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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Final word: Home economics

The economics of marriage is an exceedingly complex business, but one thing remains clear ... never marry a Keynesian

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Labour must be divided efficiently within a marriage, as Wills and Kate will learn (John Stillwell)

Newton's first law of economics states that for every economist there is an equal and opposite economist. So would you turn to one for relationship counselling? Two American financial journalists have published a book, *Spousonomics: Using Economics to Master Love, Marriage and Dirty Dishes*, which suggests

the so-called dismal science can provide the recipe for a happy marriage.

Couples enter marriage against all the advice of conventional economic theory. A wedding is the creation of an internal monopoly in which two people pledge specifically to cease trading with others. For ladies in particular there will be no more racy encounters with the invisible wandering hand of Adam Smith.

Economics demands that labour should be divided efficiently. Marriage demands that labour should be divided equally, but in a way which ensures that men always get to put out the bins. Perhaps the best advice for a stable, economics-based marriage is never to marry a Keynesian. Every time you hit a bad patch, they'll want to go out and spend more money.