

THE SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS OF AFFECTION

As Suggested by Phil B. McDonald

STATISTICIANS—those leather-minded laborers to whom the world owes so much of its unhappiness—are fond of telling us in their quaint, tabulated way, that love, marriage, and the allied emotions and conditions, are not what they once were. It used to be considered sacrilegious to explore the labyrinths of holy wedlock; to delve into the mysteries of what was thought to be Heaven's own business. But in these days of scientific warfare and synthetic foodstuffs, nothing is too sacred to escape the analyst's probe.

The charts reproduced here show the fluctuation of affection under three different conditions of marriage. Fig. 1 records—in degrees—the affections of Paul and Hazel, during a period of twenty-five years. The dotted line

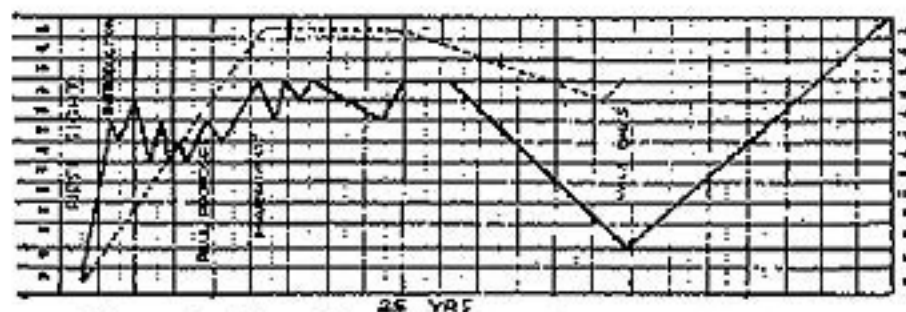


Fig. 1. Paul is 30, Hazel is 18, when they are married. Observe the affection curves of 25 years

indicates Paul's affection, the solid line denotes Hazel's. It is very simple. After studying their ups and downs one can almost visualize Paul and Hazel. He, as you can see, was a steady sort of being. His affection, once started upwards, rose to the top and stayed there for some years until his patience gave out, then declined till the time of his fatal illness, and

rose with a little flip, just before he died. Hazel, on the other hand, was a temperamental creature who loved Paul inordinately, one day, and loathed him the next. Her affection

never rose to the level of his, and it declined in the manner of a toboggan. It is evident, however, from a glance at Hazel's affection after Paul's death that he had carried heavy life insurance, and had put his money in guaranteed mortgages.

In Fig. 2 the affection lines tell the story of a rich, old man and an impressionable girl of twenty. The latter, apparently, enjoyed keen marital disappointment during her spouse's brief life with her. But a large meat-packing business raised him in her esteem after he had departed.

The third chart depicts one of those marriages that are arranged for people who have no interest in each other. And the lines of their affection run below zero throughout. The question is, are these charts typical?



Fig. 2. The man is 65 and rich. The girl is 20. Her affection is an accessory after the death

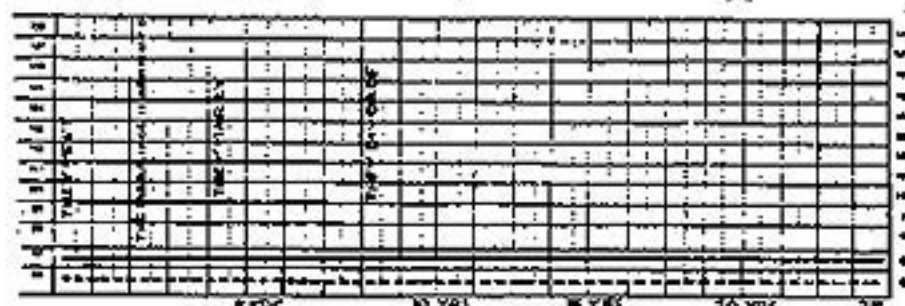


Fig. 3. An "arranged" marriage, followed, of course, by divorce. The affection does not even decrease