

disciplining groups of women may present a fresh viewpoint to educational institutions. In particular, the conclusions on the leadership of women offer a clue to an explanation of the current misunderstandings and contradictory impressions on the subject.

It must be recognized at the outset that the problem of integrating women into an army was merely a part of the larger problem of their evolving status in civil life, accelerated by the industrial revolution and affecting every phase of modern society. Although the scope of this volume does not permit frequent comment upon the general place of women in society, few of the developments were without precedent. This was particularly true of the public skepticism and masculine hostility into which the WAC ran headlong in its first year. Admittedly, the Army had its share of a conservative element that had scarcely recovered from the shock of the mechanized horse when confronted with the militarized woman.

It should also be noted that the development and integration into the Army of a women's corps was at every turn a part of the larger development of the Army, and that few problems of the smaller group were unique. The Women's Army Corps, like this volume, must be viewed in perspective as one small facet of the larger entity.

While parallel, the problems of the employment of men and women were by no means identical in nature or solution. At the time of the organization of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps early in World War II, the misapprehension was general that women could be treated exactly like men and that little research would therefore be required for the successful incorporation of woman-power into the Army. Some believed that the WAC, as a minor group within the Army, was in the same general category as other groups dubbed minorities by reason of race, creed, or color, for whom differences of treatment would be improper. In practice it was soon discovered, however, that while a soldier might wear the same design of clothing regardless of race or creed, the same could not be said regardless of sex. The same principle was shortly found true in the fields of medicine, conduct, recreation, recruiting, physical capacity, and others. While all authorities were agreed that equal treatment must be given to men and women in the Army, it was soon apparent that *equal* did not mean *identical* in every case. The Army was thus faced with the problem of what styles of garments, though not identical with those of men, gave equal comfort, fit, and military appearance; what medications and surgery, although not identical, promoted equally good health; what standards of conduct, well-being, recreation, and training would enable the military service to answer to the American public for the women in its keeping as conscientiously as it customarily did for the men. In most cases, by the end of the war, these problems were successfully solved or the key to the solution was known.

As the following pages will reveal, the final conclusions of the wartime heads of the women's services were far from optimistic concerning the dangers of employing women in the armed forces if their special needs were not constantly understood and dealt with by trained specialists and well-informed commanders.