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

Emilie J. Campbell

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

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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
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 2012
We hereby approve the thesis of

Emilie J. Campbell

Candidate for the degree of Masters of Arts

April 6, 2012

Signature on File

John A. Mueller, Ed.D.
Professor of Student Affairs in
Higher Education, Advisor

April 6, 2012

Signature on File

Holley A. Belch, Ph.D.
Professor of Student Affairs in
Higher Education

April 6, 2012

Signature on File

John Wesley Lowery, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Student
Affairs in Higher Education

ACCEPTED

Signature on File

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Title: An Examination of Attitudes of Sorority Women Toward Member and Non-Member Lesbians

Author: Emilie J. Campbell

Thesis Chairperson: Dr. John A. Mueller

Thesis Committee: Dr. Holley A. Belch
                  Dr. John Wesley Lowery

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.