

in order that they might stoke the coal stoves. In one hospital, use of poor-grade coal caused hospitalization of a large part of the detachment for carbon monoxide gas poisoning. An Army Air Forces study likewise concluded that theater-of-operations-type housing was uneconomical for permanent occupancy because of the greater number of days of hospitalization for respiratory disorders, and the long-term effects of inhalation of coal dust.<sup>15</sup>

All authorities also agreed that, if further construction had permitted, women's efficiency would have been promoted by some additional measures for privacy in permanent quarters. Major Craighill commented, concerning nurses' housing:

The use in a few overseas areas of large open barracks for nurses was found unsatisfactory. It seems apparent that women value privacy more than do men, and living together under these circumstances tended to increase tension.<sup>16</sup>

The second WAC Director also noted:

Lack of privacy in housing affects mental and physical health of women. It is essential that housing scales be established that will assure more privacy. The contrast between living conditions of WAC officers and WAC enlisted personnel would be more equalized if partitions are established in barracks to provide cubicles.<sup>17</sup>

These recommendations were generally in accord with those concerning permanent peacetime housing for men, in which cubicle-type quarters were also deemed superior where circumstances permitted.

### *Dayrooms*

Women had particular difficulty in adapting Army dayrooms to the needs of a permanent unit. The Army-issued furniture was heavy and depressing and could

seldom be made homelike by any feats of ingenuity. While many men apparently did not seem to mind the bleakness, WAC company officers pointed out that for a woman the dayroom was a substitute home—the family parlor in which the younger woman entertained her guests, and the fireside which the older women preferred to going out in the evenings. Attractively furnished dayrooms, said one authority, “go far toward offsetting the harmful effect of regimentation on women.”<sup>18</sup> For women who did not date, there was literally no other place to spend most evenings except perhaps lying down in a double-decked bunk.

The problem of contriving cheerful dayrooms was increased by the fact that not one but two were needed. By social custom, women entertained their dates in their “home” instead of going to the men's home, yet a dayroom filled with dating couples dancing to a jukebox was scarcely a comfortable place in which older women and nondaters might lounge about in fatigue clothes and bathrobes. It was seldom found a wise solution to forbid daters the use of the dayroom, since, as Major Craighill noted:

All women personnel need a dayroom in which they can lounge informally together, as well as a recreation or reception room in which they can entertain men. If adequate facilities are not available, the incidence of pregnancy and venereal disease is likely to increase.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> (1) Memo, Exec WAC for Gen Henry, G-1, 13 Mar 45. WDWAC 331.1. (2) AAF WAC Hist.

<sup>16</sup> (1) T/S, Consultant Women's Health and Welfare SGO to Actg Dir WAC, 5 Nov 45. WDWAC 314.7. (2) Craighill SWPA Rpt.

<sup>17</sup> Memo, Dir WAC for Welfare Br G-1, 12 Apr 46, sub: Caste System as Affecting WAC Pers. WDWAC 334.

<sup>18</sup> Memo, WFTC for Air WAC Off, 30 May 45. WDWAC 353.1-369.

<sup>19</sup> Craighill SWPA Rpt.