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## 12-Year-Old Could Enter University

Mildred Loomis

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# Light and Color

(continued from last month)

The first step in developing a design procedure for light and color is to determine the value of average outdoor illumination for the specific section of the country one lives in. The average annual number of clear days gives some indication of this. The percentage of light falling on a surface which is not absorbed, but reflected, should be graded between the light source and the dark surrounding surfaces for walls, ceilings, and floor in rooms receiving varying amounts of light. In order to grade the brightness for a ceiling light, the ceiling should be given a "reflection factor" of 80%. A reflection factor of 25% is acceptable on end walls in a room with ample daylight. In a deep, poorly lighted room, on the other hand, the wall opposite the window should have a reflection factor of 70%. The window-wall itself, as well as frames and mullions, produces less glare when the reflection factor is high—80% or more. Floors should have a reflection factor of 25%.

Dark blue and black have low reflection factors; yellow and white are high. The amount of light reflected from various color surfaces is as follows: white 80%-90%; pale pastel (yellow, rose) 80%; pale pastel (beige, lilac) 70%; cool colors (blue, green pastels) 70%-75%; full yellow hue (mustard) 35%; medium brown 25%; blue and green 20%-30%; black 10%.

Colors of short wave length (green, blue, violet) create an impression of being cool; colors of long wave length (yellow, orange, red) appear warm. Warm colors are sharply focused and have apparent qualities of lightness, activeness and advancing movement; cool colors are less sharply focused and seem to be heavy, passive, and receding. An obvious but seldom practiced rule is to use warm colors in rooms that are exposed to the north, or that receive little sunlight. Cool colors are best used in rooms of a southern exposure. Soft, cool colors should be used in cloudy regions, and strong, warm colors in sunny regions. Light rooms should be decorated in strong, colorful contrasts. Stronger, brighter colors can be used in large rooms, whereas low color contrasts and weak, light patterns are best used to make small rooms appear larger.

The story is told of a manufacturer who redecorated his lunch room walls from peach to light blue. Soon the employees began to complain that it was chilly inside the lunch room. The actual temperature had not changed, being thermostatically controlled. When the walls were repainted peach, and orange slip-covers were placed on the chairs, the complaints ceased.

The sustained thought needed for a balanced light and color design is conveniently circumvented today by an increasing number of builders who use the "natural" approach: wood ceilings are stained or lacquered; prefinished plywood wall panels are chosen on the merits of wood grain; even imitation wood or cork floor tile is chosen to match the "natural" wood tones used everywhere else. This so-called "natural" approach was given weight by Frank Lloyd Wright, whose building interiors had a drab sameness throughout. Wright, who called those who employed paint and trim, "inferior desecrators," clearly overdid his principle of "naturalness of material."

Compare this timid decorative approach to that of a dynamic designer who understands his light and color principles and uses them to achieve definite results. For example, we have a designer telling about his use of light and color in the principal's office at the Waterdloof Primary School, South Africa:

The character needed for a principal's office is fairly complex. The first impressions of children entering the school are formed here. This demands a friendly, colourful atmosphere. The office is also used for receiving inspectors, teachers, and parents and should therefore be fairly dignified, in keeping with the status of the principal. Office work will require a fairly subdued and quiet atmosphere which is not distracting. Because the room faces into a little court, it may feel rather warm in summer; so a feeling of coolness is desirable. Fairly cool colours are indicated also by the fact that very often only irate parents come to see the principal, and they need to be calmed down.

The bright, stimulating colours that children like can be used at a low level, out of the line of vision of the adults. It was decided to use red floor tiles in spite of the fact that red aggravates bad temper. An angry person generally does not look down, whereas a despondent person might.

Psychologists say that 85% of our impressions come through our eyes. Light and color correctly used will create just about any impression desired. In a house we should strive for a variety and sequence of impressions, from excitation to sedation, from room

(continued on page 4)

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School of Living Calendar at Heathcote Homestead Maryland Line, Md.

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## 12-Year-Old Could Enter University

Sandra Louise Sanborn, who had never been in school before June, 1964 when she took a battery of tests, has the capacity for getting A's and B's in beginning college work, according to university officials in Boulder, Colo.

Green Revolution readers will recall the items in our April and May issues ("Second Semester Report") in which her father, Robert Sanborn, described the home education of Sandra and a neighbor girl on their Redwing, Colo., homestead. They moved there in 1956 from Ohio, when Sandra was four years old. At that early age her father was teaching her trigonometry and the Greek alphabet.

The Sanborns wanted to experiment with education in a "family type" set-up where they could work closely with the children, taking advantage of the

many natural teaching situations which came up. Sandra spent no more than an hour or two a day in formal school work.

In June, 1964 the Sanborns moved to Boulder, where Mrs. Sanborn, a former teacher, is a secretary in the Dept. of Slavic Languages, Univ. of Colorado. In the summer Sandra took college Math 101 and 102 for no credit. The instructor said that she did very well and knew what she was doing. Consideration was given to letting Sandra continue in university courses, but it was decided to enroll her in the ninth grade of a Boulder girls' school, two grades ahead of normal for her age.

Reports and photos of Sandra, at this time, show her to be a healthy, robust youngster. Her only comment on all this activity is, "It's all very interesting."