From Don Juan to Comrade Ivan

Educating the Young Men of the Urals for Love and Marriage, 1953–1964

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ABSTRACT

This article examines discussions of love and marriage in a regional newspaper of the Communist Youth League (Komsomol) in the central Urals region. Although framed around the intention to communicate official communist morality and ideals about the family, these discussions included stories and readers' letters that expressed a range of views that could both draw on and challenge Party ideals. While scholarship has emphasized the conservative elements of communist morality and the lack of support for men in the domestic sphere, these sources point to an understanding of love as central to a man's life and comradely partnership as fundamental to Soviet marriage.

KEYWORDS: communist morality, gender, Komsomol, love, marriage, masculinity, Soviet, Thaw

At a 1959 youth conference in Sverdlovsk-45, a closed military-industrial town in the Ural Mountains, the Young Communist (Komsomol) secretary expressed particular concern about the “disorder in young families”—something he attributed to the “amoral behavior” of young men. As an example, he described the personal case of a new engineer, a young specialist recently arrived from Leningrad. After a relationship of several months with a female worker, he had broken up with her and refused their comrades' advice to marry. The engineer claimed that he no longer loved her and could not possibly marry without love.¹ The secretary denounced this as insincere “theorizing about free love,” calling him an example of those “modern Don Juans” who must be “[taught] respect for marriage and the family.”² But the engineer had not directly rejected the seriousness of marriage, and he justified his actions not with the argument that men had particular physical “needs” (more commonly reported in the 1920s),³ but rather with this language of “true love.”

What are we to make of this encounter? The Komsomol secretary wanted to defend “our Soviet women” against the “modern Don Juan”; the young engineer protested that he was simply waiting to marry for love. One emphasized the importance of obligation, the other of genuine feeling; both assumed that a sincere engagement with marriage and family were integral parts of a Soviet man’s life. This emphasis on love contrasts not only with the discourse of “male needs” from the 1920s, but also with the Stalin-era image of military-heroic and self-sacrificial masculinity, which had until recently been assumed to carry into the 1970s and 1980s.⁴ It also contrasts with a series of works on (post)Soviet gender studies, which portray Soviet men as having been displaced by a patrimonial state and deeply alienated from women and family life throughout the Soviet period, from the 1920s onward.⁵ By highlighting this discourse of love, we might read this conference protocol in the context of a growing body of scholarship that has been reexamining the relationship of men with women and the family in state socialist societies.⁶

This article explores love and masculinity in the Thaw years (1953–1964) in one key site of contact between Party ideological workers and the masses: a Komsomol newspaper. While scholars have productively engaged with the union-wide newspaper published in Moscow, *Komsomol’skaia pravda* (Komsomol truth), I use the regional variant from Sverdlovsk oblast, *Na smenu!* (Next shift!), as questions of love were on the minds and in the public discussions of young people not only in the capital, but also in the industrial heartland of the central Urals.⁷ As part of a larger project, I searched bound volumes of the paper from the postwar resumption of publication in 1949 through the 1970s, photographing and cataloguing every article or letter on topics such as love, courtship, marriage, or sexuality. For this article, I narrowed that list to those materials describing or addressing men from 1953 to 1964, then analyzed the contents more closely for common themes.⁸

Sverdlovsk oblast was the site of mining, metallurgy, forestry, and heavy-industrial production, experiencing in-migration of workers and young specialists from across the USSR.⁹ Its patterns of rapid urbanization and rural outmigration, with a spike during the prewar Five Year Plans and continuing until stabilizing in the 1970s, were characteristic of the Soviet system as a whole.¹⁰ While *Na smenu!* certainly republished material from *Komsomol’skaia pravda*, it also devoted space to local journalism, readers’ letters, and stories written in and about the oblast. Studies of the regional Komsomol press have demonstrated that even if ideological parameters were set by the Central Committee, papers sought local examples wherever possible, and their attention to young people and their local concerns were likely key to their popularity.¹¹ This regional study allows us to move beyond the limited focus of Soviet sociology’s surveys of Soviet youth on questions of love and sexuality, almost exclusively based in Leningrad,¹² and to begin thinking about the Soviet ideal of companionate marriage in the context of such transnational phenomena as the sexual revolution or the “democratization of the private sphere,” in which market forces and civil society debates of the West have loomed so large.¹³

Across the USSR, the Komsomol in general and its papers in particular were mobilized for the express purpose of *vospitanie*, or moral-ideological education of the youth, a project that took on renewed importance after Stalin’s death in 1953.¹⁴ While

Na smenu!'s editorial policy was guided by the need to communicate party-approved ideals to its readership, it also solicited and published growing numbers of readers' opinions and responses to debate prompts (even if in carefully curated form). In the abundant published material on love and marriage, we find complex discussions that mix romantic love and communist morality in surprising ways. I argue that romantic love was presented to the youth of the Sverdlovsk region as an integral part of the life-story of the new Soviet person, the logical reward for fulfilling the requirements of communist morality, which should culminate in a companionate, heterosexual marriage based on equal partnership. Soviet commentators explicitly imagined this as a democratization of intimacy enabled by the Revolution, creating new emotional demands that would challenge Soviet men in particular to reorient their attitudes toward women and marriage, to redefine masculinity as centered in the family but not as a *paterfamilias*. Yet even the didactic and censored debates in *Na smenu!* suggest an awareness that the realization of such ideals was frustrated not just by individual moral failings but the complex interplay of patriarchal traditions and structural contradictions in Soviet society.¹⁵

The "invention" of romantic love has long interested historians of emotion, although its precise definitions, geography, and chronology have shifted to the point where claims of early modern or late medieval European origins are hard to maintain without complicated qualifications.¹⁶ Historians and anthropologists have more convincingly argued that even if passionate, individualized love was well recognized in earlier times, the belief that this could or should be the basis of a stable marriage is more modern.¹⁷ Soviet commentators added to this the belief that true, love-based companionate marriage was only possible in conditions of socialism, and inextricably tied to the Soviet emancipation of women—that is, to the full participation of women in public life. Thus, two principles seemingly in tension are at the heart of the socialist project for men—the liberatory promise of self-fulfillment in relationships based on genuine feeling and the responsibility to create a family based on shared domestic labor. Women were generally assumed to have the necessary emotional skills for this modern coupling—a gendered assumption with its own pitfalls¹⁸—but men were to be educated in a more modern masculinity that included being emotionally engaged, supportive of the full social personhood of their partner, and willing to do the work of creating a family; failure was treated not simply as unethical or backward, but evidence that he did not truly love. While elements of this discourse were present from the start of the Revolution—even in the pre-revolutionary socialist tradition—they took on a new public prominence in the Thaw years.

The increasingly prominent place of romance in Soviet public culture following World War II echoed wider European developments. Across Europe this period saw the spread of an idea, present at least since the eighteenth century but increasingly hegemonic by the mid-twentieth, that intense intimate partnership was the ideal and primary reason to marry.¹⁹ Claire Langhamer's study of British public discourse and Mass Observation surveys presented the 1940s and 1950s as a key moment in the shift from a pragmatic model of love oriented toward duty and suitability toward a romantic model organized around self-fulfillment and personal compatibility.²⁰ Some historians have pointed to commercial media and its reliance on "sex appeal" as helping

popularize this change in a way that might be difficult to transfer to the Soviet case.²¹ But Langhamer argues that the more fundamental change of the period was the tendency to imbue the marital relationship with greater significance, ultimately contributing to rising divorce rates by placing more weight on the institution than it could bear.²² Both an increasing availability of cultural products like films and novels and the incitement to public discourse about the significance of marriage and of love as its foundation were indeed features of postwar life across the East-West divide.

To be sure, pointing to the mid-twentieth century as a period of a particular democratization of European intimacy is difficult to disentangle from colonialist discourses that have long portrayed this model of sentimental romantic love as the exclusive provenance of a superior (European) civilization.²³ But it also parallels the increasingly prominent place that the romantic love complex would play in questions of political legitimacy in Eastern Europe after World War II. Citizens of state socialist regimes were often reminded of the unique opportunities for the flourishing of genuine love between equal partners enabled by socialism, in contrast to the licentious and commercialized sexuality of the West.²⁴ While the scholarly literature has more thoroughly demonstrated this trend for East Germany than the Soviet Union, we can find similar references to the superiority of socialist and Soviet relationships in a range of genres—from propagandistic lectures, texts on family law, expert advice guides and sociology, to the pages of Komsomol papers like *Na smenu!*²⁵

In Soviet history, the association of the Thaw years with romance has been a staple of popular discourse and memoirs, as well as academic studies drawing on that literature.²⁶ Policies of mass literacy and commitment to encouraging high culture made literature and film more widely available than ever before, including Russian and Western literary classics. Love is a central theme in many of these works, and even as the state encouraged the reading of writers like Hemingway or Remarque for their supposed ideological sympathies, readers often turned to them specifically for their complex portrayals of love.²⁷ Popular Thaw-era films similarly presented plots centered on protagonists falling in love, while liberal-minded filmmakers used the search for love to depict the complex inner world of the (male) protagonist.²⁸ By reading the articles, short stories, letters and readers' debates in *Na smenu!*, we can see that this interest in romantic love was not relegated only to elite and artistic cultural production.

The attempt to put the ideal of love-based marriage into policy has a more fraught history. Early Bolshevik leaders saw the secularization of family policy and the overturning of traditional hierarchies, including the subordination of women to their husbands and his older relatives, as a necessary step toward socialist modernity. The first family codes established the equality of rights and obligations of spouses, abolished the category of illegitimate children, created simplified civil marriage and divorce, offered generous alimony rules that favored women (to the point of awarding payments by two fathers simultaneously in cases where biological paternity was uncertain). Abortion on demand and the promise of an expanding network of social services—orphans, daycare centers, cafeterias—were to free women from “kitchen slavery” and allow them to participate fully in the building of socialism. But the state never had the resources to follow through on these promises or enforce judicial rulings; the libertarian family policies were rhetorically associated with abandoned children and moral

disorder. In the Stalin years, the family was resurrected in official ideology, abortion was re-criminalized, and following a decree in 1944, divorce was made more costly and complicated, paternity and alimony suits against unwed fathers were ended, and illegitimacy reintroduced as a legal category.²⁹ Changes to these policies were on the agenda throughout the Thaw years, particularly after Nikita Khrushchev officially acknowledged the disadvantaged position into which they placed Soviet women at the Twenty-First Party Congress in 1959, but a new code was not finalized until 1968.³⁰ Nonetheless, calls for reform to the family code, and in particular, for easing the rules of divorce and removing the stigma on children born out of wedlock, were a notable part of public discourse.³¹

Scholarship on Soviet masculinities has tended to portray these shifts in Soviet family policy as having the net effect of alienating men from family life. Some argue that the Soviet state never had a genuine interest in female liberation itself, rather striking at patriarchal authority for the purpose of destroying traditional life and replacing it with the state;³² others concede a democratic impulse of the earlier policies, but hold that the revolution in gender relations was cut short, ultimately sacrificed for other goals, such as mobilization for production and defense.³³ The resurrection of “family values” in official discourse focused heavily on women’s duty toward motherhood, while men were viewed in a nomadic mobilizational model.³⁴ Freed from ties to private property or the family, men were to be sent to any part of the Union to work on production, defend the Motherland, or cultivate new lands. This process is said to have culminated in a “crisis of masculinity” by the 1970s, by which time this model of masculinity had become obsolete or unattainable for most men, resulting in their compensating by further withdrawing from family life and seeking pleasure in the company of other men, alcohol, and extramarital promiscuity.³⁵ Meanwhile, despite the growing public debate on the “double burden” of working mothers, there was no corresponding effort to draft husbands to share the housework.³⁶ Yet this characterization of Soviet gender relations draws suspiciously heavily from negative stereotypes about working-class men, and fails to capture the complexity of public discourse during the Thaw. Scholars have pointed not only to the focus on love and family life in Thaw era film, but also to postwar reassessments of the role of caring fathers in the upbringing of children and to a new prominence for images of fatherhood in visual culture.³⁷ In *Na smenu!*, we similarly find attempts to think through a socialist model of masculinity that privileges both love and equal domestic partnership.

“Without Love, Life Loses All Meaning”: Communist Morality and the Romantic Ideal

Despite assumptions of Stalin’s radical break or “retreat” on questions of the family, postwar discussions on love and morality drew on earlier antecedents. Late Stalin-era commentators had collapsed an earlier debate among the revolutionary generation in which a “cacophony of voices” in the Soviet press had debated the value of liberating desires as part of the revolutionary process or subordinating the personal to class struggle (and many combinations and permutations in between).³⁸ Co-opting Alek-

sandra Kollontai's notion of "winged eros"—of a love made all the more powerful and meaningful for being freed from constraints of religious dogma or economic necessity—the Party moved away from the radical policies associated with her. Officially approved texts denounced the "free love" theorizing of the 1920s, falsely attributed it to Kollontai, described the family as the "cell" of Soviet society, and stressed the legitimacy only of "love" that was not "free" but "serious"—that is, intentional enough to result in a marriage certificate and the raising of children. But even if Kollontai was banished from the citations of ideological tracts (except to falsely accuse her of advocating biological reductionism), Clara Zetkin's conversations with Vladimir Lenin and Friedrich Engels's *On the Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State* were used to legitimize the new family values in terms that still drew on the power of the libertarian socialist tradition. Authors elsewhere described as "conservatives"—those who uphold the idea that personal feelings should be subordinated to the needs of the state and the socialist movement—exalted the concept of a socialist model of love uniquely free of economic compulsion, religious prejudice, and patriarchal inequality, an achievement of the supposed Soviet liberation of women.³⁹

These ideas may have become more widely available over the course of the Thaw years. If late Stalin-era party control commissions received many letters from wives about cheating husbands, they often looked the other way, preferring to investigate claims of corruption and political subversion. However, the Party later took a more serious interest in the domestic life (*byt*) of its members, as well as society at large, as an integral part of the Thaw was the attempt to better diffuse social control throughout society via public morality, rather than relying on the repressive apparatus.⁴⁰ The late Stalin-era Komsomol similarly included lectures on communist morality and domestic life, though the leadership in some locales were actually dismayed when these proved far more popular with audiences than more traditionally political topics, such as the international position of the Soviet Union.⁴¹

Local committees in the Urals similarly complained that too few attended political lectures, but noted rather neutrally in their yearly report for 1952 that the lectures "On the Moral Model of the Soviet Person" and "On Friendship and Love" were the most popularly attended all year.⁴² Their recommendation was to add more of them in 1953, and over the course of the early Thaw ideological workers often argued for more resources devoted to moral education on matters of *byt*.⁴³ Indeed, these years saw increasing efforts to codify and disseminate thinking on communist morality, and to rely on moral upbringing to address moral panics around juvenile crime.⁴⁴ As part of Khrushchev's populist appeal to rely more on civil society for this collective moral education, Komsomol lecturers and newspapers encouraged young people themselves to share their opinions, experiences, and accusations. A summary of lectures given around Sverdlovsk oblast in late 1957, for example, explained that Soviet marriage was based solely on "spiritual closeness" while "in capitalist societies, it is on vulgar calculation and material compulsion"; listeners were invited to ask questions about their own personal lives, and many did, even if they tended to be "asking for a friend."⁴⁵ *Na smenu!* was drafted into this effort by mid-1957, as the propaganda department noted with alarm that young people in the oblast were drinking, engaging in "amoral behavior" (which was a common euphemism for sexual impropriety), and

sneaking into the woods to engage in religious rituals or church weddings. The report ultimately recommended using the paper for greater efforts at moral education.⁴⁶ The frequency of write-in debates (and articles discussing love more generally) increased significantly from that year on. This drew young people into debates of an intimate character, where many of them articulated visions of a modern manhood that could overlap with and yet challenge the party-state's many (and not always uniform) goals.

A number of articles shamed individual young men, calling them out by name, for seducing women with false promises of love or marriage or for illegally carrying on multiple marriages.⁴⁷ While women might be blamed in the abstract for having a "frivolous" attitude toward men or marriage or for failing to recognize these "scoundrels" despite obvious clues, the paper rarely published letters shaming a woman by name for extramarital sexuality itself.⁴⁸ It is not clear if such letters were rarely written or if the editors refused to print them, but one can deduce that the shaming of these "professional Don Juan[s]" remained a higher editorial priority.⁴⁹ In such stories sex was presented as something men sought and women permitted (or should permit) only upon promises of love or marriage, often couched in terms that assumed gender difference. What is also striking about these articles, however, is the extent to which they focused on sincerity and love. The men were shamed not for promiscuity, but for the dishonest way they achieved it, their willingness to play lightly with others' feelings or feign emotions. The object of the offense was not the woman's honor in a pre-revolutionary sense, encompassing her marriageability and value in a larger family economy based on kinship ties, but rather the intimate, emotional relationship between the two individuals.⁵⁰

Write-in debates and short stories could prove more complex than public shaming, as they tended to include a variety of views, even if some were short and poorly developed. One debate over the nature of "a maiden's pride" elicited enough responses to fill several installments. It was prompted by a letter asking for guidance on the meaning of Anton Makarenko's advice that "girls must be taught to respect themselves and their maiden's pride, to be standoffish even to young men they fancy."⁵¹ The whole discourse is a complicated mix of radical and traditional, with writers utilizing terms that sound pre-revolutionary (or even pre-modern) such as "maiden" (*devich'e*), but also demanding working-class solidarity, gender egalitarianism, or love itself, as moral goods. The tension is indicative of the broader Soviet tendency to reinscribe traditional/bourgeois gender roles in Marxist-Leninist terms that became even more pronounced by the 1970s, and the complexities created by the disconnect between ideology and praxis.⁵²

One of the first installments reframed the question by providing a story about a failed love triangle and inviting readers to determine who was to blame. An engineer, Igor, was seeing a worker named Nina when he met an attractive teacher, Irina. When Nina refused his advances, he pursued Irina instead, telling her that he chose to end things with Nina because they were from two different worlds and had "nothing to talk about"—problematically suggesting class conflict, but echoing official discourse about marriage compatibility (requiring common goals and interests). When Irina became pregnant, Igor proved uninterested in being a father or even discussing the baby as a couple. She left and became a single mother; Igor grew lonely and tried to re-enter

her and the child's life, but Irina refused.⁵³ The author concluded by suggesting reasons to judge each of the characters: Igor for "being unable to deal with his feelings" and thereby hurting the two girls, Irina for "so easily and simply entering into a close relationship with Igor," or Nina, for leaving Igor so easily.

No one defended Igor's behavior, but the reasons for the condemnation strayed from the realm of respectable courtship rules into that of emotional hermeneutics.⁵⁴ He was repeatedly referred to as a "coward," and one writer complained that "Igor doesn't fight (*borot'sia*) for love, he steals it," using a phrase common in Komsomol discourse and raising associations with the heroic-masculine class struggle (*bor'ba*).⁵⁵ Two girlfriends from Sverdlovsk read and discussed the essay together and wrote that they were "outraged [that Igor] could so easily change his feelings." They were incredulous that a person "could mistake true love for light entertainment" yet warned that such "moths" could be found in any corner, "capable of any sort of vileness" (*podlost'*). They joined several other letter-writers in decrying Igor's apparent belief that he could not be compatible with Nina because of her humble class origins.⁵⁶ A graduate student in philosophy wrote a longer essay explaining that Igor's "love" (in ironic quotes) was too fickle, using the opportunity to generalize about young people who believed in the "freedom of love" (by which he meant, freedom to date and have sex casually, without intention to marry and have children). Ultimately Igor for him was an "egoist" who could not truly love and by implication would always be alone and unhappy.⁵⁷ Although the story seemed to invite a condemnation of Irina for sleeping with Igor, no one did so directly, choosing instead to criticize her for failing to recognize Igor's vulgarity or failing to "make" a partner love her "honestly." Two of the letters that criticized Igor for his classism also criticized Nina for not having confronted Igor about that or not seeing his selfishness in that moment.⁵⁸ One argued that by the end of the story Irina should not have turned Igor away, but tried to help him.⁵⁹ The consensus seemed to be that Igor's problem was his failure to really love—to feel strongly enough to be honest and upfront about his feelings, to commit to them long-term, to "fight for [them]"; Irina's was her failure to recognize Igor's un-Soviet disinterest in Nina as a full person and either walk away sooner or somehow manage to fix him (with no details given as to how).

Stories, letters, and debates about love and the moral questions it raises continued throughout the Thaw years, increasingly linked to the promotion of the Moral Code published in 1961.⁶⁰ Absconding or cheating husbands or boyfriends who ran out on a pregnant girlfriend continued to be accused of "false" or "fake" love, while the girls they left behind could still be encouraged to ask themselves why their "maiden's pride" should allow them to be so fooled.⁶¹ However, young men could sin against love in other ways as well. The bourgeois practice of marrying based on parental decree or financial accounts rather than "spiritual closeness" was still possible in the Soviet Union, and writers saw it creeping into a number of young men's marriage choices in Sverdlovsk oblast.⁶² Some young men were also accused of failing to stand up for their beloved in front of overbearing parents—either meddling mothers or a father who ultimately compelled his son by threatening to withhold an inheritance.⁶³ One young man from a well-connected family was called out because he allowed his parents to forbid him from marrying the mother of his child, for fear that if there were a messy

divorce later, it could cost him Komsomol promotion or Party membership. The author decried his choice of giving up love to live “as a dependent”—a legal term that, when used for an adult of working capacity, comes dangerously close to “freeloader” and connotes failure to live up to the masculine ideal.⁶⁴

A Soviet man might even fail to succeed in love not because of the moral failings of weak will or selfishness, but for taking too seriously Soviet public values. David Livshits, a regular writer for *Na smenu!* who also sparked a lively debate by denouncing the dancehalls of Sverdlovsk for frivolity and licentiousness,⁶⁵ published an ambivalent short story about the place of love in a young man’s life.⁶⁶ The hero, given the diminutive name Sasha, came to Sverdlovsk as a young specialist (like the engineer in the introduction), and befriended a group of male workers, one of whom is the narrator. Sasha seemed an ideal Soviet man—he was always working, even off the clock, and forwent his allotted specialist’s apartment for a bed in the dorm. Just when his friends convinced him to invite his hometown girlfriend to join him in Sverdlovsk, he received word from the Komsomol Committee that he was posted to a Machine Tractor Station in northwestern Siberia. His friends tried to explain when she arrived, but she furiously responded with the eponymous “If he really loved [me] . . .” She revealed that he had tuberculosis and should never have gone to the Urals, let alone Siberia. In the final scene, the narrator is passing through Rostov and meets Sasha’s father, a war veteran. He asks if Sasha has finally married. The father explains, showing “sadness,” that Sasha is actually back in the Urals looking for the guys. Sasha is almost a caricature of a Soviet hero from an earlier age—he works tirelessly for the good of the socialist project, he is ready at a moment’s notice to go across the country, he is faithful to his love but unwilling to put his feelings before (what he imagines to be) his duty to the (male?) collective and is even willing to sacrifice his own health.⁶⁷ Yet the sadness in his father’s eyes suggests he has missed a step. A man too uncritically accepting the heroic model of (Stalin-era) masculinity, still refracted through the many Komsomol campaigns to travel across the Union to tame the Virgin Lands or staff the Machine Tractor Stations, could end up just as alone as the selfish cynic and freeloader.⁶⁸

Images of young masculinity that were marked more positively often centered on men who showed their respect for love or a willingness to fight for it. A letter from a young woman who feared that her boyfriend would drift away from her while serving his obligatory term in the army elicited a variety of insistences from male readers that they knew successful long-distance relationships that withstood conscription or lengthy service trips (*komandirovki*); they agreed that “true love would not fade.”⁶⁹ A soldier wrote a lengthy confession about failing to tell his first love about his feelings before they moved to different cities for education, but assured her that he needed no pity as he could love again; he was sure that her boyfriend would return, as he had seen so many of his comrades do the same.⁷⁰ Another suggested that for him life itself would “[lose] all meaning” if not for love.⁷¹ A group of friends pushed their comrade not to take “a passive position,” but rather to “fight for [his] feelings” by writing his beloved to declare his affections rather than risk “los[ing his] only love.”⁷² One young man, whose story exemplified “the moral code in action,” was even redeemed for his act of violence once the defense of his love was revealed to be the motive. Approached by a male comrade after attending a dance with a young woman, the brigadier as-

saulted him mid-sentence as he asked his intentions with the woman and implied that they had already been intimate before. The assailant was brought before the comrades' court, nearly stripped of his many credentials and demoted, but was exonerated when the victim explained that he was himself at fault, as "They have love . . ."⁷³ The story thus serves the dual function of demonstrating the superior capability of communist morality to attend to the nuance of individual cases, allowing for the persistence of the seemingly traditional practice of defending a woman's honor, though in the more modern framework by which the criteria of judgment have changed: the transgression is not premarital sex, but public acknowledgement thereof; the justification for sex or even losing one's temper and resorting to violence is not marriage or defense of honor, but the emotional power of love.

Some writers also began to suggest that the politics of the Komsomol committee meeting, or the public shaming ritual itself, might be inadequate for addressing affairs of the heart. A woman writing under the initial N. in Nizhnii Tagil had fallen in love with a friend before he went to the army, but grew disillusioned with love and people as a whole after they drifted apart. One response reminded N. that her ex-boyfriend had never "truly" loved her if he had managed to stop loving her, suggesting the romantic notion that true love is only forever, but also pragmatically advising her not to keep seeking redress at the various committees of the Komsomol. After all, no committee has the power "to order someone to love."⁷⁴ Another writer told the stories of several young men studying at the Mining Institute who had sired children but refused to marry their partners, after which the Komsomol tried to get involved to pressure their hand. While the author seemed to be rehearsing familiar tropes of "frivolous" fathers and "naive" mothers, the piece took a more pragmatic turn, asking what kind of family life would result if a couple were forced to marry by state organs. Turning on its head the common argument that couples should stay together "for the children," the author suggested that the children of couples who refuse divorce "for the children" are those harmed most of all.⁷⁵

"Help Him Understand that False Male 'I': Educating Men for the Socialist Marriage

Komsomol lecture material was clear that a couple, having fallen in love, and after identifying common interests, life goals, and ideology, should then get married and start a family. The model of Soviet marriage, it repeatedly pointed out, was superior to that of pre-revolutionary Russia and the contemporary capitalist world, because it was a "free union . . . based on the mutual attraction and love of economically free and politically equal people."⁷⁶ Whereas bourgeois marriage was structured by the "lordship of the man over the woman," socialism had created the conditions for "a new, higher type of family."⁷⁷ Defining characteristics were the full participation of women in the workforce and civil society, a range of medical and social services, and a "loving and sensitive" Soviet husband who would share in the domestic duties. But the same lecture also told the story of a couple who filed for divorce, since the "philistine" husband was more interested in property than feeling, and expected his wife to do the

housework so he could focus on acquiring more things.⁷⁸ In the pages of *Na smenu!* authors likewise exalted the new Soviet model of love-based, egalitarian marriage, but also admitted that work was still to be done to teach Soviet men to be the kind of comrade-husbands this required. The overwhelming tenor of the published material favored the concept of sharing domestic duties and childrearing, and supporting both spouses in productive and civil society work. Yet letters also showed an awareness that some men might fall short of this ideal for reasons more complex than the usual bugbears, individual moral failings or adherence to “philistine” values.

A one-page spread in the spring of 1958 described a thematic evening for the “Day of Young Families” at the Stalin Palace of Culture for the machine-producing plant, Uralmash. Accompanying pictures showed couples admiring art together, setting a table, and walking with a baby (with the man pushing the stroller). Tickets had been distributed by the Komsomol to couples according to statistics from the district marriage registry office. They could play games, buy special furniture, and see exhibitions of art by fellow workers and new books about child-rearing, cooking, and other facets of a “healthy *byt*.” A special series of talks addressed the men—encouraging them to talk more about their families at work, to link the domestic and productive spheres, and to share in the domestic workload. One speaker explained that they had all learned to cook and mop the floors in the army, so there was no reason they should be shirking on this duty now. Echoing proponents of professionalized marriage and childcare advice, an audience member rated the event as particularly helpful because, having moved to the city for work, young families like his had no close elder relatives to give this kind of advice.⁷⁹

A number of write-in debates touched on the need for men to share the responsibility for family life. One cycle asked readers to weigh in on a debate held at the factory Odezhda about three (probably fictional) couples and discuss their own “ideal beloved.”⁸⁰ The couples that solicited the most commentary were also the two that struggled with an uneven distribution of housework. In one case the young husband, Yurii, who had grown jealous and controlling, forbade his wife Ira from participating too much in the Komsomol or seeing her friends. Readers suggested the couple had spent an inadequate amount of time dating and “getting to know each other,” since common interests and goals are the only way to choose a partner; Ira should have figured out sooner that Yurii was a “philistine,” or Yurii should have been up front about wanting someone “to take care of him.”⁸¹ But even the reader who suggested the latter then proceeded to praise the example of his sister and brother-in-law, who both “do not divide domestic work into ‘male’ and ‘female,’” but rather share it.⁸² The majority opinion was generally that commitment to shared housework and women’s participation in social life outside the home was a moral requirement.

The following year, the editors published a letter written by a twenty-two-year-old woman that elicited even more responses. The author, A.K., complained of a husband that took no active part in the upbringing of their infant daughter, spent much of his free time hunting or fishing, and forbade her from participating in the drama club.⁸³ A full-page spread followed with letters, all from male readers, encouraging A.K. to stand up for herself. The editor, summarizing the tone of the letters, wrote that these male voices for the sharing of domestic labor attested to the growth of “a new man . . .

[who was] preparing to enter communism”—thus directly linking the spread of the comrade-husband ideal with the campaign to bring about communism through moral education.⁸⁴ An engineer in Sverdlovsk told a long, touching story of his own marriage, which had nearly fallen apart when his wife became overwhelmed with housework as he went out nightly with friends. Similarly linking equal partnership to urban modernity, he explained that he had learned strict ideas about what counted as “men’s work” in his rural childhood, but had now learned to share domestic duties, and his leisure time, with his wife.⁸⁵ Later installments asked if A.K. had truly exhausted all means to save her marriage. One asked if she had tried to teach her husband to appreciate her favorite cultural pursuits, as “one must fight for a true friend,” alluding to the popular phrase that “one must fight for love.”⁸⁶ Another young man confessed that he also asked his wife not to participate in the drama club and suggested that the “duty of motherhood” was a more “natural” role for women.⁸⁷ But all the other letters published in the spread disagreed, and the editors themselves congratulated readers for helping A.K.’s husband see the “false male ‘I’ that he had brought into the family,” underscoring the link between male inactivity in the home and selfishness.⁸⁸ When another cycle on the nature of “true love” was published, a letter-writer called out his friend by name and suggested that his jealousy and failure to clean and do “the many domestic tasks” was proof the friend did not actually “love [his wife] madly,” as he claimed.⁸⁹

Some writers suggested that the shortcomings in Soviet gender-egalitarian marriage resulted not from the moral failings of individual men, or even a lack of love, but from organizational problems that should be addressed by the Komsomol. One reader, responding to the young woman whose husband asked her to stop attending meetings, concluded that no one ever thinks of the Young Communist as a family person; she suggested that the organization “reckon with the family situation of the membership, [rather than] overload them with all kinds of civil-society work.”⁹⁰ A pedagogue offered a long piece on the importance of shared domestic duties to facilitate women’s full participation in civic life, ultimately complaining that the Soviet education system must be reformed to root out the persisting belief that domestic chores are “women’s work,” and somehow “against ‘male right and dignity.’” She argued that teaching skills like sewing and cooking to both sexes would rid the next generation of “the prejudices of the past.” Echoing the earlier letter about the need to better accommodate Komsomol parents, she discussed a survey showing that married women in Sverdlovsk had less time for civil-society work and cultured leisure. She ultimately blamed the Komsomol leadership for their indifference to the many young women who disappeared from their ranks after marriage, suggesting they should be formally intervening against this “dependent (*izhdevencheskoe*) behavior in the home.”⁹¹

Conclusion

Over the *longue-durée* of Russian history, many state projects to re-imagine the ideal model of masculinity have come and gone, although the need not so much to fit one ideal type as to know when and how to perform which behaviors has usually been the

key to negotiating the shifting masculinities of Russian political space.⁹² The Soviet Union brought many things to the masses, including a broader social project of promoting models of socialist manhood in mass-institutions like the Komsomol. In the Thaw years, this included a masculinity that treated love as an important and perhaps the most important part of a man's life, of the need to "fight for love" as an attribute of manliness, whether that meant making a commitment, declaring one's feelings and risking rejection, or simply knowing when it is time to change a diaper or how to make a cutlet. If Don Juan sought entertainment by false promises or feigned love, Comrade Ivan would seek fulfillment in a companionate partnership, based on mutual affection and common interest, and predicated on a respect for the full social personhood of both. While love was certainly not invented in the Thaw, it did come to be presented as an expectation for young Soviet men at that time.

Even in the industrial heartland of Sverdlovsk oblast, such a message elicited a range of responses from young readers. The discourse of love could be useful for shaming non-conformists, or simply ex-lovers with whom one wanted to settle scores, but it also encouraged people to think critically about their lives and their society. Debates around love and companionate marriage may not have provided quite the cacophony of voices of the 1920s, but certainly suggest a critical public discourse that could hold serious debates over the relationship of intimacy and power relations. Directly or indirectly, one can find in the pages of *Na smenu!* evidence for a variety of views on love, from idealistic to pragmatic and back again, and uses of those views to justify civil-society or state intervention, or non-intervention. We find evidence for a number of pressures that confronted Soviet young people as they navigated their intimate lives in these years: migration for reasons of military draft, young specialist labor migration, and Komsomol work often split couples at formative stages in their relationship or separated them from kinship networks that might have provided life advice (or needed help with domestic labor).⁹³ Komsomol and later Party work were themselves full of time-consuming meetings and accommodating working parents was easier discussed than achieved. While these discussions seem limited in comparison to the radical discourse of the feminist and sex-radical countercultures of the late-1960s United States, the willingness of Soviet youth to engage in serious discussions about the need for a more sincere and democratic form of intimacy was something they shared with their counterparts elsewhere.⁹⁴

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◆ Notes

1. "Protokoly III-oi konferentsii gorodskogo komiteta VLKSM g. Lesnaia" [Protocols from the Third Conference of the Lesnaia City Committee of the All-Union Communist League of Youth], Tsentral'naia Dokumentatsiia Obshchestvennykh Organizatsii Sverdlovskoi Oblasti [Center of Documentation for Social Organizations of Sverdlovskia Oblast] (TsDOOSO), fond 61, opis 18, delo 19 (20–21 November 1959), 103–104.

2. Ibid., 104.

3. Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Sex and Revolution: An Examination of the Literary and Statistical Data on the Mores of Soviet Students in the 1920s," *The Journal of Modern History* 50, no. 2 (1978), 252–278; Richard Stites, *The Women's Liberation Movement in Russia: Feminism, Nihilism, and Bolshevism, 1860–1930* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 360; Gregory Carleton, *Sexual Revolution in Bolshevik Russia* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 28.

4. On masculinity and Stalinism, see Thomas Shrand, "Masculine Values in the Stalin Revolution," in *Russian Masculinities in History and Culture*, ed. Barbara Evans Clement, Rebecca Friedman, and Dan Healey (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 194–209. A more nuanced reading of Stalin-era images that attenuates to changes after the war (and during the Thaw) is given by Claire McCallum, *The Fate of the New Soviet Man: Representing and Reconstructing Masculinity in Soviet Visual Culture, 1945–1965* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2018); Erica L. Fraser argues that even in the context of military masculinity, official discourse and popular negotiation changed significantly in the postwar period in *Military Masculinity and Postwar Recovery in the Soviet Union* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019). On the continued use of the Defender of the Motherland model as "hegemonic" into the 1970s, see Elena Zdravomyslova and Anna Temkina, "The Crisis of Masculinity in Late Soviet Discourse," *Russian Studies in History* 51, no. 2 (2012), 13–34, <https://doi.org/10.2753/RSH1061-1983510201>.

5. Katherine Verdery, *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Sarah Ashwin, "Introduction: Gender, State and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia," in *Gender and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, ed. Sarah Ashwin (London: Routledge, 2000); Sergei Kukhterin, "Fathers and Patriarchs in Communist and Post-Communist Russia," in Ashwin, *Gender and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, 71–89; Elena Zdravomyslova and Anna Temkina, "Sovetskii etakraticeskii gendernyi poriadok" [The Soviet etacratik gender order], in *Rossiiskii gendernyi poriadok: sotsiologicheskii podkhod* [The Russian gender order: A sociological approach], ed. Elena Zdravomyslova and Anna Temkina (St. Petersburg: European University in St. Petersburg, 2007), 96–137; Elena Zhidkova, "Family, Divorce, and Comrades Courts: Public Organizations during the Thaw," in *And They Lived Happily Ever After: Norms and Everyday Practices of Family and Parenthood in Russia and Eastern Europe*, ed. Helene Carlbäck, Yulia Gradskaia, and Zhanna Kravchenko (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012), 47–64; Zhanna Chernova, "The Model of 'Soviet' Fatherhood: Discursive Prescriptions," *Russian Studies in History* 51, no. 2 (2012), 35–62, <https://doi.org/10.2753/RSH1061-1983510202>.

6. Peter Hallama, "Struggling for a Socialist Fatherhood: 'Reeducating' Men in East Germany, 1960–1989," *East European Politics and Societies* 34, no. 4 (2020), 817–836, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888325419891200>; Helene Carlback, "Fatherly Emotions in Soviet Russia" *Baltic Worlds* 1, no. 2 (2017), 20–29.

7. Irina Tartakovskaya, "The Changing Representation of Gender Roles in the Soviet and Post-Soviet Press," in *Gender, State, and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, 118–136; Gleb Tsipursky, "Citizenship, Deviance, and Identity: Soviet Youth Newspapers as Agents of Social Control," *Cashiers du Monde Russe* 49, no. 4 (2008), 629–649, <https://doi.org/10.4000/monderusse.9499>; Tsipursky, "Model Young Communists and the Komsomol Press in the Later Khrushchev Years, 1961–1964" *Europe-Asia Studies* 65, no. 7 (2013), 1396–1416, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2013.824140>. On Komsomol sources for gender history more generally, see Adrienne M. Harris, "Gendered Images and Soviet Subjects: How the Komsomol Archive Enriched My Understanding of Gender in Soviet War Culture," *Aspasia* 11, no. 1 (2017), 97–118, <https://doi.org/10.3167/asp.2017.110106>.

8. One can argue that the more open discourse of the Thaw continued until at least 1968, but there are fewer articles and debates on these topics in the later years, and they begin to appear relegated to a "page for girls" (first appearing in 1964 and serialized bimonthly by the end of the decade as "Riabinushka" ["Rowan Tree," from a popular folk song]); this period thus requires a nuanced analysis beyond the scope of this article.

9. E. G. Animitsa, "Demograficheskie izmeneniia v Ural'skoi regional'noi sisteme rassele-niia" [Demographic changes in the Urals regional system of settlement], in *Osobennosti vosproizvodstva i migratsii naseleniia na Urale* [Particularities of the reproduction and migration of the population in the Urals], ed. V.A. Meshcheriakov (Sverdlovsk: RISO UNTs AN SSSR, 1986), 89–95. On young-specialist labor migration in general, see Lewis H. Siegelbaum and Leslie Page Moch, *Broad is My Native Land: Repertoires and Regimes of Migration in Twentieth-Century Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 178–187.

10. Lyudmila Mazur and Oleg Gorbachev, "The Peasant Family in the Urals in the 1920s–1960s Reconstructed Based on the Data of Budget Studies," *Transylvanian Review* 26, no. 4 (2017), 119–135, here 120.

11. Anatolii Anatol'evich Slezin, "Komsomol i molodezhnaia pechat' v period rannei 'otpe-peli'" [The Komsomol and youth press in the period of the early Thaw], *Noveishaia istoriia Rossii* [Modern history of Russia] 4, no. 21 (2017), 133–147, <https://doi.org/10.21638/11701/spbu24.2017.410>; Katharina Barbara Uhl, "Building Communism: The Communist Youth League during the Thaw Period, 1953–1964" (Ph.D. dissertation, Oxford: University of Oxford, 2013), 29–30, 62–63.

12. Sergei Golod, "Sociological Problems of Sexual Morality," *Soviet Sociology* (1969), 3–23, <https://doi.org/10.2753/sor1061-015408013>; Sergei Golod, "Gorod meniaet moral'nye normy" [The city is changing moral norms], *Nauka i tekhnika* [Science and technology] 11 (1968), 16–19.

13. Anthony Giddens, *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love, and Eroticism in Modern Societies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 184; David Allyn, *Make Love, Not War: The Sexual Revolution: An Unfettered History* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Jeffrey Escoffier, ed., *Sexual Revolution* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003); Dagmar Herzog, *Sexuality in Europe: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 133–171.

14. Anatolii Anatol'evich Slezin, *Fenomen Komsomola: Seredina 1950x—Pervaia polovina 1960x* [The Komsomol phenomenon: From the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s] (Tambov: Gramota, 2017), 101–118; Uhl, *Building Communism*.

15. Katharina Uhl and Irina Tartakovskaya both make convincing cases for reading Komsomol papers as expressions of official ideology. See Uhl, *Building Communism*, 6–19; Tartakovskaya, "The Changing Representation of Gender Roles in the Soviet and Post-Soviet Press."

Closely reading these sources can also reveal moments of contestation or negotiation within “official” spaces, resembling the semi-public sphere suggested by Elena Zubkova with reference to thick journals like *Novyi mir*. Zubkova, *Russia after the War: Hopes, Illusions, Disappointments, 1945–1957* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 151–163.

16. Barbara H. Rosenwein, “Worrying about Emotions in History,” *The American Historical Review*, 107, no. 3 (2002), 821–845, <https://doi.org/10.1086/532498>; Peter N. Stearns and Carol Z. Stearns, “Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards,” *The American Historical Review* 90, no. 4 (1985), 813–836, here 819–820, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1858841>

17. William Reddy, “The Rule of Love: The History of Western Romantic Love in Comparative Perspective,” *New Dangerous Liaisons: Discourses on Europe and Love in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Luisa Passerini, Liliana Ellena, and Alexander C.T. Gepper (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 33–57, here 45; Jennifer S. Hirsch and Holly Wardlow, “Introduction,” in *Modern Loves: The Anthropology of Romantic Courtship and Companionate Marriage*, ed. Jennifer S. Hirsch and Holly Wardlow (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

18. Francesca M. Cancian, “The Feminization of Love,” *Signs* 11, no. 4 (1986), 692–709, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/494272>.

19. Dagmar Herzog, *Sexuality*, 106–111.

20. Claire Langhamer, *The English in Love: The Intimate Story of an Emotional Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

21. Herzog, *Sexuality*, 110. For a broader critique of romantic love’s implication in late capitalism, see Eva Ilouz, *Consuming the Romantic Utopia: Love and the Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

22. Langhamer, *English in Love*, 208.

23. Luisa Passarini, “Introduction,” Passerini, Ellena, and Gepper, *New Dangerous Liaisons*, 1–20; Lynn M. Thomas and Jennifer Cole, “Thinking through Love in Africa,” *Love in Africa*, ed. Jennifer Cole and Lynn M. Thomas (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 11–13.

24. Dagmar Herzog, *Sex after Fascism: Memory and Morality in Twentieth Century Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 184–219; John Griffith Urang, *Legal Tender: Love and Legitimacy in the East German Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

25. “Materialy k lektsii ‘Liubov,’ brak i sem’ia v sotsialisticheskom obshchestve” [Materials for the lecture “Love, marriage, and the family in a socialist society”] (Rostov-Don: VLKSM Rostovskii oblastnoi komitet, 1957); Sergei Mikhailovich Sverdlov, *Sovetskoe semeinoe pravo* [Soviet family law] (Moscow: Iurizdat, 1951), 5–9; Lev Abramovich Zalkind, *Zdorovyi brak i zdorovaia sem’ia* [A healthy marriage and a healthy family] (Moscow: Medgiz, 1951), 18–19; Anatolii Kharchev, *Brak i sem’ia v sovetskom obshchestve* [Marriage and the family in Soviet society] (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1955), 41–60.

26. Petr Vail and Aleksandr Genis in *60-e: Mir sovetskogo cheloveka* [The 60s: The world of the Soviet person] (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1988); Natalia Lebina, *Povsednevnost’ epokhi kukuruzy i kosmosa: Dekonstruktivnaia bol’shogo stil’ia* [Everyday life in the age of corn and the cosmos: Deconstructing the grand style] (St. Petersburg: Pobeda, 2015).

27. Eleanor Gilburd, *To See Paris and Die: The Soviet Lives of Western Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018).

28. Lilia Kaganovsky, *How the Soviet Man Was Unmade: Cultural Fantasy and Male Subjectivity under Stalin* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008); Lebina, *Povsednevnost’*, 249–253; Marko Dumančić, “Rescripting Stalinist Masculinity: Contesting the Male Ideal in Soviet Film and Society, 1953–1968” (Ph.D. dissertation, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2010).

29. Wendy Z. Goldman, *Women, the State and Revolution: Soviet Family Policy and Social Life, 1917–1936* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
30. Susan E. Reid, "Masters of the Earth: Gender and Destalinization in Soviet Reformist Painting of the Khrushchev Thaw," *Gender and History* 11, no. 2 (1999), 276–312, here 295.
31. Melanie Ilic, "Women in the Khrushchev Era: An Overview," in *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. Melanie Ilic, Susan Reid and Lynn Attwood (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), 1–28, here 11–13; Liubov Denisova, *Rural Women in the Soviet Union and Post-Soviet Russia*, trans. Irina Mukhina (London: Routledge, 2010), 78–80.
32. Sergei Kukhterin, "Fathers and Patriarchs in Communist and Post-Communist Russia," 71–89, here 74.
33. Zhanna Chernova, "The Model of 'Soviet' Fatherhood," 35–62, here 36–37.
34. *Ibid.*, 39.
35. *Ibid.*; Kukhterin, "Fathers and Patriarchs in Communist and Post-Communist Russia"; Zdravomyslova and Temkina, "The 'Crisis of Masculinity' in Late Soviet Discourse."
36. Anna Rotkirch, *The Man Question: Loves and Lives in Late Twentieth Century Russia* (Research Report, University of Helsinki, 2000), <http://doi.org/10.31885/2018.00015>, here 17.
37. Dumančić, *Rescripting Stalinist Masculinity*, 111–154; Carlbäck, "Fatherly Emotions"; McCallum, *The Fate of the New Soviet Man*, 169–192.
38. Carleton, *Sexual Revolution in Bolshevik Russia*, 11; Eric Naiman, *Sex in Public: The Incarnation of Early Soviet Ideology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Artemii Pushkarev and Natalia Pushkareva, "Ranniaia sovetskaia ideologiia 1918–1928 godov i 'polovoi vopros' (o popytках regulirovaniia sotsial'noi politiki v oblasti seksual'nosti)" [Early Soviet ideology of the years 1918–1928 and the sexual question (on the attempts at regulating social politics in the sphere of sexuality)], in *Sovetskaia sotsial'naia politika 1920x–1930x godov: Ideologiia i povsednevnost' [Soviet social politics of the 1920s–1930s: Ideology and reality]*, ed. P. V. Romanov and E. R. Iarskaia-Smirnova (Moscow: Variant, 2007), 199–227.
39. Zalkind, *Zdorovyi brak i zdorovaia sem'ia*, 18–19; Sverdlov, *Sovetskoe semeinoe pravo* 8–9; Tigran Semenovich Atarov, *Voprosy polovogo vospitaniia [Questions of sexual education]* (Moscow: Medgiz, 1959), 70–72. On their description as conservatives, see Deborah A. Field, *Private Life and Communist Morality in Khrushchev's Russia* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007), 73, 98.
40. Edward Cohn, "Sex and the Married Communist: Family Troubles, Marital Infidelity, and Party Discipline in the Postwar USSR, 1945–64," *Russian Review* 68, no. 3 (July 2009), 429–540.
41. Juliane Fürst, *Stalin's Last Generation: Soviet Post-War Youth and the Emergence of Mature Socialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 253.
42. "Protokoly XI-oi gorodskoi komsomol'skoi konferentsii, goroda Irbita" [Protocols of the 11th City Komsomol Conference, Irbit], TsDOOSO, 61-10-475 (4–5 Dec 1953), 28; Postanovleniia i doklady, t.d., Otdel propagandy i agitatsii, Sverdlovskii ObKom VLKSM [Acts and reports from the Department of Propaganda and Agitation of the Sverdlovsk Oblast Committee VLKSM], TsDOOSO, 61-10-681 (12 March 1953), 6.
43. TsDOOSO, 61-10-681, 6.
44. Brian LaPierre, *Hooliganism in Khrushchev's Russia: Defining, Policing and Producing Deviance in the Thaw* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012); Deborah Field, *Private Life and Communist Morality*, 9–25.
45. S. Bruskin, "Liubov' ili druzhba?" [Love or friendship?], *Na smenu!* [Next shift] (18 December 1957).
46. Report on insufficiencies in the work of the Propaganda Department, TsDOOSO, 61-18-21 (1957), 6.

47. For example, M. Borovskikh, "Razve eto zh chelovek!" [What kind of person is this!], *Na smenu!* (25 April 1959); E. Postnikov, "Sary-su, zheltaia voda" [Sary-su, yellow water], *Na smenu!* (2 February 1960); A. Pevnev, "Dvazhdy zhenat po gluposti" [Twice married for foolishness], *Na smenu!* (19 January 1960); A. Zavodskaya, A. Radov, "Falshivaia dusha" [A false soul], *Na smenu!* (24 May 1961). For a more general study of public shaming in the Komsomol press, see Tsipursky, "Citizenship, Deviance, and Identity," 629–649.

48. Quoted text from summary of a public debate, "O chem govorilos' na dispute" [What was discussed at the debate], *Na smenu!* (20 March 1958).

49. G. Isakova, "Don Zhuan," *Na smenu!* (25 June 1952); E. Postnikov, "Sary-su, zheltaia voda" (2 February 1960).

50. Alexandra Obleränder notes a similar shift in discourses on sexual violence in the late Empire. See "Shame and Modern Subjectivities: The Rape of Elizaveta Chermnova," in *Interpreting Emotion in Russia and Eastern Europe* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2011), 82–101.

51. For the summary of Makarenko from which the "maiden's pride" concept comes, see S. Bruskin, "Liubov' ili druzhba?"; Debate installments: A. Sokolov, "Ch'ia vina?" [Whose fault?] *Na smenu!* (22 January 1958); "Obsuzhdaem pis'mo" [Let's discuss a letter], *Na smenu!* (26 Jan 1958); "Nado golos podymat' za chistoplotnost' otnoshchenii nashikh i liubovnykh del" [We must raise a voice for the purity of our relationships and love affairs], *Na smenu!* (28 January 1958); "Nado golos podymat': O chem govorilos' na dispute" ["We must raise a voice": what was discussed at the debate], *Na smenu!* (20 March 1958). The quote is from Makarenko's advice book, *Kniga dlia roditelei* [A book for parents] (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1937).

52. On the Stalin era, see Vera S. Dunham, *In Stalin's Time: Middle-Class Values in Soviet Fiction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990); on the conservative turn in the context of the "demographic crisis" see Lynne Attwood, *The New Soviet Man and Woman: Sex-Role Socialization in the USSR* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990). Official claims of having achieved equality alongside persisting patriarchal assumptions about gender roles had real effects in practice, such as refusals to prosecute domestic violence. Marianna Muravyeva, "Bytovukha: Family Violence in Soviet Russia," *Aspasia* 8, no. 1 (2014), 90–124, here 107. <https://doi.org/10.3167/asp.2014.080106>

53. A. Sokolov, "Ch'ia vina?" [Whose fault?], *Na smenu!* (22 January 1958).

54. For an analysis of Stalin's assertion of an exceptional skill in "emotional hermeneutics," see Glennys Young, "Bolsheviks and Emotional Hermeneutics: The Great Purges, Bukharin, and the February-March Plenum of 1937," *Interpreting Emotions in Russia and Eastern Europe*, 140–163.

55. I. Dziuba, "Povedenie Igoria—trusost'!" [Igor's behavior is cowardice!], *Na smenu!* (28 January 1958); "Obsuzhdaem pis'ma" [Let's discuss letters], *Na smenu!* (28 January 1958).

56. "Obsuzhdaem pis'ma," *Na smenu!* (28 January 1958); Z. Efimova, N. Molodykh, "Chtoby liubili chestno i krepko" [So you are loved honestly and strongly], *Na smenu!* (28 January 1958).

57. L. Arkhangel'skii, "Moral i svoboda" [Morality and freedom], (25 Feb 1958).

58. I. Dziuba, "Povedenie Igoria"; Z. Efimova, N. Molodykh, "Chtoby liubili chestno."

59. "Obsuzhdaem pis'ma."

60. The Moral Code was issued at the Twenty-Second Party Congress as a statement of the moral principles that should apply to all Communist Party members and Komsomol members, but it was referred to in ideological literature as guiding everyone. See Field, *Private Life and Communist Morality*, 9–12, 18–25; a new series in *Na smenu!* began on "The Moral Code in Action" in 1962.

61. A. Zavodskaya, A. Radov, "Falshivaia dusha" [A fake soul], *Na smenu!* (24 May 1961); N. Vasiliev, "Kogo vy luibite?" [Who do you love?], *Na smenu!* (15 July 1962).

62. I. Peshkova, "Liubov' po rekomendatsii" [Love for a recommendation], *Na smenu!* (14 December 1955); "Neuzheli my oshiblis' v tebia Mikhail?" [Were we wrong about you, Mikhail?], *Na smenu!* (18 March 1958); "Chitatei' prodolzhaet razgovor" [The reader continues the conversation], *Na smenu!* (6 July 1963).

63. V. Gubanova, "A sem'ia ne stala krepche" [But the family did not get stronger], *Na smenu!* (28 August 1954); T. Kniazeva, "Nel'zia molchat" [One cannot be silent], *Na smenu!* (23 January 1962); L. Bortvina, "Kto rassudit dvoikh?" [Who will judge both?], *Na smenu!* (6 July 1963); S. Marchenko, "Kuda ty idesh', A.S.?" [Where are you heading, A.S.?], *Na smenu!* (11 July 1964).

64. S. Marchenko, "Kuda ty idesh', A.S.?" [The language here echoed a series of public shaming pieces directed at "freeloaders" (*tuneiadtsy*), which used language and imagery to emasculate or even imply the queerness of the "freeloader." See "Slushaite vy, tuneiadtsy!" [Listen up, freeloaders!], *Na smenu!* (11 September 1960); "Podkupniak, A.K.? Vot on takoi!" [A briber, A.K.? That's who he is!], *Na smenu!* (17 September 1960).

65. D. Livshits, "Vospitanie . . . poshlost'iu," [An education . . . in vulgarity], *Na smenu!* (9–12 June 1960).

66. D. Livshits, "Esli on liubil . . ." [If he loved . . .], *Na smenu!* (22 June 1960).

67. Lilya Kaganovsky, *How the Soviet Man Was Unmade*, 19–41.

68. The Komsomol was mobilized to send educated youth to the countryside. The "taming of the Virgin Lands" was an ambitious campaign to settle uncultivated land in Siberia and Kazakhstan, which drew on colonialist tropes. See Donald Fitzer, *The Khrushchev Era: De-Stalinization and the Limits of Reform in the USSR, 1953–1964* (Houndmills: Macmillan, 1993), 38–57; Michaela Pohl, "From White Grave to Tselinograd to Astana: The Virgin Lands Opening, Khrushchev's Forgotten First Reform," in *The Thaw: Soviet Society and Culture during the 1950s and 1960s*, ed. Denis Kozlov and Eleonory Gilburd (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 269–306.

69. Galia C. "Neuzheli vse ischeznet?" [Will it all not disappear?], *Na smenu!* (19 July 1964); V. Liutkus, "Umenie zhdai'" [The ability to wait], V. Zhuravlev, "Veriu v vernost'" [I believe in faithfulness], V. Sharenko, "Stroki iz pis'ma" [Excerpts from letters] *Na smenu!* (16 August 1964).

70. G. Deviatko, "Ia ne obiasnialsia v liubvi" [I did not reveal my love], *Na smenu!* (16 August 1964).

71. "Stroki iz pisem" [Letter excerpts], *Na smenu!* (19 July 1964).

72. F. Karasik, "No esli tebe ne otvetiat?" [But if they don't answer you?], *Na smenu!* (25 April 1963).

73. A. Iakhanov, "Moral'nyi kodeks v zhzhni" [The moral code in action], *Na smenu!* (7 April 1962).

74. I. Klenova, "Nasil'no mil ne budesh'" [You won't be a dear by force], *Na smenu!* (9 April 1963).

75. A. Pudval', "i vynesli reshenie: zhenit'!" [And the decision was made: Get married!], *Na smenu!* (10 July 1960).

76. Rostovskii Oblispolkom VLKSM, *Material k lektsii o liubvi, brake i sem'e*, 2–3.

77. *Ibid.*, 5.

78. *Ibid.*, 12.

79. G. Vladimirovna, "Den' molodoi sem'i" [Young Family Day], *Na smenu!* (27 April 1958).

80. Valia Ganzhur, "Kogda zhe zhit'? A kakov tvoi ideal liubimogo?" [When to live already? And who is your ideal beloved?], *Na smenu!* (7 June 1959).

81. Tamara Gubanchikova, V. Volkov, Rem Perepelkin, "Chitatel' prodolzhaet razgovor," *Na smenu!* (13 June 1959).
82. Perepelkin, "Chitatel' prodolzhaet razgovor," *Na smenu!* (13 June 1959).
83. A. K., "Razve et semeinoe schast'e?" [Is this really family happiness?], *Na smenu!* (12 July 1960).
84. "Slovo vam, tovarishchi muzhchiny!" [The floor is yours, male comrades!], *Na smenu!* (30 July 1960).
85. A. Iakhnov, "Vash muzh dolzhen poniat'!" [Your husband must understand!], *Na smenu!!* (30 July 1960).
86. "Chitatel' prodolzhaet razgovor," *Na smenu!* (12 August 1960).
87. "Zakanchivaem nash razgovor po pis'mu A.K.: Kogda muzhskoe 'Ia' vyshche semeinogo 'My' [We conclude our conversation on A.K.'s letter: When the male "I" is above the family "We"], *Na smenu!* (6 September 1960).
88. Ibid.
89. Anatolii Iakhanov, "Esli liubish' . . . nel'zia bez ulybkoi!" [If you love . . . you cannot go without smiling], *Na smenu!* (19 July 1964).
90. Sonia Srel'nikova, "Chitatel' prodolzhaet razgovor," *Na smenu!* (13 June 1959).
91. Aleksandra Stepanova, "Liubov' i kotlety" [Love and cutlets], *Na smenu!* (1 January 1964).
92. Rebecca Friedman and Dan Healey, "Conclusions," in Engel, Healey, and Friedman, *Russian Masculinities*, 223–235, here 229.
93. This was an issue across the East-West divide that helped drive the demand for expert marriage and child-rearing advice. Beth Bailey, "Scientific Truth . . . and Love: The Marriage Education Debate in the United States," *Journal of Social History* 20, no. 4 (1987), 711–732, <https://doi.org/10.1353/jsh/20.4.711>; Natalia Chernyaeva, "Childcare Manuals and the Construction of Motherhood in Russia, 1890–1990" (Ph.D. dissertation, Iowa City: University of Iowa, 2009), <https://doi.org/10.17077/etd.r2kgt4py>.
94. For the US case, see Beth Bailey, *Sex in the Heartland* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 202–218; Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)," in *The Sixties: From Memory to History*, ed. David Farber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 235–262, here 252–256.