

Stephen C. Shadegg
14 E. Culver Street,
Phoenix, Arizona.

"SUMMER BACHELOR"

by Stephen C. Shadegg.

May meets June, the thermometer rises, wives depart for cooler climes, and the Summer Bachelor is born. Significantly, his annual appearance is cued by the only two months with feminine names.

The liberal lovelies who alleviate his summer sadness, openly honor his name, praise his coming, protect his reputation, and relax in his embrace.

From June until September, Phoenix, Arizona swelters. Desert temperatures range from 110 degrees up. Like a two dollar hotel, it's mostly up.

The index of social and financial standing is not to be

found in residence, car, clubs, or manner of dress. Ever since the army helped the white land grabbers steal the country from the Indians, men who are getting on have sent their families out of the heat.

There is no evidence to support the charge that husbands who stay behind to look after business and such things, spend the season intoxicated, in bed, or intoxicated in bed.

Summer-free husbands are accused of open and outrageous philandering by:

a-prejudiced and narrow minded people;

b-envious outsiders;

c-wives.....sometimes.

If the legal partner adopts a retromingent attitude, her friends will kid her out of it.

Those accustomed to the 'I mustn't waste a minute', frantic, concupiscent efforts of the temporarily unattached husband whose freedom is measured in days or weeks, may challenge if they like.

By the end of the first week of separation, that relaxed feeling which takes possession of business here in the warm weather, is in complete command. Contracts can be signed to-morrow, but that little dark-eyed proposition on the next floor demands immediate attention. Excuses offered are loneliness, heat, opportunity, precedent.....who in hell needs an excuse? Sunlight, seductive shadows through summer scanties, and Papa's metamorphosis to predatory male is complete. Anyway, it's all in fun and no one plays for keeps.

There is a division in thought as to the method of approach. Some operators favor the casual quick meeting and

quick mating. Those who insist on an introduction first are not apt to wake in a strange bed, with the incontinent bit of fluff beside them, murmuring, "I must have been drunk! What did you say your name was?"

Light liason, the thrust and parry of casual conquest, is not the summer bachelor's only occupation. There are innocent ways of combating the ennui of desert summer. For instance, swimming....gals look good in bathing suits and some can swim. Poker and bridge....babes play both. A week end of fishing in the nearby mountains is highly favored....be sure she doesn't really like to fish. Then there is automobiling, with the top down, along lonely desert roads. All these things can be done alone.

Theatre, dinners, and open air night spots which feature dancing, do require feminine companionship. I haven't mentioned drinking, but you know about that.

The seeker after truth will not be misled by implication and innuendo. The Don Juan of the desert breaks many a lance in good, clean fun. His morals are about like yours and mine. His opportunities greater, and his operations a little more open.

There is evidence that the bewitching babes who stay to help keep shop open, are responsible for the ambISEXtrous activities. In season, the summer bachelor dominates feminine conversation, mental processes, and lighter moments. "Just you wait till summer," is the war cry that greets every newcomer. A girl has to be damned unattractive or deeply inhibited to average less than five bids to dinner a week. A different party and partner every night is nothing to boast about. And,

do they look forward to it? I wouldn't know. Appearances indicate that nurses, secretaries, beauty operators, blondes, brunettes and red heads, begin to count the days at the first touch of spring; that full length mirrors work overtime while curves are carefully appraised, as the girls prepare to dress 'down' for summer.

Here in the desert, on the last frontier, luscious bits of femininity come packaged in the most revealing wrappings. The average bathing suit affords complete concealment compared to the simple little concoctions worn to the office in summer.

If the none too subtle, sensual gyrations of the commercial cuties in the chorus are disturbing, consider the aphrodisiacal dynamite of bare legs and backs all around you, of fancy fabrics designed to cling and emphasize.

This seductive simpleness is an innocent attempt to keep cool. Stockings are the first to go. The low neck isn't low enough so the backless dress with a halter to maintain forward appearances is worn. The complete costume may be cooling to the fascinating fizgig who so modestly displays it, but the meretricious appreciation of her alert audience does not bear out the theory.

If all this activity seems slightly overdone, remember that for years sociologists and statisticians have emphasized the unfair balance between the sexes. When that proportion is suddenly reversed, action is demanded. The challenge is not overlooked.

Girls appear by magic. Attractive girls, or so they seem by mid-summer, flashy females who slip back into seclusion with the coming of fall.

The handsome surgeon's wife will be back by September. Miss DeLong, with the smoldering eyes and lissome lines, who nursed you through your appendectomy, knows that every night is precious. She aims to 'make medicine while the sun shines'.

Junior College girls suddenly aware of the possibilities of a summer at home, have been known to hold out determinedly against invitations to vacation elsewhere.

There is no average summer bachelor. He may be a middle aged, eminently respectable superior court judge, whose wife is visiting the folks back east and attending the D. A. R. Convention. The kingpin local gambler gets out and around more often while his wife is on the Coast.

The service men have their moments. One domestic darling made it a practice to perform her household duties, clad only in a couple of spots of pink. The possibilities of being trapped on the service porch by an unexpected visitor, had occurred to her. One morning the moment presented itself. She reached the shelter of the broom closet as her caller opened the screen door. Her curves crowded against the mops, she waited for him to depart. Drawn by instinct or duty, his feet approached her hiding place. The door was flung open. The meter reader forgot his book and pencil. The lady, becomingly blushing, her callipygian daintiness revealed, stammered, "I... I...I thought you were the ice man!"

The wives don't get particularly upset about these summer campaigns. They have a pretty firm hold on heart and loyalty, and they know it. The whole thing is on a transitory basis. During the open season, Pappy may be, mildly speaking, on the loose, but when Fall comes all is forgotten and forgiven. The

wife, the guy in question, and his part time playmates, all recognize this.

Most wives are glad to get out. One husband, whose spouse in an economical mood, turned thumbs down on the annual vacation to suffer by his side, let things ride along till the first of July. Surreptitiously slipping to the basement, he fired the furnace. By evening his wife had ordered her ticket and was packing her trunk.

There is a definite code observed by those who cash in on short season desert romance. Night club proprietors change their entire staff, from the band leader to bus boy, when Fall and normalcy return.

Now and then, even in summer, propriety takes possession. Convention has a cooling, unwanted effect. There is the case in point of the officious new manager of one of Phoenix' finest air-cooled hotels. This well meaning, but commercially shortsighted simpleton, felt that the frequency of unregistered guests reflected on his establishment. An edict was issued. Everyone going up in the elevators after seven o'clock at night was required to register. The records revealed no off side entertaining, but the balance sheet reflected the loss of many well paying patrons.

This article was not paid for by the immigration commissioner or the chamber of commerce. You guys can give up the thought of coming out here this summer. We have the situation well in hand. Anyway, I want to protect my own interests.

There is some doubt about responsibility for the summer bachelor's freedom. I haven't investigated. Some people claim it's the full page spreads paid for by the All Year Club of

Southern California. Science advances hay fever. One cynic maintains that the wives yearn for a little freedom. Only one of these theories has been proven.....temperatures do rise.

While the boys who stay behind, midst the cacti, palm and orange groves, are thus happily and harmlessly occupied, there is no record of the wives' activities. Summer resorts are said to be gay places too.

Consider the sad case of the attorney's wife. This friendly, neatly put together charmer somehow acquired a fur coat while on her last vacation. To her it had intrinsic value, but to get it home without exciting curiosity, presented a problem. Probably due to the iniquitous influence of French literature, this little scheme resulted. She parted with her possession at a pawn shop and returned home. After a proper wait, she presented the ticket to her husband just as he was leaving for the Coast on a business trip. She said she found the claim check and wondered about the pledge. The coat was in soak for a very small sum. Surely he would return with it and they could both rejoice at the bargain.

When her husband reported that the ticket claimed only an old battered watch, which wasn't worth redeeming, she was considerably nonplussed. This was nothing to the way she felt when her husband's secretary wore the watch on cold days that winter.