



6.15 A cleaner has decided exactly where each chair will go in this pub. It will in my experience be very hard to break this pattern!

cleaners rise much earlier in the mornings than students of architecture she had an absolute control over this space, and eventually the students gave up the attempt to create a better setting. I have found this phenomenon in many building types where the cleaners are able to dominate the spatial configuration. This is particularly true in spaces such as pubs that have a strong diurnal rhythm, allowing the cleaner to arrange the furniture before the main occupants arrive (Fig. 6.15).

Lipman and Sommer both made studies of patients' communal day spaces in hospitals for the elderly or mentally ill (Lipman 1968; Sommer 1969). Both these authors found that the arrangement of chairs was determined by nurses and ward managers. Patients were relatively unlikely to move the furniture, and all became used to particular arrangements. This proved to be unfortunate, since the natural tendency of the staff was to return chairs to rather rigid arrangements, often in straight lines and frequently with their backs against walls. Of course such arrangements minimized the social interaction of the patients, which might be thought to be the main function of the space. Sommer in particular reports an experiment to change the seating pattern to a more sociopetal arrangement resulting in an almost doubling of the levels of both brief interactions and sustained conversations. Interestingly, this new arrangement involved the use of tables around which the chairs were arranged. They also found an increase in the levels of magazine reading in addition to more conversation. It