

"Treasure Hunting in the Junk Room" (1958/59)

Abstract

The 1950s not only saw the emergence of state-promoted "modern" living spaces and construction techniques, they also witnessed a change in private tastes in home furnishings. In 1958/59, The publication *Ratgeber für Haus und Familie* explained how one could transform an "old room" into a modern one.

Source



The old chamber . . . was turned into a modern room

Here, for example, is an old, two-door wardrobe with bun feet, a curved bonnet, and decorative molding. Anyone who is handy with a hammer and saw can easily modernize it himself; those who are less handy should leave it to the carpenter. The feet should be removed; the same goes for the bonnet, which is only fasted with dowels. The decorative molding also has to go, and in most cases one can simply saw off the protruding window sill. Then, once the old paint or varnish has been stripped off, you should paint everything except the wardrobe doors with black lacquer paint. Then glue colorful, patterned, washable wallpaper or something synthetic on the wardrobe doors, and attach sleek new fixtures.

And the day bed? It was made from the box spring of a normal bed to which legs were attached. We put three mattress segments on top of it, two in gray and one in red, to match the chair cushions. We gave the foam bolster at the head a gray-and-red cover. If the housewife puts a zipper on one side of the mattress covers, then they can be easily removed and washed.

Source: *Ratgeber für Haus und Familie* (1958/59); reprinted in Angela Delille and Andrea Grohn, eds., *Perlonzeit. Wie die Frauen ihr Wirtschaftswunder erlebten*. Berlin: Elefanten Press, 1985, p. 25.

Recommended Citation: "Treasure Hunting in the Junk Room" (1958/59), published in: German History in Documents and Images,

https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/occupation-and-the-emergence-of-two-states-1945-1961/ghdi:document-4452 [May 12, 2024].