20c

PUBLIC AFFAIRS PAMPHLET No. 161

SO YOU THINK IT'S LOVE!

Dating — Necking — Petting — Going Steady

BY RALPH G. ECKERT



Generated on 2021-05-14 00:36 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

SO YOU THINK IT'S LOVE!

By RALPH G. ECKERT

SHOULD you let a boy kiss you on your first date? Is it wise to "go steady" in high school? What's the difference between "necking" and "petting"? Can you be popular if you don't "neck"? Is it all right for an engaged couple who love each other to have sex relations before marriage? How can you know if it is really love?

These are just a few of the most common questions which today's students are likely to ask. Whether the students live in a lumbering town in Oregon, in Reno, Nevada, in an underprivileged section of San Francisco or Los Angeles, in Mormon Salt Lake City or rural Georgia, their questions tend to show the same confusions. Old cultural patterns are changing and new ones are growing up. But not all of the old patterns were bad nor are all the new ones good.

In the last twenty-five years there has been a pretty steady increase in juvenile delinquency, and a startling increase in divorce. We must not judge from these facts, however, that society is "going to the dogs." The growth of democracy has brought with it greater freedom of choice. But freedom is not

Ralph G. Eckert, the author of this pamphlet, is a Consultant in Parent Education for the Bureau of Adult Education, California Department of Education.

Copyright, 1950, by the Public Affairs Committee, Incorporated
—A nonprofit educational organization—

Generated on 2021-05-14 00:37 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

her that morning, so she set out to humiliate him. She put him in one embarrassing situation after another, but he was so conceited and so ill-mannered that he wasn't embarrassed. Instead he embarrassed everybody else. Just about the time you began to wonder when she was going to call in her father or a cop and have him thrown out bodily, she "swooned in his arms." Could that possibly be love?

Do We Fall in Love?

We have for a long time now used the phrase "falling in love" —just as though you were going along and something tripped you up. It is not anything you have any control over, just some-



Generated on 2021-05-14 00:37 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

affectionate, such as in dancing, necking, or petting. A good test here is *the test of separation.* If you feel the same way about a person after you have been separated from him for weeks or months, that would be a favorable indication.



The third and final test is *the test of companionship.* What do you do when you're together? Do you find that you have a lot in common? If you enjoy doing all sorts of things together as *friends,* that is a good sign.

"How can I really be sure it's love?" asked a girl once in a discussion. "Norma, how did you know?" she asked a girl who seemed to be happily married. "Well," said Norma, "I knew

Generated on 2021-05-14 00:37 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY



concluded, "Mel's a wonderful fellow, but could you really love anyone you know that well?"

She certainly could love someone she knew that well! In fact, we can't really *love* anyone until we do know him very well.

Dr. Paul Landis studied a group of hasty marriages (couples who had known each other only a couple of weeks) and found that four out of five of them ended in divorce within the first year. That doesn't look much like love at first sight, does it? Surely they *felt* they were in love or they wouldn't have married. What was wrong?

Generated on 2021-05-14 00:37 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Becoming the Right Person

We know now that a happy marriage is not so much dependent upon "finding" the right person as *becoming* the right person. People used to say that opposites attract each other. Now we know that the kind of person we are determines the kind of



person we attract and are attracted to. For example, here are three girls and here is one boy. The first girl just can't stand this particular boy. To her he is a "pain in the neck." The second one says, "Oh, he's all right—sort of a happy moron, but he's a lot of fun." But the third girl thinks he's wonderful. In fact, she has already decided she's going to marry him (although he doesn't know that yet). Now, what is the difference? He's the same boy. Why does one think him intolerable, another wonderful? Isn't it because the boy meets one girl's needs but not the other's?

To the degree that you believe there is a "one and only" meant for you, you feel insecure. How in the world can you know which one it is, and how can you be sure that, like ships,

Generated on 2021-05-14 00:38 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

to be very irritable and unreasonable. When reminded that every human being needs affection to be happy, she said that she didn't think he was getting any, that nobody loved him. What would happen, she was then asked, if she plopped herself in his lap



that night, put her arms around him, and gave him a big kiss? "He'd look at me and say, 'Now what do you want,' " she said.

And what would he say if she looked him right in the eye and said, "I don't want anything but love"? Tears came to her eyes. "I don't think I could say it," she said. But she tried, and after a couple of weeks she got up her nerve and did just that. She and her father had a long talk and they discovered that

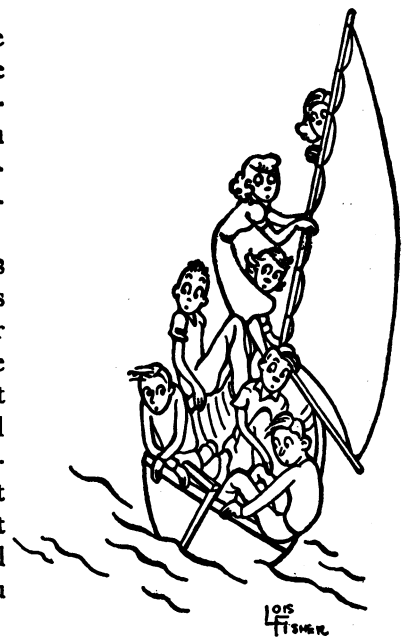
Generated on 2021-05-14 00:38 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

to become more interested in others. This in turn, helps you to overcome your shyness. It also makes people like you, for everyone likes to be appreciated.

A mother of a fourteen-year-old boy suddenly realized that it had been a long time since she had praised her son. "He had become so sloppy and careless in his appearance," she said, "that I despaired of him. But I decided I would try praise. I had to look for quite a while for something to praise but I finally found something, and I praised him. As I looked for things to appreciate, I discovered quite a few things that were praiseworthy, and I praised them. He has been coming right along, and the other night when we had guests for dinner, without any reminder from me at all he got himself all cleaned up and came down to dinner looking very nice. I was proud of him, and after the guests left I told him so. 'When you get yourself all slicked up,' I said, 'you're a very handsome young man.' He looked at me and said, 'You're a pretty slick chick yourself, Mom.' " Needless to say, they have both made each other happy.

That is what it takes to have happy families. Becoming more appreciative is a sign of growing up. As your parents *feel* you are growing up, they will unconsciously give you more privileges.

The tendency of adolescents to cover up their shyness creates a sort of vicious circle. In other words, most of you feel a little shy but you don't look that way, so each one tends to feel that no one else is shy but himself. "I'm different"—that makes you feel more shy. But just realizing that you are all in the same boat can help you outgrow it.



Generated on 2021-05-14 00:38 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Dating

Take for example this business of dating. If you are in high school and aren't dating, you may be beginning to feel that you are different. Actually, the vast majority of students in high



school do not date regularly, and probably most of them do not date at all. Of course, you all pretend that you do. You may feel you have to because everybody else does, and the others feel they have to because you do. Wouldn't it be interesting to take a poll in your school, in which nobody had to sign his name, and ask the kids honestly to indicate how many had dated in the last month, the last week, or are dating regularly, or going

Generated on 2021-05-14 00:38 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY

H31
.P95
no. 161
547505

THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS IDEA: 1936-1950

NOW more than ever the Public Affairs Committee, Inc., organized in 1936, is fulfilling its purpose of placing accurate facts on current questions before the American people. The publication of the ***Public Affairs Pamphlets***—now in their sixteenth million—is one of the activities of the Committee, whose purpose as expressed in its Constitution is "to make available in summary and inexpensive form the results of research on economic and social problems to aid in the understanding and development of American policy. The sole purpose of the Committee is educational. It has no economic or social program of its own to promote." Publication of a pamphlet does not necessarily imply the Committee's approval of the views contained in it.

Maxwell S. Stewart, Editor of the Pamphlet Series
Mabel C. Mount, Associate Editor
Dallas Johnson, Educational Director

THE COMMITTEE

Mark Starr, Chairman
Erling M. Hunt, Acting Secretary
Beulah Amidon, Treasurer
Eleanor C. Anderson
Philip S. Broughton
Earl Brown
C. Ward Crampton
Robert E. Cushman
J. Frederic Dewhurst
Thomas D. Dublin
Brooks Emeny
Samuel H. Flowerman
William Trufant Foster
Roma Gans
George T. Guernsey
Howard Henderson
William L. Holland
F. Ernest Johnson
S. M. Keeny
Harry W. Laidler
Robert P. Lane
Kay W. Levin
Robert M. MacIver
Frieda S. Miller
John Godfrey Morris
Walter E. Myer
Ernest G. Osborne
Walter R. Sharp
George Soule
William H. Wells

All rights reserved. No part of this pamphlet may be reproduced without permission, except short passages of no more than 500 words in length which may be quoted by a reviewer or commentator, with full credit to the Committee. For permission to use longer excerpts write to the Public Affairs Committee, Incorporated, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

First Edition, May, 1950

Generated on 2021-05-14 00:37 GMT / https://hdl.handle.net/2027/inu.30000054437979
Public Domain, Google-digitized / http://www.hathitrust.org/access_use#pd-google
Digitized by Google
Original from INDIANA UNIVERSITY