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**Special Issue: Kitchen and Bath Research**

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JoAnn M. Emmel, and Arlena Hines

**SPECIAL ISSUE INTRODUCTION: HISTORIC AND CONTEMPORARY FACTORS SHAPING  
TODAY'S KITCHENS AND BATHROOMS**

Kenneth R. Tremblay, Jr., Sherylin Doyle, Carmen D. Steggell, JoAnn M. Emmel, and  
Arlena Hines

This special issue of *Housing and Society* was a collaborative effort between the Housing Education and Research Association (HERA) and the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA). The call for papers was in the summer of 2007 with eight manuscripts selected that highlighted important research being conducted on kitchen and bath design. Funded by a NKBA grant, copies of this issue were distributed at the 2009 Kitchen and Bath Industry Show and Conference. An important link between HERA and NKBA is NKBA's Endorsed College Program created to serve the professional needs of industry and to ensure quality education for students who desire to become kitchen/bath design professionals.

**EVOLUTION OF DOMESTIC KITCHEN DESIGN: INFLUENCE OF DISEASE THEORY AND  
THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN**

Dana Moody and Michelle L. Vineyard

In the late 1800s negative effects associated with the Industrial Revolution and subsequent urban crowding led to increased health problems and disease transmissions. This interdisciplinary study analyzed how domestic kitchen design was influenced by concerns for public health, the changing role of women, and Victorian disease theory that centered on sanitation and germs. The role of women changed during this time period from being the manager of domestic servants to becoming the provider of domestic service for their families. Public health officials advised the housewife on the best ways to maintain family health and viewed the healthy home as a means to prevent the spread of disease. No room saw more change to improve health than the kitchen. These changes were seen in overall kitchen design, furnishings, and finishes. This review of the history of kitchen design through a multidisciplinary perspective provided insight into how design concepts evolved and gave a beneficial example of an historical study to educators who desire to convey to students the importance of a comprehensive design perspective.

**KITCHEN REMODELING: EXPLORING THE DREAM KITCHEN PROJECTS**

Kathleen R. Parrott, Julia O. Beamish, JoAnn M. Emmel, and Sung-Jin Lee

The faculty of the Center for Real Life Kitchen Design at Virginia Tech responded to a growing interest in kitchen remodeling with the Explore Your Dream Kitchen workshop to educate the consumer on working with a designer and comparing the multitude of products available to the consumer planning a new kitchen. This article reported on a survey of 192 participants in 13 of the workshops who actually remodeled or built a home with a new kitchen ( $N = 72$ ). Descriptive findings included project cost, reasons for remodeling, professional assistance, choice of design features and products, and satisfaction with the remodeling process and product choices. Analysis of the reasons for product choice showed appearance to be an important factor, while durability and cost were less important.

## **RESIDENTIAL KITCHEN PREFERENCES OF GENERATION Y**

N. Yaprak Savut and Marina Alexander

The purpose of this study was to understand residential kitchen preferences of Generation Y consumers who will become 34% of the total U.S. population by the year 2010. This group shows significant differences from their predecessors in demographics and life style. The study was conducted in two phases. In phase one an online survey was sent to 5,000 randomly selected associates of the National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) to obtain feedback about their level of awareness of Gen Y. One hundred seventeen NKBA associates responded to this survey. It was found that there was a lack of current interest in Gen Y most likely due to the income of these consumers. In phase two another online survey was sent to 5,036 alumni and current students of East Carolina University. Three hundred and ninety-six participants responded to the second phase of the survey. It was found that this group of consumers considered kitchen appliances based on their features and not on brand names. The most popular feel for the kitchen was warm contemporary. It was also found that Gen Y was interested in green/sustainable products in terms of countertops, energy efficient appliances, lighting systems, and wood products supplied by environmentally responsible sources.

## **INVESTING IN HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS THAT COUNT: A CROSS-SECTIONAL AND LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF BATHROOMS, BATHROOM ADDITIONS, AND RESIDENTIAL SATISFACTION**

Russell N. James III

This article examined how bathrooms (and half-bathrooms) were associated with the self-reported satisfaction of residents in comparison to bedrooms, other rooms, overall size, and the presence of such amenities as a dishwasher, disposal, fireplace, balcony/patio, and garage. Cross-tabulations, ordinary least squares, and cumulative logit analyses of data from the 2005 American Housing Survey demonstrated a particularly strong positive relationship between residential satisfaction and the number of bathrooms, greater than for any other housing characteristic measured. A “before and after” longitudinal analysis of homes with remodeling occurring between 1997 and 2005 also revealed a significant positive impact of bathroom additions on the satisfaction of residents. These results appear consistent with housing theory suggesting that privacy and control are major components of residential satisfaction.

## **KITCHEN SPACE PLANNING IN SMALL-SCALE HOUSES**

Mira Ahn, Kathleen R. Parrott, Julia O. Beamish, and JoAnn M. Emmel

This article discussed the desirability of small-scale houses and focused on kitchen space planning as critical to well-designed housing. People live in small-scale homes for a variety of reasons; some by necessity and some by choice. Designers and builders of small-scale housing need to offer different options in kitchen design to meet the variety of needs of residents of these households. Kitchens in small-scale housing should not necessarily be just a smaller version of a large kitchen in a large house. A well-designed small-scale house needs to recognize how Americans use, or do not use, their kitchens. Small-scale housing, perhaps more than larger housing, needs well-planned kitchen storage, including pantries, drawers, and interior cabinet storage devices. Recognizing how a kitchen is actually used for food preparation and beyond offers flexibility in designing small-scale housing adapted to different lifestyles. Successful kitchen space planning in small-scale houses is not achieved just by making the room smaller. It needs a rethinking of how residential spaces are conceived.

## **KITCHENS AS CULTURAL MEDIUMS: THE FOOD EXPERIENCES OF MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS IN MINNESOTA**

Tasoulla Hadjiyanni and Kristin Helle

Under conditions of displacement, food has been linked to physical and emotional well-being and has been positioned as a stabilizing cultural element, one imbued with symbolic meaning when deployed in the construction of identity. However, limited research has delved into the role of kitchens in the adjustment process of immigrant groups. Understanding how food practices relate to the built environment, and particularly kitchens, enriches the potential solutions by which designers, housing professionals, educators, and policymakers can work toward culturally sensitive housing; that is, housing that supports various ways of living. Drawing from 25 in-home interviews with Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans living in Minnesota, this article investigated their kitchen needs as a way to more fully understand the role of domestic interiors in immigrants' attempts to navigate life in displacement. A background on Mexican immigration, the culture's foundations, and the study's methodology preceded the discussion of the findings which pointed to the value of Mexican foods in constructing and nourishing the Mexican sense of difference. As kitchens were found to act as cultural mediums, capable of supporting and/or suppressing the practice of Mexican food traditions and thereby delineating the direction of cultural change, the article concluded with culturally sensitive design solutions and a call for future research.

## **CONTEMPORARY KITCHEN DESIGN IN URBAN MULTIFAMILY HOUSING IN KOREA**

Suk-Kyung Kim, Mira Ahn, and Kenneth R. Tremblay, Jr.

Since the first modern multifamily housing appeared in Korea during the 1960s, kitchens and their associated dining spaces have experienced tremendous changes. Before this time the kitchen primarily functioned as a space for cooking-related activities. However, Korean society has continuously developed during the past four decades and kitchen design has evolved to meet new consumer demands and accommodate a growing number of activities. The purpose of this study was to explore current design characteristics of kitchen spaces in Korean urban multifamily housing. Floor plans and interior design images of 207 multifamily housing unit types were collected from Web-based marketing catalogs provided by construction companies. This study investigated design characteristics that included interior design themes, materials, colors, space planning, and applied items. Analysis of the data revealed that strong drivers for new kitchen design in Korea were increasing awareness of environments and healthy lifestyles as well as desires to fully utilize advanced technology and products for safety and convenience.

## **DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE SUPPORTIVE BATHROOM FEATURES CHECKLIST IN HOMES DESIGNED FOR RETIRED PERSONS**

Glenda Gilmore Andes and Julia O. Beamish

Older people often need supportive home environments to live independently. The bathroom is one of the most critical spaces in the home and should be designed to facilitate the needs of an older person, since falls and accidents are likely to occur in this space. This study reported on an extensive review of research and recommendations for bathrooms for older persons from the past 40 years that were used to develop a Supportive Bathroom Features Checklist. Full bathrooms in 60 homes in 23 active adult retirement communities in four states were assessed in this study. The checklist included 10 categories of features and points were assigned to each feature. These categories of features were: lighting; electrical controls; flooring; thresholds; doors, doorways, locks, and handles; cabinetry and storage; faucets; medicine cabinet and mirrors; lavatory and vanity; toilet; and grab bars. Additional checklists were developed to be used if the bathroom had a bathtub or a separate shower. Overall the bathrooms did not receive high scores. Potential design issues for seniors wishing to age-in-place in the homes studied included narrow doors, low light levels, glare, limited clear space in front of fixtures, and limited storage.