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PINK AND BLUE: OUTCOMES ASSOCIATED WITH THE INTEGRATION OF OPEN GAY AND LESBIAN PERSONNEL IN THE SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

SANTA BARBARA, CA -13 November 2001- A new University of California study has found that the integration of open gay and lesbian officers has improved the organizational effectiveness of the San Diego Police Department. The 43 page study is written by Aaron Belkin and Jason McNichol. Belkin is Director of the Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military at UC Santa Barbara and McNichol is Doctoral candidate in Sociology at UC Berkeley.

Based on an analysis of prior research and a site visit to San Diego, the study is the most comprehensive analysis ever undertaken of the integration of open gay and lesbian officers in a major, urban American police department. The authors interviewed twenty-nine individuals - gay and straight - and surveyed 328 government documents, academic studies, newspaper articles, and other materials. They took numerous steps, outlined in the report's section on 'methodology' to ensure the fairness of their findings.

Major findings include:

- * The integration of open gays and lesbians has improved the police department's organizational effectiveness.
- * A quiet process of normalization has reduced much of the emotional charge that heterosexual officers originally anticipated. A 'taken-for-grantedness' seems to characterize the presence of gay and lesbian officers.
- * Departmental leaders including the current and former Chiefs of Police have taken numerous, important steps to ensure that the decade-long process of integration has proceeded effectively.
- * While integration has proceeded largely uneventfully, subtle forms of discrimination do persist, and some gay officers who do not already enjoy respect may face challenges.
- * In spite of these uneven effects, integration has enhanced cohesion as well as the SDPD's standing



with the communities it serves.

The Center for the Study of Sexual Minorities in the Military is an official research unit of the University of California, Santa Barbara. The Center is governed by a distinguished board of advisors including the Honorable Lawrence J. Korb of the Council on Foreign Relations, Honorable Coit Blacker of Stanford University and Professor Janet Halley of Harvard Law School. Its mission is to promote the study of gays, lesbians, and other sexual minorities in the armed forces.