

## RENTING FOR ROMANCE-BOOMERS WITH BENEFITS

It was a rude awakening to realize that my rent is now equivalent to my take-home salary, give or take a few Starbucks lattes. [Single, boomer, broke—and working full-time](#). Welcome to Silicon Valley—an exciting place to live—especially if you’re in your twenties, with impeccable [geek/nerd/ and/or MBA credentials](#), and earning the equivalent of my annual take-home salary every month. It’s [even more challenging for aging mature singles who don’t own real estate. Which is why I began to think about renting for romance-becoming a boomer with benefits.](#)



It’s [enough work being a mature single](#)—the job, commute, searching for romance, attending to the medical needs of every part of the boomer body that cries for attention. It rocks me to realize that my full-time job won’t even keep body and soul together. (Forget what the housing crunch does to women without employment or jobs that pay even less—an unusually [high proportion of Silicon Valley homeless are women](#)).

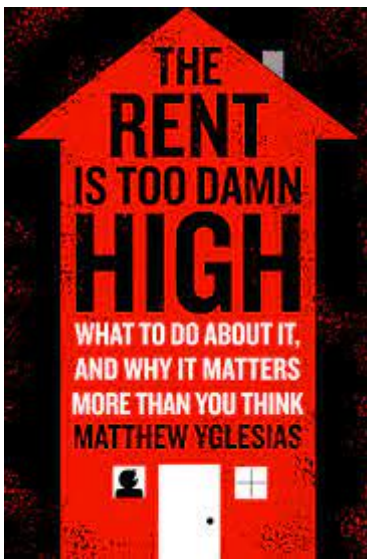
People in Silicon Valley talk about rent and real estate in hushed voices like people in other places talk about natural disasters or terrorist attacks. Interns have been found at Apple and Google sleeping under their desks or in the parking lot. [Employees with good salaries rent garages, storage sheds, tents, sleep in vans](#). Former couples stay in toxic relationships because they can’t find anywhere else to live. RV parks outside of Google or Apple corporate headquarters, or lined up on the street by the Stanford campus. A friend went to check out a great-sounding rental room in Palo Alto. It turned out to be for a bed-as in four bunk beds in a tiny bedroom and one over-burdened bathroom.

To quote [Jimmy Mcmillan](#), perennial candidate and founder of the “Rent Is Too Damn High” New York political party: “the rent is too damn high!”

Rent has gone up an average of 50% over the last five years, according to Zillow. The

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average going rate for a two-bedroom apartment went from \$1,775 in 2010 to \$2,960, according to Rent Jungle -a 67 percent jump, and kept on climbing. The average one-bedroom saw a 77 percent increase from \$1,330 to \$2,362 in the same timeframe. [Median rental in San Jose is now \\$3,258 in San Jose](#) mid-2023. [Million Dollar Shack documents the rental horror stories](#), including one Yahoo employee who commutes 180 miles/day to keep her job.



[“Airbnb, Airbnb,” friends chant at me](#), like a magic incantation. Forget holding onto my recently married daughter’s bedroom so she and my son-in-law can visit me. “Rent that room!” Despite the face that I’m a renter myself.

Tossing and turning, I come up with what seemed a brilliant idea. Time and energy are short. Why not combine renting and dating- how about renting for romance? [Combine your sex life with lodging—become the Host/Hostess with Benefits](#). It gives a whole new meaning to the late Perle Mesta’s [The Hostess with the Mostest](#).

Renting for romance could be a new category on Airbnb, where you list your relationship requirements, along with whether you provide shampoo or kitchen privileges-sort of like [Tinder with guaranteed use of the bathroom](#). Or it could be a new app-the new hot personal service website, disrupting Uber and making venture capitalists salivate.

Could [Renting for Romance become a Silicon Valley 2023 unicorn?](#)

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To my entrepreneurial dismay, an intrepid girl reporter at [San Jose Inside](#) (good work, Jenifer Wadsworth) had already discovered that there are [propertied predators already doing their own version of Renting for Romance](#), although without a business plan, romantic intentions, or Power Point presentation. [Craigslist now features “rent for sex” ads, mostly by men.](#) Beautiful eighteen-year-old nymphomaniac women (also clean and honest) are preferred, but there is at least one landlord who will guarantee you the room if you pee on his face.

I found an old friend I briefly dated years ago to rent my daughter’s room. He loves the idea of Hostess with Benefits. We didn’t have a workable romantic relationship then and we don’t now, so my new business model has yet to be tested. I do let him leave the toilet seat up. A good renter is hard to find—even without the romance.

