

# Moscow Clinic Teaches Moms How to Please Their Russian Husbands

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A maternity clinic in Moscow has been providing patients with booklets on "improving family relations" — dispensing advice to women that urges them to be subservient to their husbands and to never dispute the man's "God-given" role as the boss in his home, a news report said.

The advice is included as an addendum to a standard medical booklet that include lists of medical data and recommendations for a healthy pregnancy, Kommersant daily reported Tuesday, calling the text "insulting" and a "testament to the New Medieval epoch."

The added section, entitled "Useful advice on strengthening family relations," includes such suggestions as: "A woman had better not awaken the beast in a man; the ability of a woman to take second place is the highest value she presents to a man," according to photos of the booklet posted by independent radio station Ekho Moskvy on its website.

"Every husband wishes to be the head of the family, because this is his God-given purpose," another passage reads.

Other bits of the booklet's wisdom include the following:

"A man cannot like a woman's leadership — that is unnatural."

"A man cannot stand being controlled by his wife — the head of the family should not be controlled. Try to control the president of a country — would he [then] be able to do much for the country?"

"A man absolutely cannot stand when his wife teaches him. The husband is the head of the family, and, consequently, he is also the teacher."

The booklet also described women as being guided by their supposedly "emotional nature," whereas "men respond to the world rationally."

The booklet has been supposedly distributed at several "Moscow hospitals," Kommersant reported. It did not identify any of the clinics, saying only that the booklet had been presented to a pregnant friend of one of the newspaper's reporters when she came in for a checkup.

Sections of the manual seem to read like excerpts from the 16th century Russian treatise on obedience, known as "Domostroy," which preaches submission to the tsar and the Russian Orthodox Church as well as and women's submissiveness to their husbands.

"A wife who is kind, industrious and silent is a crown to her husband," the 16th century text reads.

Some Russian conservatives have called for restoring parts of Domostroy rules for household practices, even though many of those suggestions seemed to be partly in jest.

Officially, women enjoy the same legal and political rights as men in Russia. In divorce cases, courts often side with the woman, giving her custody of any minor children — a practice that some have described as discrimination against men, while others argued it was a reflection of Russia's century-old tradition of viewing women as hearth keepers and men as breadwinners.

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