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THE BODY SOVIET: HEALTH, HYGIENE, AND THE PATH TO A NEW LIFE IN THE 1920S

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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ABSTRACT

In 1917 the Russian Revolution released torrents of new ideas and hopes for the creation of an entirely new society. Government agencies, the communist youth league, and even worker volunteers envisioned a grand future and attempted to institute various social programs to bring their ideas to fruition. Central to all the utopian dreams was a reformulation of the daily life of the Soviet citizen. One aspect of these programs was hygiene education which took on many forms. Pamphlets and posters trumpeted a new, hygienic way of life while lectures in workers' clubs, special "celebrate hygiene" weeks, and factory campaigns hailed the positive effects of fresh air, sunshine, and exercise. Agitational courts held mock trials for people exhibiting "holdover" behaviors — the illiterate, the drunkard, the slob, the libertine and the spitter. New health institutions educated the populace to a life deemed more healthful and rational.

More than just a utopian impulse, the creation of a healthier population coincided with the needs of a modern state to be strong militarily and industrially. Healthier soldiers and sober, strong workers increased the Soviet state's might. Additionally, a scientific, rational way of life appealed to Bolshevik theorist and they hoped, would lead to a more stable and compliant population.

This dissertation focuses on hygiene education and sheds light on the Soviet state's interaction with its citizenry, challenging old assumptions of the imposition of governmental programs on a passive population. Health cells and volunteer inspectors,
revealed public support for these reforms. The imposition of health reforms came not just from government officials but also quasi-governmental groups with members who often had little to no training. Additionally, the study of Soviet health programs reveals many commonalities with public health programs in the United States, Britain and other European countries. Instead of finding the insular development often assumed of Russia, commonalities with the West are evident, especially in the use of science and progress to legitimate state intervention.
Dedicated to my parents
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1:
INTRODUCTION

According to a story recounted in the 1925 book How does one live to be healthy? V. I. Lenin visited fellow revolutionary Clara Zetkin, and while chatting with her, pulled from his pocket a letter which he said came to him from a class of children in the remotest (glukhoy) countryside. He opened the envelope and read to her:

Dear Uncle Lenin,
We study diligently and we can already read and write well. We can do many good things. We wash well every morning and wash our hands when we go to eat. We wish to be a delight to our teacher. He does not like it when we are dirty.¹

After reading the letter, Lenin turned excitedly to his friend, “See, dear Clara,” he exclaimed. “We are studying culture. We wash and even every day. Look, for us, even in the countryside, they are participating in the restoration of Soviet Russia. And with such examples,” he continued portentously, “need we worry that victory will not be on our side?”²

More than just a quirky, anecdote from Lenin’s life, the book’s story highlighted Soviet thought on cleanliness. Lenin equated culture with students merely learning to wash their hands. Also, notably, the students studied the basics of hygiene with a teacher who

¹ Aleksandr Zhelezniy, Kak zhiv`, shtoby zdorovym byt? Biblioteka iunogo pionera pod obshei redaktsiei MK RKLSM. Seria fizkul’tumika. (Moskva: Novaia Moskva, 1925), 27.
² Ibid., 27.
had already passed on the lessons of literacy. In the new Russia, an enlightened mind had to reside within a cleansed body.

This bonding of hygiene to issues of culture should not be particularly surprising. After all, it was not Karl Marx alone who motivated the men and women of the Russian Revolution. Utopian theorists, such as Edward Bellamy and Sir Thomas More, motivated and inspired their actions. Upon taking power, the Bolsheviks strove to eliminate the evils which they associated with capitalism. They attempted to craft a golden age by legally abolishing rank and privilege and destroying considerations of sex and race. They conceived of a program for restructuring society and raising the disenfranchised. Accordingly, the material circumstances of the working class and the improvement of their living circumstances occupied their minds. Proper health, which had begun to be associated with the elimination of poverty and oppression in the nineteenth century, became a focus of their energies.

Health was not just an issue of culture but also one of survival. Soviet leaders entered the 1920s highly concerned about the devastation wrought by World War I and the Civil War and worried that in the certain and coming clash with capitalism the health of the population would be a deciding factor. Earlier Russian leaders had considered popular health an important military and industrial question and consequently a factor in the state's

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4 For a discussion of this in France after the period of the July Monarchy and throughout the rest of Europe (Switzerland, Germany, Austria) see David S. Barnes, *The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 31-34. For connection of disease to city districts see Anne Hardy, *The Epidemic Streets: Infectious Disease and the Rise of Preventive Medicine, 1856-1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); For similar conceptions of disease in Soviet Russia see N. A. Semashko, *Osnovy sovetskoi meditsiny* (Moscow: NKZ, 1926), 14.
With the Soviets these concerns infused health rhetoric with militaristic metaphors and images. Lenin often commented on the essential nature of a healthy populace to a powerful state, remarking, “the fight for socialism is at the same time the fight for health.” More radically during the period of epidemic disease after the Civil War, when ten million people suffered from typhus alone, Lenin made the famous declaration “Either the louse will defeat socialism or socialism will defeat the louse.” Health issues were intimately connected to political and social concerns. As Lenin remarked to Clara Zetkin with hygienic habits they would achieve “victory.”

Alongside their concern for national defense, Bolshevik leaders emphasized the industrial shortcomings of the new state and the need for hardier and grander industry. Russia had been under-industrialized in comparison to the west before the war, and the period of civil war which followed the revolution had depopulated the cities, scattered or killed much of the working class, and ravaged industries. Since Bolshevik leaders based their rule and ideology upon their connection to the workers, this dissolution of the working class cut away at their legitimacy, and the great initiative to recover quickly from the devastation necessitated a robust industrial base. The idea of using health care to strengthen workers and hence industry was not new to Russia, and in the early years of the twentieth century, laws provided for security in case of industrial injuries and sickness.

During the early twentieth century, reformers advocated the guarantee of worker health in

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5 In the 1700s the threat of plague to the armed forces spurred toward public health. See John T. Alexander, *Bubonic Plague in Early Modern Russia: Public Health and Urban Disaster.* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 36.


7 N. Semashko, “Politika v dele zdravookhraneniia za desiat’ let” *Desiat’ let oktiabria i sovetskia meditsina* ed. N.A. Semashko (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 4.

order to ensure social stability, but their efforts fell short. By 1907, only one-third of mills had some type of organized health care, and the insurance which went into effect in 1900 only covered about one-fifth of workers. With revolution, the Bolsheviks insured all workers, promising them all treatment and medicine free of charge. To be modern and vigorous, Soviet industry had to catch up quickly to that of the west and every worker was needed in top condition to do so. The idea of social insurance resurfaced as an effective tool. However to get the most of workers, it was not enough to monitor them within the walls of the factory and scientifically organize their labor, workers' lives outside the factory must be examined and organized. Health campaigns centered on reforming lifestyles in order to enhance worker productivity and decrease the number of work accidents and absences. Many reasons, then, drove the new state to invest in the health of the population.

To ensure a healthy population and a culturally, militarily and industrially powerful state, the Bolsheviks founded the People's Commissariat of Health of the Russian Republic (known by the acronym Narkomzdrav) in 1918, the first ministry of its type in the world. N. A. Semashko came back to Russia with Lenin in the famous sealed train served

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9 Ibid.
10 N. A. Semashko, Okhrana zdorov'ia rabochikh i rabotnits krest'ian za desiat' let (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 5, 7.
11 A variation of social hygiene and ideas of preventative medicine espoused by the Pirogov society Kaser, 38.
12 The British Ministry of Health was set up the following year and would be the first to cover an entire nation, see Michael Kaser, Health Care in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1976), 40. For more on the organization of the department of health see Dr. A. Ia. Gutkin and Z. G. Frenkel, eds. Zdravookhranenie v sovetskoj Rossi i za X let (1917-1927) (Leningrad: Praktitcheskaia meditsina, 1927); in English see Henry E. Sigerist’s Medicine and Health in the Soviet Union (New York: The Citadel Press, 1947), 24; or, more extensively, John F. Hutchinson, Politics and Public Health in Revolutionary Russia, 1890-1918. The Henry E. Sigerist Series in the History of Medicine. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 191 - 195.
as Commissar of Health until 1930 and set out in 1918 the primary tasks of Narkomzdrav as providing centralized, universal, and preventative care.\(^5\)

Semashko faced a herculean task in 1918. A lengthy list of objectives greeted the new Commissar of health, including, “the fight against tuberculosis, venereal disease, [and] professional diseases\(^14\), [plus] the protection of mothers and infants, the protection of the health of children and youths, sanitary statistics, and measures for physical culture and sanitary enlightenment.” Semashko took charge of the health of a country used to periodic disease of epic proportions and found himself responsible for sanitizing a “land of epidemics” such as the cholera wave of 1847 and 1848 when 1,933,235 cases were reported.\(^6\) Other problems stalked the population, in 1913 alone there were 876,568 cases of tuberculosis and 1,248,002 cases of syphilis.\(^7\) In the period from 1900-1910 in Russia there had been some 414,143 deaths due to pox (for Germany in the same period there had been 380 deaths).\(^8\) War, Civil War and Revolution only worsened health conditions. In 1918 to 1920 there were five million registered cases of typhus alone.\(^9\)


\(^{14}\) Diseases which were a consequence of work conditions.


\(^{16}\) I. Strashun, "Desiat' let bor'by proletariata za zdorov'e," Desiat' let oktiabria i sovetskaiia meditsina N. A. Semashko, ed. (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 33. For a list of the major epidemics of the years 1886 to 1923, see E. M. Ivanov, 40 let deiatel'nosti Moskovskoi sanitarnoi organizatsii, 1883-1923. (Moscow: MOZ, 1925), 14.

\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) Ibid.

\(^{19}\) Weissman, "Origins of Soviet Health Administration," 102.
immediately faced the challenge of controlling the waves of epidemic disease which not only threatened the health of citizens, but the stability of the young state.\textsuperscript{20}

The development of sanitary infrastructure (sewers, water service and sanitary housing) constituted a major focus of the period 1921-1925 alongside the fight against infectious diseases such as typhus, cholera, pox, and malaria.\textsuperscript{21} To complicate Semashko's task the number of doctors decreased dramatically with revolution. On the eve of World War I, 24,000 physicians lived in Russia, by 1921 Narkomzdrav estimated that only 11,000 remained, and the Bolsheviks did not trust those who stayed.\textsuperscript{22} In addition, the relationship between the pre-revolutionary community physicians and the Bolsheviks had been a stormy one.\textsuperscript{23} A number of Russian physician's rejected the revolution, and the Bolsheviks alleged that the majority plotted against them.\textsuperscript{24}

While distrustful, the Bolsheviks desperately needed the help of these specialists. Lenin argued in 1919 that only with the help of specialists trained in science could the revolution triumph in Russia.\textsuperscript{25} And so, Narkomzdrav incorporated older specialists into its structure. Generally, the doctors of the department were highly-educated, older, and middle and upper classes. According to Semashko doctors survived difficult conditions in the

\textsuperscript{20} Gorfin, "Osnovnye etapy," 47.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 47-48.

\textsuperscript{22} Doctors were lost to the war, civil strife, while treating victims of epidemic disease, and in the general flight of intellectuals which accompanied the revolution. For the statistics see Neil B. Weissman, "Origins of Soviet Health Administration: Narkomzdrav, 1918-1928," in \textit{Health and Society in Revolutionary Russia} ed. by Susan Gross Solomon and John F. Hutchinson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 106.

\textsuperscript{23} While physicians had been unable to organize for the three decades prior to the revolution, the threat of Bolshevism united them and they threw aside their differences to unite. See Hutchinson, \textit{Politics and Public Health}, 182.

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 105.

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 104.
1920s. The state paid them little, and their morale was low. Most gravitated toward the major urban areas, and in 1924, eighty percent of all physicians lived in the large urban areas. While the periphery languished, Moscow had more doctors than they could afford to employ.

In its first years, Narkomzdrav desperately worked to stem the tide of epidemics. Only later did they fully turn to Semashko's third goal -- prophylactic work (the prevention of illness). A focus on prophylactic measures had been prevalent among progressive physicians of the late imperial period. While Soviet reformers decried the efforts of the pre-1917 government and leading physicians as bourgeois and ineffective, in many ways they replicated the programs found under the tsars and provisional government in the foundation of Narkomzdrav. Pre-revolutionary goals meshed well with the ideals of the new state and its priorities. Semashko supported the ideas of social hygiene, and with his backing social hygiene became a driving force of health policy. The science of social

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Ibid., 115.
Ibid., 114
Sigerist, 53.
Ibid., 107.

As Semashko quipped, the only things that brought the regime to look at worker health were "epidemics and the workers movement." see, Okhrana zdrov'ia rabochikh, 3. Frieden examines the relations between pre-revolutionary physicians and the government in her book Russian Physicians in an Era of Reform.

Punkt25 of the party program advocated "the carrying out of wide cleaning and sanitary measures with the goal of preventing the spread of disease." N. A. Semashko, Okhrana zdrov'ia rabochikh i rabotnits krest'yan i krest'yanok za desiat' let(Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 15.
hygiene worked "to describe and prescribe: its practitioners were to examine the social conditions within which disease occurred and spread and to propose social measures which would contribute to the all-important goal of preventing disease." The concept of preventing disease by changing behavior had circulated throughout much of Europe. Alfred Grotjahn, a Social Democrat in Germany, popularized the idea during the late nineteenth century, and Narkomzdrav officials borrowed heavily from the Germans.

The notion of infection of the entire state by a single individual infused the Soviet 1920s in political as well as health metaphors. The actions of every individual contributed to the good or ill health of the rest of society. Since sickness imposed burdens on an already weak state, the healthy person helped the state to prosper. Consequently healthful, hygienic behavior became equated with the political concept of citizenship. The toll of modern life upon the body and psyche of the worker became an issue not just because of worries of his or her individual health, it was the individual's effect upon the society as a whole which was of concern. Just as the single germ could destroy the entire organism, so to could a diseased individual destroy the entire society. In show trials "an enemy of the people often received the label of refuse, parasite or infectious germ." Lenin himself spouted these ideas and “employed the metaphors of rubbish, disease, and vermin."
Semashko, considered so-called "lifestyle illnesses" to be the main threat to the health of the population and that through manipulation of the worker lifestyle healthier citizens would emerge. In his 1926 book *The Foundations of Soviet Medicine* he stated: "Lifestyle" illnesses are to this day the misfortune of our country. They still mow down both the adult and youth populations. Therefore Soviet medicine puts the task before itself of "the improvement" of life and labor of the population, that is, the sanitation of those conditions in which the population lives. The prevention of illnesses (preventive maintenance) is the main task of Soviet medicine.

As well as preventing social diseases, the changing of lifestyles prevented social problems. Semashko stated, "Alcoholism, degeneration, crime and similarly all other deadly sins depend, above all, on living standards."\(^\text{38}\)

To care for the medical needs of workers and for preventative education, Narkomzdrav relied heavily upon the dispensary, whose roots were in the works of the pre-revolutionary, Pirogov-society physicians.\(^\text{39}\) Dispensaries varied in their focus. Some addressed all health problems, but others specialized in precise complaints. For instance, in 1925 the RSFSR's eighty-four dispensaries devoted to the treatment of venereal diseases

\(^{37}\) N. Semashko, "Politika v delezdravookhraneniia za desiat' let" in Desiat' let oktiabria i sovetskaia meditsina, ed. N. A. Semashko (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 3.

\(^{38}\) Hutchinson translates this term, *ozdorovlenie* as "healthifying." As there is no satisfactory term in English for this word meaning a combination of bringing health and order, in this dissertation, the term is translated alternatively as "improvement" when in relation to the KOTiB (Committee for the improvement of Labor and Life) or "sanitation" in other areas. For a discussion, see Hutchinson, *Politics and Public Health*, xv.

\(^{39}\) Semashko, *Osnovy sovetskoi meditsiny*, 25.

\(^{40}\) Ibid, 14.

\(^{41}\) The physician G. A. Zakharyn (1829-1897) advocated the use of dispensaries for healing and observation, see Kaser, 38; The dispensary use of inspectors was not the first use of medical personal for control. In the 1690s, in response to plague, medical inspectors had been used. See Alexander, *Bubonic Plague*, 31,32.
saw 292,589 individuals and did 2,909,664 follow-up investigations. A vast support network connected to the dispensaries. For example, in 1926, dispensary doctors visited factories and examined 200,000 workers recommending medical treatment for nearly 130,000 of them. The doctors suggested a variety of treatment centers. 61,676 were referred to ambulatory clinics, 4,773 for spa treatment in centers isolated in the countryside with strict, healthful regimens, 11,421 to special dietetic cafeterias which fed them nutritionally balanced diets, and 6,494 for stays in the night sanatorium where their off-work hours proceeded in a clean, well-ventilated environment defined by healthful influences, educational initiatives, and balanced diets. 44,131 were referred to the special tuberculosis dispensaries.

The dispensary combined medical treatment with observation. After being sent to the dispensary, a worker met with a doctor who diagnosed the illness. Then either a doctor or a nurse visited the worker’s home to determine any lifestyle choices which would complicate the healing process. Consequently, medical professionals observed not just ill workers, but the surroundings and habits which might be aggravating their condition. The home inspectors, most often nurses, carried out sanitary enlightenment within the home, educated the inhabitants as to the errors in their house-keeping and lifestyle or, in extreme cases, found new hygienically constructed apartments for patients and their families.

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43 In 1927, 202 such organizations connected to dispensaries in the RSFSR as well as 52 cafeterias. See Strashun, “Desiat’ let bor’ty,” 55.
44 For more detailed explanations of these inspections see the multiple volumes of Trud i zhorov’e rabochikh edited by Ia. Iu. Katz (Moscow: MOZ, 1926).
46 For district by district dispensary numbers in Moscow see Spravochnik dispanserizirovannykh predpriiatii g. Moskvy na 1-e Oktiabr’ 1926 g. (Moscow: MOZ, 1927).
Sanitary propaganda, which started in the army in 1919, composed the cornerstone of Narkomzdrav’s prophylactic program. Narkomzdrav officials used a variety of methods to get its message out. The first all-Russian conference on sanitary enlightenment work took place on March 15-20, 1921. Narkomzdrav presses printed forty titles in 600,000 copies and 50,000 slides for 1925 to mid-1927. This is not counting works from local health departments. Mock trials on sanitary themes, such as venereal disease or alcoholism, presented a popular way to educate workers, and Pravda accidentally reported one as a real trial because it was supposedly so true to life. The play, “The End of Happiness,” featured singing microbes and other amusements. Sanitary-themed films such as “The road to happiness,” “Fight for Life” (on malaria), “Life’s truths” (on syphilis), and “Abortion” appeared in clubs and at factories. Most impressively, museums devoted to sanitary education, such as Moscow’s House of Sanitary

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Enlightenment (*Doma sanitarnogo prosveshchenie*), presented workers with visions of a new, healthful life. There were eight-five such permanent exhibitions in 1927.

Moscow’s Sokol district sanitary enlightenment activities covered a typical range of endeavors. According to 1925 records of the Moscow district’s health department, sanitary enlightenment activities proceeded in lectures, films, mock trials, and permanent exhibitions. During the first six months of the year in the district, lectures on the themes of “work, life and health” reached 161,306 listeners while traveling and corner health expositions informed 54,292 people about hygienic living. In addition the department presented 117 films and thirty plays on sanitary themes as well as holding 142 excursions to health-themed places. They gave out 6,162 leaflets, 3,208 brochures and 627 books in addition to maintaining twenty-five traveling libraries each with approximately fifty to seventy books on health and nearly 9,000 slides. The department assisted seventeen labor circles and fifty-one study groups. Finally, they opened a House of Sanitary Enlightenment on the first of February which saw nearly 9,000 visitors. It consisted, in all, of over 861 exhibits including 258 posters, eighty-seven models, twenty wax models, fifty-eight lesson exhibits, and a library of over 1,000 books.

The department of health and its dispensaries reached many people, but they were not the only ones involved in sanitary enlightenment work. A 1925 book aimed at worker youth hammered the point that government programs could only do so much:

> All those achievements may not be enough as long as every individual person in their private life does not follow the rules of hygiene. To the

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53Ibid., 72.
54Ibid., 72. Leningrad also had a hygiene museum with 13 different departments and serving in the brief period from January to April 1921 28,903 visitors, see *Putevoditel’ po muzeiu zdravookhraneniia Leningradskogo obizdvoiodela* (Leningrad: Leningradskii meditsinski zhurnal, 1928), 35.
55TsMAM f. 1474, op. 2, d. 17, l. 6.
contrary, the infringement of these rules by individual people may to a significant level weaken the results of social-sanitary works.\textsuperscript{56}

In the face of individual inaction, all of the best programs were powerless.\textsuperscript{57} The department of health encouraged worker organizations and grassroots efforts to change health. Posters and pamphlets frequently featured the slogan, "The maintenance of worker health is the duty of workers themselves." According to the 1927 survey \textit{Health Care in Soviet Russia for Ten Years} many different groups carried out sanitary enlightenment work, including committees for the improvement of labor and life, housing sanitary representatives, and school and factory sponsored cells. "Through these, with these, among these sanitary enlightenment is carried on at the home, factory and elsewhere."\textsuperscript{58} Health cells, organized by workers, apartment building inhabitants, and school children, numbered 8500 in Moscow in the mid-1920s.\textsuperscript{59} In health cells, Muscovites came together under their own initiative to improve their factories and homes and consequently better the city.

While Narkomzdrav supposedly addressed the health care needs of the entire state, resources and personnel assured a less ambitious result. Doctors gravitated to urban areas leaving the countryside without provisions. The introduction of the New Economic Policy did not bring relief to struggling peripheral health departments. While funding for medical needs was transferred to local governments in May 1922, the funding for the campaign against social diseases and for essential services remained the responsibility of the center.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{56} S. Kal'manson, and D. Bekariukov, \textit{Beregi svoe zdrov'e! Sanitarnaia pamiatka dla rabochikh podrostkov}, (Leningrad: Molodaia gvardiia, 1925), 4, tir. 10,000.

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{60} Weissman, "Origins of Soviet Health Administration," 107, 110.
In health care, programs remained concentrated among the workers and consequently urban in character.

Semashko, and his fellow officials at Narkomzdrav insisted that a healthful lifestyle would transform Russia into a utopia. If the people under their protection followed their strictures and the sanitary level of housing was improved, all illness would disappear. Hygienists depicted a regimented, rational lifestyle as the cure for everything from cancer to a child’s crying. Illiteracy, superstition, dirty physical conditions, and the social and economic turmoil of the NEP-era impeded health reforms. In 1926, only forty-four percent of the population of Moscow province was literate (though the city was better than the countryside and Moscow province better than the rest of Russia).

Material circumstances conspired to make reform more difficult. Moscow experienced great fluctuations in the 1920s in population and services. By the end of the Civil War, nearly half of the population had fled the city leaving only about one million. However, by 1924, the city regained its pre-revolutionary population. This rapid reurbanization overtaxed the city’s resources and a housing shortage soon resulted.

In addition, hygienists worried that the New Economic Policy (NEP, 1921-1928), created an unhealthy environment. With NEP, Lenin advocated a step backward and a lessening of the headlong rush toward communism. The government kept control of the "commanding heights" but allowed small-scale capitalist enterprises to grow. Consequently

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61 Chapters two and four address this idea at length.
63 Diane Koenker argues that though the population fluctuated and there were many immigrants from the countryside, the population remained urbanized. See "Urbanization and Deurbanization in the Russian Revolution and Civil War," The Journal of Modern History 57 (September 1985), 424, 449.
64 Ia. Iu. Kats, Moskva ee sanitarnoe i epidemiologicheskoe sostianie (Moscow: MOZ, 1924), 7.
entrepreneurs came too Moscow to make their fortunes and enlivened the streets of the city. Business picked up and while shortages remained, goods were again available.

In the streets of Moscow this meant a profusion of what theorists considered bourgeois pleasures. Parisian boutiques sold the latest fashions and perfumes and chic cafes offered up expensive food and drink with racy entertainments like jazz music and dancing. Theorists blamed the crime of the boulevards, the prostitutes, and the bootleggers on the needs of the NEP-man. While acknowledged the need for economic recovery, they did not advocate actually enjoying these fruits of capitalism which profaned the revolution and dirtied the streets of the city. A proper Soviet avoided the cafes and boutiques and lived a simple life. In this charged environment, individual behavior came under intense scrutiny. The strong revolutionary was defined by how he or she navigated the streets of Moscow and avoided the many temptations. Hygienists combined their displeasure with the capitalism of NEP with science-cloaked admonitions against drinking, dancing, high-living, and even fashionable dress, and make-up.

* * * *

This dissertation addresses the ways in which Narkomzdrav and other health-minded organizations attempted to change the lifestyles of Muscovites to make them healthier, more productive, and more politically-conscious citizens during the NEP years. Healthful habits strengthened the body and the mind of the individual and transformed the rest of society. In health rhetoric and posters the adoption of one healthful habit transformed a person and brought with it political consciousness, love, and harmony as well as material improvements for the rest of society including more goods, better housing,
and even electricity. Health-care propagandists truly saw healthy habits as the gateway to utopia.

The dissertation contains four separate thematic sections, the body, the home, parenthood, and leisure. These sections are tied together by overarching arguments. In each section the following key concepts are examined: the interconnectedness of Soviet health-care ideas and techniques with those of western reformers and pre-revolutionary activists; the contrast between the Soviet rhetoric of women’s liberation and the assumed roles for women as citizens, homemakers, and mothers; the invasive techniques of new, Soviet institutions such as the dispensary and the health cell and their relations to the traditional power structures within the home and neighborhood; the utopian dreams and attitudes of health care reformers; and finally, the ways in which hygienists utilized the malleable concept of “science” to justify their conceptions of what was desirable and what was objectionable.

The second chapter of the dissertation addresses the unique recommendations involving bodily health and maintenance in 1920s Moscow. Drawing heavily upon militaristic and mechanical metaphors, hygienists attempted to rationalize the running of the body and the scheduling of the workers’ day. Posters emphasized the impact of personal health decisions on the body politic and presented a healthful lifestyle which encompassed not just healthful work habits but an entire hygienic life of proper leisure activities, health rituals and techniques for keeping the body running at its most efficient. The chapter argues that connections between the individual body and the body politic justified the intrusion of the state into personal life. Additionally, western concepts of the body’s connection to the mind figured heavily in discussions of the physical abilities and appearances of men and women. Most importantly, worries about the weakened Soviet
state on the world stage emerged in discussions of the mind/body connection and techniques for strengthening the will.

The third chapter investigates the recommendations for maintenance of a clean home which appeared in the Soviet press, posters, and pamphlets from 1921 to 1927. The chapter fully explores the basic recommendations for a clean and organized home. It also argues that the Soviet programs for the home did not make a great break from the west or from pre-revolutionary Russian ideas. Hygienists heavily borrowed from international discussion and made connections between health conditions of the population as a whole and their domestic situations in Moscow and abroad. Additionally, the section examines the ways in which recommendations in literature and posters for care of the home contradicted Soviet calls for a new era of women’s liberation from the tyranny of the hearth, and the impossibility of many of these ideas given the crude domestic situation of most Moscow inhabitants.

The fourth chapter looks at the actions of the agency for maternal and infant health, the Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants. A fuller picture of the experience of parenthood in the 1920s is presented utilizing posters which described proper mothering techniques and regimens, the invasive techniques of inspectors, the dispensaries for expectant mothers, dispensaries for mothers and children, and state concerns for popular health and fighting strength. The chapter argues that hygienists attempted to supplant the authority of parents with that of the doctor while at the same time mechanizing the nurturing process into a non-skilled area for women, all in the name of international competition for higher birth rates and lower infant death rates.

The final chapter of the dissertation addresses attempts to regulate leisure, thereby increasing worker productivity and smoothing the functioning of the state, and argues that
Soviet conceptions of the evils of modern life as exemplified in the bustle of the city provided a conceptual base for these programs. Within the city, reformers hailed the activities of worker clubs, red corners,\(^5\) night sanatoriums, the komsomol, and pioneer troops as proper leisure activities which could fight the corruptions inevitable in the urban setting. Outside the confines of the city, Soviet health authorities set up a system of houses of leisure and sanatorii to isolate workers from the city's pernicious influences and to teach them a full regimen of healthful living which including not just cleanliness strictures and physical activity, but also correct nutrition, etiquette, and healthful social interaction.

This dissertation focuses on hygiene education and sheds light on the Soviet state's interaction with its citizenry, challenging old assumptions of the imposition of governmental programs on a passive population. Health cells and volunteer inspectors, revealed public support for these reforms. The imposition of health reforms came not just from government officials but also quasi-governmental groups with members who often had little to no training. Additionally, the study of Soviet health programs reveals many commonalities with public health programs in the United States, Britain and other European countries. Instead of finding the insular development often assumed of Russia, commonalities with the West are evident, especially in the use of science and progress to legitimate state intervention.

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\(^5\) Red corners were small displays of communist propaganda and reading materials in factories, apartment buildings and other venues. The red corner became an affordable alternative in the search for leisure space while club spaces were still scarce and building efforts were falling short of demand.
Figure 1.1 “8 hours for rest - 8 hours for sleep - 8 hours for work” MOZ 1927, pub. 7,000. All images courtesy of Russian State Library.
Figure 1.2 “All phyculturalists to the front lines of the Lenin shockworkers!” Lenselprom, 1921-25, pub. 40,000.
Figure 1.3 "Get into the cultured habit - Change underwear and go to the bania."
Gosmedizdat, 1926-1929. pub. 10,000.
Figure 1.5 “Be neat and don’t just lay, clean your teeth, every day!” Gosmedizdat, 1926-1929, pub. 10,000.
журнала гигиена и здороу’е рабочеи и крестьянской сем’и, вyp. 19 (Leningrad: Leningradskaiia Pravda, n.d.) pub. 10,000.
Figure 1.7 “Quit your smokin'! It's paper-wrapped poison!” Gosmedizdat, 1926-1929, pub. 10,000.
Figure 1.8 “Drive out the drunkard from the thicket of workers!” Boprosy truda, 1929. pub. 15,000.
Figure 1.9 "Down with religious holidays!" Glavlit AKTs society AKhRM, 1926-1929. pub. 20,000.
Figure 1.10 "The workers of the USSR do not have the right to poison their strength, body and mind which are needed for the collective work of the socialist construction of the proletarian state," NKVD 1922, pub. 20,000.
Figure 1.11 "Among women often there is a disturbance of the internal sex organs," MOZ 1927, pub. 7,000. Note the bottom comment next to the female hockey player, "All physical exercises for women must be decreased in their strength and length. Football, weight-training, fighting, boxing, diving from large heights... is forbidden!"
Figure 1-12. “Sun water and good air -- the best rest from labor” MOZ, 1927. pub. 7,000.
Figure 1-13. Cover. D.A. Kradman. *Physculture as a part of cultural-enlightenment work (Fizkul’'ura kak chast' kul’turno-prosvietitel’’noi raboty)*. (Leningrad: Knizhnyi sektor Gubono, 1924).
CHAPTER 2:
BUILDING THE BODY SOVIET:
STRICTURES FOR BODILY CARE AND CLEANLINESS

The clock ruled life. Or so it must have seemed to the worker who viewed the poster "8 hours of leisure, 8 hours of sleep, 8 hours of labor" (See figure 1.1). While pictures of daily activities obscured the face of it, the overarching reality, the template against which these were seen, was the clock. The clock, a giant 24-hour time-piece, metered out the rhythms of a healthy daily life. Clock-like circles of action contained the images of daily life strewn over the poster, subjecting these actions to the clock's rule. The clock formed the background and framed these views of modern life. The man's factory work-station connected him to a machine belt, intimating that at work he connected to a time piece -- his rhythms dictated by the turning of the drive and the pace of the factory.

While the final slogan of the poster declared, "Physical culture proceeds 24 hours a day," only two of the fourteen scenes depicted athletic activities. Instead, the viewer beheld an entire vision of a healthy lifestyle including cleanliness strictures -- a morning wash in the basin, washing hands before meals, brushing teeth, and showering at the factory or bania; nutrition advice -- a light breakfast and dinner with a factory cafeteria luncheon; and leisure-time suggestions -- reading in isolation, skating, calisthenics, and reading aloud at the club.

Outside of the clock's realm, on left and right, stood admonitions against those activities which remained outside of a healthy life -- drinking and smoking. Not part of the
metered vision, they were not favored with depictions. Even though the Moscow Department of Health, which oversaw both urban and rural areas, created the poster, the healthy life was not on the farm, but in the factory. The healthy individual was male, Russian, and literate. While showers and eating took place in communal areas, the worker slept and lived in a seemingly private room with a single bed. The only female figure appeared in the factory cafeteria. No women appeared in the club scene or on the factory floor, not to mention in the worker's insular home.

The above poster, with both its omissions and overarching vision of health as a "twenty-four-hour" pursuit, represented the main themes of hygienists writing on individual behaviors. Health resulted from nutrition, cleanliness, and physical fitness, but to hygienists it meant much more. In this poster, and in the literature on similar themes, bodily and mental health joined, and the recommendations for improving both the functioning of the mind and the body were virtually identical whether found in a pamphlet on physical fitness, cancer or sexually transmitted disease. Pamphlets hailed rationalization, regimentation, cleanliness, abstention from smoking, drinking and sex, and purification through physical activity as components of a healthful lifestyle and almost always presented them as a full package.

Aleksei Gastev\(^1\) pioneered the mechanization of the body in Russia, but world-wide trends favoring a monitored, tempered, rational life also contributed. In the west, labor leaders focused on the provision of an eight-hour-day as a way to liberate workers. However, under the Soviets, the push for labor discipline emerged at the same time as the government introduced the eight-hour day. Instead of leaving workers free to determine

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\(^1\) Gastev developed complex schema for the scientific organization of labor and life in the 1920s. A more thorough discussion of his life and work can be found later in this chapter.
their own uses for their time away from work, this had to be harnessed for more effective use during their eight hours of labor.

This chapter will discuss in detail the multiple components of the lifestyle advocated by reformers and the ways in which reformers' ideas often contradicted one another, and almost always advocated sex-specific terms. Not surprisingly hygienists always chose the male body as normative and addressed women's health as a unique set of conditions. The first portion of the chapter addresses debates about the ideal functioning of the body and its regimentation, followed by a discussion of cleansing the body, impure habits, and, finally, physical fitness and the mind/body connection.

Man, machine and the military

With October, many groups dreamed of creating an exciting, new society, and even when the New Economic Policy necessitated a step back from achieving utopia immediately, they continued to dream. Lenin, not one for impractical flights of fancy, had his own "utopian" projects that excited him, including electrification. The poor condition of Russia almost necessitated these "compensatory fantasies." Beyond just dreaming of utopias, some looked to a man who could eventually inhabit this brave new world. The individual and his perfection, as both a citizen and a worker, could streamline government and increase production. Two main metaphors described the perfected, rational, healthy human and his path to productivity -- the mechanistic and the militarized.

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5 In fact, on the cover of Vasilevskii's The Hygiene of Women's Labor, it is a man who is featured doing work, see L. M. Vasilevskii, Hygiene zhenskogo truda, Biblioteka okhrany truda. (Leningrad: Leningrad gubernskogo soveta professional'nykh soiuzov, 1925). pub. 10,000.
7 Ibid., 45.
8 Ibid.
The machine, as the ultimate symbol of progress and the modern age, became a metaphor for the perfection of humanity in a society obsessed with progress and industrialization. Aleksei Gastev, highly influenced by labor/production theorists such as Frederick Winslow Taylor and Henry Ford, emerged as the most well-known proponent of this concept. Gastev came into vogue with his 1918 work, *Poetry of the worker’s blow*, and inspired over 800 cells and eight laboratories for the Scientific Organization of Labor (NOT) by the end of 1924. NOT highlighted the regulation of the body at work. Gastev saw work as integral to human development, but if done improperly, or in improper settings, a strain on the body. He noted, “We live out at work the best parts of our lives. We must learn how to work, so that work will be easy and a constant school of life.” In this “school of life”, Gastev theorized that men, by mimicking the movements of machines, would become human-machine hybrids, rationalized in thought as they were rationalized in movement. In one of his mechanistically paced poems, Gastev further developed this idea:

The machine-automat works precisely, QUICKLY AND EXACTLY
- as it is habit, so does it proceed -
and the factory depends upon the regulations.
With a human it is just the same
the regulation of the body
the regulation of nerves
the definition of movement
the definition of labor skills.
In the beginning movement (work) proceeds with difficulty.

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6 Clark, 36.
9 Clark, 37.
But just begin to work out
REGU-LA-TION,
movements proceed surefootedly, exactly, quickly
Regulation gives step-by-step
TRAINING
This training may exactly calculate and,
EASE
Training can develop
QUICK TRANSITIONS
from one directive to another.10

By modifying movement and rationalizing work, Gastev hoped to make labor more
efficient and easier, thereby getting the most and best of each worker.

While Gastev’s ideas came under official fire in 1923 for too closely tying man’s
destiny to that of the machine, his concept of the mechanized body remained popular
throughout the 1920s.11 Other theorists also conceived of the body as a machine. In The
labor and health of worker youth Dr. V. Sigal exhausted an entire chapter on the theme
“How the living machine works.”12 Hygienists incorporated the metaphor of the body/machine into their recommendations for proper leisure, nutrition and rest. A 1922 program
circulated for adult enlightenment curriculum recommended that during the first fifteen
hours of class students be acquainted with the idea of “the human machine carrying out

10 Gastev, Kak nado rabotat’?, 5.
11 By the late 1920s the creation of a automaton stirred no official controversy. Clark, 23, and Johansson,
Aleksey Gastev, 7, 103. Gastev produced many other books, including Poezii rabocheogo udara which was
first published in 1918 but can be found printed by (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaja literatura, 1971);
Vosstanie kul’tury (Kharkov: Molodoi Rabochii, 1923).
12 V. Sigal, Dr. Trud i zdorov’e rabochei molodezhi, Zdorov’e rabochei molodezhi (Leningrad: Molodaia
gvardiia, 1925), 1. For a contemporary physiology textbook of a more technical character, see P. G.
Arkhipov, D. N. Lukashevich, and I. V. Sazhin, eds. Sputnik lektora: Konspekty lektzii po anatomii i
fiziologii cheloveka. (Petrograd: Petrogradskoe okurzhnoe voennosanitarnoe upravlenie, 1922); Other titles
included G. Bosse, Chelovek zavod (N.P.: Proletarii, 1925); Muramovich Kak zhivet i rabotaet
chelovecheskogo tela (both were recommended by E. S. in the files of VTsSPS GARF f. 5451, op. 9, d.
496, l. 140).
work...and the skeleton and muscles of a man as a mechanism." Not only did the body function as a machine, but according to Gastev, "The body must be cultivated as a working machine." Nutrition discussions readily repeated the concept of food being fuel to the human machine.

In addition to describing the "machine man" reformers often called up the trappings and rhetoric of military service, which like the machine, served as a prevalent image of efficiency and strength, and had the additional benefit of denoting heroism. The pamphlet, How does one live to be healthy? began with a fiery call to arms asking young pioneers to remember their fathers' tales of valor and sacrifice, and cautioned that now, in this period of rest before the inevitable battle with capitalism, it was time to take stock:

And we would be poor combatants if we were unable to use this reprieve for the preparation for a new attack. We must necessarily strengthen and save our physical strength -- it is our gunpowder which we spent during the years of war....And tomorrow, for the new attack, we must be able to send into the battle iron groups of young and old Leninists, healthy, courageous and strong in battle, for the enemy is strong. No one knows when that "tomorrow" will be. Perhaps after a year, maybe after five, but we know one thing, that pioneers must come to the relief of the komsomol and the party, and those reinforcements must be healthy.

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13 GARF, f. A-7954, op. 1, d. 72, l. 19. For similar comments, see I. Gel'man, D-r., Trud, utomlenie i otdyk (Moscow: VTsSPS, 1925), 8. pub. 10,000.
14 A. Gastev, lunist' idi (Moscow: VTsSPS, 1923), 17. For a strong, straightforward period anatomy text see P. G. Arkhipov, D. N. Lukashevich and I. V. Sazhin, Sputnik lektora: Konspekty lektsii po anatomii i fiziologii cheloveka (Petrograd: Petrogradskoe okruzhnoe voenno-sanitarnoe upravlenie, 1922).
15 In an article by E. S. "Obshche obrazovat'nye kruzhki v rabochikh klubakh," contained in the files of the VTsSPS cultural department, the author recommended that in a set of lectures for the worker club on nutrition, lecturers should acquaint workers with the "preliminary processing of fuel (food) before receipt into the blood and the comparison of the apparatus of the machine with the apparatus of the human." See GARF f. 5451, op. 9, d. 496, l. 12.
16 Russian youth group.
17 Aleksandr Zheleznyi, Kak Zhit', shtoby zdorovym byt'? Biblioteka iunogo pionera pod obscheci redaktsiei MK RLKSM, Seriia Fizkul'turnika (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1925). pub. 9,000
By calling health the “gunpowder” for the battle of nations, Zheleznyi implied it was an issue of national import.

The poster “All Physculturalists to the front lines of the Lenin workers,” used similar military metaphors, in conjunction with images of industrial strength, making a direct connection between the healthful choice of physical culture and the strength of the country (See figure 1-2). The slogan invoked military imagery by calling workers to take to the “front lines,” and the purposeful group of athletes marching together towards a common goal evoked a parade march. Male and female athletes hiked, ran, and biked purposefully towards the forge where men in red training outfits stood at anvils tempering metal for the industrial cause symbolized by the smokestacks behind them. These blacksmiths dwarfed the masses of physical culturalists and in their unlikely work attire and red-infused personages functioned as a portal to a new life. In their physical culture attire and close proximity to the factories behind and to the right, the poster conveyed the idea that bodily maintenance made up an essential part of industrial labor. Clearly, physical culture forged the makers of the new, greater, industrial state and prepared them to take position on the ‘front lines.’

The cautions for protecting the body mirrored those of protecting the state portraying a pitted battle against disease and microbes for control of the body. According to a poem in the magazine For a New Life, the body became a “fortress” to be safeguarded or lost:

Know and remember all-
It is not just simplistic phrases
Every healthy person

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**Footnote:** For more on symbolism in posters see Victoria E. Bonnell’s *The Iconography of Power: Soviet political posters under Lenin and Stalin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
Is an unassailable fortress
For tuberculosis. ¹⁹

By maintaining their health, people fortified themselves. Semashko employed the
“fortress” metaphor in his book Social illnesses in 1926. Cautioning readers not to partake
of those things which “destroy your fortress,” he declared “If you sleep around
(polunochnichaesh’), dragging around to different places, then it is self-evident that you
destroy your fortress.” ²⁰

To justify health concerns, hygienists employed metaphors which would resonate
with their audience. The pervasive concern for industrial growth and a strong working
class assured the comprehension of simple mechanistic metaphors by the general populace.
Additionally the cult of the machine and fascination with technology by leading Bolsheviks
implied to the populace the desirability of such mechanistic functioning of the body. For a
population recently emerged from war, as well as one warned of the inevitability of a
coming war, military metaphors certainly toned portentously. Additionally, military
imagery recalled memories of camaraderie and bravery of men at arms, particularly
attractive to young men and boys who had not participated in the fight for the revolution.

Rationalization and cleanliness

Be it a call to arms or to the clock, recommendations to regulate one’s life and
change habits always followed. To improve individual health, pamphlets recommended
regimentation and personal cleanliness with special attention to clothes and teeth. The

²⁰ N. Semashko, Sotsial’nye bolezni (Moscow: Moskovskii gosudarstvenny universitet, 1926), 16. pub.
3,000. For similar reference to the body fortress see by same author Sotsial’nye bolezni i bor’ba s
nimii (Moscow: Voprosy truda, 1925), 12. pub. 15,000.
following section explores the suggestions made by hygienists for lifestyle improvement and day to day living. Their ideas relied heavily upon the scientization of daily life and the regimentation, rationalization, and cleaning of the body. Hygienists foresaw a passage to a utopia where there was no disease and technology and prosperity sheltered everyone for those who followed the hygienists' teachings.

Regular hours and scheduling emerged as essential in health literature. As one poem rhymed, "8 hours of work/ 8 hours of rest/ Finish the chores/ Sleep the 8 left." The poster "8 hours of work, 8 hours of rest, 8 hours of leisure" displayed a similar breakdown for the day’s activities (See figure 1.1). Regimenting the day emerged as the essence of a healthy lifestyle. Zheleznyi’s pioneer pamphlet presented a regular schedule as the foundation of a healthy life, "The first step is to put your day in order -- when and how much to sleep, to work, to eat...and therefore the first step is upkeep of time." According to the section titled “Foundations of a Normal Life,” in the pamphlet, *Workers take hold of your health*, how one lived within the scheduled times was equally important:

A normal way of life demands work in a healthy situation, correct leisure, normal sleep (no less than 7 hours every 24-hour period) and exercises for all parts of the body.

Labor, good leisure, normal feeding, normal sex life for adults, and sport for all ages -- these are the foundations of a healthy life.

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22 Zheleznyi, *Kak zh’it’* 5-6.
23 V. Sukharev, *Rabochii, beregi svoe zdorov’e: K ozdorovleniu rabochei sem’i*, (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 22. pub. 10,000.
All activities were modified to show their correct utilization, “correct leisure,” or the ubiquitous “normal,” denoted not just the duration of these events, but their use in a proper, healthful regimen. In sample schedules not one moment was left unanswered.  

The regimen articulated in every pamphlet involved not just scheduling of when to sleep and wake but how to do these activities and others throughout the day. Sleep was to be enjoyed in fresh air with a clean bed and clean body. The pamphlet *Take Hold of your health!* advised readers on how to go to bed. The should lie down at the same time every night, avoid anything which might bring too much excitement before bed such as reading, eating, work or fighting. They must sleep in a bed which was not too soft or infested with bugs, wear nightclothes (it was not specified as to whether this was in preference to nudity or street clothes), and sleep on linens which were changed every two weeks on a bed which was aired once a week. Zheleznyi told his pioneer readers to train themselves to rise at the same time every day (7:30) and to rise quickly out of bed. Further, he gave his pioneer readers examples of activities which could fill their healthful day:

- **7:30-9:00** After getting out of bed, do calisthenics, make bed, wash/ dress accurately, tighten your belt. Breakfast. Walk quickly to school.
- **9:00-1:00** While in school: agitate for cleanliness, sit straight, care for eyesight, during breaks organize games.
- **1:00-2:00** Home: Wash hands and eat without rushing.
- **2:00-3:00** Rest. A walk.
- **3:00-5:00** Reading (or lessons), light handiwork.

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24 Ibid, 17.
26 S. Kal’manson, and D. Bekariukov, *Beregi svoe zdrov’e! Sanitarnia pamiatka dla rabochikh podrostkov* (Leningrad: Molodaia gvardiia, 1925), pub. 10,000.
5:00-6:30 House work: agitate for sun and clean air, and against dust and insects.
6:30-7:00 Dinner and walk to group.
7:00-9:30 Group.
9:30-10:00 Walk home from group. Preparations for bed.
Wash hands and legs. Brush teeth.
10:30 Sleep.

Hygienists accorded daily cleansing rituals special attention. After rising, a wash with room temperature water and briskly drying with a rough towel helped to ensure “very good spirits.” V. Sukharev noted the ability of a bath to “strengthen health [and]...calm the nervous system.” Aside from being a general recommendation for health, cleanliness strictures battled skin diseases and parasite infection. In the morning wash, the subject needed to scrub “face, neck, hands and even the torso to the waist” with soap. People should wash their hands before eating and “several times during the day.” Hygienists urged readers to take on the “cultured habit” of attending the bania for a more thorough washing at least once a week (See figure 1.3). More than just a sign of cultured living, the bania was “a necessity — to clear the body of sweat and grease secreted by the skin and also

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31 Here, Zheleznyi strayed slightly from the schedule for adults recommending 9 hours of sleep for pioneers. See Kak Zhit', 6-7.
30 On lice see, Sukharev, Rabochii, beregi svoe zdorove, 10; see also A. A. Sakhnovskaya, Prof., Chesotka i bor'ba s neiu, Biblioteka zhurnala Gigiena i zdorove rabocheye i krest'ianskoi sem'i, vyp 32, (Leningrad: Leningradskaya pravda, 1926), pub. 13,000.
32 Kal'manson and Bekariukov. Beregi sovet zdorov'e! 7; The humorous, Ne myr' em kak katan' em: Komedia v trekh aktakh piati kartinakh (Moscow: Glabpolitprosvet TsK VLKSM, 1926) recounted how to wash for peasant audiences.
33 Ibid.
from the casually carried lice, which, if caught quickly, have not the time to multiply."^4

Bania campaigns, when the population was allowed to use the bath house free of charge, attempted to increase the numbers who attended the bania.\(^5\)

Hygienists set out different cleanliness strictures for men and women, implying that cleanliness enhanced beauty and that menstruation made women dirtier. For women, hygienists set out special cleanliness strictures for their purportedly particular needs and especially their assumed concerns for beauty. V. E. Dembskaia's book on women's hygiene begins with a chapter on beauty. While she contended that makeup was unnecessary "from either an hygienic or aesthetic point of view," she underscored the need for women to maintain a favorable appearance by giving recommendations for increasing natural beauty.\(^6\) For healthy skin, women must wash with warm water and soap and also attend to proper exposure to clean air and sunlight. In *The young woman and the komsomol*, the author took a similar stance against makeup and artificial beauty enhancements, noting that the joys of powder and perfume were short lived.\(^7\)

Aside from beauty advice, hygienists directed women's attention to maintaining bodily cleanliness and its role in reproductive health. N. Iu. Lur'e began *The hygiene of girls, young women and women*, with instructions on how to maintain the procreative

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^5 During one such campaign, half the population of the city supposedly participated. For free campaign reference, see N. A. Semashko, *Okhrana zdorov'ia rabochikh i rabotniks krest'ian i krest'ianok za desiat' let* (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 19. See also N. Dzhumaliev, *V.I. Lenin i okhrana zdorov'ia trudiashchikhsia* (Kyrgyzstan: Frunze, 1969), 57. For a history of the transition from dry to wet baths in France, see Georges Vigarello, *Concepts of Cleanliness: Changing attitudes in France since the Middle Ages* trans. Jean Birrel. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).


^7 Vera Ketlinskaia, *Devushchka i komsomol* (Leningrad: Priboi, 1927), 62. pub. 3,000.
health of young girls. After discussing how to avoid the transfer of gonorrhea and other sexually transmitted diseases to infant girls, Lur'e went on to detail the special strictures which menstruating women must take to maintain cleanliness and reproductive health.  

She decried the traditional treatment of menstruation, where the changing of underwear was not considered necessary, as especially upsetting. Further, Lur'e described the secretion of blood by women during menses as a means of infection for both the menstruating women and those who came into contact with her. Sexual contact could lead to infection because during menses, “the very womb becomes like an open wound” through which “every manner of microbe” on the male’s genitalia may infect the woman. Others held similar beliefs about the eroding effects of menstruation. Dembskaia, in the tract, Women’s Sexual health, wrote that during menstruation, “the blood, flowing from the womb, serves as a kind of bridge,” for microbial infection.

While hygienists warned women that they were weaker and consequently more easily infected while menstruating, they also advised them that emanations from the womb discomforted others. Menstrual blood, if not properly contained, could “flow down on the hips, quite often emitting a nasty (skvernyi) smell.” All this caused “an unpleasant feeling in the woman menstruating and those around her.” L. M. Vasilevskii also commented on the smell which accompanied a menstruating women. Menstruation brought with it blood

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38 N. Iu. Lur’e, Gigiena devochki, devushki, zhenschchiny Vtoroe dopolnennoe izdanie, (Moscow: Omm, 1927), 7, 11. pub. 15,000.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Dembskaia, Polovaia gigiena zhenschchiny, 12.
42 Lu’ye, 11. Discomfoit with the menstruating body coincided with Russian religious restrictions of menstruating women who were treated as unclean and capable of destroying the purity of the church. See Eve Levin, Sex and Society in the World of the Orthodox Slavs, 900-1700. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 169-172.

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and mucous which could lead to an "unpleasant odor" and therefore "one of the most important hygienic concerns in a girl's life" was proper care of her menstrual cleanliness. Given the holdover fear of odors and their infection-causing ability, these recommendations obviously reflected a certain concern with the infectious nature of women. Because of the dangers of menstruation, the regular cleaning of the body was not sufficient. Instead of the cold water wash recommended for men and non-menstruating women, menstruating women should use a hot water wash. For pregnant women the strictures became even more detailed. A. Antonov recommended that women go to the bania twice daily and everyday clean sex organs with boiled water and soap.

Discomfort with the fecundity of the female body presented itself in other formats and perhaps explained the upset displayed here towards the products of the female reproductive organs. Eric Naiman pointed out the distress with which Russian philosophers viewed the female body especially its connection to the processes of life and therefore, ultimately, death and decay. In the west, doctors similarly cautioned women about their weakened state during menstruation.

All these special strictures for the washing of face, neck, hands, and torso, meant little if a person wore dirty clothing. As the pamphlet How to live to be healthy? noted, clothing was the body's "mobile dwelling" (podvizhnoe zhilishche). Underthings must be changed at least once a week and outerwear must never be worn without a protective layer.

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43 L. N. Vasilevksii, Gigiena molodoi devushki, (Moscow: Novaia moskva, 1926), 16. pub. 20,000.
44 Dembskaia, Polovaia, 13.
45 A. Antonov, D-r. Pamiatka materi (Leningrad: Priboi, 1925), 5.
47 For a long discussion of the roots of these ideas in America see Roberta J. Park, "Physiology and Anatomy are Destiny!?: Brains, Bodies and Exercise in Nineteenth Century American Thought," Journal of Sport History 18:1 (Spring 1991), 31-63.
of linens. If outer clothing could be reworn if cleaned with a brush (brush off dirt outside the apartment), but underclothes should be changed weekly. Dirty outer clothing endangered everyone. According to Semashko, “Dirty clothing pollutes and infects our body. Infection of all kinds is transferred by dirty clothing and underwear. That is why among dirty people skin illnesses are so widespread.” Clean clothing stopped the spread of disease and thereby became a matter of social duty. “The soiling of the skin and clothing may serve as a source of different illnesses, so it is necessary to keep this from happening and keep careful care of skin and clothing.”

However, the social and cultural implications of clothing did not end there. In some cases, it seemed that clothes did make the man, imparting positive or negative characteristics. “Comfortable clothes facilitate work, dirty and ripped clothes put the print of untidiness on study and work. That is why the army demands from its red army-men that they are always dressed smartly and accurately.” Clothes became an environment which could influence the functioning of the body and mind in either a positive or negative manner.

Hygienists also studied the cut and style of clothing. Hygienic clothing allowed free movement and circulation. Semashko wrote an entire pamphlet, The Art of Dressing on the question of clothing and hygiene. Vasilevskii advised pioneers to wear clothing which left open the neck, hands, and legs to the knee and to go barefoot during the

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48 Kal'manson and Bekariukov, Beregi svoe zdorov' e! 7.
49 Vasilevskii, Gigiena pionera, and Zheleznyi, Kak Zhit'.
50 N.A. Semashko, Nauka o zdorov' e obschestva (sotsial'naia gigiena) izd. 2-oe, (Moscow: NKZ, 1926), pub. 10,000.
51 Biblioteka "plamia" Gigiena i zdorov' e rabocheho i ego sem' i (Stalingrad: Bor'ba, 1925), 21.
52 Vasilevskii, Gigiena pionera, 26.
53 Ibid., 19. See also Gorsuch, Flappers, 13.
54 N. A. Semashko, Isskustvo odevat' sia (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1927). pub. 15,000.
summer. Hygienists advised women to avoid the perils of fashionable dress, such as unstable high heels, constricting waistlines, and long skirts which dragged up dirt and instead recommended loose jumpers (sarafani) and low shoes. Jewelry was decried as both bourgeois and primitive. According to Vasilevskii "In terms of beauty and in terms of health, the best adornment of a girl is her natural freshness and attraction of her youth."

Maintaining healthy eyes, ears and teeth appeared as a distinct concern outside of general bodily hygiene. "If you ruin your eyes, you cannot buy new ones," advised A. V. Mol’kov, director of the State Institute of Soviet Hygiene, in one pamphlet. Another pamphlet gave instructions on reading in proper lighting and at a proper distance, always wearing glasses if they have been prescribed, and never using anything other than sanitized cloth to remove particles from eyes. The author continued that one should read from no closer than thirty centimeters with the light source on the left or straight ahead of the reader. Alongside these recommendations for eye care stood instructions for ear care, including never putting matches or sharp objects in the ear. It repeated the same strictures for the nose.

55 Zheleznii, Kak zhiti', 22.
56 For fashionable dangers (high heels and skirts) see L. M. Vasilevskii, Gigiena molodoi devushki, (Moscow: Novaia moskva, 1926), 25-30. pub. 20,000; and also S.D. Astrinskii, Dr., Devushka budushchaia mat', (Leningrad: molodaia gvardiia, 1926), 5. pub. 10,000. Henri Beraud gave accounts of the contemporary fashions in his The Truth About Moscow: As seen by a French Visitor Trans. by John Peile, M.A. (London: Faber and Gwyer, 1925), 49-51.
57 Gorsuch, Flappers, 19; Jewelry was addressed as incompatible with party life in A. A. Sol’ts, O partetike(Moscow: Kommunisticheskii universitet, 1925), 14. pub. 6,000.
58 Vasilevskii, Gigiena molodoi devushki, 34; Sander L. Gilman discusses the cultural implications of health and the equation of beauty or ugliness with health or ill health in the west in Picturing Health and Illness: Images of Identity and Difference (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).
59 A. V. Mol’kov, ed. Sanitarnoe prosveshchenie: V shkole i cherez shkolu vyp. 1. (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1923), 33-34.
61 Kal’manson and Bekariukov, Beregi svoe zdorov’e! 11.
Questions of dental health and care occupied an inordinate amount of space compared to that for eye and ear care. Almost every health pamphlet recommended brushing twice daily, and a visit to the dentist every six months rounded out the regimen. In a poem on dentistry in the magazine *For a New Life*, readers are told to brush twice daily for three minutes each time, and *Take hold of your health!* advised in which directions to brush upper and lower teeth. Mol’kov emphasized brushing for its connection to good nutrition and good eating habits, for without strong teeth, workers could not chew the food as well as they were told. Rotting teeth led to stomach ailments and in pregnant women could harm the fetus.

More than just a healthy habit, brushing indicated cultural attainment. On the cover of Vasilevskii’s *Pioneer Hygiene* the entire book is summed up in the picture of a smiling pioneer with an enormous toothbrush. (See figure 1.4). In one hygiene series poster, the brushing of teeth imparted character strengths such as precision and vigor. “Be accurate; forget laziness, clean teeth daily.” (See figure 1.5). Workers themselves recognized brushing as a sign of change. At a health-work-assessment meeting in 1927, one worker stood and professed:

The cultural level of the working mass has markedly risen and therefore the needs of the working class for medical help have also risen. Who of the workers would have cared before for their teeth? And now, a tooth just starts to darken and we are already at the dentist because we now

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64 Mol’kov, *Sanitarnoe prosveshchenie*, 32.
65 For pregnant women’s teeth see Antonov, 5.
understand the connection which exists between the pain of a tooth and gastric illnesses. 66

For this worker, interest in dental health signified cultural enlightenment and the progress of science. Cultural transition was connected to habits which were connected to health.

Just as a darkening tooth could intimate future internal problems. Hygienists recognized that maintaining the outside of the body was not enough for health and that its internal workings must be cared for as well. “The body must be cared for like a working machine,” Gastev admonished in his Youth come forward! of 1923. 67 Just as a machine, he explained, it had to be carefully monitored both by the clock and in terms of fuel. In the rather detailed explanation which appeared in the book, Gastev spelled out a fifteen-day work and rest schedule itemizing the food needed to maintain the body during this period.

III. 15 Spring Days in 1921.

A. Organism’s activity: B. Quantity of food:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>per day</th>
<th>in all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental labor</td>
<td>9 h. 32 m.</td>
<td>143 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical labor</td>
<td>1 h. 28 m.</td>
<td>22 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>1 h. 30 m.</td>
<td>22 1/2 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sleep</td>
<td>5 h. --</td>
<td>75 1/2 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccounted</td>
<td>- h - m.</td>
<td>- h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic labor</td>
<td>6 h. 30 m.</td>
<td>97 1/2 h.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24 h. * 15</td>
<td>360 h.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Blk. Bread 8 1/2 lb.

onions 4

Potatoes 4

Nuts 2

Dried apples

in water 1 lb.

water 18 lb. 69

Food maintained the body, but it was also a danger to health according to Semashko, “The most common method through which infection enters the body seems to be our mouths and

66 “Moskovskii porfaktiv o rabote Moszdrava” ZNB 11-12 (June 1927): 4.
67 A. Gastev, lunost’ idi! (Moscow: VTsSPS, 1923), 17.
68 Gastev’s schedule called for less sleep than most hygienists recommended and for which workers had agitated.
69 Ibid, 17.
our digestive organs. Most often this infection comes through water. For proper
digestion, hygienists further recommended that food be at a medium temperature, eaten
slowly in small bites, and thoroughly chewed. Hygienists also recommended limiting the
intake of water. Zheleznyi recommended four to five glasses a day. Semashko counseled
that water should be boiled to eliminate infectious agents. Again, pregnant women
received special instructions to protect their fetus by avoiding meaty, salty or hot foods, and
spirits.

The 1923 pamphlet Labor and worker's leisure: The lunch break explored at length
the meanings and needs of the worker in furtherance of the goal of “the most work without
harm to the organism.” The author hailed the lunch break as “one of the most reliable
means to restrict the number of accidents and illnesses of a professional character and to
preserve the health of workers.” Rather than concentrating on what foods should be eaten
or how they should be chewed, Vaks focused upon the environment in which dining
should take place -- the community dining hall. It should be hygienic and sanitary, but also
comfortable, with a stocked reading room and space for physical exercise, games,

70 N.A. Semashko, Nauka o zdrove obshchestva (sotsial'naia gigiena) izd. 2-oe, Moscow: NKZ, 1926, 13. pub. 10,000.
71 L.M. Vasilevskii, Gigiena pionera, Biblioteka iunogo pionera, Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1925, 28. pub. 20,000. See also S. Kal'manson, and D. Bekariukov, Beregi svoe zdrove! Sanitarnaia pamiatka dlia rabochikh podrostkov. (Leningrad: Molodaia gvardiia, 1925), 15. pub. 10,000. Thorough chewing, or Fletcherizing, gained vogue in the United States at the turn of the century. For information on Fletcher see Harvey A. Levinston, Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 87-92.
72 Zheleznyi, Kak Zhit', 22.
73 Semashko, Nauka o zdrove obshchestva, 14.
74 A. Antonov, D-r. Pamiatka materia (Leningrad: Priboi, 1925), 5.
discussion and even a place where workers could go outside to eat. Vaks stated that this was based in part upon the research of Taylor and the English who founded workers' cafeterias during the war to keep workers healthy and productive. This advice seemed to be taken to heart as pictures of worker dining halls invariably showcased white tablecloths on tables with flowers and full place settings.

Nutritional health was of too great importance to be left to non-professionals. To help women prepare meals and to ensure better nutrition and allotment of resources, the Soviet government experimented with communal dining halls during the Civil War and in 1923 established a department to see to the feeding of the general population. Narpit (People’s nutrition) was beset by funding problems and poor materials. By 1926 they only fed about eleven percent of workers and five and a half percent of the city population as a whole because few kitchens functioned and many produced inferior food at higher prices than home-cooked meals.

For those who were ill and needed special attention, the dietetic cafeteria was poised to answer this call. In 1924, the commission for the protection of labor resolved that dietetic cafeteria should be brought into reality. Established for those with diet-related illnesses, within five years they had given 5,000 lectures on food-related themes and seen more than 40,000 patients in Moscow. Several types of dietetic cafeterias served the needs of the community, either at hospitals or other health institutions. However, they all

76 Ibid., 27-28.
77 Ibid., 14, 28.
79 A.N. Ginozman and E. Iurovskaia, "K pitaletiitui raboty dietstolovykh v Moskve," in Moskovksii otdel zdravoohraneniia, ed. Piat’let raboty dietstolovykh, (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1928), 1-2. pub. 3,000. The number of dietetic cafeterias rose fairly steadily but was never high; 1924 - 10; 1924/5 - 24; 1925/6 - 26; 1926/7 - 27; - 1927/8 - 27; 1928/9 - 27, 4.
required that patients be admitted by a doctor, adhere strictly to their regimen while in the
program and submit to their supervision. As with other prophylactic institutions
connected to the Moscow Department of Health, the patients were educated as they were
treated. In addition to attending lectures, they learned an entire healthful eating style.
According to a questionnaire given out to workers on the first anniversary of the dietetic
cafeterias, when asked what they had learned, the majority of the respondents said, ""How
to eat in order to be healthy. To wash hands before eating. To not rush eating. To chew
food well and to mind the work of the intestines."

Hygienists conceived of the ideal body as regulated and clean — an efficient
machine — and described in detail the ways in which a proper lifestyle could positively
affect an individual's health and society generally. Attention did not always center on the
positive. Whereas positive behaviors could change all of society, negative habits, or even
just one negative habit, led to a full host of problems according to the images in propaganda
plays and posters. Reformers singled out smoking, drinking and wanton, sexual activity as
particularly degrading to the body and campaigned against all three as will be further
explored in the next section.

The impure body: Smoking, Drinking and Sex

B. E. Dobrusina, "Vozniknovenie i etapy razvitiia deitolechehhiia v Moskve," in Moskovskii otdel
zdravoohraneniia, ed. Piat' let raboty dietstolovikh, (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1928). pub. 3,000.
"Rabota dietstolovoi profilaktorii imeni Shumskoi (Dolozheno na knoferentsii v Institute im. V.A.
Obukha)," Ezhenedel'nik Moszdravotdela 3, no. 156 (1926): 40-41.
N. Lebina, Rabochaia molodezh Leningrada: Trud i sotsial'nyi oblik, 1921-1925, (Leningrad: Nauka,
1982), 145-146. Reformers in the French war on tuberculosis linked syphilis and alcoholism to
tuberculosis see David S. Barnes, The Making of a Social Disease: Tuberculosis in Nineteenth-Century

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Pamphlet literature repeated the message of the poster which opened the chapter, smoking was not part of a proper regimen. According to anti-smoking advocates, smoking destroyed the body in a number of ways. In its pure form, the nicotine from cigarettes could kill, and more extensively it stunted growth and destroyed teeth, lungs, stomach, vision, and nerves. According to the pamphlet Hygiene for Propagandists, smoking harmed one of their most important work tools — their voice. The cover of the pamphlet, The Truth about Smoking insinuated that cigarettes enslaved the heart implying the vanquishing of the will by vice (See figure 1.6). In more dire predictions, smoking could lead to heart problems, blindness (in conjunction with alcohol), hearing loss, and even memory loss (according to American experiments cited by the author). Smokers also more easily became infected with tuberculosis. A poster from the Moscow Department of Health summed it all up with the slogan, “Quit your smokin': it's paper wrapped poison.” (See figure 1.7). The disgusted look of the youth in the poster conveyed the disgust with which smokers should see their habit according to hygienists. The disembodied cigarette focused attention on the object rather than the addicted person.

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83 Iu. N. Vonzblein, Пусть здоровь, Biblioteka zhurnala gigiena i zdror'ev rabochei i krest'ianskoi sem'i, vyp. 29, (Leningrad: Leningradskaia pravda, 1926). pub. 10,000.
84 B. Sigal, D-r. Vrednaia privychka (Kuren' e tabaka), (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe meditsinskoe izdatel'stvo, 1929), 5-10. pub. 20,000.
85 I. M. Vasilevskii told of 1 woman who had 7 healthy children but then went to work in a cigarette factory and had 7 miscarriages and another woman had 6 miscarriages while working at the factory and 2 healthy ones after leaving, see Gigiena propagandista (Agitatora, lektora, prepodavatelia), (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiiia, 1924), 21. pub. 10,000.
87 I. M. Barushkin, Pochemu vreden tabak (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 7. pub. 15,000.
Smoking hurt women more severely than men according to A dangerous habit (tobacco smoking) and could have drastic effects on her progeny. Another article implied that a smoking mother could seriously affect the health of her child and end up either not bearing the child or having a child who was weak and pale. While women directly harmed children with their actions, fathers took the blame for glamorizing smoking and making their children wish to emulate their habits. In the trial of a smoking pioneer, although the boy admitted to ignoring the pioneer pledge and expert advice, the father received partial blame for his son’s habit because he set a poor example.

As with other bad habits, hygienists portrayed the harm to the individual as secondary to the harm to society as a whole. According to studies cited by the author of The Truth about Smoking, smoking or even the handling of tobacco products caused pregnant women to have severe complications, harming both present and future generations. In the anecdotal cases he provided to substantiate this, the women had healthy children before or after work in the cigarette factory but only miscarriages while there. If the damage to children was not enough, the author added that there was a very high rate of death among tobacco workers. The actual production of cigarettes harmed others, hence crippling society.

In addition to endangering the health of others, smoking contributed to the problems tearing apart society. Smoking caused fires and wasted good farmland, and coincided,
noted one text significantly, with the criminal element. Moreover, smokers at work endangered their co-workers and garnered unequal treatment. To let them have separate smoking lounges was detrimental not only because it gave them special privileged space when it was at a premium but also because that allowed them breaks from work. In sum, the pamphlet *Take hold of your health!* stated:

The smoker harms not only himself, but also those around him, forcing them to breathe air saturated with smoke.
The smoker submits a rather harmful example to youth and juveniles, since smoking generally begins with imitation.
The smoker supports the tobacco industry, one of the most harmful to the health of workers.

N. Bukharin stated in “Youth must build their lives according to the new!” that smoking was an old habit of the old regime. Youth smoked then to protest the regime, but now it did nothing. “It spoils the air, spoils the smoker, disturbs our living together and fouls your goods (*dobro*).” He continued that smoking was not new or stylish in any way.

While hygienists recognized that smoking had once been a form of rebellion against the regime, it was obviously no longer acceptable. One author noted, it was fine during the time of capitalism, but hard times were really no excuse. He concluded that women had life much harder and smoked considerably less than men. Instead of smoking being an attribute of the revolutionary, writers argued that it was against the will of the foremost man of the revolution — Lenin. Semashko said that Lenin had been the initiator of the present

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93 Ibid., 18; Sigal, *Vrednaia privychka*, 12.
95 Kal’manson and Bekariukov, *Beregi svoe zdorov’e!* 18.
97 Sazhin, 25-27.
anti-smoking campaign. Lenin, according to Semashko, forbade smoking in meeting halls and kept the transom open to ensure clean air. In really long meetings Lenin supposedly allowed smoking but only in the area of the fireplace where smokers could blow their smoke up the flue. According to Semashko, Lenin referred to these people as the "smoking cockroaches." Picking up the message, some groups expressed their revolutionary fervor with anti-smoking messages. In one Moscow factory, the workers began a no-smoking circle in 1925 in cooperation with the dispensary devoted to chemical addictions such as alcohol, smoking, and narcotics. Twenty-five workers gave up smoking for six months. Letter writers also complained about smoky conditions which needed to be changed in clubs and work areas around the city.

Alcohol was paired with smoking as a bad habit which endangered health, though it received the more severe condemnation. Semashko pointed out that alcohol, "destroys all human organs." In another pamphlet he commented that alcohol "destroys the protective forces of the organism. It destroys, for instance, the heart, which regulates everything, destroys the liver, which also influences a person's general constitution, on general health,

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98 Semashko, Putin sovetskoi fiskul'ury, 31.
99 Ibid. See also N. A. Semashko, Nezabyvaemyi obraz izd. 2-oie (Moscow: Politizdat, 1968), 15. Sigal also referred to this story in Vrednaia privychka, 16.
100 In a mospoligraph factory, the workers began a no-smoking circle in 1925 in cooperation with the narkodisperser and 25 workers gave up smoking for 6 months. See, "Polgoda ne kuriat," ZNB 14-15 (1926): 24.
101 In the letter, "A bad example," the writer complained of the health cell room at Presnenskii soviet which was always smoked up and crowded and was a difficult place to breathe. The author stated that they needed to keep their own rules. See Paz, "Dumoi primer," ZNB 22 (1926): 12.
102 In L.M. Vasilevskii's Gigiena molodoi devushki, he conceded that smoking was dangerous but attested that drinking was even more detrimental to a young woman's health. (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1926), 30. pub. 20,000.
103 Semashko, Okhrana zdorov'ia rabochikh, 44.
destroys the kidneys, destroys the blood vessels and leads to arteriosclerosis.”

Semashko gave abstention from alcohol as the first rule of personal hygiene.

The effects of alcohol on the individual were severe and crippling according to the literature, but the effects on the individual paled in comparison to those which were visited upon society and their progeny because of the alcoholic’s weakness. Alcoholics made poor workers. “His hands shake, his eyes are poor, he is completely incapable of detail work.” The alcoholic wasted his money on drink. Alcoholics made bad examples for children attempted to imitate them. They also directly endangered their children’s development. Children of alcoholics suffered from idiocy, psychosis, and more easily became criminals. One pamphlet stated that drunken parents gave birth to children with rickets, and rhetorically asked, “Do drunken parents have the right to bear children and to produce sickly, unneeded people? No, they do not...if a husband or wife is a drunkard they should not have children. Their children will not only be sickly but drunkards just like their parents.”

However as one pamphlet noted, while America may sterilize drunkards, this was not an acceptable solution in the Soviet state, and they must be educated. In party

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104 Semashko, Sotsialnye bolezni, 13.
105 Ibid.
106 Alcoholics are consistently labeled unable to help themselves or weak of character. See L.N. Bitte, "Bor'ba s gor'koi," ZNB 17-18(1925): 5-6; and the agitational trial by L. A. and L.M. Vasilevskii, Sad nad samogonshchikami: Delo Karpova Tikhona i ego zhany Akaf' po obvineniiu v izgotovlenii i tainoi torgovle samogonkoi (n.p.: October, 1923), 27. no pub.
107 Semashko, Okhrana zdorov'ia rabochikh, 44.
108 Ibid.
109 L.N. Bitte, "Bor'ba s gor'koi," ZNB 17-18(1925): 5-6; for alcohol’s connection to criminality, see M.N. Gernet, ed. Prestupnyi mir Moskvy: sbornik statei (Moscow: Pravo i zhizni, 1924).
111 B. S. Sigal, D-r., Alkogolizmom i molodezh'. (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1925), 21-23. pub., 10,000.
organizations drinking could lead to dismissal for “discrediting the party,” and the pioneer code listed both drinking and smoking as unacceptable in pioneers.  

In addition to its effect on children and families, alcoholism led to economic problems. Work absences and accidents brought about by alcohol figured prominently in anti-alcohol literature. According to a Sigal pamphlet, “There are more accidents on Monday than any other day of the week. True, one factor in this is that the organism after a long rest has not yet readjusted to the work process, and therefore attention is weakened. But a far greater factor is alcohol.” The poster, “Drive out the drunkard from the thicket of workers!” brilliantly conceived alcohol’s effect on the factory and consequently the economy (See figure 1.8). A drunk, portrayed as a sickly, yellow, hovering figure, sloppily poured a glass of liquor. In the gigantic size of the worker, the artist relayed the message that one individual’s actions could be very powerful. The alcohol sloshed into the glass and overflowed it, dousing the factory below. The poster appended the phrase, “In a small glass is enough to drown a huge factory” In the yellow-coloring, the poster connected the sickness of the drunkard with other recognized societal burdens. The color yellow evoked both the yellow-ticketed, pre-revolutionary prostitute and the yellow-hued Russian mad house.

The poster “Down with church holidays” made similar connections of alcohol with societal harm, decreased productivity, and added in the specter of religion (See figure 1.9).

117 TsMAM f. 1474, op. 3, d. 2, l. 11; Vasilevskii, Gigiena pionera, 29; In a few districts the KOTiB obtained police records of people charged with drunk and disorderly conduct and hounded them to get to dispensary, and claimed this method led to the healing of about 4,000 people. Kovgonkin, "Obshchestvennaia bor'ba s narkotizm" ZNB 4-5 (March 1927): 15. See also Sol’tz, O Partetike, 18-20.  
118 B. Sigal, Dr., Trud i zdorov’e rabochei molodezhi, (Leningrad: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1925), 42; Kathy S. Transchel describes “blue monday” and other drink related work problems in “Under the Influence: Drinking, Temperance, and Cultural Revolution in Russia, 1900-1932.” (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, 1996) 146.
In the central image, two workers stumbled in front of a large work calendar with nearly all the dates blocked out by the words “skip” or “illness” vividly connecting over-consumption with decreased productivity. Again, the figures were larger than life, reiterating the far-reaching impact of one individual’s actions. Alcohol consumption harmed public order and domestic life more drastically than anything smoking literature posited. The poster depicted a drunk man molesting a woman on the streets of the city in one panel and storming out of his shattered home and away from his sobbing wife and child in another. Perhaps most distressingly, the drunkard came to death in a streetcar accident in the upper, right-hand panel, a “victim of the religious revelry” who actually seized the transportation arteries of the busy city thereby harming everyone. The streetcar stood unmoving and crowds milled about.114

The poster, “The workers of the USSR” presented a similarly bleak picture of the effects of alcohol on society and domestic life (See figure 1.10). Criminals and haggard prostitutes framed the five panels of alcohol-infused life on the left and five panels of sober life on the right. In the center of the poster, a larger-than-life worker confronts the choice of stupor or sobriety. In a crux position, he stands between dark and light, bad and good, destitution and prosperity. Fighting, battery, and destitution greeted the alcoholic at home instead of the clean, ordered, well-appointed room available to the sober worker. With sobriety followed more children, material prosperity, and even technological advance. At work, the alcoholic mutilated himself in accidents and destroyed the entire establishment in fire in contrast to the industrial productivity symbolized by the smokestacks on the right.

The city of the alcoholic loomed dark and violent versus the ordered, electrically lit, cultured city of the theater, movies, and clubs on the right. Finally, as an end, the drunkard enjoyed

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114 In the lower left, the viewer was reminded of the “innocent trees” that lost their lives for these celebrations.
the company of prostitutes and sickness, finally choosing suicide over continuing such a life as opposed to the healthful route of sex-segregated, sober, physical activity on the right. By not observing one component of the healthy lifestyle, the entire vision of society and personal life collapsed.

Drink, in and of itself, endangered workers, but it could lead to more perilous circumstances like narcotics abuse or prostitution and consequently venereal disease. In the agitational play, “Trial of a syphilitic,” the worker Platonov infected a friend’s wife by getting her drunk and then raping her. Returning to her husband, the woman infected him. In another, agitational, mock trial, a fatherless, alienated, teen poet started with alcohol but moved to the more seriously addictive cocaine which led to antisocial behavior and hooligan activity. Kagan explained the inexorable path of degradation from drink which completely destroyed hopes for the next generation:

Every husband and wife, of course, wishes to have a child, but it is not always possible, for instance, if they are syphilitic, which more often than not occurs because of drunkenness because a drunk person does not have the reserve to abstain from sexual intercourse, falls in with prostitutes, carries the infection to his wife, and that infection is then given to the children.

115 Platonov was sentenced to three years in isolation by the court. See B. S. “Sud nad sifilitikom,” Gigiena i zdrov’e rabochei sem’i: Dvukhnedel’nyi zhurnal gigienny i populiarnoi meditsiny 7 (15 December 1923): 14.
116 The term hooligan covers a variety of crimes which disrupted society at various levels. The Soviets undertook campaigns to root out hooliganism in the 1920s. For a nuanced discussion of the meanings of hooliganism for Russian culture mainly in the pre-revolutionary period and but also in the 1920s, see Joan Neuberger, Hooliganism: Crime, Culture, and Power in St. Petersburg, 1900-1914 (Berkeley: University of California, 1993). For the trial mentioned above, see Avlov, Sud nad khuliganami (Moscow: Doloi nеграмотност’, 1927).
Reformers implicated drink in both creating prostitutes and leading men to patronize prostitutes and there become infected. The agitational trial of a prostitute and a madam claimed that alcohol had so impaired the judgment of a country-boy who had left his wife at home that he slept with a poor prostitute who had numbed her senses with alcohol. He ended up catching syphilis from her. Sex under the influence always led to venereal disease, and sexually transmitted disease because they were deemed “secret diseases” by the population were an even more dangerous social evil than most others, according to B. S. Sigal in his pamphlet Venereal Diseases.

Hygienists concerned with impure lifestyle targeted sexual irregularity as a leading cause of a number of ailments not always venereal in nature. Scholar Eric Naiman pointed out the great concern with which theorists regarded sexual activity during the 1920s as they saw within it the seeds for corruption of utopia and society generally. Pundits regarded the activity of youth as especially dangerous, saying they were living A Life out of Control

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118 For more on the overall dangers of prostitution as a social hygiene problem see, L. M. Vasilevskii, D-r. Prostitutsiiia i rabochaia molodezh Biblioteka rabochei molodezhi pod obshchei redaktsiei MK RKSM, (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1924). pub. 10,000.
119 A.I. Akkerman, Sud nad prostitutkoi i svodnitsei: Delo grazhd. Evdokimovoi, po obvineniiu v soznat’ nom zarazhenii sifilisom i grazhd. Sviridovoi v svodnichestve i soobshchnichestva. (Moscow: NKZ, 1924), 38.
120 B.S. Sigal, Venericheskie bolezni. 2-oe izd. Trud, byt i zdorov’e rabochei molodezhi. (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1926), 3. pub. 10,000.
according to one book. Rules for sexual conduct emerged in various publications attempting to apply the same techniques of regimentation to sex as to other health issues.

Parents were strongly urged to discourage their child’s sexual awakening which could be retarded in children by avoiding tea, coffee, and alcohol, sleeping on a hard, individual bed on back with hands above covers, waking early, and washing with cold water, engaging in proper physical activity (which kept blood from sitting in the sex organs), working in fresh air, and staying away from lascivious entertainments.

Hygienists discouraged men from sexual activity out of marriage which in all depictions led to syphilis infection. Women were not even safe in marriage. One article noted seventy-five percent of sick women began their sexual life with their husbands and that seventy-one percent of dispensary patients were infected by their spouses. In the literature men often grew impatient with traditional treatment and skipped out on the full course of healing at the dispensary. In the agitational trial, Statute 155 of the law kodeks of the RSFSR, the wife became infected through just such a means. If patients underwent a full course of treatment, they were guaranteed health. To protect against infection, hygienists

\[^{122}\text{V. Ketlinskaia and Vlad. Slepkov, Zhizn’ bez kontrollia (Polovaia zhizn’ i sem’ia rabochei molodezhi), Biblioteka bytovoi konferentsi. Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1929. pub., 10,000. The book Pis’ma iz uteriannogo portfel’ia: O poshlosti v bytu caused quite a stir when it was let out with its interpretations of sexual irregularity among youth edited by Semashko. L. Lebedev and L. Rubinshtein. Komsomoľ’skaia publistika. (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1928).}\]

\[^{123}\text{A.B. Zalkind, Polovoi vopros v usloviiakh sovetskoi obshchestvennosti: Sbornik statei. Leningrad: Leningrad, 1926. Jessica Smith referred to Prof. Zalkind’s attempt to “industrialize” sex in her Woman in Russia, 129.}\]

\[^{124}\text{B. S. Sigal, D-r., Polovoi vopros, Zdorov’e rabochei molodezhi, (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1925), 27. no pub. See also, Vasilevskii, Gigiena pionera, 23-24, 27.}\]

\[^{125}\text{S.D. Astrinksii, Dr., Beremennost’ i venericheskie bolezni, (Moscow: Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva, 1928), 30 and Akkerman, Sud nad prostitutkoi, 191, 193.}\]

\[^{126}\text{M. Kaplun, vrach. “Vstupaia v brak, osvedomliaites’ o zdorovim drug druga,” ZNB (1926): 9.}\]
recommended soap and water or condoms or slathering the sex organs with calamine lotion and then washing with soap.\textsuperscript{127}

Hygienists preferred abstinence as the best choice. According to Sigal, “the healthiest and most stable men and women are those who are able to sublimate” their desires until “the solidification of the organism.”\textsuperscript{128} Masturbation or onanism presented a dangerous alternative to abstinence and hygienists decried the ways in which it weakened the body.\textsuperscript{129} Sexual arousal and pleasure were associated with the bourgeoisie and onanism with antisocial behavior.\textsuperscript{130}

For smokers, alcoholics and those led onto more dangerous paths by alcohol (narcotics or prostitution), salvation lay in the institutions of the department of health. In the poem “To a new life” the female protagonist slid from work at the train station, to drink, to prostitution, and finally to the boulevard but cannot be lost to this:

\begin{verbatim}
But falsely she decided
She did not have an out
She saw the grave before her
But the doctor gave a shout

“In the prophylactoria they’re able!”
Though the living there is hard
All the same life there is better
Than on the boulevard.

Working there you’ll see
That in life there is hope
and there you will soon forget
all the wine and other dope....
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{127} Sigal, \textit{Venericheskie bolezni}, 25.
\textsuperscript{128} Sigal, \textit{Polovoi vorpos}, 47
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 32-39.
The fight for life in history moves on in the U-S-S-R! to the propylactory Partner to the dispensary.  

The dispensary system promised recovery to the heroine -- the dispensary for help with addictions and the prophylactory for sexually transmitted diseases. The prophylactory provided the medical supervision and regimen of the dispensary but combined this with a place to live and job training. Women learned a trade and redeemed themselves through physical labor. The concept of redemption through physical exertion found repetition in the rhetoric of physical culture. More than just a part of the healthful regimen it imparted character, strengthened the will and curbed unhealthful sexual urges. The next section explores the multifaceted meanings of physical culture.

Physical fitness

Rather than engaging in unhealthful pursuits, advice literature urged workers to participate in physical activity. Physical culture would "make workers healthy and increase production of worker and peasant labor." Additionally physical exercise ensured a "bettering of the economic situation of the country and a rise in the cultural level of the population." Most importantly, the proper use of physical culture, according to Semashko, "does not only lead to the improvement of the population, in particular the

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132 Even were treatment effective the numbers reached could not have been high. In 1924 there were only 39 vendispensaries in the RSFSR as a whole. GARF f. A-482, op. 1, d. 552, l. 13.  
133 GARF, f. A-482, op. 1, d. 552, l. 13.  
134 GARF f. A-482, op. 1, d. 156, l. 48. For similar notes, see Sukharev, Rabochii, beregi svoe zdrove, 22.  
135 GARF f. 5451, op 10, d 502, l. 1.
young reserves, but helps solve the basic questions which modern life poses. Even
Lenin engaged in physical exercise -- cycling. Semashko averred that Lenin's cycling
strengthened Lenin enough that he survived the assassination attempt. Most importantly,
Lenin understood, according to Semashko, the broader meaning of physical culture.137

Sport first came to Russia in the 1860s.138 Government authorities hoped it would
curb worker and student discontent, and in 1912 the tsar centralized sport under
government power for assistance in military training.139 After the revolution, in the face of
extreme health problems, sport was seen as a cheap and quick way to raise the health of the
population and educate them to a full and healthful lifestyle.140 Hygienists liked the idea of
physical exercise but opposed the competitive nature of sport preferring the idea of physical
exercise and gymnastics or “physical culture.”141

Although Semashko argued that the primary goal of physical culture was to
increase labor productivity, he insisted that it must also enter into the entire day’s activities
and proceed twenty-four hours a day.142 The higher council of physical culture agreed.
They recognized the interconnections of physical exercise to an entire healthful lifestyle. In
discussions they underlined, “physical culture in the broadest sense of the word...

136 N.A. Semashko, Puti sovetskoifizkul'tury, (Moscow: Vysshii sovet fizicheskoi kul'tury, 1926). tir
6,000.
137 Semashko, Puti sovetskoifizkul'tury, 29-30.
138 James Riordan, Sport in Soviet Society: Development of Sport and Physical Education in Russia and
139 Ibid., 32-33 and Henry W. Morton, Soviet Sport: Mirror of Soviet Society. Russian Civilization Series
(New York: Collier books, 1963), 160.
140 Riordan, 73.
141 Ibid., 97.
142 Semashko, Puti sovetskoifizkul'tury, 24-25.
employing the correct personal hygiene, using the forces of nature — sun, air, [and] a correct regimen of labor and rest.\textsuperscript{143}

Physical culture did not just contribute to a healthful lifestyle by developing a strong organism, but also gave the healthy organism strength of will to resist other temptations.\textsuperscript{144} Studies in 1923 noted that factories with less sport had more problems with illness, alcoholism, and hooliganism.\textsuperscript{145} By far the most important temptation which physical culture thwarted was that towards sexual activity. “Physical culture destroys the physiological bases for sexual anomalies,” wrote Semashko.\textsuperscript{146} Discussions of physical culture’s effects on sexuality were extremely gendered. For men, physical culture cut down on sexual urges, and for women, physical activity strengthened procreative abilities. In both cases, it increased their potency. Men who denied themselves physical pleasure increased their stamina, leadership qualities, and strength, while women’s exercises concentrated on making them healthier mothers.

Women needed physical culture more, according to one book, because of pregnancy.\textsuperscript{147} The poster “Among women displacement of the internal sexual organs is frequently observed” concentrated on the reproductive effects of physical culture for women and recommended a series of exercises to prevent a prolapsed uterus (See figure 1-11). The central diagram illustrated a bisected uterus and underscored the visible nature of

\textsuperscript{143} GARF f. A-482, op. 1, d. 156, l. 49.
\textsuperscript{144} Bernstein, "What Everyone Should Know," 289.
\textsuperscript{146} N.A. Semashko, \textit{Puti sovetskoi fizkul'tury}, (Moscow: Vysshii sovet fizicheskoi kul'tury, 1926), 56. pub. 6,000.
\textsuperscript{147} Veronika Gorinevskaia, \textit{dr. Fizicheskaia kul'tura rabotnitsy} (Moscow: Trud i kniga, 1925,) 7. pub. 6,000.
Notably, the poster presented these exercises directly connected to pregnancy as taking place inside the walls of the home thus constricting women's sphere. Hygienists encouraged women to exercise yet cautioned against too much exercise and strongly discouraged women from exercising during their menstrual periods. According to the above poster during menstruation women should only do light exercises and walks. Other sources advised women to do nothing at all during their period and instead lie down and rest through it.149 Non-menstruating women never approached the strengths of men. Hygienists advised even healthy women never to do as much as men and never to participate in certain sports -- "football, weight lifting, wrestling, boxing and jumps from great heights (into depths from a height of six feet) are completely forbidden!" (See figure 1-11)

In a companion poster, men's physical culture presented an image containing considerably different outcomes and reasons for physical exercise. In the poster, "Sun, Water and Good Air - The best rest from labor," the artist presented men's relaxation as integral to their role in contributing to the state in production not reproduction (See figure 1-12). The participation in sunbathing and water activities in the first two panels led to the well-defined muscular males of the third panel, either ready to play, or having just finished, a chess game. In their homo-social world, the men participated in sport to tone both their bodies and their minds, but not for any procreative function. In a society resonating with

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149 Gorinevskaja, 45.
military metaphors the homo-social environment may have prompted viewers to tie physical fitness to military experiences and perhaps even readiness.\(^\text{120}\)

The cover for the D.A. Kradman pamphlet, “Physical culture as a part of cultural-enlightenment work” illustrated the same message (See figure 1-13). The silhouette of an obviously built-up male figure presented in stasis, with book in hand and weight-training equipment at rest, but at the ready, connected the idea of physical vigor with intellectual acuity. The posture and bearing intimated strength and command. Replace the dumbbell on end with a globe or astrolab and the pose of the shadowy male figure called to mind portraits of historical men of power. For men, obviously, physical culture prepared them for leadership and domination.

The Mind and the Body

As evidenced in the above image, these strictures for bodily care held great political potential in the eyes of hygienists. But the potential was not simply directed toward the competition of nations. The physically healthy not only produced more but were also more fit mentally. Thus, the state of the body directly affected that of the mind. Commissar of Health Semashko reflected in 1926, “Among us, even now, we have taken to talking about the ‘soul’ and the ‘body’ as in olden days, and to separate and contrast the spiritual and physical life as if the ‘soul’ and the ‘body’ settled in our different pockets.” But according to the philosophy of materialism, he said, such a division was not possible.\(^\text{151}\) He continued that ancient philosophers were not altogether wrong in their explanations of the connection between the body and the soul:

\(^{120}\) The poses, glances, and lithe, naked male forms imply to the modern eye a certain homo-erotic tone, but Russian culture is less concerned with male nudity than this one.

\(^{151}\) As Sigal put it life was a physical and chemical process with no room for a “soul”. See *Trud i zdorov’* e, 5.
When the ancient Romans said: ‘in a healthy body there is a healthy soul’ -- they incorrectly separated the soul from the body but correctly noted the connection and dependence between the ‘spiritual’ and ‘bodily’ phenomenons. They said: ‘the physically healthy man displays a healthy mental life: whoever is generally sound of health is also sound of mind.”

For Semashko, the mind and body worked in symbiotic relationship. The state of the body manifested in the state of the mind. This concept, elucidated by Semashko, found repetition in pamphlets and posters.

The debate as to the place of the will within the physical shell of the body and the effects of one upon the other had long occupied Russian theorists in their debates upon the shape of “the new man” in Russia. In the literature of the 1860s, the image of the new man became a repository for all the longing for a new life which intellectuals, inspired by Marx, Nietzsche and Feuerbach, could express. Given the genesis of this body in the minds of intellectuals and social commentators, it is not surprising that the new man was both a physical and mental entity, one in whom neither was separated from the other, but in which both mind and body acted in symbiosis. In What is to be Done?, Cherneshevskii’s hero Rakhmetov was strong physically and mentally, and later Soviet commentators would continue this vision of their own. Belinskii and Dobrolyubov also saw the reflection of a healthy mind in a healthy body.

The issue of the mind’s strength entered into definitions of hygiene. The library for the journal Hygiene and health of the worker and peasant family included the A. L.

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132 Semashko, Puti sovetskoi fizkul'tury.
134 Riordan, 43.
Mendel'son works on hypnosis and memory." Control of the mind appeared as a theme in other venues as well, testifying to the popularity of the question. Lectures in clubs often focused on hypnosis, and Bulgakov staged a wickedly fun parody of the popular obsession in his Master and Margaritta. The great interest in controlling the mind may have reflected the common belief that war and revolution had weakened the mental powers of Russia’s fine young men.

It is beyond doubt that the events of the past years, such as the imperialist and Civil Wars, the revolution with all that poured from its consequences and the current standards of daily life -- unemployment or overwork, foul living conditions, the sharp contrast of the old lifestyle with the new forms of social construction -- markedly increased the number of neurotics.*

The state of the body could both help and hinder the workings of the mind. Semashko cautioned that alcohol weakened the will, "Look at the person of a "drunkard." His hands shake. He is puffy...his eyes and face are red. He is dressed shabbily and...has already lost the feeling of human modesty. Children laugh at him."

Sexual urges were widely held to be detrimental to the workings of the mind. For men, onanism weakened mental capabilities, however, men could overcome the burdens of their bodies upon their minds by denying themselves sexual release.** For women, whom philosophers had long depicted as more connected to the physical and natural, the normal

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*155 A. L. Mendel’son, Privat-dotsent. Gipnoz i vnuшенie B-ka zhumala Gigiena i zdrovo’re Rabochei i krest’ianskoi sem’i, vyp. 61. (Leningrad: Leningradskia pravda, 1927). pub 5500 and by the same author, Ob ukreplenii pamiati B-ka zhumala Gigiena i zdrovo’re rabochei i krest’ianskoi sem’i, vyp. 30. (Leningrad: Leningradskia Pravda, 1926). pub. 10,000


157 Semashko, Okhrana zdrov’ia rabochikh, 44.

158 I. Gel’man, Polovaia zhizn’ sovremenoi molodezhi 2-oi dopolnennoe izdanie. (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1923), 40-44.
functioning of their body could cripple them mentally. For instance, one commentator felt that the onset of menses completely overwhelmed young women:

> During the period of sexual maturation of the female organism proceeds a complex work, a large rebuilding. During this time it is not advisable to over stress with excessive work, neither physical, nor intellectual. No comparison should be made to boys of the same age...some of the forces of a girl are absorbed by internal reorganization within her...it is better that the girl during the period of sexual maturation stay perhaps even an extra year in class than to undermine the womanly force.¹⁵⁹

No amount of physical exercise allowed women to overcome this disability. However, the mind could triumph over the body with proper adherence to the rational powers of the doctor's prescribed regimen. Vasilevskii, in his advice to pioneers, suggested learning to defecate at the same time every day, "most advantageously in the morning, immediately after rising." By strength of the will, Vasilevskiia advised pioneers to regulate the internal workings of their bodies.¹⁶⁰

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The above stricture for maintaining a clean body and clothing as well as following a prescribed diet met with certain resistance due to both ideological concerns and material considerations. For many young, male activists the pristine, clean lifestyle recommended by the hygienists lacked the romance and mystique of the Civil War hero whom they credited with a certain lackadaisical attitude towards hygiene and bravado in relationships with women.¹⁶¹ Some activists "on principle" avoided personal sanitation.¹⁶² Others, like

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¹⁵⁹ V. E. Dembskaia, D-r., *Polovaia gigiena zhenshchin*. B-ka zhurnal gigiena i zdorov'e rabochei i krestianskoi sem'i, vyp. 67, (Leningrad: Leningradskaja Pravda, 1928). pub. 10,000.


¹⁶² K.I. Bukov, et. al. *Ocherki Istorii Moskovskoi Organizatsii VLKSM*. 71
young women, according to hygienists' admonitions, were unwilling to give up make-up, long hair, or fashionable clothing.

In addition to reticence on the part of youth to follow the strictures recommended by hygienists, the material conditions of Moscow most certainly contributed to the problem. Finding water and soap for the multiple, daily body and hand washings presented problems. In 1923 there were only thirty-six banias in the Moscow area which could serve only 160 people a day and 130,000 a month -- falling far short of the needs of the city's population. One helpful article, "How to be clean without the bania," described the ways in which one could do without soap or hot water for bodily washings, utilizing instead soda or salt. Material conditions in the capital did not allow for running water and bathroom facilities for many of the city's inhabitants as will be further explored in the next chapter. Even in apartments that had running water, keeping up with all the needs of the building's inhabitants remained difficult. In one instance, workers reportedly used the one tub in the one bathroom of their building for washing laundry and bathed at the public baths.

Still, hygienists trumpeted great benefits for following their instructions. They presented proper regimentation of life as a cure-all for illnesses both personal and societal. The pamphlet, What you must know about Cancer, stated "a simple, healthy life, simple foods, abstention from smoking and drinking -- keep a person young and protect him from cancer." The regimen also promised a healthy society. To commentators who feared that

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163 S.A. Gurevich, Obzor zhilishno-kommunal'nogo dela v Moskve i deiatel'nosti Moskovskoi zhilishno-kommunal'noi inspektii i sektii kommunal'noi sanitarii v 1922 g. (Moscow: Sanitornoi chasti MOZ, 1923), 47. pub. 3,000.
166 N. N. Petrov, prof., Shto nado znat' o rate, Biblioteka zhurnal Gigiena i zdrov'ye rabochei sem'i, vyp. 1, (Leningrad: Leningradskiala pravda, N.D.), 6. pub. 10,000.
years of Civil War, revolution, famine, and epidemic diseases had drained the population of vital energies, Semashko postulated in 1926 that the question of fatigue, "which now disturbs the party," could be settled by organizing time and regulating life.  

Hygienists promoted an image of bodily health which encompassed far greater goals than simply the maintenance of clean skin or the decrease of communicable disease. They aimed for a complete renovation of life through the manipulation of personal habits, and by this emphasis ensured that personal choices became political. The 1922 poster "The workers of the USSR," bluntly stated that workers did not have the "right" to drink (See figure 1.10). Indeed when maintenance of a proper regimen could so enhance industrial productivity and military capability, it became a societal duty to follow these strictures. Since illness could be avoided through proper behavior, it became a transgression to suffer from disease.

Perhaps more intangibly these same correct habits led to the triumph of culture. (See figure 1.3). In some cases, one improved habit opened the door to utopia. In the poster, "The workers of the USSR" electric light, material prosperity, culture, fecundity and domestic order accompanied abstention from drink. By cleansing one's body, maintaining a strict schedule, abstaining from polluting activities, and engaging in physical culture men could triumph over biology and resist the temptations and pitfalls of modern, urban life as well as the enticements of the flesh, thereby transcending the disturbing environment of the 1920s and progressing directly to utopia.

The next chapter examines the hygienists' attempts to modify the home and similarly rationalize and regiment its function. Again, personal choices for care of the home

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157 Clark, 47, and Semashko, Puti sovetskoi fizkul'tury. Theorists inspired by Taylor searched for one theory that would make everything work. Soviet health faith in the regimen seemed a similar quest for the one method to utopia. For more on the theme see Martha Banta, *Taylored Lifes: Narrative Productions in the Age of Taylor, Veblen, and Ford* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), ix.
take on the dimensions of societal duty, and their proper observance leads to utopia.

However, these choices become women's to make as hygienists target them as the forces of change in the home.
Figure 2.1. "The maintenance of cleanliness within the home is the duty of every conscious citizen," State institute of Social Hygiene. NKZ RSFSR, 1921-1925, pub. 5,000. All figures courtesy of the Russian State Library.
Figure 2.2. "Window" Institute of Sanitary Culture. Moscow: Mosgublit, 1927. pub. 300.
Figure 2.3. "Boiling Water" Institute of Sanitary Culture. Moscow: Mosgublit, 1927. pub. 300.
Figure 2.4 "Women workers build cooperation" 1921-1925. pub 20,000.
Figure 2.5. “Close the trash bucket and don’t breathe in infection,” Gorod i derevnia, 1926-1929, pub. 2,000.
Figure 2.6. “Air the room more often” Gorod i derevniy, 1926-1929, pub. 2,000.

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Figure 2.7. Cover, B. Sukharev, *Workers hold on to your health* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926).
Паренесение культурных навыков в семью.

От здрав'ечки вышло приказанье:
Ввести немедленно влажное подметание.

Figure 2.8. "Ugolok Otdykha" ZNB 13 (October 1925): 21.
Figure 2.9 “Comrades! Do not spit on the floor.” Gosmedizdat 1926-1929, pub. 10,000.
Figure 2.10 “Don’t be afraid of water. Wash daily!” Moscow: Gosmedizdat, 1926-1929, pub. 10,000.
Figure 2.11. “Wash hands!” Serii gigiena i truda, no. 10. Moscow: Voprosy truda. 1928, pub 5,000.
Figure 2.12. "Flush after every use!" Moscow: MOZ, 1926-1929, pub. 10,000.
CHAPTER 3:
HOME IS WHERE HEALTH BEGINS:
HOUSEKEEPING, WOMEN, AND SOCIETY

With the rise of the curtain on the play, "Our Life: An agit-lifestyle-buffoonery in two acts," the author set up the audience to experience the shock of recognition. There, on the stage, in all its cacophonous glory, stood their homes and apartments -- crowded, cluttered, filthy, and disordered with laundry draped in lush heaps amidst stacks of dishes encrusted with food from long-finished and forgotten meals. In the little space left in the maze of furniture, laundry, and mess an infant intermittently squalled while twin boys loudly played in the dirty water of a washtub shoved under a large table. Yet two more children rounded out the hell's chorus -- a boy sprawled on the floor who pretended to read while simultaneously screaming for quiet above the din and a girl who loudly sang to herself while waltzing across the stage.

In the middle of this chaos, a woman sloshed away doggedly at one of the many piles of laundry using a washtub atop the large table. Referred to only as "mother" throughout the seven-page script, she and her unceasing toil went unnoticed until the children's screaming directed itself toward her with cries for a potato, some attention, or arbitration in a fight. The cries and her obvious torture held until the curtain fell on the first act.

While the first act jolted with its stark reality, the second startled with its tranquility. The curtain rose on "Cheerful music and white light. It is the same room, only sparkling
clean and orderly. In the middle of the room stands a chair. On the wall are portraits of revolutionary leaders. A pioneer corner. Shelves with books.” Center-stage, the older girl, Liza, replete with a cheery, red kerchief around her neck, abandoned her previous waltzing to sweep. Her brother, Vania, ran in and began to help her clean only to bound out again to pick up the twins from the kindergarten as his sister left for dinner at the factory cafeteria.

Once the mother entered this portrait of smooth-running domestic order, her imprisonment from the home obviously overturned, she was willingly helped by Liza to set the dinner table for the return of the husband. When the father finally entered the play, Liza quickly admonished him for attempting to touch the children with his filthy hands, but after he and the rest of the family washed and dried their hands (on separate towels), they sat down to dinner. With dinner came further revelations. The mother announced her election as a public servant and while the father objected that she already had too many obligations, she crowed that she had been no better before, but now her children had become "such heroes (eagles)!!"

Finally, the players revealed in a jaunty tune the reasons for all this transformation:

| All:             | In the scene we have just shown you,  |
|                 | The connection we’ve not told you.    |
| Mother:         | Listen comrades here’s the deal,      |
|                 | I have joined the zhenotdel. ¹       |
|                 | I do not cook a luncheon             |
|                 | Our home has not a kitchen.           |
|                 | From now on that room must be        |
|                 | Communal for you and me.             |
|                 | For me it was two in one,             |
|                 | A slave cell and a prison.            |
| 7-year-olds:    | Brother and I did smarten            |
|                 | We go to kindergarten                |
| Mother:         | My dearest little kiddies,           |

¹ Women's bureau of the communist party.
Will soon be Oktiabristki.²

Vania and Liza: To pioneers we did sign
A year ago and we’re fine.

Mother: Treasure your children, believe me!
And let them pioneers be!

All: We are a little gladder
‘Cause mom’s a zhenotdeler³

The scant seven pages which the script occupied in the journal Workers Club managed to contain almost all of the major critiques which hygienists held of the home along with their recommendations for its more rational and healthful organization. According to reformers, in the contemporary home women were trapped in endless drudgery never managing to make any progress no matter how they worked while they simultaneously dealt with the irrational squabbling and petty demands of children. Theorists countered that with the introduction of Soviet power and training things would change considerably. In the play the children entered the nursery and pioneers, the mother the zhenotdel, and order took over. Knowledge and light transformed the entire scene. The tortured mother no longer stood chained to the washstand. The toil of the home vanished. The laundry completely disappeared. More importantly, attitudes transformed. The daughter ate at the factory kitchen and Soviet institutions cared for the children. The children helped in the home. All of this was the due of Soviet power and education.

While the play revealed Soviet plans for improvement of the home, it also displayed the biases of reformers and their unrealistic expectations. First, the nuclear family portrayed obviously did not represent all of the city’s inhabitants, but in hygienists’

² The Soviets had four youth group organizations which were intended to bring up children in the Soviet spirit. According to age, children either participated in the Octobrists, Pioneers, or Komsomol.
literature and leaders' recommendations, the nuclear family was the only target. Single men and women never received any advice except on finding a healthy mate, conveying the idea that a single lifestyle was abnormal. Secondly, men were passive. Their only important actions in the home were as active pioneer youth. Grown men appeared solely as the recipients of the new hygienic knowledge from the women in their lives and even then the men had to be trained in its use and are depicted as resisting the changes to the home.

In hygienists' depictions of the home, women are the agents of change, and hence, they are responsible for any backwardness in the home or for its transformation into a socialist paradise. Conversely, men simply received change and did not activate it. Therefore they were outside the responsibility of changing the home.

The changes wrought above by Soviet power were so smooth they actually were depicted in a song, but in reality changing the home involved more difficulty. In a city plagued by overcrowded, dilapidated apartment buildings and a general lack of basic water, sewer, and electric services, hygienists failed to acknowledge the simple mechanical problems of keeping the home clean. Just by taking daytime child care and food preparation out of the home the home magically cleaned itself and laundry disappeared. In keeping with the general devaluation of housework as unskilled, unwaged, and therefore unimportant, the essential tasks of laundering and cleaning the home remained unmentioned. The laundry disappeared even as the family switched to the use of individual towels. The ambivalent attitude of reformers towards food preparation came through, too. The daughter ate at the factory, but the husband still expected a dinner prepared at home.

While more extended families held sway in the countryside, as was noted in the introduction, hygienists literature directed itself primarily at improving conditions in the city and bringing the countryside's lifestyle to approximate that of the city.

Note the daughter's admonition of her father and his dirty hands and the husband's complaint that the wife was already overtaxed.
The wife prepared the husband's meals in her own, albeit "cell-like," kitchen rather than the communal kitchen. As for the further tasks needed to maintain a clean home, the daughter swept, but no additional labors -- dusting, water-carrying, mopping, etc. -- were mentioned.

While hygienists pledged to remove certain laborious tasks from the home, they ignored the many which remained along with the increased labor required of women by their new hygienic norms. Though the promised facilities for centralizing household tasks never materialized, women retained the responsibility and blame for conditions in the home.\(^4\) To complicate their lives still further, groups like the visiting nurses and the local health cells introduced new hygienic norms for the home in spite of the overburdening of women which these might entail. Additionally, women were urged to take on more tasks such as work outside the home -- both waged and volunteer.

Hygienists consistently portrayed those women who did not maintain the new norms as backwards, ignorant, and responsible for the problems in their house and consequently their effect on society. Once they turned to Soviet power their loads lightened. However, it is clear that women were not always coerced into compliance with the new health regulations and often welcomed the government's interference. A clean, ordered home with helpful children and a supportive spouse sounded attractive to many.

Soviet reformers who emphasized the hard battle which they fought and the ignorance and backwardness of their quarry may have overstated. Additionally, many women of various backgrounds participated in inspectorates and health cells, in effect voting with their feet.

The history of hygienic reform within the Soviet home cannot be presented simply. It is a multi-faceted story.

Utopia, home, family and women

Although the “agit-lifestyle-buffoonery” only took seven pages in the January issue of *Workers’ club*, the home and its transformation did not suffer from the inattention of hygienists. A variety of creative individuals in different mediums took on the project of reeducating the public on the importance of the home. Pamphlets outlined the proper way to keep a home and even to heat it. Posters detailed all aspects of housekeeping. Even special campaign weeks centered on propagandizing the healthy home. Still, all reflected the opinion of Commissar of Health N. A. Semashko who stated in his book *The Social Causes for Illness*, “The home is one of the most important factors in the health or ill-health of a person.” The following section will outline the ideal keeping of the home which hygienists trumpeted as the true path to the elimination of social diseases and societal problems.

Semashko warned that the condition of the home threatened the individual, but he expressed greater concern for the health of society at large. He worried more about the influence of life within the home on the spread of contagious disease. Citing numerous statistics drawn from around the world, Semashko made connections between apartment conditions and the spread of social diseases like tuberculosis and the perennial touchstone of international comparison, infant death. A. A. Ashikhman’s pamphlet *Social Diseases in the Home*, underscored the importance of the home to all aspects of health:

7 M. P. Dubianskaiia starts with the idea that the optimal temperature for the organism was 18 degrees Celsius and then proceeded from this point to fill out 46 more pages in *Gigiena zhilish: ob otoplenii pechami* (Leningrad: Leningradskaia pravda, 1927), pub. 10,000.

8 The “Week for sanitizing homes” was planned for somewhere between August and September of 1921 and would focus upon “the meaning of the house for health” as well as how to keep a healthy home, the politics of housing, tuberculosis and other infectious disease. See the planning circular from the sanitary enlightenment committee of NKZ GARF f. A-2313, op. 1, d 12a, l. 10.

9 N. Semashko, *Sotsial’nye prichiny bolezni* (Moscow: Moskovskii gosudarstvenny universitet, 1926), 20. pub. 3.000.
The modern man, especially the city-dweller, spends a significant portion of his life in the home. Disregarding that he sleeps here, prepares food here, he also often spends leisure time here and brings up small children. Therefore it is understandable that health and welfare depend to a very great extent on the kind of home in which we spend time.10

The gravity with which Semashko and Ashikhman regarded domestic health and its connection to disease drew upon and reflected world-wide concerns with urban health and societal strength. Both reformers cited European and American studies to buttress their arguments.11 Europeans first began to link societal health to the keeping of the home in the 1800s. With the industrial revolution in Europe, public health problems blossomed as the growth of industry caused massive amounts of people to crowd into urban centers and sorely stretch resources. Not surprisingly, the working class occupied the worst lodgings.12 Edwin Chadwick documented the health and housing conditions of the working class in his 1842 book *Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Laboring Population of Great Britain*, and the sanitary movement in Europe burgeoned.13 Chadwick’s report bolstered the argument that environmental factors influenced disease.14 With time, hygienists began to realize that more affluent homes could contain the same threats, and that in the modern, urban environment diseases of the lower classes could easily pass to the upper class. It

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10 Interestingly, all of the commentary focussed on “the modern man” even though women would be carrying out the majority of these tasks. See A.A. Ashikhman, Dr. *Sotsial’nye bolezni i zhilishche*. Z.G. Frenkel, ed. and intro #3 *Biblioteka Sanpredstavitelia 2-aiia seriia broshiur (kommissiia sanitarnyk predstawitelei)* (Leningrad:Kommissiia Sanitarnyk predstaviteleia, 1928), 12. pub. 6,000. See also his *Bolezn i byt: Borby s sotsialnymi boleziami* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1927). pub. 5,000.
11 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
was truly a problem for all of society, which parliament recognized when it passed the first public health act in 1848.13

For Soviet officials, the equation of the health of society with the health of the home transformed personal hygiene into a civic duty. A. V. Molkov wrote, "The maintenance of cleanliness in the home is the duty of every conscious citizen. It is important not just for [the citizen] himself, but also for all of society."14 Molkov's insistence on the civic nature of domestic maintenance formed the rallying slogan for the poster, "The Maintenance of Cleanliness in the Home." (See figure 2-1) As Molkov stated, a "good citizen" protected the welfare of the larger society, and thus he implied that housekeeping was a public and social matter rather than a personal and private decision. Thus considered, a healthy home became the basis for membership in society and its care was the interest of society and government.

The connection of domestic lifestyle with political and social issues held a long tradition in Russia. From the mid-1800s various Russian groups had deemed the developing city too dangerous a place to live for moral and practical reasons. Workers in the cities banded together against the splintering forces of the modern metropolis -- pooling expenses and dining in common groups hoping to make the most of their meager earnings.17 Many physicians of the late imperial period held that poor, filthy environments

14 A.V. Mel'kov. Materialy dlia besed o podderzhanii chistoti v zhilishche NKZ (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1921). 4. pub. 25,000.
encouraged disease. When Soviet reformers attempted to modernize the home they were building upon previous traditions. Planners hoped to actually change behavior and attitudes with new designs for apartment living which broke down the barriers between nuclear families and encouraged a more efficient use of resources. Marxism, with its emphasis upon material circumstances, placed great stock on the ability of the material environment to manipulate the psyche. In addition, Soviet psychology relied heavily upon the ideas of behavioralists from America, and their own Pavlov, to describe human behavior. The quest for perfect ordered environments was rooted in the quest for a new, more perfect individual to become the base for a transformed society.

To serve these twin goals of social and political health, hygienists diagnosed the problems of the home and came up with remedies. As part of the utopian plans, they reexamined women's position within the home. Most encouraged collectivizing domestic labor in communal kitchens, laundrettes, and nurseries. Importantly, though hygienists worked to streamline and make the home more efficient, they never questioned that these tasks were the sole responsibility of women. Even in communal and utopian groups their tasks often remained segregated. By relocating the labor, Soviets hoped to free women's time for the more important task of political activism. Even among the Soviets domestic

20 In the west, hygienic information for the home similarly targeted women almost exclusively, but there, Tomes argues, the investment of the tasks of the home with such powerful significance in life and death, elevated women's importance in the home, 10.
labor remained undervalued and became vilified as the source of women’s subjugation and a symbol and cause of her ignorance.  

As with all of the utopian dreams of the Soviets, these ideals had to be grafted onto a far from perfect reality, and utopia articulated in an imperfect reality took on unanticipated forms. While the problems were recognized and the ideal clear, much like the play, the transition from the worker’s home-life as it was to home-life as it should be remained poorly and incompletely expressed. Marxism upheld women’s liberation, but the grand dreams of the planners languished in the 1920s environment of scarcity. While activists presented nurseries, pioneer troops, and zhenotdel membership as cure-alls, in reality these programs were exceedingly small in number and could not begin to address the mountain of problems which women faced within the home as new hygienic norms increased, rather than decreased, their burdens. Hygienists recognized lack of facilities and increased burdens as hindrances, but did not tolerate them as excuses for women’s lack of social and political involvement. As the 1920s proceeded and communal facilities remained insignificant in the face of demand, the state called on women to muster their own resources for the satisfaction of their household needs. For “who has a closer interest to the home, if it is not women and the housewife.”

21 Jeffrey Brooks noted that in obituaries of great men in the pages of Pravda notes on family or home only appeared in 7% of the 495 cases, intimating the unimportance of these to power. See “Revolutionary lives: Public Identities in Pravda During the 1920s.” in Stephen White, ed. New Directions in Soviet History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 34-35.

22 Liza Kagan’s Put’ k obshestvennoi rabote (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 24-25. pub. 10,000. did not recognize overburdening as anyone’s problem but women’s. The book contended that women themselves needed to organize tasks more scientifically and work together to form communal organizations to take over their domestic tasks, and thus help themselves. With a communal laundry, one woman could do 65 kilograms of laundry in eight hours and thereby lighten her domestic chores.

23 N.A. Semashko, Okhrana zdorov’ia rabochikh i rabotnits krest’ian i krest’ianok za desiat’ let (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 23.
Some posters implicitly recognized the state’s reliance upon women as primary caregivers and keepers of the home. The twin posters, “Window” and “Boiling Water” issued by the Moscow Department of Health purportedly guarded against childhood injury (See figures 2.2 and 2.3). “Window” cautioned that “with the onset of warm weather begins the tumbling of children from windows. In 1927, in Moscow there were 329 calls of the emergency service to help children suffering from falls from windows.” Notably, the poster emphasized not the injuries of the children or how many died. It featured the number of times the state expended resources to respond to these problems. Women, as the only adults featured in the posters, were held culpable for the problem and therefore responsible for positively changing the situation. The poster “Boiling water” similarly featured a woman as the sole care-giver in the home and emphasized the use of state resources to care for improperly monitored children.

The poster “Working women build cooperation,” underscored the concept of women’s sole responsibility for the home by showing her as the catalyst for the creation of new life (See figure 2.4). Under the watchful eye of the male leader’s portrait on the wall, the literate woman struggled with geometry and served as a gateway to a new life. Presented in a crux position, her mathematical struggle bridged the gap between past and future. Her individual actions pulled the rest of society from poor home life and squalor to communal nurseries, from street bartering to the cooperative, and from the beer hall to the classroom. Notably, the conscious woman, who had obviously bridged this gap and pointed both to the means of transformation and its goal, was larger than life.

It must have been an extraordinary, larger-than-life woman who could achieve this all — work, home, family, education, and social activism — but according to reformer Liza Kagan in the mid-1920s many such women, nearly 10,000 housewife delegates, worked in
Soviets and other organizations in the Soviet Union and approximately 70,000 housewives participated in the Moscow Soviet elections. Kagan also noted that many women labored in health or education. Semashko observed on the ten-year anniversary of the revolution that women had made great contributions in the fight for health. The health magazine *For a New Life* regularly featured short biographies of women delegates and inspectors who had dramatically changed not only their own lives but also bettered society. Delegate Tsarkova of the Krasnaia Presnia district displayed Homeric fortitude. A housewife, she worked in two small state departments, organized other housewives into health cells, lectured on sanitary enlightenment, helped several workers to move and represented others at trial. All this while raising five children. The biography noted that she was now learning to read.

Women themselves credited their delegate and social work with great powers for change in other aspects of their lives. One woman attributed increased marital harmony to her attendance at delegate meetings, “I stopped scolding my husband...Now I go with my

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husband to the club or to some kind of lecture, and together we follow the advice and our
lives have completely turned around."^29 Another credited delegate work with her newly
organized home:

Before, I rarely cleaned the apartment. Everything was put off. There were
a lot of troubles with the children, and just no time. I just made it to the
holidays and the bustle began. But now, just as I hear at the delegate
meeting lectures of the dangers of filth to people, which illnesses multiply,
and how you can organize your cleanliness, things have completely changed
with me. I’ve gotten used to shaking out the door mat, sweeping with a
damp broom, dusting everyday, etc. Now you wouldn’t know the
apartment. It is not neglected. It’s easy to clean daily.^30

Finally, delegate work could bring positive change to the mother-child relationship. One
mother/delegate noted that before she had quarreled with her children and even beat them.
She confessed, “It’s well-known that a mother loves her children, but I just didn’t have
enough patience with them.” Becoming a delegate allowed her to improve her relationship
to her children. She said that she learned that beating children could affect the development
of their character and once she had sent the oldest child to the camp, she found greater
strength.^31 Delegate work had bolstered her ability to express what she considered her
natural motherly feelings, enhanced her family’s happiness and ensured her child’s future.^32

In the heroic tales and plays, women overcame male prejudice along with poor
material circumstances and overburdening to maintain active participation in social work.

In the short biography, “Vydvizhenka” to work” the author noted that even though

^30 Ibid.
^31 Corporal punishment was considered out-of-vogue by the Soviets, see the treatment of the orphan
Sirotin in Agitshud nad prestupnikami (Voronezh: Voronezhskaya kommuna, 1923). pub. 300.
^32 Kagan, 10.
^33 The term vydvizhenka refers to the upwardly-mobile women who were trying to improve themselves in
the 1920s.
Filipenko’s husband grumbled she continued to do her party and health inspector work on top of her eight-hour workday and raising three kids. Often men were depicted as reactionary ruffians who kept women down. In the agitational trial of the wife-beater Ivan Grigor’ev, his politically-conscious wife Anna divorced him and became a completely different person. In another play by Andreev, a similar scenario played out. The wife gradually became conscious through the helpful advice of a young, advanced, male worker. With the support of her Octobrist son she divorced her politically-unconscious husband who failed to understand that “his wife has a right to a social life and work.” In some depictions male failings were blamed for women’s problems. One article contended that ignorant men kept women ignorant, and told the story of a politically-active woman who was beaten by her husband who said she was out catting about when she was attending meetings. The author commented further, “It’s clear we do not need to fight unconsciousness just among women.” Men of authority did not escape blame. In a letter to the newspaper *Communist labor* two women wrote of their efforts to bring a militia man to account for not intervening with a man who was beating his wife.

In I. V. Rebelskii’s play, *Trial of a husband who beat his wife while in a drunken state*, the drunkard Vasilii Petrovich Voloshin battered his wife because he said it was his right, especially after his wife became politically conscious and even smarter than him and consequently not as subservient. Friends convinced his wife to sue. She admitted to being

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34 G. “Vydvishzenka za rabotoi,” 5.
35 Boris Andreev, *Sud nad starym bytom: Stsenarii dla rabochikh klubov ko dniu rabotnitsy 8-go Marta (s metodicheskimi ukazaniami)* (Moscow: Dologi negramotnost‘, 1926).
reluctant at first because she did not want other women to think that zhenotdel membership automatically meant divorce, but she eventually filed and won. The belief that female political activism automatically led to divorce found expression elsewhere. Krupskaia told of her experience in a factory where she heard a female activist say to a group of female workers that once they entered the party they must renounce their husbands and children. Krupskaia emphasized that this was not true and said that instead women must make fighters of their husbands. What to do with a husband who refused a consciousness-raising from his wife Krupskaia left unspoken, though the above plays advocated divorce.

Hygienists downplayed the positive influence of men in the home. Men passively received the benefits from the women in their lives and were educated by them as to proper behavior. In the opening play, the husband only made his appearance when the environment had been transformed, and even then his daughter cautioned him as to how to behave properly. The following passage revealed a degree of hostility that infrequently made it into the pamphlets and never appeared in hygienists' commentaries:

Look closely at how life is in the majority of even our working families. The husband, returning from work, for the most part relaxes at home or elsewhere but the wife, even if she has worked her eight hours at the factory hurries quickly home in order to serve the family. Who cares for the children and cleans up after them? Who must set the table and clean up after the "master" has eaten? Who makes sure that his shirt is clean, cleans the whites, sews on buttons, darts socks? Who makes lunch? All of these obligations lay upon the wife even though she has worked at the bench the same eight hours alongside her husband. And infrequently does it occur to anyone that this is incorrect, that a man must also help a woman in the household while we still have an insufficient number of establishments taking these cares from women.

38 S. Smidrovich, Rabotnitsa i novyi byt (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1927), 15. pub. 15,000.
In posters, the absence of men in the labor of the home was very evident. Posters consistently depicted women as responsible for tasks around the home and men only appeared as helpers in scenes that are outdoors or connected to the outside - window washing, chopping wood, or cleaning courtyards. In the companion posters “Close the bucket, and do not breathe in disease” and “Air the room more often” only two men appeared in the six tasks highlighted (See figs. 2.5, 2.6). One chopped wood in a courtyard and the other, a young boy, washed windows while a woman mopped in the foreground.  

If a conscious man did want a better home, he could not achieve it alone. The wife stood as a barrier to man’s power in the home. Revolutionary Clara Zetkin pointed out that often the “brave eagles” would become “cowardly geese” if that was what awaited them at home. The cover for the book *Workers Hold on to your Health* presented this concept in a visual allegory (See figure 2.7). A barefoot, politically-unconscious woman with a kerchief tied under her chin created a barrier between the man and the child behind her who lay in front of a window which framed smokestacks in the distance. The worker passed to the woman, in almost a petitioner’s gesture, a paper lettered “Hygiene.” For the man to achieve the health of the next generation, protected or confined by the woman, and the eventual prosperity of industrialization, symbolized by the smokestacks in the window beyond, he must bring woman to an understanding of hygiene.

Historian Suellen Hoy in *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* noted a similar shift in housework responsibilities in the United States during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The chores which had traditionally been women’s on farms remained theirs as families moved to the city. Suellen Hoy, *Chasing Dirt: The American Pursuit of Cleanliness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).


unlike a conscious, working-woman’s kerchief which tied behind the neck.

Tellingly, the man attempted to change the home through literacy. This coincided with a general trend within the literature to depict women as problematic not when they had drinking problems, like men, but when they were illiterate, and consequently, politically unconscious. In “Trial of a housewife,” Vlasova, the wife of a communist, refused to go to the cooperative for groceries or allow her children to become pioneers. She would not attend club meetings or open windows around the house. The husband finally resorted to the court since he had no power over his wife or in his home. Wives could change husbands, but husbands were unable to change their wives’ minds. In contrast to women’s experience with unconscious spouses, husbands never divorced their wives, but sought their advancement, perhaps acknowledging the irreplaceable nature of a woman to the home with children.

Husbands needed help. Conscious children held the capacity for both change and power. According to depictions in the literature, uneducated, unsovietized children without exception ravaged the health of a home. Without Soviet influence children lived in a state of nature — loud, unruly, and anarchic. Most radically, a female activist speaking before the Moscow Soviet explained that sanitary reformers urged women to place their children in homes so that the women could increase their own sanitary enlightenment work. In most cases placing children in Soviet day institutions resulted in an ordered home. In an article documenting nurse inspectors’ work, after the nurse placed the children of five

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4 R. D. Sud nad domashchnei khoziakoi B-ka rabotnitsy i krest’ianki. (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1927).
44 Interestingly, men easily divorced women and though laws supposedly guaranteed help to women and children, they realistically had little recourse.
patients into Soviet care (kindergartens, pioneers, etc.) the conditions of the homes and the patients improved.49 The play, “Our Life: An agit-lifestyle-buffoonery in two acts,” contained a similar message. For the home to be ordered, calm, healthful, and peaceful, the children had to enter Soviet education.

Theorists promised women that Soviet education would make their children help around the house, and that by sending children to a pioneer troop, women could lighten their load.50 In the pamphlet The road to social work Kagan retold the story of one exhausted housewife who only saw her children when they wanted to eat, and finally acceded to her husband’s urgings and allowed the children to join the pioneers. Within two weeks she insisted they were different children who did their homework, the wash, and even asked to help around the house.51 In the pioneers children purportedly learned how to order their personal lives and clean up after themselves, thereby lessening their mothers’ burdens. The pamphlet Pioneer’s hygiene recommended not just personal hygiene but also explained to pioneers how to keep their rooms within their homes. The text assumed a single-occupancy room for the pioneer which they should care for studiously, cleaning their feet before entering the house, ventilating and lighting their bedroom thoroughly, dusting the furniture and books, and washing the floor.52 Another author assumed that the pioneer would be so busy within the home, that a schedule may become necessary. Perhaps get rid

50 N. N. Iordanskii urged acquainting children with home hygiene from the first meeting at school, see Sanitarno-gigienicheskaia rabota shkoly (Moscow: Moskovskoe aktsionemoe izdatel’skoe obshchestvao, 1926). pub. 3,000.
of clutter in the first week, fight dust the second, a general cleaning on the third, and launder clothes, and clean the bed in the fourth.\textsuperscript{53}

Even with all the benefits which pioneer membership supposedly brought home, women resisted the troops according to the popular images. In the short story \textit{Why Varia gave her children over to the pioneers}, the title character initially opposed the calls of the pioneers for her children, but finally she relented. “I’m their mother and not their enemy,” and allowed them to join. The epilogue noted the power of the pioneers:

Already four months Varina’s children have attended the troop and in reality, Varia’s life has eased. In the morning she is at the mill while the kids are at school. In the evening either the children are at the troop or busy at home with their own business. Everyone picks up after themselves and wants to help Varia clean. Fights and screams have lessened.\textsuperscript{54}

The pioneers’ presence was not always the calming palliative of the home presented to reluctant-to-sign mothers. Meetings, troops, and literature encouraged pioneers to battle for new life with multi-faceted action. In these, the role of the pioneer expanded beyond cleaning and straightening in the home. An article entitled “Fighters for a new life” exemplified the point.

The pioneers do not want to be shut up in the narrow framework of individual health. Receiving knowledge and hygienic skills they carry these into the family into their surrounding situation. We often see pioneers who take up the fight against smoking and alcoholism or for cleanliness and fresh air at home.\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{53} Aleksandr Zheleznyi, \textit{Kak zhit' shtoby zdrovym byt’} Biblioteka iunogo pionera pod obshchei redaktsiiei MK RLKSM Seriia fizhkultunika. (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1925), 34. pub. 9,000.
\textsuperscript{54} O. Spandar'ian, \textit{Pochemu Varia otdal svoikh detei v pionery} Biblioteka rabotnitsy i krest'ianki Seriia “Rabotnitsy” No. 5 (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 27. pub. 10,000.
\textsuperscript{55} I. Mil'man, “Bortsy za zdrovyy byt” ZNB 13-14 (1927): 16.
Far from simply making their own beds or sweeping the floor, such comments urged pioneers to take a more active role in the home. Pioneer troops even encouraged their members to confront their parents and other caregivers. At a conference of school health cells, one young woman's speech trumpeted the role which their cell had taken in transforming family life.

We compel our parents not to fear fresh air. We fight smoking in the school and in the home...we ask for ourselves our own plates, our own beds...when the father of one of our comrades got the boy drunk, we told the father that he was not just harming his own health but that he was drinking up the milk of our comrade. And the father was ashamed.²⁶

Children did not just target drunken fathers. Rather than helping their mothers, some pioneers confronted their mothers and other female figures in the home. Lenin himself noted the ways in which children could change the habits of those within the home, in a speech extolling children, “Children learn in school how to brush their teeth and wash their hands. They look over their own clothes and they ask their mothers and sisters that their clothes be looked over, and as much as possible, put in order.”²⁷

One pamphlet lamented that pioneers at home had so much to remake that to do so they would have to make a plan of attack and marshal all the forces of the home. The author recognized that this could increase tensions in the home, “Of course, such a big job must attract all the forces of the home up to the old grandmother, who, perhaps does not take all this innovation to heart.” But, these old authorities of the home were not to be heeded. Their excuses proved inadequate or hypocritical. As the pamphlet explained:

²⁶ Za novyi byt v nashei smene: Prezidium konferentsii zdraviacheek shkol Baumanskogo raiona (Moscow: MOZ i MONO, 1926), 7. pub. 1,000.

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Often our mothers complain of the impossible clutter, but at the same time, the corners are crammed up with all kinds of odds and ends, old galoshes, tea pots, samovar tubes, and so on. This rubbish typically sits from Easter to Easter. Mice nest there, and cats use it as a bathroom. You must remove forever these hot-beds of dust — soft curtains, rugs, photos, and icons from the walls. In general you must minimize those places above where dust may settle.\(^{38}\)

A short story, "Who's right?" made the same point. The mother attempted to resist the son's opening of the window, but he finally prevailed.\(^{39}\) In a small cartoon in *For a New Life*, the relationship of pioneer to mother became even more hostile as the young male pioneer attacked his mother with a water hose in the name of "wet cleaning" (See figure 2.8).\(^{40}\) While presented as a jocular cartoon, the message rang clearly. Women needed to be cleaned up, and children were the ones to do it.

The focus upon women's illiteracy and unconsciousness reflected the very real frustrations of reformers. Overall women were more frequently illiterate than men and less frequently attended clubs, the komsomol, and other propaganda sites.\(^{41}\) Therefore, reaching them as an audience presented problems. The magazine *Club* devoted energy to the question of getting women involved and educated. One article insisted that despite widespread illiteracy, women would come to clubs for topics like children, hygiene, and economy. Following up on these gender stereotypes, the author recommended combining political messages with sewing circles since women had to sew anyway. Another article called for pulling women from the sewing circles to get them to do free baking for the

\(^{38}\) Zheleznyi, *Kak zhiti*, 34-35.

\(^{39}\) S. Kozakevich, "Kto prav?" ZNB 4-5 (1925): 15.

\(^{40}\) "Ugolok Otdyka," ZNB 13 (October 1925): 21.

\(^{41}\) According to Liza Kagan's book of 1926, *Pro obshchestvenoi rabote*, 62.9% of women were illiterate. (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 18.
buffet (while simultaneously teaching them how to cook in the home). Despite these efforts women's involvement remained low and interest lukewarm.

Hygienists consistently depicted women as the primary care givers and the responsible parties for change within the home. When husbands and children changed the home, they did so only by convincing the women to modernize. Men escaped scrutiny and either appeared in a slightly befuddled, yet benevolent capacity, or as completely irredeemable morons. At the same time that hygienists depicted women as responsible, they decried women's lack of social activity, illiteracy, and general backwardness. However, hygienists generally agreed upon the problems in the home which women needed to fix. The following section addresses the recommendations of hygienists for creating a healthy home.

Recommendations for a healthful home

Hygienists displayed and reproduced in a number of different forms the new norms for the Soviet home. Pamphlets and posters maintained a major place in the education campaign, alongside agitational plays and trials. Perhaps the most complete set of recommendations for home tips appeared in the poster "The Maintenance of Cleanliness in the Home" which noted that this was "the duty of every conscious citizen." (See figure 2.1) While the poster's recommendations are discussed more fully below, some generalities can be observed. First, it relied heavily on text and was most certainly meant for a more careful contemplation than other eye-catching, political posters of the day. The poster featured a woman and children in a set of contrasting images of the home. One set depicted the correct and the other the incorrect lifestyle, a style of representation common to lubok
(wood cuts) and iconography. The positive image appeared on the top of the poster and presented a “heaven” in contrast to the hell of “how one ought not keep one’s apartment.” Light, both from electricity and the sun, streamed through the positive image, while steam and shadow appropriately accompanied “hell.” The positive featured an additional child, a young boy in the kitchen door, to perhaps underscore the beneficial effects of proper housekeeping.

As with the opening play, the most noticeable change in the images concerned the laundry. Laundry should be done outside the home, according to this poster, because the steam endangered health. To further highlight the good quality of air within the ‘heaven’ home, the windows hung open. In addition, other cluttering items disappeared. Once the laundry basin disappeared, the kitchen table took over the function of dining table and moved clutter from the living area. The pets and knickknacks disappeared. The most interesting changes concerned the icon corner and technology. The icon corner disappeared to be replaced by a calendar and landscape. Electric lights and even a fire alarm surfaced in the picture after the housewife took out the laundry and started using a damp mop. As with other images, one simple action changed the entirety of life around the individual.

The poster above addressed multiple housekeeping concerns, however, generally, most of the recommendations for a good home focused on the quality of the air within the home.

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Indeed according to A. V. Mol’kov, the director of the state institute of social hygiene, it could form the sole consideration for a healthy home.

The main characteristics of a healthy home are good air and good freshness, proximity to nature, comfort and spaciousness. Cleanliness — the signs of good air in a home and its cleanliness, the absence of foreign adulterated gases and dust, normal and uniform temperature and the moderation of humidity.

Reformers blamed “bad air” for a multitude of ills and infections. A. A. Ashikhmin’s Air in our homes included question and answer sections with subheadings such as “Air, its composition and meaning,” “Spoiled air in living quarters,” and “Dampness in the home.”

Good air was “a necessary condition for the correct functioning of the breathing organs: clean air is the best remedy against lung ailments and against infectious diseases generally.” Internationally, experts recognized airing of the home as an effective method for combating infectious disease, especially the formidable tuberculosis.

In the west and in Russia, the belief that bad air and smells, or “miasmas,” led to infection became prevalent at the time of the Black Death, and still held sway throughout much of the nineteenth century. Remnants of this ideology continued into the twentieth century.
century, even as germ theory was on the rise. From 1870 to 1900, the idea that germs caused disease was highly contested. Florence Nightingale was a vocal supporter of the miasma theory and used it as an organizing principle in her care of the sick and the construction of hospitals. In America, Nightingale’s ideas were broadly applied to care of the sick in the Civil War and to cities after the war. The dangers of foul air were also parcel of Pasteur and Lister’s work as well as informing popular consciousness. In the United States, the education of the masses to the concepts of bacteriology took place in the Progressive Era.

Soviet conceptions of the healthy home retained a mixture of miasma and germ theories of disease. The companion posters, “Air the room often,” and “Close the bucket – Don’t breathe in infection” contained the message that bad air could lead to ill health. (See figures 2.5 and 2.6) The poster “The Maintenance of Cleanliness in the Home,” recommended the cleaning of areas surrounding the home (stairways, courtyards, etc.), “in order not to infect the air and earth.” (See figure 2.1) In the hierarchy of air presented by Take hold of your health! country air occupied the top spot followed by city air and finally apartment (enclosed) air. The pamphlet further recommended that apartments be aired twice daily and while sleeping, and they eschewed house plants because they were dangerous to the quality of the air, explaining that at night plants took in oxygen and

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therefore deprived humans of the essentials of life. Some cleanliness recommendations contained elements of both germ and miasma theory. Opening the windows to air the house had the added benefit of letting in sunlight which killed most microbes but was blocked of its most beneficial influences by glass. “Ventilation cleans and freshens the air, aids in the removal of dust and decreases the humidity in the air.” Semashko pointed out that good ventilation could even improve the air in a non-hygienically built home.

Sports halls needed to be well-aired, just like clubs, homes, nurseries, and meeting rooms. Sleeping rooms should be aired at night and even in cold weather rooms needed to be opened at least twice daily. In the home, the transom bore the responsibility for airing the room. Most Soviet health organizations made the provision of transom windows a top priority, and they proudly featured the numbers of transoms which they had installed when outlining their activities Semashko railed against the “prejudice” that kept people from airing their homes for fear of a “draft” or a “cold”. He swore “This is simply

74 V. Sukharev, Rabochii, beregi svoe zdrav' e: K ozdorovleniiu rabochei sem' (Moscow: Gosizdat', 1926), 5, pub. 10,000.
75 A. A. Sadov, Dr. Zaraznye bolesni i byt Gigiena i zdrav' e rabochei i krest'ianskoi sem'i, vyp 53. (Leningrad: Leningradskaia pravda, n.d.),11. pub. 10,000. Also Ashikhman, Bolezn i byt 15.
76 Ashikhim, Vozdikh nashikh zhilishch, 21.
77 Semashko, Vvedenie v sotsial'nuu gizhenu, 21.
78 Kal'manson and Bekariukov, 13.
79 For a picture of a transom, see the first segment of the poster “Air the room more often.” (See figure 2.6).
80 According to the report of one sanitary doctor, their group had encouraged in past 2 months the claim the following improvements -- 14 better air; 3 transoms; 114 exterminations; 41 more tidy condition of home; 2 white washings; 34 apts add wall paper; 1 move food prep out of living quarters; 2 move clothes washing out of living quarters; 4 acquired single towels; 2 apartments add trash can; 4 set up spittoons; 4 change apts. See Sanvrach Bogatyrev, "Khronika dispanserizatsii," Ezhegodnik Moszdravotdela 34:5 (26 August/September 2): 497-498.
superstition.” To back himself up, he again turned to the west, mentioning Swiss doctors who put patients in front of open windows year-round.\(^{11}\)

Dust, dampness, and dark all contaminated the air, but dust stood out as the most detrimental. Calling the inhalation of dust “one of the most dangerous occurrences,” one reformer lamented “the air thickly saturated with dust which is found in working and educational premises” and demanded “the most energetic and continual measures to fight.”\(^{12}\)

In the pamphlet *Take hold of your health!* dust removal and prevention took the following course:

The cleaning of dust from shoes before entering the lodging (especially in relation to unfortunate felt boots), the cleaning of clothing not within the living area, the washing of the floor with a ‘damp’ method (damp sawdust, wet twigs, a brush wrapped up in a damp towel), and frequent dusting similarly with a wet towel of the items in the room.\(^{13}\)

Dust was not an insubstantial concern. International experts identified dust as a probable carrier of disease. According to one historian of American hygiene “of all the theoretical insights of the late-nineteenth-century laboratory, this wedding of dust and disease had perhaps the most profound implications for the hygiene of everyday life.”\(^{14}\) For Russians it would also be far-reaching. Soviet hygiene aligned with the international opinions on dust. One Soviet pamphlet advised that tuberculosis floated in the air and could settle on anything and therefore the homemaker must clean the bedding and clothing more frequently.\(^{15}\)

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\(^{11}\) Semashko, *Nauka o zdrav’e obshchestva*, 20.

\(^{12}\) Kal’manson and Bekariukov. *Beregi svoe zdorovi!*, 13.

\(^{13}\) Ibid., 14.

\(^{14}\) Tomes, 96.

\(^{15}\) A.A. Ashikhman, (Dr.) *Sotsial’nye bolezni i zhilishche* A.G. Frenkel, ed and intro. #3 Biblioteka Sanpredavitelia. 2-ia serii broshiu (kommissiia santiamykh predstavitelei) (Leningrad: Kommissiia Santiamykh predstavitelei, 1928), 14. pub. 6,000.
To minimize the collection of dust, reformers emphasized simplicity in home decor. The first recommendation on the poster, "The maintenance of cleanliness in the home," advised "Do not keep superfluous, unnecessary items in the home: it decreases the amount of air in it and hampers cleaning. Keep articles in order." (See figure 2.1). The worker should "keep soft chairs, rugs...and collections of knickknacks out of house." The emphasis on simplicity over collections of knickknacks coincided with political concerns of the new state for anti-bourgeois behavior. In another nice bit of political serendipity, reformers singled out the icon corner in the house as especially collecting dust and endangering the home. However, ideal homes were not completely devoid of decoration. Portraits of leaders or natural scenes hung from their walls. (See figures 2.4, 2.1). Politically-approved art did not collect dust, it would seem. Semashko summed up the recommendations for keeping the home saying:

The best advice for the hygiene of the home can be expressed thus: choose a spacious, sunny, and dry place, do not encourage humidity (do not spill water or do wash in the apartment). Open the window and transom more often, and heat well. The most important thing is to keep it clean.

In recognition of the dust and filth all around them, recommendations for cleanliness did not stop at the door to the apartment. Hygienists advised the cleaning of stairways, courtyards and all common areas, as well as a dust-off before entering the house (See figure 3.10). A typical cleaning regimen contained the following:

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86 Similar calls for simple home decor appeared in American hygienic texts, such as keeping simple furniture without lots of fabric in the house (rugs, etc.) and avoiding the collection of items which would hold dust, see Tomes, 144.
87 Kalashnikov, Pamitka, for similar strictrures in the European context see Adams, Architecture in the Family Way, 50.
88 Semashko, Nauka o zdorov'e obshchestva, 20.
89 One internal document of the Sokol Sovet noted that inhabitants of one building chose lots to see who would wash the stairwell every other day. See TsMAM f. 2315, op. 1, d. 36, l. 323.
Stairways should be swept daily along with periodic cleaning of the windows and lamps on the stairways. The entrance doors of the stairs must be supplied with springy, closing devices in order that in the winter time staircases will not be exposed mistakenly to the chill air. Absolutely intolerable is the soiling of stairways by cats and dogs (for this the responsibility lies, of course, on the animals’ owners).

Because of its dangerous nature, dust merited special attention, and detailed instructions appeared for its removal. Schedules were common. V. P. Kalashnikov advised a daily wet cleaning of the floor, dusting of the furniture, windows, door, etc. with wet brush, and a weekly “fundamental cleaning” -- washing floors, shaking rugs, mats, curtains, clothes, removing cobwebs, and sweeping the top of stove. To keep the dust of the city from invading the home, elaborate cleaning rituals grew up around entering the home and the entryway space itself.

The habits of spitting and smoking contributed to the home’s air problem. Hygienists maintained that when spittle containing the tuberculosis bacillus dried, it could become airborne and waft aloft to infect others. The poster, “Comrades, people!” admonished the spitter, while simultaneously suggesting the solution -- use a spittoon (See figure 2.9). The introduction of spittoons to residences, clubs, and factories, often was given as evidence of work by local health authorities. Smoking similarly endangered everyone’s health in the home by dirtying the air and the walls. People should avoid

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91 Ibid. In regards to animals the recommendations generally run that they should not be kept at all (See figure 2.1).
92 Kal'manson and Bekariukov, 14, 38.
93 According to the report of one Sanddoctor, their group had encouraged in past 2 months the claim the following improvements -- 14 better air; 3 transoms; 114 bug fights; 41 more tidy condition of home; 2 white washings; 34 apts add wall paper; 1 move food prep out of living quarters; 2 move clothes washing out of living quarters; 4 acquired single towels; 2 apartments add trash can; 4 set up spittoons; 4 change apts. See Bagatyreva, “Khroruka disperserizatsii,” 497-498.
94 See the 18th recommendation on figure 2.1
expectoration, coughing, and sneezing. If they had to cough or sneeze the mouth and nose should be covered, preferably a kerchief. While the reasons given were those of health, other consideration may have entered into the condemnation of spitting as they did in the west, where spitting was additionally demonized for its vulgarity and "the anarchy it symbolized."*

In addition to dust, darkness threatened the health of the home. Hygienists depicted sunlight as the friend of health. The sun provided a natural disinfectant, a deterrent to disease, and was especially lauded in the fight against tuberculosis. The pamphlet Take hold of your health! praised the sun as the greatest weapon in the fight against infection and declared ominously that from inspections it was very evident that tuberculin houses contained a greater portion of dark or shady rooms. It further upheld its point with statistics. In well-lit rooms, only thirteen of every 10,000 people will die of tuberculosis, but in dark rooms eighty-two will die."

Hygienists depicted damp air as equally dangerous as dusty air or dark rooms. To combat it, texts advised that laundry not be done in the house. The poster "The Maintenance of Cleanliness in the Home," vividly portrayed the steam and damp of doing wash in the home and advised that clothing should never be cleaned in the home, but

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* Kal'manson and Bekariukov, 14.
* Spitting was associated with tuberculosis spread, see Barnes, The Making of a Social Disease, 75. but others have spread the idea that the condemnation of spitting went beyond simple concerns for contagion, see Ott, Fevered Lives, 117,118. John F. Kasson discusses the rudeness associated with spitting, but outside of the context of health in his book Rudeness and Civility: Manners in Nineteenth-Century Urban America (New York: Hill and Wang, 1990), 125.
* Sunlight killed the tuberculosis bacillus, Barnes, The Making of a Social Disease, 115.
* See the multiple slogans in Mol'kov, 10 and the arguments of Kalashnikov, 30.
* Kal'manson and Bekariukov, 12-13.
instead in the courtyard or on the balcony (See figure 2.1). The collective laundry did not exist in sufficient numbers to farm this task out.

Dust, dark, and damp all contributed to problems in the home, but certain spaces were especially at risk. Hygienists singled out the kitchen for special advice and attention. As the previous chapter mentioned, the delicate art of creating healthful dishes as part of a nutritious diet was deemed too difficult for untrained housewives so the state attempted to organize collective eating facilities. However, these were slow in coming and often inferior in quality. The kitchen continued to exist and had to be transformed. Most workers chose to eat at home, as will be further discussed in the next chapter. Of particular concern to hygienists was the cleanliness of utensils, plates, and napkins clean as they believed these objects to be modes of syphilis infection. Kitchen trash, if not properly kept provided a breeding ground for the carriers of disease. To keep flies from breeding in the trash, it must be kept closed, in a dark place, and emptied every week. The trash heap must be at some distance from the dwelling. Cockroaches needed to be similarly discouraged despite the folk belief that black ones were good luck.

The bathroom required similar attention, “for the sake of one’s own health and the health of those around you.” One could sit on the toilet only if it were clean, otherwise the user should assume the posture of an “eagle” (sadit' sia oriom — which assumedly

\[\text{For a more in-depth discussion of "lifestyle" syphilis see Laura Engelstein's The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in fin-de-siecle Russia (Ithaca, NJ: Cornell University Press, 1992). For syphilis and the kitchen see Kal'manson and Bekariukov, 16-19. The theory of non-venereal transmission of syphilis was prevalent elsewhere as well, see Tomes, 107 - 108. Kal'manson and Bekariukov recommended at least a vert’s distance away for the trash heap, 16; Sadov, Zaraznye boleznii, 24; M.P. Dubianskaia Borites s mukhami, klopami, kmarami, vshami: domashnie nasekomiia — nashi vragi 2-oe izd (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennaia tipografia im. tov. Zinov'eva, 1926), 16,42. For worries about houseflies carrying disease in the American context, see Tomes, 9. L.M. Vasilevskii. Gigiena pionera 2-oe izd. (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1925), 31.}\]
meant a crouching posture), and then “carefully” and accurately use the bathroom. The pamphlet *Infectious Disease and Life* recommended "tidiness" in bathroom use, as well as utilizing toilet paper and hand washing.

The lack of running water must have particularly complicated the task of keeping the home clean. Reformers recommended daily wet cleaning of floors and surfaces and weekly wet cleanings of common areas, but they never discussed from where the water was to come. In addition women required water for launderings of bed linens, towels, and clothing of each family member as well as the two daily personal washings. Hygienists required personal plates, napkins, and utensils for each person which always had to be clean before use. If there was a child in diapers, the recommendations for more frequent changings, as will be seen in the next chapter, together with all of the above cleaning surely led to an almost unbearable wash load. Nowhere in all of these recommendations for increased water use do hygienists suggest that these needs will add to women’s burden of chores — or to children or husbands’ for that matter, intimating that hygienists lived in far different conditions than the average worker. The following section addresses the reality of Moscow in the 1920s and details the problems which stood in the way of housewives truly changing their lives.

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103 Ibid.

104 A. A. Sadov, *Dr. Zaraznye bolezni i byt Gigiena i zdorov’e rabochei i krest’ianskoj sem’i, vyp 53.* (Leningrad: Leningradskaiia pravda, n.d.), 27. pub. 10,000

105 Ruth Schwartz Cowan, who pointed out the ways in which technological innovation did not help women in the home and in fact, saw an increase in the work for middle and upper class women in her book *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* pointed out the ways in which especially, the move to more factory produce clothing increased wash loads. (*New York: Basic Books, 1983*), 65.
The imperfect reality — housing conditions, services, and shortages

For a French visitor in 1925, the revolution had left Moscow in an abysmal state and pushed the city's inhabitants into ghastly circumstances. He lamented, "The real misery of Sovietism is not in the street but in housing...In Moscow you smoke as much as you possibly can so as not to be conscious of the room." The floors, covered with loose flooring and pebbles, "crunch like the paths of a Casino." The over-crowding led people, "to hate each other like the chained galley slaves of former days." He bemoaned the fates of three and four families squeezed into a kitchen or entryway as lodgings, and the general lack of sanitation despite the oversight of the house council. Tenants lived in anarchic messes, "Lids of old boxes replace broken windows. Some of the more particular tenants have made doorways with smelly bags of pitch. Everyone lives immured in a sort of surly terror." To Beraud's horror, life in Moscow was "a mixture of barrack, monastery, and prison."

Noted the western observer Fannina W. Halle in *Women in Soviet Russia*, "Nowhere, perhaps, do the contrasts between the new and the old appear so crude, so glaring, as in the Soviet Russian house and home." Nineteenth century Moscow experienced rapid and drastic urbanization leaving it one of the world's ten largest cities and twice as densely populated as most European capitals. While the effects of war,

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107 Ibid.
108 Ibid., 158.
109 Ibid., 159.
110 Ibid.
domestic turmoil, hunger, and fear drastically reduced the population of Moscow between
1917-1920, the introduction of NEP in 1921 swelled the city. At first the reclamation of
bourgeois houses had eased housing problems, but foraging, deterioration, and
overcrowding conspired to make many of these lodgings nearly uninhabitable soon after
their repartition. The housing which remained proved inadequate, and by 1922, there was
a housing shortage.\textsuperscript{113}

Moscow contained 26,586 properties in 1925 with an average of sixty inhabitants
per dwelling. The average property was divided into eight apartments with eight people per
apartment.\textsuperscript{114} Of these dwellings thirty-five percent had running water, sixty-two percent
had sewers, and a little over eleven percent enjoyed central heating.\textsuperscript{115} Hygienists devoted
great attention to the problem of improving the sewers and water services of Moscow, and
they used the differences in death rates in more economically advantaged countries with
more sanitary cities, especially Germany, England, and France, to point out deficiencies in
Russia.\textsuperscript{116} While city services expanded throughout the 1920s, and may have contributed
to a decrease in the death rate, they were still far from universal.\textsuperscript{117}

\textsuperscript{113} According to the work of William J. Chase, half of the population of Moscow took up lodgings in the 'reclaimed' houses of the bourgeoisie by 1921, but it was of poor quality. See his \textit{Workers, Society and the Soviet State: Labor and Life in Moscow, 1918-1929}. Studies of the Harriman Institute. (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1987), 27-28, On the housing shortage, see his 74; For anecdotal, yet interesting, accounts of life in the apartments of the city see the chapter "How Moscow Keeps House," in Anna Louise Strong's \textit{The First Time in History: Two Years in Russia's New Life (August, 1921 to December, 1923)}. (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924), 134 - 153; or Marguerite E. Harrison, \textit{Marooned in Moscow: The story of an American woman imprisoned in Russia}. (New York: George H. Doran, 1921), 94 - 97.

\textsuperscript{114} St. Sanvrach V.F. Ivanov. "Opyt obsledovaniia byta dispanserizirovannykh rabochikh v Chistoprudnom obedinenii" \textit{Ezhegodnik Mosdravotdelaa} 17/170 (29 April 1926), 286.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., 287. (Ivanov)

\textsuperscript{116} Sukharev, \textit{Rabochii, beregi svoe zdorov'e}, 12.

\textsuperscript{117} Chase attributed the decreased death rate to increases in sewer and water services, see, 78.
Generally, hygienists reported the problems of shortages and facilities but they ignored their obvious complications in their propaganda. Instead they assumed water, sewer, gas, and even electrical services as givens in their posters and pamphlets. Posters often featured apartments with running water (See figures 2.1, 2.5, 2.6, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12). More often than not, they simply glossed over the question. In two telling depictions, the faucets literally hang in mid-air, giving them a mythical quality (See figures 2.10, 2.11). While these posters showed running water, for most Muscovites who did not have running water at home the images depicting running water only in the communal baths and a bucket for home washing were probably more realistic (See figs. 1-1, 1-3).

Muscovites without running water lugged water from taps and wells in courtyards or even rivers and ponds. To add to the labor, the nature of the water sources ensured that the water was often of questionable quality and had to be boiled. They drew the water and carried it home, sometimes complaining of multiple flights of stairs which were often filthy and treacherous. Undoubtedly, having to carry water from even a short distance greatly increased the time women spent on laundry and the strength needed for such tasks. To illustrate the labor involved, one historian estimated that in turn-of-the-century America women on average did four loads of wash a week carrying about eight gallons for each of two to three washtubs, heating some of that water. A bucket holding

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118 For an anecdotal account of plumbing and hot water problems in Moscow in the early days of revolution see Marguerite E. Harrison, *Marooned in Moscow: The story of an American woman imprisoned in Russia.* (New York: George H. Doran, 1921), 49, 107.
119 Sukharev, *Rabochii, beregi svoe zdorov'e,* 11. In health advice in the United States before 1920, similar advice appeared on how to clean water and ensure its purity, See Tomes, 144.
120 "Tribuna chitatelei: Kto obratit vnimanie?" *Kommunisticheskii trud* 276 (February 1921).
121 In his account of a trip into Moscow in the early 1920s Henri Beraud commented that washing was "the luxury of millionaires" and was done by Chinese at such prices that a clean shirt was the same price as a new one in Paris. See *The Truth About Moscow.*
about three or four gallons of water would weigh about twenty-five pounds. After collecting they had to then heat it for laundry.\textsuperscript{122}

Those who did have water and sewers had to be taught their proper use. Slogans on posters “Flush after every use!” and “Pour only waste-free water” suggested that plumbing was not always well understood(See figure 2.13, 2.5, 2.6). This would lead to further problems for the apartments, as tenants who did not understand plumbing would flush all matter of waste through pipes and leave frozen, burst pipes unrepaired so that the water would destroy even more of the limited housing available.\textsuperscript{123}

Providing food for the family also proved more difficult than hygienists admitted. Gathering goods for cooking in an environment of scarcity remained costly in terms of time and money. Once they returned home, many women did not have private or communal kitchens, but instead either shared a general purpose room with others from their floor or used a small primus stove in the apartment, which could be a great trouble and add considerably to her chores.\textsuperscript{124} The kitchen sometimes served as housing for yet another family in overcrowded Moscow, adding to the difficult conditions.

Even in view of these insufficiencies, reformers more commonly blamed overcrowding for the poor health of the population than inadequate services.

It has already long been noticed that houses poorly constructed from a sanitary point of view (close, dirty, deprived of light and air) are the centers of this or that disease. Epidemics of typhus...diphtheria, scarlet fever, and so on, often emerge from uncomfortable living places. Close, dirty, dark, crude dwellings promote the development of tuberculosis which is known as a social calamity.\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{122} Hoy, 158.
\textsuperscript{123} Smith, \textit{Woman in Soviet Russia}, 146.
\textsuperscript{124} Chase, 196.
\textsuperscript{125} Kalashnikov, \textit{Pamitka}, 31.
Reformers blamed overcrowded conditions for everything from infant mortality to the breakdown in morals. They argued that in the United States, France, and Britain less crowding led to lower infant death rates. 126 Semashko cited statistics from 1899 Vienna and stated that these proved that dwelling size had a direct correlation to death rate as workers “in poor, crowded apartments” died at a five times the rate of others. 127 To remedy this problem, he stipulated that the minimum space requirements per person for health -- eighty cubic arshin 128 of well-lit room per person and one cubic arshin of window for every five to seven cubic arshin of space. 129 In 1926 Moscow, the average person lived in just 1.4 cubic arshin. 130

In such small spaces, individual beds were obviously an impossibility, but this did not keep reformers from commenting upon their necessity. In the book, Scabies and the fight with them the author directly blamed the practice of sharing beds for filthy living:

In the cities, in view of their modern over-crowding, people live closely and often also filthily. Sometimes several people use the exact same bed not changing the bedding after their use. There are families in the city who have maintained the habit of sleeping together...the unemployed, staying in the

126 R.M. Bravaia, Dr. Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva na zapade i v SSSR: Istoriicheskii ocherk (Moscow: Gosmedizdat, 1929), 68-9. and B.S. Ginzburg, Dr. Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva (Kratko rukovodstvo diia lektora) (Moscow: Otdel Okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva NKZ, 1924), 18.
127 Semashko, Nauka o zdrav'e obschestva, 17.
128 An arshin was the equivalent of 28 inches or 71 centimeters.
129 80 arshin is the equivalent of 55 meters. N.A. Semashko, Nauka o zdrav't obschestva (sotsial'naia gigiena) izd. 2-oe (Moscow: NKZ, 1926 pub. 10,000), 78-79. In his, Vvedenie v sotsial'nuiu gigienu. Biblioteka narodnogo uchitelia Semashko recommended 28.8 square meters of well-ventilated space per person with a sunny .5 square meters of window for every 2.5 to 3.5 square meters of space, (Moscow: Rabotnik prosveshcheniia, 1927), 20.
130 V.F. Ivanov (St. Sanvrach) "Opyt obsledovaniia byta dispersirovannykh rabochikh v Chistoprudnom ob'obedinenii" Ezhegodnik Moszdravodela 17/170 (29 April 1926), 287.
boarding houses and the newly arrived, for example seasonal workers, live in eternally-dirty-from-overcrowding, poorly-cleaned locations.  

The crowding of many into one bed also endangered children’s social development, according to hygienists because it awakened prematurely the sexual instinct. In pamphlets aimed at expectant mothers infection or accidental crushing/suffocation of the infant resulted from multiple-person bed use.

Hygienists blamed crowded conditions for other social degeneracies, such as alcoholism. They did not directly link alcohol and crowding, but they assumed that the unpleasant situation in the home pushed people out to participate in unhealthy leisure activities:

Every person wishes upon returning home from service or work, to relax in a clean, comfortable, quiet home. It is not a whim but a natural, essential requirement. Nothing gives such complete rest as quiet, comfort, and cleanliness in the home. But can this be achieved in crowded, over-filled, filthy homes where there is no place to retire, leave from the noise or other people? Crowding, noise, turmoil not only do not give rest and relaxation, but, on the contrary, further irritate the worker’s nerves. He would involuntarily wish to leave such conditions and run from them to the nearest pub.

In addition to leading adults to drink, the author continued, these conditions led children to alcohol as they watched the example of their elders.

Overcrowding did more than affect individual health, it also threatened the health and dynamism of society at large. Doctor Ashikhmin held that one of the greatest problems

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131 Prof. A.A. Sakhnovskaia, *Chesotka i bor'ba s neiu* Bib-ka zhumala Gigiena i zdorov't rabochei i krest'ianskoj sem'i, vyp. 32. (Leningrad: Leningradskaja Pravda, 1926), 16. pub. 13,000.

132 Ashikmin, *Sotsial'nye bolezni*, 23. French sanitarians also blamed crowding for pushing adults into the pub, doubly dangerous in the case of tuberculosis since alcohol was blamed for weakening the body and making it susceptible to the bacillus. Their distaste for promiscuité betrayed “a deep seated fear of uncontrolled proximity in any context.” see Barnes, *The Making of a Social Disease*, 116,128.

133 Barnes, 128.

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from over-crowding was that “it made it necessary for people that they always be under the 
gaze of others, often complete strangers unwillingly sharing the apartment.” This life 
under the gaze of others threatened to destroy the moral order.

It leads to the dulling of that natural sense of bashfulness and people 
become accustomed to speaking crudely about many things about which it is 
not fitting to speak. Children begin to look prematurely upon sexual 
relations, and the example of adults affect them and corrupts them. To this it 
is necessary still to add that a crowded home, children of both sexes sleep 
together and with the example of elders around them, this prematurely 
awakens in children the sexual instinct. Joint living and sleeping of people 
of different sexes does not only lead to premature awakening of sexual 
feelings but also leads to sexual dissipation and to a chaotic sexual life."

The effects of this enforced community remain incompletely explored. Still, while 
reformers deplored the filth which accompanied overcrowding, they took full advantage of 
the window it gave into the private lives of citizens and encouraged others to use this 
vantage to inform on their fellows whenever possible, as the following section reveals.

Enforcing cleanliness

Health authorities took advantage of the Soviet emphasis on the collective over the 
individual and the transparency afforded by overcrowded conditions to make the lines 
between personal health, societal health, and domestic health permeable. The most 
pervasive form of involvement by individuals, and the most written-about in terms of 
strategies and effectiveness, was the health cell. The health cell was a small group of men 
and women in an apartment building, factory, or attached to a school or club that carried out 
grass roots efforts for improving health and educating the populace. In support of the 
dispensary in 1925 389 health cells existed in factories, 8,516 in housing, and 300 in anti-

Ashikhmin, Sotsial'nye bolezni, 19.

Ibid.
tuberculosis work. With three to five people per cell, this meant that nearly 30,000 workers participated in cell work, conducted lectures, discussions, trials, campaigns, and organized children’s squares and cafeterias. According to an official Moscow Health Department report, “The inclusion of so many workers’ in the construction of health care significantly lifted the consciousness of the masses which helped the organs of the Moscow Health Department in the fight with infectious diseases.” However, these estimates probably inflated worker participation as many cells only existed on paper according to later reports. A 1927 report stated 6000 health cells and 20,000 participants, and posited that even many of these really did not exist anywhere but on paper.

As part of the effort to encourage “self-help” authorities hoped for the eventual pervasiveness of cells. “In cities and villages, every large property or group of small properties must have its own health cell,” insisted one reformer. “A meeting of the inhabitants authorized by the Soviet constitution” selected the leaders of the cell. The ideal health cell assisted the dispensary’s efforts, investigations, and accounting procedures, improved the building’s condition by conducting sanitary enlightenment work, labored towards better construction, propagandized against infectious diseases, provided help for mothers, children, the chronically ill, and the psychologically disturbed, and investigated

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136 A.K. Bogomolov. (Dr.) "Dostizheniia sovetskoi meditsiny" ed. and intro. V.A. Obukh. Vyp. 2 "Puti i dostizheniia Sovetskoi meditsiny" po programme nauchnogo obschestva Moskovskikh vrachei "Leninizm v meditsine" (Moscow: MOZ, 1925), 26. Also see Material k doklady otdela zdravoookhraneniia na plenum Moskovskogo soveta RK i KD 27 Oktiabria 1925 g. (Moscow: Mossoviet, 1925), 7; I. Geizer, Ozdorovlenie truda i byta: Itogi deiatel’nost Moszdvotdel za period c 1/x - 1924 po 1/yii - 1925 g. (Moscow: MOZ, 1925), 23. pub. 5,000.

137 Material k doklady otdela zdravoookhraneniia na plenum Moskovskogo soveta RK i KD 27 Oktiabria 1925 g. (Moscow: Mossoviet, 1925), 7.

workers on disability and assured that they were making proper use of leisure time. Similar “sanitary associations” had formed in the United States during the late 1800s and worked towards spreading hygienic ideas among the working classes, particularly with pamphlets. Ia. Iu. Kats, one of the foremost writers on the place and organization of the dispensary and health cell, recommended that the cell members be of both the proletariat and intelligentsia and that they mirror the look of the professional organizations.

In practice, health cells varied greatly in their abilities and powers. The members of the health cell of Lilinu pereulok house 11 described their duties as follows: they had weekly meetings with the sanitary doctor and the nurse-investigator and followed experts’ instructions while enforcing “individual social-prophylactic measures” in worker homes through inspections. They boasted of their accomplishments in two months of work, including the betterment of air in fourteen apartments, the installation of transom windows in three, 114 exterminations, forty-one homes were made “more tidy”, two homes had clothes washing moved out of the living quarters, four acquired individual towels, two added trash cans, four set up spittoons, and in four extreme cases, the families were moved to different apartments.

A more extensive view of the health cell’s tasks and the variations among them can be culled from the forms used in the Moscow Department of Health’s 1924 competition of health cells. The department of health asked the cells to give information on the material circumstances of their building along with its social breakdown and crowding, what they

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140 -Tomes, 54.
had remodeled, and their role in the fight against infectious disease -- specifically tuberculosis, sexually transmitted disease, alcoholism, etc. Additionally, cells provided information on their relationship to the sanitary bureau, the committee of the improvement of labor and life, and the dispensary. Finally, they explained how they helped tenants with children, whether they organized better green space, play grounds, cafeterias, and other amenities, and how often they carried out sanitary enlightenment activities and general meetings of the tenants along with the inhabitants' reactions to these meetings.

Of the roughly seventy respondents to the competition, many returned nearly blank forms, having only formed a few months earlier. However, some filled out their forms exhaustively and highlighted activities which they felt set their cell apart. The health cell of home 3/24 Meshchanskaia ulitsa, consisting of a chemist, a worker, and an unemployed individual, highlighted their efforts to keep the building clean by disinfections, keeping the yard tidy, daily sweeping of the stairs, and doing a weekly wash. They also organized summer gymnastics for the children, built a sandbox for the very small ones, installed transoms in all rooms, lectured on sanitary hygiene, and organized excursions to the museum of health along with putting up posters on hygiene in their own red corner. All this was the work of just three people.¹⁴²

Other cells reported equally extensive activities but in different areas. At 9 Malaia Spasskaia ulitsa the cell's two workers and one white-collar worker inspected all thirty-eight apartments under their control monthly to ascertain "how accurately the inhabitants of the building fulfilled the laws of sanitary housekeeping." They brought violators before the building's inhabitants' council which could fine those who dirtied the building and surrounding area.¹⁴³ Another cell conducted monthly inspections of the apartments and

¹⁴² AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 97, l. 1.
¹⁴³ AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 97, l. 17-18.
prodded people to open their transoms every day, take their trash out more frequently, keep the bathroom dry, and clean their homes with a “damp” method.\(^\text{144}\) In some cases, such as alcoholism, the cell would either attempt to influence the sufferers themselves, recommend them for treatment elsewhere, or, in an extreme case, throw the alcoholics out.\(^\text{145}\)

Generally, health cells wielded no administrative power, but instead, focused on education.\(^\text{146}\) Few cells admitted to a complete lack of sanitary enlightenment work, though they varied in the amount of work attempted. One of the more active cells, the group at 14/30 Matrosskaia tishina with a total of 908 people under its purview, organized a sanitary agitational trial, an excursion to the health museum, an agitational play on venereal disease, and propaganda installations including a health corner and a wall gazette.\(^\text{147}\) Other groups were not as active admitting only to an occasional letter or house meeting, but they felt they still managed to peddle their influence among the inhabitants of their building. One cell admitted that though they had not organized any lectures or discussions for sanitary enlightenment, they did “conduct discussions at convenient opportunities with every citizen” in their apartment building.\(^\text{148}\)

Given their involvement in the spread of sanitary information, organizers felt it essential that cells “grasp and master the elements of sanitary culture.” For this purpose they recommended “the conduct with health cells of systematic lectures, excursions, and the consistent instruction of the health cell in their work alongside specialists.”\(^\text{149}\)

\(^{144}\) AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 97, l. 33.

\(^{145}\) AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 97, l. 20. In the case of an alcoholic thrown out of the building for “incurable” alcoholism, it was according to the determination of the court that he was thrown out of the home, see AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 97, l. 17.

\(^{146}\) Kats, *Sistema a metody dispanserizatsii*, 44.

\(^{147}\) AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 97, l. 2.

\(^{148}\) AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 97, l. 30.

\(^{149}\) Kats, *Sistema a metody dispanserizatsii*, 43.
instructions on proper hygiene, officials bombarded cell members with lessons on how to properly advise those under their care. An advice article to members of health cells against tuberculosis, stated:

It is impossible to simply forbid spitting on the floor or kissing a child on the lips. We must explain why it is prohibited. We need to explain why we must stand up for ventilation and for wet sweeping. We need to show why it is dangerous to drink spirits and how it affects both the health of the most ill, the economy, and consequently the family. We need to know that we fall ill with tuberculosis not just thanks to poor conditions but also thanks to our ignorance.\footnote{\textit{V. Stoianovskaja, Dr. "Shto dolzhen znati" i delat' chlen zdrav'iacheiki po tuberkulezu." Gigiena i zdrav'iach'e rabochikh i krest'ianskoisem'i 14 (July 1926), 5.}}

However, it can only be speculated as to what type of information these activists spread. Cell members, without the time for in-depth reading and no extensive training or supervision, very likely sprinkled their medical advice with their own homespun theories and moral lessons, just as the professional hygienists were prone to do.

Letters to the magazine \textit{For a new life} suggest that Muscovites counted on their health cells to be effective as they held them responsible for poor conditions in apartment buildings and dormitories. A complaint letter about the Smolenskii Bulvar 53 student dormitory decried the students for throwing garbage out the windows and destroying their newly, remodeled building but concluded that the health cell was ultimately responsible.\footnote{Klin, "Veselye naryvy" ZNB 7 (April 1926): 13.}

If the health cell could be culpable for a lack of action or change, obviously people felt that cells had the power to effect positive change in the homes and apartment buildings of the capital. In one complaint letter about the awful conditions of a dormitory, the writer posited that the only reason that things were so bad, that the trash was not changed and conditions were filthy, was that there was no health cell at all.\footnote{Rul'neva, "Nuzhna zdrav'iacheika" ZNB 3 (February 1926): 15.}
Letters praised certain health cells as active and able. Letter-writers lauded their work. One letter praised the health cell for maintaining the home at 18 Staromonetnii pereulok.\textsuperscript{153} Another letter congratulated the health cell at a student dormitory which managed to improve filthy kitchen conditions by obtaining a place to construct a special laundry room with scheduled times for the boiling of linens.\textsuperscript{154} Worker O. praised the health cell of his factory which had done far more than the Commission for the improvement of labor and life (KOTiB) because it did not live just by instructions and circulars, but closely tied itself to the dispensary, ambulatory, nursery, and so on.\textsuperscript{155} Indeed, writers admired some health cells for going above and beyond in their service. A letter commended the health cell of Polianka house 2 1/2 because they not only fulfilled their health cell work, but also constructed a Lenin corner and worked towards the political and cultural enlightenment of the tenants of their building.\textsuperscript{156}

Alongside the health cell stood the more formal institution of Soviet health care and prophylaxis -- the dispensary. The health cell supposedly worked closely with the dispensary.\textsuperscript{157} The dispensary, upon referrals from physicians who investigated workers, provided treatment for sick workers as well as investigations of homes and sanitary education. Under dispensary orders, nurses and doctors carried out more formal home inspections than those of the cells. The dispensary’s investigation was done on order of the institution doctor, “where the character of the disease requires an explanation of the

\textsuperscript{155} Rabochii O. “Kak byt’?” ZNB 3 (February 1926): 14
\textsuperscript{156} Zdravok tipografi im. Dunaeva O. Bitkova “Zdrav’iacheika ne spit,” ZNB 3 (May 1925): 17.
\textsuperscript{157} V. Stoianovskaia, (Dr.) “Shto dolzhhen znat’ i delat’ chlen zdrav’iacheiki po tuberkulezu,” Gigiena i zedorove rabochei i krest’ianskoi sem’i 14 (July 1926): 5.
standard of living and its influence." The results of these investigations were noted in the sanitary journal of the patient.\(^{158}\)

Those involved in the dispensary system felt that the home inspection was an essential part of treatment. V. A. Obukh wrote, "When the healing doctor knows the condition in which the worker’s life and labor take place, they can, with their advice and through sanitary and san-technical measures (through responsible organizations), prevent the harmful consequences of abnormal conditions of labor and lifestyle."\(^{159}\) Hygienists hoped that through observing and instructing sick workers they could turn them from those habits which had made them ill and expected great powers from their inspectors. The inspector “must ably and closely get to the personal and intimate life of the patient to clear from his lifestyle that which pushes him towards this or that poison.”\(^{160}\)

The dispensary collected information about worker home life through questionnaires in 64,075 cases in 1926, but for a deeper look they used the home inspection.\(^{161}\) According to data collected by V. A. Obukh, the head of the Moscow Department of Health, the Moscow dispensaries examined 120,000 people and carried out home inspections on 32,000. Doctors performed 12,000 of these home inspections and nurses 20,000.\(^{162}\)

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\(^{160}\) I. Stoklitskii, "Iz-pod vlasti durmana — k trudu (Rogozhsko-Simonovskii Narkodispanser)," *ZNB* 8-9 (May 1926): 12.

\(^{161}\) V. A. Obukh, ed. A. K. Bogomolov, Dr. comp. *Zdravoookhranenie v Moskve (Dispanserizatsiia rabocheho naseleniia)* vyp. IV “Puti i dostizhenia sovetskoi meditsiny.” po programme nauchnogo obschestva Moskovskikh vrahov "Leninizm v Meditsine," (Moscow: MOZ, 1926), 45.

\(^{162}\) Ibid., 27.
Just as the health cells involvement increased the number of inspections for Muscovites, other quasi-official groups became involved in home visits. In connection with the Committee for the Improvement of Labor and Life, members of the zhenotdel along with some teachers conducted inspections in the Chistie prudy neighborhood of Moscow in 1926 looking at the homes of 342 families with some 1,235 members. In the Khamovnicheskii district zhenotdel members in connection with Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants (to be discussed more fully below) carried out 4,620 investigations and even went to court to improve the living conditions of some of the women. These organizations carried out 200,000 visits in 1924/1925 and 150,000 for the first half of the year 1925/6 reaching, according to contemporary estimates, a total of nearly 500,000 Muscovites.

Inspections were not uniquely Soviet. At the turn of the century America, many visiting nurse groups conducted similar work in major urban areas like Boston, Philadelphia and New York City. Nurse inspectors performed vital roles in the dispensary system, helping to control patients and imposing healthful regimens -- "both as educators and as watchdogs." Organizers in New York found the nurse especially important as she demonstrated how to change circumstances rather than just handing out circulars. This difference was especially important, according to organizers, when dealing with the often illiterate lower-classes.

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[164] P-va, "Delegatki za rabotoi (Khamonicheskii raion)," ZNB 17-18 (September 1926), 3.
[165] Kats, Dispansernaia sistema, 22.
[166] Duffy, 208.
Hygienists paid great attention to the home as it was the base for a healthy society. In their recommendations they made certain assumptions as to the proper roles of men, women, and children in the Soviet family. Hygienists targeted women at the source of problems in the home, but also as the only ones with power enough to change things. Husbands and children had to persuade their mothers whereas wives applied their knowledge and overcame sexist, abusive husbands to drag their homes to a Soviet lifestyle.

While nurses and doctors inspected and recommended ways to keep a more healthful home, the new lifestyle pushed women into unhealthy cycles of overwork and stress with less time than men for leisure and sleep. State statistics documented the burdens upon women. One study noted that in 1923 eighty percent of women workers were simultaneously housewives. With the new sanitary norms this gave them in effect a second job which becomes evident in the examination of time management charts from the period. A man’s working day was 13:02 while a woman worked 14:55. Their leisure time and sleeping times were also disparate. Men had 3:23 leisure and slept 8:14 while women had 2:42 of leisure with 7:23 of sleep. According to time budget studies done in 1931, women’s chore times only increased. Full-time working women spent an average of five hours a day on chores and children. Men spent only two hours. Undoubtedly the lack of running water, electricity, sewage lines, laundries, and easy shopping greatly complicated their tasks.

New hygienic norms for house work greatly overburdened women and lengthened their work days. However, Semashko and other health officials considered more sanitary homes essential to the smoother and stronger functioning of society. In 1920 and 1921 the

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* From Kingsbury and Fairchild, Factory, 249-250, as cited in Chase, Workers, 196.
government passed laws requiring Muscovites to maintain their housing in a sanitary condition. A clean house became a hallmark of citizenship, and since the government targeted women as the parties responsible for the maintenance of the home, it became integral to the definition of a Soviet woman.

As guardians of the home, women's individual efforts at domestic hygiene and economy could lead to the new world. In posters, women's actions led to a bright future of cooperative living, electricity, order, and political consciousness for all (See figure 2.1, 2.4). In "The Maintenance of Cleanliness in the Home," the woman's following of the strictures elucidated at the bottom of the poster led to the material prosperity and order of the heaven image which included electric light, a personal stove, fire alarms, and even more children. Women's actions ensured the future.

Interestingly, this path to citizenship was guarded by institutions which borrowed extensively from the west in their conception and course of action. The dispensary system and its home visitation replicated programs from New York and elsewhere, which Russian hygienists fully acknowledged. Not only did their structure reflect this connection to the west but so to did their message. Semashko's justifications for domestic order relied heavily on studies from the United States, Germany, and other western countries.

The next chapter deals more extensively with the comparisons which Soviet officials made between Russia and the west, especially in terms of birth rates and infant death rates. In addition the chapter deepens the picture of the invasive techniques practiced by the department of health with their institutions of the dispensary and consultation and through the person of the nurse inspector. Again, women, as carriers and primary educators of the next generation, received special attention.

171 Chase, Workers 188.
Figure 3.1 "Breast feed." V. V. Spaskii, pub. 50,000. All figures courtesy of Russian State Library
Figure 3.2 “What saves Russia from Massive Infant Death?” The fact that ninety-two mothers of a hundred breast feed.” Postcard V. V. Spaskii, pub. 50,000.
Figure 3.3 “What should one do with an infant with a cold or vomiting?” V. V. Spaskii, Moscow, pub. 75,000.
Figure 3.4 “The Causes for the English Disease (Rickets)” Moscow: Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants, 1926-1929. pub. 4,000.
Figure 3.5 “Why do so many infants die in Russia? The outcome of early feeding with kasha or the soska.” V. V. Spaskii, Pub. 50,000.
Figure 3.6 "Vasilii went to the babka instead of the hospital." Moscow: MOZ, 1921-1925, pub. 10,000.
Figure 3.7 “The Correct way to hold a three-month-old child.” Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants, 1926-1929. pub. 4,000.
Figure 3.8 “Why do infants cry?” Moscow: Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants, 1926-1929. pub. 4,000.
Figure 3.9 “Comrades! After the work day come to the club. There you will find relaxation, knowledge and entertainment.” Leningrad: Kul'totdel LGSPS, 1927. pub. 1927.
Figure 3.10 “Been on the street? Clean your clothes and feet.” Gosmedizdat, 1926-1929. pub. 10,000.
Figure 3.11 "Workers. In the house of leisure, study how to build a new life." Moscow: MOZ, 1926-1929, pub. 10,000.
CHAPTER 4:
A HEALTHY MOTHER RUSSIA:
MATERNITY AND PRO-NATALIST INITIATIVES

As she entered the brightly-lit waiting room of the consultation for nursing infants, the young mother must have tensed and blinked severely. Around her everything was bright, clean and spartan. Gowns of the whitest-white adorned the doctors and nurses, both the ones who stood in the cubicles, and those featured in the posters encircling the room. Perhaps the unfamiliar odor of disinfectants and medicinal unctures made her twist her nose as she clutched her tightly bundled and crying baby. Whatever her initial impression, the reaction of the other women, already lined-up and waiting, to her entrance, must have been far more disturbing. One chided her for bundling her child, another for rocking it to calm its cries, a third mutely and disapprovingly pointed to the posters on the wall to call the new mother's attention to her misdeeds.

Just a few months before the reaction of the waiting women had been just the opposite. While the consultation sparkled just as brightly, the chorus of women behaved quite differently. The women had suspected the consultation of all sorts of corruptions and perversions. They bundled their children and distrusted the nurse whom they suspected of being without children herself though more than willing to tell them how to raise theirs. One suspected they were weighing the children for some nefarious purpose, like, she added
ominously, those she had read about in America. Another mother even asked in a worried
tone about the "confiscation" which was being planned.

The American nurse who witnessed the above two scenes regarded them as a
triumph of Soviet public health.¹ Suspicion and distrust had been changed into faith and
even a devotion to the new system which led them to proselytize to others proper
techniques for raising children. But perhaps it was the woman who confused the
consultation with a confiscation who better understood this aspect of the Soviet public
health campaigns. In many ways the consultation, set up by the Narkomzdrav's
Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infancy was a strange and alien
experience which, like other Soviet public health programs, confiscated the authority of
women in matters of child-rearing and replaced it with the authority of the male doctor and
his new, scientific, Soviet lifestyle.

The Ministry of Health, through the consultation, the maternity home and most
vividly in propaganda, aimed to institute new methods of child-care among Soviet women
and replace traditional practices and practitioners. Building on previous zemstvo
campaigns, the authorities behind these institutions and the entire cultural campaign of the
"third front" attempted to destroy the female-centered community of child care in which
midwives and village wise-women held sway. As they chipped away at the authority of the
midwife, they re-conceived the role of the mother in child-bearing and rearing and
attempted to deny the long-held contention that motherhood was a natural ability of women
which took no special knowledge or training. They challenged the usual order of child-care
and instead supported a new authority, the doctor, who would lead women to more
hygienic techniques which concentrated on rituals of cleanliness and timing.

When they injected the doctor into the mother-child relationship, they also depersonalized and disciplined it. Once hygiene was trumpeted as the deciding factor in a child’s health and health became equated to happiness, the good mother was one who ensured her child’s health through following the instructions of the health experts. Essentially, good mothering became a skill, and like any skill, it had to be acquired. According to the propaganda, any woman could perfect this skill with practice and attention to the doctor-recommended health regimen. Hence any power she could derive from this new emphasis on motherhood was simultaneously being pulled from her.

Women received a mixed message in regard to pregnancy and childbirth. Stories and reports consistently portrayed children as a burden and their raising as detrimental to a woman’s health. The department of health attempted to separate women from the harmful effects of a growing child. Health inspectors took children from mothers and placed them in nurseries and pioneer troops, while the organizers of the house of leisure attempted to make women vacation separately from their children. In a seeming paradox, hygienists also warned women that if they did not have children it would harm their health. According to the literature, without sexual contact women withered, but all casual sexual contact was dangerous. Hence, the only healthy choice, the only socially responsible choice, was to procreate. This, even more ironically, clashed with the sexual advice given to men to remain celibate and push all such urges into physical culture and revolutionary fervor.

The seemingly conflicting ideas that women must procreate to be healthy, but were endangered by their children, connected with a growing concept that women should be more involved in the building of the new Soviet Society. Hygienists emphasized child-rearing as a social responsibility but also encouraged women’s volunteerism. By denying the egoism and fractious personal relationships of the private family and giving up the
relationship to their own child, women would emerge from darkness and relate to the entirety of society. As the previous chapter noted, through social work and volunteerism women would be involved in the building of Soviet society.

This chapter concentrates on the programs of the Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants (Otdel okhrana materinstva i mладенчества) and the production of a new Soviet style of child care by theorists, health specialists, worker activists, and worker volunteers. While male doctors occupied positions of authority in Narkomzdrav, women heavily influenced the organization and running of the department. Both the head of the Russia-wide and the Moscow branch of the Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants were women -- V. P. Lebedeva and O. P. Nogina respectively. Large numbers of female volunteers carried out the inspections which attempted to physically implement these ideas. Women also made up the bulk of mid-wives and traditional healers. While the propaganda pushed male doctors as authorities on these matters and men filled the upper echelons of the department of health, the actual battle for supremacy in matters of child-rearing took place among women.2

Pronatalist institutions and policy

Concern for the care of mothers and children was nothing new to Russia. A Soviet writer examining the origins of natalist policy in Russia put the beginnings with Peter the Great who saw the need for more workers and taxpayers and therefore the necessity of

2 Jane Lewis critiqued the common "women controlling women" model in her article on social work and explored the complex relationships of women as medical practitioners with men in positions of power see "Women and Late-nineteenth-century social work" in Regulating Womanhood: Historical Essays on Marriage, Motherhood and Sexuality Carol Smart, ed. (London: Routledge, 1992), 78-99; For a feminist history of natal care see Ann Oakley, The Captured Womb: A History of the Medical Care of Pregnant Women (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, 1984). 149
caring for orphans and foundlings. These programs concentrated on illegitimate or abandoned children and their care. In the course of the eighteenth century, Russian ideas about population and its meaning for the state shifted, and as they did, ways to control its growth, health, and productivity changed. By the early nineteenth-century, the military colonies of Arakcheev instituted programs to control population growth. Organizers attempted to educate mothers in modern, western, hygienic care for their children and by so doing, ensure a healthy child who would then grow to be a strong member of society.

Almost a century later, Soviet public health programs attempted to spread these ideas to the general population through propaganda and legislation. Throughout the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth, countries around the world experimented with different programs stimulated by the growth of bacteriology, professionalization of medicine and the social sciences, nationalist competition, and modern warfare with the intent of creating healthier, larger, more stable populations.

Believing that the size of a nation could set it on a path to dominance, practically all industrialized countries instituted programs to increase population growth in the early twentieth century. Germany, Britain, and the United States all attempted to lessen infant death rates and better educate mothers for the tasks before them. These programs greatly

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3 R. M. Bravaia, Dr. Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva na zapade i v SSSR: Istoricheskii ocherk (Moscow: Gosmedizdat, 1929), 147-147; on Catherine the Great and the influence of "French ideas" in upbringing see 150-152.
5 In the United States, the Children's Bureau provided instruction and information to mothers free of charge see Molly Ladd-Taylor, Raising a baby the government way: Mothers' letters to the Children's Bureau, 1915-1932. The Douglass Series on Women's Lives and the Meaning of Gender. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1986).
accelerated after World War I. For example, Britain encouraged growth in natalist programs even during the war, emphasizing that there should be no decrease in spending because of the engagement, but instead it should be increased. These ideas did not pass Russia by. In an edited collection by B.S. Ginzburg which the Russian Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants sent out to all the district departments, Ginzburg outlined the new, European-wide fears of population depletion in the twentieth century as compared to the Malthusian inspired fears of overpopulation in the nineteenth century and squarely centered Russian concerns with depopulation. The book included multiple tables and graphs of birth and death rates throughout Europe, to underscore Russia’s poor performance in comparison to other European countries.

As the state claimed motherhood, its definition changed “from women’s primary private responsibility into public policy.” In Russia the movement from private organizations for natal health to centralized state organs exemplified this shift. Doctors and private individuals organized the first welfare organizations for women in Russia in the

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6 Bravaia, Okhrana materinstva, for Germany had 360 consultations in 1910 and by 1920 2,600. Infant death decreased from 15.1 per 100 in 1913 to 14.5 per 100 in 1919, see 97-98. England had 1700 centers by 1918 with 700 of these in private hands. Centers taught about breast-feeding and minor household organization and claimed a drop in infant death from 12.8% in 1901-1910 to 10% by 1911-1920, 100; for United States’ programs for children and children’s hygiene see 101. See also Kriste Lindenmeyer. “A Right to Childhood”: The U.S. Children’s Bureau and Child Welfare, 1912-1946. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997). For essays providing a general overview of natalist programs throughout Europe, see Seth Koven and Sonya Michel’s edited volume Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of the Welfare States (New York: Routledge, 1993).

7 Bravaia, Okhrana materinstva, 99.

8 For reference to the distribution of the book see GARF f. A-482 op. 1 d. 556 l. 85. For comparative natalist policies see the article “Problema okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva na zapade i v Sovetskoi Rossii” in the self-edited Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva (Kratko rukovodstvo dlia lektora) (Moscow: Otdel okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva NKZ, 1924), 6-44.

early 1900s, but by the 1910s, the state brought these programs under its umbrella.\textsuperscript{10} However, even with state interest, the number of institutions founded remained small and the number of women reached minimal.\textsuperscript{11} Health problems among the population were so severe that in 1914 the army rejected nearly one-third of draftees for rickets, tuberculosis, or general wasting.\textsuperscript{12} Only revolution would bring the creation of large-scale programs for natal health. The Soviets did not disavow the programs begun by the bourgeoisie in hopes of increased population for the "capitalist struggle for markets" and "strong war machines" just because of their source.\textsuperscript{13}

New Soviet leaders desired a stronger, larger population.\textsuperscript{14} War, Civil War, and famine devastated the population, and the birth rate plunged after so many young men had been lost.\textsuperscript{15} These problems could not be addressed by looking only to the health of the adult population. The health of infants set the foundation for future productivity. Children constituted a resource which had to be managed and cared for by society. The concerns of

\textsuperscript{10} In 1901, doctors in St. Petersburg and Moscow started infant programs under the name "Drops of Milk." the 1911 society to fight infant death used lectures and other programs to encourage breast feeding. See Bravaia, \textit{Okhrana materinstva}, 186, 188.

\textsuperscript{11} Organizations for the Welfare of Mothers and Children in 1915-1916:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>1915</th>
<th>1916</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permanent shelters and day shelters</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of children in them</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>800-900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village nurseries</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>number of children in them</td>
<td>15,843</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Drops of Milk&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelters for pregnant women and birthing mothers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{12} O. P. Nogina, \textit{Tridtsat let okhrany materi i rebenka v SSSR}. (Moscow: Ministerstvo zdravoookhraneniia SSSR institut sanitarnogo prosveshchenia, 1947), 30. Also by the same author in English under the title \textit{Mother and Child Care in the USSR}. (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1950); See Bravaia, \textit{Okhrana materinstva}, 84-85.

\textsuperscript{13} Bravaia, \textit{Okhrana materinstva}, 84-85.

\textsuperscript{14} Ginzburg also goes into detail on the transition from Malthusian fears to this new wrinkle in population policy, see the article "Problemy okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva na zapade i v Sovetskoi Rossii"

\textsuperscript{15} Ginzburg, "Problema okhrany materinstva," 7.
Narkomzdrav underscored this point. The Moscow Department of Health devoted sixteen percent of the budget to the protection of mothers.

Leaders considered the lives of children to be so important that they could not be left the private affair of parents. The state had to have influence. A housewife attacked in an agitational trial of the 1920s railed against the new system and its invasiveness. “It’s enough that they spoiled my husband. He forgot his faith, but I won’t give them my children to spoil...They’re my kids...I’ll do as I like.” But a young, female komsomol member, a representative of the new order, rebuked her, “That’s nonsense, Stepanovna. Your children aren’t your own. Children belong to the society of workers.”

To protect these youngest members of the society of workers, the government passed legislation to protect mothers and children and established in 1918 the Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants (Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants). Ginzburg reported that a 1912 study showed that children of working mothers died at a higher rate than those of non-working mothers, twenty-five versus nineteen percent, and attributed this to tsarist work conditions. The importance of children’s health and natal policy to the new agency was summed up in a 1925 quote by O.

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18 R.D. Sud nad domashchnei khoziaikoi (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1927), 6.
19 "Pregnancy leave is the tax of health" declared V. Sukharev, Rabochii, beregi svoe zdorov’e: K ozorovleniiu rabochei sem’i (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 21. By 1928, women involved in physical labor were allowed 8 weeks of maternity leave and those in mental labor received 6 weeks to birth. Material help was guaranteed for the first 9 months. See I. Katsenel’son, Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva: ee tseli i zadachi 3-i izdanie (Leningrad: leningradskaja pravda, 1928). In 1920, OMM moved from NKSO to be a sub-department of NKZ. Bravaia, Okhrana materinstvo, 206. For more on labor restrictions for women and children in connection to health policy, see I. Strashun, "Desiat’ let bor’by proletariata za zdorov’e," in Desiat’ let oktiabria i sovetskia mediitsina. N. A. Semashko, ed. (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 64.
20 Ginzburg, Okhrana materinstvo, 162.
P. Nogina, the head of Moscow’s Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants:

At the present time, when the questions of the sanitation of the population has deeply penetrated the working mass and begins to seize the peasant layer, it must be clear to all that the health of every single person lays in his infancy and even before. Only a healthy mother can give birth to a healthy baby. Therefore the sanitation of the population begins with the protection of a pregnant woman and her infant.\(^{21}\)

The Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants supervised orphanages, nurseries, homes for mothers and children, maternity homes (for normal births, problem births, and for homeless mothers), abortaria,\(^{22}\) and consultations for nursing children and women (also known as consultations for pregnant women). However, the bulk of its work was in propaganda.\(^{23}\) Departments distributed propaganda through a variety of means. They organized schools of motherhood and infancy within the consultation, maternity home, and at factories with large numbers of female workers. Sanitary enlightenment theorists said the consultation was the best place for the distribution of literature.\(^{24}\) Worker clubs also tried to spread the message with lectures and question and answer nights. One


\(^{22}\) While seemingly in contradiction to a pro-natalist policy, health reformers argued that safe and legal abortions were necessary to cut down on the injury and death to women caused by illegal abortion providers, see Strashun, “Desiat’ let bor’by,” 65; Gutkin and Frenkel’, Zdravoookhranenie v sovetskoi Rossi, 45-46. Additionally, abortions were provided as part of the state initiative to liberate women, but their were restrictions upon them which made it difficult for most women to terminate their pregnancies, see Wendy Goldman, Women, The State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917-1936 (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

\(^{23}\) Haines, Health Work, 51.

list of 1924 department activities noted that they performed lectures, sent articles to be included in publications, organized excursions and printed 720,000 copies of books on maternal and natal health. Another department pledged to use "lectures, meetings, exhibitions, conferences, handouts, posters, brochures, etc." According to a short account of department activities in Russia for July - September 1924, the department presented four lectures along with the film "Children - Life's flowers" (Deti - tsvety zhizni), placed twenty-two articles in women-targeted journals, and led 119 excursions through the museum with 2,489 participants and 5,691 unescorted individuals.

The Institute for the Study and Teaching of Infant Welfare opened a child care museum in which the mother could observe a model home complete with displays of posters, wax models, and model rooms. The museum organizers reproduced some of its posters as postcards (See figures 3.1, 3.4) Smaller traveling exhibits, consisting of posters and wax displays of food, toys, and other objects properly kept, toured consultations and maternity homes. The public was not left to its own devices in these presentations. To ensure proper interpretation of the exhibits, handbooks described exactly how to lead groups through the show including dialogue and even stage directions.

25 GARF f. A-482, op. 1, d. 556, l. 85.
26 GARF f. A-482, op. 1, d. 156, l. 27.
27 GARF f. A-482, op. 1, d. 556, l. 85.
28 The all-Russia exhibition for OMM was started in 1919 and exhibited for only two years before burning down. See Antonov, Sanitarno-prosvetitel'naia rabota, 25 - 26.
29 N.I. Langova comp. Vystavka "Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva" (Moscow: Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva, 1927). See also B.S. Ginzburg's discussions to accompany a poster collection in the village in Populiarnye besedy po okhrane materinstva i mladenchestva (v pomoshch izbachy) Prilozenie k khudozhestvennoi vystavke-lubku po okhrane materinstva i mladenchestva (Moscow: Otdel okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva NKZ, 1925). For reproductions of an OMM poster display touching on the following themes: breast-feeding, cleanliness, alcohol, etc. (unfortunately in too poor shape for reproduction) see "Vystavka po okhrane materinstva vo dvorste truda" in Isskustvo i promyshlennost' 2 (February-March 1924): 47-52.
Departments spread their message in their operations. Consultation workers “instructed [pregnant women] in all matters of hygienic living and of child care” including detailed directives for how to spend the time up to birth (diet, exercise, etc.).

The Home for Homeless Mothers went even further and combined natal-care classes with trade classes so that the women would not only know how to care for their infants but earn the wherewithal to construct a healthy life once they left the institution. At the Home for Mothers and Children, they received more intensified and prolonged instruction. Women could stay anywhere from one month before birth and two months after to an entire ten month stay. Organizers stated two goals: to be a hygienic place for mother and infant and to teach the mother correct care. “A mother living two months in the Home for mothers and infants sees in action that she can and must live without old women’s biddings, that the fear of the evil eye, fear of colds, spirits and the swaddling of the baby cripples his life.”

At the home, pregnant women learned how to “rationally spend the time until birth” and after having the children “the doctor and nurse-instructor continually show mothers how they ought to feed and care for nursing children.”

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32 In 1927, the average stay was sixty-one days. *Materialy o deiatele’nosti lechebno-profilakticheskikh uchrezhdeni Moszdravotdela za 1926/27 goda po dannym statisticheskogo otdeleniia Moszdravotdela* (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1928), 7.


34 A. Balander, “Dom grudnogo rebentsa” in Moskovskii komitet nedeli okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva, red. *Okhrana materi i mladenchestva v Moskve i Moskovskoi gubernii: Illiustrirovannyi sbornik* (Moscow: Moskovskii komitet po provedeniiu nedeli okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva, 1923), 40.
No matter the source, the message was fairly consistent — "women must change their ways...traditional child care was incorrect and must be superseded by modern habits. Traditional female lore was to be abandoned in favor of science." Reformers presented the "babka" as the incarnation of the past and all its evils and placed all blame onto her shoulders. As one author declared, "The biggest reason for infant death is not the poverty of the population - it is the babka." According to the writers, the babka compounded her offense by "torturing" the women throughout the birthing process. Authors also vilified wise women for their post-natal care and reputation as back-alley abortion providers. Doctor Ginzburg cited statistics which contended that ninety-five percent of Russian women gave birth under the babka’s care and blamed babkas for 30,000 deaths.

Pictures invariably portrayed the babka as a withered old woman with a skull-like face of death, usually hunched and frail, who worked in filthy conditions (See figure 3.5). Posters showed babkas delivering babies in rooms decorated with hanging laundry, animals, and the occasional farm implement. The patient laid in a pose that spoke of suffering and exhaustion. Either the mother’s hair fell in her open, screaming mouth or across her lips slack in unconsciousness. By contrast a doctor assisted delivery was serene. The doctor dressed in white stood in a bare room which was obviously not used

36 N.K. Mitropol’skii Doloi babok! Doloi oshibki i suveriia pri rozhdenii i vospitanii detei (Leningrad: Gosudarstvennaia tipographia im. Zinov’eva, 1926).
37 Mitropol’skii Doloi babok!, 7-8, 16. For other anti-babka propaganda see, Lebedeva, G.I. ed. Znakharska: Skaz (Moscow: Novaia derevnia, 1924). Anti-practitioner propaganda also targeted males who followed traditional practice but they were usually not associated with natal medicine or the city. See A. A. Khrustalev, Znakharka i doktor (Moscow: Krasnaia nov’, 1923); and Leonid Subbotin, Zakharko’-obvanshchik i babkina loshchad: Komedia v 3 deistviakh (Moscow: Novaia derevnia, 1925); and figure 3.5.
39 ibid., 8, 23; see the posters reproduced in "Vystavka po okhrana materinstva vo Dvortse Trua," Isskustva i promyshlennost’ 2 (February-March 1924): 51.
for anything but this process. The postpartum woman lay in a calm, contented pose. With
the doctor-assisted birth the foregone conclusion was a healthy baby and calm mother.

According to authorities, the babka preyed upon unconscious or ashamed women
and tried to frighten them away from the new health facilities and programs. The babka
Lopukhina\textsuperscript{40} charged in a mock trial with causing a woman’s death in a botched abortion,
presented her services as being “for secret pregnancies” or for women who were ashamed
to be pregnant (a supposed impossibility in the new state).\textsuperscript{41} Babkas also exploited the
ignorance of the population playing on the mistrust of the new medical authorities,
exploiting popular suspicion of the hospital as a location of death, and saying that male
doctors could not understand “women’s business”.\textsuperscript{42}

In plays and stories, the babka’s ignorance endangered both mother and child. The
judge disregarded babka Lopukhina’s thirty years’ experience delivering children and
providing abortions.\textsuperscript{43} Experience was not adequate. Like the anti-midwife campaigns in
Western nations, only institutionalized learning was acceptable.\textsuperscript{44} Furthermore, the babkas
did not possess the ability to use the instruments considered essential by doctors, and
instead of a thorough knowledge of medicines the babkas relied on grasses, prayers, holy
water, bootlegged liquor, and in extreme cases her one instrument was described (and

\textsuperscript{40}Lopukhina is a name that summons numerous allusions including its literal meaning: \textit{lopukh} - a type of
prickly-leaved herb and the tradition-bound first wife of Peter the Great Evdokia Lopukhina.
\textsuperscript{41}L.A. and L.M. Vasilevskii, \textit{Sud nad akusherkoi Lopukhinoi, sovershivshei operatsiiu aborta, sledstviem
cheho iavilas’smert’zhenshchiny, i intsenirovannyipokazatel’nyi sud} (Oktyabr, 1923), 6.
\textsuperscript{42}Sigal, \textit{Sud nad mater’iu vinovnoi v rasprostranenii}, 12, 43. See also the actions of Irina Petrovna
Semeonovna in B.S.Ginzburg’s wonderful \textit{Sud nad materiu polkinuvshei svoego rebenka} (Moscow: Zemlia
i fabrika, 1924), 34.
\textsuperscript{43}Vasilevskii, \textit{Sud nad akusherkoi}, 6.
\textsuperscript{44}Waters, “Child care Posters,” 65.
Author's emphasized babka shortcomings in their further care for women and their children. One woman lost two of her children to scarlet fever because of her constant belief in the babka's power. Another lost her child after attending the old woman Buranova. Health officials blamed babkas for infant deaths and blindness because they reportedly did not properly attend to venereal diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhea. Additionally, agitational trials condemned babka methods for calming children — including the use of opium tonics and alcohol.

Not only was the babka cruel and incompetent, but most damningly in the eyes of many, she was dirty. Authors ardently detailed the filth of the babka. As one reformer insisted, "The babkas do not know about the maintenance of cleanliness and really do not believe in it much...under their long fingernails they always have a lot of dirt." Babkas did not keep their tools in cabinets or sterilize them and used methods which doctors found grotesquely unsafe. In a favorite hygiene horror story, one author claimed the babka would cut the head off a live chicken while sitting between the mother's legs in order to frighten the baby out of the mother.

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43 For holy water, spirits and prayers, see B. Sigal, Sud nad mater'iu vinovnoi v rasprostranenii skarlatiny (Moscow: Zhizn' i znanie, 1925), 18-19. For grass, see same author Sud nad mater'iu, vinovnoi v plokhom ukhode za det'mi, povlekshem za soboi smert' rebenka (Leningrad: Zinoviev gosudarsvevaia tipographia, 1925), 7. For a nice picture of the log, see Mitropol'skii, Doloi babok, 21.
44 See Mitropol'skii, Doloi babok, 22-27.
45 Sigal, Sud nad mater'iu vinovnoi v rasprostranenii.
47 Ibid., and Ginzburg, Sud nad materiu.
48 Mitropol'skii, Doloi babok, 9.
49 Vasilevskii, Sud nad akusherkoi, 9.
50 Mitropol'skii, Doloi babok, 10; In the west, medical professionals attacked female midwives on similar grounds, see Judith Walzer Leavitt, Brought to Bed: Childbearing in America, 1750-1950 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
A profusion of other sources for filth met the eyes of reformers. Authors constantly emphasized cleanliness saying that mothers should keep all items around the child clean. Experts recommended clean toys free of sharp edges. Mothers had to keep clothing, bedding, and linens freshly washed and change them frequently. They should also carefully store food products and boil water. In some pamphlets, authors emphasized cleanliness as the primary measure for ensuring infant health, "a cleanly kept room, a frequently washed floor, washed hands, daily bathing of the child for the first six months, the frequent changing of underclothes - these are the tax for a healthy child."^5

No matter how well-kept the environment of the apartment, it provided only part of a healthful upbringing. Doctors prescribed large amounts of fresh air and sunshine for expectant mothers and new-born children. According to one expert, the baby born in summer should be taken outside immediately and stay there all day. For children born in winter doctors recommended short exposure for the first month and then four to six hours a day. If outdoor exposure could not be provided the transom should be opened to air the apartment during sleeping hours and several times throughout the day.

Expert advice also included concern for proper, scientific care. Universally, health-care advocates touted the healthfulness of breast feeding over formula or even cow's milk.57

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53 See Melenevska, Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva, 11; For a long list of do's and don'ts see Moskovskii komitet, Okhrana Materinstva i mladenchestva, 1.
54 N.I. Langova comp. Vystavka "Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva" (Moscow: Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva, 1927), 10.
55 Langova, Vystavka, 4.
56 Langova, Vystavka, 10.
57 Annmarie Adams points out that in England formula was said to be better than breast milk from about 1870 on, see Architecture in the Family Way, 127.
Ginzburg blamed half of infant deaths on poor feeding of children. The old soska (the practice of giving a child already chewed food strained through a piece of fabric) was also too filthy to be tolerated. A Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants postcard held that "so many nursing children die in Russia" because of early feeding with cereal and the "chew teat" (See figure 3.1). According to How to raise a healthy infant, "one researcher held that the "chew teat" killed more people than shells and bullets during the war." A. N. Antonov's book Sanitary enlightenment patronage of nursing infants listed breast-feeding as the most important lesson the nurse could pass on to the mother. In nineteenth-century Russia, digestive disorders caused by the early switch to solid food were primarily responsible for infant deaths. Peasants claimed that breast-feeding did not provide enough for infants. A commemorative postcard from the health museum credited breast feeding of ninety-two percent of babies with saving the nation from massive infant death (See figure 3.2). While the benefits of proper breast-feeding were many, most importantly it protected against rickets (See figure 3.3). Another postcard credited poor feeding and poor living with "almost always" leading to "the English disease" (See figure 3.4).

59 Ginzburg, sud nad materiu, 42. For similar sentiments see B. Sigal, Kak vyrastit zdorovogo rebenka (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardia, 1927) and A. Antonov Dr., Otechego byvaiut letnie ponosy i kaka eberech ot nikh rebenka (Leningrad: Priboi, N.D.), 4-5.
61 B. Sigal, Kak vyrastit'z'dorovogo rebenka (Moscow: Molodaia gvardia, 1927), 15.
63 Ransel, Mothers of Misery, 269-271.
64 For a long discussion on this theme see A.N. Antonov, Kak eberech rebenka ot angliiskoi bolezni (Leningrad: Priboi, 1926).
Semashko recognized that propaganda should be accompanied by more substantial messages and agitation. "The affair of protection of mothers and infants has entered among us, a new phase. Now it is already not enough to agitate and propagandize that we must protect the mother and child. [The time] is coming to explain how to do that and to give active, practical, and concrete advice." Department officials not only dispersed this message, they also supervised its enforcement through the home visits of the consultation. "The Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants was the first organization which widely used dispensary methods in its work. It did not wait for the mother to come to it with her needs, but persistently went itself to the masses and awakened their minds and wills." In a few extreme cases a system of extended support and home visitations would be set up for pregnant mothers with unusual problems. Dr. Bravaia noted in her 1929 comparative work on natal programs the power of the home inspection in the west and specifically, the work of English nurse inspectors. She credited English nurse inspectors with a significant decline in the death rate of English infants.

Magazines and pamphlets credited the home visit with important breakthroughs. It afforded great opportunities to see the origins of health problems and to agitate for the prevention of further problems. The home visitation was supposed to accomplish a variety of tasks:

An essential element in the work of the consultation for pregnant women is the home visit to the pregnant women. "Entering the home life of the

64 N. Semashko, "Predisloviii," in Otdel okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva narodnogo komissariata zdravookhranenie, comp. Sputnik po okhrane materinstva i mladenchestva (Moscow: Otdel okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva, 1921), 3.
65 Bravaia, Okhrana materinstvo, 210.
pregnant woman to uplift her, to create a hygienic condition of existence, teaching her cleanliness, ensuring that the pregnant woman did not breath spoiled air, was not covered in insects, would not work in the eight month and that she did not have sexual relations immediately before birth is the first feature of home-visitation work.' The patronage sister must teach the mother the correct rearing and care for the baby then, when the baby is still not there.  

Although health officials wanted doctors and nurses to carry out the home visits, a shortage of qualified professionals forced many of the investigations to be conducted by members of the party, zhenotdel members, or other volunteers.  Moscow doctors performed 18,611 home visitations in 1922 and nurses completed 27,499. In 1927, doctors visited 42,300 homes and nurses 76,309.

It would prove difficult for women to avoid the influence of the consultation and nurse inspector. If a woman did not seek out the consultation within two or three weeks of the birth of her child, the nurse was sent to fetch her. One text recommended visitation within no less than three days of birth. Sometimes neighbors turned in those reluctant to visit the consultation. In a brief article on Consultation No. 27, the author recounted the story of a female worker who came early to the consultation to notify them of a birth in her building. The child came two weeks ago and the worker was worried since the mother was

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87 Rakhmanov, "Konsultatsii dla zhenshchin," in Trudov III Vsesoiuznogo soveshchaniia po okhmatmladu as quoted in Bravaia, Okhrana materinstvo, 213.
88 Bravaia, Okhrana materinstvo, 220.
89 A.N. Khanevskii, "Desiat let isdelnoi raboty v g. Moskve" in O.P. Nogina and S.O. Dulitskii, eds. Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva: Sbornik statei (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1929), 73.
91 Antonov, Sanitarno-prosvetitelnii patronazh, 22.
getting “absurd” advice from some “old-lady relative”. As a cultured worker she insisted that a nurse must be sent “urgently” to the mother.⁷²

Once they found the new mothers and got into the home, the nurse-investigator agitated vociferously for hygienic measures:

The nurse, going to the home of a child of the nursery, will acquaint herself with the family structure...She uses every good opportunity in order to persuade those around the child of the necessity of upholding proper sanitary-hygienic measures to show the mother how to wash the child or prepare kasha, kissel, to help the mother to clean the room, and such. The nurse appears to be a friend of the family and the parents relate to her with complete confidence.⁷³

Though the author probably overstated the “friendliness” of the relationship between the nurse-inspector and target family, the home visit facilitated the development of a very intimate relationship between the agents of the state and individuals. Additionally, the nurse injected herself into the normal running of the home by demonstrating how to cook properly or showing the mother how to clean her home.

While the nurse could have great power during inspections, she consulted with the doctor regularly and followed his directives. Of course, in these reports she exercised her own discretion and opinions in what she reported. However the literature noted at all points her inferior status to that of the doctor. According to Antonov, the nurse served as “the eyes of the doctor and occasionally his hands.” His description gave the nurse a role of passive observer or as “his hands” and only a vehicle for the doctor’s will.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Antonov, Sanitarno-prosvetitel'nyi patronazh, 7.
to Antonov’s text, the nurse should urge new mothers to immediately visit the consultation for new mothers and there see the doctor. If the mother did not appear within a week, the nurse should visit again to deliver the same message.⁷ The nurse was important as an extension of the doctor’s authority, but equally important was the quick attendance by the mother to the doctor’s scrutiny.

Through the home visit the doctor’s message reached those who were outside normal lanes of communication and allowed for the collection of vast amounts of data on living conditions and lifestyles. The home visitation provided instruction not just through lecture and demonstration but by the example of the sister herself. “The sister of the consultation must be not just a good nurse, but also a cultured person. She must be a good advocate for the conducting of life and the necessity of the scientific care of children.” Of course she needed this power to fight the residual powers of the “babkas and old aunts.” The article goes on to state that, “She must be able to counter their arguments and strengthen her own. She must be able to answer questions on judicial, housing, cooperation and soviet construction...it is a bad sister who cannot answer these questions.”⁸ Not surprisingly, health officials had problems finding skilled personnel. According to one set of complaints, many of those sent in to teach other women how to care for children were unable to work with children of a young age, did not have a strong knowledge of how to feed or clothe children, and “generally they committed a full number

⁷ Ibid., 22.
of coarse mistakes in their work." However, in the official characterizations of sisters in
the propaganda, no such weakness leaked through.

Authorities insisted that children died not by fate but because of laziness and
ignorance. In one show trial a mother accused of inadequately caring for her child
defended herself by saying, "Every mother herself knows how to care for her child. My
mother, without consultants or doctors, raised me healthfully." The child died because of
"god's will." The court found this defense untenable, particularly since the nurse had
visited the mother and told her how to change her life. In the summation even the defense
said such ignorance was no longer acceptable after eight years of Soviet power. However,
the court was lenient and instead of jail time ordered her to enter the mothers' courses to
learn the necessary rules."

Agitational plays and other propaganda transformed motherhood from a natural
preserve of women to a skill to be acquired from health professionals. Doctors prescribed
the proper way for mothers to keep the environment for themselves and their children, how
to conduct their daily lives, and even how, when, and what they should eat. Women
became incapable of even the smallest decisions and their authority degraded in what had
once been their "natural" preserve. The babkas to whom women had traditionally looked
for this information were deemed dangerous. Authorities rejected woman's own
experience as inadequate in the face of new medical information and the increased

77 I.L. Fel'dman, "Srednii personal v echezhdeniakh moskovskogo poddel a Ohhrany materinstva i
mladenchestva," in O.P. Nogina and S.O. Dulitskii, eds., Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva: Sbornik
statei (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1929), 156. For other complaints on sisters' incompetence (in terms of
inaction) see E. Konius, "Sanitarno-prosvetitel'naia rabota sestry i akursherni," Okhrana materinstva i
78 B. Sigal, Sud nad mater'iu, vinovnoi v plokhom ukhode za det'mi, povleksheva za soboi smert' rebenka.
79 Sigal, Sud nad mater'iu, vinovnoi v plokhom ukhode.
importance of reproduction. Women could even become the source of infection for their children.  

Coincidentally, at the same time that the radical feminist theorist Aleksandra Kolontai urged the liberation of women from child care so they could become fully-functioning members of society, doctors wished to take child care out of women’s hands because they felt women were incompetent. According to one account, specialists attempted to take children and place them in homes to be brought up with trained nurses “which was expected to show better results than the clumsy efforts of the untrained mother.” The experiment ended quickly because “it was found that infants did not respond well to this regimen...The department has now definitely adopted the policy of encouraging all mothers to keep their infant children at home.”

Even if authorities wished to completely take over the work of the mother, resources did not meet their needs. Instead they had to content themselves with only occasionally taking care of the child. One observer of the maternity home praised its ability to immediately move children into competent, “skilled” hands — those of the trained nurse. Ultimate authority still rested with the doctor, but the nurse practitioner fulfilled the duties of daily care. Once the child and mother left the observation of the Home for Mothers and Infants, they were immediately to move under the purview of the nursery and its system of observation and home visitation.

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80 Waters, “Child care posters,” 90.
82 Haines, Health Work, 61.
83 Melenevska, Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva, 8.
84 In line with earlier theorists in the west, it is never really suggested that men take over the daily care of infants, just that women, who were seen as generally incompetent, should care for children under the supervision of men. Ludmilla Jordanova, Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989), 31.
The nursery allowed doctors access to older children and they lobbied heavily with mothers to encourage them to place their children in the nursery. Again, inadequate numbers tempered nursery success. In addition, women did not regard the nurseries without wariness and were often reluctant to accept nursery care. Older women are described as unwilling to pay for the care of others' children when they had done it all fine themselves. Another woman distrusted them in a critique similar to that leveled on hospitals saying how could it be fine in the nursery if they were always calling the doctor.55 Authorities worked towards instilling in the public a sense of their responsibilities before the state as parents, the proper ways in which to bring up a child, and a complete faith in the scientific opinion of the doctor. The mother, and in certain situations the nurse, would become a conduit for the knowledge of the doctor. The doctor’s role often eclipsed that of merely an authority in child-rearing and became something far more intimate - that of father-figure. In a description of a 1927 baby contest, the reporter enthused that the contest would test both the care given the child by the mother and the strength of the consultation as a program. The contest examined everything “the physical development, growth, teeth, weight, and most importantly the lifestyle and housing conditions in which the child grew and developed.”56 The doctor represented the soul of the consultation and worried nervously about the rating of the children and his care.57 The article presents the two parental figures as the nurturing mother and the knowledgeable doctor. The article neglected to mention the birth father as a member of the team bringing up the child. The

55 Nogina, Trudatsat let okhrany materi, 24, and “V bor’be za novyi byt” ZNB 2 (April 1925): 11.
56 Chlen Soveta, “Konkurs na luchshiu mat’ i rebenka na Khavovnikakh” ZNB 11-12 (June 1927).
57 S.D. “Konkurs na luchshchego rebenka v Moskve,” in Mat’i dlia: Sbornik dlia materi Moskovskii podotdel OMM, ed. (Moscow: Moszdrav, 1928), 37.

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doctor father figure exhibited all the nervousness and pride in achievement usually attributed to the father.

Birth fathers suffered in comparison to these doctor father figures. Either they were creatures with bad intentions — drunkards who beat their wives whom the conscious woman ultimately left — or if they had good intentions they were conscious men unable to stand up to the powers of women. In *The Trial of a Housewife* the wife gossiped, maligned, sought the church, and held back her children from public life, while the conscious husband stood by helpless. In the trial of an illegal abortion provider, the husband, a clinic worker, actually lost his wife when she sought the babka and ignored his attempts to bring her to the new medicine. The babka proved to be too formidable for the conscious man. The only man virile enough to challenge the authority of the old babka was the doctor. While she did not deflate immediately in his presence and perhaps would scrap with him in the agitational trials, she ultimately lost to his greater logic and skill.

The doctor as father acted as the head of the family, and the mother fulfilled his plans for society’s children. He claimed responsibility for the child’s health and robust nature. A description of the contest winners from the baby contest brings this idea to its conclusion. “The conducting of the concourse is the best example of how only with the help and assistance of the consultation may mothers knowledgeably bring up a child and prepare him to the ‘contest of life’ which is still before them.”\(^8\) The mother participated merely as a helper to the doctor — his representative in the private home.\(^9\)

\(^8\) Chlen soveta, “Konkurs na luchshuiu mat’ i rebenka na Khamovnikakh,” ZNB 11-12 (June 1927).

\(^9\) Only one depiction of a doctor bordered on negative. In the B.S. Ginzburg agitational trial *Sud nad vrachom meduchastka* (Moskva: Otdel okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva NKZ, 1925) the doctor was actually found wanting and charged by the state. As the trial played out, each woman was blamed personally for her infant’s death and following the babka instead of the doctor. Additionally the doctor was hampered by uncooperative local officials and poor material conditions.
As the doctor’s influence deemphasized men’s and women’s personal contribution to their children’s development, the charts and time-graphs of Soviet child-rearing further distanced women from active participation in their children’s upbringing. They were to nurse, not according to the calls of their own bodies or the cries of their child, but according to the schedule laid out by the doctors. Doctors maintained that infants should be fed only breast milk and that this feeding had to take place according to a prescribed schedule which had been arrived at through scientific analysis. Essentially, every three hours a mother was supposed to breast feed.\(^9\) Some handbooks even prescribed the duration for nursing and the proper posture for breast feeding, intimating that women did not even do this small action correctly — left foot on a bench, baby on knee, one arm along spine with four fingers below breast and one above to ensure baby could breathe and suck properly.\(^9\) A photo series poster from the Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants demonstrated the contrast between proper and improper feeding. On the left was the correct proffering of the breast, versus the incorrect feeding posture on the right (See figure 3.7). A vivid cover to a 1927 issue of *For a New Life!* pictorially represented this idea.\(^9\) The cover featured a line of four mothers from the Home for Homeless mothers nursing their infants. In the same position, even to the tilt of the head and the prescribed offering of the breast, each mother sat in the same gown holding their baby at the same angle and nursing them in unison. Their heads turned downward at an angle left a bit of profile and hair to fill the viewers eyes. Only the children had faces and hence, personalities. Women were merely cogs in a feeding machine.

\(^9\) Ibid, 49.

\(^9\) For the approximate duration (20 minutes) see I. S. Katsenel’son, *Sovety materiam* (Leningrad: Tipografiia pravda, 1927), 17; see also Langova, *Vystavka'Okhrana materinstva.*

\(^9\) Cover, *ZNB* 15 (August 1927).
Doctors discouraged personal initiative even if a mother swore that the schedule was not working. The schedule had been arrived at scientifically and could therefore not fail. Any problems were strictly the fault of the mother. One mother, accused of negligence in a mock-trial, cried to the judge “But those books, father (batiushka) are not for our kind. Keep him clean, feed him by the clock, and take him outside...I tried to do it that way, but then Kol’ka cried all the more.” The judge subsequently sentenced the woman to go learn the regimen better as he was confident that this would conquer all problems. In an article entitled “Why babies cry,” the author explained that “infants never cry evilly, without cause” and that instead they only cry for poor care such as “clutter, insect stings, uncomfortable positions, extremely warm bundling (arousing sweat, weakness and unnerving the child) chills, a tight diaper, which binds the child...all of these and even more large and small offenses of care - are already well-known reasons for a baby’s cry.” If the mother accounted for all these reasons and the baby still cried she was to take it to the doctor where he would probably find it had gas. If the child still insisted on crying the fault lay with the parents. “There are children who exhibit an especially restless nature and they are called nervous children. Children most often get this quality from their parents.” The cure? A stronger application of the regimen. The text-heavy poster “Why do children scream?” held to the same theme. Children cried when they were kept improperly but never cried without reason (See figure 3.8).

Articles and pamphlets presented the regimen as a cure-all. Children subjected to a correctly performed version of the regimen invariably conformed completely to behavioral standards. In a story recounting the house of leisure for mothers, a young child personified

93 Sigal, Sud nad mater'iu, vinovnoi v plokhom ukhode., 9.
94 R.K. “Prichiny krika rebenka,” in Mat' i ditia: Sbornik dlia materi (Moscow: Moszdrav, 1928), 32.
95 Ibid, 33-34.
the positive effects of the scientific system of child care. "Twenty-five nursing children all sleep, but suddenly through the netting the black eyes of a youngster are visible. He doesn't sleep, but the house of leisure already taught him to lie quietly during determined times." The mother may not be able to teach him, but just two weeks in the properly-applied regimen trained him. The theme of Soviet doctors "curing" crying recurred. In another reported conversation between ordinary people a mother of twins gushed as she exited the consultation and thanked her doctor profusely that her neighbor had been correct when she said "'consultation babies did not cry and were not sick' and now all was well."77

As children aged, the mother remained important as a conduit for correct knowledge. Mothers had to be able to answer their children's questions. Their fathers were unavailable or returned from work so tired that they did not interact with their children. Therefore, mothers must send their children to the system of soviet care - the kindergarten, the school, and the pioneers or abandon them to education on the streets.78

As well as educating women, an entire system of check-points emerged to care for children's health including the Department for the Protection of Children and Youth in Narkomzdrav, prophylactic institutions and dispensaries, doctor inspections, professional inspections of older youth, and physical culture groups.79

Authorities never made clear where women would find the time to implement these measures. If social services, such as nurseries, communal kitchens, and laundries had been implemented on a adequate scale, the burden on women would have lessened. However, 80I. Geizer, "Ugolok materi i rebenka," ZNB 14-15 (July 1926), 5.
79 For a run-down and description of youth-oriented health institutions see Strashun, "Desiat' let bor'by," 68. The above also gives the following numbers for youth oriented institutions in 1926 -- ambulatorii 75, inspection cabinets 14, doctors for the health of children and youth 1162 (of these 74 doctor-instructors), institutions for physically week children 71, sanatoriums of various types 90, For other illnesses 29, 69.
these services remained scarce and there remained a great many tasks for women to do within the home for more hygienic child care. The strictures of the health regimen for children must have added considerably to women’s burden of household chores.\textsuperscript{100} Undoubtedly many regarded the new rules as ridiculous wastes of time and luxuries they couldn’t afford. When a “cultured” factory worker in a short-story recommended to an old woman caring for some children that the crying baby probably wanted to be fed, the old woman responded she could go get the mother from work and bring her to feed the child and then, “Yeah, he would stop crying — but these are not lordly children.” And when the cultured woman recommended that milk and water be boiled, the babka complained there was no time for such things.\textsuperscript{101}

Article and pamphlets supported the idea that raising children was a difficult proposition. Consistently, when homes or families were in trouble, the solution was to rid the home of children by sending them out of the house, i.e. to the nursery, the pioneers, the factory kitchen, etc.\textsuperscript{102} One author praised the home for mothers and children because it allowed women to recover “physically and morally (moral’no)” from the difficulties of child birth and rearing.\textsuperscript{103} Authorities depicted children as so detrimental to a woman’s health and functioning that they developed programs to allow women to take their yearly vacation away from their children. The normal course of leisure did not restore the working mother because “her decreed holiday she doesn’t spend in the condition of relaxation but connected to the child she stays in the regular habits of her daily life and

\textsuperscript{100} See Tomes, \textit{Gospel of germs}, for a discussion of these added burdens in the American context.  
\textsuperscript{101} P. Dorokhov, \textit{Vspleski: Rasskazy novaia Moskva} (Moscow, 1925), 16.  
\textsuperscript{103} E.A. Vasich, “Doma materi i rebenka,” in Moskovskii komitet nedeli okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva, eds. \textit{Okhrana Materi i mladenta v moskve i Moskovskoi gubernii: Illiastrirovannyi sbornik} (Moscow: Moskovskii komitet po provedeniiu nedeli okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva, 1923), 30.
carries not a small load of housework." To remedy this, in 1926, Narkomzdrav created a special house of leisure for mothers and children. They traveled to the house of leisure together but upon arrival they split into different areas. Children from six months to three years old stayed in a separate facility with a special dacha for nursing infants. The mothers of nursing children would see their children to nurse them and that was all. Older children remained completely out of reach.

Though set up to "save" mothers from the influence of their children, the organizers must have had some difficulties getting this point across to the women involved. Most reports referring to the program take great pains to show what a tremendous resource it was for mothers and how many of them came to realize this after only initial reluctance. Indeed, separation seemed to be quite an issue for most of the women involved. "The sorest question for mothers about life in the house of leisure appeared to be the separation from their children. Not every mother understood that it was in her interests that the child lived separately from her. The belief that no one except for mothers or grandmothers can care for an infant caused several to sacrifice their relaxation and return, not staying in the house of leisure even one day." The author commented that these women were also "non-nursery" mothers as a way of explaining why they rejected the house of leisure. Even so, these mothers could not be left unserved or unenlightened and the problem of keeping mothers in the house of leisure for longer periods was discussed often though no solutions proposed.

106 For example see, AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 185, l. 2. and Chlen Soveta, "Odobrili rabotu: Na Plenume sektsii Khamovn. raiona," ZNB 1-2 (January 1927): 17.
Reports on the house of leisure concentrated on the eventual joy they brought the mothers. One report described the first day as the worst, but by the second most mothers were calm and in the second week felt better. The women enthused over the house of leisure by the end. In an “overheard” dinner conversation at the house of leisure one woman said “in a timid voice: “it’s good that the children are taken to a separate dacha. Good that you see the kids rarely or otherwise the kids would only be upset and act up and the mothers cry bitter tears.”

Sanatorium stays similarly fortified women. One mother who had just finished a stay at a sanatorium voiced sentiments which suggested that the home was injurious to one’s health. When asked about her departure from the sanatorium she said “I’ve become accustomed to it here...I will not willingly go home. At home I cannot live so calmly and cleanly. There it is children, housework, crowded. As soon as I leave...I will again be taken ill.” Statistics from other projects supported her assertion. According to data collected on women who had been in the night sanatorium for sex organ problems only forty percent of cases attained long-term healthfulness. In the other sixty percent the benefits were “short lived. No more than three weeks after release from the night sanatorium they worsen again under the combined influence of professional work, domestic work, and the non-favorable standard of living,” concluded the researcher.

While children endangered women’s health they were simultaneously the only way for a woman to stay wholly human. Doctors advised men to stay celibate, but women were told that without sex they would waste away, lose their attractiveness, and sicken. “How

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107 AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 185, l. 2.
great an effect sexual life has can be seen in how quickly, even by age thirty or thirty-five a woman who has not know the joys of sex (polovykh radostei) withers away." 111 For women sex never existed without complications nor was it discussed as a pleasurable experience. Sex without the purpose of procreation or outside the confines of marriage always resulted in venereal disease or pregnancy. 112 Hygienists explained that while legal, abortion should not be undertaken without serious thought. "Abortion never occurs without punishment. Abortion presents danger and brings damage to women's bodies even when performed by a doctor in a hospital environment." 113

Hygienists gave women limited options. Celibacy and sex without progeny both endangered women's health. Propaganda painted motherhood as both a societal duty and an essential element of womanhood. "Motherhood is women's most important societal obligation. To give birth to and raise a healthy child is women's duty to the proletarian state," reported a pamphlet. 114 One doctor advised that young women's health should be looked after because of their importance as future mothers, and special attention needed to

111 L.M. Vasilievskii, Gigiena molodoi devushki (Moscow: Novaia Moskva, 1926), 11. For similar statements and a much more detailed account of attitudes towards sex in the 1920s, see Fran Bernstein, "What Everyone Should Know About Sex: Gender, Sexual Enlightenment, and the Politics of Health in Revolutionary Russia, 1918-1931." (Ph.D. Dissertation: Columbia University, 1998), 260.
112 S.D. Astrinskii warned that casual sex most often leads to sexual disease in Devushka budushchaia mat' (Leningrad: Molodaia gvardiia, 1926), 18. Bernstein notes that in poster depictions only prostitutes engage in non-procreative sex and the positive sexually-active women were always presented with children, see "What everyone should know," 260. A version of this chapter can be found in the Russian Review as "Envisioning Health in Revolutionary Russia: The Politics of Gender in Sexual- Enlightenment Posters of the 1920s," The Russian Review 57 (April 1998).
113 Antonov, A. Pamiatka materi, (Leningrad: Priboi, 1925), 3. For similar statements on abortion see S.D. Astrinskii's (Dr.) long list in Abort i preduprezhdienie beremenosti (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 1927), 12-25 and Vera Ketinskaia's Devushka i Komsomol (Leningrad: Priboi, 1927), 65.
114 Antonov, Pamiatka, 3.
be paid to those diseases which threatened their future reproductive abilities. The pamphlet *Mother and infant* highlighted the essential nature of motherhood to woman.

Motherhood and the birth of an infant, and in particular the first, occupy a large place in the lives of women...From that moment when a woman begins to feel the movement of a new life [within her] she is in a way reborn. The woman and the wife are transformed into the mother.

Finally, in a section entitled “Pregnancy and the development of fertility” the pamphlet *Girls as Future Mothers* presented conception as an unavoidable conclusion to marital, sexual relations. “A woman beginning to live a sexual life usually by one to two months must become pregnant. If pregnancy does not occur then she needs to go to the doctor in order to clear up the reasons for infertility.”

Theorists conceived of motherhood with a certain amount of ambivalence and often contradicted themselves. As Eric Naiman has pointed out, the idea of motherhood brought many theorists discomfort. Turn-of-the-century theorists associated motherhood with decay, as part of a circle of life and death, and saw triumph over the sexual urges as a means to immortality. Additionally, theorists deemed the love of a mother for her child irrational and anti-social. This distaste for the “egoism” of motherhood was very evident in the works of the 1920s health specialists. They constantly urged women into more social relationships in which they should pass over their own children in favor of taking care of the greater society. Naiman also noted some theorists’ contention that parents, especially

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115 Ibid., 4.
116 Mitsnik, Z.O. and A.N. Antonov, *Mat’i rebenok* (Leningrad: Priboi, 1925), 1. Eric Naiman notes a similar trend in Soviet fiction to associate women solely with their biological function as mothers, see *Sex in Public*, 38.
117 Astrinskii, *Devushka budushcheia mat’*, 20. The women were further advised that first pregnancies often ended with a resumption of bleeding within two to three months and if this occurred they should go to the doctor, 21.
mothers, were not qualified to raise their children psychologically and would always taint them with the diseases of the past.\textsuperscript{118}

Again, the maternity home served as a point of a dispersal for these strong messages. The maternity home did not just serve as a place to give birth hygienically,

The mother herself undergoes the educational effect of the cultural, socially-conscious atmosphere of the institution, which has the typical selection of cultural enlightenment undertakings like the club and lectures, discussions for the raising of sanitation as well as the social literacy of the mothers. Educational institutions turn out stronger where the mother learns not just the correct way to care for a child, but also acquires social experience and understanding of her deficiencies.\textsuperscript{119}

In a short-story of a factory-worker who returned to enlighten her village, she used the nursery as a base for engendering social-responsibility of the mothers by making sure mothers stayed for readings and literacy lessons.\textsuperscript{120}

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Those involved in the creation of Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants claimed great successes, "On the vast front of achievements to the ten-year anniversary of the October Revolution, successes in the affairs of protection of mothers and children occupy one of the important places."\textsuperscript{121} Clearly, the programs succeeded in their primary objective of lowering the infant death rate. In 1913, the percentage of children that died before the end of their first year was twenty-eight percent. By 1926, it had dropped to just thirteen percent.\textsuperscript{122} However, decreasing the heavy labor and night-work of mothers

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{118} Naiman, \textit{Sex in Public}, 190.
  \item \textsuperscript{119} Melenevskaia, \textit{Okhrana materinstva}, 5.
  \item \textsuperscript{120} Dorokhov, \textit{Vspleski}, 22.
  \item \textsuperscript{121} O. Nogina, "K trekhdnevniku okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva," \textit{ZNB} 4-5 (March 1927), 1.
  \item \textsuperscript{122} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
undoubtedly changed the numbers for infant deaths as did the better food situation. More and better city sanitation obviously improved the living standards for thousands of Muscovites. The programs of the Department for the Protection of Mothers and Infants constituted just one part of the sanitary improvements in the city.

Other department programs did not make such impressive showings. Generally, the number of maternity services remained very low. For example, between 1919 and 1923 the number of children serviced by the nursery rose by sixty-three percent but the number of women working rose by 121%. In 1925 under the authority of Moszdravotdel there were 102 nurseries with spaces for 5,145 children, only two homes for mothers and children which cured 570 children and 522 mothers, and twenty birth homes which served 50,311 mothers. The birth homes probably came close to serving the entire population as 1923 statistics for Moscow reported 50,474 births which just slightly outstripped the resources available two years later. The consultations were much more active with thirty-one consultations for children with 599,852 visitors and twenty-seven consultations for mothers with 181,434 visitors. Even as poor as these numbers are, Moscow institutions made up, generally, about a fifth of the number of total institutions in each category for the

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123 Semashko admits the numbers were “still very low” in a 1928. See O svetlom i temnom v rabochem bytu (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1928), 25.
124 O.P. Nogina, Organizatsiiia i rabota iaslei: Rukovodstvo dlia zaveduiushchikh iaskiami i meditsinskogo personala iaslei i iaslei-sadov (Moscow: Medgiz, 1961), 8.
125 Materialy o deiatelnosti lechebno-profilakticheskikh uchrezhdenii Moszdravotdela za 1926/7 goda po dannym statisticheskogo otdeleniia Moszdravotdela (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1928). For figures on the RSFSR and USSR for the 1920s see Bravaia, Okhrana materinstvo, 208.
126 Tsentral'noe statisticheskoe upravlenie, Narodnoe khoziastvo soiuza SSR v tsifrakh (Moscow: MKKh, 1925), 41.
127 Materialy o deiatelnosti lechebno-profilakticheskikh uchrezhdenii Moszdravotdela za 1926/7 goda po dannym statisticheskogo otdeleniia Moszdravotdela (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1928). For figures on the RSFSR and USSR for the 1920s see Bravaia, Okhrana materinstvo, 208.
RSFSR. Most recognized that it would take a long time for services to fully meet the needs of women.

While services remained inadequate, hygienists declared the campaign against the babka as quite successful. Organizers claimed that by 1927, ninety percent of births in Moscow were in maternity homes. The number of women going to the consultation also increased. It was the "rare" woman who did not visit the consultation for pregnant women. Contemporaries also rated the work of the home visitation as highly effective. According to statistics from one district in Moscow seventy-five percent of the nurse's suggestions were fulfilled by those visited. A 1922 survey for a Leningrad department maintained that mothers changed their care in the following ways after visits from the nurse; mothers who improperly fed their children changed from fifty to nineteen percent with the nurses first visit; those who improperly diapered their child from seventy-two to thirty-seven percent; those who incorrectly bathed them from fifty-nine to forty-two percent; those who did not care for their sense organs correctly from forty-two to seventeen percent and those who gave improper suckling dummies from sixty-three to fifty-nine percent.

Not completely satisfied with their efforts, organizers claimed a qualified success. O. P. Nogina, head of the Moscow Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants, stated in her assessment of ten-years' work in Moscow, "Though we cannot say that we have completely changed the lives of mother-workers, the lives of nursing children

128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
133 See Antonov, Sanitarno-prosvetitel'nyi patronazh, 41.
have changed undoubtedly." In 1923, Lebedeva admitted that while it would take time, she optimistically predicted that ten years hence women would happily become mothers when they were freed from their obligations for child care. International comparisons frequently made it into the reports of the Department for the Protection of Motherhood and Infants. Birth rates and infant death rates consistently appeared alongside those of other countries, particularly Britain, the United States, France, and Germany and in these figures comparisons of relative progress emerged. As well as international comparison, department reports often compared the successes of Soviet health to that of tsarist protection.

The subtext of international comparisons was the Russian's weakness, especially in birth rate and infant health. This emphasis on the essential nature of strong infants to a strong state furthered the invasion of Soviet health care into private life. The visiting nurse entered the home not for an illness, as in the dispensary institution, but simply because of pregnancy. The government took upon itself the right to enter private citizen's houses even if no wrong had been committed. As well as eroding privacy, the new dispensary doctors reconfigured the relations of the home. Women were the only responsible caregivers, and the authority of the doctor chipped away at the place of the father.

At the same time as they investigated, doctors, nurses, and volunteers spread the message of Soviet natal health. Mothers who followed the regimen would ensure the happiness of their children. The behavior of infants altered markedly with the application

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135 V.P. Lebedeva, "Okhrana materinstva i mladenchestva na puti k kommunizmu," in Moskovskii komitet nedeli okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva, eds. Okhrana Materi i mladentsa v moskve i Moskovskoi gubernii: Illustrirovannyi sbornik (Moscow: Moskovskii komitet po provedeniui nedeli okhrany materinstva i mladenchestva, 1923), 4-5.

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of scientific principles according to medical authorities. In the wonderland created by consultation doctors and their regimen, children did not cry or fall ill. Soviet power understood and calmed the most cursed of problems and opened the gateway to a golden age.

The next chapter returns to an examination of the lives of both men and women within the unique confines of NEP-era Moscow and outlines the ways in which health officials and union groups attempted to encourage workers to relax in a way that strengthened their health and increased their productive capabilities. The club, sanatorium, and houses of leisure underpinned the question for reeducating and encouraging workers in healthful leisure.
CHAPTER 5:
BELABORING LEISURE:
HYGIENIC LEISURE AND THE DANGERS OF THE CITY

In S. Epshtein's memory of 1922 Moscow, the effects of revolution, Civil War, famine, and epidemic disease had destroyed the city leaving it a mix of old and new:

On a cobble-stone street off Tverskaia (now Gorkii street) thaws filthy snow mixed with trash. Shabby lights burn through. Occasionally quick sledges fly through recklessly. More infrequently an old, foreign-made automobile rolls by. Not one house is being built. From the sidewalks stick up the hands of derelicts — whole families of derelicts from the famine-covered Volga region. Orphans brush by. They spend the nights in forgotten basements and attics. On the corner traders sell loose cigarettes and...offer up long-forgotten white loaves of bread.

But Epshtein remembered more than just disorder. Through this scene of filth and disrepair marched a column of youth. Twenty young men and women joined in the rhythmic chanting of a Maiakovskii poem and strode through the muck-encrusted wreckage of Moscow. Ordered and loud, they injected into the scene the hopes of Soviet power and the vigor of youthful enthusiasm. They were the club from house #2 — the Paris Commune Club.

The clubhouse itself was nothing special. It took up one windowless room in a typical, five-room apartment over-filled with typical neighbors who complained of the possibility of noise. A theater took up the entirety of the room, filled with hard-wood, backless benches lined up to face a make-shift stage. Across the back of the stage hung a banner, "Down with the debauchery of the boulevards and streets! Glory to the schools
and clubs of worker youth.” On this stage the club members asked and answered the
questions of the day in themed, evening discussions. One night was devoted to the political
and economic discussion of “Why NEP?” Other discussions addressed concerns of health
and science, “What is hypnosis?” or “How did man create God?” In the Paris Commune
Club, the ideas of revolution were never far from the minds of the members, nor were the
questions of how to create a better life.¹

Epshtein’s elegiac account of the early days of the Paris Commune club highlighted
the major planks of the Soviet fight for healthy leisure in the 1920s. The city endangered
health with its filth, reckless individuals, petty traders and their NEP-obsessed, capitalist
values. Remnants of the old order still drove through the center of town fearlessly, and the
new had not even begun to be built. Within this environment of filth and remnants of the
tsarist system, workers had to spend their leisure time. Hygienists recognized both the
need for leisure time and the necessity of carrying out this leisure logically to ensure worker
health and hence the state’s productive and military capacity. However, the city and its
influences, as well as traditional leisure’s debauchery, threatened to destroy the health of the
workers

To the rescue of the workers in this afflicted, foul site came the chanting column of
youth from the Paris Commune club. Club membership transformed them, fortified them
against the evils of the streets, and gave them an appreciation of the arts. They tramped
through the streets and brought with them not just the vision of their toned bodies
performing tasks in unison, but also the promise of a more cultured life in the Maiakovskii
poem which unified their movements. Hygienists saw in innovative, Soviet leisure
activities a way to save the health of workers and create simultaneously activities which

¹ S. Epshtein, “Klub imeni Parizhskoi kommuny,” in Kniga o delakh komsomol’skikh, 1921-1941 goda,
ed. A. M. Mil’chakov, (Moscow: Detskaia literatura, 1966), 216-221.
enriched and transformed worker consciousness. They championed the workers’ club movement as well as museums, libraries, and other cultured, leisure-time activities. As the banner read, “Down with the debauchery of the boulevards and streets! Glory to the schools and clubs of worker youth!”

For those who would not, or could not, exchange their old leisure for new, more-healthful, leisure opportunities, institutions emerged to take them into isolation, buffering them from the pernicious influences of the city and engaging them actively in living healthfully. Within the city, night and day sanatoriums, day squares and prophylactory took sickly workers in their off hours and surrounded them with healthful influences and ideas in the hopes of reworking the mind and body in a therapeutic environment. The extremely ill stayed sanatoriums tailored to their illnesses located well outside the stifling confines of the city. In these institutions, doctors promised full recovery to patients who followed the regimen completely and rested healthfully and in a cultured way. To educate the rest of the workers to a cultured use of rest, the department of health set up houses of leisure which took in the workers for the yearly, two-week vacation and taught them the essentials of a healthful life.

This chapter examines the quest for proper leisure-time activities within the city and outside its confines. The first part of the chapter defines Soviet leisure and examines some of the new leisure pursuits and spaces which the Soviet government attempted to invent. The next section focuses on hygienists’ depiction of Moscow in the 1920s and the dangers which they routinely associated with life and leisure time in the city. The final portion of the chapter investigates the solutions proposed for learning proper leisure outside the corrupt influences of the city. Increasingly through the 1920s, hygienists turned workers out to the sanatorium or the house of leisure system where authorities attempted to
transplant workers into a utopia where a strict regimen forced workers into the reconstruction and fortification of worker health.

Necessity of leisure

"The inactive organ dies," declared Dr. Gel’man in his 1925 book, Labor, fatigue and rest.² Gel’man considered labor essential to life, not just as Engels had noted because it was the source of all riches, but because it was indispensable to the life of man the "machine." To function properly the body critically needed labor. Atrophy caused muscles and even bones to deteriorate. Further, Gel’man elaborated, labor alone did not make up man’s needs. Man also required rest.³ Semashko concurred, saying that while others often likened man to a machine, this analogy was incomplete, "Food for a human is the same as fuel for machines. But the comparison of man with machine is incorrect in that a machine, in contrast to a human, may work long periods without breaks. A man without rest cannot work a very long time."⁴ Dr. V. Sigal agreed, "Weariness and ruin are the outcomes of exhausting work." His pamphlet on working-youth health contained a chart of worker accidents according to number of hours on the job.⁵ Labor legislation passed by

² I. Gel’man, D-r., Trud, utomlenie i otisky (Moscow: VTsSPS, 1925), 6. pub. 10,000. For a detailed discussion of hygiene of labor see Lewis H. Siegelbaum, "Okhrana Truda: Industrial Hygiene, Psychotechnics, and Industrialization in the USSR," in Health and Society in Revolutionary Russia. Susan Gross Solomon and John F. Hutchinson, eds. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 224 - 245.
³ Gel’man, 6, 8.
⁴ N. A. Semashko, Kak otdyhat’letom (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 3. pub. 10,000.
⁵ V. Sigal, Dr. Trud i zdorov’e rabochih molodezhi (Leningrad: Molodaia gvardiia, 1925), 37-39. 186
the Soviets underscored the need for leisure as well as labor and guaranteed workers rest 
breaks throughout the day and week along with a two-week vacation every year.6

Hygienists painted sufficient leisure and rest as the essence of good health. Dr. A. 
G. Kagan gave a lengthy account of the system of rejuvenation during which time special 
cleansing nutritives moved to the organs and purified them of the “poisons of fatigue.”7 In 
*Hygiene for the Propagandist*, Vasilevskii stated that the body needed leisure so that the 
organism could recover and labor “without danger”.8 According to Kagan, without leisure 
the organism not only did not work properly but became a societal hazard. Fatigue made 
the worker difficult in social settings. “Languorous, lackadaisical, irritable, impatient, 
suffering from headaches or fainting spells, reduced appetite, insomnia, etc. -- this is what 
the overworked person feels and presents to others,”9

Though Semashko argued that the best rest was sleep, he and other hygienists were 
not content to leave workers to passive leisure.10 Kagan pointed out that just staying in bed 
was not enough as the body must move to flush poisons out of the organs.11 Gel’mam 
lamented the fact that many workers spent their leisure time at home, “passively awaiting 
the next work day.”12 Leisure time had to be utilized and exploited rather than whiled away.

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6 Labor legislation appeared in statute 115 of the kodeks. For those in dangerous professions, there was a 
month-long vacation every year. See Semashko, *Kak otdykhat’letom*, 5; A. Vainshtein, *Doma otdykh i 
sanatorii dlia zastrakhovannykh* (Moscow: Voprosy truda, 1926), 3. For a full discussion of leisure 
legislation see A. F. Danilevich, *Rabochee vremia i otdykh* (Moscow: Trud i kniga, 1924).
7 A. G. Kagan, Dr. *Rabochoia molodezh’ na odykhe* (Leningrad: Priboi, n.d.), 7. pub. 5,000
8 L. M. Vasilevskii, *Gigiena propagandista (Agitatora, lektora, prepodavatelja)* (Moscow: Molodaia 
gvardia, 1924), 9. pub. 10,000.
10 Semashko, *Kak otdykhat’letom* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 5. pub. 10,000; *Gigiena i zdorov’e 
rabochego i ego sem’i* Biblioteka “Plamia,” (Stalingrad: Stalingradskoe izdanie, 1925), 23. pub. 4,000.
12 Gel’mam, *Trud*, 34.
According to Gel'man, non-laboring time should be “spent expediently and carefully” to ensure health. He also recommended the “rational” use of break and leisure time.

“Sufficient time in the fresh air, sufficient movement which is indispensable for the development of all parts of the body - these are what must be used first of all during the non-working time regimen.”

Leisure did not come naturally. “Just as there is an art of labor so to is there an art of leisure (italics his),” declared one doctor. Another recommended a look to the Americans and their “art of leisure” as a model. He further explained to the reader the exact nature of leisure, declaring that “one must remember that leisure and laziness are far from being the same thing. Leisure is a necessary preparation for labor and for a higher level of its completion.” In his definition, Kagan emphasized rationalization of leisure stating, “Rhythm saves energy, accelerates the restoration of processes and increases the “accumulation” of stores of energy for the future!” Kagan concluded that because leisure could be so important the day should be regimented and the vacation period strictly planned.

Worker leisure whether artful or rationalized, was meant not only to restore the body, but to improve the mind. Kagan wrote, “The rest time of youth must improve them, be filled with cultural content and be collective.” Physical fitness, as chapter one noted, served this purpose admirably. Games provided both mental and physical conditioning. A good game included elements for developing muscles alongside “elements for mental 

13 Ibid, 35.
14 Gel’man, Trud 37.
15 L. M. Vasilevskii, Gigiena propagandista (Agitatora, lektora, prepodavatelja) (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1924), 18-19. pub. 10,000.
16 Vasilvskii, Gigiena propagandista, 18.
17 Kagan, Rabochaia molodezh, 10.
development, for the development of the senses, and also elements for the development of
the will (self-control, alertness, courage) and aesthetic feelings."

According to Semashko, before the revolution pleasant leisure was unavailable to
the worker. Clubs and theaters closed their doors to the poor, and physical exercise had not
even been conceptualized for any but the privileged classes. Censorship ensured that
lectures could provide the worker with no new ideas or interest. Both men and women
suffered. As Semashko insisted, “Naturally, the ordinary worker lived numbed by the hard
labor of an unenlightened life and on Sunday drank to a stupor, beat the wife, scared the
kids and went to bed a little early.” The wife spent her time at church, “looking at golden
icon screens and icons and hiding in the corner lamenting a nonexistent god.” Semashko
said such leisure provided “heavy rest without any enlightenment or pleasure” instead of a
period of respite and rejuvenation.

Semashko noted that with the revolution there had been “in leisure a complete turn
around.” By 1928, workers had the new worker club designed “in order to broaden their
knowledge, in order to define their needs, in order to understand how they must fight and
work for a better future.” Leisure had gone from drinking and carousing to learning and
agitating. As leisure had changed, so too had the workers, according to Semashko. Now a
significant number of workers enjoyed the club, theater, and movies. “Many have become
so used to this kind of cultured pastime that for them it even seemed odd to contemplate
spending leisure time at home in bed in a smoky room staring at the ceiling instead of at a
general meeting.”

18 V. Gorinevskii, “Podvishnye igry (s biologicheskoi tochki zreniia).” 5-21 in Igry i razvlecheniia:
Sbornik statei ed. V.G. Marts (Moscow: TsKRKSM, 1922), 7, 15. pub. 5,000.
19 N.A. Semashko, O svetlom i temnom v rabochem bytu Biblioteka prostye besedy (Moscow: Gosizdat,
1928), 14-15. pub. 10,000.
20 Semashko, O svetlom i temnom, 16-17.
The club was the foundation of the fight for cultured leisure according to one author.21 In 1924, there were 107 clubs in Moscow, and by 1925 there were 450 clubs in Moscow province.22 The ideal club provided "healthy relaxation, healthy laughter, songs, good conversation, games, dancing and sport."23 According to one official "the club must affect and influence the rebuilding of everyday life. It must be noticeable for its cleanliness, comfort and order of its strongly organized life. Lectures and frequent bad talks, noise and racket are not very attractive and do little."24 Even the construction and organization of the club was meant to influence the workers' perceptions. Not just a space for healthful leisure, the club educated workers to healthful living. Strashun, in "Sanitary enlightenment in the club," recommended that clubs be not only sites for healthful relaxation, but actively engaged in spreading sanitary enlightenment's message. "Without sanitary culture there cannot successfully exist any other culture. The club should become a basic item, shaping consciousness of the circular nature of responsibility and the collective care of health for all and consequently for every one."25 As part of enlightenment work there were club

21 Al. Mil'chakov, Komsomol v bor'be za kulturnyi byt (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1927), 18-32. pub. 10,000.
23 A. Oborin, O rabote profsoiuzov v gorode i v derevne, (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 35. For more on club activities see, M. Leizerov, Shto ty mozhash' delat' v klube (Moscow: Gubok, 1926). pub. 5,000 and his O rabochem klube (Moscow: Doloi negramotnost, 1927); According to V. F. Pletnev the club was a space that was also a vospitatel see Rabochii klub: Printsipy i metody raboty 2-oe pererabotannoe izd. (Moscow: Vserossiiskii proletkul't, 1925), 15.
24 L. Kagan, Rabota gorodskoi iacheiki VLKSV sredi devushek (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1927), 50. pub. 5,000.
25 Strashun, Dr, "Sanitarnoe prosveshchenie v rabochem klube," in Sanitarnoe prosveshchenie v rabochem klube (Tsikl leksii-dokladov i illiustrativnykh vecherov) Sanprosveshchenie v klube, vyp. 1. (Moscow: Doloi negramotnost', 1925), 7. pub. 10,000.
evenings, evenings of physical culture, question and answer sessions, plays, skits and spectacles, and even planned excursions to museums and scientific institutes.\textsuperscript{26}

Not all activities directly appealed to workers' sanitary conduct. Lectures, discussions, question and answer meetings, spectacles, memory evenings, and club circles all attempted to draw the workers' attentions and bring them into the club to spend their leisure time in some type of enriching activity. For example, in December of 1923, the club connected to the Hammer and Sickle factory presented thirty-two different events, including lectures on religion, gonorrhea, anatomy, and literature; spectacles such as "Life and hard alcohol," "For the Red Flag," and "Crime and Punishment"; movies such as "Orphans" and "The Bourgeoisie in hell;" and hosted meetings of the komsomol, the sports circle, and others. In all they hosted 14,216 spectators for various events.\textsuperscript{27} While this was one of the more active clubs, others were also involved. In 1924 there were 564 lectures in Moscow clubs overall with 87,698 attendees and by 1927 there were 2,955 other club events with 623,498 patrons.\textsuperscript{28}

According to Semashko, the club needed to be "attractive and interesting" so that it could carry out cultural-enrichment work.\textsuperscript{29} To fulfill this need, club circles appealed to a variety of interests. One 1924 club included circles for literature, union work, billiards, choir, drama, chess, graphics, youth, tourism, book lovers, newspaper clippings, and the

\textsuperscript{26} On club evenings see S. Dolinskii, "Metodika: Klubnaia vecherinka," \textit{Klub} 3:10 (March 1926): 12-22; on fizicult see S. Shitik, "Vechera' fizcultura, trud i byt." \textit{Klub} 6:13 (June 1926), R. Roman and Veprinskii, \textit{Rabochii idi v klub! materialy dlia zhivoi gazety} (Moscow: G. F. Mirimanov, 1925), pub. 10,000.
\textsuperscript{27} GARF, f. 7952, op. 3, d. 226, l. 40.
\textsuperscript{29} N. Semashko, "Bor'ba s khuliganstvom i nedostatki klubnoi raboty," \textit{Klub} 9:16 (September 1926): 3-5.
time league. The poster "Comrade!" showed some of the different activities available within the club including dances, teas, physical activities, radio clubs, and reading circles (See figure 3.9). To appeal to youth, pioneer troops attached themselves to clubs as did representatives of the komsomol. According to one theorist, "the workers' club without pioneers is like a family without children." Theorists did not leave these groups to their own devices but produced literature on how to manage club and circle events and gauge their effectiveness. A 1924 survey found that 293 physical culture circles brought 13,000 members to clubs. According to a 1927 report, workers particularly attended family nights, as well as drama, music, chess, checkers, and physical culture circles, but lecture attendance was slacking. A 1925 article in the journal Club recommended a "lifestyle" circle as a desirable part of club activities. The author conceived the lifestyle circle as an active group that would first investigate life problems by taking excursions and would then create corner exhibitions on the question.

In addition to activities such as circles and spectacles, clubs offered other facilities. One of particular importance was the library. Libraries provided a space for reading and

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31 V. Zorin, "Rabochii klub i pionery," Klub Eshemeshiacnyi zhurnal 1 (June 1925): 55.
32 See S. Dolinskii, "Metodika: Klubnaia vecherinka," Klub 3:10 (March 1926): 12-22. S. Shitik, "Vechera 'fizcukura, trud i byt,' Klub 6:13 (June 1926); For a full discussion of circles see V. A. Nevskii, Azbuka kurzhkovoi raboty (Moscow: G. F. Mirimanova, 1925). Worker self-motivation was another important aspect of club work, see K. I. L'vov, Svoimi silami: Kak organizovat' prosvetitel'nuiu rabotu v gorode i derevne bez pomoshchi gosudarstva (Moscow: Seiatel', 1922).
33 V. M Zlobina and B. S. Shcheprov, "Profsoiuzy v period vosstanovleniia narodnogo khoziaistva (1921-1925 gody)," in T. M. Demitsyn, et. al, eds. Profsoiuzy Moskvy: Ocherki istorii (Moscow: Profizdat, 1975), 178. While the numbers were strong, some worried that they were merely competitive circles rather than devoted to full health, see Kostriukov, chlen sankruzha kluba raikoma RLKSM, "Gotov' tes' k konkursu," ZNB 10 (August 1925): 24.
34 GARF f. 5451, op. 11, d. 467, l. 4-5.
housed a variety of reading materials including books, belles letters, and newspapers. The central workers' library and reading room opened in 1918 with 4300 books and by September 1921 had over 50,000 volumes. By 1921 Moscow's 161 libraries contained 1,197,594 books. Libraries served as spaces for cultural enlightenment work. The central libraries of Moscow had oral readings, rhythmic gymnastics, or even reading sessions with magic lantern slides. Libraries attached to clubs grew in size through the 1920s. According to the records of the Astrakhov club at the Serp i molot factory, the library grew steadily through the 1920s. In 1923 the library held only 1,183 books for 870 patrons who borrowed 1,014 books. In 1927, the library had grown to 9,332 books with thirteen journal titles. 1102 patrons and their 243 children enjoyed the library with an average daily attendance of forty-seven patrons.

Worker clubs founded libraries and organized lectures, circles, and activities within their walls but also made a practice of arranging excursions and walks for club members to sites around the city and into the surrounding countryside. Hygienists conceived of the excursion as a weapon in the fight against street culture, pulp literature, and sex. According to a report at a komsomol conference, a trip to the palace of the people could combat all these pernicious influences. One doctor envisioned the excursion as a way to fight the debauchery which accompanied long holiday weekends. He lamented, if only breaks could be utilized as in England, where long excursions were planned for such holiday

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25 GARF f. A-2313, op. 1, d. 134, l. 5.
26 GARF f. A-2313, op. 1, d. 134, l. 5.
27 GARF f. 7952, op 3, d. 233(1), l. 4.
28 TsAOXM f. 634, op. 1, d. 7, l. 212.
weekends, "The huge, beneficial influence of such mass excursions of the workers is visible to all hygienists." Excursion in Moscow could end up at a museum, palace of the people, or even special planned green spaces. For example, the state museum of social hygiene opened in 1919 to serve as a source of health information for the population. The Moscow trade unions organized 261 excursions in 1921, 465 in 1922, and 900 in 1923. Every excursion included a guide to explain and direct. According to excursion reports from 1927, of the 1,194 excursions held, 732 or sixty-one percent were on social behavior, eighty-four or seven percent were on health care, 103 or nine percent on science and 275 or twenty-three percent on economic themes. In addition, the excursion bureau conducted 3,612 tours of the city for 4,743 visitors as well as governmental instructional tours for 6,446 people.

The workers clubs struggled with scarce facilities and overcrowding. However there was a general perception that they were well-ordered and functioning. Aside from poverty, clubs suffered low attendance by adults and especially women. In 1926 over forty percent of Moscow club members were under age twenty-three. Though activists admitted that women were overburdened, and some did try to institute day care services and communal kitchens in the clubs to give women time, it was still the club's attractiveness

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41 Gel'man, Trud, utomlenie i otdyk, 36.
42 A. Mol'kov, Gosudarstvenny institut sotsial'noi gigienu Narkomzdrava, 1919-1924 (Moscow: Gosudarstvenny institut sotsialnoi gigienu, 1924), 11. pub. 1,000.
43 GARF f. 5451, op. 11, d 479, l. 30.
44 GARF f. 5451, op. 11, d. 47 9 ,1 . 2.
45 The club itself struggled with overcrowding even as it was held up as a refuge from the crowded home. In the new Soviet society the home would only serve as a place to sleep. Life and leisure would be collective. See Anatole Kopp, Town and Revolution: Soviet Architecture and City Planning, 1917-1935 Trans. by Thomas E. Burton (New York: George Braziller, 1970), 116.
46 B. Elskii, Klubnyi aktiv. (Moscow: VTsSPS, 1926), 6-7. pub. 10,000.
47 Hatch, 100.
which activists focused upon as the mechanism for change. One author noted that though women complained of being too busy they still found time for religious observance, dances, and hosting guests. The club “must fight for this time” he concluded. Older workers could not be ignored. Organizers needed to attract workers by entertaining rather than assuming workers were completely uninterested.

Semashko insisted that the biggest task of the club was “to distract the worker for the streets, and to win over the interest of the street. For this the club should be not only objectively useful, but also subjectively interesting to visitors.” Others concentrated on how to inject enlightening messages into those activities which workers enjoyed, perhaps by joining science lessons to club work by using forced bulbs as decoration and also a science lecture in the winter months. To appeal to these groups, activitists recommended new spaces for adult relaxation within the club and an attention to their different interests. For women, authors recommended introducing more lectures on women’s themes and taking over sewing circles that women frequented and infiltrating the discussions with political themes.

Theorists argued about the nature of clubs and what should be included but never that they were inessential to the construction of new life. Activists created such safe leisure

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24 A. Oborin, O rabote profsoiuzev v gorode i v derevne (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 55.
27 N. Semashko, “Bor’ba s khuliganstvom i nedostatki klubnoi raboty,” Klub 9:16 (September 1926), 3-5.
space in other areas as well. The red corner was a small, club-like space within a factory, communal cafeteria or dormitory, for example, where workers could meet for games and lectures. They provided an alternate space for cultured leisure in the 1920s. This was especially important as club premises were generally insufficient for all to enjoy and building of new clubs progressed slowly. A sample set of lectures for a red corner in 1926 included nights on lifestyle choices, including drunkenness, venereal disease, and work skippages. Red corners presented a popular alternative and rose quickly in numbers. In 1926 there were 2,199 in Moscow and by 1927, 2,680. But those which existed struggled with shortages of materials and space. One corner reported that workers had to use benches as tables for checkerboards and chess, sitting on the floor to play, as the tables were overflowing with books and magazines.

Ideal leisure in a less than ideal world

While the Commissar of health connected healthful leisure to cultured pursuits and revolutionary fervor, not everyone observed a complete transformation in the leisure pursuits of the working class. Semashko insisted that the revolution had changed the city and its culture, but the journalist Rene Fuelop-Miller remarked in his first-hand account that the increased leisure time mandated by the Soviets only increased the amount of time that workers had to drink. According to Semashko, incorrect leisure choices jeopardized one's health.

55 M. Leizerov, Krasnye ugolki. Biblioteka kul'trabortnika, (Moscow: Trud i kniga, 1925), 4, 17. pub. 20,000 with three reprints recorded in catalog.
56 GARF f. A-406, op. 7, d. 97, l. 20.
57 GARF f. 5451, op. 11, d. 467, l. 4.
if the relaxer carries on an irregular way of life. At night staggers about, but
does not sleep, drinks, etc...he does not restore his strength, but, on the
contrary, destroys it. If he uses rest on binges and debauchery, he directly
damages his health. Instead, taking advantage of a regular way of life
during leisure time is necessary for a healthy person.\textsuperscript{59}

Even enthusiastic revolutionaries found themselves agitating to wrest the workers from the
clutches of traditional leisure's drinking and carousing.\textsuperscript{60} Pamphlets noted the societal
responsibility of those who incorrectly used leisure time, citing the rise in work accidents
and the lowered productivity after long holiday weekends. Holidays, traditionally
associated with drinking fests, merited special attention in the literature and posters(See fig.
1.9).\textsuperscript{61}

One symptom of these problems, according to commentators, was the rise in the
number of hooligan acts. Hooligan activities, drunkenness, fighting, and disruptive behavior
often overlapped with traditional worker culture. Soviet commentators fed on stories of
debauched youth and the rise of criminal activity in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{62} In the 1927 agitational trial
of two young men of the streets, an expert testified to the rising number of hooligan
incidents. There were 428 in 1923, 763 in 1924, 1,661 in 1925, and 4,438 for only three
quarters of 1926.\textsuperscript{63}

\textsuperscript{59} Semashko, \textit{Kak otdykhat letom}, 8.
\textsuperscript{60} For traditional pre-revolutionary, leisure activities (such as tavern visits, gaming, club and dance
attendance), see Victoria Bonnell, ed, \textit{The Russian Worker: Life and Labor under the Tsarist Regime},
\textsuperscript{61} AMO f. 66, op. 13, d. 7, l. 88.
\textsuperscript{62} "In recent times, the pages of newspapers and journals have been full of messages on the rise of
hooliganism, scandals and fights and the flood of alcoholics." L. Zakharin, "Bor'ba za poriadok v klube,"
\textsuperscript{63} Gr. Avlov, \textit{Sud nad khuliganami} (Moscow: Doloi negramotnost', 1927), 37. pub. 4,000.
Hooliganism in the club took on a variety of forms:

There is the drunk kind, where the hooligan brings in wine, gets drunk on the club premises, curses his mother, sings bawdy songs, hangs on the women, fights in the club and on the street at its doors, practices petty theft, graffitees a wall, door or window with inscriptions, spoils furniture, portraits, musical instruments, fans, and in general breaks the general property of the club. They also do not take off their coats in the club. They smoke if they have cigarettes, litter and drop sunflower seeds, bring up a row, crowd, or noise in places where people congregate, and prevent the work of the masses with conversations, bustle, vanity, laughter, and with comings and goings during the lectures and reports.⁴⁴

Semashko saw hooliganism as an issue of health and championed the club as a means to fight it. Specifically he pointed to the need for clubs in the “organization of societal opinion.” For those who blamed hooligans for closing their club, Semashko countered that these clubs had marked themselves for failure by not mobilizing the neighborhood in favor of the new Soviet lifestyle. “The creation of societal opinions is the most trusted way to fight against hooliganism and against poor behavior, drunkenness, [and] work skippages.”⁴⁵ Other activists cited this connection to the community and public opinion as vital to correct leisure.⁴⁶

Hygienists attacked other leisure choices as unacceptable and unhealthy, and simply staying at home was also undesirable. At home, in their overcrowded and unaired apartments, workers could not begin to rest properly.⁴⁷ The home was filled with problems. “With the crowded nature of our dwellings, the inconvenience of our kitchens...the expense

⁴⁴ Zakharin, "Bor'ba za poriadok v klube," 16.
⁴⁵ Semashko, "Bor'ba s khuliganstvom," 4.
⁴⁷ Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 9.
of entertainment for the workers, the dirt and discomfort of pubs,” workers needed a space for proper leisure.

Hygienists found the worker home overcrowded and not conducive to proper leisure, but the home shone in comparison to the filthy, depraved, capitalist metropolis that was NEP-era Moscow. Anti-urban sentiments fueled many of the reform passions of the early city planners. Hygienists couched their disgust with the present city in terms of health. “According to the modern standards of labor and life, and especially in the big cities...[the worker is] in danger at work, in danger at home, and in danger on the streets from ‘Cold and rain,’ filth and dust, and finally, the danger of infection with many diseases.” Two conditions of the city made it especially dangerous for workers, overcrowding and the resulting filth. The filth of the streets gained special attention. Hygienists described rituals to prevent workers from bringing this filth into their homes (See figure 3.10) The article, “The Street and Hygiene,” described at length the dangers of urban filth and how to combat it.

NEP Moscow endangered workers with more than physical conditions. It tempted workers to illicit behaviors, to drink, to prostitutes, and to pursuits which according to hygienists were bad habits. According to one Soviet historian, youth confronted a variety of temptations in 1920s Moscow:

The NEPman bourgeoisie by all means of their lives imposed negative norms and morals on youth. The deformed images were taken into life. Magnificent clothes, the chic display windows of NEPman shops, and the

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"See Stites chapter "Utopia in Space: City and Building," Revolutionary Dreams, 190-204.
"S. Kal'manson and D. Bekariukov, Beregi sovet zdorov'e! Sanitarnaia pamiatka dla rabochikh podrostkov. (Leningrad: Molodaia gvardiia, 1925), 3. pub. 10,000.
proud women who were almost professional prostitutes -- this is what working youth had to confront in the beginning of the 1920s.\textsuperscript{72}

Aside from the daytime displays of wealth, NEPmen amused themselves with night-time carnivals of cabaret life, prostitution, and debauchery.\textsuperscript{73} Characters in plays, posters, and poems lost their health and sometimes their lives in pursuit of dangerous leisure on the boulevards among the bars and the prostitutes.\textsuperscript{74} Doctors so associated depravity with the city that they insisted syphilis in the countryside was spread by non-venereal means, sharing spoons, or towels but in the city it spread through prostitution and casual sexual encounters.\textsuperscript{75}

Workers liked the glitz of the city streets, but other factors also pulled them to improper leisure. City streets and neighborhood pubs offered more comfortable leisure for many of the city’s inhabitants. In the agitational play, \textit{The trial of an illiterate}, two politically unconscious workers, one male and one female, used heckling and the allure of the beer hall to pull students away from the literacy classes at a local factory.\textsuperscript{76} “Go to the beer hall and you’re equal to all,” declared a politically unconscious husband in an agitational trial.\textsuperscript{77} Hygienists saw this, perhaps, as the most dangerous comment on the

\textsuperscript{72} N. Lebina, \textit{Rabochaia molodez’ Leningrada : Trud i sotsial’nyi oblik, 1921-1925 gody} (Leningrad: Nauka, 1982), 147.

\textsuperscript{73} For a salacious description of 1920s Moscow cabarets and their goings on, see William J. Chase, \textit{Workers, Society and the Soviet State: Labor and Life in Moscow, 1918-1929}. Studies of the Harriman Institute (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1987), 201-203.

\textsuperscript{74} A. Iakkerman, \textit{Sud nad prostitutkoi i svodnitsei: Delo grazhd. Evdokimovoi, po obvneniiu v soznat’ nom zarazhenii sifilisom i grazh. Sviridovoi v svodnichestve i soobshchenstva} (Moscow: NKZ, 1929).

\textsuperscript{75} B. S. Sigal, \textit{Venericheskie bolezni} 2-oe izd. Trud, byt i zdorove rabochei molodezhi (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1926). 41-42.

\textsuperscript{76} Boris Andreeva, \textit{Sud nad negramotyn Khudozhestvennaia chast’ gubpolitprosveta sektsii samodeiatel’ nogo teatra. Seriia politсудov.} (Leningrad: Gubono, 1924). pub. 5,000.

\textsuperscript{77} I. V. Rebel’skii, \textit{Insstenirovannye sudy} (Kak ikh organizovyvat’) (Moscow: Turd i kniga, 1926), 59.
beer hall’s allure. The bar, they reasoned was a more embracing and attractive environment for most older workers than clubs, where they felt singled out and confused. It often had stronger roots in the area and in workers’ lives. In a 1926 “sanitary agitational trial” of a hooligan, the fictional prosecutor brought in a string of older workers who had left the club because the beer hall was quieter. To encourage workers to avoid the beer hall, one Klub magazine article advocated giving out movie and theater tickets. Another article noted, “It is clear that the more people who are in the club, the fewer patrons there are in the beer hall and the fewer still ‘going visiting’ or ‘to parties’.”

Whereas the beer hall endangered older, male workers, hygienists depicted dances as a baneful influence on the health and welfare of youth. The dance was the first step onto a slippery slope where “NEPman music” like the tango and its perceived avocation of promiscuity could lead to further bad behavior. Pamphlet writers melded hygienic and moral concerns to justify their objections. Instead of condemning clothes as revealing, the

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78 For a humorous, conversational take on the dilemma see Il’ia Rubanovskii, Za knigu ili v pivniu? Biblioteka “Zhugchie voprosy” (Moscow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1928). pub. 10,000
82 Ibid., 16-20.
83 Drinking was mostly male-oriented leisure in Russia, much as it was abroad. For Russia, see Transchel, 45; for elsewhere see Kathy Peiss, Cheap Amusements: Working women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-century New York (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 17.
84 For a much more detailed discussion of the dangers of dancing, see Anne E. Gorsuch, Flappers and Foxtrotters: Soviet Youth in the “Roaring Twenties,” The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies, Number 1102, (Pittsburgh, PA: The Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1994). In the west, dances were popular amusements for working women, see Peiss, 88-114.
special dresses hampered the proper functioning of the body, "dancers breathe poorly, particularly in those special, tight dresses." The chilled drinks encouraged colds.\(^5\)

While some reformers condemned dancing, others saw the need for dance, especially as a means to lure youth from the streets and into the clubs. At the 1922 meeting of the Moscow Komsomol, a debate ensued over dancing. Given the lack of other physical activities for youth, one activist recommended dances as a viable solution.\(^6\) The topic was still hot in a similar meeting in 1926, where another activist recommended that dances be infiltrated by youth activists who could change the character of these gatherings and thereby influence youth.\(^7\) A poster from a Leningrad club clearly pictured dancing as one of the activities offered by the club (See figure 3.9).

Hygienists attributed the attractiveness of poor leisure habits to the lack of other sites for leisure. Youngsters went to dances because there were not enough spaces in clubs or physical culture venues. Older workers went to beer halls because they could not find a quiet place elsewhere. "If we do not give the worker relaxation in the club, he will go to the beer hall, to the inn, and to the boulevard."\(^8\) The club combated the "holdovers (rassadnikami) of drunkenness and work skippages."\(^9\) Zamoskvoretskii attributed drinking among hooligans to the lack of a safe, quiet space for worker relaxation noting "In the evening after work, they look for a place, a place where they can forget, and not finding any other means, they drink [to forget]."\(^10\) Given their concentration on the unsuitable

\(^{5}\) L. M. Vasilevskii, Gigi\'ena molodoi devushki, (Moscow: Novaia moskva, 1926), 33. pub. 20,000.
\(^{6}\) TsAODM f. 634, op. 1, d. 7, l. 88.
\(^{7}\) TsAODM f. 634, op. 1, d. 81, l.
\(^{8}\) A. Oborin, O rabote profsoiuzov v gorode i v derevne, (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1926), 35.
\(^{9}\) N. Lebina, Rabochaia molodezh' Leningrada: Trud i sotsial'nyi oblik, 1921-1925 gody (Leningrad: Nauka, 1982), 122.
\(^{10}\) V. Zamoskvoretskii, "O bor'be s khuliganstvom," Klub: Ezheemesiachnyi zhurnal 5 (October 1925): 64-69.
nature of most sites, it is not particularly surprising that hygienists attempted to create more protected sites for spending leisure hours.

**Night sanatoriums**

Packed with invitations to debauchery, unhealthful living, and people who were ill and contagious, the city endangered the ordinary Muscovite. For those who were ill, the city led inevitably to greater sickness and weakness. Authorities considered intervention necessary to isolate the ill from the noxious influences and the temptations of Moscow, or, at the very least, to buffer them and allow their bodies a chance to heal. To cure these illnesses, the dispensary referred workers and their children to spaces within the city where their diet and lifestyle problems would be cared for, where they would spend their leisure time properly, and where, hopefully, they could recover their health — the night and day sanatoriums and the special squares.⁹¹

According to hygienists, the idea for the night sanatorium came from the Americans but had also been followed by the German organization of the Red Cross beginning in 1910.⁹² The night sanatorium system resembled a radical program established by a New York pediatrician for tuberculosis treatment. Called a preventorium in America, the institution housed undernourished children from New York and treated them with good

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⁹¹ Referrals to the night sanatorium and other such institutions could be obtained through the dispensary doctor, the commission for the improvement (ozdorovlenie) of labor and life, the commission of the night sanatorium. See A. Zalesskaia, “Opyty rabot v nochnom sanatorii pri lechebno-proteznom institute,” Ezhenedel’nik Moszdravotdel’ 4/157(28 January 1926): 58.

⁹² Focusing particularly on tuberculosis methods, N. Fridman noted that pre-Revolutionary Russia did have some institutions for victims of tuberculosis, there were no night sanatoriums per se. See, “Nochnoi sanatorii, kaka odno iz vspomogatel’nykh uchrezhdenii dispensera dlja tuberkuleznykh bolnykh,” Izvetsiia narodnogo komissariata zdravookhraneniiia, 2-3 (1923): 13. 203
food, twenty-four-hour a day exposure to fresh air, excursions, and education. In Russia, both children and adults received treatment in similarly-organized institutes. In 1921, four night sanatorium were opened in Moscow, bringing the tradition to Russia. By 1926/1927, the tuberculosis dispensary system of Moscow alone had ten day sanatoriums (of these two were for adults), eleven night sanatoriums (three of these for children), and fourteen physical therapy squares (nine of these were for children).

Authorities considered the day sanatorium the “simplest and cheapest” of the sanatoriums. The day sanatorium, mostly intended for children as a refuge during the day while parents worked, often held classes as well as caring for the ill. In the night sanatorium adults stayed over night to bolster their health. The night sanatorium provided a cleaner, less-crowded environment than that which was available at home, without taking the patient from their work station, which one author considered “both its weakest and strongest point...The patient, continuing his professional work, during his stay in the night sanatorium severed his connections with his family and usual conditions of life.” This separation allowed the patient to view an entirely different lifestyle and make changes:

The sanatorium gives him a convenient place, answering to his needs for food and those cultural boons which are necessary to help the organism to triumph over illness. At work he is the same as the others, but returning to the sanatorium, he discards his working clothes, washes off the dust and dirt, and refreshing his body from hours of work, changes into light, clean,

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96 Vainshtein, *Dom odykha*, 33-34.

97 Ibid., 35.
sanitary clothing and turns into the patient who submits to the obligatory regimen of the sanatorium.  

The separate space which the sanatoriums created also resonated with the workers. The patient who entered the sanatorium completely transformed himself to enter the sanctuary of the night sanatorium. He transformed from a worker to a patient but also from a source of infection to a cleansed inhabitant of an ideal leisure space. He stripped away the dirt and grime of the city to enter this new realm. A worker from the Platinovii factory reportedly called the night sanatorium a refuge from a hectic home, “My apartment is poor. I live in a corridor... but the night sanatorium is exactly what workers need.”  

The squares used similar techniques as the night sanatorium but were distinguished by their outdoor sleeping arrangements. The special health squares (ploshadki) occupied the territory of city green spaces, and squares and consisted of beds and personnel. One descriptive article, “On the square,” accented the ways in which the square provided a separate world for worker, “Quiet. The sounds of street life reach here weakly. Only a bell’s toll occasionally breaks through with its tone.” A patient underscored the ways in which the square provided a world apart. “How can I not like it, is it possible to relax at home? The air is stale, the children are loud — how is that rest?” As the soft sounds of city life indicated, the square provided a place where the intensities of life in the city lessened and where the temptations of the boulevards could not reach. Worker testimonials appeared in the press to praise the squares for the lessons which they imparted and the refuge they provided, though most did mention their reluctance at first. “It was quite cold at  

98 Vainshtein, Doma Otadyka 35.  
the beginning of winter. Everyone laid down and shivered...[but we] got used to it -- the
same for the regimen and the discipline.*101

The regimen of the sanatorium and squares adhered strictly to the clock. Most all
articles highlighted the rigidity of the scheduling. A 1926 schedule for a Moscow night
sanatorium noted that workers entered the institution at five o’clock in the evening,
showered, changed, rested in bed until dinner at seven after which they engaged in cultural
enlightenment work until nine (reading, discussions with the doctors, lectures or physical
culture) at which point they had tea before retiring at ten o’clock. The mornings started at
half past six when the patient arose, washed, had breakfast at seven, and left for worker at
half past.*102 Organizers of sanatoriums also told workers how to spend their off-time
within the institution. Sleeping practices merited special attention. Organizers kept
windows open even in winter, sometimes nailing them open, to keep the air clean in the
sleeping chamber.*103 As for cultural enlightenment work within the system, sanitary issues
took center stage. In the *Moscow Health Department Weekly* Dr. Kagan suggested bodily
hygiene, labor and rest, diet, home life, sex, or alcohol, smoking, and narcotics as themes
for nightly lectures.*104

As important as how patients lived within the sanatorium was how they lived once
they left it. Patients were to take their lessons home from this “school for healthful

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101 V. Protopopov, “Ploshchadka distsipliniruet rabochikh,” *ZN B 4-5* (1925): 15. Similar accounts can be
found in “Na ploshchadke,” *ZN B 4-5* (May 1925): 13-14; I. Geizer, “Na ploshchadke dlia tuberkuleznykh

102 Vainshtein, *Doma otdykha*, 35. For other sample regimens see, Fridman, *Nochnoi sanatorii*, 13;
Haines, *Health Work in Soviet Russia*, 107;


104 B. B. Kagan, Dr. “Programma dlia raboty po sanprosvesheniiu v nochnykh sanatoriakh” *Ezhenedel’nik
practices. To gauge the effectiveness of the treatment, night and day sanatoriums offered statistics on increases in weight while in the sanatorium, but also proposed more detailed investigations into the lives of those who left the institution. Anna Haines, a visiting nurse from America highly impressed with the Soviet health system, remarked of the night sanatoriums, "Needless to say, the records show almost all the cases improved on discharge, but the authorities felt that the education value of the treatment to the patient and to his family is of even greater benefit than his immediate gain in health." Haines noted that the institutions seemed to be very popular. According to a 1925 investigation of one hundred former patients of the night sanatorium for the factories of Rogozhsko-Simonovskii district, forty-three began to clean their teeth, nine obtained individual plates, six got bedding, twenty-one began to do rub downs (obtiranie), and six quit smoking.

The perceived influence which the sanatorium experience would have on the patient’s family’s health was as important as that of the immediate effect upon the individual’s health. An article on a children’s health square noted that while the children listened avidly to the sanitary enlightenment lectures, the lasting reform came only “when they go home they talk to their parents about the same things — open the transom, do a wet cleaning, and brush your teeth." Lifestyle changes reached into all aspects of the patient’s life. According to an article on children of the health squares, not only did the children’s physical health strengthen, but they also “study better, are more disciplined, develop

103 Fridman, 14.
104 Haines, Health Work in Soviet Russia, 107.
105 Ibid.
106 Kapengut, “Rabochie o nochnom sanatorii,” 15.
hygienic skills and grow accustomed to an amicable, collective life." In short, their experience changed the way they lived.

Testimonials from workers as to the effectiveness of the night sanatoriums filled the pages of health magazines. One worker noted, "The night sanatorium shows us that work is not all that harmful if we live that time when we are not at work sensibly (po chelovecheski)." According to a worker from the AMO factory, the night sanatorium was a special space for relaxation. "After the day's filth and hard work, you fall into a true place of relaxation where all is clean and good. The nerve system after carrying on healing after a break calms and increases the capacity for work."

Escaping the City

What is the sense of lectures, posters and slogans, when the lectures about hygiene are conducted in stuffy and dirty rooms? What is the sense of hanging posters on the walls about the dangers of smoking and the necessity of bodily cleanliness, when on the floor there is so much trash that it must be raked up with a shovel, when one cannot even enter the lavatory and the single water faucet does not work because of filth? The house of leisure teaches not by words, but by the mere fact of its existence—its example. It shows the necessity of living and building one's home rationally and hygienically.

Two types of institutions served as sanctuaries in the countryside from the problems of the city. Both were begun with October, and both struggled in their early years for resources and construction but were doing fairly well by 1924. These institutions were the

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110 Ibid.
111 E. Shestakova, "Rabochie v nochnykh sanatoriakh," ZNB 3 (February 1926) 8.
112 Kapengut, "Rabochie o nochnom sanatori," 15.
113 Fedynskaia, "O domakh otdykha," ZNB 1 (January 1926): 2-3
114 For a brief history of the two systems see, Vainstein, Doma otdykha, 52-55.
sanatorium and the house of leisure. For those who were ill, the sanatorium attempted to
shelter them from the hard-living conditions of the city, educate them to hygienic norms,
and help them to recover. The house of leisure system also attempted to shelter workers
from the city and educate them to hygienic norms but attended to healthy workers, keeping
them for only two weeks during their annual vacation time. Though they differed in set-up,
they coincided in their goals, “In sanatoriums as well as in the house of rest, attention is
paid to the patient learning new skills with which he learns to struggle with illness.”

Though small in number, both types of institutions increased through the 1920s,
after a brief fall with the introduction of NEP, and served more and more patients. By
1924 and 1925 the twenty-six sanatoriums of the city cared for 14,000 patients, completely
healing almost nine percent and giving seventy-nine percent some relief according to their
own statistics. In 1925/26 twenty-eight sanatoriums served 15,008 patients, and in 1926/
27 thirty-one cared for 16,655. The house of leisure system increased greatly in numbers
through the 1920s. In 1920, only 240 people experienced the benefits of the house of

115 Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 31-32. For more on the official set-up of sanatoriums, spas, and houses of
leisure, see Glavnoe kurortnoe upravlenie NKZ, Kurorty SSSR: Spravochnik (Petrograd: Krasnyi pechatnik,
192-); N. A. Semashko, Shto takoe kurort’ i kak na nikh lechit’ sia (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1924); and
Moskovskii Sovet RK i KD, Sektsiia domov otdykha MOZ. Doma Otdykha: Sbornik statei i materialov
(1920-1923 gg.) (Moscow: Gosizdat, n.d.) pub. 3,000.
116 The house of leisure system began building even during 1920/1921. With NEP, they experienced great
need and a certain lessening of programs, but recovered in 1924 when a new funding source was discovered
- the social insurance fund. For more details, see Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 24 - 27.
117 Moskovskii otdel zdravookhraneniia, Kratkii obzor sostoianniiia zdravookhraneniia v Moskve i gubernii
(Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1926), 26. pub. 5100.
118 Zdravookhranenie v Moskve i Moskovskoi gubernii (Moscow: Moszdravotdel, 1928), 12. The same
report gave the number of 27 for sanatoriums in 1924/25 and 12,962 people served.
leisure. In 1921, some 7,213 workers enjoyed stays in the house of leisure, but by 1924/1925, the twelve houses of leisure saw 50,000 vacationers.\footnote{The numbers for patrons of the house of leisure were as follows, 1920/240 people, 1921/7,213, and 1923/17,010. According to a survey of 1925 patrons of the house of leisure 46.3% were women and 53.7% men. Of these 60.3% were older than 30. See Fedynskaya, “O domakh otdykha,” 2-3; MOZ, Kratkiy obzor sostojaniia, 26.}

The institutions differed slightly in their focus. Prescription to a sanatorium, in contrast to other healing institutions, was a drastic step that was only taken when doctors decided that “to return a worker to health, they must isolate him from that sphere where he is surrounded by harms, where his organism is in such a state as to be unable to fight the illness.”\footnote{Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 38.} While the house of leisure was intended as an institution for healthy individuals, it, like the sanatorium, worked to create an entirely different world for workers. “The house of leisure teaches not with words, but with the very fact of its existence, its example, how to rationally and hygienically live and to build your home.”\footnote{Fedynskaya, “O domakh otdykha,” 2-3.} Like the exhibitions of ideal kitchens and nurseries, the sanatorium and house of leisure functioned as a perfected world where workers entered and surrounded themselves in images of the coming utopia.

“The house of leisure with its regimen not only sanitizes and strengthens those living within them, but also teaches and rears through the environment and all the work of the establishment it agitates for a new life by itself.”\footnote{Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 2. The same quotation appears in L. Fedynskaya, “O domakh otdykha,” ZNB 1 (January 1926): 2-3.} The school for new life consisted of two major parts — sanitary enlightenment work and the regimen. Sanitary enlightenment proved as integral a part of sanatorium life as it was of night sanatorium life in the city. One sanatorium reported “organizing concerts, spectacles, evenings of questions and answers, living newspapers, and movies. For men and women they put together special
segregated lectures on the questions of hygiene and sexual life.”  In the house of leisure the worker learned skills to apply to healthful living. As one couplet quipped, “something of cleaning the body and home something about drinking and smoking/ About how the sun and water nourish/And even how to go to the bathroom.”

Enlightenment work discussed the need for regimentation of daily life, and workers learned from the example of the house of leisure’s scheduling. The regimen of vacation life received much of the credit for positively changing life.

The day of the patient in the sanatorium is precisely divided by hours. The patient rises at a determined hour and goes to bed at a determined hour. At certain hours they eat, go for a walk, take sun and air baths, etc. Further, the patient becomes accustomed to careful care for their bodies — regularly cleaning and rinsing the mouth, keeping skin clean, breathing correctly, growing accustomed to clean air, rationally clothing themselves, and accustoming their body to cold water.

As with previous examples of the regimens, proper adherence served to cure all problems. Both institutions concentrated on exposing workers to a healthier lifestyle. In the sanatorium, it was prescriptive, meant to fight an existing disease. In the house of leisure it was prophylactic. In theory, sanatorium doctors tailored the regimen for each group of patients or in some cases, for individual patients. Every aspect of the patients life “had to be done by a special timetable, based on scientific factors and should be to one purpose: to put the patients organism in the most fortuitous conditions for the struggle with the illness.” Doctors compared the regimen of the sanatorium to a prescription.

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122 Stepan, “Kak otdykhaiut i lechatsia Moskovskie rabochie,” ZNB 3 (February 1927), 8.
126 Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 44.
If the patient eats well and spends a lot of time in the sun and in general strictly fulfills the hygienic instructions, then the [tuberculosis] bacillus may go into remission forever and will not reappear and the “ill” in practice will live his entire life as “healthy.” But, if the ill returns to live in poor conditions — crowded apartments, poor nutrition, works in dust, etc, and in addition forgets the advice of the doctor to not smoke or drink, stay in the fresh air, etc, then the organism will gradually weaken and the [tuberculosis] bacillus will again live, awaken, and get back to work.\textsuperscript{128}

The physical structure of the sanatorium and house of leisure received a great amount of attention both for its ideological and curative properties. The isolation of the institution was important. “Sprigevo” contained both a sanatorium and house of leisure as well as its own farm, gardens, and livestock.\textsuperscript{129} In effect it became a world of its own, a separate space which was almost entirely independent of need from the city.

As islands of health, the sanatorium and house of leisure symbolized the power of the Soviet state to change environments, and perhaps, consequently, a message to workers of the possibility for their own transformation. An article in \textit{For a New Life} gave the very existence of sanatoriums and houses of leisure as proof of the power of the revolution. “The house of leisure is wholly and completely, a work of the October revolution. Not only did they not exist earlier; even the idea for them did not exist.”\textsuperscript{130} In the 1925 article titled “Our sanatoriums,” the author gave a history of the houses which had been transformed into sanatoriums. The Ogarev sanatorium had once been a palace of a Romanov prince. The Chekhov sanatorium had once been the home of a wealthy

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 2.
\textsuperscript{129} Stepan, “Kak otdykhat,” 9.
\textsuperscript{130} Konstorum, “Nashi sanatorii,” 3.
Another house of leisure took over a former monastery. The buildings were spaces redeemed by socialist power, usually a former mansion of the bourgeoisie, and therefore formed a perfect environment for the rehabilitation of a worker either poisoned by the NEP-man-tainted urban environment or work-place stresses. However, it was a constant struggle. An article on the Sverdlov house of leisure argued that the building had not been sufficiently transformed. The author lamented that pictures which “could not be interesting to a worker” hung on the wall and instead called for a Lenin corner filled with portraits, books and biographies. “Where workers relax there must prevail the worker spirit.”

The house of leisure (dom otdykha) provided escape from the ruinous influences of the city and also educated the worker. According to Dr. Kagan, the house of leisure served as a “two-week practical school of a healthful and new life.” In the “school of health and new life” the lessons learned did not apply simply to the individual. The vacationer needed to take these ideas home and apply them to his domestic life. In this aspect the house of rest was even a “factory of health,” according to another article, for the change it wrought. -- a factory that was “favorable and [provided] the cheapest protection from mass social illness against which the struggle is considerably more difficult and more dear.”

131 “Nashi sanatorii,” ZNB 6 (June 1925): 3.
133 Kagan, Rabochaia molodezh, 11.
135 Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 11.
As well as changing the workers health, the proper use of rest time restored them mentally. The new environment allowed the worker to rest both “physically and spiritually (dushevno).”

One Moscow Department of Health poster made the point. In “Workers, in the house of leisure learn to build a new life,” the pristine, ordered set up of the house of leisure was presented in a picture above with a red arrow directly connecting it to the reordering of the worker home, versus the unordered, crowded, dark, and unaired room of unorganized, old worker life presented in the hell position below (See figure 3.11). Survey questions given to former patrons revealed the hoped-for changes. According to a 1925 survey of 1000 house of leisure patrons, twenty-three-and-a-half percent had improved their personal hygiene, nearly twelve percent had bettered their home lives, a little over six percent ate better, and almost twelve percent made more rational use of their free time. Along with these changes, about two-and-a-half percent changed their sleeping habits, nearly nine percent began doing morning gymnastics, and nearly seventy-four percent would readily move to a communal apartment.

Educating workers occupied most descriptions of the house of leisure. One author noted that most of the workers relaxing at the house of leisure did not use water or wash. He explained this was not due to reticence on their part but rather inability to find soap and clean water in the city. City workers lived in crowded, unsanitary conditions and this would not change any time soon. The house of leisure would change workers’ lives by showing them how they could live:

The house of rest gives workers temporarily, such a dwelling which introduces him to the necessity of a new dwelling, to the need for striving to

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138 Ibid., 13.
build cooperative housing and to a certain extent adjusting him to the habit of cultured living in a healthy dwelling...as a whole familiarizing the worker with a normal healthy life is the purpose which the house of rest serves.¹⁴⁰

A 1925 article from For a New Life claimed that initially many “older workers and worker mothers” distrusted even the idea of these special institutions and went unwillingly. These wary types were reluctant to go to a “strange, unfamiliar house where, according to the rumors, there was ‘bolshevik order’, and they lived communally, where they have some kind of ‘phycsculture’ and where men and women go around the whole day in “shorts and wide trousers...with naked legs.”¹⁴¹ “About no other type of medical institution exist so many incorrect assumptions as those of sanatoriums,” claimed one article.¹⁴² The author went on to challenge the idea that the sanatorium visit should be “pleasant,” saying that while it was often pleasant, the main reason for the sanatorium was for healing and the main method of this was the regimen. Hence, the sanatorium stay was just like a prescription from a pharmacy. Workers did not come simply to rest or for pleasure, but for their health.¹⁴³

Resistance to the regimen took on more active forms. According to an anonymous account of a meeting in the Khamovnicheskii district, the participants were highly interested in a report of the workings of the house of leisure and sanatorium. They called for a longer stay for the ill in the sanatorium but saved their vitriol for a discussion of problems in the house of leisure. One member said, “The regimen of the house of leisure must be strengthened [in order to] liquidate once and for all the flirt.”¹⁴⁴ Similarly, a 1926 article

¹⁴⁰ Vainshtein, Doma otdykha, 19.
¹⁴³ Ibid.
entitled "There need not be a place for drunkenness and hooliganism in the house of leisure" detailed problems in discipline. "Now, we must take note of the unhealthy phenomenon which is being observed on the part of a small group of workers. We are referring to cases of drunkenness, hooliganism, and incidence of malicious infringement of the regimen." The article noted a case where five workers had to be "literally thrown out by the militia from a house of leisure". Bad behavior could be less extreme. A 1925 article noted that conversations and fights disrupted the quiet nap time and people who took their lunches in their rooms threatened the collective nature of the experience.

As important as the fight against poor behavior in the house of leisure was the increase of sanitary enlightenment work. If workers did not value the opportunity of the house of leisure promised them, hygienists blamed ignorance and political unconsciousness. "There is a worker contingent who do not understand the importance of the regimen," insisted one writer, "and this incomprehension leads to their restless behavior and disturbing the others’ relaxation." To fight this ignorance, the article recommended further instruction in the social responsibility of the patron to the house of leisure. Finally, sanitary enlightenment within the house of leisure itself should be increased to fight the problem and underscore the "meaning of the regimen."

Enlightenment work fought the problems of the flirt and hooligan through its mere existence. Without cultural enlightenment work the house of leisure floundered:

Workers by their nature cannot spend two weeks in a state of "doing nothing" even in a state of leisure...Those hours of rest not taken up by

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145 "P'ianstvu i khuliganstvu ne dolzhno byt' mesta v domakh otdykha," ZNB 12-13 (June 1926): 12.
146 Predsedatel' Krasno-Presenenskoi Strakhovoi Kassy, Nemudrov, "Tam, gde zhili monakhi (Dom otdykha Moszdravotdela v Zvenigorode imeni A. I. Rykova," ZNB 7 (June 1925): 11.
147 "P'ianstvu i khuliganstvu ne dolzhno byt' mesta v domakh otdykha," ZNB 12-13 (June 1926): 12.
148 Ibid.

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eating, sleep, or physical culture must be filled with cultural work, otherwise
the flirt, drunkenness, bouza, or at best boredom, will flourish in the house
of leisure. In those house of leisure where cultural work is not carried out or
is poorly done, the worker cannot have proper rest. 149

Enlightenment work allowed authorities “to mobilize a social opinion among the working
masses” and brought power to bear on the hooligan and flirt. 150 A letter in For a New Life
called for corrective action to be taken against misbehaving vacationers such as reporting to
the factory committee, publishing names in wall newspapers, and generally getting their
cribles and names known to the community. 151

In telegrams sent to the Moscow Soviet and the Moscow Trade Unions in 1928
workers at least mouthed propaganda phrases in testimony to their enjoyment of the house
of leisure. The telegrams, typically sent after a meeting on the last night of a stay at the
house of leisure, played upon the themes from the propaganda to sing the praises of the
house of leisure. One telegram noted, “Only the October revolution gave the working
class the ability to use royal palaces and forests for the health of the workers.” 152 Another
telegram noted that “hundreds of thousands of workers now rested in a spot where the
Iusupov princes and their fellows had carried on their orgies.” The telegram continued that
now workers relaxed not just for their own health but for “the construction of socialism in
our country.” 153 Another telegram swore to the way in which the patrons had “used” their
rest time to “restore their organism” thanks to the “skillful organization of leisure, the
careful supervision and management of relaxation, the fulfillment of the regimen,

149 Bouza is a type of alcoholic beverage made from millet, buckwheat, or barley. Garevskii, “Kulturnaia
rabota,” 6.
150 “P’ianstvu i khuliganstvu ne dolzhno byt’,” 12.
152 AMO f. 2129, op 1, d. 386, l. 40.
153 AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 386, l. 32. Other telegrams reiterated this point, see, l. 46, 56.

conversations with the doctor about the rate of progress, the filling of the entire day with
excursions, and cultural sessions of sport.”¹⁵⁴ “We promise that we will take into our own
lives that which is rational and applicable which we have learned in the house of leisure”¹⁵⁵

In articles workers used similar language to describe their experiences in the house
of leisure and echoed the stipulations of the propaganda. Woman worker P., a 40-year-old,
non-party janitress with three children, praised the house of leisure for teaching her “a
correct life” and vowed to “attempt to carry out that which I have seen.”¹⁵⁶ Another
worker wanted to start the “normal relaxation” which he learned there. Worker Po-ov, a
married 43-year-old said “the house of leisure taught me everything good and I will put
my home in the same order.”¹⁵⁷

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In a 1926 article, A. Lipets described the startlingly destructive environment of
most workers and reasoned that political work was impossible without fighting certain
facts, “the fact that the worker family loses the quiet and restoring forces of sleep because
of bugs, that in soups of our restaurants cockroaches float, that in the countryside there are
no lavatories, and in cities people are not able to use them.” Not only were physical
situations too difficult to do political work, but Lipets considered it unfair to ask workers to
fulfill even cleanliness strictures in such situations. “It is impossible to write “wash your
hands” And not give a pure(clean), dry towel and soap. It is impossible also to be

¹⁵⁴ AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 386, l. 35. See also l. 54.
¹⁵⁵ AMO f. 2129, op. 1, d. 386, l. 56. See also l. 75.
¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

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reconciled...[to] the naked, sad walls of our dwellings and public places." While concentrating on the utility of the club, Lipets could just as easily have been discussing the necessity of the night sanatorium or the house of leisure. Hygienists looked for places to isolate workers and allow them the rest they needed to rejuvenate and recover from the baneful influences of modern life. In their vision, perfected leisure took place outside of the city in the clean air of the countryside, revealing a strong, anti-urban bias. In the best scenario, a worker healthfully passed his time in the sun and air while engaged in physical exercise.

Hygienists recommended that workers exploit their leisure time and use it to rejuvenate their body and enrich themselves culturally. Healthy leisure served as a base for further cultural activity and starting point for political agitation. Healthful leisure was cultured leisure and cultured leisure expanded, challenged, and informed, cultivating the mind as well as the body. Leisure activities could lead to a more informed populace and open the door to the socialist utopia which would most surely arrive with a healthy and enlightened population. Cultured leisure spaces, such as the club, provided an entrance through entertainment for political enlightenment. By encouraging workers to use their leisure time actively, hygienists were essentially recommending greater political involvement for men and women.

In many cases, hygienists traced poor worker productivity to poor leisure habits. Drinking and carousing to all hours of the night on the dangerous streets of Moscow weakened workers. Proper leisure, club activities, physical culture, and excursions buffered workers, restored them, and invigorated them. For those who were already ill, hygienists prescribed better leisure as a cure. In night and day sanatoriums, as well as

sanatoriums in the countryside, doctors tailored leisure-time and sleep regimens to patients' illnesses and theorized that adherence would cure all illnesses. Healthy leisure, alongside home and bodily care, made Muscovites into a modern production industrial force. Proper leisure made them strong of body and sound of mind politically. If Muscovites gave themselves over to the institutions of leisure, productivity and culture would rise and with them the revolution would triumph.
Figure 4.1 “People’s Health Care in the USSR,” Moscow: Association of artists of Revolutionary Russia, 1926-1929. pub. 5.000 Courtesy of the Russian State Library.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In 1927, Commissar of Health Semashko assessed the progress of Narkomzdrav on the ten-year anniversary of the revolution, and he declared it a success. "The death rate of the population has dramatically lowered. Epidemic illnesses, which were the historically pathetic difference between our country and the rest of Europe, sharply decreased." He noted that infant death rates fell from approximately one-quarter of all births to about one-fifth and in Moscow and other urban areas they amounted to a little over one-tenth of all births. Not only did Russia now compare more favorably with Europe, but Narkomzdrav had dramatically changed the situation from the pre-revolutionary era. "All of [these indicators] in general and each separately has fallen far below the pre-war levels." He concluded that the course was true.

While pleased, Semashko admitted that not nearly enough had been done. Though the major numbers had improved, inadequate care for the peasantry and low numbers of institutions marred Narkomzdrav's successes. Outside the major urban centers, medical practice made slow inroads. The few doctors who ventured outside Moscow and Leningrad confronted equipment and supply shortages as well as a distrustful population.

1 N. Semashko, "Politika v delezdravookhraneniiia za desiat' let" 3-12 in N. A. Semashko, ed. Desiat' let oktiabria i sovetskaia meditsina. 3-12. (Moscow: NKZ RSFSR, 1927), 11.
2 Ibid., 12.
3 Ibid., 11.
4 Ibid., 12.
5 Ibid.
In the city, needs still far outstripped facilities and communal services lagged. For instance, the night dispensaries could not begin to serve all the needy. The house of leisure which immersed so many in the lessons of a healthful life, did not begin to treat every Muscovite. Consultations could provide plenty of advice to mothers but lacked the wherewithal to offer mothers formula or other support in any significant amount. In the home, poor material circumstances, overcrowding, and shortages conspired to limit dramatic improvements. Communal kitchens, laundries and nurseries did not materialize.

Semashko commented on Narkomzdrav successes, but Soviet health care initiatives addressed broader goals than simply the lowering of epidemic illness and infant death rates. Healthy habits were just the first step on the path to the future. While material considerations -- strong industry, a robust military, and healthier babies -- framed the ideas of health education in the 1920s, the articulation of these ideas held broader consequences. Hygienists expanded the duties of citizens to include personal habits and domestic cleaning. Attempting to control the tremendous waves of epidemic disease facing the still weak revolutionary state, hygienists removed distinctions of private and public behavior, and the emphasis upon individual health as a component of the greater society’s strength led to greater intrusion into private lives and habits. All behaviors could either weaken or strengthen the young country, and therefore all behaviors were subject to interference. The man who masturbated weakened his sexual potency and endangered the growth of the population. The mother who did not keep a clean home endangered herself, the health of her family, and finally all those around her since an improperly cared for home was an incubator for lifestyle diseases. Proper behavior ensured the health of society and consequently the strength of the state and its international potency.
The poster "People's Health Care in the USSR" depicted the major components of Narkomzdrav's programs (See figure 4.1). In the center, a doctor lectured to a group of workers framed by a scroll that preached worker self-action. In the center, the programs of the department for the protection of Motherhood and Infants were represented by the rooms of the consultation and the multiple graphs of statistical data. Finally, in the center bottom, a nurse-instructor, pictured visiting a peasant home, called to mind the work of the dispensary. In side pictures, sanatoriums, red army medicine, and other programs were featured. However, the poster also showed that not all of Narkomzdrav's programs were so concrete in their methods and objectives. In the upper-left corner smokestacks belched out the promise of a strong, industrial workers' state. In the upper-right corner, a political rally showed a populace engaged in the highest form of culture -- political participation. Finally, the pantheon of worker and peasant, soldier and national minority, man and woman, tied health care to the leveling and unifying forces of the revolution. Just as Lenin commented to Clara Zetkin, proper hygiene was about more than personal cleanliness, it was about culture.

In posters and plays, following the doctor's strictures and living a moderated life opened a portal to the future. One individual's sobriety, physical activity, or change in housekeeping transformed the entire world and brought material improvement, larger, happier families, bigger apartments, camaraderie, and light. With so much at stake, individual behavior had to meet exacting standards. Keeping precise schedules and participating in proper leisure could lead to utopia or degradation. Hygienists offered more than just propaganda for a healthier life, in sanatoriums, clubs, and houses of leisure, they provided models as well as idealized spaces for leisure. However the facilities were hard-
pressed to meet the demand. Club construction never caught up with demand and the loud, crowded spaces that remained appealed to few.

While guided by science, hygienists still embraced certain ideas about the proper roles of the sexes. Proper behavior for men differed from that recommended for women. Men contributed to the state as workers, soldiers, and theorists. If men followed the regimen, lived cleanly, and exercised, they became strong workers, able soldiers, and sharper minds. The consequences for men of bad behavior entailed decreased productivity or disturbing the peace. For women, the benefits of a healthful lifestyle connected to their procreative function. Good diets and exercise imparted a healthful glow to women which hygienists said made them more attractive than powders or Parisian fashions. Once they attracted a mate, exercise and diet made them stronger mothers. While men gained a strong body and mind for production, women became stronger for reproduction.

Whereas hygienists held men responsible for taking care of their own health, they heaped more than personal responsibility on women. Women were responsible for their own health, the health of their children, the health of their home, and they were even supposed to branch out and take care of the rest of society. Soviet theorists visualized a coming communal organization where laundry, cooking, and child care were centralized and rationalized, lessening the burden for women. In the meantime, recommendations for a health home targeted women as the responsible audience. These recommendations for increased housekeeping burdened women, and communal facilities did not emerge to help them. Ironically, hygienists told women they would have to build the facilities themselves.

In addition to increasing housework for women, hygienists complicated and extended women's child care responsibilities. Hygienists stressed the importance of prenatal care, breast feeding, and socialization to mothers in consultations and birth homes,
and they expected pregnant women to wash more frequently, eat better, and boil their water, which certainly would have been laborious tasks. After giving birth, doctors recommended more breast feeding for a greater length of time, and condemned those remedies which women had long employed. Texts on child-care continued to target women as the responsible parents as the children matured. Women were the care-givers and socializers of the next generation. In plays, mothers kept children back, not fathers, and appeals for pioneer attendance went to mothers. Women remained responsible for their offspring through adulthood.

Hygienists urged workers to self-initiative and educated them to proper leisure, but they also enforced these ideas. An entire network of officials looked into men’s and women’s lives to enforce the prescribed lifestyle. Doctors inspected workers, and dispensary nurses investigated houses. Special committees probed worker lifestyles. In addition, individual citizens attempted to bring their fellows into compliance with health strictures either convinced of the correctness of the quest, for political gain, or for their own unique reasons. Health cell volunteers cleaned up communally used areas in apartment buildings but also investigated the private living spaces of tenants on a regular basis whether given cause or not. In theory the health cells reached all Muscovites, but thousands of health cells existed only on paper and others, undoubtedly, could not have found the time to knowledgeably carry out all their cleaning and inspection duties.

The vigor with which medical and health cell personnel pursued workers domestic and leisure activities was not uniquely Soviet. Sanitary inspections and education had been part of pre-revolutionary medical practice. The dispensary system built upon concepts upheld by leading pre-revolutionary community physicians. While the Soviets had more pronounced success, they were not without tsarist predecessors. As often as Soviet
Hygienists pulled up pre-revolutionary statistics, they compared their programs and progress to west-European efforts.

The transition to utopia did not come under Semashko. Though Semashko's initiatives had bettered the health for the Russian population, they still remained far less healthy and well cared for than their European counterparts. He was removed from his post in 1930 and replaced by M. F. Vladimirskii. For Soviet citizens, health care initiatives continued to make inroads even without Semashko, and by the 1960s, the life expectancy of Soviet citizens paralleled that of citizens of western countries. However, during the 1970s things took a turn for the worse, and the Soviet Union would become the first industrialized country in the world to show a decrease in life expectancy and an increase in infant mortality. Whatever changes may have occurred in the 1920s, they were obviously just the beginning of the story.

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