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Building a Straight State: Sexuality and Social Citizenship under the 1944 G.I. Bill

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For more than fifty years now, scholars have celebrated the G.I. Bill of Rights as one of the most important public policy innovations of the post–World War II era. The G.I. Bill is often credited with moving millions of working-

class Americans into the middle class by democratizing higher education and home ownership and with ushering in the postwar economic boom. The G.I. Bill deserves celebration—it was one of the most far-reaching pieces of social policy legislation in the second half of the twentieth century. Yet while there is no denying the scope and scale of the G.I. Bill, the celebratory literature has not fully acknowledged the many exclusions built into the program. Some historians have noted that the design and implementation of the legislation made G.I. Bill benefits most accessible to white middle-class men. Much less commonly remarked upon is a 1945...

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