



Women Warriors: Stories from the Thin Blue Line

John M. Wills

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The book you hold in your hands is unique in that it contains stories written solely by women in law enforcement regarding their experiences on the job. Some of the narratives will make you laugh, others will make you weep. Some will outrage you as you try and understand why people act as they do. Women working the streets in law enforcement are a relatively recent phenomenon. In 1970, only 2% of all law enforcement officers were women, but by 1991 that number had risen to 9%. Numbers from the years 2007 and 2008 suggest the number of women involved in policing is almost 100,000, or just over 15%. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010). Having been involved in law enforcement since 1971, I can attest to the fact that the ranks of women in policing have increased dramatically. There are a number of reasons for this uptick, not the least of which is that law enforcement is no longer regarded as only a man's job. We've learned over the years that women perform equally as well as men do in this vocation. Obviously, both genders bring different skills and abilities to the job, but in the final analysis, both sexes put the bad guys in jail. Why write about women in law enforcement? Because during my career, I've trained scores of women in a variety of disciplines: defensive tactics, firearms and fitness, to name a few. I've seen their determination and tested their mettle. I've watched as some quit, not unlike some of their male colleagues, and marveled as others fought through adversity and won. I've mentored some who have gone on in their careers to be highly successful. Sadly, I've seen a few make the ultimate sacrifice and lay down their lives for their fellow man. Needless to say, I am inspired by the daily battle waged by our women in blue. We will forever be grateful to those who have unselfishly put themselves in harm's way and ultimately lost the battle. Their reward, however, is eternal life. For us who remain behind, we take comfort in seeing their names inscribed on the sacrosanct walls of the National Law Enforcement Memorial in Washington, D.C. alongside those of their brothers who also died in the line of duty. The stories you are about to read are compelling and give us, the readers, an insight into the minds of these exceptional women. I refer to them as Women Warriors because, as you will see, they fight tenaciously and savagely to uphold the oath they swore: To Serve and Protect. May the patron saint of police officers, St. Michael, protect each of them as they risk their lives each day so that we may live in peace.

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