

To See Ourselves As Others See Us? Incorporating the Constraining Role of Socio-Cultural Practices in the Theorization of Micropolitical Resistance

Penny Dick*

In this paper, I explore micro-political resistance (defined as resistance at the level of meanings, identity or subjectivity) within the context of professional part-time working. Using Skeggs' (1997) notion of dialogical recognition, which refers to an individual's identification with negative portrayals of the social categories to which they belong, I argue that in transgressing dominant (and taken-for-granted) workplace norms, part-time professionals experience guilt and a sense that they may not be fulfilling their professional obligations. Based on a qualitative study of part-time working in the UK police service, I show how part-time professionals navigate these feelings by both drawing attention to the instrumental value of conforming to certain work-based norms, specifically long hours, and by refusing deployment to tasks and roles that they see as peripheral to their professional identities. It is through such refusals, I argue, that the micropolitical resistance I illustrate in this paper can be understood as effective because of its impact on how everyday routines are performed.

Keywords: micropolitical resistance, subject positions, professional part-time working, police work, police women

Introduction

When professionals make the transition from full- to part-time working, this can often be read as signifying a decline in organizational and career commitment (Daly, 1997; Lane, 2000; Lawrence and Corwin, 2003; Lewis and Lewis, 1996). Extant literature has illustrated how this has negative effects on opportunities for career advancement (Edwards and Robinson, 1999, 2001; Hoque and Kirkpatrick, 2003; Lane, 2000, 2004; Tomlinson, 2006) and, in some contexts, on how part-time professionals are perceived by colleagues and managers (Charlesworth and Whittenbury, 2007; Smithson, 2005). There is a smaller literature which suggests that reduced opportunities for career advancement are traded-off for an improved work–life balance and quality of life (MacDermid *et al.*, 2001; Shaw *et al.*, 1999). However, there is very little research that has directly examined how part-time professionals deal with the assumed or real negative perceptions of co-workers and managers (see, e.g., Smithson, 2005), yet this is a critical focus for research, as it is likely to influence their sense of professional self-hood and hence the extent to which they are able to maintain a sense of existential security and belongingness to their profession (Collinson, 2003). In this paper, using data from qualitative interviews with part-time police officers, I address this issue using the notion of micropolitical resistance, which is defined as resistance at the level of meanings, identity or

Address for correspondence: *Institute of Work Psychology, Sheffield University Management School, Conduit Road, Sheffield S10 1FL, United Kingdom; e-mail: p.dick@sheffield.ac.uk

subjectivity (Thomas *et al.*, 2004). The paper contributes to studies of micropolitical resistance by illustrating how it is generated not only by conscious reflection on various discourses of 'being', but also constrained by emotional reactions to the material difficulties engendered by the visible transgression of dominant organizational norms.

The paper is organized into the following sections. First I discuss the position of women as professionals in general terms and then the position of part-time professional women in particular. I then present the theoretical framework of micropolitical resistance that is used in this study. The methodology and analysis are then presented followed by the discussion and conclusions.

Women in the professions and semi-professions

Women have historically occupied subordinate positions in terms of pay, status and prestige in many professional fields such as medicine (e.g., Goodrick and Reay, 2010), accountancy (e.g., Kirkham, 1993; Kornberger *et al.*, 2010), law (e.g., Bolton and Muzio, 2007) and the focus of this paper, the semi-profession of policing (Heidensohn, 1992; Westmarland, 2001). In the police service, for example, up until 1972 women police were employed in a separate branch to mainstream policing and, even following integration, tended to be deployed disproportionately to operational tasks designated 'women's work', mainly involving children and sexual crimes (Heidensohn, 1992). 'Real' police work, which is seen to be of particular value, is that which involves operational crime-fighting work on the streets, for which women (compared to men) have traditionally been considered less suitable (Westmarland, 2001). While this picture has certainly changed and continues to evolve (Dodge *et al.*, 2010), the professional status of police women remains somewhat precarious, illustrated by continuing evidence of their differential deployment (McCarthy, 2013; Wertsch, 1998) and sustained by a widespread cultural belief that operational police work is not compatible with the demands of motherhood (Dick and Cassell, 2004), largely because of the demand for 'ever-availability', i.e. the expectation that individuals are available for work at all times (Zerubavel, 1979).

These processes mirror those that have been identified in a variety of studies of the professions and semi-professions. A consistent finding in this literature has been that the cultures in professional organizations are often reflective of a hegemonic form of masculinity (Connell, 2013) which valorizes conduct and attributes such as work centrality, rationality and technical capability. Such ideas run counter to those through which femininity and motherhood are often understood, whereby women are expected to be homemakers and to be better at the interpersonal rather than technical aspects of a profession (Dick and Hyde, 2006). Such processes mean that women can often struggle to be seen as authentic members of professional communities and in their efforts to be accepted as such will engage in inclusionary strategies (Witz, 1990), often attempting to project a professional identity while at the same time being careful not to appear too masculine, i.e. acting in ways that are overly authoritative, assertive or controlling (see, e.g., Haynes, 2012).

It is this strategy, perhaps, which explains the somewhat paradoxical research finding across numerous studies, that police women do not contest or resist dominant masculine conceptions of police work as involving mainly crime fighting and requiring physical and mental stamina, even though it is this construction that at least partly accounts for the precarious status of police women outlined above (Dodge *et al.*, 2010; Heidensohn, 1992; Holdaway and Parker, 1998). As Muzio and Tomlinson (2012) explain, being identified as a member of a specific profession carries significant reputational and financial advantages, or what Bourdieu (1991) refers to as 'symbolic profit'. By buying into dominant masculine conceptions of police work, women may be pursuing an inclusionary strategy in their 'professional projects' aimed at gaining acceptance as individuals who are as credentialed for 'real' police work as their male counterparts (Witz, 1990).

If we accept, therefore, that the identity of the professional police officer carries much in the way of symbolic profit and hence enables individuals to experience acceptance and inclusion, it is not unreasonable to suggest that when an officer opts to work part-time, this is put at risk. The norms that are seen as central to professional policing are those which involve the enactment of ever-availability,

such as working long and unsocial hours, and are also those that (partly) constitute the forms of hegemonic masculinity discussed above (Charlesworth and Whittenbury, 2007). Failing to conform to these norms not only reinforces organizational cultural prescriptions that valorize masculine modes of conduct (Heidensohn, 1992), but also reproduces the idea that operational police work and motherhood are not easily reconcilable. Add to this the problem that, as a consequence of such cultural processes, part-time professionals in general may often be perceived by colleagues and managers as less committed and less professional (Daly, 1997; MacDermid *et al.*, 2001; Smithson, 2005), and it becomes clear that professional part-time women may not be seen to possess the attributes and characteristics that are understood to be central to the identity of the professional. Given that research indicates that part-time professionals and semi-professionals show a great deal of awareness of and sensitivity to this issue (see, e.g., Smithson, 2005), it seems that these processes may pose a considerable threat to the professional identity of part-time working women. Since a sense of professional identity is what provides individuals with a basis for self-affirmation and self-worth (Ashcraft, 2005), understanding how women deal with such threats to their professional identity is very important. To address this issue, I now turn to literature that has examined how individuals may resist undesirable identities that can be conferred upon them in social arenas such as professional work.

Theoretical framework — micropolitical resistance

In this paper, I use a discursive approach to understanding professional identity whereby the latter is understood as a temporary and contingent position that individuals occupy within a web of discourses, such as, for example, discourses of professionalism and masculinity as outlined above (see, e.g., Weedon, 1987). While, as discussed, women can secure a sense of professional identity through a process of bricolage, whereby they occupy positions in multiple discourses, part-time working in professional and semi-professional domains poses significant problems for this strategy. This is due to the fact that, as outlined above, when working part-time, women cannot enact and therefore comply with some of the dominant norms of professional conduct, particularly and critically with respect to time spent at work (Lawrence and Corwin, 2003). Work centrality and the time commitments this demands can be understood as a form of discursive control (Zanoni and Janssens, 2007) in as much as these ideas have distinct disciplinary effects on the identities and behaviours of professionals (Fournier, 1999). Professionals, for example, will often work very long hours not because they receive remuneration for doing so, but because they see this as a professional responsibility (Kellogg, 2005). Research indicates that it is this temporal feature of professional conduct that produces ideas of the part-time professional as less committed and less professional (Charlesworth and Whittenbury, 2007; Lawrence and Corwin, 2003). Their reduced organizational presence, it is argued, relegates the part-timer to the position of a marginalized 'other' (Nentwich and Hoyer, 2013). Studies of micropolitical resistance offer much insight into how part-time professionals may react to and deal with this positioning.

As outlined above, micropolitical resistance is defined as resistance at the level of meanings, identity or subjectivity (Thomas *et al.*, 2004). It is premised on the idea that power operates not through coercion or force, but through ideas that operate to fix individuals as members of particular categories, that carry sets of rights, obligations and norms of conduct. Seen from this perspective, patriarchal power works not by powerful men working together to exclude women from positions of power, but by categorization processes that fix men as those naturally suited to work and to positions of authority within work, and women as those most naturally suited to the domestic sphere and to work positions that mirror domestic responsibilities (Kondo, 1990; Weedon, 1987). Such processes wield their effects through the subjectivity of individuals, who are positioned as particular types of person on the basis of the social categories to which they belong. Micropolitical resistance is seen when individuals refuse, disrupt or contest these categorizations, often in an attempt to micro-emancipate (Zanoni and Janssens, 2007), i.e. to obtain a sense of empowerment.

There is now a wealth of research in this tradition that has illustrated how individuals elide subject positions that invoke a sense of existential insecurity engendered by discourses in which particular groups are positioned as socially inferior (e.g., Collinson, 1994; Laine and Vaara, 2007; Mama, 1995; Zanoni and Janssens, 2007). This research illustrates how members of such groups affirm their agency by rejecting and contesting their apparently inferior or subordinate status, celebrating the attributes that are constructed as the source of this inferiority and subverting the terms of the discourses that transmit these ideas. For example, Laine and Vaara (2007) illustrate how middle managers in an engineering company contested the meaning of corporate strategy as constructed by senior management, positioning themselves as the 'movers and shakers' and contesting the idea that they were subject to senior management controls.

While these approaches have been applauded for enabling a far more nuanced understanding of how consent and resistance to discursive positions interpenetrate each other and overlap (Collinson, 1994), they have been criticized for over-emphasizing agency. It is often assumed, for instance, that individuals are able to unproblematically reflect on the subject positions offered through a particular discourse and make choices about which to accept, reject or resist (Collinson, 2003). But this neglects the limits on such reflections and choices that are set by socio-culturally determined practices (Bordo, 1993). Individuals may, for example, be engaged in practices that are so taken-for-granted that they do not stop to question the extent to which these might actually be operating to fix them as certain 'types', limiting their capacities to contest their subordinate status, precisely because they perceive this to be what is, in any case, socially available to them. Moreover, individuals, irrespective of how they are viewed from the perspective of an observer, may not experience their positions as disempowering or subordinate. Kondo (1990), for example, illustrates how the gender order in Japan is reproduced because women believe that their primary role is to care for the family, irrespective of the fact that this serves to subordinate them in workplaces and in society more generally. Susan Bordo (1993) notes how agentic notions of the free and resisting individual within Western discourses fail to disrupt dominant cultural scripts that lock individuals into specific self-understandings. For example, despite the fact that many women claim to be exercising free will and choice when they opt for plastic surgery and feel themselves to be empowered by such decisions, such choices nevertheless reproduce dominant ideas about how women should look.

The work of both Bordo (1993) and Kondo (1990) illustrates that destabilizing meanings may be difficult due to the constraining presence of highly institutionalized cultural scripts which limit both the nature of alternative subject positions that can be generated and the extent of their take-up. (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). In Kondo's (1990) study, for instance, the de-institutionalizing effects of the resistance she documents were limited due to the fact that while, for example, taking unauthorized time off work (a practice in which many of the women in Kondo's study engaged) opposes the dominant work ethic in Japanese culture, it is nevertheless consistent with other dominant norms, most particularly the place and role of women in Japanese society. Taking this argument further, Skeggs (1997) argues that some social categories, such as working-class women, are constructed through discourses that, by their nature, make it difficult for their members to experience a positive sense of self in any context. One strategy, therefore, might be for such women to resist being positioned by such discourses, but as discussed above resistance may be more socially constrained than is often assumed in the literature. When individuals cannot resist category membership due to the material realities of their existence (e.g., accent, life chances, education, occupation or salary), they can seek only to dis-identify with that category (Skeggs, 1997). Resistance to particular discourses that can be understood to inferiorize or subordinate a particular group is therefore constrained not only by deeply embedded cultural scripts, habits and the material realities with which individuals are confronted, but also by dialogical recognition (Skeggs, 1997) — the recognition that they *do* belong to that category. Dialogical recognition means that the inferior positions conferred upon women as a consequence of, say, their working-class status, have a degree of legitimacy or power for and over these women, causing them to continually seek external validation and to prove themselves as worthy members of society.

Applying these ideas to professional part-time working then, it can be said that when professionals work part-time this can be understood to constitute a relatively unsettling challenge to dominant workplace norms. This is because discourses of professionalism as already discussed are inscribed in everyday workplace practices, which assume that the individual is able and wants to prioritize work above domestic responsibilities. The part-time professional transgresses the norm of work-centrality in a highly visible way: not only is part-time working inconsistent with taken-for-granted work-based practices in which professionals are expected to engage, it actively impacts on the experiences and workloads of colleagues and of managers (Skinner, 1999). Colleagues may, for example, experience an increase in workload: sometimes, when part-time professionals reduce their hours, they do so within their existing roles, and the hours lost may not be recouped (Edwards and Robinson, 1999). For managers, having to accommodate a part-timer within existing systems of work organization can mean that workloads and patterns may have to be re-organized (Skinner, 1999).

The visibility of this norm transgression is what gives rise to the discursive construction of the part-time professional as less committed and less professional (Smithson, 2005). There is some evidence that part-time professionals can resist the subject position that this offers by re-positioning work and its meaning within their professional identities. Bailey (2000) and Raddon (2002), for instance, studied the experiences of professional women who were on maternity leave and found that for some women, the break from work during pregnancy resulted in a liberating re-evaluation of work, and emancipation from office politics and the career treadmill. However, when women do return to work part-time, they have to deal with the impact that their reduced presence can have on colleagues and managers. Maintaining a positive sense of self, which is understood to be the central motivation in processes of micropolitical resistance (Thomas and Davies, 2005; Zanoni and Janssens, 2007), is difficult when day-to-day routines that are taken-for-granted as common-sense, and in which agents are heavily, and often unconsciously invested, create an unpalatable dialogical recognition — the possibility that the individual does lack worth and value because these are the dominant cultural evaluations of the social category to which they belong. Given these processes, how does the part-time professional deal with these threats to her professional identity?

Methodology

Research context

As outlined above, it is relatively recently that women police were recognized as a legitimate part of mainstream policing and their positions continue to be somewhat precarious. In the police forces that took part in this study, women constituted around 15 per cent of the total uniformed service at the time the research was conducted (2003–2005), though this has increased across all forces in England and Wales to around 23 per cent in recent years (Brown, 2012). Like all police forces in England and Wales, the forces that participated in this study are large organizations, structured as typical professional bureaucracies. Operational front-line policing is seen to be the organizational core, which is organized on a geographic basis, enabling forces to effectively police the different areas a given force encompasses, but also comprises many specialist squads and departments which include units such as the Criminal Investigation Department; dogs and dog handling; the mounted division; burglary and drug squads; firearms, and so forth. While women officers occupy roles in many, if not most of these departments, they are under-represented in most forces in the ranks above Inspector and tend to be disproportionately represented in units dealing with children and domestic violence.

Part-time working was introduced in the police service in 1990 initially as an experimental pilot scheme in six forces, which was agreed to by the Police Advisory Board and initiated by the Home Office. While ostensibly this experiment was designed in response to disparities in the resignation rates between men and women officers, it did follow the successful outcome of an industrial tribunal on the grounds of indirect sex discrimination, brought by a female officer whose request to work part-time hours had been turned down (Tuffin and Baladi, 2001).

Following the success of the pilot scheme, part-time working was introduced across all the forces in England and Wales in 1992. This was because the retention of women officers was considered important not only from an Equal Opportunities perspective, but also because of the costs associated with the loss of well-qualified and trained staff. Since its introduction, part-time working has been a problem within most police forces, in that managers find it difficult to manage the process of implementing part-time hours, and of managing the part-timer using their preferred methods (see, e.g., Charlesworth and Whittenbury, 2007; Edwards and Robinson, 1999, 2001). These difficulties have led some authors to conclude that while women officers are, in general, marginalized, this is especially the case for part-time officers, who may not only be filtered into less demanding and satisfying roles (Charlesworth and Whittenbury, 2007), but whose opportunities for career development and advancement may be greatly hampered (e.g., Edwards and Robinson, 1999, 2001). The social construction of time in the police organization plays the major role in the production of these difficulties, as face-time (defined as visible presence in the workplace) is heavily emphasized (MacDermid *et al.*, 2001).

Since its introduction, part-time working is an option undertaken by a very small minority of officers. The average proportion of part-time officers increased from just 1 to 2 per cent between 1996 and 2001, and now stands at just over 6 per cent across most forces in England and Wales (Brown, 2012). Similar to the implementation of part-time working in other semi-professional and professional organizations (Hoque and Kirkpatrick, 2003; Skinner, 1999), police forces adopt a piecemeal, *ad hoc* approach to accommodating part-time staff, and both line and senior management have little control over the frequency, timing and location of requests for part-time working (Edwards & Robinson, 1999).

Individuals who reduce their hours generally do so by around 20–30 per cent, amounting to one or one and half days less per week than full-time working. While, in theory, workgroups are able to recoup these hours, in reality, this does not happen as it is not practically possible to find a replacement member of staff for this quantity of time. Moreover, because part-time staff try to avoid working routine overtime,¹ they tend to go home at the time they are contracted to do so, and if there are tasks that are uncompleted or additional work to be done, this tends to fall on the shoulders of full-time colleagues.

Methods of data collection and research participants

The data reported here were collected as part of a wider research project investigating the development and management of flexible working practices (including the focus of this paper, part-time working) in policing in three metropolitan police forces located in the North of England, of similar size, geography and policing demands. The forces will be referred to hereafter as Force A, Force B and Force C. Qualitative case studies were conducted in the three participating police forces.

The primary sources of data collection were semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions.² Semi-structured interviews were conducted with triads of police officers (the part-time worker, their manager and one colleague), within each force. Each triad was located in a separate geographical unit. We thus conducted a total of 72 interviews, representing 24 separate cases of part-time working — eight cases per force. The author and a research assistant travelled to different venues for the purpose of data collection. We conducted interviews on police premises at times that were convenient to participants. Each individual interview took between 30 and 60 minutes to complete. Interviews were tape-recorded, fully transcribed and returned to the participant for checking prior to being used as data. For this paper, I have drawn principally on the interview data collected from 23 part-time female officers³ who took part in the study. These women worked in a variety of operational and geographical locations throughout the three forces (see Table 1).

All the women interviewed had remained within their pre-pregnancy role and within the same work-group, with the exception of four women, all of whom had opted to leave their roles due to the difficulties they experienced in trying to cope with their workloads on a part-time basis. I return to this issue in the analysis below (see Table 1: participants A3, B6, C3 and C4). With respect to the first

Table 1: Details of participants

| Force and case identifier | Interviewee | Nature of unit |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| A1 | Part-time female working 70 per cent of full-time hours | CID office in town centre |
| A2 | Part-time female inspector working 80 per cent of full-time hours. | Operational police unit |
| A3 | Full-time female constable who had returned to full-time from part-time work (70 per cent of full-time hours) between the time she agreed to be interviewed and was actually interviewed. | Specialist squad at the time of the interview but formerly in a busy operational police unit in the city centre. The participant returned to full-time hours in another unit because she was actually better able to meet her domestic commitments in this new role. The interview was conducted in the latter unit |
| A4 | Part-time female constable working 80 per cent of full-time hours | Surveillance unit attached to CID. The role is not demand-led and involves only two shifts |
| A5 | Part-time female constable working 60 per cent of full-time hours | Operational police unit. This officer worked at an out-post, manned by up to four officers per shift |
| A6 | Part-time female constable working 80 per cent of full-time hours | CID office in town centre |
| A7 | Part-time female constable working 60 per cent of full-time hours | Operational police unit |
| A8 | Part-time female constable working 75 per cent of full-time hours. | Town centre operational unit |
| B2 | Part-time female working 65 per cent of full-time hours | Community beat office located in operational police department. This is a demand-led unit but the demands are less intense than in core operational work |
| B3 | Part-time female working 50 per cent of full-time hours | Operational police unit in the outskirts of the city |
| B4 | Part-time female working 90 per cent of full-time hours | Operational police unit. This part-timer worked in an out-post which was manned by two officers. When responding to calls, she would join with colleagues working in other units |
| B5 | Part-time female constable working 92 per cent of full-time hours | Busy operational police unit in the city centre |
| B6 | Part-time female constable working 62 per cent of full-time hours | Control room. This is the unit that takes response calls from the public and despatches operational officers to those calls. This participant requested a move to the control room because she felt she was having to hand too much work over to colleagues when working part-time as an operational officer |
| B7 | Part-time female constable working 87 per cent of full-time hours | Family protection unit (see A5 above for brief description) |
| C1 | Part-time female constable working 87 per cent of full-time hours | Busy operational police department in city centre |
| C2 | Part-time female constable working 85 per cent of full-time hours which she had recently increased from 50 per cent because she was struggling to accommodate her workload | Neighbourhood police unit located within an operational police department in city centre |
| C3 | Part-time female constable working 50 per cent of full-time hours | Criminal Investigation Department (CID) in city centre. Part-timer moved (by her own request) from the main department to a specialist position within the department — financial investigation — which is not as demand-led |
| C4 | Part-time female constable working 75 per cent of full-time hours | Sexual offenders unit. Part-timer applied for this role because she was, in her own words, 'not being used to optimal advantage' in the operational role she was performing part-time on first returning from maternity leave |
| C5 | Part-time female sergeant working 50 per cent of full-time hours (she job-shared with another female sergeant) | The part-timer and her job-share colleague were in charge of a neighbourhood policing unit located in a city centre police department |
| C6 | Part-time female constable working 92 per cent of full-time hours | Busy operational police unit in city centre |
| C7 | Part-time female constable working 75 per cent of full-time hours | Busy operational police unit in city centre |

point (that the women interviewed for this study remained in their pre-pregnancy roles), it is important to note that, as outlined above, part-time working was introduced into police forces in the aftermath of a successful industrial tribunal. Thus, I would argue, in negotiating their deployment, part-timers are able to draw power resources from this broader institutional backdrop (see Dick, 2009).

The age range of the women was between 29 and 45, with the median age 34. The length of service for the group was in the range 7–18 years, with a median of 10 years service. The women interviewed for this study had reduced their hours by between 8 and 50 per cent, following the birth of a child (details are given in Table 1). Ninety-eight per cent of the officers working part-time across the three police forces were women.

Data analysis

The data were initially analysed using a template (e.g., King, 2004). This technique involves the systematic identification of categories and themes from textual data (see Appendix for the template that was developed from the data collected for this study). While providing a useful description of a data set, template analysis cannot help with theory development. Thus, for example, in support of the extant literature, the interview data generated by the part-time police officers showed that their experiences of working part-time were overwhelmingly positive. For example, only three part-time officers mentioned issues of isolation/marginalization (code 7). However, every participant made comments about the improvement of work–life balance (code 11). Furthermore, while 13 participants believed that part-time working would hamper their opportunities for career development and progression (code 12), this was attributed by the majority to their personal choice in taking up part-time working (code 13). Nonetheless, it would be an overstatement to read these responses as reflecting an unproblematic acceptance of the conditions participants encountered and the experiences they related. Many participants, for instance, discussed the feelings of guilt or discomfort they experienced as a consequence of working part-time.

During the interviews, we often probed participants in order to find out why they felt guilty or uncomfortable. Did their colleagues complain about them or make comments, for instance? Interestingly, we found that part-timers did not report such experiences, but they did feel that they were being judged by their colleagues for not being as available as full-time staff. As we circled between the literature on gender, work and organization and the data, it seemed to us that this feeling of being judged resonated with Skegg's (1997) account of dialogical recognition, discussed above. Nobody was explicitly making negative judgements of the part-time participants in this study but the latter were aware that in failing to conform to the norms of professionalism dominant in the organization, they could be seen as lacking professional credentials, most particularly commitment to the profession and to professional standards. It should also be pointed out that dialogical recognition is not simply recognition of negative representations of the social category to which one belongs, it can also pertain to more positive representations such as professionalism and prestige. Hence, some of the processes discussed in what follows arguably reflect participants' desires to be seen as valuable in the eyes of others through their enactment and possession of professional attributes.

This idea of dialogical recognition then informed how we read some of the experiences recounted by our participants which were difficult to otherwise explain. For instance, even though a lot of the women in our study told us that they had repositioned work as less central in their lives having decided to work part-time (see below), many of them refused deployment to roles that would enable them to more easily achieve this centrality. Moreover, when explaining why they preferred not to work routine or planned overtime, participants not only drew attention to the importance of a less permeable home–work boundary, but also to the financial disincentives they faced. This struck us as particularly interesting given that it is common for police officers to justify routine and planned overtime as necessitated by the nature of the job, not its financial incentives.

Analysis

Dis-identifications: navigating negative subject positions

As outlined above, while all the part-time participants believed that they were perceived in negative ways, this was based on inference, rather than on direct evidence. Many respondents, for example, discussed how the part-timer's relative lack of availability could be seen as a problem by full-time colleagues, often because the latter experienced increases in their workloads. Some of the part-timers believed that this problem was then (unfairly and unjustifiably) attributed to their lack of commitment rather than a consequence of their choice to work less hours (and consequently receive less pay):

I let it be known, that yes, all right, I'm not there, but then I'm not being paid to be there either. You know I'm only getting paid for when I'm working. (A5)

More concrete evidence regarding negative perceptions was that three participants complained that they had been deployed to more menial tasks on their conversion to part-time hours (A1, A6 and C4) and seven participants reported that their managers had attempted to deploy them into administrative, non-operational roles when negotiating their return from maternity leave (A1, A7, B4, B7, C3, C4, C5), an extremely common response from managers to requests for part-time working at the time of this study, reflecting the perception of several managers that part-timers lack flexibility and are therefore not as 'useful' as full-time officers:

In my experience I've found that most [full-timers] are quite flexible and that they will come in on their days off particularly if they're getting paid for it, whereas the likes of ... I mean I'm always giving the example of part-time officers with childcare problems because that's all I've dealt with, but for [name of part-timer] there's nobody to look after the children and she's got to be at home and therefore there isn't the flexibility there of bringing her in the day after. Whereas officers who are perhaps single or haven't got children, they can be a bit more flexible and they could come in ... and particularly if there's a financial issue for them. (Full-time manager, Force A)

The ubiquity of this managerial response is illustrated by the quote from participant B5 below: if managers agreed to allow the part-timer to remain in her pre-pregnancy role and accepted her proposed pattern of hours, individuals were delighted though surprised. The remainder of the participants made no mention of how they were deployed or whether attempts had been made to dissuade them from returning to operational roles. This does not mean that such attempts were not made, rather that participants did not mention or orient to these attempts as meaningful or worthy of comment during their interviews.

In a study of the Australian police, Charlesworth and Whittenbury (2007) found that officers who converted from full- to part-time hours were given more routine clerical tasks and prevented from undertaking the full range of police activities on the grounds that these require 'continuity', a finding that has been replicated in other studies of part-time professionals (Dex and Smith, 2002). As the extracts below illustrate, the women who did mention and discuss their supervisors' attempts to deploy them to alternative roles or to more menial tasks refused to accept these tasks and roles. In the first quote below, the participant explains her reaction to her manager's suggestion that she moved into an administrative 'day job' that would be less demanding in terms of time and energy:

The advantage to [Force B] of me working with my Block (i.e., team) is that they don't lose an experienced officer and I'm not in a job that I didn't want to be in, 'cos I knew that it would be easier in many ways but I didn't want to do it. I came into the job to be a police officer not do office work. When I was pregnant I was on light duties but I continued working with the Block and I helped out on paper-work and they [supervision] did try and give me a day job but I didn't want it. (B4)

Well, I find it difficult. Since I've come back to work ... I were a detective and a well respected member of a team and an office. Since I've come back I feel like I'm not anymore. ... [T]hey think as a part-time detective that all of a sudden you've lost all your brain, you can't do the job, so

obviously they don't want you. They think a full-time detective can contribute more to a [murder] enquiry than a part-time detective, so you don't get any of them. You get all the office duties like ... I have to do menial tasks like that. I feel like I do all the rubbish things, so I've applied for a new job within the force as a FIO which is a Force Intelligence Officer. So, therefore I can keep my [detective status]. (A1)

The fact that, as already mentioned above, all the participants in this study had succeeded in being accommodated within their pre-pregnancy role (though in five cases — A1, A3, B6, C3 and C4 — this did not turn out as anticipated) is suggestive of a shift in the balance of power between managers and part-timers, unless we are to believe that the former are simply highly progressive.

Nonetheless, as Charlesworth and Whittenbury's (2007) study suggests, mobilizing institutional sources of power may be more difficult in departments like the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) where it is taken for granted that the work is of exceptional importance and therefore necessitates long working hours. It is this difficulty which perhaps explains why participant A1 was not able to successfully contest her deployment within her own department and had felt it necessary to seek an alternative role. As illustrated by the case of participant C4 in Table 1, however, it seems that CID is not the only department to deploy part-time staff to tasks they perceive not to optimally utilize their skills and experience.

In terms of identity, a key concern motivating these refusals is, I would suggest, the symbolic profit (Bourdieu, 1991), that is accrued from being, as the participant above states, 'respected' members of the team. That is, performing the full range of operational police duties (see extract from participant B5 below) is what brings value and occupational self-esteem to individuals. This is perhaps best illustrated less by what participants reported and more by the fact that despite the availability of roles in less demanding units, the majority of the part-time officers interviewed opted to stay working in very busy demand-led units. The decision made by participant C4 to leave her operational role was entirely motivated by the fact that she believed her skills and experience were not being utilized 'optimally'. Working in these busy demand-led units made the lives of these women much more difficult, especially given the routine expectation that officers will remain on duty to finish uncompleted tasks or if commanded to do so by supervisory officers:

I mean, my main gripe was I loved section.⁴ To me section is what you join the job for, and I didn't want to get shipped off to an administrative role, [so when I got pregnant] it was like, no, I want to carry on doing this, but my concern was that they would try to ship me off ... I was really lucky, 'cos I put my hours in and they were agreed straight away.

A little later, she says,

I know that we have to expect to stay on [duty]. I mean if I arrest somebody, I stay on, but I know roughly how long I'm going to be, but when they [supervision] won't even tell you how long you're going to be, or how long you've got to stay on, that can be really stressful. (B5)

In spite of these problems and despite the fact this woman could easily have asked to be transferred to a unit where her hours would be fixed and predictable, she had no desire to leave 'section'. Of course, it could be argued that these women wanted to stay in operational work simply because they found this more enjoyable than office work, but I would argue that preferences for particular types of work are not simply expressions of underlying personality variables but also of cultural processes in organizations which, as discussed above with reference to police work, valorize certain features and dimensions of occupations, giving rise to particular professional norms of conduct. Indeed, it could be argued that it is the dialogical recognition of the good professional police officer as one who engages in 'real' police work that underpins these participants' desire to remain in units that make maximum use of their experiences and skills.

Given that being recognized as a good officer is what provides individuals with symbolic profit, refusing deployment to tasks that are seen as 'menial' or as illustrated by the quote above, to tasks and roles not central to the identity of police officer, may be what motivates these women to dis-identify

with the subject position offered to part-time officers, in which they are constructed as less professional (Smithson, 2005). Nonetheless, while such refusals enable dis-identification at one level, the difficulties generated in work groups by actually accommodating a part-time officer render the maintenance of a positive sense of professional self-hood somewhat difficult, as I will now go onto illustrate.

Navigating professional guilt: resisting negative dialogical recognition

All but three part-time participants expressed feelings of guilt about the extent to which the reduction in their working hours and availability had created extra work for their colleagues. While some participants recognized that this problem was due to the fact that the organization continued to count the reduced hours officer as equivalent to a full-time resource in the team, they did not question the more insidious cultural norm, whereby it is usual for officers to take sole responsibility for particular tasks, most especially their administrative components. Examples here might be dealing with a particular criminal case in the CID, which would involve collecting and collating relevant information, as well as taking responsibility for liaising with external agencies, such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS); or completing all the interviews and paperwork associated with an arrest, in the case of operational policing. This mode of organization generates a need for task continuity, reflected not only in how specific tasks are performed, but also in the expectations that colleagues and external agencies have with respect to police work, and is typical of how work is organized across the professions (Anderson-Gough *et al.*, 2000, 2005). It is this taken-for-granted mode of organizing that poses particular difficulties for part-time officers and impacts on how they believe they are perceived by colleagues, as well as on their own sense of professionalism, through their adherence to professional norms.

Part-time participant: I initially worked on section [operational policing]. I came back initially part-time on section but that was only for 12 months and then I came back into the operations room.

Interviewer: Ok, so, why did you only do 12 months on section part-time?

Participant: It wasn't planned, but I found that over that period of time because of the way the shift patterns fell, I found that I was having a lot of time off. I'd go over a week stint where I wasn't in work erm, and that meant I was having to pass stuff, crimes, enquiries to other people to do and I didn't like that. I didn't like for one, them having to do my work for me and putting on them, and also it wasn't done the way you want it done, so it's like, well, I just didn't feel it worked. (B6)

All of the women that we spoke to for this study argued that despite working reduced hours, their workloads were as high as their full-time counterparts. Not one officer complained about this, but many did struggle to complete their work and it was failing to cope with this struggle that led participants A3, B6 and C3 to actually apply for a different role:

You do feel pressured to work at the same rate as the full-timers ... Not pressured. [It's] probably my own pressure because of the way that I am. I mean [before I reduced my hours] I'd been used to working in a busy CID office going at that speed and at that rate of knots and it's difficult to comprehend that you're only 20 hours and you can't fit 40 in. (C3)

This extract is typical of how women discussed their responses to heavy workloads, attributing the pressure to maintain these loads to their own internal professional standards. I would argue that these accounts demonstrate further efforts to maintain professional credibility both materially (by coping with a high workload) and discursively (by emphasizing personal commitment to completing these workloads). Despite fitting virtually full-time workloads into part-time hours, many of the participants did report feeling judged by their full-time colleagues:

You get negative comments, but in a jokey way, so if you were to ... if you were to speak to them about it, they would say, 'Oh, you know, I'm only having a laugh and a joke.' It depends on what

kind of person you are. I mean sometimes, you know, you take it to heart and you feel like ... you know, you feel guilty. You know, 'I'm going home and I'm leaving you in the lurch. I've got to go home because I've got children [to see to]', but you're leaving somebody with your job then, you know, and you just feel guilty about it. (C1)

Guilt is an emotion that is cognitively underpinned by the idea that the individual has breached a moral code. Within policing, especially at grass roots level, there is a strong emphasis on solidarity in work teams, and the belief that one should look out for colleagues (Chan, 1996; Waddington, 1999). As the extracts above illustrate, it is when the officer may have to pass uncompleted tasks to colleagues, or when she leaves work at the end of a shift, rather than staying on to complete a task (as is the norm) that guilt is experienced, probably because this breaches this particular moral code.

Resolving this guilt was accomplished in very similar ways by those participants reporting it: they would frequently remind themselves and others that they were indeed less available but were also receiving less pay:

I let it be known, that yes, all right, I'm not there, but then I'm not being paid to be there either. You know I'm only getting paid for when I'm working so ... I mean they have a laugh, you know, say, 'oh', you know, 'running off again', you know, and they say things like that, and I say, well, 'yeah, because I'm ... I'm not paid to be here so I'm not gonna be here', you know. They only pay me to work 24 hours, you know, so I'm not coming you know, to work any more ... so ... (A5)

When full-time officers remain on duty to complete tasks, they receive routine overtime payments. That is, for any hours over the 40 contracted hours worked, the officer will receive additional payment pro rata. For part-time officers to be paid overtime rates, they too need to work more than 40 hours in a given week. Since much routine overtime will amount to less than 5 hours a week, part-time officers working longer than their contracted hours (often around 32 hours a week) frequently do not qualify for overtime rates of payment. Remaining on duty to complete tasks is therefore financially lucrative for full-time staff and less so for part-time staff. Interestingly, in both this research and earlier research conducted by the author, the reasons for staying on duty and not handing over to oncoming colleagues is usually justified with reference to the complexity of the task or to possible mistakes being made which could have detrimental outcomes should the task eventually come to be central to a criminal conviction. In other words, it is commonplace for the necessity for overtime working to be justified with reference to professional standards:

When you're sent to a job you deal with it from the start, if you like, so you know all about it and if you make an arrest you do your statement and if there's anyone else involved you generally have to follow it up because you took on that original job. If it's a job where there's lots of statements to be taken, but there's no offender, if you like, so it's been witnessed by say, two or three people ... [and] there's a description of the offender, there's video evidence and there's forensics been left at the scene. There's all that to [do]... if you haven't sort of gone to the original job from the very start and you don't see what's gone on, then things can get missed, so that's another reason why you do have to sometimes follow it from start to finish. (C7)

I would argue that in drawing attention to the fact that they are not financially compensated for working routine overtime, part-timers are reacting to negative dialogical recognition. That is, they recognize that not working overtime is read negatively not only because it increases workloads for colleagues but also because this problem is not in general attributed to the structural conditions that cause this increase (the fact that departments cannot recoup the hours lost through part-time working) but is tacitly attributed to a lack of professional commitment and therefore potentially to a lack of professional standards from the part-timer:

But you could take [the teasing] the wrong way if you're not of the right inkling and you could feel quite, you know, that we don't do anything and that we're not working. I think if you got down to the nook and cranny of it they [the full-timers] forget, I think, a lot of the time we don't get paid as

much. We're not getting paid for those days we're not in so it's not like we're skiving. We're losing out big time financially because of that. (B2)

The naming of the economic reality of the employment relationship, I suggest, enables the part-timer to 'push back', i.e. to externalize what is being constituted as 'inside', i.e. to personal attributes of individuals (Fleming and Spicer, 2003). However, by achieving this push back in the manner illustrated, she also effectively reproduces the discourse in which she is constructed as lacking commitment and professionalism, because professionals are expected to be motivated by vocational not instrumental concerns (Bourdieu, 1991).

Regardless of the challenges facing part-time officers in terms of maintaining a positive sense of self, it was nevertheless clear that all but three of the participants had successfully adjusted to their roles, and despite the guilt some of these women experienced, and the fact that they believed they were perceived negatively by some colleagues and managers, most appeared to accept this as 'part of the deal', that was worthwhile due to the benefits obtained through an improved work-life balance. Thus it seems that even though there is a loss in professional status associated with the transition to part-time working, the more positive sense of self that is engendered through having more time to spend with the family provides adequate consolation. Indeed, in line with the studies by Bailey (2000) and Raddon (2002), several participants in this study reported that, as a consequence of having children and working part-time, work was less central in their lives. Of course, as the quote below also illustrates, one reason for this stems from socio-cultural discourses that hold working women ethically and morally accountable for the welfare of their children (Duncan *et al.*, 2003):

You do get asked, 'Are you going back full-time?' I'd love to, but ... I don't think it's fair really on the children. They're such ... they're so young. I mean okay, I joined the police and now I've decided my family are more important, if you like, so that's why I've had to do this, but I still like my job and I still don't want to give it up, but if I had to choose obviously it would be my family first. I think for most people it would, you know. (C7)

This repositioning of work meant that, as illustrated in the next extract below, participants were not prepared to jeopardize their work arrangements by applying for specialist or developmental roles deemed essential for career advancement, and had also ruled this out for the foreseeable future:

I've done this for 10 years, so I've never ... I've just not thought about promotion. I've got some people who'll accommodate me so I've stayed put basically because I've thought, 'I won't take the chance of going anywhere else and being more of a hassle to them', so I've thought, 'Well, I'm happy here', you know, they understand me. They know about my family and ... and I've just sort of shied away from going anywhere else just to save any more ... any problems. (C1)

Hence, a reduction in career commitment, as this quote illustrates, cannot be simply read off an individual's preference for part-time working (e.g., Hakim, 1995) but is also a consequence of the structural constraints that inhere within the local and organizational job market and how these relate to expectations around obtaining relevant vocational experiences.

Transformational spaces: positive outcomes engendered by difficulties in work groups

On the whole then, this analysis begs a question that was raised in the introduction to this article, which concerns the extent to which micropolitical resistance, such as that illustrated here, is actually effective. Certainly, while, on the one hand, it is possible to argue that the women in this study have succeeded in holding on to their professional roles, this seems a somewhat pyrrhic victory, in as much as this is achieved at the cost of career advancement and of status within both the work group and the organization. Nonetheless, the study suggested that in fact it was in attempts by work groups to accommodate the part-timer in ways that were acceptable both to her and to the work group that creative and, positively, win-win solutions were manufactured. For example, in one case, where the part-timer had refused deployment to an office job and insisted on using her skills and qualification

as a police driver, her manager had patterned her work hours across three different operational groups (a strategy that is generally frowned upon in policing):

If I didn't work the reduced hours across the Blocks (i.e., operational groups), I don't think there'd be anybody with my experience [in those blocks]. The other blocks have said to me, that they're grateful for me, you know, for being an extra resource for them which they wouldn't necessarily have. And they say, 'Well thanks for covering cars for us' and all this lot, but I've said, 'I'm just doing my job', you know ... (B4)

As illustrated by this quote, unlike other part-timers, this officer believed she was perceived in highly positive ways by the work group as she was seen as adding to, not diminishing, the resources available within the group. Her reported use of the phrase 'I'm just doing my job', in response to the gratitude she says the group members express to her, perhaps illustrates an attempt to reclaim her identity as a 'normal' professional police officer and thus minimize the possibility that her services can be read as an anomalous though beneficial consequence of her part-time status.

Two other officers in the sample were also working across a number of work groups though it was not clear from the data how this arrangement had come to pass. In addition, a number of participants from all three forces commented that they had heard of similar situations from colleagues and friends suggesting, at least anecdotally, that while such instances are by no means common, neither are they totally isolated.

Discussion and conclusions

In this analysis, I have sought to understand how part-time professionals negotiate the threats to their identities that are produced through discourses that construct them as less professional and less committed. I have used the explanatory framework of micropolitical resistance to explore this issue. I have claimed that enacting the role of police officer is symbolically profitable only if the individual is engaged in what is widely understood as 'real' police work. This, I have argued is what explains the unwillingness of part-timers to move into administrative roles or to undertake tasks they consider menial. The quest for the achievement of a positive sense of self is seen to be central to the generation of resistance at the level of subjectivity, and I have claimed that it is this which motivates part-time police officers to resist attempts to deploy them in ways that undermine their sense of value. Nonetheless, I have claimed that while resisting re-deployment enables them to retain the symbolic profit associated with professionalism, the difficulties generated by actually attempting to fit them into work groups that rely on certain modes and patterns of work organization lead the part-timer to experience feelings of guilt. It is these feelings that constrain the extent to which the part-timer is able to reject and contest the subject positions in which she is constructed as less committed and less professional because she dialogically recognizes herself within them.

The paper makes a number of theoretical contributions to micropolitical accounts of resistance in organizations, as well as to the literature on professional part-time working. First, I have shown how both structural conditions within organizations and taken-for-granted organizational practices both shape and constrain subjective responses to the discourses targeted at employees. While, for example, micropolitical accounts of resistance acknowledge that agents are motivated by the desire to construct a positive sense of self, they have tended to neglect the extent to which this is constrained, as well as enabled, by both discursive and non-discursive aspects of the socio-cultural context (for an exception, see Zanon and Janssens, 2007). Zanon and Janssens (2007) argue that organizational control mechanisms work most efficiently when there is a high degree of coherence between discursive controls (control through the disciplinary power of ideas) and non-discursive control (control through organizational structures and roles). In the police force, for example, dominant and non-discursive modes of task organization that create the requirement for continuity (individual responsibility for tasks and no handovers), are underpinned and reinforced by discourses that promote the idea of task continuity as central to effective police work. It is this coherence that not only created problems

within work groups due to the presence of the part-timer but, additionally, caused the part-timer to recognize herself as a problem, as lacking professional commitment. This dialogical recognition inevitably closed off the extent to which the part-timer could occupy more positive subject positions, and illustrates the importance of exploring how micropolitical resistance is shaped not simply by conscious reflection on discourses of 'being' but also constrained by more unconscious processes, such as taken-for-granted social and organizational practices.

The guilt engendered by the more negative aspects of dialogical recognition was, I argued, ameliorated by disrupting a core principle of professional identity — that the sometimes onerous levels of responsibility and effort involved in the execution of professional roles should be experienced as vocationally rather than instrumentally rewarding. Disrupting this principle by drawing attention to the lack of financial return they obtain from complying with such norms enables part-timers to successfully externalize the cause of their transgression (Fleming and Spicer, 2003), but also reproduces the discourse that constructs them as less professional and less committed. However, I argued that the benefits these women experienced through the concrete improvements to their lives that accumulated from working part-time acted to buffer and mitigate these identity threats. This is, perhaps, the reason that externalizing their guilt by constructing an instrumental orientation to work was not as threatening as it might otherwise have been. By positioning their home life as more central than work, these women reproduce macro discourses (Musson and Duberley, 2007) that construct women as home-makers and men as breadwinners, but, at one and the same time, they unsettle dominant cultural scripts in which career advancement is valorized for professionals. Thus the analysis illustrates the point made by Collinson (1994, p. 29) that consent and resistance are 'inextricably and simultaneously linked, often in contradictory ways within particular organizational cultures, discourses and practices. Resistance frequently contains elements of consent and consent often incorporates aspects of resistance'.

Existing literature that has examined the gendered nature of professions has noted that inclusion strategies pursued by women may inadvertently reproduce the hegemonic forms of masculinity reflected in the cultures of professional organizations (e.g., Haynes, 2012). This study suggests, in line with the emerging practice-based view of institutional change (Orlikowski and Yates, 2002), that transformations to this culture may not necessarily proceed from the power resources provided by external pressures for change such as those generated by legislation or social movements (Acker, 2006). Rather because part-time working surfaces and exposes the principles on which such cultures are based, opportunities emerge for questioning and contesting these principles. For example, the notion of 'ever-availability' as illustrated in this study was exposed by these women as resting on financial as well as vocational principles.

Finally, the paper addresses one of the core concerns that have been raised about accounts of micropolitical resistance: its effectiveness. While, of course, what counts as effective resistance will vary depending on the perspective of the observer, I would agree with Collinson (1994) and Bordo (1993), who have argued that micropolitical accounts of resistance risk celebrating it, without thinking through the extent to which it actually succeeds in transforming dominant discourses and ideologies. My analysis suggests that rejecting or contesting the subject positions offered through discourse are not, in themselves, sufficient to destabilize truths and identities in the way that Thomas and Davies (2005) suggest. As Fleming and Spicer (2003) argue, while employees may, in words, re-write any number of subject positions that are aimed in some way at regulating their behaviour, in deeds, they continue to reproduce them. Nonetheless, it is through practices that the discursive and non-discursive elements of organizational life are related (Bourdieu, 1977). The part-time women in this study, for instance, are showing materially, every day, that policing can be performed outside of standard parameters. Thus, even though they clearly accrue some costs from this, including how they (believe) they are perceived, the extent to which they are valued, and some financial disadvantages, their overall levels of contentment and satisfaction, coupled with the simple fact of their presence in the work group, may provide some colleagues with pause for thought.

Second, and relatedly, the reason that these women attract a degree of censure is that their presence in the work group disrupts taken-for-granted practices and routines. As Feldman and

Pentland (2003) argue, any organizational routine, such as taking sole responsibility for the completion of a specific police task, can be understood as occurring at a performative and an ostensive level. The ostensive level refers to the purpose of the routine and the performative level to how the routine is actually enacted. Small changes in the performance of routines, as Feldman and Pentland (2003) point out, can generate larger scale changes, at both the performative and ostensive levels. My analysis suggests that it is as agents struggle to perform the everyday routines of policing with part-time officers, who cannot be expected to work in the same way as full-time staff, that new routines may be generated to enable their accommodation. Zilber (2002) has illustrated that routines are transformed not just by changes to how they are performed, but by changes to the meaning systems that support them. Consequently, changes to routines engendered by the accommodation of part-time working may be productive, over time, of changes to meanings, suggesting a further mechanism that may act to disrupt the forms of hegemonic masculinity that have shown remarkable persistence in influencing the norms and values configuring many professions and professional organizations.

In conclusion, in support of existing accounts of micropolitical resistance, my analysis suggests that it is attempts to build a positive sense of self that motivate individuals to re-write and re-inscribe the subject positions that they are offered through both regulatory organizational discourses and through more macro socio-cultural discourses. However, I have suggested that the extent to which these positions can be re-written is both shaped and constrained by the material and discursive structures within which agents are embedded. This embedded feature of agency means that resistance is generated not only by conscious reflection on certain discourses of 'being' but is also constrained by attempts to resolve the emotional consequences of 'dialogical recognition', which can occur because of the taken-for-granted nature of organizational practices. I have argued that the transformational potential of micropolitical resistance depends upon the extent to which this actually results in concrete changes to how work is enacted. As my analysis indicates, even in a fragmented workforce, where there are limited opportunities for the mobilization of collective alliances, and where presenteeism is emphasized and the value of part-timers questioned (MacDermid *et al.*, 2001), such changes can occur because of how micropolitical resistance indirectly impacts on everyday routines and practices. That is, as part-timers resist being positioned as lacking commitment to the profession (by refusing certain deployments) and as lacking commitment to the maintenance of professional standards (by naming financial incentives as motivating work centrality), they have a material impact on how work is carried out. Groups have to find ways to accommodate part-timers whose working hours are out of sync with the rest of their work group and they have to find ways to satisfactorily manage workloads within the constraints imposed by staff who are not 'ever available'. It is these unintended and improvisational consequences of the micropolitical resistance outlined in this paper that, I would suggest, can be understood as 'effective'.

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Notes

1. Routine overtime refers to working additional hours to those contracted.

2. Since these data are not used for the purposes of this paper, in the interests of space, no further details about them are provided here.
3. One of the part-time participants was a male officer who was working at a 'help desk' rather than in an operational role; he was also working only one fixed shift with no requirements for overtime. It was felt that the data from this participant was not relevant to the study aims and hence his details are omitted from Table 1.
4. 'Section' is the colloquial term for front-line operational policing.

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Biographical note

Penny Dick is Professor of Organizational Psychology in the Institute of Work Psychology at Sheffield University Management School. Her research interests include identity, resistance and power; the impact of family-friendly policies on organizations and individuals, and the role of institutional work in understanding processes of organizational stability and change. She has published in journals such as the *Journal of Management Studies*, *Work, Employment & Society*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Organizational and Occupational Psychology* and the *British Journal of Management*. Penny is an Associate Editor for the *Journal of Management Studies*.

Appendix

Template

| Code | Description |
|--|---|
| 1. Retention | Reference to retaining female staff following child-birth |
| 2. Legislation | Discussion of flexible working drawing on notions of Equal opportunities, government legislation, or Industrial Tribunals or threats of |
| 3. Legitimacy | Discussion of flexible working as a means for securing organizational legitimacy to internal and external audiences |
| 4. Progressive | Discussion of police organization as progressing, evolving in line with the changing needs of individuals/society |
| 5. Availability | Discussion of how part-time staff impacts on officer availability, either positively (+) or negatively (-). |
| 6. Conflicts | Discussion of how part-time or other flexible work patterns conflict with other priorities/processes or practices |
| 7. Marginalization/isolation | Discussion of how part-time working operates to isolate or marginalize the part-timer (7a), other staff (7b) |
| 8. Financial considerations (for the individual) | Discussion of financial issues related to working part-time |
| 9. Perceptions of or attitudes towards the part-timer | Discussion of how the part-timer is perceived by full-time staff either positively (+) or negatively (-) |
| 10. Task deployment | Discussion of how part-time or other flexible work pattern impacts on the way that part-timers are deployed (10a) or the way that other staff are deployed (10b) |
| 11. Work-life balance (WLB) | Discussion of how part-time or other flexible work pattern has an impact on WLB either positively (+) or negatively (-) |
| 12. Promotion and development | Discussion of the way that part-time work can affect promotion and development prospects either positively (+) or negatively (-) |
| 13. Personal choice | Where individuals express the view that any career stasis or disadvantages stem from the individual's choice to work part-time |
| 14. Equity | Discussion of how part-time working impacts on individual (14a) or work-group (14b) equity |
| 15. Demanding | Discussion of police work as a demand-led activity |
| 16. Lack of clarity over meaning of policies on flexible working | Discussion that suggests there is a lack of clarity about what policy means or how it should be implemented |
| 17. Policy management | Discussion of how the policy is managed to good effect (+) or with negative effects (-) |
| 18. Policy communication | Discussion of how policy is communicated effectively (+) or ineffectively (-) |
| 19. Political correctness | Discussion of political correctness influencing the organization's approach to staff (19a) or policing (19b) |
| 20. Reciprocity | Discussion in which the importance of give and take by individuals is emphasized or the importance of officers and managers showing flexibility in what they are prepared to do/allow |
| 21. Quantification | Discussion of targets, performance indicators, or other means of calculating police efficiency |
| 22. Trust | Discussion in which the reliability and dependability of the officer is emphasized |
| 23. Balance | Discussion in which the importance of balancing the needs of individuals with the needs of the organization is emphasized |
| 24. Gender | Discussion of WLB or flexible working which explicitly raises the issue of gender |