

ther complicating the problem of unequal punishment.

After Wacs reached Manila, the problem began to assume added importance, and the WAC staff director again requested permission for the social association of "relatives and friends of long standing" carrying passes from their WAC commanding officers. The theater again refused to set an over-all policy. WAC company officers, when asked to make suggestions for the improvement of discipline, included "a definite policy for officer-enlisted relationships"; "fewer rules and more rigid enforcement of same."¹⁴⁸

An additional restriction, more severe than any in the European or Mediterranean theaters, was FEASC's customary prohibition against marriage of its members; as applied to women, it allowed them to marry only if they became pregnant. In this command, women engaged to men about to leave for combat often quite frankly consulted the WAC staff director and the chaplain to ask why they should not take that course. To prevent this, the staff director repeatedly attempted to secure more lenient terms for both men and women of American citizenship; this was eventually granted by General McMullen only after the headquarters reached Manila.¹⁴⁹ Only 121 of the theater's 5,500 Wacs married in the theater during the war.¹⁵⁰

Restrictions on Daily Life

In the opinion of many observers, one of the most serious handicaps to the health of women in the area had been the restriction to locked compounds in the majority of stations in New Guinea, a factor which did not affect male troops. It was noted that, among medical causes of evacuation for women, psychoses and neuropsychi-

atric disorders were second only to dermatitis. It was always to remain a matter for debate whether the unusual restrictions placed upon women were necessary and inherent in the dangers of the Pacific area, or were an unnecessary creation of arbitrary theater policies. Colonel Brown continued throughout the stay in New Guinea to recommend the abolition of the system, but few modifications were ever reported with the exception of the GHQ unit in Hollandia, the smaller Air Forces group, and minor adjustments elsewhere.¹⁵¹

Three resulting unfavorable factors were noted. The most obvious was the noise, crowding, and lack of privacy which, in the opinion of medical officers, fostered mental disorders. Even if the area was not noisy, women experienced a "sense of confinement" which made them unable to relax after strenuous office hours or tiring mass entertainment. Major Craighill reported that women appeared to value privacy more than men, and that even among nurses, who as officers were less crowded in tents than enlisted women, the rate of loss for psychiatric reasons was increased by lack of privacy.

More important, in medical officers' opinions, were the physical disorders fostered by simple lack of physical exercise, recreation, and rest. Major Craighill wrote, "Facilities for exercise are lacking in most places. . . . In the tropics, more

¹⁴⁸ (1) Marginal note by Colonel Brown on draft of this chapter. OCMH. (2) Fraternization in FEAF was forbidden by Stf Memo 15, 30 Jul 44. Folder, WAC Det FEAF I. (3) Interv with former CO of a USASOS WAC Det, 22 Jul 47. (4) Check Sheet, Hq USAFFE, WAC Stf Dir, to DCofS, 23 Jul 45, Tab 15 to WAC Draft AFPAC Reply. (5) Quotation from Correspondence folder, 5200th WAC Det, Drawer X-29443.

¹⁴⁹ Memo cited n. 141.

¹⁵⁰ Griffith Account, "Statistics May 44-Sep 45."

¹⁵¹ Sources cited n. 51.