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**Women Policing: A Contemporary Study of Women's  
Experiences in the Royal Thai Police**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Women's Studies**

**At Massey University, Palmerston North,  
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# Abstract

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In line with international trends, in Thailand there are significantly fewer women than men who work at the senior level in public service and law enforcement occupations, especially in the police and armed forces. Utilizing the Royal Thai Police (RTP) as a case study, this research aims to identify the opportunities and barriers for promotion that impact women in the RTP and to analyze why few women work at the senior level for both police and administration or office-based work.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather information on women's experiences. Thirty-seven intended participants were interviewed. Thirty-four participants are female police officers who work either in the Technical Support Unit or in the Field Operation Unit and another three participants are significant public authority figures who work with the RTP.

Although many participants reported that they feel they have been 'accepted' in the RTP as police officers, there is evidence that they have not been fully accepted in the workplace. 'Acceptance in the workplace' has varied meanings according to which section of the organization those female police officers work within. This research shows that organizational and cultural barriers still exist that limit opportunities for promotion. Theoretical frameworks provided by Butler and Foucault help to provide tools for understanding why this might be the case in this and other case studies. One difficulty that emerged from the research is that having insider status as a researcher in relation to gendered cultural norms has impacted on the level of separation from critical

analysis of the issues being studied, because the researcher is the product of these same gendered cultural norms.

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# List of Acronyms

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AAPs	Affirmative Action Programs
APSW	Association for the Promotion of the Status of Women
BPPB	Border Patrol Police Bureau
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSC	Civil Service Commission
DoD	Department of Defense in the United States of America
DPKO	United Nation Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DVAW	Domestic violence against women
EDB	Education Bureau
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EU	European Union
FPU	Female Formed Police Unit
ILO	International Labour Organization
IR	International Relations
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals

MUHEC	Massey University Human Ethics Committee
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCWA	National Commission on Women's Affairs
NPA	National Police Agency in Japan
OCSC	Office of the Civil Service Commission
OWF	Office of Women's Affairs and Family Development
PGH	Police General Hospital
PPR	Provincial Police Region Division 1 – 9
RPCA	Royal Police Cadet Academy
RTP	Royal Thai Police
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics team
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNPOL	United Nations Police
US	United States of America