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An Examination of Attitudes of Sorority Women Toward Member and Non-Member Lesbians

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AN EXAMINATION OF ATTITUDES OF SORORITY WOMEN
TOWARD MEMBER AND NON-MEMBER LESBIANS

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment for the

Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts

Emilie J. Campbell

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania
The School of Graduate Studies and Research
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the attitudes of sorority women towards member and non-member lesbians, taking a closer look at the perceived versus actual acceptance of lesbian women within the sorority community. The findings may assist practitioners in creating and maintaining supportive environments for lesbian students within campus-sponsored women's organizations.

A four-year, public institution of higher education in the mid-Atlantic is the campus of interest. A convenience sample of 402 undergraduate sorority women was solicited for the study, with 67 respondents used in the data analysis. This study used an adaptation of Engstrom and Sedlacek's (1997) SAS Sexual Orientation Survey (SAS) to measure and compare attitudes of sorority women toward lesbians. Through the data analysis, the findings indicated that both sexual orientation and membership status affect the attitudes of sorority women in a given situation. After discussing these findings, the researcher provided implications for future research, theory, and practice.