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Silencing in Policing About Former Genderviolence

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Abstract

This study explores the question why, what the researcher calls “the Me-Too period in the Dutch police force” between 1985 and 1993 could be silenced, as victims and perpetrators remained working in the Force. Silencing in policing was firstly described by Skolnick, 1966. The close knitted identity of the police organisation gives an influential exploration for this, together with an often career-long stay of police workers in their organisation. In this paper we will firstly explain police identity with strong features as: masculinity, sexism, crudeness and a strong loyalty among members. This can provoke in sexism and genderviolence. Loftus' research in 2008 on diversity policy in England shows how orthodox features of police identity can survive transition periods, by going underground and then resurfacing. This durable features makes identity different from organisation culture. Secondly, we will analyse how gender violence can be silenced for so many years. Within police identity, the mutual bond between colleagues is important for understanding silencing for so long. The paper ends with the exploration of Restorative Justice, for these policewomen. Victims are given a voice; their suffering is acknowledged which helps with recovery and well-being. Recognition by the police organisation is of structural importance in this respect.

Keywords: Policewomen; Genderviolence; Silencing; Restorativejustice