

## roommate market crowded with lemons

by patti jo peterson

finding a roommate is like buying a car—you have to be careful not to get a lemon.

In my college experience, I've had many fruits for roommates, and although they've come in various shapes and sizes, I've found there are basic ones on the market you should avoid.

The sneakiest roommate you can get stuck with is a two for one. After contentedly signing a lease to share an apartment, you learn she's equipped with another roommate—her boyfriend.

He doesn't pay rent, sleeps in the living room all day, and drinks your cranberry juice for breakfast. He wishes you would leave your \$225 a month apartment so he can watch his favorite television shows and be alone with your roommate. He spends most of his time in the bathroom or bedroom, and you always wonder why he never seems to have anywhere to go.

Don't try getting your roommate to deal with her boyfriend. Swept with passion and love for this imbecile, she can't be dealt with rationally at this point. Direct your strategy at him.

For a couple of weeks, don't leave unless it's absolutely necessary and for no more than an hour at a time.

Insist on watching television shows like the "Newlywed Game," "The Love Boat," and "James at 15."

Buy only enough food to last one person for one meal. Spend a lot of time in the bathroom, and, at the end of the month, ask him for one-third the rent.

Invite your most obnoxious friends for a Tequila Sunrise party on a night your roommates expect to spend a quiet evening at home.

If all fails, consider moving.

One of the most common fruits is the



nocturnal roommate. Usually found in dormitories, she sleeps all day, skips classes, then at 10 p.m., just when your nuzzling down for a few dreams, she wakes up screaming.

"I'm flunking. But who cares."

Fits of giggles follow, until she finds others of her kind who invade your room, pull out the booze and spend the night deciding they don't care about anything.

Although murder seems a promising end for the nocturnal roommate, peace-

loving people should buy a good set of earplugs, a heavy duty pillow, and get used to sleeping in headgear.

The anti-clean roommate challenges your stamina. She lives under the personal philosophy that cleanliness is next to misery, and you'll usually find her underwear under your bed.

Her very presence propagates mold and deterioration, so prepare to find old food stuck in dresser drawers, under desks, and inside your sheets.

Lysol, used once a day, is the only effective treatment for the anti-clean roommate. Encourage her to use it in her bath water.

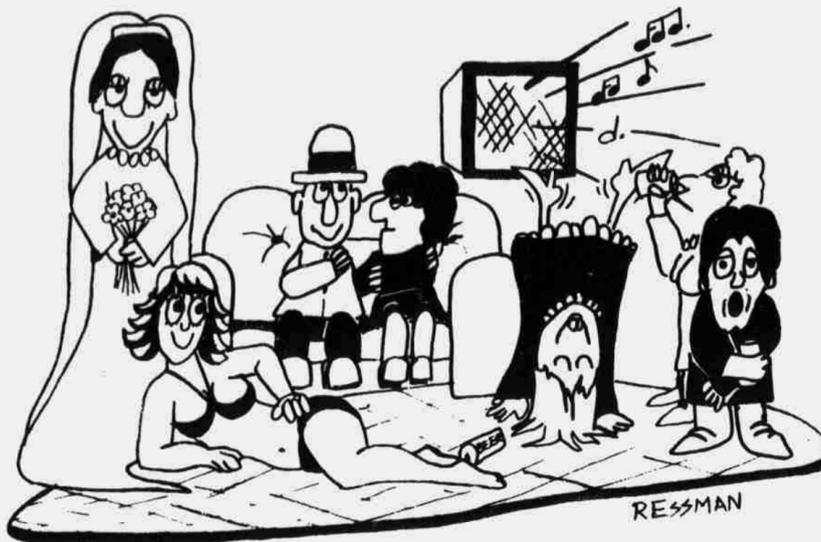
The perfect roommate is beautiful, friendly, popular, well-adjusted, and compassionate. Avoid her at all costs. She is disgusting.

The bride-to-be must be the most boring roommate of all. With stars in her eyes, she looks loaded. But she's only thinking of her upcoming wedding.

Her major problem is deciding whether the reception mints should match the napkins or the floral arrangements.

Excitement keeps her from sleeping,

## RENT A ROOMMATE



and as she tosses and turns, bridesmaids dressed in shades of chartreuse dance through her head.

Out of all these desolite roommates, only one emerges with promise—the absentee. She lives with her boyfriend without her parents knowledge and comes home only to pay gas, electricity, and rent.

The only problem arises when her parents call at 8 a.m. Sunday wondering where their daughter is. The experienced liar quips back that she's in the shower, out for donuts, or on her way to church.

## landlords have tales of mistreatment

by mary jane winquest

The stories are frequently heard among students about the landlord who never fixes the broken window or the landlord who doesn't return the deposit or the landlord who evicts a student for no reason.

But few hear the landlord side of stories—including the tales of students who overhaul motorcycles in living rooms, or the students who raise marijuana or the students who knock holes in the walls. The stories are there, too.

"They told my wife they were tomato plants," Darrell Brown said of students who were evicted for growing marijuana in their apartments.

Brown went on to call four UNL football players who knocked a hole in an apartment wall "animals." They also broke screens and ruined the carpet when rain poured in open windows they had climbed in and out of, he said.

But although he has other stories, Brown said students are no worse than other tenants and that 70 percent of his student tenants treat the property well.

"I don't want you to think we are taking pot shots at students," he said.

Mrs. Daryl Burch said the kind of tenant a person is cannot be judged by his outward appearance.

"It basically has to do with the way they were brought up," she explained. "If they were brought up neat they will stay



neat."

Burch said she has had problems with tenants who sneak dogs into apartments despite a rule against pets. Damage occurs when a tenant moves in or out of an apartment, she added.

She said that the \$100 deposit she requires does not begin to pay for the maintenance on refrigerators, ranges, dishwashers and carpeting and drapes.

According to Angie Mefford, manager of Jones Apartments, noise is the biggest problem with student

tenants. Mefford rents 110 units, 80 percent to students.

Mefford said, in general, students keep apartments in good shape and she hasn't taken a tenant to court since she became a manager a year ago.

Burch hasn't been that lucky.

"I'm in the process of taking someone to court now," she said. "This particular party hasn't paid their rent for months and are to be served an eviction notice today."

In order to prevent problems, the Browns said they belong to a rental owner's association that lists by social security number information about tenants. Whether the person has promptly paid his rent is included in the type of information recorded.

Burch said female tenants are generally neater than boys and she rents only to them. She said she relies on the damage deposit as her only insurance against a destructive tenant.



Mefford said she completes a thorough check on prospective tenants. She checks with employers, previous landlords, record the persons driver's license number and requires a nine to 12 month lease.