

Arva Marie Johnson

Reflections on Being the Only Woman on the Day Shift

Description of the reactions of and resistance by male officers.

Interview recorded March 1, 2007

A. JOHNSON:

It was strange and different to be working around a lot of men knowing that you are the only female that's on the day shift, and knowing that they really didn't want to work with you, and then trying to hold a conversation—sometimes we didn't talk at all. And then sometimes you might get somebody that wanted to talk about their job.

K. JOHNSON:

Can you provide an example of some of the resistance that you might have met?

A. JOHNSON:

Well, some of them would say, 'Why would you want to be here? Wouldn't you rather be at home with your child, cooking?' I said, 'No.' 'I don't think you'd be able to handle this job.' I said, 'I think I can.' So I had to really prove myself. And then as time went on, they saw that I wanted to do the job, and I could do the job, and I was willing to stand by them and do it. So it all changed. It was good, and they started to accept me.