deviance – attracting professional reprimands, and even dismissal, for those who are caught engaging in this behaviour and legal sanctions for those constabularies who do not make every effort to enforce these protections. Given these new anti-discrimination climates, I have found that the dominance of the old police occupational culture and the requirement for officers to subscribe to its ethos has been fractured although to say that it has been eradicated would be misleading.

However, these new punitive measures cannot alone account for improved workplace climates for LGB police officers. In chapter four, I discussed how the liberalisation of social attitudes towards homosexuality, the associated increased educational attainment of the UK population, and the resultant emergence of a new demographic of police officer that is “*diversity-savvy*” due to their socialisation in diversity-rich communities, have also contributed. All of these factors illustrate the sensitivities of police constabularies, their environments and cultures to external social and political climates and the importance of police organisations being seen to respond to these changing climates in order to maintain public trust and legitimacy. Thus, in a reversal of fortune, I found the existence of generational transition occurring in policing, where policing “*dinosaurs*” – often older officers – who continue to exhibit hostilities and resistance towards the inclusion of LGB officers (or towards diversity reform more generally) are

now shunned by their more professional and liberal colleagues and considered ‘deviant’ if caught.

As a combined consequence of these factors, an unprecedented era for LGB police officers currently exists, one in which the majority of my participants felt empowered and protected – demonstrating to constabularies the positive impact of diversity reform efforts which, I argue, should be sustained and built upon as they consider and move towards future directions.

8.2.2 A New Era of LGB Contributions

Rather than their sexuality discrediting them as police officers, I found that the majority of the LGB officers in this study felt – reflecting and contributing to growing theoretical perspectives on the commodification of identities in organisations – that they make an active contribution to contemporary police work and are encouraged to draw upon their experiences and standpoint as a member of a social minority group as a form of ‘workplace capital’. This has been facilitated by a national reconsideration of what the role and remit of the public police should be. In this regard, a conscious move away from being a police ‘force’ to now being a police ‘service’ post-Macpherson has expedited the inclusion of LGB officers due to the creation of new ‘soft’ areas of police work that focus on proactive engagement with communities and the building of an ‘ethics of care’ within the police mindset. It was to these new ‘soft’ areas of policing that participants in my research felt they were able to make a unique contribution, due mainly to their ability to offer an enhanced service to LGB individuals/communities based on empathy and a demographic rapport.

This is not to say that the remit of LGB officers is confined to these ‘soft’ areas of police work. This study also provided examples of where LGB officers contribute to traditional ‘hard’ policing. But rather than merely conforming to behavioural expectations in these areas, I found that LGB officers are able to offer something ‘different’, such as various alternative ‘styles’ of policing, enabling, for example, the diffusion of emotionally

charged and confrontational interactions with members of the community through discourse, rather than physical confrontation. This, coupled with further examples in this thesis of how LGB officers are able to educate and challenge attitudes and behaviour of colleagues (especially towards sexualities and difference), highlights the ability of these officers to facilitate positive organisational change in policing by showcasing 'alternatives' to how traditionally machismo-fuelled policing can be done. Consequently, a new hybrid of teamwork was observed, where the heterogeneous contributions of different types of officers are now seen as the key to successful and creative police work.

These contributions provide an evidence-based rationale for the continued and increased inclusion of LGB officers in policing and offer potential solutions for constabularies that are still plagued by negative occupational behaviour. As such, as well as showcasing, for the first time, the direct contributions that LGB officers make to operational police work, this research also champions a greater acknowledgement of the indirect contributions made by these officers as agents of change. Thus, just as Brown and Woolfenden (2011) call for the increased representation of women officers to disrupt the continued dominance of masculinity in policing and bring about meaningful organisational change, this research calls for increased representation of LGB officers on similar, even shared, grounds.

8.2.3 The Continued Complexity of Identity Management

Given the inherent invisible and subjective complexity of sexuality, it was not a surprise to discover in this research that the 'various intricate combinations of exposure and disguise' observed amongst LGB police officers by Burke (1994,1995) twenty years ago continue for LGB officers today. Drawing on symbolic interactionist perspectives of sexuality and identity management as a 'process' shaped by external environments, personal biographies, interactions with others and an associated subjective and intersubjective evaluation of potential stigma – or anticipated 'career related costs' (Clair et al., 2005) – in chapter four I showed how the identity management strategies of LGB officers can, in the main, be understood as a 'career model of identity management'.

This model highlights how the process of identity negotiation for the majority of LGB officers begins prior to commencing their initial police training and is subsequently characterised by several distinct policing ‘frames’, all of which present different contextual priorities. This model identified how, for the initial stages of their policing careers, the majority of LGB officers chose to pursue an alternative virtual social identity at work, one that camouflages their actual social LGB identity so that they can first prove themselves as a “*good police officer*” and become an accepted part of their team before disclosing potentially stigmatising information about themselves. Central to this model is the eventual ‘coming out’ at work – one of the most stressful and psychologically-laden points of an LGB police officer’s career but which is essential for them to achieve identity ‘normalisation’. It is at this stage that their virtual and actual social LGB identities positively unite, representing the point at which they feel reasonably comfortable to disclose their actual identity at work and to embrace some of the potential ‘contributions’ outlined in the post-Macpherson policy directions that first promoted their inclusion.

In contrast, I also found instances where this ‘model’ of identity formation is not conformed to. For example, positively, I observed a growing demographic of LGB police officers who disclose their sexuality from day one due to the anticipated ‘career related costs’ being minimal for them. These officers were young in service, had been brought up within the aforementioned ‘profound revolution’ (Weeks, 2007) and consequently sexuality for these officers was, in the main, a non-issue. Antithetically however, I also observed instances where the anticipated costs of ‘coming out’ were deemed too high by officers, who, instead, pursued a discreditable virtual social identity for the duration of their careers. These were mainly officers whose police careers had begun in pre-Macpherson policing climates and who struggled to accept that post-Macpherson diversity reform efforts were sincere. These observations were also reflected in the modelling of my quantitative data, which showed that officers who had joined the police post-Macpherson were more likely to have ‘come out’ quickly, compared to their peers with longer levels of service.

An understanding of these complex identity strategies amongst LGB officers is imperative for constabularies today in order to help them tailor organisational responses and to introduce initiatives and investment in areas of policing that are likely to have most impact. For example, my research highlighted the importance of initial training environments and how the significance placed on diversity by trainers and senior managers inducting new recruits was highly persuasive for new LGB officers when weighing up the risk of ‘coming out’ at work from the outset. Similarly, in chapters four and seven I highlighted how the uniformity and rigid framework of the initial two-year probation period is often counterproductive as it provides little opportunity for LGB officers to navigate their ‘difference’ and experiment with alternative ways of doing police work but instead promotes homogeneity in policing through adherence to contemporary iterations of the police occupational culture. This was a central point that I raised as part of my contribution to the recent Independent Police Commission (Jones, 2014) and is one that I highlighted and addressed at several points throughout this thesis. Failure of constabularies to understand how police environments shape the decision of LGB officers to ‘come out’ (or not) at work therefore poses a direct threat to the policy rationale for their inclusion in post-Macpherson policing being realised.

8.2.4 Resistance and Challenges

Despite significant improvements in the working lives of LGB officers in post-Macpherson constabularies, I did uncover some examples in this research where resistance to their inclusion – and towards diversity reform more generally – still exists, and where some inefficiencies in the management of diversity have proved problematic and counterproductive. This resistance, I argue, collectively hinders the realisation of a relational psychological contract – an underlying aim of post-Macpherson diversity reform efforts – between police constabularies and those LGB officers who experience this resistance.

For example, in chapter four I discussed how, despite the introduction of formal anti-discrimination frameworks, a small number of the rank and file have found new ways of manifesting prejudice and discrimination which are covert, ambiguous and difficult to detect. This was reflected in my quantitative data where experiences of discrimination were reported in areas of policing – deployment recruitment, training and promotion – where supervisory discretion was at its highest and therefore open to adverse influence by personal bias and prejudice.

Explanations for this continued deviant behaviour are complex but related mainly to the persistence of some negative ingredients of the police occupational culture and the continuation of homophobia in society more generally. I initially suggested that this resistance is an example of members of the once dominant rank and file trying to hold onto and preserve their threatened identity (Breakwell, 1986). Conversely, I highlighted how the nature and iconography of police work often fuels ingredients of this police occupational culture. For example – further strengthening my argument related to the importance of homogeneity in policing today – I observed how the continued dominance of masculinity in policing, especially in ‘hard’ areas of police work, makes it difficult for LGB officers to break away and carve a unique contribution, especially given the fraternal and militaristic nature of some police environments.

I also detected several anxieties that exist amongst officers themselves that have prevented them from fully achieving a positive actual LGB social identity at work. The first relates to my discussion of promotion and development aspirations amongst LGB officers in chapter seven, where considerable concerns were raised around how diversity is used within these formal processes. Linked to professional morality, I discussed the confusion that exists between positive discrimination and positive action initiatives used by constabularies – the misunderstanding between which has caused some to actively avoid engagement with the promotion process. In the most extreme examples, officers with promotion aims had made the premeditated decision not to ‘come out’ at work so that they could avoid any accusations of unfair advantage from their non-LGB colleagues. This helped explain why, in my regression analysis of my national survey

data, senior officers were found to be considerably less likely to be 'out' at work compared to their lower-ranking peers. Second, as I outlined in chapter four, anxieties are growing related to the longevity of police diversity reform, due to an observed historical tendency of police reform agendas to be reactive to 'catastrophes', a realisation by LGB officers that is hampering their trust and confidence in their constabularies and causing doubts that these new diversity climates and protections for LGB officers will continue in the long term. In particular, the threat of austerity and the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners made my participants feel uneasy about the future of police diversity.

These factors collectively illustrate how the management of diversity in constabularies continues to be pertinent today. It also provides an evidence-informed justification for why diversity reform in policing should not be seen as complete. After all, as argued by Rowe (2004), the experiences of minority police officers often reflect the internal health of police organisations and, therefore, the reported experiences of LGB officers can be a helpful 'litmus test' for police constabularies. By exploring the complex underpinnings of continued discrimination and by becoming aware of concerns and anxieties raised by LGB officers in this research, practical measures and initiatives can be composed and policy directions tailored which can address and quell this resistance so that the threat of LGB officers not 'coming out' and making enhanced contributions to contemporary policing can be reduced and efforts can be made to ensure that a relational contract between these officers and their constabularies is achieved in the future.

8.2.5 Towards a Nuanced Understanding of Public Policing

Finally, I acknowledged in this thesis the complex and variable parameters within which policing takes place by showing how the experiences and contributions of LGB police officers can differ according to their positioning within varying operational contexts.

For example, I showed how the territorial system that underpins the 43 police constabularies in England and Wales creates contextual variances for LGB officers

related to the ‘type’ of constabulary within which they are located. Here, providing a further illustration of police sensitivities to external social climates, I identified differences in the commitment to diversity reform amongst these diverse constabulary ‘types’, and explored how LGB officers from constabularies that primarily police rural communities experience less progressive and inclusive workplace environments than their urban counterparts. However, as a result of the increased visibility of LGB officers in large/urban constabularies, it was in these organisations that reported discrimination in my quantitative data was highest. Yet, officers in small/rural constabularies were less likely to ‘come out’ and to utilise their demographic ‘workplace capital’ due to the perceived continuance of a pre-Macpherson mindset in these small/rural organisations that was deemed likely to fuel professional and community hostilities towards them. Further, LGB officers in small/rural constabularies also feared that because of the low visibility of diversity in these organisations, by ‘coming out’ they would be made the “*poster boy*” (or girl) for diversity by their senior officers.

I also discussed examples from my data of where different areas of police work provide multiple and in some cases conflicting ‘frames’ for LGB officers to negotiate their virtual and actual social LGB identity. Here, my quantitative data found that LGB officers in uniformed roles were over three times more likely to be ‘out’ at work and one and a half times more likely to think that their constabulary does enough to protect their LGB officers compared to plainclothes officers. However, in direct contrast, my qualitative data found that uniformed policing roles provided the greatest challenges for my participants, again mainly (although not exclusively) due to the perceived high concentration of the police occupational culture in these areas of police work. Alternatively, a career in plainclothes policing was deemed more appropriate for LGB officers due to an antithetical culture of intellectual maturity and acceptance in these departments that allows LGB officers to forge a more personalised and positive workplace identity. Reinforcing this distinction, my participants described their initial compulsory attachments to uniformed policing as a personal test of psychological strength that had to be overcome in order to allow them to subsequently pursue their career aims in plainclothes policing. This conflict between my quantitative and

qualitative data provided an example of the complexities of researching policing and sexuality in a mixed method way, but flagged an area within my research that could benefit from future empirical attention.

I also explored the altered workplace parameters of LGB officers with rank – an important consideration given the hierarchical nature of police work, yet still often overlooked in policing scholarship. Here, I found that senior officers are often divorced from operational police work and therefore escape the persuasiveness of the police occupational culture experienced by the rank and file. Instead, I found that the close-knit nature of working in a senior management team, together with working on national and international platforms, introduces new challenges and workplace cultures for these senior LGB officers which influence their identity strategies at work – made complex by expectations for them to symbolically ‘lead’ their constabularies and the associated increased scrutiny of their private lives by the media, police stakeholders and bureaucratic vetting processes. As such, my quantitative data found that LGB officers in the lower ranks were three times more likely to be ‘out’ at work and one and a half times more likely to disclose their sexuality to members of the public in the course of their duties compared to senior officers.

These varying perspectives and how they mould the experiences of LGB officers in different ways contribute to wider theoretical debates related to police culture. Responding to growing criticisms of its monolithic conceptualisation within the police culture ‘classics’, my research has contributed to a new wave of theoretical scholarship that acknowledges how policing cultures (emphasis on the plural) are influenced and manifest themselves differently within the varying contextual parameters within which public policing takes places. However, importantly given the political motivations of my research, this thesis also complements and provides examples to support current political and policy trends that show preference to locally-determined and flexible police policy frameworks in an active retreat from centralised blueprints that all constabularies were expected to universally follow.

8.3 A Short Note on Research Limitations

While I am sure that this research will help enhance understandings of LGB officers' workplace experiences, there are some notes of caution that I feel obliged to acknowledge. First, despite showcasing how sexuality and policing in England and Wales interrelate, the nature of this qualitatively-driven mixed method research means that its findings can only claim to represent the experiences and perspectives of its participants. Thus, I do not argue that the research has generalizable impact, although given the paucity of empirical attention to this niche area of policing it offers one of the most comprehensive insights into the subject matter that could be used to inform future police diversity directions. However, as I have acknowledged at different points throughout the thesis, researching the police is complex because it is shaped and experienced by multiple actors and stakeholders, all of which see operational policing from a unique standpoint. This research, therefore, despite offering a degree of triangulation as a result of my dichotomous methodological tools, only represents the views and experiences of my LGB police officer sample, from their positional lenses, which have not been rigorously compared to the experiences and perceptions of different stakeholders on these same issues.

Second, given the original and exploratory nature of this research, I acknowledge that the parameters of this thesis are broad. On leaving the field in November 2011, I found that I had so much rich data that I had to be selective about what to include in my thesis – whatever was not directly relevant to my central research questions did not make the cut this time (although it will be used for future publications). Indeed, each of the empirical chapters in this thesis could be the sole focus of a doctorate. Because of this, there are areas within my findings that I could not explore and present in as much depth as I would have liked. An example of this is the impact of intersectional identities on the topics discussed. Given the opportunity to conduct the research again, I would explore further how gender and ethnicity create intersectional ambiguity in discussions of sexuality and how LGB officers with more than one minority demographic intersect are faced with competing and conflicting challenges.

8.4 Future Directions

Throughout this thesis I have highlighted potential areas that could inform my future research strategy. This strategy has both short- and long-term dimensions, an overview of which provides a suitable close to this thesis.

Short term, I plan to maximise the direct impact of this thesis by writing and submitting several articles to leading peer reviewed journals for publication. This element of my publication strategy has already begun (Jones and Williams, 2013; Jones, 2014) and future articles are likely to mirror the four empirical chapters that I have presented here. I also plan to approach several publishing houses to discuss the possibility of a research monograph of my thesis – although this will impact my journal submission strategy if successful. Beyond this, I intend to further develop relationships established with my participants and gatekeepers in this research – substantiating my utilitarian aim to provide an empirical and operational voice for LGB officers – by presenting my research findings through different platforms to constabularies across England and Wales. I have already given several invited talks at local GSN events.

Long term, I aim to use this research as a springboard to inform a future postdoctoral strategy. Specifically, there are two areas that I am considering pursuing. First, building on my discussion in chapter six, I was fascinated by the discussion of my participants related to their perceived contributions to the policing of LGB communities and how their tailored demographic and associated history allows them to empathise and build rapport with LGB victims of crime. Taking this further, I would like to empirically explore how the police shape the experiences of victims within the criminal justice system and whether this ‘tailored’ service is similarly acknowledged and encouraged by victims from minority groups themselves. Alternatively, I would like to undertake some ethnographic work in order to explore the nature of police cultures in contemporary police operational climates. Specifically, I would like to consider whether or not contextual variances related to location/constabulary type, rank and area of policing that I discussed in chapter

seven are felt and thereby impact the experiences and workplace climates of all police officers. Regardless of what avenue I eventually take, this thesis has provided fertile ground which can be used to contribute to existing socio-legal scholarship and debates as well as providing a rationale for further research in this area.

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Appendix One: Online Survey Screen Grabs

About You
<p>1. Gender</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Male <input type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Transgender</p>
<p>2. Age at last birthday</p> <p><input type="text"/></p>
<p>3. How would you describe your sexual orientation?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Gay Man <input type="radio"/> Lesbian / Gay Women <input type="radio"/> Bisexual Man <input type="radio"/> Bisexual Woman <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify): <input type="text"/></p>
<p>4. How many of your friends openly know about your sexual orientation?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> All <input type="radio"/> Most <input type="radio"/> Some <input type="radio"/> None</p>
<p>5. How many of your family openly know about your sexual orientation?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> All <input type="radio"/> Most <input type="radio"/> Some <input type="radio"/> None</p>
<p>6. To which of these groups do you consider you belong?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> White <input type="radio"/> Black or Black British <input type="radio"/> Asian or Asian British <input type="radio"/> Chinese or Chinese British <input type="radio"/> Mixed <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify): <input type="text"/></p>
<p>7. Which of the following best describes your relationship status?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Single <input type="radio"/> With partner, living separately <input type="radio"/> With partner, living together <input type="radio"/> Civil Partnership <input type="radio"/> Separated <input type="radio"/> Divorced / Dissolved Civil Partnership <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify): <input type="text"/></p>

Police Career
<p>8. How many years have you been a police officer?</p> <p>Select an answer <input type="text"/></p>
<p>9. In which police force do you currently work?</p> <p>Select an answer <input type="text"/></p>
<p>10. How many years have you been an officer in your current force?</p> <p>Select an answer <input type="text"/></p>
<p>11. In which branch/division are you currently based?</p> <p>Select an answer <input type="text"/></p> <p>If you selected Other, please specify: <input type="text"/></p>
<p>12. What is your current rank?</p> <p>Select an answer <input type="text"/></p>
<p>13. How satisfied are you being a police officer?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very satisfied <input type="radio"/> Satisfied <input type="radio"/> Somewhat satisfied <input type="radio"/> Not at all satisfied</p>
<p>14. What are your current career aims? (select all that apply)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Remain in your current role <input type="checkbox"/> Apply for promotion <input type="checkbox"/> Specialise <input type="checkbox"/> Apply to transfer to another force <input type="checkbox"/> To leave and pursue a career outside policing <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure at the moment</p> <p>If your aim is to 'specialise', what area of policing would you like to do this in? <input type="text"/></p>

Individual

15. Are you a member of the Gay Police Association (GPA)?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

16. Are you a member of your force's LGB staff association?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not applicable

17. How many of your police colleagues do you think are aware of your sexual orientation?

- ☐ All
☐ Most
☐ Some
☐ None
☐ I don't know

18. Have you ever had any concerns about being open about your sexuality to your police colleagues?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If 'yes', what were your main concerns (*select all that apply*)

- ☐ That it might hamper your integration with your team
☐ That it might threaten your career prospects
☐ That it might have a negative effect on your deployment
☐ Fear of isolation
☐ Fear of bullying/harassment from colleagues
☐ Fear for your personal safety
☐ Other (*please specify*):

19. Would you consider yourself to be "out" at work?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

a. If 'yes', how long did it take for you to come out?

Select an answer

b. Did you disclose your LGB status to your police colleagues voluntarily, or were you 'outed' against your will?

- ☐ Voluntarily
☐ Outed by a police colleague
☐ Outed by a friend/family member
☐ Outed by a member of the public

Organisational

20. Have you ever experienced discrimination (due to your sexual orientation) by the police in relation to any of the following?

	Yes, in my current force	Yes, in a force prior to my current force	Yes, in all of the forces that I've worked for	No, never
a. Recruitment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Deployment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Promotion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. If 'yes' to the any of the above, did you ever formally report this discrimination?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Not applicable
☐ Other (please specify):

22. In your opinion, does your current force do enough to support their LGB police officers?

- ☐ More than enough
☐ Enough
☐ Not quite enough
☐ Not at all enough

23. In your opinion, do the police (as an organisation) do enough to support their LGB police officers?

- ☐ More than enough
☐ Enough
☐ Not quite enough
☐ Not at all enough

24. Have you ever talked to your senior officer(s) about LGB related issues?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
 If 'no', would you ever feel comfortable talking to them about such issues?
☐ Very comfortable
☐ Comfortable
☐ Not so comfortable
☐ Not at all comfortable

Policing LGB Communities

25. In your current role, are you involved with policing LGB communities/individuals?

- ☐ Yes, regularly
☐ Yes, occasionally
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

If 'yes', do you openly disclose your LGB status to members of the LGB community?

- ☐ Yes, always
☐ Sometimes
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

26. Do you think your LGB status helps or hinders your police role when dealing with LGB communities/individuals?

- ☐ It definitely helps
☐ It sometimes helps
☐ It rarely helps
☐ It sometimes hinders
☐ It definitely hinders
☐ Not applicable

27. Have you ever received a hostile reaction from members of the public who are aware of /suspect your LGB status?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If 'Yes' to the above, what type of hostility have you experienced? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Verbal abuse
☐ Physical abuse
☐ Harassment
☐ Property damage
☐ Other (please specify):

Thankyou for getting this far, you are almost at the end of the survey

28. Would you be interested in being interviewed for the second stage of this research project? (The interview should take between 60-90 minutes to complete, would like to discuss a time/location to best suit you)

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, please provide contact details that you would be willing for Matthew Jones to contact you on in order to arrange an interview:

Appendix Two: Participant Information Sheet

LGB Police Officers Research Project Participant Information Sheet

Thank you for considering taking part in this research project. Before you participate it is vitally important that you become aware of some key information about the research process. Please take some time to read through these 'commonly asked questions' which have been composed to address most of the issues you are likely to have. However, if there is anything that is not clear, or if you would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact me (see page 2)

What is this research all about?

This research project is the first in over 20 years to investigate the occupational experiences of LGB police officers throughout England and Wales. The key aims of the project are threefold:

1. **Individual:** to investigate the motivations and expectations of LGB police officers in relation to police work, employment experiences and general social well-being
2. **Organisational:** to identify how police services have improved their management of such individuals, and to identify areas that require further attention.
3. **Community:** to examine the impact of officers' sexual orientation on relations with groups within minority communities.

Who is the research funded by?

This three year research project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (see: www.esrc.ac.uk).

Is my participation voluntary?

Yes, participation is purely voluntary. The success of the project will be dependent on LGB officers coming forward to offer their help and support.

Why should I take part?

Over the last twenty years, huge strides have been taken, in terms of the social acceptance and legal recognition of LGB individuals. However to date, there has been little research on how these changes have affected British Policing and the occupational experiences of LGB police staff.

However, given the invisible nature of sexuality, as well as the lack of active monitoring within the police of LGB status, the success of such research relies on the willingness of individuals to put themselves forward to help.

The aim of this project is therefore to build up enough support, so that a credible insight into the experiences of LGB police officers can be obtained. It is only when this

is done, that the police can realistically go about implementing LGB friendly policy and practices that will improve the working environment and experiences of their LGB staff.

What would I be expected to do if I decided to take part?

This project will be carried out in two stages. You can choose to participate in one or both of these stages, with the level of commitment varying between both:

Stage 1: This is a short online survey that should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. The survey can be found here and can be accessed on any computer with a web browser:

https://www.surveys.cardiff.ac.uk/lgbpolice_2011

Stage 2: This will involve a one-to-one interview that should take no more than 1.5 hrs at a location of your choice. Please leave your details at the end of survey if you would be happy to be interviewed, or contact Matthew directly.

When will the research be carried out?

Stage 1: Surveys will be distributed to officers between September 2010 - July 2011.

Stage 2: Interviews will take place between January - September 2011.

Who will be carrying out the interviews?

This research project has been designed and will be executed by Matthew Jones, a doctoral researcher at Cardiff University.

Matthew has an LLB in Law and an MSc in Social Science Research Methods. He is a gay man who has aspirations to join the police force himself. However, he has been caught out by the current recruitment freeze, so has decided to conduct research on a topic which he is personally invested and interested in.

Where will the interviews take place?

This is entirely up to you, Matthew (the interviewer) is aware that individuals feel comfortable in different environments so he's keen to acknowledge this by being as flexible as possible.

Interviews can be held (for example) at your place of work, in a local cafe or pub.

Will interviews be recorded?

Yes, all face-to-face interviews will be recorded using a small dictaphone. But please don't be put off by this - researchers record interviews so that they can concentrate fully on what you are saying (otherwise they will be scribbling down notes for the whole time). Interview recordings will be transcribed as soon after as possible, ideally within 24 hours. The digital file will then be deleted straight away.

Will everything I say be confidential?

Yes, EVERYTHING you say during the course of this research project is strictly confidential.

Will any of my police colleagues ever know what I have said?

No, because of the rules surrounding confidentiality, identity of participants will never be disclosed.

It is also worth noting that this is an academic study - as such we have no obligations to the police organisation. All of the data we collect is ours and we will do everything in our power to protect the relationship of trust that will exist between us and our participants.

How will you ensure confidentiality?

No person will be named or be identifiable in any way in the report or articles based on the study. To protect the identity of officers, the following measures will be taken:

1. Pseudonyms will be used throughout the research project (including transcription and making notes). Your real name will never appear.
2. No information will be included in the studies report (or subsequent publications/presentations) that could reveal the identity or location of participants.
3. All notes and transcripts will be stored in password protected documents so no one else will have access to your information.

What will happen to the data collected?

All of the data collected during this study will ultimately go towards Matthew Jones' PhD thesis - an 80,000 word report which will be examined by senior academics.

Matthew will also write several academic and police journal articles and present at several conferences during the course of the study - all of which will include information on the data collected during interviews.

Importantly, the findings will also be presented to senior police management, so that it can be used to inform future policy and organisational practices.

Please be assured that you will not be referred to by name, or be identifiable in any of these written texts or presentations.

What happens if I want to withdraw?

You can choose to withdraw at any time, without reason. In this event, all of the information you have provided will be destroyed and not used to formulate our findings.

Who can I contact if I am not happy with how the research is being conducted?

For general concerns about participation in this research project, please contact Matthew Jones (see Contact Details)

However, in the event that you are not happy with how the research has been conducted, or if you have concerns about how your information has been dealt with, please contact the Cardiff University Social Science Research Ethics committee:

Deborah Watkins
Research and Graduate Studies Administrator
Room 0.10 Glamorgan Building
Department of Social Sciences
King Edward VII Avenue
Cardiff
CF10 3WT

I would like to ask a few more questions about the research, who can I contact?

If you would like further information about the study please do not hesitate to contact me at the following:

Mr. Matthew Jones
Email: jonasm17@cf.ac.uk
Tel: 07581624736

Appendix Three: Interview Guide

1. Recruitment, Selection and Training

- Motivation for joining
- Prior perceptions/experiences
- LGB status before joining
- Disclosure of LGB status

2. Individual

- Disclosure of LGB status at work
- Relationships/experiences with heterosexual colleagues
- The benefits of being an LGB police officer
- Any resistance?
- Experiences of working in different police departments.

3. Organisational


- The Police as an LGB employer
- Career aims
- Experiences of promotion
- Perception/experiences of speaking to senior officers about LGB-related issues.
- Membership/experiences of the GPA/constabulary gay staff association
- The future – suggested improvements?

4. Policing LGB and Wider Communities

- LGB status: help or hindrance?
- Disclosure of LGB status?
- Contributions?

Appendix Four: Informed Consent Document

LGB Police Officers Research Project
Participant Consent Form



**PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD**

I

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and these questions have been satisfactorily answered.

☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason.

☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study.

☐

	YES	NO	
4. I agree to the interview being audio recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please tick box
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Researcher

Date

Signature

Appendix Five: Regression Models

Predictors	Survey Question			
	<i>Constabulary Does Enough</i>	<i>Talk LGB Issues With Manager</i>	<i>Discloses LGB Public</i>	<i>'Out' at Work</i>
Small Constabulary	0.78	0.78	0.49*	0.23**
Medium Constabulary	1.67**	0.81	0.72	0.50
Uniformed Officers	0.7*	0.74	1.04	3.17**
Tenure	0.91	1.52**	1.28*	1.26
Rank	0.92	1.33*	0.65*	0.35**
'Out' at Work	1.42	2.28*	1.25	-
Gay male	0.74*	2.30**	1.00	0.89
In a same-sex relationship	0.97	1.30	0.29**	2.03*
Age	1.03*	1.01	0.99	1.04
Black Minority Ethnic	0.51*	1.27	1.50	0.11**
'Outness'	1.03	1.17*	1.24*	4.40**
GPA member	0.71*	2.07**	1.68*	1.45
LGB staff network member	1.39*	2.87**	1.22	5.17**
Model Fit				
Sig	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00
Nagelkerke R Square	0.081	0.368	0.241	0.769
N	768	758	103	768

Odds ratios reported. Below 1 denotes less likely, above 1 denotes more likely.

* Statistically significant at the 5% level; ** Statistically significant at the 10% level.

Appendix Six: Regression Tables Reproduced from Jones and Williams (2013)

Table 3: Logistic Regression Predicting Discrimination

	<i>Training</i>				<i>Deployment</i>				<i>Promotion</i>			
	<u>B</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Wald</u>	<u>Exp(B)</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Wald</u>	<u>Exp(B)</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Wald</u>	<u>Exp(B)</u>
<u>Constabulary Characteristics</u>												
Small/Rural	1.28	.51	6.27	3.59**	.40	.41	.92	1.49	.62	.97	.41	1.86
Large/City (ref: Medium/Semi-urban)	1.02	.55	3.43	2.76*	.95	.39	5.85	2.58**	1.57	.91	2.97	4.80*
<u>Job Characteristics</u>												
Uniformed	-1.48	.41	13.39	.23***	.17	.39	.19	1.19	1.41	1.18	1.42	4.10
Length of Tenure	-.22	.20	1.18	.81	.32	.18	3.12	1.37*	.77	.44	3.04	2.16*
Rank	.33	.25	1.74	1.39	.43	.19	5.36	1.54**	.96	.30	9.92	2.61***
<u>Personal Characteristics</u>												
Gay Man	1.03	.41	6.26	2.80**	.72	.31	5.26	2.05**	2.18	.76	8.28	8.83***
In a relationship	.27	.49	.30	1.31	-.11	.36	.10	.90	-.38	.89	.18	.68
Age	.11	.03	10.91	1.12***	.00	.03	.02	1.00	.03	.08	.19	1.03
BME	2.36	.60	15.46	10.54***	1.82	.52	12.14	6.20***	1.25	1.10	1.30	3.49
'Out' at work	2.24	.87	6.58	9.42**	.72	.63	1.33	2.06	.97	1.19	.67	2.63
'Out' to family/friends (scale)	-.32	.15	4.38	.73**	.17	.13	1.58	1.19	-.10	.26	.16	.90
GPA member	.89	.44	4.06	2.43**	.87	.34	6.60	2.39**	-.52	.78	.45	.59
Constabulary LGB group	.31	.47	.43	1.36	-.06	.35	.03	.94	.02	.76	.00	1.02
Constant	-8.72	1.50	33.85		-6.65	1.21	30.21		-13.10	3.33	15.51	
<u>Model Fit</u>												
-2 Log Likelihood		231.369				355.698				87.231		
df		8				8				8		
sig.		.000				.000				.000		
N ¹ =		755				760				766		
Nagelkerke Pseudo R ²		.286				.203				.400		
Percentage classified correctly		94.8				91.6				98.3		

Notes:¹ Reduction in sample size due to listwise deletion of cases necessary for regression requirements.

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01

Table 4: Zero Inflated Poisson Regression Predicting Count of Discrimination Types

	<i>Count of Discrimination Types</i>		
<i>Poisson Model (Count/True Zeros)</i>	<u>Coef.</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>Z</u>
<u>Constabulary Characteristics</u>			
Small/Rural	.22	.21	1.02
Large/City (ref: Medium/Semi-urban)	.55***	.21	2.60
<u>Job Characteristics</u>			
Uniformed	.05	.21	.26
Rank	.06	.10	.54
<u>Personal Characteristics</u>			
Gay Man	.45**	.18	2.56
In a relationship	-.12	.21	-.56
Age	.00	.01	.22
BME	.77***	.45	1.70
'Out' to family/friends (scale)	-.08	.09	.06
GPA member	.03	.19	.13
Constabulary LGB group member	.19	.20	.95
Length of Tenure (exposure)			
Constant	-1.83	.66	-2.76
<i>Binomial model (Inflation/Excess Zeros)</i>			
'Out' at work	-.86**	.40	-2.19
Constant	1.96	.46	4.21
<u>Model Fit</u>			
Log-L	-480.25		
Chi-Square	29.40		
Df	14		
sig.	.000		
Vuong	-2.74		
N ¹ =	770		

Notes: N =770 (Reduction in sample size due to listwise deletion of cases necessary for regression requirements.)

*p<.10 **p<.05 ***p<.01.