

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: Braniff International Hostess College  
Other name/site number: NA  
Name of related multiple property listing: NA

2. Location

Street & number: 2801 Wycliff Avenue  
City or town: Dallas State: Texas County: Dallas County  
Not for publication:  Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  
 nomination  request for determination of eligibility) meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the  
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my  
opinion, the property  meets  does not meet) the National Register criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following levels of significance:  
 national  statewide  local

Applicable National Register Criteria:  A  B  C  D

Mark Wolfe State Historic Preservation Officer 12/13/2020  
Signature of certifying official / Title Date  
Texas Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency / bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register  
\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register  
\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register  
\_\_\_\_ other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Private
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public - Federal

**Category of Property**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions:** Education: school, education-related housing

**Current Functions:** Vacant

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification:** Corporate Modernism

**Principal Exterior Materials:** Brick, Stucco, Concrete, Glass

**Narrative Description** (see continuation sheets 7-6 through 7-9)

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>A</b>	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>B</b>	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>C</b>	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>D</b>	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations:** G

**Areas of Significance:** Commerce (*local*), Social History (Women's History/Labor History) (*state*)

**Period of Significance:** 1968-75

**Significant Dates:** 1968

**Significant Person** (only if criterion b is marked): NA

**Cultural Affiliation** (only if criterion d is marked): NA

**Architect/Builder:** Pierce, Lacey, and Associates (Architect); Heyn, H. Dan (Landscape Architect)

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (see continuation sheets 8-10 through 8-29)

## 9. Major Bibliographic References

**Bibliography** (see continuation sheets 9-30 through 9-32)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. (*Part 1 approved Oct. 6, 2019*)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office (*Texas Historical Commission, Austin*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository:

**Historic Resources Survey Number** (if assigned): NA

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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property:** 1.37 acres

### Coordinates

#### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: NA

1. 32.812495° -96.817164°

**Verbal Boundary Description:** The nominated boundary is the legal parcel as recorded by the Dallas CAD as: (ID 00000166582000000) CLIFTON PLACE, BLK 12/1616 LOTS 1-3, PT 4,7, & 8 and shown on Map 2.

**Boundary Justification:** The boundary is drawn along the legal parcel to include all property historically associated with the building.

## 11. Form Prepared By

Name/title: Cindy Hamilton and Nate Curwen/Heritage Consulting Group with assistance from THC Staff  
Organization: Heritage Consulting Group  
Street & number: 15 W Highland Avenue #1  
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Date: July 2020

## Additional Documentation

**Maps** (see continuation sheets Map-33 through Map-34)

**Additional items** (see continuation sheets Figure-35 through Figure-45)

**Photographs** (see continuation sheets Photo-46 through Photo-58)

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## Photograph Log

The Braniff International Hostess Hotel  
Dallas, Dallas County, Texas  
Photographed by Nate Curwen, August 2019

Photo 1: View of West Elevation, looking northeast.

Photo 2: View of South Elevation, looking north.

Photo 3: View of South and East Elevations, looking northwest.

Photo 4: View of East Elevation, looking west.

Photo 5: View of North Elevation, looking south.

Photo 6: View of Parking with Subject Building to the left, looking south.

Photo 7: View of Pool Courtyard, looking north.

Photo 8: View of Pool Courtyard, looking northwest.

Photo 9: View of Pool Courtyard, looking southeast.

Photo 10: View of Underpass, looking southwest.

Photo 11: View of Underpass Entrance, looking northeast.

Photo 12: View of first floor, atrium, looking southwest.

Photo 13: View of first floor, atrium, looking north.

Photo 14: View of first floor, passion pit, looking south.

Photo 15: View of first floor, auditorium/dining room, looking northwest.

Photo 16: View of first floor, auditorium/dining room, looking south.

Photo 17: View of second floor, looking northeast.

Photo 18: View of third floor, looking south.

Photo 19: View of fourth floor, stair, looking east.

Photo 20: View of fourth floor, looking north.

Photo 21: View of Fourth Floor Stair, looking east.

Photo 22: View of fourth floor, stair, looking east.

Photo 23: View of fifth floor, balcony, looking north.

Photo 24: View of Roof, looking north.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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## **Narrative Description**

The Braniff International Hostess College is a five-story building constructed in 1968 by Braniff International Airways to train and house prospective flight attendants. Dallas-based architectural firm Pierce, Lacey, and Associates designed the facility with interior decorating by Chuck Ax, Braniff International's Design and Art Consultant. The building is three miles north of downtown Dallas, in the Oak Lawn neighborhood on the Dallas North Tollway. It is three miles southeast of Dallas Love Field, once the city's primary commercial airport. Landscaping, designed by noted landscape architect H. Dan Heyn, shows small trees and box shrubs bordering the stucco border walls, an interior paved courtyard, and paved parking cover the remaining space of the parcel. The boomerang-shaped pool is a historic structure on the west elevation; it is a contributing resource. A concrete wall and metal fence line the perimeter of the parcel. Braniff International Hostess College is an International style reinforced concrete structure with a pyramidal plan and raised over a vehicular underpass. The stucco exterior features unique elements, like rounded corners and a projecting cube window. Its original architectural and interior design were integral devices that communicated the mid-1960s Braniff brand, the implementation of which led to the company's most successful period. Although the interior retains some important components—first-floor kitchen, auditorium, and sunken living room with conical fireplace—the upper floors were gutted in 2015. As a result, the hostess college no longer retains sufficient integrity to communicate its architectural significance. However, the building retains good integrity to communicate its significance as a late 20<sup>th</sup>-century training facility closely associated with women's labor history.

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## **Setting**

The Braniff International (BI) Hostess College is at 2801 Wycliff Avenue in the Oak Lawn neighborhood three miles north of downtown Dallas, Dallas County. Built three miles southeast of Dallas Love Field Airport (the airliner's hub until 1974), the training facility is on a triangular site at the corner of Wycliff Avenue and the Dallas North Tollway, a major city highway built in the 1960s. Oak Lawn is a residential neighborhood with single-family homes and multi-family dwellings that characterize blocks near the nominated building. The 1.37-acre site is triangular with a slightly terraced landscape. Wycliff Avenue bounds it on the southeast, Hartford Street to the northeast, and the Dallas North Tollway to the west. The shape of the building abstractly resembles airplane wings. Access to the site is by a paved drive which extends from Hartford Street. The subject building is near the parcel center, with paved parking to the west, a courtyard with a built-in pool to the east, and general landscaping at the parcel's north, south, and east perimeter. The pool, an original feature, is boomerang-shaped with a concrete slab patio. Landscaping includes shrubbery and trees around the site's perimeter. These site features provided privacy for the students.

## **Braniff International Hostess College**

Braniff International Hostess College, built in 1968 as a training facility and residence hall for flight attendants, is a five-story mid-century international style building raised on concrete pillars with a drive-through parking garage underneath it. The reinforced concrete structure has a cream-colored stucco exterior and flat roof. It has a pyramidal-shaped footprint composed of three parts: two narrow rectangular sections and a seven-story central tower that bisects the facility's east elevation. The 68,475 square building is fenestrated with floor-to-ceiling fixed glass windows and sliding doors horizontally-banded on the top three floors; the first and second floors are primarily solid walls with skylights, atriums, and transoms that light the interior. Designed as a secure and self-contained facility for Braniff's female occupants, there is no distinguishable "primary" façade. However, a sculptural planar wall projecting from the first floor of the west elevation (facing the highway) originally served as a billboard for the airliner. Other featured exterior elements include rounded wall corners and continuous rows of balconies with original safety bars.

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### *Exterior*

The **west elevation** faces the North Dallas Tollway. Concrete piers support the building at the ground-level parking lot, and above it is a projecting planar wall that extends across the elevation's width. Originally, it functioned as an advertisement for the building with "a huge bronze emblem of the stylized bird that is Braniff's flight symbol, superimposed over a 14-by-130-foot mosaic of white embossed and debossed BI symbols...directly at eye level with the new Dallas North Tollway."<sup>1</sup> The second floor features an aluminum-framed ribbon window installed c.1980 that spans the width of the elevation. Floors 3-5 feature continuous concrete slab balconies enclosed by historic-age floor-height metal bars. Non-historic floor-to-ceiling aluminum-framed glazed sliding doors match historic the historic fenestration pattern and provide access to the balconies. The south end of the elevation features a stair tower clad in stucco.

The **north elevation** shows the building's pyramidal-shaped footprint as a cross-section. From west to east, each succeeding section is recessed. The westernmost section is a blank wall plane fenestrated by a vertical aluminum-framed ribbon window that extends the height of the elevation. The modern "Parkgate" sign is at the top of the building. The center section is not fenestrated but features concrete balconies with security bars on the top three floors that extend to the east façade. The easternmost section is the building's 7-story tower. Largely unfenestrated, the first floor has an aluminum-framed storefront that extends from the east elevation and balconies on upper floors from the building's east elevation to, roughly the equivalent of, one bay on the north side of the tower.

The central tower, two structural bays wide, bisect the **east elevation** into two nearly symmetrical sections. The flanking sections are set back approximately two structural bays from the tower. Two aluminum-framed storefronts are on the first floor and flank the central tower. Each storefront contains double-leaf aluminum-framed doors that service the building's main reception areas. Floors 3-5 feature floor-to-ceiling aluminum-framed sliding doors, with projecting balconies above the storefronts. The balconies feature metal security bars, which are an original and a distinct feature of the building. The northern and southernmost setbacks, with interior stairwells, are not fenestrated.

The **south elevation** is similar in configuration to the north elevation in that it displays the stepped pyramid footprint. The only difference between the north and south elevations is the fenestration. The south elevation's central portion features a vertical ribbon window with one projecting fixed rectilinear window to the east of the ribbon window on the first floor.

### **Roof**

The roof is flat, comprised of a bituminous system, topped in a layer of loose gravel. Modern mechanicals are placed across it, and a mechanical penthouse is centered on the east perimeter. A stair penthouse is at the south side.

### *Interior*

The building's first floor features public space consisting of atria, common rooms, and a kitchen. The second floor was formerly used as classrooms, and the remaining upper floors (3-5) are former dormitories.

The **first-floor** features two atria located at the east perimeter, a kitchen at the southwest corner, and a central sunken living room. Modern aluminum-framed glazed doors within the storefronts provide access to the interior atrium. Both atria have vinyl tile floors, painted plaster walls with a textured finish, vinyl baseboard, and painted gypsum board

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<sup>1</sup> Braniff International Airways, "Hostess College Brochure," 1968, on file at the Texas Historical Commission.

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ceiling. Both ceilings feature painted wood skylights. The southernmost atrium features a built-in wood reception desk is at the north end of the space. An elevator and bathrooms are between the two atria.

The central congregation space is divided into two main sections by an interior aluminum-framed glazed storefront system that runs north-south. The western side houses a former auditorium/dining room with an open plan and a small stage. Concrete columns with vinyl baseboard support the ceiling. Finishes in the auditorium and dining room include exposed concrete floors, plaster walls with applied acoustic paneling and glazed storefront systems and flat plaster ceiling. The north wall features original built-in floor-to-ceiling cabinetry.

The eastern side of the aluminum-framed storefront system houses the former "Passion Pit," a sunken lounge for the flight attendant trainees. It is circular with built-in seating and a conical-shaped fireplace. Finishes of the space include polished concrete floors, painted plaster walls with a textured finish, vinyl baseboard, and painted flat plaster ceiling.

Former classrooms are north of the auditorium/dining room, and a kitchen is south of it.

The **second floor** was used for flight attendant education, hence the lack of fenestration. In c.2015, demising walls and finishes were removed, and this floor is currently open in plan with an exposed concrete structure.

**Floors 3-5** were previously bedrooms for student residents. In c.2015, the demising walls and finishes were removed, and these floors are currently open in plan with an exposed concrete structure.

The building has a two-shaft elevator bank centered on the east wall that services all floors. The cabs have been removed from both shafts. Two stair towers service the building, one at the north end and the other at the south end. Both stairs are utilitarian in character, with concrete treads and risers and metal railings. The stair at the north end contains a multi-story tapestry along its back wall. The tapestry is an original feature of the building when it functioned as a hostess college and represents Braniff's color scheme during the 1960s and 1970s.

### **Swimming Pool and Landscape**

The swimming pool is an original site feature for the Braniff International Hostess College and a contributing resource. Part of a landscape design created by H. Dan Heyn, the pool is an angular boomerang shape surrounded by concrete walkways. Heyn "committed to, and specialized in, the use of indigenous plants in his landscape architectural design practice."<sup>2</sup> Records of the landscape's historic appearance are at the Alexander Architectural Archives at the University of Texas but were unavailable at the time of submission.

### **Alterations**

The building exterior retains its primary design features with limited alterations. At the exterior, the original Braniff signage, which was on the second floor of the west elevation, was removed c.1980. Subsequently, new modern signage has on the north and south elevations reflects the building's most recent use as a high-rise apartment for the elderly. The original textured paneling at the first floor of the west elevation was resurfaced with smooth stucco, c.1980. Ribbon windows were added to the second floor at the formerly un-fenestrated portion of the west elevation in c.1980 when Dresser Industries owned the building. A previous owner removed the demising walls at floors 2-5 of the interior of the building.

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<sup>2</sup> Heiny, iii.

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## **Integrity**

The Braniff International Hostess College retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical significance as a late-1960s flight attendant training facility. Its historical architectural and interior design were integral devices that communicated the mid-1960s Braniff brand, but demolition to upstairs interior spaces diminished its integrity to claim architectural significance. However, the building retains good integrity to communicate its significance as a building associated with women's labor history. The building's exterior and historic-age pool are, overall, intact. The interior spatial pattern of the first floor is retained with original materials. Vertical access, specifically the central elevator bank and stair towers, remain in their original configuration.

**Location:** The Braniff International Hostess College is in its original location.

**Association:** The building exterior continues to visually display the same characteristics as when the building functioned as a hostess college. It includes the character-defining balconies at floors 3-5, the pool, and the overall building footprint, which are unaltered. The upper floor balconies that feature the floor-to-ceiling sliding doors and metal fencing directly associate with the hostess college since these features dictate where the dormitories were.

**Feeling:** The building retains its appearance from the period of significance. The site retains its college campus-like feeling with its perimeter fencing and landscaping, and swimming pool. The first floor features character-defining features, including the reception lobby, the cafeteria, and "Passion Pit."

**Setting:** BI Hostess College remains a prominent fixture along the Dallas Tollway. The surrounding area was primarily residential when the subject building was constructed, and the setting has retained its residential character. Overall, the setting remains consistent with the period of significance.

**Design:** The building's design remains relatively unchanged, except for the installation of ribbon windows at the west elevation on the second floor and the replacement signage.

**Materials and Workmanship:** The materials and workmanship of the building are still highly evident at the exterior. The building was constructed with CMU block, which remains in good condition.

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## Statement of Significance

The Braniff International Hostess College, which opened in 1968, was a training facility for Braniff International Airways flight attendants until 1975. Established in the early 1930s, Dallas-based Braniff went through a series of owners before Greatamerica Insurance Company purchased the firm in 1964. Under Harding Lawrence's helm, the airline successfully rebranded itself as a uniquely stylish and modern way to travel. In 1968, Braniff applied its splashy corporate style, developed by advertising specialist Mary Wells and designer Alexander Girard, to its state-of-the-art hostess college, where flight attendant training focused as much on personal appearance as safety protocols and customer service. The hostess college trained a predominately female workforce as a physical embodiment of Braniff's corporate brand during the peak of its success before its decline in the late 1970s and ultimate demise in 1984. Braniff hostesses, famously dressed in Emilio Pucci-designed uniforms, faced rigid gender discrimination to meet the airline's glamorous corporate image in the late 1960s. Still, by the mid-1970s, unionized flight attendants challenged their sex symbol image with legal victories and earned greater job security and advancement opportunities. Braniff International Hostess College is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of Commerce at the local level of significance as a training center for Braniff's hostesses whose image and professionalism was integral to the company's most successful era. It is also nominated under Criterion A in the Area of Social History (Women's Labor History) at the state level of significance. Braniff International Hostess College is the only extant resource in Texas associated with female flight attendants' unique labor experience and whose collective efforts in the late-1960s and early 1970s affected meaningful change to the profession. It meets Criterion Consideration G because the building provides valuable insight to the study of women's work roles in the 1960s-70s, a period when longstanding occupational segregation and gender discrimination eroded in the wake of second-wave feminism and the Women's Rights Movement. The peer-reviewed scholarship shows a broad historical perspective to dispassionately evaluate the Braniff International Hostess College in the context of the late-1960s and 1970s women's labor developments and architectural history. The period of significance is 1968 to 1975 when the property served as a flight attendant training facility.

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## The Aviation Industry in Dallas and Texas

Texas' booming postwar commercial airline industry developed out of the state's strong federal military aviation presence. National defense projects for World War I, World War II, and the Cold War funded 20<sup>th</sup>-century construction and expansion of Texas airports, fueled innovation in airplane technology and airport design, and spawned the state's aviation manufacturing and transport industries. In 1910, the Aeronautical Division of the Army Signal Corps established Texas' first military flight training facility at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. It moved the operation to Texas for its relatively flat land regions and a mild climate that allowed for year-round flying.<sup>3</sup> The U.S. Military built additional army airfields during World War I, including those in Fort Worth (Meachum Field) and Dallas (Love Field), both constructed in 1914. Postwar, many decommissioned army airfields became civil and municipal airports, and new commercial and civil airliners emerged.

Although San Antonio was the state's center for military aviation, North Central Texas cities Dallas and Fort Worth became hubs for commercial aviation. Federal airmail contracts in the 1930s were the financial "lifeblood" for commercial carriers.<sup>4</sup> American Airways (later American Airlines) and Braniff Airways held Texas' largest federal airmail contracts with bases at Love Field and Fort Worth Municipal Airport. National and international passenger

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<sup>3</sup> Ralph Newlan, "Texas General Aviation," Texas Department of Transportation, Environmental Affairs Division, Historical Studies Branch, March 2008: 6-7; Roger Bilstein, "Aviation," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed November 20, 2021, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/aviation>.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 12,

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service developed alongside airmail service. Routes out of Dallas and Fort Worth connected Texas to the Midwest and East Coast, while international service out of Brownsville in South Texas opened travel to Latin America.<sup>5</sup>

During World War II, Texas became the nation's center for flight training and a leader in aircraft manufacturing. Major manufacturing plants in Dallas and Fort Worth employed thousands of civilians and produced more than 50,000 airplanes.<sup>6</sup> The industry expanded rapidly, and by the 1960s, Texas led the nation in aeronautics production.<sup>7</sup> Defense spending funded the construction and expansion of airports across the state, with Love Field becoming the largest wartime flight training facility during World War II. The federal government ensured the longevity of its air travel infrastructure by enacting the National Airport Plan (1944), which, along with the Texas Aeronautics Act (1945), augmented the number of airports and improved existing airports with the use of federal funding. For example, by 1964, continued improvements at Love Field made it the largest terminal in the Southwest.<sup>8</sup> Technological developments—like landing aids and inflight locational systems—that the military invented were later installed in postwar commercial airplanes. These and other improvements ultimately made flying safer and more affordable.

The postwar period saw a great expansion in Texas' aviation industry. Feeder airlines that serviced small and medium-sized Texas cities joined transcontinental airliners. Texas-based companies included Braniff, Pioneer Air Lines (Houston), Trans-Texas Airways (Houston), Frontier Airlines (Fort Worth), and Southwest Airlines.<sup>9</sup> Aviation deregulation paved the way for Braniff to become the state's top carrier and competition with other leading transnational airliners, like American Airlines. Modern urban airports opened to cater to the growing industry. In 1969, Houston Intercontinental Airport opened in Houston, and the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport (the "world's largest" at the time) opened in 1974, supplanting Love Field and Fort Worth Municipal Airport. However, before DFW Airport's completion, Love Field ranked seventh in passenger enplanements behind Chicago O'Hare, Los Angeles, Atlanta, John F. Kennedy, San Francisco, and La Guardia.

For Texas' economy, the aviation industry pumped billions of revenues into the state, enticed new business investment, and employed thousands of Texans.<sup>10</sup> Nowhere was this more evident than in Dallas. In 1962, the *Dallas Morning News* reported 4,000 aviation industry employees based at Love Field and area offices with an estimated 6,000 jobs in private business "directly dependent on Love Field."<sup>11</sup> Five years later, the Air Transport Association showed total employment at the airport numbered 13,748—including flight personnel and airport ground-based employees—with monthly payroll costs that totaled more than the combined wages of four neighboring counties. Although the indirect and direct influence of Love Field on Dallas's off-airport business was incalculable, many corporations were based or had regional offices in the city because the airport was among one of the nation's major hubs.<sup>12</sup>

Dallas grew tremendously in the 1960s and 1970s. The city frequently led the state in job growth, with Fort Worth showing competitive numbers in the same field that experts attributed to the aircraft industry.<sup>13</sup> The city's infrastructure, particularly aviation and highway development, attracted giant electronics firms like Texas Instruments.

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<sup>5</sup> Bilstein.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Newlan, 24.

<sup>8</sup> Art Leatherwood, "Love Field," *Handbook of Texas Online*, accessed January 20, 2021, <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/love-field>.

<sup>9</sup> Newlan, 25.

<sup>10</sup> Kent Biffle, "Economy Linked to Field," *Dallas Morning News*, September 30, 1962; Walter B. Moore, "Dallas Leads in Aviation Industry," *Dallas Morning News*, June 15, 1972.

<sup>11</sup> Biffle.

<sup>12</sup> Walter B. Moore, "Love Field Payrolls Exceed 122 Million," *Dallas Morning News*, November 12, 1968.

<sup>13</sup> Al Altwegg, "Dallas Leads All Other Texas Cities in Job Growth," *Dallas Morning News*, February 11, 1968.

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Construction near Love Field increased with new industrial parks, luxury apartments, hotels and motels, gas stations, and restaurants. Like Irving and Richardson, new suburbs led to more significant population figures as Dallas and Fort Worth became a sprawling metroplex. Estimates ahead of the 1970 census showed more than 38 percent of Texans lived in Dallas and Houston. In 1970, Dallas was the eighth-most populous city in the U.S., with 844,000 residents.<sup>14</sup> Postwar highway construction gave commuting workers in numerous suburbs job opportunities across Dallas and Fort Worth. Airport adjacent growth extended to the east side of the then-new Dallas North Tollway. The Braniff International Hostess College, built in 1968, joined other high-rise apartment buildings and multi-family homes in the highly populated area on the west side of the Oak Cliff neighborhood. Within five years, however, airport-oriented businesses moved nearer to the newly built Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. Braniff, like other carriers, moved its headquarters from Love Field to DFW, and the nominated building closed in 1975.

### Historical Overview of the Flight Attendant Profession

#### *Early Development*

Having qualified to enter the school and having finished its intensive course of training, the air hostesses present a combination of Job, Florence Nightingale, Frances Perkins, and your favorite movie star. - *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* June 20, 1937<sup>15</sup>

In the 1920s, the early passenger air travel period, airlines competed against railroads and ocean liners to compete for affluent white customers. The industry looked for ways to recreate Americans' comfort and service associated with other travel modes and show that flying was fundamentally safe. Historian Kathleen M. Berry noted airlines believed white male stewards had a calming effect on nervous passengers, but they were inept as hospitality staff.<sup>16</sup> The prevailing racist ideology assigned people of color as inherently inferior but well-suited for service jobs. A couple of airlines experimented with African American porters, but they found negative stereotypes white people associated with Black people prevented these novice passengers from feeling safe while flying.<sup>17</sup>

The female flight attendants' concept is attributed to two individuals: Steve Stimpson, a division traffic agent at Boeing Air Transport, and Ellen Church. In 1930, Stimpson's task orchestrated the inauguration of Boeing's coast-to-coast passenger air service. Stimpson believed the company needed cabin attendants to entice the wealthy, white businessmen (their primary demographic who could afford air travel) to choose Boeing. Initially, he proposed Filipino men provide the service. While planning for the trip, Stimpson met Ellen Church, an aspiring female pilot and nurse. Church's knowledge of flying and her proposal that female nurses could replace male stewards intrigued Stimpson. For Church, such an opportunity would be one way to fulfill her dream of working in commercial aviation when women were not permitted to be pilots. Stimpson argued to Boeing that young, white female nurses were characteristically disciplined, intelligent, and predisposed caregivers whose presence on a plane could lend reassurance to passengers. Their onboard presence, he believed, would be a "great psychological punch" to the flight-wary public as a means to convince them that airplanes were a safe means of travel. Most importantly, he argued, "Imagine the publicity we could get from it."<sup>18</sup>

Boeing officials were initially hesitant but agreed to try out Stimpson's idea with Church orchestrating the female crew. The first stewardess service flight began on May 15, 1930, on Boeing's Oakland-Cheyenne-Chicago route. After

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<sup>14</sup> John Geddie, "Expect Population Growth If You Reside in Dallas," *Dallas Morning News*, April 18, 1971.

<sup>15</sup> "Chic Air Hostesses Product of Hard Work and Training," *Fort Worth Star Telegram* June 20, 1937.

<sup>16</sup> Kathleen M. Barry, *Femininity in Flight: A History of Flight Attendants* (Durham, NC: Duke University, 2007): 16.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Berry, 19 and 21.

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the trial run, passenger praise and the publicity garnered by female stewardesses' novelty led Boenig to make the practice permanent.<sup>19</sup> The following year, Boeing issued the first training manual for female flight attendants that identified their primary responsibilities: cleaning cabins, heating coffee, writing reports on passengers and equipment, ticket collection, care for airsick passengers, and supplying pillows, reading materials, cigarettes, and gum. Flight attendants also helped load baggage, refuel planes, secure unstable seats to the ground, and roll planes into hangars. They were to learn each passengers' name, point out interesting geographic features while in flight and answer any question about how the plane operated.<sup>20</sup> Other airlines quickly followed suit, and by 1935, Eastern Airlines, American Airlines, Western Airlines, and Trans World Airlines had all hired female flight attendants.

Braniff's passenger service officially began in 1934, following its successful bid on a Dallas-to-Chicago federal airmail contract. Three years later, the company hired its first ten "hostesses" out of 3,500 applicants. The prerequisites for "the hardest and most exacting [job] that can be occupied for a girl in this machine age" included the era's standard physical requirements (age: 21-26; weight: 100-118 pounds; height: 5'-5'4"), two years of college education, and nurse training. In that era, the height and weight requirements reflected the limits of airplane cabin size and total passenger capacity. However, it also underscored airline companies' desire for an attractive stewardess. Uniquely, Braniff also required Spanish fluency as the airliner had begun service from Brownsville, Texas, to Latin America. Among the first hostesses were several women from South Texas. Lucile Behl of Brownsville described the opportunity as a dream come true.<sup>21</sup> Hostesses trained at Braniff's Dallas headquarters to learn flight technology, safety regulations, radio-telephone communications, meteorology, service, and clerical duties.

Airline managers considered intangible qualities in their hiring practices that reflected an era trying to reconcile changing attitudes of "a woman's place is in the home" mentality with a growing desire among women to seek professional employment. They looked for women who looked and acted the part of future homemakers. The women they hired demonstrated themselves as polished (but not *too* refined), poised, intelligent, and hardworking candidates with universal appeal.<sup>22</sup>

The neatness, cleanliness, discipline of a Madame de Sevigny; the capacity to make nervous old ladies like and trust her; and tiny infants respond to her soothing care; the unfailing cheerfulness, efficiency and dispatch of a Pullman porter; and the hands-off serenity of a royal princess, when exposed to the occasional advances of some curbstome Lothario.<sup>23</sup>

To maintain a corps of "ideal hostesses," airline companies enforced rules that prohibited marriage, managed their physical appearance, and set behavioral boundaries. For example, officials set boundaries for intimacy levels between them and male passengers and instituted strict professional behavior guidelines. In 1936, American Airlines instructed:

Unnecessary conversation should be avoided...the impression should be given that the stewardess is ready and willing to give information or assistance, but in a courteous, brief, and business-like manner, and that duties do not permit a prolonged or aimless conversation...Visits to the cockpit should be made only when absolutely necessary and should be as brief as possible.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Victoria Vantoch, "The Jet Sex: Airline Stewardesses and the Making of an American Icon," University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, PA (2013) Page 14.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>21</sup> "Valley Girls Join Airline: Hostesses Employed by Braniff," *Brownsville Herald*, April 27, 1937.

<sup>22</sup> Barry, 27.

<sup>23</sup> "Out of 3500 Ambitious Girls 10 Become Air Hostesses," *Jefferson City Post-Tribune*, July 6, 1937.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

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By World War II, the flight attendant profession became a service job solely associated with women. Despite rigorous standards and restrictive policies, young women flocked to the job as an exciting and glamorous career. For many, the job was an opportunity to explore the world before they married and had children. For others, the independence it afforded gave them a sense of self-worth and pride. Airliners recognized the pivotal and marketable role its stewardesses played, and they began to invest more funds into training and hiring. United Airlines, for example, established a flight attendant school at the Chicago airport, complete with an interior model of a DC-3 for the practice of serving food. The number of flight attendants employed by U.S. carriers tripled from nearly 300 to near 1,000 as airlines focused more on passenger service to entice the competition's customers. Simultaneously, the public's perception of air travel safety changed, and companies stopped requiring its stewardesses to have nursing backgrounds.<sup>25</sup> In the decades to come, while airliners tightened their grip on female flight attendants' image to sell their corporate brand, women consciously and unconsciously challenged the notion of "women's work" to claim their rights as professionals and citizens.

*The Flight Attendant Profession in the Postwar Era*

They are selling sex [and] trying to maintain flying [Playboy] Bunnies instead of a professional, well-trained corps of flight attendants.<sup>26</sup>

Young women continued to gravitate to the flight attendant profession in the postwar years. Applications for flight attendants soared in the 1950s. In 1951, American Airlines received 20,000 applications for only 347 positions. The application was comprehensive and included multiple interviews, body measurements, weight checks, foreign language tests, intelligence tests, and personality evaluations. Many candidates were rejected at first sight simply because they did not fit into the narrow and strict height and weight requirements.<sup>27</sup> Barry's *Femininity in Flight* observed:

Postwar airlines demanded increasingly elaborate schooling for stewardesses in becoming more attractive and charming in a standardized way. Large carriers like United and American [Airlines] built lavish training facilities ("charm farms" in flight attendant argot), where candidates spent up to six weeks earning their wings. The training included technical schooling in airline operations, safety procedures, and service routines, but it devoted more time to socializing stewardesses in the airlines' strict standards of behavior and appearance.<sup>28</sup>

In August 1958, American Airlines opened the first facility dedicated solely to training flight attendants at Fort Worth's Amon Carter Field. *Life* spotlighted the training center and its trainees on its magazine cover the same month.<sup>29</sup> The \$1.2-million-dollar facility (demolished in 2020) was a two-story U-shaped building on American Airline's 22-acre campus designed to accommodate 1,000 flight attendants in successive classes. The airliner called it a "school" or "college," rather than a "facility," and photographs depicted a sorority-like atmosphere where attractive young women sunbathed by the pool as much as they studied. The marketing undercut the rigorous training they undertook, which diminished the young flight attendants' professionalism and dedication to the field. *Life Magazine's* article, "Glamour Girls of the Air," acknowledged the job's downsides—low wages, irregular working hours, and few opportunities for advancement. It highlighted, however, the job's glamorous image, world travel, and the chance to meet eligible, successful bachelors. Many, it noted, left the job within two years because "being so attractive, they

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<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>26</sup> Christina Kirk, "They Don't Want to be Sexpots," *Daily News* (New York, NY) October 22, 1967.

<sup>27</sup> Vantoch. Page 27

<sup>28</sup> Barry, 46.

<sup>29</sup> "Glamour Girls of the Air," *Life Magazine*, August 25, 1958.

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soon get marriage proposals.”<sup>30</sup> Other airlines quickly followed suit, with Trans World Airlines opening their facility in Kansas City, MO, United Airlines in Chicago, IL, and Braniff International Airways in Dallas, all constructed between 1958 and 1968.<sup>31</sup>

As flight attendants became more central to airline identity, their appearance also became subject to stricter controls. Hiring regulations stressed body figure, age, marital status, beauty, personality, and physical condition. Most airlines had a marriage clause that prevented hostesses from being married while on the job. Coupled with the fact that the age of hostesses was typically between 22 and 26, prime marriage age during this era, there was high turnover. The high turnover resulted from the industry’s own strict rules against married flight attendants, weakened flight attendants’ professional rights who were viewed as expendable.<sup>32</sup>

Airlines based in Texas generally assigned greater value toward the hostess's image, spearheaded by Braniff International Airways' approach. In 1965, Braniff hired Harding Lawrence, who subsequently rebranded the company with new colors to stand out among the competition with Mary Wells' assistance. The rebranding was not limited to aircraft but also their hostesses. Stewardess uniforms had long communicated an airliner’s brand. For example, Braniff’s first uniforms included Bolero-type jackets that emphasized its international connection to South America. In 1967, a Braniff spokesman explaining the company’s designer crafted Pucci uniforms remarked, “We’re getting away from the security image that passengers wanted in the past. The girls are still trained in emergency procedures, but now they’re more fun to look at.”<sup>33</sup> One specific Braniff campaign, the Air Strip, was a uniform gimmick whereby the hostess would have on a full clothing suit equipped with a space helmet at the beginning of the flight and, by the end of the flight, she had stripped down to a mini skirt. The “Air Strip,” Braniff International stated, “keeps the passengers dazzled and makes the girls feel like girls and not like bus conductors. The men ogle more, but what girl doesn’t like to be looked at?”<sup>34</sup>

Marketing hostess’s sex appeal reverberated throughout the airline industry during the late 1960s and early 1970s because it was believed customers would choose one company over another simply based on its flight attendants’ appearance. American Airlines spent \$1 million “to catch up with Braniff’s mod look” but chose instead a “clean-cut American look.”<sup>35</sup> One hostess complained about the sexy uniforms:

The thigh’s the limit these days when it comes to pleasing jaded jet travelers. More and more airlines are putting their smile girls into high-altitude miniskirts to attract the flagging attention of tired businessmen... They are selling sex [and] trying to maintain flying [Playboy] Bunnies instead of a professional, well-trained corps of flight attendants.<sup>36</sup>

The “American look” also underscored the industry’s long-standing racist beauty standards that rejected darker skin colors, coarser hair textures, and different body shapes. To be sure, neither white flight attendants nor flight passengers welcomed people of color to the profession. Furthermore, even when the industry employed African American women, their hair (straightened), makeup, and demeanor were strictly scrutinized. While most airlines hired women of color

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Jerrold K. Footlick, “Careers...for the Seventies: Close-ups of 20 Ways Americans Earn a Living.” Dow Jones Books: New York, NY (1969).

<sup>32</sup> Drew Whitelegg, “Working the Skies: The Fast-Paced Disorienting World of the Flight Attendant,” NYU Press: New York, NY (2007). Page 46.

<sup>33</sup> Christina Kirk, “They Don’t Want to be Sexpots,” *Daily News* (New York, NY) October 22, 1967.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Christina Kirk, “They Don’t Want to be Sexpots,” *Daily News* (New York, NY) October 22, 1967.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

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following the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Braniff International alleged they could not find qualified African American applicants until 1967 when it hired Henri Lee Hawkins of Dallas.

The Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Movement opened the door for flight attendants to challenge the industry's age ceilings, no-marriage rule, racial discrimination, and fight for career mobility and better wages. Under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which barred "employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin," individual flight attendants and unions filed complaints to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.<sup>37</sup> The Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) union filed a complaint to the EEOC on behalf of its member, Betty Green Batement, who Braniff fired for getting married. In 1965, EEOC ruled that marriage could not be a cause for firing a woman employee.<sup>38</sup> Flight attendants continued to file Title VII grievances through the 1970s. ALPA Steward and Stewardess Division worked with the singular goal, "to make the job of flight attendant a career, a profession."<sup>39</sup> Their efforts garnered flight attendants: better ratios of passengers to cabin staff; safety measures (like securing luggage and galley equipment) that could improve survivability in escape and rescue efforts; limits to consecutive hours worked; designated onboard seating for working flight attendants; fire-resistant fabric for their uniforms; and policies that benefitted married and working mothers.<sup>40</sup> When Braniff International fired a stewardess supervisor for filing a sex discrimination complaint with the EEOC, three other stewardesses joined her suit against the company. The employee complained female supervisors did not receive equal treatment in the accumulation of seniority and that her firing "has had and will continue to have a chilling effect" on other women seeking equal treatment.<sup>41</sup> Men also filed grievances with the EEOC claiming gender discrimination against hiring male flight stewards. In 1973, Braniff added its first male hosts to its flight attendant corps, saying, "We knew we'd eventually hire men...when we began receiving stewardess applications from men...They even have uniforms!"<sup>42</sup>

In 1978, the Carter administration deregulated the airline industry from federal oversight, allowing companies to set their routes and fares to compete openly. Deregulation resulted in many airline companies' downfall, including Braniff, Trans World Airlines, Pan Am, and the uptick in others like United, American, and Delta. The flight attendant profession's glamour and allure suffered as companies subsequently put their time and money into other airline business aspects.<sup>43</sup> By the early 1980s, the "Golden Age" of flight came to an end, as airlines prioritized profitability and efficiency.

## **History of Braniff International Airways**

### *Early Development*

In 1928, two brothers Paul Revere Braniff and Thomas Elmer Braniff, founded the airline company in Oklahoma. Braniff initially specialized in transporting oil executives by flight from Oklahoma City to Tulsa during the state's oil boom. This particular venture did not last long, and like most booms, saw a bust in 1929. After the crash of 1929, another new airliner (which would later become American Airlines) bought out Braniff.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> "Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964," U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

<sup>38</sup> Hugh Aynesworth, "Grounded by Marriage Rule, Hostess to Fly Again," *Dallas Morning News*, September 25, 1965.

<sup>39</sup> Mary Brinkerhoff, "Flight Attendants Fight 'Safety Cop Outs,'" *Dallas Morning News*, July 21, 1971.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> Rena Pederson, "EEOC Case: Braniff Supervisor Ordered Reinstated," *Dallas Morning News*, August 5, 1973.

<sup>42</sup> "Coffee, Tea, or Who? Braniff Adds Male 'Hosts,'" *Dallas Morning News*, May 3, 1973

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* Pages 59 and 60.

<sup>44</sup> Richard Ben Cass, "Braniff Airways: Flying Colors," Arcadia Publishing: Charleston, South Carolina (2015) Page 7.

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While the Braniff brothers saw relative defeat in their first venture, their gained experience from the previous airline business helped developed the blueprint for their next venture, Braniff Airways Inc., founded in 1930 during the Great Depression. Due to the economic downturn, success was not immediate, yet by 1934, the company secured its first airmail contract for deliveries between Chicago and Oklahoma City. Further success came in the following years when the company merged with two smaller airlines, providing Braniff Airways with a more extensive route system and commercial exposure. The acquisition of a top-of-the-line Douglas DC-3 twin-engine plane further increased their profitability. Following this expansion period, the company moved its operations from Oklahoma City to Dallas in 1942, specifically to Love Field, as the airport was then becoming a hub for airline companies. For a brief period during World War II, the company stagnated when it directed its assets to the war effort. In the postwar period, commercial aviation became more common. The company increased its earnings when peacetime operations resumed with flight service across the United States, Central America, Cuba, and South America.<sup>45</sup>

Growth and change within the company continued in the 1950s. The development came with increased expansion into South America and a merger with Mid-Continent Airlines, a small airline based in Kansas City, MO. In January 1954, Tom Braniff passed away unexpectedly in a private plane crash, ushering in a series of company policy changes. Braniff's death required the company to make its first real change in management since its founding in 1930.<sup>46</sup> Charles Beard joined Braniff International in 1935 as a general air traffic manager.<sup>47</sup> Beard accepted the position immediately after Tom Braniff's death and managed the company until 1965.<sup>48</sup>

Braniff began formal training for hostesses in the 1950s with a course of study that was three weeks long. It required candidates to speak a foreign language, preferably Spanish, as its primary foreign destinations were in South America. Braniff required that candidates have had two years of college training or the equivalent in business experience and must have been between 20 to 26 years old with "near perfect health." During training, the hostesses took classes in first aid, food service for passengers, airline codes, signals, routes, and schedules. Also, the hostesses became versed in airline industry jargon, meteorology, and air navigation. Their knowledge was extensive enough to permit them to answer potential flight-related questions from passengers.<sup>49</sup>

#### *Braniff under Harding L. Lawrence*

Following Tom and Bess Braniff's deaths, the company found its financial ownership in jeopardy. Between 1954 and 1964, the Blakely/Braniff Foundation and Texas Instruments owned the airliner until Greatamerica Insurance Company bought it in 1964. Braniff International Airways flourished under the Greatamerica Insurance Company and its new president, Harding Luther Lawrence. Before joining Braniff International, Lawrence was the Executive Vice President of Continental Airlines. When hired by Braniff International, he was the youngest airline company president in the United States.<sup>50</sup>

One of Lawrence's first actions as president of Braniff International was an advertising campaign to rebrand and promote the airline nationally. He hired the New York City-based firm Jack Tinker and Partners Mary Wells as creative director for the project. In turn, Wells brought internationally known designers Alexander Girard and Emilio Pucci on board. To get a better sense of how to rebrand Braniff International, Wells and her team visited airports in Braniff's system. Her conclusions showed a grim setting that compared the look and feel of terminals and uniforms to

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Page 7 and 8.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Page 8.

<sup>47</sup> "Charles E. Beard Dead at 81; Former President of Braniff," *NY Times*, July 20, 1982.

<sup>48</sup> Richard Ben Cass, "Braniff Airways: Flying Colors," Arcadia Publishing: Charleston, South Carolina (2015) Page 8.

<sup>49</sup> "Largest Class Turned Out By Braniff International," *Dallas Morning News*, June 27, 1954.

<sup>50</sup> Richard Ben Cass, "Braniff Airways: Flying Colors," Arcadia Publishing: Charleston, South Carolina (2015). Page 8.

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a prison.<sup>51</sup> The team efforts rebranded Braniff International into a stylish and exciting airline company, notable for their bright and vibrant color schemes. Braniff's key distinction was that they called their in-flight service employees "hostesses," and not the traditional "stewardess" name, as the word "hostess" had a warm and friendly connotation.

The years 1965 and 1966 were defining for Braniff International hostesses. Fashion designer Emilio Pucci created a revolutionary wardrobe that discarded the traditionally utilitarian uniforms of decades past. The new Braniff uniforms were high-fashion and vibrantly colored culottes, leotards, wraparound skirts, scarf hats, derbies, and serving dresses. Hostesses could change into any coordinating wardrobe piece mid-flight. Aligning the uniforms with the modern Braniff brand attracted new hostess recruits, who applied from nearly all 50 states, the Pacific Islands, South America, and Europe. The airliner also disposed of the traditional cropped or bob hairstyles for trendier, longer hairdos.

Further growth for the hostess division of Braniff International occurred in 1966 when plans developed to construct a new ultramodern facility in the Oak Lawn District of Dallas for the training of hostesses. Labeled as a "Girl's Dream World," the new Wycliff Avenue facility was five-stories in height, fully equipped with amenities. It included training and education rooms along with shared bedrooms. The all-inclusive facility, completed in 1968, was also a secure environment for the young women trainees.<sup>52</sup>

The innovative and comprehensive rebranding and advertisement scheme executed under Lawrence fostered the company's most successful period of growth and international expansion. In 1969, the airline began flying to Hawaii, which prompted the purchase of a new Boeing 747, then the largest commercial plane. By the end of the 1960s, the airline was on par with commercial output with other major airlines, including American Airlines and Delta. The company's success was evident in its growth. The company established a reputation for its attention to detail by creating a unique inflight experience, a reputation earned by the hostesses' hard work.<sup>53</sup> By the end of the 1970s, the airline expanded flights to Europe and Asia.

Braniff experienced a decline in the late-1970s amidst the Middle East oil crisis, which affected revenues following its costly purchase of new Boeing 727s and 747s to allow extended international trips. These purchases, coupled with the inability to use the new planes due to the oil crisis, drastically hurt its financial standing. To combat this unexpected financial hardship, Lawrence called for reducing plane inventory by selling unneeded older aircraft and eliminating underutilized routes. This plan worked for several years until 1982, when the company ceased to operate in the commercial setting. The company made a slight recovery in 1984, but this resurgence was short-lived.<sup>54</sup>

### **Braniff International Hostess College**

Braniff International Airways, a leading company in commercial flight in Dallas, Texas, developed plans to construct a new ultramodern hostess college in 1966. Before building their new permanent home, the Braniff Hostess College rented space at the former Blanton Towers near the Dallas Love Field Airport from 1965 to 1967. This space was small and did not offer Braniff the necessary facilities to educate and promote the Braniff flight attendant. Thus, the company decided to construct a new facility with classroom and dormitory functions under one roof. The Wycliff Avenue site in Oak Lawn was next to the newly built Dallas North Tollway, conveniently near the company's headquarters at Dallas Love Field.<sup>55</sup> Local architectural firm Pierce, Lacey, and Associates earned the commission to

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<sup>51</sup> Monica Obniski, "Accumulating Things: Folk Art and Modern Design in the Postwar American Projects of Alexander H. Girard." PhD diss. University of Illinois at Chicago (2015). Page 293.

<sup>52</sup> Obniski. Page 8

<sup>53</sup> Ibid. Page 8

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. Page 9.

<sup>55</sup> "Braniff Opens New College" *The Dallas Morning News*, January 11, 1968.

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design a five-story state-of-the-art building, which cost \$2 million. The airline wanted its architecture to appeal to young, prospective job seekers and reflect Braniff's curated brand. To achieve this, Braniff International assembled a design team that included Florida-based interior designer Chuck Ax and Alexander Girard, who designed the interior in an array of bright and vibrant colors reflective of those found on the exterior and interior of Braniff's commercial aircraft.<sup>56</sup>

The grand opening for the Braniff International Hostess College was held on January 4, 1968. The event drew local journalists and writers from industry-specific publications, such as *Air Transport World*, *Air Travel*, *Interline Report*, and various travel agency journals.<sup>57</sup> In attendance were Braniff Airlines representatives, including Braniff President Harding L. Lawrence and fifteen Braniff hostesses, and prominent local officials including Dallas Mayor Eric Jonsson and Chamber of Commerce President Morris Hite. Tours of the new facility were led by the college's new supervisory staff, including Weetia Hoggard, Margaret Kincaid, Kay Felts, and Charlene Minter.<sup>58</sup>

The Braniff International Hostess College was one of the few stand-alone flight attendant training facilities in the United States in the late 1960s. The American Airlines Stewardess Training College (affectionately called the "Charm Farm," and demolished in 2020) was the first facility in Texas to incorporate housing and training under one roof when it opened in 1957 at Fort Worth's Amon Carter Field.<sup>59</sup> Other companies used hotels, motels, and rented private buildings to host weeks-long seminars for prospective flight attendants. Junior colleges and private companies also offered stewardess training in the era, but airliners typically re-trained these candidates upon hiring. Like the earlier American Airlines training college, the Braniff facility was a completely self-contained building featuring integrated dormitories, onsite amenities, and educational rooms. This model expresses the emphasis on efficiency, security, and image in the Braniff training model. The college offered a five-week course curriculum that included training in servicing onboard customers, safety and emergency procedures, and airplanes' aerodynamics.

Braniff's training model went beyond the job's technical aspects, focusing on personal appearance and etiquette, which reflected the changing nature of the industry as airlines began to use glamour as a selling tool for prospective customers. Braniff molded students into their ideal of a glamorous international traveler. Hostesses trained in classes related to figure control and proper diet. The building had a training runway where students learned how to walk correctly. In an on-site beauty salon, students learned the latest in hair and beauty trends.

Since most students were leaving home for the first time, Braniff sought to assuage parents' concerns by strictly controlling day-to-day life. During this era, few choices were afforded to women, with cultural restrictions placed on the choice of residence, lifestyle, sexual partners, and careers. Society did not fully accept young, single women living alone. Braniff was aware of this societal expectation and wanted to maintain the idea that their hostesses were proper young women. The choice of housing the students in the building was not just a matter of efficiency but also a means to control and mold the hostess's public image. While attending college, students followed strict schedules and rules. Classes for the typical five-week course ran from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday, with a 10 p.m. curfew. An elaborate alarm system alerted the dormitory supervisor of any unauthorized open windows or doors anywhere in the building. Private police officers also were on patrol throughout the night within the building.<sup>60</sup>

Entry to the building was on the first floor's east elevation and featured two atriums. The highlight of both atriums were skylights constructed of glazing set in redwood frames. Students were not permitted to leave the college during

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<sup>56</sup> "Where Braniff put flair in the air," *The Dallas Morning News*, May 17, 2014.

<sup>57</sup> Richard Ben Cass, "Braniff International Hostess College: Historical Overview," [Braniff Preservation Group](#)

<sup>58</sup> "Where Braniff put flair in the air," *The Dallas Morning News*, May 17, 2014.

<sup>60</sup> "Braniff Dedicatees Hostess College," *The Dallas Morning News*, January 5, 1968.

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the five-week training period, but they could have visitors. The first floor's highlight was the “Passion Pit,” a rendezvous and hangout spot for students and their male visitors. The “Passion Pit,” which remains today, features a white conical chimney suspended over a round black marble burning unit centered over a plush white carpet. The remainder of the first floor held an auditorium and dining room. At the far end of the reception area, extending across the adjacent dining room's wall, a series of floor-to-ceiling doors painted every color used in the Braniff palette.<sup>61</sup>

The second floor comprised the classrooms designed in different color schemes. One contained a complete mock-up of an airplane, allowing students to practice onboard serving and simulating a real-life cabin experience. Trainees exercised in the “Silhouette Room,” a small gymnasium space, while the “Powder Puff Room” provided professional beauty services they were expected to upkeep.<sup>62</sup>

Upper floors housed 36 dormitory rooms that accommodated four women each. These rooms, of course, reflected Braniff's brand in wall colors—painted in shades of red, yellow, purple, blue, or green—and decorations of replica artifacts from international destinations that Braniff International serviced.<sup>63</sup> The interior design fostered an exciting and memorable experience for the students.

The building was staffed and operated exclusively by women. Jean Duncan, the first manager of the new facility, was a Braniff employee since 1953 and had worked in the hostess training department since 1959.<sup>64</sup> It was mainly Duncan's vision to create this facility after visiting other airlines' training facilities and determining that the best training concepts integrated the educational and residential components. During her time as manager of Braniff International's hostess training, she trained more than 75 percent of all Braniff Airline's 800-plus United States-based hostesses.<sup>65</sup> Yearly totals of candidates during the operation time were typically around 600, with one out of ten applicants chosen for the five-week program. Once a student graduated from the five-week program, they reported to an assigned airline hub in the United States, South America, or Europe.<sup>66</sup>

In 1975, Braniff International Airways vacated the building due to a decline in revenue and sold it to Dresser Industries for \$2 million. Dresser Industries converted the building into the Dresser Leadership Center, a technology company that also used the nominated building as a training facility. Dresser Industries spent \$250,000 renovating the interior to include an audio-visual system, new beds, and new seating for the auditorium. Dresser also used the building for training purposes.<sup>67</sup>

From 1999 to 2014, Parkgate operated the former Braniff facility as an independent apartment building for retired adults. Greenway Investment Company, the next owner, initially planned to demolish the building for redevelopment. However, the Braniff Preservation Group launched an effort to preserve the building and obtain a Texas Historical Commission determination of eligibility for listing the building in the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>68</sup> The structure was saved from demolition, and its rehabilitation is underway.

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<sup>61</sup> “Braniff Opens New College,” *The Dallas Morning News*, January 11, 1968.

<sup>62</sup> “Where Braniff put flair in the air,” *The Dallas Morning News*, May 17, 2014.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> “No more “plain” hostess for Braniff International,” *The Alcalde*, June 1968.

<sup>65</sup> “Braniff Hostesses Land in New Home,” *The Dallas Morning News*, January 5, 1968.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> “Dresser finds new purpose for building,” *The Dallas Morning News*, August 1, 1975.

<sup>68</sup> Richard Ben Cass, “Braniff International Hostess College: Historical Overview,” [Braniff Preservation Group](#)

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### *Glamour, Architecture, and Interior Design*

In 1966, Braniff International Airways commissioned Dallas firm Pierce Lacey & Associates to design an ultramodern flight attendant training facility three miles southeast of the airliner's hub at Love Field. For Braniff, the project—along with a new terminal at Love Field—were progressive steps in the airliner's total corporate makeover that reinvented Braniff as a modern, glamorous, and efficient means of travel. Advertising executive Mary Wells conceptualized Braniff's Jet Age corporate identity in 1965 that captured what Eero Saarinen called "the excitement of the trip" but in a fashionable, "high-octane color montage of Mexican and modern" package developed by Alexander Girard.<sup>69</sup> Eye-catching terminals, aircraft, equipment, and graphics were integral components of the airliner's brand that promised customers a travel experience as stimulating as the destination itself. Flight attendants, already firmly rooted in American visual culture, were paramount actors in Braniff's fantasy as glamorous and charming young women, bespoke in Emilio Pucci uniforms, who effortlessly attended to travelers. The glamorous fantasy, however, was anything but effortless.

Historians Alice T. Friedman and Kathleen M. Barry define glamour as a cultural construct of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century consumer market that appeals to popular taste, aspirations, and ideology through visual imagery. Their scholarship showed how midcentury-era architecture and feminized service labor (specifically flight attendants) produced glamour, a perennially elusive quality the public desired and consumed.<sup>70</sup> Uniquely, the nominated building represents the intersection of both in the construction of glamour. The midcentury corporate modernist design of the insular training facility and dormitory embodied Alexander Girard and Wells' Braniff-branded aesthetic. For prospective flight attendants, the immersive architectural environment, technical training, and requisite physical makeovers aligned with Braniff's strict appearance and deportment standards that transformed them into embodiments of the Jet Age's "flight attendant mystique."

"If any building," wrote journalist Bill Morgan in 1968, "can live up to the Braniff hostess uniforms, you'll find it at 2801 Wylciff."<sup>71</sup> Pierce-Lacey & Associates designed the BI Hostess College,<sup>72</sup> which earned the firm a Texas Society

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<sup>69</sup> "New Solutions: Architecture for the Jet Age," *Architectural Forum* (July 1962): 72; Monica Obniski, "Accumulating Things: Folk Art and Modern Design in the Postwar American Projects of Alexander H. Girard," PhD diss. (University of Illinois at Chicago, 2015): 294.

<sup>70</sup> In *American Glamour and the Evolution of Modern Architecture* Friedman examines the construction of glamour in the visual imagery of diverse iconic 20<sup>th</sup> century modern buildings, like Eero Saarinen's TWA Flight Center (completed in 1962). Glamorous architectural and interior design photographed to isolate it from its real-world context depicted a modern lifestyle many desired but could not afford. Alternatively, the experience of walking through the sculptural TWA Flight Center, was itself an experiential fantasy staged for the traveling public. Barry's *Femininity in Flight: A History of Flight Attendants* looks at the construction of glamourized femininity around the image of flight attendants and how it shaped the profession's labor activism. In adhering to the airline industry's exacting appearance and deportment standards, flight attendants themselves produced feminine glamour for customers' consumption (and, as Barry adds, men's enjoyment). Friedman's work draws parallels with the flight attendant experience when she likened the surface organization and treatment of exotic or eye-catching materials, both critical to the visual imagery of the subject buildings, to "functioning like makeup on skin or accessories on a well-dressed body."<sup>70</sup> Well-dressed stewardesses, in turn, as visual imagery in the isolated airplane cabin environment enhanced for passengers the fantasy of air travel promoted by companies, like Braniff. For more, see Kathleen Berry, *Femininity in Flight: A History of Flight Attendance* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007): 5-6; Alice T. Friedman, *American Glamour and the Evolution of Modern Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010) 6.

<sup>71</sup> Bill Morgan, "Bird's Nest on the Ground," *Dallas Times Herald Sunday Magazine*, February 25, 1968.

<sup>72</sup> John Allen Pierce, FAIA (1931-2016) and Neal Lacey, AIA (1931-2013) formed their Dallas firm in 1953 but closed it while both men served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War. Pierce was born and raised in Dallas. He earned a BS and BA in Architecture from Rice University in 1953 and graduate study as the Emil Bruhler Fellow in Architecture at Princeton University, earning his Master's in Architecture and Urban Design in 1959. Neal Lacey (1931-2013) was born in Dallas. He also graduated from Rice University and earned his graduate degree in architecture from the University of Texas, Austin. In addition to the

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of Architects First Honor Award in 1970. The building embodied the airline's corporate image and even conceptualized gendered architectural details—"the shape, colors, all of it"—to characterize it as "definitely a woman's building."<sup>73</sup> Constructed on a triangular site that fronted the Dallas North Tollway in a suburban setting between downtown Dallas and Love Field, the corporate training facility comprises three rectangular sections raised on concrete pillars. Sculptural elements, like curved wall joints and continuous bands of balconies wrapped around the white stucco building, softened the exterior. Simultaneously, a two-story sculptural planar wall of embossed and debossed "BI" symbols and decorated with an abstracted metal bird sculpture (the BI mascot) advertised its Braniff affiliation to passing motorists on Dallas' new highway.

Architectural and landscape design made the building a self-contained facility, evoked Braniff's commitment to efficiency, and created an insular environment in which the women trained. The architects eschewed a central entrance and adopted instead two openings on either side of a central tower that bisected the east elevation. Landscape architect H. Dan Heyn, credited with popularizing native Texas plants in formal landscapes, designed a plan for the triangular site that prioritized the occupants' privacy.<sup>74</sup> The walled-off complex sat atop a location above the street level, and native trees, plants, and hedges bordered walls and entrances. Auto driveways circulated traffic to the rear (highway-facing) parking lot that continued beneath the building. A heated pool, an angular boomerang-shape, was installed on the east elevation between the college and walls. Cage-like bars that enclosed three floors of balconies demonstrated Braniff's commitment to ensuring its occupants' security (**Figure 13**).

The hostess college's interior design and spatial functions reinforced the physical and corporate ideological transformation flight attendants underwent during training. Interior designer Chuck Ax followed the prescribed aesthetic Alexander Girard (1907-1993) developed for Braniff in 1965. By the 1960s, Girard was a well-known fabric and graphics designer with professional connections to Eero Saarinen and Herman Miller. The Braniff Hostess College interior showcased Girard's expert curation of color and pattern with Latin American folk art that added depth to the otherwise stark-white interiors and modern furnishings. Two interior features mainly spoke to the glamour Girard's work infused into the training facility: the five-floor-long multicolored fabric-covered decorative panel in the building's north stairway and a sunken lounge on the first floor. Architects and Ax based the building's "Passion Pit," a circular sunken lounge that featured a floating conical-shaped fireplace, on one Girard styled for Eero Saarinen at the Miller House (Columbus, Indiana). The architect also designed sunken lounges at Vassar College and the TWA Flight Terminal. Living and training in an environment with high-style architectural features, rich and fashionable interior fabrics, and museum-quality artifacts that represented Braniff's international flight courses reinforced for trainees the glamorous image of globe-trotting hostesses that they hoped to become.

The building's press coverage demonstrated the role of design in constructing feminized glamour and chauvinistic attitudes that perpetuated the sexualized image of flight attendants in popular culture. One journalist described the building's area in terms of a woman's body measurements and warned readers not to call "her" (the 68,475 square-foot building) "dumpy," an unsympathetic nod to the strict height and weight requirements to which flight attendants adhered.<sup>75</sup> He likened the stucco exterior to "creamy white complexion and curves in the right places," which recalled racist beauty standards perpetrated on women of color who worked as stewardesses in the airline industry. Other architectural aspects of the "feminine building" included: the lavish use of color ("with its special impact on every

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nominated building, Pierce-Lacey & Associates designed Braniff's Jetrail Terminal at Love Field (1969-70) and terminals at the Houston Intercontinental Airport. John Allen Pierce, obituary. <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/name/john-pierce-obituary?pid=177745300>, accessed September 10, 2020.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Landscape plans for Braniff Hostess College are located in the [H. Dan Heyn Collection](#) at the University of Texas Alexander Architectural Archives. As of January 2021, the archive is closed on account of ongoing construction at the building.

<sup>75</sup> Morgan, 4.

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individual—women especially”); and halls and rooms with ““rounded corners”—nothing to snag a stocking or skirt on.”<sup>76</sup> Promotional materials touted the exercise room (where “neophyte hostesses learn...about *excess baggage*,”) beauty salons, and makeup parlor as “self-improvement” rooms, a phrase used by Braniff to re-frame managerial control over physical appearance as a personal choice for betterment.

### **Criteria Consideration G (Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years)**

The 1960s-70s was a critical time in women’s history wherein longstanding occupational segregation and gender discrimination eroded in the wake of second-wave feminism and the Women’s Rights Movement. Second-wave feminism was a resurgence of political and social activism among women during the 1960s to the early 1980s. The activist movement was inclusive of diverse races, ages, classes, and professions. It emerged postwar, with shifting employment patterns and changing popular opinion about working women's rights. Second-wave feminism focused on women’s workforce civil liberties, civil rights, and domestic rights. Wartime defense work, in which American women played a significant role, shifted attitudes of what, if any, work was appropriate for women. When the war ended, there was a nationwide effort to employ returning servicemen, either at new positions or the positions they held previous to enlisting in the military. Despite their postwar job loss or displacement, the number of working women remained high. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 13 million women worked in 1940, 20 million women were employed in 1945, and 17 million women stayed gainfully employed after the war.<sup>77</sup> The Women’s Bureau of the Labor Department found that post-war, most working women did so to support their families financially.<sup>78</sup> This trend continued through the 1960s. As more women worked, gender disparities in education, training, wage, and a desire for childcare came to the forefront of a social and political movement called second-wave feminism. These discrepancies received national attention with the publication of the *Feminine Mystic* by Betty Friedan, which questioned a women’s role in society, and the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited gender discrimination in the workplace.

#### *Women’s Labor History in the 1960s and 1970s*

Stewardesses were among the many women from various walks of life who launched the modern movement for women’s rights. They were not part of the radical vanguard of nascent second-wave feminism in the mid-1960s. Nor were they among the pioneering feminists who labored at the grassroots with little or no public recognition. Instead, stewardesses in the mid-1960s helped to shape and propel the advent of second-wave feminism by staking highly visible, relatively uncontroversial ground in growing struggles against gender discrimination in the United States.<sup>79</sup>

Postwar ideological concepts of race, gender, and familial roles; economic and political history; and popular culture intersect under the umbrella of Women’s Labor History. Those forces shaped who went to work, what jobs women performed, what rights they had, and when/how that changed.

In 1963, Betty Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, which chronicled society’s subjectivity of women. Friedan’s book helped spark the era’s feminist ideology, called second-wave feminism, that sought better women’s social, economic, and political lives. It also led to public gatherings and symposiums throughout the country that brought to light gender inequality within the workforce, political sphere, and domestic life.

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<sup>76</sup> Bob Skinner, “Jet-Age School for Girls,” February 15, 1968. The article on file at THC does not include a magazine title with which to credit.

<sup>77</sup> “Women on Jobs are Increasing,” *Amarillo Daily News*, Dec. 13, 1946

<sup>78</sup> “Women Work for Economic Reasons, Not for Fun of It,” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, July 21, 1946

<sup>79</sup> Barry, 130.

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In the 1950s, many working women bore the responsibility of childrearing. This type of woman was an outgrowth of the ideas that transpired during World War II and immediately following. The sharp rise in the number of women heading families meant that fewer women could choose to remain at home with their children. The demographic of working women in the 1960s expanded even more as the baby boomer generation came of age to be employed. These women were young and eager to enter the workforce as jobs eligible for working women expanded. Yet, as women's economic responsibilities mounted, women themselves made little progress in narrowing the gender gap in wages.<sup>80</sup>

The jobs that were afforded to women in the late-1950s to the early 1960s were diverse. Unfortunately, the industrial jobs that women experienced success in were slowly diminishing due to gender occupational segregation, yet new occupational avenues were opening up. Post World War II through to the 1960s saw large spikes in social and welfare workers, nurses, teachers, medical and dental technicians, clerical workers, and service workers. All of these jobs experienced an increase of over 25% within their respective field.<sup>81</sup> Overall, the growth of women workers from 1950 to 1960 was 35%. This increase was also due to the expanded service work opportunities, and it introduced the term "pink collar" to the 1960s workforce lexicon. The term differentiated between society's definitions of "women's" and "men's" low-level office and retail work.<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, increasing the role of women in the workforce occurred within governmental politics with the passing of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII prohibited "employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, and national origin."<sup>83</sup> The legislation created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which investigated claims of sexual discrimination through job denial, raises in salary, and promotions.<sup>84</sup> What was initially seen as a victory for women workers turned out to be false hope. Politicians and enforcers of the bill viewed sexual discrimination as a "joke" and dismissed nearly all cases filed for sexual discrimination from 1964 to 1966.<sup>85</sup> In response, women's groups formed the National Organization for Women (NOW), the Women's Equality Action League, and the National Women's Political Caucus. These organizations campaigned to force lawmakers to uphold federal anti-discrimination laws and brought lawsuits against employers combating unequal pay, discriminatory hiring, and sexual discrimination.

By the early 1960s, substantial numbers of middle-class and working-class mothers of young children had accepted full-time employment. Yet not all women needed or wanted to enter the workforce. This lack of desire largely stemmed from norms of the 1950s that only single women and married women without children worked for wages. However, unlike earlier decades, women began to defuse the old social class as a distinction between wives who worked outside the home and those who did not.<sup>86</sup> Further advances for women in the labor force coincided with greater access to education. Title IX of the Higher Education Act of 1972 provided women with greater access to higher education, which broadened their eligibility for higher-paying professions.<sup>87</sup>

Labor demand continued to accelerate the feminization of work in the 1970s; there was an increase of nearly 8 million female workers.<sup>88</sup> "Pink Collar" service industry jobs, like flight attendants, saw a huge spike. More openings for flight

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<sup>80</sup> Julia Kirk Blackwelder. *Now Hiring: The Feminization of Work in the United States, 1900-1995*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press (1997). Page 203.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* Page 152.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* Page 178.

<sup>83</sup> "Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964," U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

<sup>84</sup> Judith N McArthur, and Smith, Harold L.. *Texas Through Women's Eyes : The Twentieth-Century Experience*. Austin: University of Texas Press (2010). Page 197

<sup>85</sup> "Women's Rights: The Impact of Title VII on Gender Equality," LBJ Presidential Library.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid* Page 180

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid* Page 185

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid* Page 179

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attendants correlated to the era's increase in commercial aviation and its primary candidates were young, unmarried college-educated women. Civil rights protections empowered flight attendants to challenge long-standing restrictions on their work, primarily based on gender discrimination. Widespread publicity of women's rights and legal victories gradually changed influenced the way flight attendants perceived their jobs and gave them the tools to fight for workplace rights. While some men were flight attendants, most were women who faced strict standards regarding their age, marital status, race, and appearance. In 1971, *Sprogis v. United Airlines* challenged the industry's biases and concluded, "any passenger preference for single airline stewardesses did not provide a valid reason for invoking...exception in Title VII as a *bona fide* occupational qualification."<sup>89</sup>

*Women's Labor Movements in Texas*

Advancement for women in the workforce varied from state to state. Many states, such as Texas, were rooted in misogynistic values within the labor force. These deep-rooted values created issues for the advancement of women in the labor force in Texas. In 1966, the Southern Methodist University, located just north of Dallas, held the first of two symposiums for women, the first entitled "The Education of Women for Social and Political Leadership." Emmie Baine, SMU the Dean of Women, organized the event, which drew more than 400 participants and was the first women's symposium in Texas. The keynote speakers of the first symposium were Marietta Tree, former U.S. ambassador to the U.N.; Dr. Carl N. Degler, professor of history at Vassar College; Dr. Helen V. McLean, a psychiatrist at the Institute for Psychoanalysis in Chicago; Dr. Mary I. Bunting, president of Radcliffe College; and Viola H. Hymes, chairman of the governor's Commission on the Status of Women for the state of Minnesota. The success of the first symposium spawned the need to hold a second symposium the following year. The second symposium in 1967 built upon the initial motivation of the first symposium and encouraged stronger relationships between women leaders and women looking to enter the workforce. The conferences were "a once-a-year intellectual feast" for the women of Dallas.<sup>90</sup>

One of the symposium's primary goals was to create a safe space for women to congregate and listen to speeches about how they can succeed in the labor force. Many of the women attending were college-aged with the hope of using their degree after college for a sustainable career. For many in attendance, this was the first time they witnessed speeches advocating for women's labor force rights and a revolutionary new topic in what has long been a conservative state.

In addition to the symposiums garnered by *The Feminine Mystique's* publication, action within federal and state legislation provided necessary building blocks for advancing women's labor rights. Attempts were made at the governmental level to do this in Texas. The Texas Civil Rights Act of 1967 was a landmark law that prohibited employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, or nationality. It did not, however, include a provision on gender.<sup>91</sup> One member of the Governor's Commission on the matter stated the following:

It is recognized that the working pattern of women is different from that of men. A young woman takes a job until she is married or until she has a baby and then retires from the work force until she has completed her family or never to return. It is a fact of life that an employer's expectation of

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<sup>89</sup> Roberta Lessor, *Social Movements, the Occupational Arena and Changes in Career Consciousness: The Case of Women Flight Attendants*. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, Jan., 1984, Vol. 5, No. 1, A Special Issue on Environment and Career (1984). Page 37-51.

<sup>90</sup> "Southern Methodist University Women's Symposium Records," (1966). *Southern Methodist University*. Abstract. <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/smu/00162/smu-00162.html>

<sup>91</sup> Judith N. McArthur, and Smith, Harold L.. *Texas Through Women's Eyes : The Twentieth-Century Experience*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010. Page 195.

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reaping a substantial dividend from hiring and training a young man is much more apt to be realized than his similar expectation in the case of hiring a young woman.<sup>92</sup>

State-led efforts to produce useful information on the livelihoods of Texas women fell short. Texas Commission on the Status of Women, which only lasted until 1969 due to lack of funding and staffing, produced inadequate information so then-Governor Preston Smith established the Texas Status of Women Commission in 1970. Margaret Brand Smith, a Dallas attorney and insurance executive, led the commission that held its first conference in Austin that year with more than 1,000 women in attendance. Unfortunately, it also disbanded due to a lack of political support. Seven years later, Governor Dolph Briscoe's executive order formed the Texas Commission on the Status of Women. Led by Dallasite Lorene Vychopen, it sought to continue the efforts established under its predecessor commissions.<sup>93</sup>

At the same time, Texas NOW chapters emerged in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin. In 1970, Houston NOW established an Equal Employment Opportunity Task Force, which sought to target Title VII violators. The statewide National Organization of Women's chapter, directed by Dallas-based chapter head Martha Dickey, was formed in 1973. Within three years, 29 local chapters across the state fought workforce gender discrimination and protection in domestic settings and against rape.<sup>94</sup>

In 1972, the Texas State Legislature passed the Texas Equal Rights Amendment, a monumental victory for gender equality. Its passage was a 15-year effort spearheaded by the Texas Federation of Business and Professional Women, led by Dallas attorney Hermine Tobolowsky, a Dallas-based attorney. Female support for the Texas ERA came from the state's large population of working women, particularly those who did not consider themselves feminists. However, many women opposed the passing of the amendment because it forced "women to work outside the home, abolish alimony and child support, and make women subject to the military draft."<sup>95</sup> The Texas ERA prohibited sex-based discrimination in labor and credit applications and strengthened women's property rights.

### *Women's Social Movements in Dallas*

The Texas Women's Movement began to take shape in the early 1970s with the Dallas Chapter of the National Organization of Women's formation. The media facilitated community discussion about the topic. Regular columns in the *Dallas Morning News* column followed the Equal Legal Rights Amendment progress and sought opinions from Dallas's working women and homemakers. Texas ERA leader Tobolowsky as quoted: "passage of the amendment is the biggest step forward that women have ever taken." Carol Holloway, a Dallas housewife, opined, "I think the amendment is good, not because of women's liberation – I want to make that clear – but because it treats women as equals...It has been a long time coming." Many women it quotes supported its passage, but many who held conservative views were not comfortable with "total equality" lauded by the era's more liberal feminists.<sup>96</sup> The Texas ERA's passage was ultimately successful. In 1973 alone, the Dallas EEOC reviewed more than 1,300 complaints.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid. Page 196.

<sup>93</sup> Debbie Mauldin Cottrell, "Governor's Commission For Women," *Texas State Historical Association*.  
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/mdg05>

<sup>94</sup> McArthur. Page 199

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. Page 214

<sup>96</sup> "Women View Liberation," *Dallas Morning News*, August 23, 1970.

<sup>97</sup> "Equal Employment Complaints Costly," *Dallas Morning News*, May 5, 1974

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### *Scholarly Evaluation*

Women must learn their own history because they have a history to be proud of and a history which will give pride to their daughters...To keep us from our history is to keep us from each other. To keep us from our history is to deny to us the group pride from which individual pride is born...Courageous women brought us out of total bondage to our present improved position. We must not forsake them but learn from them and allow them to join the cause once more.<sup>98</sup>

- Beverly Jones, "Toward a Female Liberation Movement" (1968)

The accomplishments of Second-Wave Feminism during the 1960s and 1970s in the United States set in motion a greater focus to document women's history through scholarly means. At the national level, one of the first books published documenting women's history was Alice Kessler-Harris' 1982 book, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States*. The book closely examined changing patterns in wage work for women throughout the United States, chronologically from the colonial period to the 1970s. Kessler-Harris found government reports to outline the conditions and changes found in women's paid labor history. The author recognized her work as a survey of women's labor history and acknowledged more in-depth analysis opportunities.<sup>99</sup> As a landmark book, its strength was its accurate depiction of occupational segregation through wage differences between men and women, how specific demographics of people fought against the equality of men's and women's labor, and what types of jobs women worked.<sup>100</sup>

With the foundation set forth through this book, authors in the following decades have been able to fill in these gaps with numerous texts that look at specific labor markets of women's history. One type of industry that the book touches on is the service industry. Kessler's excellent book covered the service industry's importance to women's labor and did not detail different industry jobs. Flight attendants were one of the most prominent forms of servicewomen during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Realizing this importance, authors, scholars, and former employees of the industry wrote books specifically detailing female flight attendants' history.

### *Flight Attendants in Women's Labor History Scholarship*

Scholarly interest in flight attendants in the last twenty years has led to numerous works that document the profession within the scope of women's labor and social history. An industry dominated mainly by women, many of the scholarly works highlight women's role in the industry from its beginnings in the 1930s and typically concluding in the 1980s when airlines became deregulated. Books such as *Femininity in Flight* by Kathleen Barry, *Working the Skies: The Fast-Paced, Disorienting World of the Flight Attendant* by Drew Whitelegg, *Come Fly With Us! A Global History of the Airline Hostess* by Johanna Omelia and Michael Waldock and *The Jet Set: Airline Stewardesses and the Making of an American Icon* by Victoria Vantoch examine the history of female flight attendants. Topics within the books include culture, personnel, training, evolution, and social movements. The 1960s and 1970s are highlighted as the most important years within the industry as commercial aviation was beginning to be a norm within the transportation sector, and concepts such as fashion and glamor became highly marketable.

*Femininity in Flight* by Kathleen Barry, a sociologist focused on women's history, documents the female flight attendant experience through the lens of activism and glamour. Her analysis found glamour culture promoted the job as fashionable and attractive, but it masked the flight attendants' demanding work. Her depiction of the glamorized

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<sup>98</sup> Beverly Jones and Edith Brown, "Toward a Female Liberation Movement," (Boston: New England Free Press, 1968): 17-18. <https://rozsixties.unl.edu/items/show/686>, accessed June 22, 2020.

<sup>99</sup> Julia Kirk Blackwelder. *The Journal of Southern History* 49, no. 1 (1983): 153-54. Accessed June 29, 2020.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

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lifestyle also resulted in female flight attendants' tipping point to fight for their worker's rights. The industry's glamour was primarily bound to tight restrictions on height, weight, and age resulting in a limited career. Barry uses source material such as perceptive readings of popular culture, newspapers, industry publications, and first-person accounts. Braniff International Airlines is a primary example for her evaluation of glamour during the 1960s and 1970s, specifically about their unique color scheme and their Pucci-designed attire.<sup>101</sup>

The book *Working the Skies: The Fast-Paced, Disorienting World of the Flight Attendant* by Drew Whitelegg, a faculty member at Emory University, takes a general approach to chronicle the history of female flight attendants identifying itself as a behind-the-scenes look at the industry. Like *Femininity in Flight*, this book uses firsthand accounts from retired flight attendants, both female and male, to get a holistic view of the industry, from industry strife's to industry highs.

In addition to books, scholarly articles and theses tackled the subject of female flight attendants. Articles such as "Think of Her as Your Mother: Airline Advertising and the Stewardess in American, 1930-1980" in *The Journal of Transport History* and "Gender in the History of Transportation Services: A Historiographical Perspective" in *The Business History Review* further detail the history of the industry through the lens of female flight attendants. For thesis, Ph.D. candidate Carney Maley wrote, "Flying the 'Unfriendly Skies': Flight Attendant Activism, 1964-1982," which chronicles the female flight attendants during second-wave Feminism and how the industry was vital in advancing women's rights. The books, articles, and dissertations mentioned above account for female flight attendants' history from their beginnings in the 1930s through the 1990s, all written by people with different backgrounds during the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. Through reading the breadth of scholarship, one understands how the social, political, and economic context of the 1960s and 1970s shaped sweeping changes to the profession.

While historiography varies from state to state, Texas's long stance of male dominance in society greatly hindered the female narrative in its state history. This narrative changed in the late-1960s when social historians re-examined U.S. history from the "bottom-up." James M. Day's 1972 *Women of Texas* was one of the first to chronicle how women participated in the state's historical narrative.<sup>102</sup> It served as the basis for the topic's future expansion, and subsequent research looked at Texas women in subcategories such as politics, race, social status, and labor.

The 1968 Braniff International Hostess College fits squarely within the timeline of sweeping change in women's labor history in Texas. The nominated building is a product of its mid-1960s rebranding, whose success relied on its flight attendants' labor and professionalism. The building continued to represent women's labor history until 1975, when Braniff sold the property. During its years of operation, the building was associated with the era's women's labor advancements that improved gender and racial inequities, providing a safer working environment and opportunities for professional advancement.

## Conclusion

The Braniff Hostess College is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in the area of Social History (Women's Labor History) at the state level of significance. It is also nominated under Criterion A for Commerce at the local level of significance as a training facility for hostesses who embodied the company's image and culture during Braniff's most profitable era. The period of significance is 1968-1975, representing the years the building operated as a training facility for Braniff. It meets Criterion Consideration G because it provides valuable insight into the study of women's work roles in the 1960s-70s, a period when longstanding occupational segregation and gender discrimination

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<sup>101</sup> "Femininity in Flight," Duke University Press Review.

<sup>102</sup> Nancy Baker Jones, "Making Texas Our Texas: The Emergence of Texas Women's History, 1976-1900," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, Volume 120, Number 3, January 2017. Page 294.

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eroded in the wake of second-wave feminism and the Women's Rights Movement. In many ways, the Braniff Hostess College represents a closing chapter in female flight attendants' history when their glamorous image blinded society to their professionalism and rights. Scholars have documented this evidence of social and political change in books and academic articles that enable the dispassionate evaluation of this resource type. Many of these books chronicle the history of female flight attendants, thoroughly highlighting the 1960s and 1970s as a time of transcendent change within the industry. Following the 2020 demolition of the American Airlines Hostess Training College in Fort Worth, Braniff International Hostess College became the last building in Texas to represent female flight attendants' labor history. However, its significance rests on its association with the Braniff hostesses who were instrumental in the company's success and as a collective, transient workforce whose efforts challenged the era's gender discrimination to effect change for themselves and future flight attendants.

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*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*  
*Amarillo Daily News*

Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

## Maps

Map 1: Braniff International Hostess College (2801 Wycliff Ave.) in Dallas, Texas. Source: Bing Maps 6/17/2020



Map 2: The nominated boundary is the legal parcel recorded by the Dallas CAD.



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Map 3: Map Showing Coordinates



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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**Figures**

Figure 1: Braniff International Hostess College, c.1968 (Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved).





Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Figure 4: The first-floor entrance atrium. (1968) Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved.



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Figure 5: Braniff hostesses dubbed the facility's sunken lounge Dream Parlor, AKA the "Passion Pit." Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved.

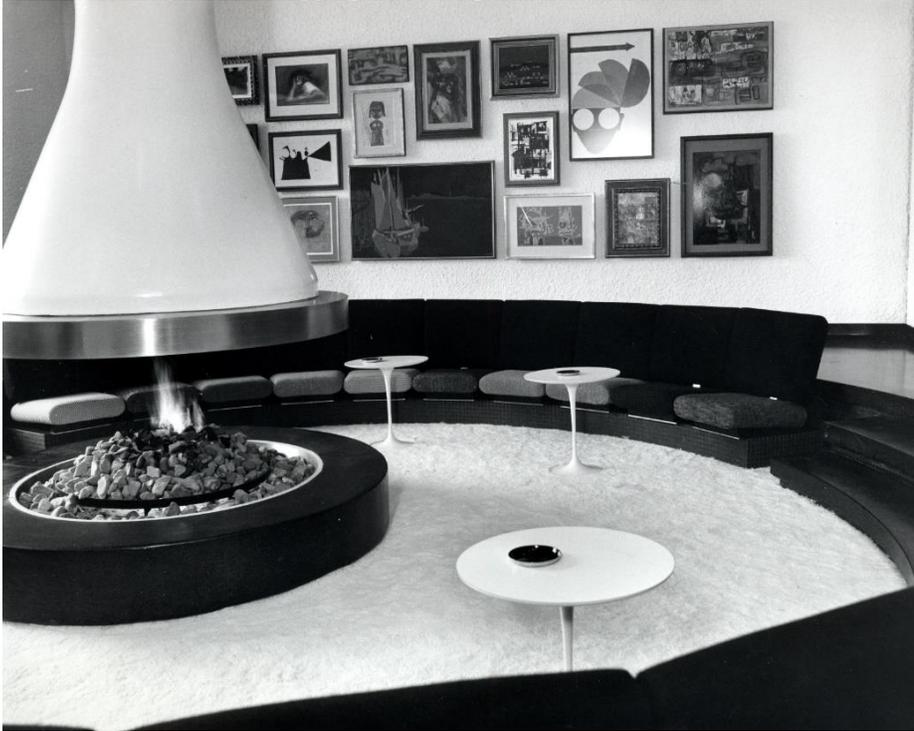


Figure 6: A full-scale plane mock-up on the second floor. Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved



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Figure 7: A Braniff trainee learns how to walk down an aircraft aisle in the second-floor exercise room. Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved.



Figure 8: Hostess dorm room, 1968. Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved.



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Figure 9: The “Powder Puff” room was on the second floor. Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved.



Figure 10: Cover of the *Dallas Times Herald Sunday Magazine*, February 25, 1968.



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Figure 11: The Braniff “Air Strip,” concept. Braniff Airways, Inc., © and ®, All Rights Reserved.

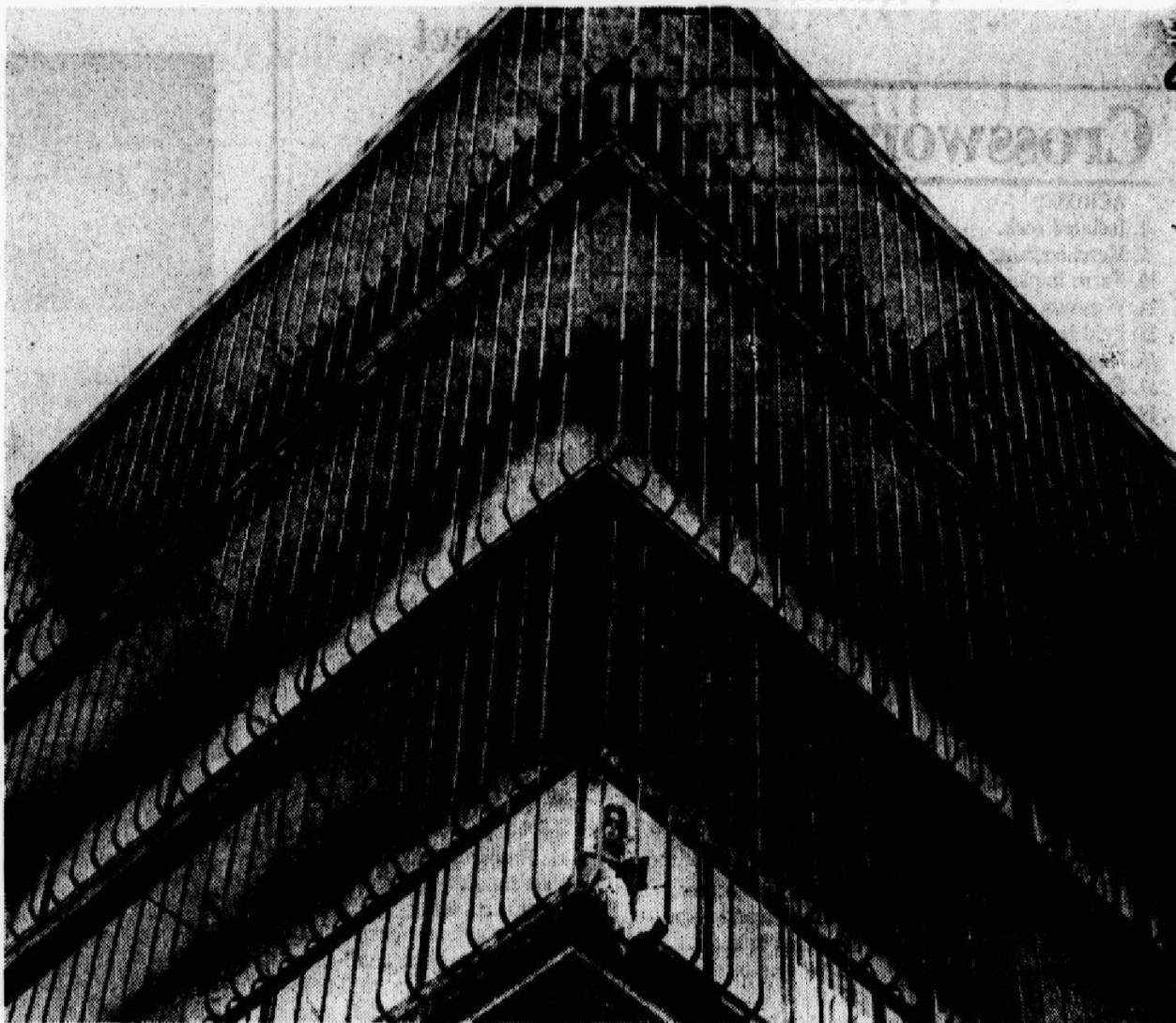


Figure 12: Braniff flight attendants (“hostesses”) in-training. (1969) Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved



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Figure 13: Flight attendant trainee sitting on the caged balcony at the nominated building. Source: Langum, Lee. "Hi Down There!" *Dallas Morning News*, May 28, 1974.



—Dallas News Staff Photo by Lee Langum.

**Hi Down There!** Pretty Lavon Mc-Connell, a Braniff flight attendant trainee, effectively breaks the

monotonous pattern set by the balcony railing at Braniff's hostess college at Wycliff and the Dallas North Tollway.

Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

Figure 14: In 1973, Braniff International Airways hired its first male stewards. Braniff Airways, Inc., Copyright, All Rights Reserved.

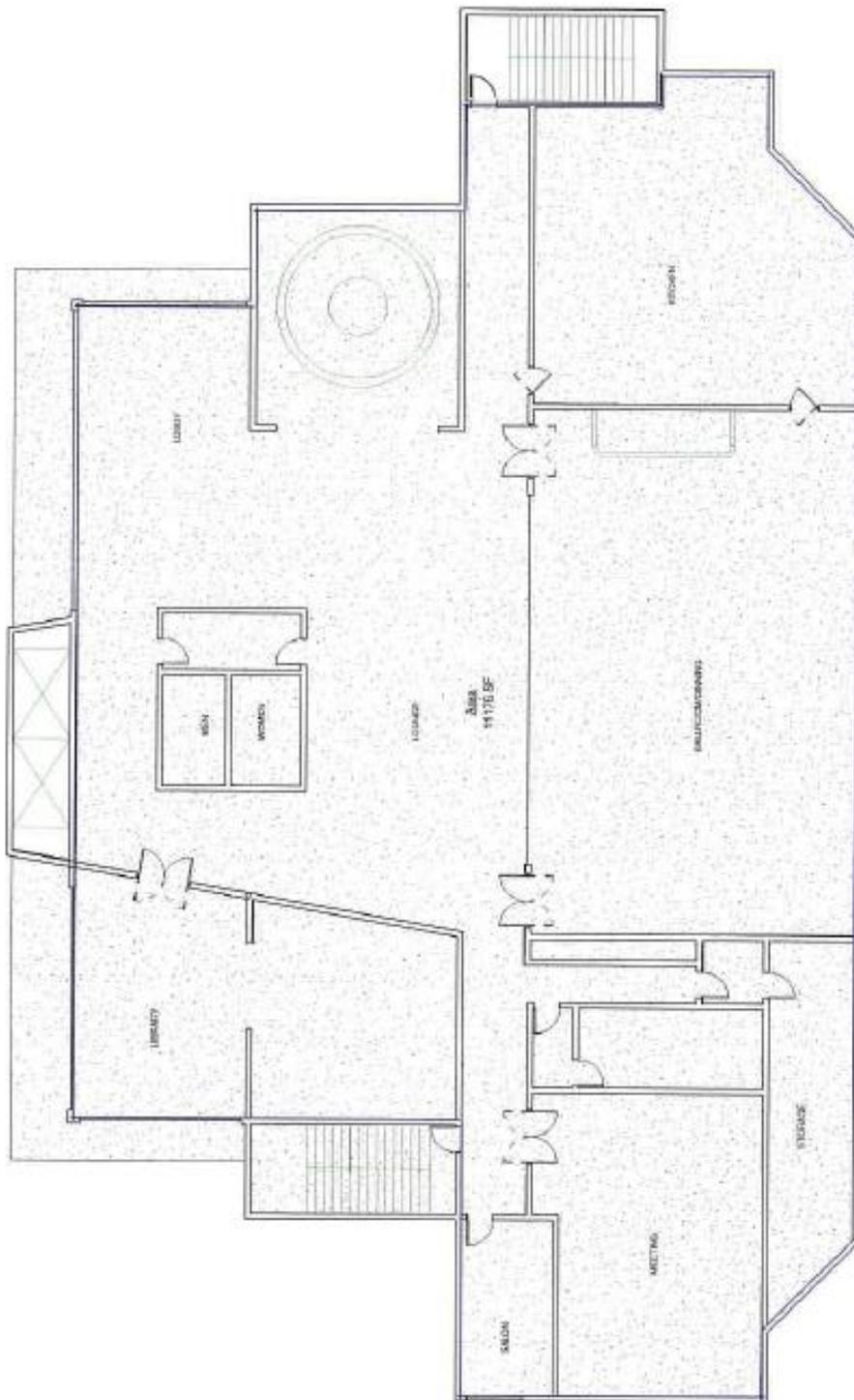


Figure 15: Braniff's earliest training school held in Dallas, 1937. Source: "Chic Air Hostesses Product of Hard Work and Training," *Fort Worth Star Telegram*, June 20, 1937.



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

Figure 16: Current First Floor Plan.



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Figure 17: Current Second Floor Plan.

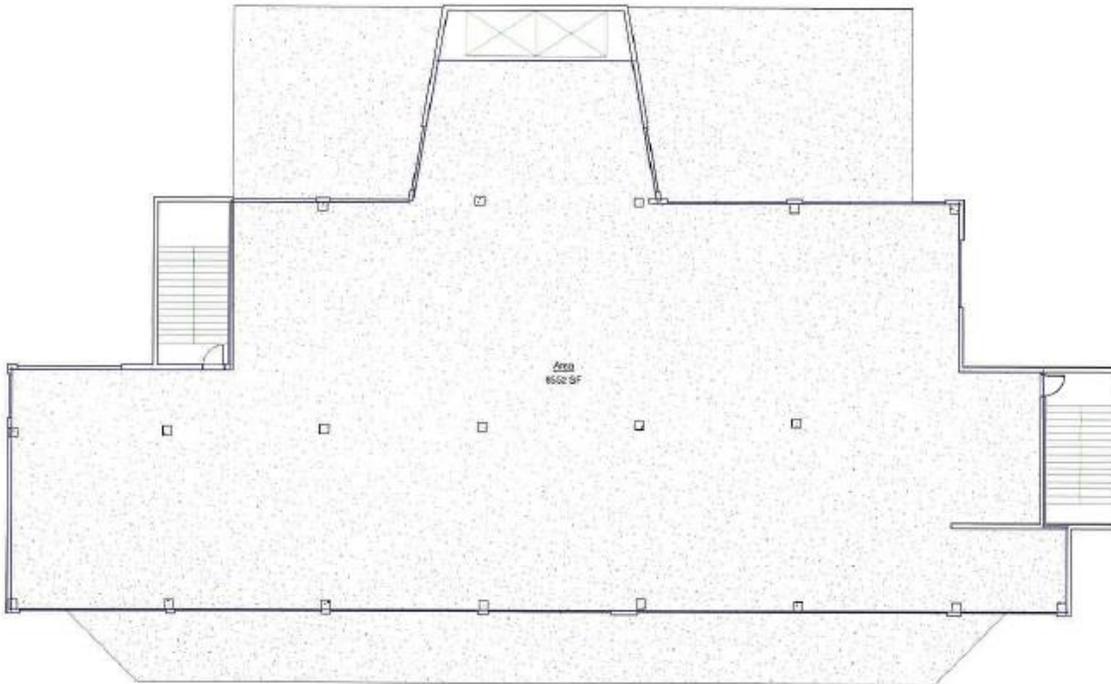
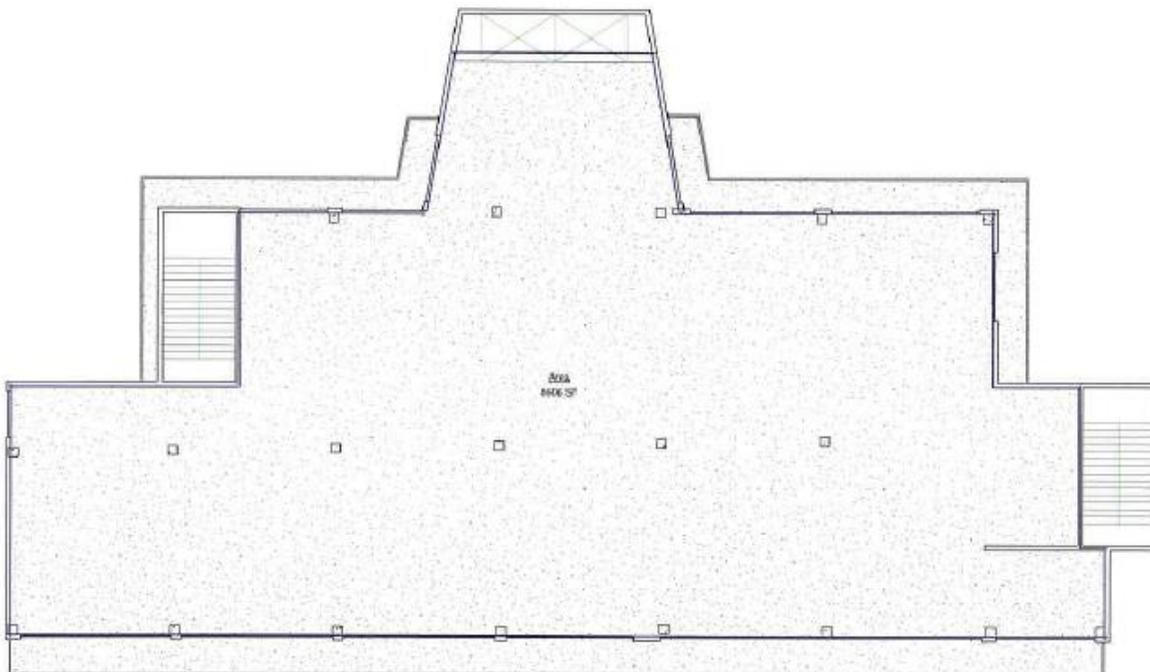


Figure 18: Current Third through Fifth Floor Plan.



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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## Photograph Log

The Braniff International Hostess Hotel  
Dallas, Dallas County, Texas  
Photographed by Nate Curwen, August 2019

Photo 1: View of West Elevation, looking northeast



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 2: View of South Elevation, looking north



Photo 3: View of South and East Elevations, looking northwest



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 4: View of East Elevation, looking west



Photo 5: View of North Elevation, looking south



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 6: View of Parking with Subject Building to the left, looking south



Photo 7: View of Pool Courtyard, looking north



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 8: View of Pool Courtyard, looking northwest



Photo 9: View of Pool Courtyard, looking southeast



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Photo 10: View of Underpass, looking southwest



Photo 11: View of Underpass Entrance, looking northeast



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Photo 12: View of first floor, atrium, looking southwest



Photo 13: View of first floor, atrium, looking north



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 14: View of first floor, passion pit, looking south



Photo 15: View of first floor, auditorium/dining room, looking northwest



**Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas**

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Photo 16: View of first floor, auditorium/dining room, looking south



Photo 17: View of second floor, looking northeast



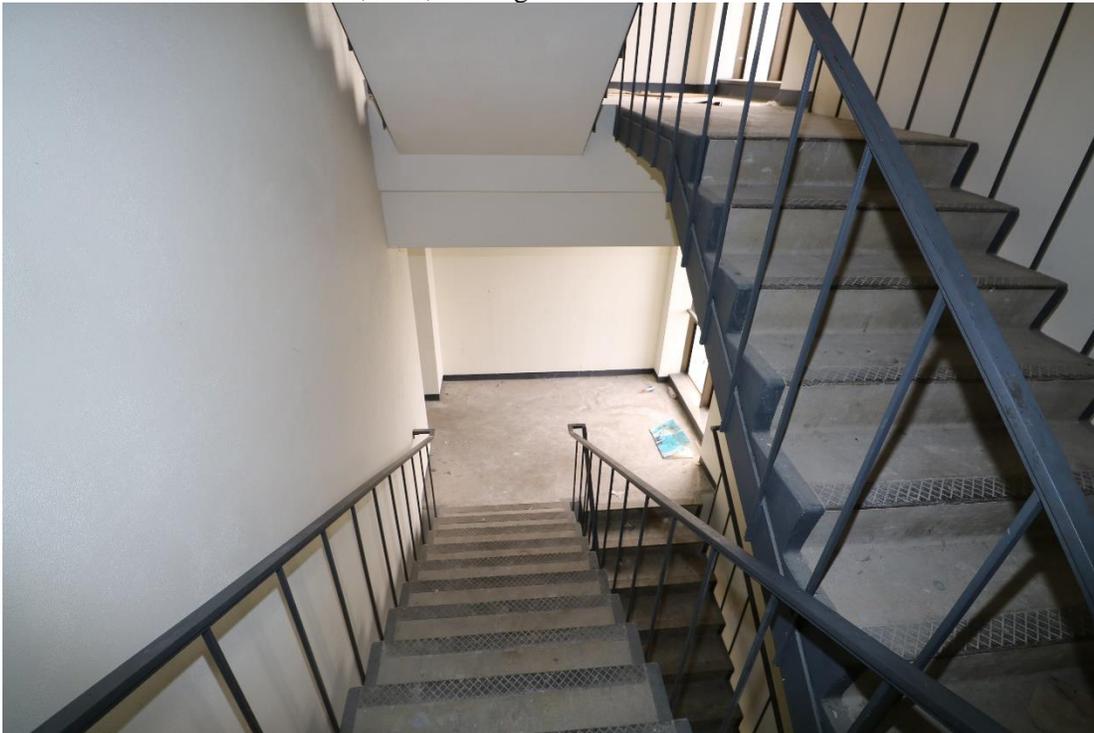
Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 18: View of third floor, looking south



Photo 19: View of fourth floor, stair, looking east



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 20: View of fourth floor, looking north



Photo 21: View of fourth floor, stair, looking east



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 22: View of fifth floor, looking northeast



Photo 23: View of fifth floor, balcony, looking north



Braniff International Hostess College, Dallas, Dallas County, Texas

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Photo 24: View of roof, looking north



*~end~*