Communism on Tomorrow Street
Mass Housing and
Everyday Life after Stalin

Steven E. Harris

Woodrow Wilson Center Press
Washington, D.C.

The Johns Hopkins University Press
Baltimore
EDITORIAL OFFICES
Woodrow Wilson Center Press
One Woodrow Wilson Plaza
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-3027
Telephone: 202-691-4029
www.wilsoncenter.org

ORDER FROM
The Johns Hopkins University Press
Hampden Station
P.O. Box 50370
Baltimore, Maryland 21210
Telephone: 1-800-537-5487
www.press.jhu.edu/books/

© 2013 by Steven E. Harris
Printed in the United States of America
246897531

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Harris, Steven E. (Steven Emmett)
Communism on tomorrow street : mass housing and everyday life after
Stalin / Steven E. Harris.
pages ; cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Housing—Soviet Union—History. 2. Public housing—Soviet
Union—History. 3. Housing policy—Soviet Union. 4. Communism
and architecture—Soviet Union. I. Title.
HD7345.A3H13 2012
363.5’83094709045—dc23 2012007450

The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars is the national, living
US memorial honoring President Woodrow Wilson. In providing an essential
link between the worlds of ideas and public policy, the Center addresses cur-
cent and emerging challenges confronting the United States and the world.
The Center promotes policy-relevant research and dialogue to increase under-
standing and enhance the capabilities and knowledge of leaders, citizens, and
institutions worldwide. Created by an act of Congress in 1968, the Center is a
nonpartisan institution headquartered in Washington, D.C., and supported
by both public and private funds.

Conclusions or opinions expressed in Center publications and programs are
those of the authors and speakers and do not necessarily reflect the views of
the Center staff, fellows, trustees, advisory groups, or any individuals or or-
ganizations that provide financial support to the Center.

The Center is the publisher of The Wilson Quarterly and home of Woodrow
Wilson Center Press and dialogue television and radio. For more information
about the Center's activities and publications, please visit us on the Web at
www.wilsoncenter.org.

Jane Harman, Director, President, and CEO

Board of Trustees
Joseph B. Gildenorn, Chair
Sander R. Gerber, Vice Chair

Public members: James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress; Hillary R. Clinton,
Secretary of State; G. Wayne Clough, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution;
Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education; David Ferriero, Archivist of the United
States; James Leach, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities;
Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary of Health and Human Services; Fred P. Hochberg,
Designated Appointee of the President from within the Federal Government

Private citizen members: Timothy Brosas, John T. Casteen III, Charles E. Cobb
Jr., Thelma Duggin, Carlos M. Gutierrez, Susan Hutchison, Barry S. Jackson

National Cabinet: Eddie & Sylvia Brown, Melva Bucksbaum & Raymond
Leary, Ambassadors Sue & Chuck Cobb, Lester Crown, Thelma Duggin, Judi
Flom, Sander R. Gerber, Ambassador Joseph B. Gildenorn & Alma Gilden-
horn, Harman Family Foundation, Susan Hutchison, Frank F. Islam, Willem
Kooyker, Linda B. & Tobia G. Mercuro, Dr. Alexander V. Mirtchev, Wayne
Rogers, Leo Zickler
## Contents

Tables and Figures  xi
Acknowledgments  xiii

Introduction: Moving to the Separate Apartment  1

**Part I. Making the Separate Apartment**

1 The Soviet Path to Minimum Living Space and the Single-Family Apartment  27
2 *Khrushchevka*: The Soviet Answer to the Housing Question  71

**Part II. Distributing Housing, Reordering Society**

3 The Waiting List  111
4 Class and Mass Housing  154

**Part III. Living and Consuming the Communist Way of Life**

5 The Mass Housing Community  191
6 New Furniture  228
7 The Politics of Complaint  267

Conclusion: Soviet Citizens’ Answer to the Housing Question  300

Notes  309
Bibliography  353
Index  377
Chapter 6

New Furniture

In December 1954, a Muscovite, E. Lashun, wrote to the All-Union Conference of Constructors in Moscow to tell the architects and builders what she expected from new housing. Lashun, who was living with her husband and two daughters in an 8.85-square-meter room of a wooden house, explained that they had been on their local soviet's waiting list for four years and that “not a few years will probably still pass when we will live normally, as it befits a Soviet toiling person, to whom the Stalin Constitution has given the right: to labor, study and cultured rest!”

The December conference meant different things to different members of the Soviet polity. For Khrushchev, it presented the opportunity to declare a clear break from Stalin's expensive architectural aesthetics and insist that architects take up economical mass housing designs. For architects beholden to Stalinist aesthetics, the meeting was a bruising experience, whereas for others it opened a space for reexamining their constructivist past. For an ordinary Muscovite like Lashun, the conference unleashed a cathartic torrent of complaints about her family's everyday existence and her expectations for the future: “One can hardly believe that one day we will not in fact freeze in a damp and cramped kennel, that we will stop to wallow on the floor, underfoot, but that we will rest on a couch in a cultured way, for which there will be space in the room.” Looking to the future, she imagined that “arriving from work and school, we will sit as an entire family at the table and not eat in line one after another.”

Alongside more space in a private apartment, furniture was a critical part of what ordinary citizens like Lashun expected from Khrushchev's mass housing campaign. Her letter depicted what she believed would be her family's transition from its present, cramped housing to a “normal” domestic sphere. Objects and spaces would no longer serve multiple functions. It would be possible, she mused, “to do homework quietly without harassment like our seventh grade schoolgirl does her homework now—she studies, but she's pushed and everything gets poured onto her books and notebooks, which is on the only table, where the kitchen and the dining room and the bedroom and so on and so forth are situated.” This multifunctional table and their lack of space only served to frustrate her family. She continued:

Imagine our family at the table: the father eats his meal, the schoolgirl does her homework, and as the housewife I'm cooking at one and the same table, yes and the younger daughter also climbs up to the table, and under the table there's all the kitchenware, that is, a tea kettle, a pot, and a frying pan and the rest, since we don't have a kitchen, but just a narrow passageway where there are gas stoves . . . and all the gas emissions and the steam from boiling linens gets into our room."

If meals and homework were not difficult enough, the cramped conditions of their remaining dilapidated furniture made sleeping impossible. "At night we settle down 'comfortably,'" Lashun added sarcastically, "the children sleep on the bed, and my husband and I sleep on the floor under the children's feet, because there is no more free space." The Soviet state's answer to Lashun's demands was a small, single-family apartment with all the technological amenities and consumer goods of modern urban life. A new line of furniture was likewise part of its long-awaited answer to the housing question.

This chapter examines the role that furniture played in the construction of the khrushchevka as a new space in which the values and social norms of the communist way of life were defined. The millions of new small apartments required entirely new consumer items that would correspond to the dimensions and aesthetics of mass housing, shape people's everyday behaviors according to the values of the communist way of life, and remain distinct from consumerism in the capitalist West. What this new furniture would look like and what these values and behaviors would be were neither predetermined nor decided by the Communist Party's top leadership. As scholars have argued, the separate apart-
ment did not signify the end of the revolutionary process, but rather its reinvigoration under Khrushchev’s regime, which mobilized mass housing and the consumer items that went with it to fulfill the Revolution’s project of creating the New Soviet Man and Woman. Although Khrushchev’s regime boosted production of consumer items and defined the broad ideological contours of the communist way of life, it delegated furniture design and defining the new Soviet home’s communist content to architects, furniture designers, and taste arbiters. With the regime’s blessing, these members of the cultural intelligentsia tied such tasks to the broader processes of de-Stalinization and the Cold War struggle with the West over standards of living, to reexaminations of early Soviet design aesthetics and their relationship to modernist design, to women’s role within the home, and to what a classless society looked like at home.

This chapter also explores the new furniture designs that residents of the khrushchevka were promised and the meanings that members of the cultural intelligentsia ascribed to these new household goods. And it delineates what ordinary urban dwellers actually brought to their new homes. Internal government reports on Soviet citizens’ consumption patterns for furniture and other household goods in the early 1960s, examined here for the first time, revealed to Khrushchev’s regime that the state of people’s household possessions diverged significantly from ideal images of the modern Soviet home as the site of a rationally organized and aesthetically modern domesticity fit for the transition to communism. Despite expansions in production, chronic shortages prevented many people from finding new furniture and household consumer items in stores, forcing them to make do with older makes. People’s continued reliance on mechanical consumer goods instead of electrical ones undermined propaganda that celebrated the scientific and modern direction of the Soviet household. Social differentiation in consumption patterns undercut the egalitarian ethos in the rhetoric on new furniture and the khrushchevka. Comparisons with consumption patterns in the capitalist West revealed to the leadership how far behind the Soviet Union really was, and how foolish Khrushchev had been to declare otherwise during his famous “Kitchen Debate” with Richard Nixon in 1959. In short, this chapter demonstrates, two starkly different images of ordinary people’s furniture and household consumption patterns emerged in the 1950s and 1960s: The first comprised ideal representations of the new Soviet home and its household objects; the second included the realities residents faced in trying to find new furniture and consumer goods for their new homes. Each played a significant role in shaping what Communism on Tomorrow Street promised to be and how it turned out in practice.

In Search of New Furniture

Like all consumer goods, furniture was an item of extreme scarcity under Stalin. Before World War II, the furniture industry was based largely on handmade methods of production and was insufficiently mechanized. Khrushchev’s regime faced an uphill battle when it committed itself to meet ordinary citizens’ furniture needs. In March 1955, an audit found that supply was still slipping further behind “the growing needs of the population” because the industry was based on “handicraft methods, predominantly with the use of manual labor.” Factories with technology “for the mechanization of production processes” continued to depend upon labor-intensive techniques. The Soviet leadership redoubled its efforts in 1957 to “organize the manufacture of small-sized furniture and built-in kitchen equipment for apartments of the new type in the necessary quantity.” But government agencies inexplicably lowered production targets during the next couple of years, despite evidence of increasing demand. The Central Committee of the Communist Party soon learned that “the production of furniture by far will not satisfy the needs of the population of the republic [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, RSFSR], and the shortage of furniture will be felt all the more sharply.”

As the domestic embodiment of Communism on Tomorrow Street, the well-appointed separate apartment was supposed to come with its own line of furniture that met every family member’s needs. Internal government reports and empty store shelves, however, indicated that there would be many sparsely furnished khrushchevkis. In February 1957, for example, the director of a furniture retailer, Mosmebel’torg, reported on the uncoordinated state of his industry to the Soviet of Ministers of the RSFSR. The director, a certain Fokin, explained how problems with dinner tables had worsened considerably during the past two years. Mosmebel’torg had obtained and sold 94,000 dinner tables in 1955, and 77,000 in 1956. For 1957, it would handle only about 55,000 to 60,000 dinner tables, falling far short of the 150,000 it
had ordered. Fokin explained that increases in the city's housing stock had given rise to a high demand for dinner tables and somehow caught planners off guard: "They have forgotten that a person who has just moved into an apartment obtains in the first place a dinner table and they have completely forgotten about this dinner table." The industry's lack of coordination was impossible for even him to understand. One of his local suppliers, Moscow Furniture Factory No. 2, had even ceased being a furniture factory altogether:

At the present time, for reasons we can't fathom [Moscow Furniture Factory No. 2] has begun to call itself the "Lira" factory and by now doesn't produce tables, but pianos. We are not against pianos, but we will not stop repeating this until they hear us and understand the simple truth, that having received a new apartment, the majority of Soviet people need in the first place a dinner table and in the last place a piano.

Fokin also accused national furniture producers of dropping tables in favor of other consumer goods, such as television cases and sewing machine benches. Although Soviet consumers were unable to influence furniture production, as their capitalist counterparts did in a buyer's market, their frustration could nonetheless be repurposed to legitimize a retailer's main points. Thus, to illustrate people's frustration, Fokin quoted from letters to newspapers, identifying each person as a "customer." In a letter to Soviet Trade (Sovetskaya torgovlya), one Muscovite wrote, "Five o'clock in the morning. Moscow sleeps, there is only cold wind penetrating into one's bones, but 'seekers' of furniture are sadly awake on the streets of the sleeping city." In a letter to Evening Moscow (Vecherniaia Moskva), another lamented, "Well, for already four months I try to obtain a round table. . . . But unfortunately my search has not been crowned with success." 14

The Soviet leadership—undeterred, or perhaps spurred, by such reports—launched a comprehensive reorganization and expansion of furniture manufacturing in March 1958. The government highlighted the connection between "the population's broad demand for furniture" and more mass housing. It directed the furniture industry to focus on "the massive output of inexpensive sets and individual objects of household furniture for one-room and two-room apartments." Set to expand was furniture built into apartments, a key space-saving de-vice for already-small apartments. The industry was also supposed to widen the variety of furniture and adopt new synthetic materials such as plastic, rubber, and artificial resins for varnish. Machine-building enterprises were charged with providing the industry with a sufficient supply of woodworking machines in order to transform it from handi-
craft production to mechanized mass production. To educate the public, Gosstroii of the USSR (State Committee on Construction) was charged with setting up a permanent furniture exhibit in Moscow and managing "an all-union competition in 1958 for the creation of better furniture models for new apartments, intended for one family." 16

The new way of life was about to go on display, but reports on the ground told a familiar story. Although production showed steady increases after 1958 for tables, hutches, and cupboards, other makes such as couches and sofas experienced periodic decreases (see table 6.1). The rapid pace of furniture manufacturing led to severe deficiencies in quality that mirrored those in housing construction. By 1961, 90 percent of the products coming out of seven Moscow oblast factories were defective. Factories in the Gor'kii and Novosibirsk regions had similarly high rates of deficient products.

By 1963, the usual problems persisted. Most of the 3,000 furniture manufacturers in the Russian Republic were "small, of a partial handicraft type." The government ordered an end to the manufacturing of 296 outdated makes and urged that obsolete designs with low demand be pulled from production. The industry’s heavy reliance on handmade production resulted in too many different designs. There were 156 kinds of chairs, 116 makes of dining tables, 222 sorts of clothes closets, and 217 kinds of beds in production. In short, the furniture destined for people's homes under Khrushchev was an eclectic assortment of older, handmade makes lacking any recognizable style. This is something we must keep in mind before turning to the furniture exhibitions and mass media propaganda that presented the new furniture as factory-produced makes based on standardized designs and modernist aesthetics. Such ideal representations projected a harmonious alignment between modern apartments and new furniture. The reality was more of a mismatch between apartments that already afforded little space and furniture items that were not designed for them in either size or aesthetics. Like the communal apartment, as we saw in chapter 5, outdated furniture lingered in the Soviet everyday as a sign that leaving behind an older, dysfunctional lifestyle for a new way of life would not be as
immediate as the regime’s deadline for achieving communism by 1980 suggested.

Despite these problems, increases in consumer goods production opened new opportunities for architects, designers, and taste arbiters to shape the design and meaning of the Soviet home. They sought to define the contours of the communist way of life with as much pent-up excitement as ordinary urban dwellers had trying to get a separate apartment and shop for new furniture. For these makers of the Soviet home, scholars have argued, Khrushchev’s mass housing campaign provided unprecedented opportunities to act out the Russian intelligentsia’s traditional role of telling ordinary people how to live their lives; liberate themselves from the banality of the everyday, now associated with the “petit bourgeois” tastes that bureaucratic elites had enjoyed under Stalin; and raise themselves to a higher state of being or “new way of life.” Designers under Khrushchev adopted the _khrushchevka_ as the organizing principle of furniture design, and set about telling people how to use it in a tasteful and culturally edifying manner worthy of a society well on its way to communism.

Furniture designers found inspiration in both the Soviet past and the contemporary world beyond their borders as they searched for furniture that fit the small dimensions of the _khrushchevka_. This placed their work at the intersection of two critical currents in Khrushchev’s thaw: the rehabilitation of cultural trends repressed under Stalin and greater openness toward the West. Similar to the fate of constructivist architecture, the Soviet avant-garde’s furniture projects had fallen victim to the Communist Party’s attacks against constructivism in the early 1930s. Those designers who were still interested in producing inexpensive and functional furniture under Stalin quietly developed ideas about streamlining production and integrating design with small separate apartments, thereby following a path similar to their colleagues in architecture, as explained in chapter 2. In 1941, for example, the Architects’ Union promoted “furniture types and models that are co-ordinated with contemporary, small dwellings.” A catalogue of furniture designs, written during the war, similarly recommended designing furniture for small separate apartments.

As with architects’ small apartment designs in the 1930s, ideas on designing “mass furniture” were not implemented until the Khrushchev era. The models of avant-garde architects and artists from the 1920s and early 1930s—such as Aleksandr Rodchenko, El Lissitzky, and Moisei
Ginzburg—served as one source of inspiration. Like the architects who looked back to the constructivist tradition and international style in designing mass housing,35 furniture designers under Khrushchev drew from these earlier experiments at home and abroad.36 The modernist aesthetics and production principles they incorporated included the development of form from function, simplicity and lightness of form, a rejection of ornamentation and figurative representation, adoption of industrial materials such as steel, the fusion of art with everyday life, and mass production of inexpensive objects available to the wider public.

In addition to past experiments, a contemporary source of inspiration (and competition) for Khrushchev's furniture designers and architects came from the capitalist West and the state socialist regimes of Eastern Europe. Designers on both sides of the Iron Curtain produced mass housing, furniture, and consumer items that fused the modernist aesthetics of the prewar avant-garde with postwar mass production. By sharing ideas and models through publications, exhibitions, and tours, furniture designers and architects across the Cold War's political divide advanced an international style for the interior of the postwar home. The American Exhibition in Moscow in 1959—where Khrushchev had his ill-fated debate with Richard Nixon over an American kitchen—was perhaps the most famous encounter that permitted Soviet architects, furniture designers, and ordinary people to see, touch, and borrow ideas about American domestic design. Soviet architects and furniture designers, scholars have recently shown, enjoyed many opportunities to exchange and borrow ideas (and technology) from their state socialist satellites and the capitalist West.37

As Greg Castillo has convincingly demonstrated, each side in the Cold War laid claim to the modernist aesthetic of midcentury design as a symbol of its socioeconomic system's superiority over the other. Americans mobilized modernist design in countless exhibitions to promote the internationalism of the Atlantic Alliance and the material benefits that European integration and economic ties with the United States would produce. They used the modernist aesthetic to convince skeptical Western European critics that the American way of life coming over the borders represented a sophisticated consumerism instead of a descent into tasteless kitsch. The Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellites similarly promoted modernist design as a sign of transnational unity and economic integration within their camp.

In the socialist home, modernist aesthetics promoted a proper scientific and rational (one might say planned) approach to consumerism in the face of capitalism's chaotic and excessive version. In short, there was a socialist path to mass consumerism, and modernist design was its ideal aesthetic. Getting there, however, would require Soviet architects and furniture designers to purge themselves of the consumer tastes and aesthetics that had evolved under Stalin.38

Designs for the New Way of Life

For some members of the cultural intelligentsia, letting go of Stalinist excesses in domestic design was hard to do. A 1954 collection of essays on apartment and furniture design, Interior of a Residential House, still celebrated elite, Stalin-era apartments. The larger the apartment, the more likely it was that each of its rooms would have its own, separate function. A spacious apartment could include a kitchen, a common room, a bedroom, a children's room, a dining room, an office, a living room, a vestibule, an entranceway, a hallway, and various connecting spaces. Furniture was assigned the single function of the room it occupied, and every room contained one piece or set of furniture that served as its "compositional center."39 One contributor, Lazar Cherikover, recognized that times were changing and furniture design was to be conditioned by the dimensions and layout of smaller apartments. Apart from serving set functions—the storage of objects, eating, and sitting—furniture was to be "at the same time capable of decorating the interior of the modern mass apartment." He warned residents that large furniture and household objects "visually reduce the already small size of rooms of the mass apartment and create in it an impression of things being too narrowly packed." Aesthetics and function had to be brought into balance with one another because the home was supposed to be characterized by "the absence of unneeded splendor and at the same time of unjustified simplification of forms." Here Cherikover was negotiating a middle position by reminding readers that rooting out Stalinist "excesses" should not swing the pendulum back to the asceticism of constructivism. Ideally, spaces and objects were equal partners that together constituted the new Soviet home.40

As one of the last publications of its kind to celebrate the domestic interiors of elite, Stalin-era apartments, Interior of a Residential House
simultaneously looked ahead, if somewhat grudgingly, to the aesthetics and prototypes of the new furniture. At the heart of the transition was an evolving relationship between objects and space, whereby the latter came to dominate the former. In much the same way that architects simplified larger, elite apartments to arrive at the khrushchevka's basic design (see chapter 2), proponents of the new furniture reshaped objects and their relationship to space. The result in ideal representations of the khrushchevka was a home that resembled a well-calibrated machine whose parts all fit together perfectly to produce the New Soviet Man and Woman. The scales soon tipped decidedly in favor of smaller separate apartments as the organizing principle of furniture. In drawing conclusions from a furniture exhibition in Moscow in 1956, Cherikover approvingly described the emerging changes as a consequence of smaller domestic spaces, arguing that

the dimensions and composition of new furniture, and its technical and artistic forms, must to a maximum degree correspond to the parameters of apartments of the new type and to the architecture of interiors of modern housing; and . . . the increase in the amount of manufactured furniture, improvement in its quality, and lowering of its cost can be reached only through maximum industrialization of production and furniture finishings.31

Proponents of the new furniture categorized it according to its functions and relationship to the mass apartment's dimensions. One of the most widespread was sectional furniture (sektzionnaia mebel'), which applied especially to bookcases and cupboards in living rooms (figure 6.1).

Such furniture was composed of two or more distinct sections that could be dismantled and rearranged in whole or separately.32 Sectional furniture was devoid of excess decoration and all its surfaces were flat, making it possible to save space.33 Collapsible and folding furniture (universal'naia razbornaia mebel' and skladnaia mebel') was similarly designed to conserve space and alter a room's function. Examples included tables with collapsible sections to make them larger or smaller and a bookcase with a section that folded out to serve as a small desk.34 Shelf furniture (stelazhnaia mebel'), such as shelves attached to walls, was another flexible space saver.35 With rooms doubling or tripling in function, combined or transformative furniture (kombinirovannia mebel' and tranformiruushchaisia mebel') was the order of the day. The couch-bed (divan-krovat'), which was used during the day as a couch, became a bed in the evening.36 Pillows and sheets were conveniently hidden from view during the day in a space under or behind the couch-bed. An alternative design was the trundle bed, which was well suited for a bedroom shared by more than one person.37 Another variant was a bed that folded out of a large case that served as a desk and bookshelf. Likewise, armchairs could be opened and extended in the evening to serve as a bed for one.38 Built-in furniture (vstroennia mebel' and prisennia mebel') was a critical space saver already included in an apartment's design.39

Figure 6.1. Sectional furniture in a living/dining room with dining table and chairs. The furniture and this room were part of the 1959 furniture exhibition in Moscow discussed below.

To introduce the Soviet public to the new furniture and spur architects and designers to produce it, Khrushchev's regime organized several home and furniture exhibitions. These exhibitions announced that the state was serious about meeting people’s consumer needs and incorporating their input drawn from comment books. They also had a didactic function: to teach urban dwellers about proper consumption and homemaking for the communist way of life. Such exhibitions revealed the broader tensions between the consultative and didactic aspects of promoting the new furniture and the khrushchevka. The regime was declaring its willingness to cater to consumers’ tastes, but only within certain boundaries that members of the cultural intelligentsia were only too happy to articulate. The architects’ reactions to the 1958 Gosstroi furniture competition and its exhibition in 1959 (figures 6.1 and 6.2) reveal that the new furniture was as much a novelty for them as it was for consumers, whose comments will be examined in chapter 7.

Gosstroi organized the 1959 exhibition in Moscow in time for the Twenty-First Communist Party Congress in early 1959, where Khrushchev described the broad outlines of the communist way of life. Gosstroi chief Vladimir Kucherenko explained its purpose to the Central Committee: “The participants in the competition were given the task to create new models of inexpensive mass furniture, meeting the growing needs for well-furnished and well-equipped housing and corresponding to the dimensions and layout of apartments of the new type.” The competition featured sixty-six different sets of furniture, twenty-four sets for kitchens, and fourteen designs for built-in closets. It stressed the importance of integrating furniture and apartment design, rather than treating these separately. All entries were put on display in one-, two-, and three-room apartments in Moscow’s poster-child district for new mass housing, Novye Cheremushki. The Moscow exhibit featured the main types of new furniture discussed above, including beds that could be raised into closets during the day, dinner tables that could be extended or shortened with folding parts, and a desk attached to a bookcase. The models were made from modern, factory-produced materials such as plastics, light steel frames, and aluminum.

Publications such as Architecture of the USSR (Arkhiitektura SSSR) and Decorative Arts of the USSR (Dekorativnoe iskusstvo SSSR) praised the exhibit as a major turning point. The architects, designers, and manufacturers at the Leningrad affiliate of the Union of Architects in April 1959 echoed the sentiment at a meeting to discuss the competition, to which some in attendance had contributed designs. Their discussion revealed much excitement at witnessing and participating in the furniture industry’s recent transformation. As one architect, a certain Belov, explained, “It is now clear to everyone that for the apartment of the new type a new furniture is required, that is organically tied to the layout and sizes of spaces.” Another architect, A. Liubosh, exclaimed that “we have seen a revolution in this matter; there had not yet been an exhibit that broke to such an extent the old traditions and habits and ended up on the right path.” A new type of furniture had at last been made that fit the dimensions of the separate apartment. Liubosh enthusiastically predicted that they could supply at least 40
percent of new apartments in Leningrad with the new furniture by 1960 and, thereafter, shoot for 70 percent. This implied, of course, that a substantial portion of new apartments would not have the new furniture but rather, as suggested above, an eclectic mix of furniture not designed for the khrushchevka’s dimensions or aesthetics. Such realities did not dampen the architects’ sense of accomplishment. Belov explained that designers from the local furniture manufacturer he represented, Lenobl’drevo’mebel’prom, had tried to balance comfort, attractiveness, cost, and availability of raw materials in their competition entries. Simplicity and efficiency, which were core ideas of modernist design, had fully informed their work. Belov’s designers had reduced the different types of furniture they made, developed multifunctional models, and simplified designs to increase output.46

The recent competition put to shame the last major exhibit held in Moscow in 1956. One architect, I. Gol’verk, explained that “our furniture seemed primitive at that time in comparison with those foreign makes that were presented.”47 Cultural progress on the world stage intersected at home with the arduous task of lifting the ordinary person’s domestic tastes. The architect A. Macheret explained that the latest competition had given him “an impression first of all of a correctly chosen direction”—all the better because he believed that some urban dwellers desperately needed to improve their interior decorating skills. Drawing attention to recently settled apartment buildings in Leningrad, Macheret explained that “the picture looks plain awful. You can’t imagine what goes on there, not because people don’t want to get other furniture or don’t have the means to do so, but because they can’t get it anywhere.” Shortages notwithstanding, Macheret believed in the power of the cultural intelligentsia to save ordinary people from their poor interior decorating decisions: “I’m not going to say that the broader masses’ taste is less than polished, but they need to be shown what to get. Just go [to their apartments] and see what they acquire!”48

As the Leningrad architects pointed out, the new furniture’s relationship to space had to be highly efficient and simplified. In 1954, Cherikover had written in Interior of a Residential House that furniture typically covered 35 to 40 percent of an apartment’s floor space.49 By 1959, Gol’verk claimed that furniture actually took up more space, usually 50 to 60 percent, but that the designs on display in the Novye Chereomushki apartments offered a positive step forward. He explained that the furniture models covered 33 percent, and in some cases only 27 or 28 percent, of an apartment’s space. He assured his colleagues that “these small-sized objects entirely satisfy all the needs of the population” and would even improve people’s psychological well-being. In his view, the 1959 exhibit illustrated the benefits of uncluttered interior spaces characterized by flat, uninterrupted surfaces. He explained that “for a person who stands over the course of the workday in front of a constantly moving lathe or rides on fast transportation, it’s necessary to create in the domestic setting some kind of release, conditions in which a quiet scene has an impact on domestic life.”50 The benefits of a well-furnished and properly arranged single-family apartment had been noted in the past as a way of mitigating the psychological harm of war.51 In Gol’verk’s vision, a soothing, uncluttered domestic sphere similarly shielded residents from the turbulence of modern life in peacetime.

Proponents of the new furniture asserted that the domestic interior of the separate apartment should reflect the production aesthetic of contemporary factories in order to emphasize its modernity. Gol’verk explained that “the simplicity and economical efficiency of the method of production without a doubt draws with it the economical efficiency and simplicity of the interior’s resolution.” With production having such an influence on the composition of interior space, there seemed to be no other option than to recognize it as part of the aesthetic of domestic space. Gol’verk continued: “Precisely in this organic link, so to speak, of the interior’s aesthetic with the method of production are laid those progressive foundations, which we see now in the architecture of the interior.” The aesthetics of interior design had been fundamentally shaken. Domestic objects could no longer be created apart from their interior and the production process, and the basic structure of the apartment was now the central organizing force of household furniture design. The architecture of the separate apartment, its objects, and mass production now formed an organic whole.52

Teaching Good Taste

Architects and designers like Gol’verk were eager to explain to the general population what to do with the new furniture and what to think about it. Through advice pamphlets, newspapers, and magazines, they showed consumers how to construct a tasteful domestic interior. This
expert advice intertwined prescriptions on proper socialist taste with the most practical matter at hand: how to comfortably arrange one's new furniture in the tiny spaces of the separate apartment. But this literature also revealed a fundamental tension between the self-appointed and state-supported taste arbiters of the cultural intelligentsia who wrote it and the ordinary urban dwellers who were supposed to read it. On the one hand, homemaking experts insisted that tastes were diverse and that individual consumers played a key role in developing them. On the other hand, domestic design experts never failed to set ground rules for what was acceptable. Like their counterparts in other Eastern Bloc countries such as East Germany, many of their ideas were rooted in the revival of prewar modernist aesthetics that emphasized the minimalist and functional décor of the international style. But Soviet advice literature also had domestic influences, such as the Russian intelligentsia's traditional view of itself as arbiter of cultural norms. The communal apartment, whose lingering influence on the symbolic construction of the new Soviet home we already saw in chapter 5, similarly served as an alternative source of inspiration for arranging furniture in the khrushchevka.

In the communal apartment, families living in one room used furniture to demarcate areas for different family members and for sleeping, eating, studying, and leisure. Although the separate apartment gave a family more privacy than had ever been imaginable in a communal apartment, its small number of rooms and dimensions continued to force families to use rooms for two or more functions. Rather than lament this continuity, the authors of domestic advice literature presented it as a new and refreshing lesson in modest taste and overcoming spatial limitations through the practical arrangement of furniture.

In fact, such advice was hardly novel. It had already been part of architects' recommendations for coping with life in cramped communal apartments, as illustrated in a Leningrad furniture exhibition in 1951. Upon its review of this exhibit, a city commission stressed that "in choosing designated forms of furniture, it follows to consider the character of contemporary housing space that the basic mass of the population has." It noted that "in general a room serves at one and the same time as a bedroom and as a place where one spends the day, therefore the production of a combined complex of furniture should be developed at the present time." The same year, Leningrad designers looked to collapsible furniture (skladnaja mebel') as a way to help resi-
dents make do with the spatial restrictions of the communal apartment. They explained that "the population has to reconcile itself for now with the restrictions of living space, searching for various ways to use it more rationally." Furniture could play a key role in making "comforts and coziness in our rooms" possible. "With the skilful arrangement [of furniture] it is possible to save floor space in any room either for children to play, or for dancing, or as free space for passing through." Making efficient and rational use of space through well-designed furniture was thus not only an invention of modernist design. Residents of communal apartments had already grown accustomed to using furniture for different functions, such as the round dining table in the middle of a room at which people ate, studied, and wrote. Such practices had been a necessity for communal apartment dwellers, who reproduced them in the tight confines of the khrushchevka.

The domestic advice literature eased the transition by framing such compensatory practices as harbingers of a new, modern way of life. In the separate apartment, tables served more than one function, and to save space they became rectangular and gravitated to a wall. Such arrangements divided up rooms into functional zones, which the advice literature touted as a critical principle in a rationally and efficiently organized home. The division of urban space into functional zones, such as those for work and residence, was a central idea of modernist urban planning, which extended here from the city straight into the home. Alternately hiding and revealing certain household objects was a critical feature of functional zones. If the common room doubled as a bedroom, sheets, pillows, and covers needed to be stored away during the day. A resident could change a space's function by opening or folding up a couch-bed, and the sleeping zone of a common room could be hidden from view behind a curtain. A combined dresser included a vanity that could be pulled out or stored away, thereby hiding toilet articles. Residents could discreetly keep alcoholic beverages, shot glasses, and wine glasses in a specially made box designed into one of the sides of a couch-bed. The box's top and side sections opened up, with the latter serving as a small table. Under the banner of modest taste, homemaking specialists also urged residents to use furniture and other household objects to make their small apartments appear larger. Mirrors could visually expand the dimensions of the combined bathroom and toilet unit. To offset the cramped feeling that several doors in one entranceway created, a mir-
ror could be attached to the bathroom and toilet door, thereby covering up one door and giving this space greater visual depth. Children's furniture offered additional opportunities for the rational division of scarce space. Because a child was unlikely to have his or her own room, children's furniture demarcated a child's corner in a common room or bedroom. A combined foldout bed, desk, and bookcase saved space when a child shared the common room with parents. Whereas homemaking specialists recommended that pre-school-aged children have a minimal amount of furniture and a corner in a room, a school-age child could have a transformable zone in a common room or share a room with a sibling. In a two-bedroom apartment, children and a grandparent could occupy the smaller room, while parents lived in the common room. In a three-room apartment, parents and children lived in separate rooms and a grandparent resided in the common room. The grandparent's space was to be cordonned off by a curtain during the day so as not to be seen by "an outsider's eyes."

Acceptable Social Divisions

As these examples illustrate, an apartment's properly arranged spaces and objects divided the social world of the separate apartment along generational lines. The conjugal pair had priority in occupying its own space, followed by children, and then the grandparent. The inclusion of three-generation families was an allusion to the actual presence of grandmothers in many Soviet families.

In homemaking advice literature, such generational differences were acceptable because they were deemed to be universal and would naturally continue to exist when Soviet society reached communism. Differences in nationality and ethnicity were another matter. Homemaking literature, at least what was published in Russian, showed individuals in either photographs or drawings wearing exclusively modern European clothing. Such images were not intended to mean that only ethnically European Soviet citizens belonged in separate apartments. On the contrary, the separate apartment was supposed to be a universal form of housing available to all. Instead, such images suggested that the ideal separate apartment would eventually be the home of an ethnically homogenous and egalitarian society. The persons depicted in Soviet homemaking advice literature were thus white, middle-class Europeans posing as a universal standard. This mirrored the international style of mass housing and new furniture, which was likewise more European and North American in origin than its universalist claims pretended to be.

Homemaking specialists' ideal visions of the khrushchevka signaled a sharp reduction in the number of social divisions and identities that Soviet citizens had come to expect, especially in communal housing. In a communal apartment, gender and generation had intersected with other social cleavages, such as class, education, ethnicity, and religious belief. Chronicles of the communal apartment's early existence—such as Mikhail Bulgakov in his play Zoya's Apartment, and in his novella Heart of a Dog—represented such social mixing as a central part of this unique urban milieu. In the homemaking literature of the Khrushchev era, the move to the separate apartment effectively purged these social divisions from the domestic sphere and mass housing estates. As we saw in chapter 3, Khrushchev's regime had attempted but failed to strip the waiting list for housing of the social and historical meanings that urban residents projected onto it. Homemaking advice specialists were attempting something similar by presenting the khrushchevka as a domestic space that had filtered out the messy social complexities of communal apartment life in the old city center. Their efforts left gender and generation as the only recognizable and legitimate social divisions in the separate apartment and the future communist society. Their textual and visual representations advanced the Soviet project of cleansing the social body of its impurities in order to produce a hygienically fit and homogenous society that just happened to look middle class and European. This was strikingly different from the Stalinist regime's violent methods of remaking society, especially in the wake of World War II, and the coercive measures that Khrushchev's regime periodically undertook against criminals and social undesirables. The homemaking literature under Khrushchev was a decidedly benign and peaceful method of reshaping society, which residents could simply ignore.

In contrast to generational differences, homemaking advice literature treated gender in a more complex manner, alternately constructing the separate apartment as a genderless space and then emphasizing the role of the housewife within it. With the major exception of the kitchen, most of an apartment and its furniture tended to be gender neutral. Unlike the bourgeois apartment of the nineteenth century, the khrushchevka provided no specifically male space like an office.
1968 sociological survey of a cooperative building in Moscow even found that both men and women took an active role in setting up domestic interiors. Although homemaking advisers likewise addressed both men and women, their prohibitions on questionable behavior, especially the kind that perpetuated class differences, focused more on women. What women allegedly did to beds was particularly troublesome. One advice specialist lamented their unfortunate desire to construct mountains of decorative pillows on beds. Peasants of long ago had already laid the foundations for such misuse of beds by sleeping on wooden benches, while placing sheets and covers on a real bed during the day. This piece of furniture became “the designator of the masters’ status.” Given the spatial limitations of a separate apartment, no space or object could have a purely decorative function. Doing so would transform its ideological content. This adviser concluded that “when a household object acquires the sense of being put on display, which does not correspond to its real function, that bad taste appears, which is now called petit bourgeois.”

Two taste arbiters further derided such use of beds as the ostentatious display of a family’s material wealth: “At times you come across apartments in which the bed stands in the foreground, decorated with an atlas-sized cover and an entire mountain of pillows, as if proudly announcing the family’s prosperity reigning in the house.” Other accounts specifically identified women with conspicuous forms of domestic consumption. The 1968 sociological study in Moscow claimed that women had become the prime “victim of the cult of the object” in new housing. They were “guilty of ‘the disposition to put things on display’ [vystavochnost] in their home” and were more likely to allow an object to “stand outside of time and function like an exhibition object on display.” Such criticisms alluded to the modernist ethos of collapsing the division between art and everyday life that had informed Soviet and Western avant-garde experimentations of the 1920s. Whereas the bourgeoisie and capitalism had been to blame at that time for dividing art from everyday life, it was now Soviet women who stood in the way of this modernist vision for the new Soviet home.

Of course, a woman could redeem herself by properly working in the kitchen. In no other unit of the separate apartment was as much attention paid to integrating space and the female body in a rational system replete with the latest amenities and appliances. Sinks, a stove and an oven, a refrigerator, counters for food preparation, a table and chairs, storage spaces, cooking and eating equipment, a radiator, and even sometimes a washing machine for clothes all had to fit in a space of about 5.5 square meters. The rationally organized kitchen resembled an assembly line, allowing the scientific organization of the outside world to permeate and shape the new Soviet home. The rational arrangement of kitchen objects facilitated the housewife’s daily work and rationalized her bodily movements. A poorly arranged kitchen forced a woman to walk “several kilometers” while preparing food. In such a kitchen (figure 6.3), the housewife wastefully contorted her body, bending, kneeling, and reaching for things.

In a well-arranged kitchen, however (figure 6.4), the lower half of a woman’s body remained stationary, while her movements were confined to the upper body. The rationally organized kitchen promised

Figure 6.3. A housewife working in a poorly and inefficiently organized kitchen.

*Source: Boris Merzhanov and Konstantin Sorokin, *Eto muzno novoselam* (Moscow: Ekonomika, 1966).*
to make the housewife’s movements more efficient. It disciplined her body, making it resemble that of a worker standing before a lathe on the factory floor. Like the excesses of ornamental architecture under Stalin, the housewife’s body would be purged of unnecessary movements in the name of domestic efficiency and a new way of life.

As the image shown in figure 6.4 suggests, the perfect housewife’s body was the desired social product of the khrushchevka’s kitchen factory. So too was the efficient assembly-line production of family meals. Food preparation counters with compact storage spaces were conveniently situated next to the stove and sink. A cutting board that slid out from under a counter allowed the housewife to prepare food while sitting down. Hanging cupboards above the main working areas decreased excessive walking. The chair in one kitchen (figure 6.5) suggested its transformation into a laboratory of everyday life, where meals were prepared with clinical precision.

Some visionaries of the communist way of life foresaw an ever-smaller kitchen that would eventually disappear into the walls of people’s apartments as residents, especially women, spent more of their everyday lives in the workplace and in the neighborhood’s public spaces. In the futuristic apartment Aleksandr Peremyslov featured in his book *House of the Future* (see chapter 5), the kitchen was reduced in space-age efficiency to “a built-in compact aggregate for storing and warming up food” featuring a refrigerator, sink, electric stove, and pull-out table. This compact unit “replaced” the kitchen as a separate social space within the apartment, allowing at most for preparing and consuming small meals like breakfast. A family took its real meals in the communal dining hall and called ahead to place its orders. The nine dining facilities in Peremyslov’s imagined microdistrict “at the very least replace three thousand individual kitchens and make it possible to feed the entire population.” In dreaming of the day when communal dining halls would forever replace the kitchen, Peremyslov echoed Soviet designers of the kitchen-less *dom-kommuna* and prewar modernist visionaries such as Karel Teige. In his treatise *The Minimum Dwelling* (1932), Teige had lamented the continued presence of the “live-in kitchen” as a holdover from the past that exceeded minimal functions and served as a social space separating the family from the community. A kitchen reduced to a compact nook, similar to the one Peremyslov found, was at worst “a throwback to the old live-in kitchen” and at best “a transition to a higher form of apartment (i.e., without a kitchen).”

Other homemaking experts under Khrushchev did not believe that the kitchen needed to be eliminated and were much less willing than Peremyslov to entertain the radical stances of such prewar modernists as Teige. These experts contended that, in addition to cooking and cleaning, the Soviet housewife used the kitchen for ironing and sewing clothes, and the family took its meals in it. One homemaking specialist noted that “under the settling of an apartment by one family, the kitchen becomes not only a place where they prepare food but also eat. In the absence of a separate working room, the majority of all work connected to household labor also takes place in the kitchen.” Given its added functions, the kitchen of the separate apartment was increasingly referred to as a kitchen–dining room (*kukhnia-stolovaja*) and took on the “appearance of living space.” A well-arranged kitchen was the anchor of a separate apartment that ensured a family’s bliss and allowed its members to regenerate psychologically.
Figure 6.5. Kitchen equipment with standardized sectional components. This model kitchen was designed at the Building Academy in East Germany, demonstrating that Soviet architects drew upon the models of other socialist countries for their own designs.

New Furniture

Viser explained that "here the family gets together in a scene of coziness and warmth that furthers rest and the relaxing of one's nerves after the working day."

Such advice implied that communal dining rooms and laundries had not developed sufficiently to liberate the housewife from such chores. Even if they had, homemaking experts likely would have still advocated the "live-in kitchen," pace Teige, as a progressive social space suitable for the communist way of life. As we saw in chapter 1, the kitchen had long since returned as a legitimate space in apartment designs. Although architects and housing propaganda under Khrushchev drew some inspiration from such radical models as the dom-kommuna, eradicating the kitchen was simply off the table. In more prosaic terms, homemaking specialists simply reflected what ordinary urban dwellers were doing once they got into a khrushchevka. In the communal apartment, residents had typically used the kitchen for cooking and other domestic chores but returned to their private rooms for eating and socializing. In the separate apartment, this critical auxiliary space was suddenly in the hands of just one family, and no matter how small it was, urban residents would make the most of it.

New Things in Life

As noted above, the furniture that residents of the khrushchevka brought home was often unlikely to be the kind advertised in homemaking advice literature and in exhibitions. Although shortcomings in production suggest how widespread this problem was, the data on household consumption illustrate it even more vividly. Several years into the mass housing campaign, the leadership in Moscow got its most comprehensive look at what people were consuming from a 1962 study done by the Central Statistical Administration of the Russian Republic (Tsentr'noe statisticheskoe upravlenie RSFSR) on the household items of people in different employment categories. The Soviet government discovered that not everyone's household consumer needs were the same and that some social groups had obtained more goods than others. Evidence that class mattered in obtaining new furniture and household goods stood in sharp contrast to homemaking advice literature, which saw gender and generation as the only legitimate social divisions. It undermined the egalitarian values of Khrushchev's regime.
and reproduced in consumption the class-based differences that we have already seen in housing distribution.

The 1962 study was based on a sample of 28,700 families, broken down into the following categories: 11,100 families of workers, 700 families of permanent sovkhoz (state farm) workers, 300 families of construction workers, 300 families of railway system workers, 13,100 kolkhozniki (collective farm families), and 3,200 families of engineering-technical personnel (inshenerno-tekhnicheskie rabotniki, ITRs) and white-collar workers. The surveyors wanted to know about practically everything that people had accumulated, and they broke down respondents' possessions into five main categories: furniture, items bearing a "cultural" value (e.g., musical instruments, but also audiovisual electronics), household appliances, forms of transportation, and reading materials. They also asked respondents whether anyone in their families went to the library. In addition to reporting what people presently had in their homes (see tables 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4), the surveyors asked respondents what percentage of their household items they had acquired from January 1958 to June 1962 (see table 6.5). The data from this question allowed the surveyors to infer the impact of mass housing on consumers' purchases: Most people had obtained most of their furniture "in the past four years, in other words, in the period that saw the most rapid housing construction and the greatest mass-scale allocation of apartments to workers and white-collar employees."

The survey also revealed which social groups were likely to have more consumer goods. As illustrated in table 6.2, ITRs and white-collar employees were the most privileged possessors of furniture. Although they had the smallest families (along with construction workers), they had more items per family than any other social group for all furniture except beds and dining tables, which was most likely a function of their small family size. In contrast, sovkhoz workers and kolkhoz members, the two groups with the largest families, possessed the most beds and dining tables. For almost all other furniture, these two rural groups had less than anyone else. ITRs and white-collar employees similarly came out ahead of all other groups in the possession of most consumer items and reading materials (table 6.3).

The urban/rural divide, which had long been considered a holdover of social inequality from the capitalist past that would wither away under communism, reproduced itself in people's household possessions. In due deference to egalitarian ideals, the surveyors claimed that every-
Table 6.3. Possession of Household Consumer Goods among Six Soviet Employment Groups in 1962 in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (average number of items per 100 families in each group as reported on June 1, 1962; highest amounts for each consumer good are shaded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Characteristics or Type of Good</th>
<th>Industrial Workers</th>
<th>Construction Workers</th>
<th>Railway Workers</th>
<th>Sovkhoz Workers</th>
<th>ITRs and White-Collar Employees</th>
<th>Collective Farm Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average family size</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable radio receivers</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio sets and radios</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>58.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Televisions</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape recorders</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic record players</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable gramophones</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accordion</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pianos and grand pianos</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other musical instruments</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerators</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machines</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical vacuum cleaners</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical floor polishers</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameras</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing machines</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>56.5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light automobiles</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycles and motor scooters</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles and motorized bicycles</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>46.9</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>3,807</td>
<td>2,315</td>
<td>5,117</td>
<td>1,527</td>
<td>3,512</td>
<td>1,125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Families that subscribe to or regularly buy:
- Newspapers: 96
- Periodicals: 36
- Number of family members who go to the library: 90

*ITRs = inzhenero-tekhnikieszke robotniki (engineering-technical workers).

Source: Gosudarstvennyi archiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), f. A-259, op. 42, d. 9114, ll. 63-64.
Table 6.4. Possession of Furniture and Household Consumer Goods among Engineering-Technical Workers (Inzhenero-Tekhnicheskie Robotniki, ITRs) and White-Collar Employees in 1962 in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (average number of items per 100 families in each group as reported on June 1, 1962; highest amounts for each furniture item are shaded)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Characteristics or Type of Furniture or Good</th>
<th>All ITRs and White-Collar Employees</th>
<th>White-Collar Employees in Industry</th>
<th>Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools</th>
<th>Doctors</th>
<th>Middle Medical Personnel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average family size</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes closets</td>
<td>93.4</td>
<td>99.1</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>101.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookcases</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>54.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beds</td>
<td>166.7</td>
<td>185.1</td>
<td>164.5</td>
<td>165.9</td>
<td>172.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couches and sofas</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>80.9</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>112.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutches and cupboards</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>47.8</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chests of drawers</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>37.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables for eating</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tables for writing</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>41.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs and armchairs</td>
<td>450.3</td>
<td>512.5</td>
<td>423.6</td>
<td>486.3</td>
<td>532.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanities and mirror pieces</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable radio receivers</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>57.1</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio sets and radiosials</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Televisions                                       | 36.3                                | 46.9                              | 30.7                                     | 35.6    | 60                      | 37.4 |
| Tape recorders                                    | 1.6                                 | 2.1                               | 0.6                                      | 3.9     | 7.1                     | 2.3  |
| Electronic record players                         | 8.9                                 | 12.4                              | 6.1                                      | 10.2    | 17.2                    | 11.1 |
| Portable gramophones                              | 4.9                                 | 5                                 | 3.9                                      | 8.8     | 7.1                     | 5.3  |
| Accordions                                        | 8.4                                 | 9.7                               | 8                                        | 10.7    | 7                       | 7    |
| Pianos and grand pianos                           | 4.1                                 | 5.9                               | 1.7                                      | 12.7    | 17.1                    | 2.3  |
| Other musical instruments                         | 9.2                                 | 11.2                              | 7                                        | 11.2    | 17.1                    | 11.1 |
| Refrigerators                                     | 8.1                                 | 16.5                              | 4.9                                      | 9.3     | 31.4                    | 4.1  |
| Washing machines                                  | 18.6                                | 28.3                              | 16.5                                     | 23.4    | 27.1                    | 8.8  |
| Electrical vacuum cleaners                        | 6.8                                 | 12.2                              | 4.1                                      | 12.2    | 20                      | 3.5  |
| Cameras                                           | 21.4                                | 39.3                              | 15.8                                     | 33.7    | 45.2                    | 16.9 |
| Sewing machines                                   | 70.8                                | 62.4                              | 73.5                                     | 65.9    | 64.3                    | 38.5 |
| Light automobiles                                 | 1.7                                 | 3.1                               | 1.1                                      | 2.9     | 1.4                     | 1.2  |
| Motorcycles and motorcycles                        | 3                                   | 4.2                               | 2.7                                      | 0.5     | 2.9                     | 2.9  |
| Bicycles and motorized bicycles                    | 24.7                                | 32.3                              | 22.4                                     | 24.4    | 38.8                    | 20.5 |
| Books                                              | 9,217                               | 10,849                            | 5,935                                    | 23,226  | 35,193                  | 5,736|

Families that subscribe to or regularly buy:

| Newspapers                                         | 139                                 | 174                               | 125                                      | 191     | 216                     | 98   |
| Periodicals                                       | 93                                  | 110                               | 87                                       | 136     | 156                     | 61   |
| Number of family members who go to the library     | 127                                 | 141                               | 119                                      | 186     | 160                     | 105  |

Source: Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), f. A-259, op. 42, d. 9114, l. 71.
sovkhоз workers were most likely to have obtained higher proportions of their overall furniture possessions in the past four years, whereas kolkhoz members and ITRs/white-collar workers had obtained the smallest proportions of their furniture in the recent past. The Soviet intelligentsia had not obtained less furniture in recent years for lack of money, whereas it appears that was the fate of kolkhozniki. As the surveyors noted in table 6.6, ITRs and white-collar employees spent the most amount of money per family member on furniture and other household goods in 1961 and had increased their expenditures the most among all groups in comparison with 1958. 66 Yet according to table 6.5, between 1958 and 1962 they had obtained less than half of their current furniture possessions. In conjunction with table 6.5, therefore, table 6.6 suggests that the Soviet intelligentsia (ITRs and white-collar employees) had obtained most of their furniture before the high years of Khrushchev's housing boom but still spent more per family members on all consumer goods than all other social groups. But do the data really tell us that construction workers and sovkhoz workers purchased a higher proportion of their furniture in recent years than other social groups and that most of their new purchases were of the new style? This is a more difficult question to answer because older models continued to be manufactured and families may have bought older,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.6. Money Spent by Soviet Families on Household Consumer Items in 1961 in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Amount Spent in 1961 per Family Member on These Goods (rubles):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items of a Cultural Value and Means of Transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items of a Cultural Value and Means of Transportation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Group</th>
<th>Furniture and Household Appliances</th>
<th>Items of a Cultural Value and Means of Transportation</th>
<th>Furniture and Household Appliances</th>
<th>Items of a Cultural Value and Means of Transportation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial workers</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sovkhoz workers</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collective farm workers</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ITRs* and white-collar employees</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>30.9</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ITRs = inzhenerno-tekhnicaske rabotniki (engineering-technical workers).  
Source: Gosudarstvennyy arkhiv Rossisskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), f. A-259, op. 42, d. 9114, l. 22.
secondhand items. Nonetheless, the data indicate that most Soviet citizens, even peasants, were benefiting from a wave of increased consumer goods production that was triggered by Khrushchev's mass housing campaign.

The surveyors found that people in some groups had not only obtained most of what they possessed in the past four years but had also acquired some goods for the first time. Purchasing new consumer items they had never before enjoyed or even seen—such as refrigerators and vacuum cleaners—was another aspect of the emerging communist way of life that Khrushchev's regime celebrated and ordinary people had come to expect. As explained in table 6.7, construction workers obtained several items for the first time, including tape recorders, pianos, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, and motorcycles. Most families surveyed had likely obtained most of their electronic devices only recently, if not for the first time. This was especially true for television sets, tape recorders, electronic record players, refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, motorcycles, and automobiles. In addition, the data reveal the objects most families were likely to have already possessed before 1958, including cable radio receivers, portable gramophones, a musical instrument, sewing machines, and bicycles. These broad patterns suggested that electrical devices were just beginning to make their way into Soviet homes in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In contrast to homemaking advice literature, which celebrated the modernity of electronic goods in the scientifically organized home, most families still relied on mechanical goods in their everyday lives.

The fact that more ordinary Soviet citizens from different social groups were obtaining more household consumer goods, despite lingering social stratification, was surely a good sign. But the real victory of the communist way of life, as Khrushchev famously saw it, could only come once the Soviet Union surpassed its capitalist rivals in the West. The surveyors for the 1962 study were attuned to this measure of success, but they only had bad news to share. Without offering much commentary, they provided two tables (adapted here as tables 6.8 and 6.9) showing that a far greater percentage of families in the United States, England, France, and West Germany possessed major household appliances than did families in the Soviet social groups surveyed.

The surveyors curiously interpreted the grim statistics in table 6.8 by noting that "only 3 percent of families of industrial workers and 8 per-

---

Table 6.7. Percentage of Furniture and Household Consumer Goods Obtained between January 1958 and June 1, 1962, in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (highest percentages for each consumer good are shaded).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Furniture or Good</th>
<th>Collective Farm Workers</th>
<th>Unskilled Workers</th>
<th>Skilled Workers</th>
<th>White-Collar Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cable radio receivers</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>53.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio sets and radions</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>69.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Televisions</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>89.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape recorders</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machines</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>88.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerators</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacuum cleaners</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycles and motorbikes</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles and motorbikes</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation). L-259, op. 42, d. 914, l. 66.
cent of ITRs and white-collar employees have refrigerators." Their inclusion of sewing machines in this table went without commentary, but the implication in comparison with what capitalist families had (table 6.9) was fairly clear. Most Soviet families got by with mechanical devices from the nineteenth century, while their capitalist counterparts had surged ahead into the twentieth-century world of electrical goods.

The surveyors moved on without further comment, but the numbers alone spoke volumes to the leadership in Moscow. The data confirmed any sense of inferiority that Khrushchev and his inner circle might have experienced, but which they hid when Nixon met him during their famous "Kitchen Debate" at the American Exhibition in Moscow in 1959. The United States was so thoroughly routing the Soviet Union in getting electronic goods into the hands of its citizens that the same paltry number of Soviet families that somehow had them tended to equal the tiny number of American families that somehow avoided them. Even the presentation of the capitalist countries' data on the page of the surveyors' report suggested the greater inferiority the further one moved east. The United States stood in the middle of the page at the head of the West brandishing its latest crushing data, followed to its right by its faithful British allies with their lower, but still respectable, figures. The French came next, already woefully behind in televisions, and the West Germans were not far behind, even with three-year-old figures. Someone reading this report could have

---

**Table 6.8. Possession of Electrical Appliances and Sewing Machines among Six Soviet Employment Groups in the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (average number of items per 100 families in each group as reported on June 1, 1962)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appliance or Machine</th>
<th>Industrial Workers</th>
<th>Construction Workers</th>
<th>Railway Workers</th>
<th>Sovkhoz Workers</th>
<th>ITRs and White-Collar Employees</th>
<th>Collective Farm Workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerators</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machines</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floor polishers</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacuum cleaners</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewing machines</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>70.8</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ITRs = inzhenero-tekhicheskie rabotniki (engineering-technical workers).  
Source: Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), f. A-259, op. 42, d. 9114, l. 57.  

**Table 6.9. Percentage of Families in Capitalist Countries in Possession of Durable Goods**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio sets</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Televisions</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerators</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing machines</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacuum cleaners</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), f. A-259, op. 42, d. 9114, l. 58.

Only guessed how depressing the data were for countries just beyond the Iron Curtain.

**Conclusion**

No matter how much the Soviet state increased the manufacture of consumer goods, the data presented above show that unsatisfied consumer demand continued to plague the Soviet economy. Increases in the variety and amount of consumer goods, coupled with persistent shortages, created a troubling contradiction. Although Khrushchev’s regime had significantly increased the production of consumer goods, it still retained the features of the command economy forged under Stalin to which economists have pointed in explaining state socialist regimes’ persistent shortages. These included manufacturers’ tendency to hoard supplies and goods, unforeseen changes in economic plans, official prices that failed to accurately reflect demand, and the fact that consumers faced a seller’s market. For many ordinary urban dwellers, waiting for the state to manufacture furniture and consumer goods was becoming with each passing year as much a part of the communist way of life as the dream world envisioned in homemaking advice literature.

Retaining control over the symbolic construction of the khrushchevka and its furniture as the new spaces and objects of the communist way of life was critically important to a regime that increasingly staked its legitimacy on improving ordinary citizens’ standard of living. Despite their embrace of a rational and scientifically organized domestic life, the advice specialists on the new Soviet home hid a deeper
anxiety, which was shared especially among mass housing architects, about the limitations they faced. As we saw in chapter 2, underneath the scientific veneer of the well-planned khrushchevka were a series of decisions about apartment design dating back to the 1930s that ultimately delimited what architects could do with this space and how furniture makers could design new furniture. Ordinary residents, to whom we turn in chapter 7, politicized architects' inability to resolve the design shortcomings that plagued separate apartments, and many were less than enamored by the modernist turn in furniture design. Rather than embrace the minimalist dimensions of the khrushchevka as a harbinger of a more rational and scientific way of life, many residents wondered why their apartments simply could not be a bit larger and better designed to meet their needs, and why furniture was still so difficult to obtain.

Chapter 7
The Politics of Complaint

The Soviet home remained a politically charged field under Khrushchev as the regime mobilized it for the broader goals of creating a classless society, shaping the New Soviet Man and Woman, and showing the world that socialism was superior to capitalism. The communist way of life (kommunisticheskii byt) would be the final victory of this politics of transformation. It would be achieved not through repression and war as Stalin's regime had tried, but through the peaceful, consensus-building project of moving people into their own apartments, proper socialization through neighborhood organizations, and a deluge of advice literature on how to live the good life of a Soviet citizen.

At the same time, by resolving the housing question through the mass housing campaign, Khrushchev's regime sought to depoliticize its most socially divisive features, such as the waiting list and the cooperative, as we saw in previous chapters. The regime looked forward to a future communist way of life without a housing question once urban residents all lived in separate apartments. What Khrushchev's regime found, however, was that ordinary people were not as prepared to abandon the politics of complaint and blame once they passed through the process of housing distribution and moved into their separate apartments. Urban residents at times even echoed the language of a Stalinist purge in trying to force the state to resolve a housing question they believed remained unanswered.

Residents of the khrushchevka found a host of problems when they moved to their new homes, ranging from incompletely built neighborhoods to shortages of furniture in stores. Rather than sheepishly ac-
Chapter 6

1. Russian State Economic Archive (Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv ekonomiki; hereafter, RGAE), fond (f.) 339, opis’ (op.) 1, delo (d.) 1101, listy (II.) 86–87.


4. Ibid., II. 87–88.

5. Ibid., 1. 88.


8. March 1955 report by the Ministry of State Control of the USSR on the October 1953 decree, “On Increasing the Production and Improving the Quality of Furniture for Sale to the Population,” Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv novoeishii istorii; hereafter, RGANI) f. 5, op. 43, d. 23, II. 11–21.


10. By November 1957, the government lowered projections for furniture output (reported in rubles) in the RSFSR from 1957 from 3.56 billion rubles to 3.312 billion rubles. The production target for 1958 was downsized from 4.491 billion rubles to 3.918 billion rubles. From 1956 to 1960, consumer demand in the RSFSR was projected to be 5 to 6 billion rubles annually and 27 to 30 billion rubles over the entire period. Since output already lagged behind demand in 1956 and 1957, the unsatisfied demand would carry over into 1958, raising the estimate for that year to approximately 8 to 9 billion rubles. The source was a report to the Central Committee from the Department of Administrative and Commercial and Financial Organs of the Central Committee of the RSFSR. State Archive of the Russian Federation (Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiiskoi Federatsii; hereafter, GARF), f. A-259, op. 42, d. 298, II. 99–103.


12. Ibid., II. 48–49.

13. Ibid., I. 49.


17. The categories of furniture remained constant throughout the editions of the sourcebook cited in the source note for table 6.1. Each edition reported its year as well as several other preceding years. The selection of preceding years varied from one edition to another. Some years were reported in several editions, whereas others were reported in only one edition. With the exceptions of 1951 and 1954, the data for each year from 1950 to 1970 have been located by examining these sourcebooks together. Table 6.1 is the result of compiling the data from these editions. In general, production figures were reported in the same amounts for years reported in more than one edition. However, there are some discrepancies. For cases in which one edition provides a more detailed number while another rounds up or rounds down the number, I have reported the more detailed number. For all other discrepancies, which cannot be attributed to rounding numbers up or down, I have used the data that appeared most accurate in my judgment of the evidence.
23. See also a resolution published by furniture manufacturers in the Ministry of Lumber and Paper Industry in Reshenie soveshchaniya rabotnikov mebel’nogo promyshlennosti Ministra lesnoi i bumazhnoi promyshlennosti SSSR po voprosu uchishcheniya kachestva mebeli (Moscow, 1949).
26. For examples of architects and designers who drew from Soviet avantgarde designs, see Aleksandr Saltykov, O khrushchevskom uspehe v bytu (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo “Iakusovskoe,” 1959).
28. Castillo, Cold War.
29. S. Alekscev et al., Inter’er zhilogo doma (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo literature po stroitel’stvu i arkitekturke, 1954), 20–23, 28, 99–100. The other contributors to this collection were O. Baier, R. Blashekevich, M. Makotinski, and L. Cherikover.
30. Alekscev et al., Inter’er zhilogo doma, 97–100, 102, 205.
34. Gol’verk, Novaya mebel’, 7, 11, 17–18; Sereiduk, Kul’tura vashii kvartiry, 55.
36. Popov and Brener, Al’bum mebeli, 165.
38. Ibid., 19–21; Cherepakhina, Biografistvo kvartiry, 50, 55; Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto nuzhno novoselam, 24–34.
42. RGANF, f. 5, op. 41, d. 114, l. 32.
44. Ibid., 4–5.
46. Central State Archive of Literature and Art, St. Petersburg (Tsentrall’nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhibiv literature i iskusstva Sankt Peterburga; hereafter, TsGALI SPb), f. 341, op. 1, d. 547, ll. 17–18, 47–51, 60–61, 66.
47. TsGALI SPb, f. 341, op. 1, d. 547, ll. 17–18, 41.
48. Ibid., ll. 51, 54–55.
49. Alekscev et al., Inter’er zhilogo doma, 98.
50. TsGALI SPb, f. 341, op. 1, d. 547, ll. 20, 39.
51. S. Gureevich, “Psikhogigienicheskoe znacheni zhilishcha,” Gigiena i sanitaria, no. 2 (1948): 14–15. I thank Benjamin Zajicek for bringing this article to my attention.
52. TsGALI SPb, f. 341, op. 1, d. 547, ll. 34–35, 38.
53. Buchli, “Khrushchev, Modernism”; Castillo, Cold War.
55. TsGALI SPb, f. 347, op. 2, d. 201, ll. 2–3.
56. Ibid., d. 194, ll. 1, 1a–18.
57. For a description of how a family used old furniture in the 1950s to demarcate zones in a communal apartment room, see Joseph Brodsky’s, “In a Room and a Half,” in Less Than One: Selected Essays, by Joseph Brodsky (New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2000), 473–76.
58. V. Artem’ev and A. Bobrov, Vasha mebel’ (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “Ekonomika,” 1964), 84; Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto nuzhno novoselam, 19, 25.
60. Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto nuzhno novoselam, 6, 22–25, 28–29, 34; Cherepkhina, Blagouaistoisko kvarirty, 41; Artem’ev and Bobrov, Vasha mebel’, 83–84.
62. A. Strengin, Mbel’ (Moscow: Tsentr’noe biuro tekhnicheskoi informatsi, 1958), 5, 12.
64. Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto nuzhno novoselam, 32.
73. Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto nuzhno novoselam, 63–64, 68–69, 71–73; Cherepkhina, Blagouaistoisko kvarirty, 14, 25–26; Serediuk, Kul’tura vashchii kvarirty, 97.

75. Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto nuzhno novoselam, 63–65; Cherepkhina, Blagouaistoisko kvarirty, 12–15.
76. Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto nuzhno novoselam, 66–71; Cherepkhina, Blagouaistoisko kvarirty, 14, 19–21.
79. Merzhanov and Sorokin, Eto mizhno novoselam, 70; Cherepkhina, Blagouaistoisko kvarirty, 27, 30; Kulebakin, V pomoshch’, 93.
80. Cherepkhina, Blagouaistoisko kvarirty, 30; Serediuk, Kul’tura vashchii kvarirty, 97–98.
82. Ibid., ll. 53–54.
83. Ibid., l. 53.
84. Ibid., l. 71.
85. Their data for this table did not include a separate line for construction workers.
86. GARF, f. A-259, op. 42, d. 9114, l. 52.
87. Ibid., l. 57.

Chapter 7

5. Central State Archive of Literature and Art, Saint Petersburg (Tsentr’nyi gosudarstvennyi arhiv literatury i iskusstva Sankt Peterburga; hereafter, TsGALI SPb), fond (f.) 341, opis’ (op.) 1, delo (d.) 357, listy (ll.) 1, 13–16, 21, 24.
6. Ibid., ll. 1, 28–29.
7. TsGALI SPb, f. 341, op. 1, d. 386, ll. 28–29, 31, 35.
8. By “unpaid for space,” Iakovlev meant auxiliary spaces. Residents paid rent according to the amount of living space per person; the amount of auxiliary spaces they had at their disposal did not factor into the calculation of rent. The basic legislation governing rental rates was the June 4, 1926, law “On Apartment Rent and Means for the Regulation of Using Housing in Urban Settlements.” Izrail Mart-