Please Re-lease Me

Recently I did my part to stimulate the economy by purchasing a brand new car. Yeah, that was me, the person who bought the only car the Big Three sold last month.

It had been a long time since I'd bought a new car and the salesman said, "There are going to be some things on the cars I show you that you may not be familiar with."

"What's that?" I exclaimed nearly jumping out of the front seat.

"Those are called windshield wipers," said the bemused salesman.

When we got down to trading on the car my wife and I were escorted into a room where we met with the finance guy. Despite what you may have heard, evidently there are still companies out there who are willing to loan money to deadbeats like me.

Although we did not take advantage of the attractive lease option on the car, the idea of leasing intrigued me. A rare thought entered my head: if you can lease cars why can't you lease other expensive items such as kids, horses, dogs and spouses?

Just think, if you could lease kids you could avoid the heavy up front costs associated with dating and a wedding. There would be no pain of pregnancy and delivery and you could lease an older model and avoid the mess of dirty diapers.

If you also avoided teenagers you'd get a lot more sleep too. If you got a damaged model, or didn't like the kid, you could turn it in at the end of the lease period and only pay for the damages you caused. It would still be a lot cheaper than paying for their college education.

Horses seem like a natural for the lease option. The biggest problem for horse owners these days is how to get rid of the horse once its useful life is over. With a lease you'd just give the horse back to the dealer and be done with it.

Depending on your age in life, you could either lease a racy, sporty horse or an older model that belonged to a little old maid who hardly ever used it. When the leased horse started to break down, make strange noises, or the leather upholstery started to crack, you could just give the horse back... no strings attached.

How many times have you bought or been given a dog only to discover that you were incompatible; that the dog ate your slippers or chased your cows? With a flexible contract that leasing allows, you could upgrade to a more fully loaded model.

My wife really liked the leasing idea and she thinks that women ought to be able to lease husbands. She thinks a three-year lease would give a wife long enough to determine if her leased model had the four things that women look for in a husband: sexual compatability, a sense of adventure and skills in vehicular and lawn maintenance.

If she got a real lemon there are opt-out clauses in most leases that would allow her to turn in her husband without having to pay for the entire length of the lease. Or she could just wait until the end of the lease period, trade him in for a newer model with more features, and walk away without any further obligation.

Although she might have to pay a fee for extended use, it would still be a whole lot cheaper than a divorce and it's much better than getting all excited about nothing and then marrying him.

If, in the rare circumstance that a wife actually liked her husband, or there was any residual value left in the old bugger, she could buy out the lease and keep him a little while longer. Granted, she would still have the problem you have with horses; how to dispose of the husband when he gets old and useless.

There's another option that might appeal to women. I know it's now possible to lease fractional shares of airplanes for specific chunks of time, like 25 or 50 hours per year. Most

women will agree that's more than enough time to get the things done that husbands contribute to a marriage in a year. Most wives are tired of their husbands after 25 hours anyway.

I'm told there would be favorable tax advantages too in leasing a husband. You could just write him off! (If you haven't already.)