Reconsidering the Unity of Health & Environment: Housing for the Hazelwood School
Glasgow, Scotland

"Light and Color are inseparable, and in the design of the Charnley House, light interest was so blended with their psychological, sensual, motional and technical aspects—"color and light in Man-Made Environments"

"The rear-most thing, the building, receives the light of the day, and makes that place visible as what it is." —Parsons of Light

In the field of health care color, as well as decor in general, is beginning to be studied. Its effects on recovery times and manner have been documented. Those spaces with vivid colors and differentiation of decoration in each area have had positive impacts on users (Carter, 1979 p 138). The more a place feels like a home, the more comfortable a person will be, therefore minimizing anxiety (Greene, 1994 p 4). If the patient/user of the environment can be calmed by the use of the color, this effect will be transferred to the staff, and vice versa. A composed staff will work more efficiently and be better suited to aid. The importance color plays in healing environments is astronomical. Used correctly, it has the possibility of bringing a sense of ease to the users and reduces stress levels.

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The visible light spectrum is extremely small in comparison to all of the different light waves. As we age, or lose our colors we begin losing the ability to distinguish the dark blue wavelengths, and also. When designing for those with impaired vision, it is important to use colors from the warm side of the spectrum—red, orange, yellow. These can also be used but becomes difficult to distinguish from the other cool colors. As vision diminishes blue begins to take on gray tones and even different hues are hard to see. Impaired eyes will only see red when looking at a purple, therefore a purple vase on a red wall will read as only a red object. Color cannot be seen but can be felt. A person will be, therefore minimizing anxiety (Greene, 1994 p 4). If the patient/user of the environment can be calmed by the use of the color, this effect will be transferred to the staff, and vice versa. A composed staff will work more efficiently and be better suited to aid. The importance color plays in healing environments is astronomical. Used correctly, it has the possibility of bringing a sense of ease to the users and reduces stress levels.

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