

Texas Tech's Designing Woman

Beth Worthington gives new meaning to the phrase room service. She's a full-time interior designer at Texas Tech in Lubbock, on hand to introduce collegians to the thrill of throw pillows and the cachet of flowered chintz. "I love working with the students to help them actualize their decorating dreams," says Worthington, who can wax a bit flowery herself.

According to Worthington, about 10 full-time interior designers work for university housing departments, at schools from Miami University to West Michigan State. She fell into her job while pursuing her doctorate at Tech and dabbling as a consulting designer. The response was so enthusiastic that Tech added her to its staff. Now she stocks thousands of cloth and carpet samples and hundreds of furniture catalogs offering everything from Old English styles to high

tech. "I can help students enhance their environment by making spaces cozier, bigger, warmer or whatever they want" says Worthington.

The designer contends that a college cell can be transformed for as little as \$100. Tech supplies the paint—in tasteful shades of toast, mauve, white, pale yellow or blue-gray. Beyond that, students may seek inspiration in Worthington's "demonstration room" in one of the residence halls, where she uses such inexpensive decorating touches as rice-paper shades, hand-woven baskets and walls covered with pastel sheets. She has also compiled a how-to book of handy tips.

Milk bottles: Danny Limas, a senior interior-design major, credits Worthington with getting his creative juices flowing. "She showed me how to use a major focal point in my room. One year I used a shelf I made and

put old milk bottles and personal things on it and highlighted it with a spotlight."

Other students have also been inspired by Worthington to take their decorating beyond their own rooms. Artistic forms of graffiti are encouraged; residence hallways are brightened with paintings of teddy bears, Garfield clones, pink flamingos, ducks (very popular), Casablanca scenes and ocean waves.

The Texas Tech designer beams that all this drive to decorate indicates that students really feel at home at school. "Students who fail to personalize their rooms frequently are the first ones to drop out," she says. Worthington even insists that refurbishment provides academic benefits as well as esthetic improvement. "Better surroundings equal better grades," she declares.

JENNIFER BOETH with
LINDA BURKE in Lubbock



Getting rid of the dormitory doldrums: Designer Worthington displays carpet samples

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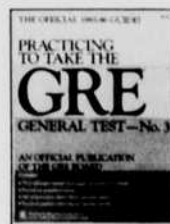
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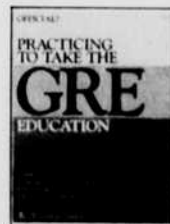
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