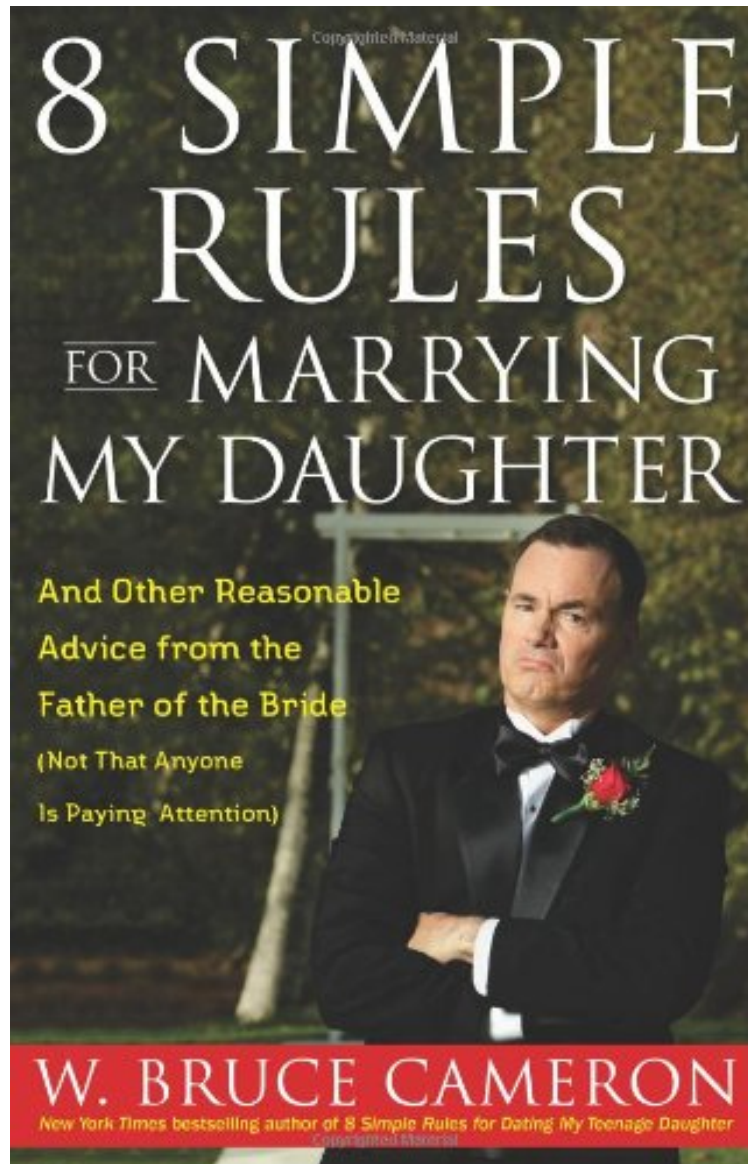


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## **8 Simple Rules for Marrying My Daughter: And Other Reasonable Advice from the Father of the Bride (Not that Anyone is Paying Attention)**

*W. Bruce Cameron*

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Great sense of humor and outlook on life. I wish I could clone him and have someone with such a great sense of humor and outlook in my life! I highly suggest getting all of his books (and NO, I am not employed or related to him or getting a kickback!).

Following the stunning success of 8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter -- which was adapted into a TV show for ABC -- W. Bruce Cameron returns with an even more hilarious look at fatherhood, capturing the predicament of the forgotten man in the tux at his little girl's wedding. As Cameron explains, modern weddings are much like royal coronations, only more expensive. Aside from the writing of checks, there is not much fathers understand about them. Why can't guests successfully eat, drink, and dance unless the whole event is as carefully choreographed as a Broadway production? With his characteristic wit, Cameron captures the aspects of the wedding that are the most ridiculous to paternal eyes, for example: • why the wedding needs a theme (this one is "We're all stressed out") • why the wedding has to be photographed as if it will be reviewed by the Warren Commission • why the bouquet must include a species of flower found only at the tip of the Himalayas • why the wedding dress has to strike the right mood (which, judging from everyone's behavior, might best be summed up as "crabby") Throughout it all, however, a father keeps faith that the wedding -- if not the wedding preparation -- will make his daughter a happy woman. Hilarious yet poignant, 8 Simple Rules for Marrying My Daughter is sure to be a comfort to the legions of fathers (and mothers) who will one day have a daughter walking down the aisle.

About the Author  
W. Bruce Cameron is a nationally syndicated columnist and the author of 8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter, which was the basis for the television show 8 Simple Rules on ABC, now syndicated nightly on ABC Family. He is also the author of How to Remodel a Man and is the two-time winner of the National Society of Newspaper Columnists Award for best humor columnist and the winner of the 2006 Robert Benchley Award  
Excerpt.  
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Introduction  
A father's job is to protect his daughters from dangerous things, like puberty. This isn't easy, because the daughters don't want to be protected -- in fact, when they get to be teenagers, "dangerous" somehow becomes synonymous with "attractive." When they were little, they were frightened there were monsters in their closets, and wanted you to check. Then they got older, and you worry there might be boys in there, and they scream at you that you have no right to look in the closet, it is their private property! (Even though it is in the home that you pay for.) When they were small, they wanted the light left on so they could sleep, but now they want to sit in the living room with the lights turned off (and their boyfriends presumably turned on), and they get annoyed when you noisily flip on all the lights so you can better see the shotgun you are cleaning. Back when they were young, they wore cute little T-shirts and shorts -- and as teenagers they appear to be wearing exactly the same clothes, outfits so tiny on their alarmingly developed bodies you feel the need to wrap a quilt around them, or maybe spray them with insulation. You used to be the most important male figure in their lives, and now they regard you as if you are something growing on the shower curtain. You've been replaced by a slinking, sniveling succession of slackers who stare at your daughters with ill-disguised desire. Boys. The first time a boy comes over to see your daughter, your instinct is to ask him to leave your property and your planet. Unfortunately, even if you get rid of this one, others will soon follow -- people have been irresponsibly breeding boys for a long time, and why this isn't prevented by the Geneva Convention, you'll never understand. Other than convening an emergency session of the UN Security Council, there are few practical solutions available to you, though basketball player Charles Barkley had an interesting take on what to do about the boys sniffing around his daughter: "I figure if I kill the first one, word will get out." My response to the viral spread of teenage boys was to write the 8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter, which ultimately became an ABC television show starring the late John Ritter. (Example -- Rule One: If you pull into my driveway and honk, you'd better be delivering a package, because you're sure as heck not picking anything up.) These 8 Simple Rules, posted on their bedroom doors when my daughters refused the idea of wearing T-shirts with the rules printed on the back, worked about as well as you could expect, which is to say, not at all. My daughters continued to behave in ways I can only describe as FBF (forbidden by father) until they finally became old enough to admit I was right along. (I suppose I should reveal that though they were old enough to make this humble admission, they didn't actually do so.) Then they moved out, somehow thinking this would mean an end to FBF activities, which is absurd. My job to protect my daughters will not end until I've had my first autopsy. The fact that the forbidden activities are no longer occurring in my own living room is not at all relevant, though I do appreciate having more space on my couch. Which

brings us to the subject of this book: marriage. Now, I am not against my daughters getting married and having children -- far from it, I can't wait until they have teenage daughters of their own! (Now Grown) Former Teenage Daughter: Can you believe it? When I told my daughter she was grounded, she screamed that she hated me and locked herself in the bedroom! Father: Really? I can't imagine. Former Teenage Daughter: Then she snuck out her bedroom window! Father: (helpless laughter) Yet as much as I am looking forward to having the above conversation, I am against my daughters marrying too young, too hastily, or too soon for me to get used to the idea that a "son"-in-law is suddenly going to be part of my permanent family. Why can't we wait a few years, until we're all, say, retired? I think we can all agree that the world runs better when we learn from our fathers. When it comes to love, I've had a series of problems finding someone who truly appreciates just how wonderful I am, which has led to a couple of relationship disasters, including a divorce. Now I realize that my wonderfulness is best doled out in small doses, or maybe even just kept completely to myself. With my glorious male wonderfulness thus in check, I've managed to find and keep a steady girlfriend for a couple of years, though she's just off a nasty breakup herself, so we're both proceeding with caution. This is called "learning from our mistakes," and my daughters, both still in their twenties, strike me as too young to have made an adequate number of mistakes from which to learn, though when it comes to boys, I've done my best to prevent them from making mistakes, and I don't care if this is paradoxical. What is it they say? Life begins at forty! What a perfect age for my daughters to start contemplating getting married! Unfortunately, you can't issue an FBF against biology -- I know, because I've tried. Despite the fact that your daughter is still your little girl, when she looks in the mirror, she sees a full-grown woman, one she apparently feels is ready to get married to some loser. Or not! Maybe he's not a loser! One of your jobs is to find this out -- just because he refuses to watch America's Most Wanted doesn't mean he's afraid he'll see his face on it. Just because he asks you how things are going at work doesn't mean he's mentally tabulating your net worth because he's planning to steal your money and sack your village. Just because he kisses your daughter doesn't mean he's an alien being, intending to impregnate her with a creature that will burst out of her chest and destroy mankind.\* On the other hand, all three of the above are reasonable suspicions that should be investigated via polygraph and liver biopsy, and if he refuses, he should not be marrying your daughter. (Yet if you think about it, isn't agreeing to a polygraph exactly what someone would do if he were guilty?) Then, entirely separate from the topic of marriage is the subject of the wedding. You'll find that during the planning and execution of this complex ritual, your advice and counsel are very much appreciated by you. Just as *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenage Daughter* is an owner's manual for any parent whose little girl has transformed overnight into little monster, this book, *8 Simple Rules for Marrying My Daughter*, is also a how-to guide. How to handle all the joyous events in your future: your daughter's engagement, wedding, marriage, and requests for loans. How to cure your daughter of Bridemania (you'll need a Bible, a crucifix, and some holy water). How to deal with your future son-in-law in a way that's friendly and yet still totally intimidating. Whether your daughter is years and years away from getting married (as I still insist mine should be) or has recently had someone propose, in these pages you'll find the answers to your questions, like: It's the happiest time of her life -- so why is everybody crying? Shopping for a wedding gown -- how can something so boring be so frightening? What's the difference between the traditional and non-traditional wedding? (Traditionally, the father of the bride pays for both.) The wedding theme song -- should we use the music from *Mission: Impossible*? Oddly, the whole earth-shattering series of events begins not with the father, but with a man to whom you've probably given little thought or notice: the prospective groom-to-be. Copyright © 2008 by W. Bruce Cameron ONE There Are 8 Simple Rules for Marrying My Daughter "Groom" as a noun means "man who will marry my daughter." "Groom" as a verb means "monkeys eating lice off each other." The challenge for a father is to accept the reality of the former without fixating on a mental image of the latter. Usually, the news that one of the boys who has been hanging around eating all the food in the house has somehow morphed into a fiancé comes as a big shock to the father, who had no idea things were this serious because the only clue anyone gave him was that his daughter mentioned that her relationship was "very, very serious" and that they "might get married." How come nobody ever tells him anything? In ancient times, the boy gave a clear sign to a father of his intentions by offering a gift of respect, like a donkey or a fiefdom. In today's world, this very practical system has fallen to the wayside. (Though to be truthful, I don't really want a donkey. A sports car would be nice, however. And a fiefdom would still be okay.) It was also a practice for the father to pay a dowry to the groom -- sort of like paying ransom, except that the kidnapper got to keep her! This is pretty baffling until you consider that in ancient times, girls often married in their teens: There are moments when a father would quite frankly pay anything to get someone else to take responsibility for his teenage daughter. The practice of giving a dowry has evolved into the tradition of having the father pay for the wedding. (Though I have to say, if you're ever afforded the opportunity to fulfill your obligation with nothing more than a couple of goats, do it!) Now the father finds himself playing catch-up. The daughter seems sure this guy is "the one," but what does she know? Every single other man in her life has turned out to be a loser -- otherwise, they'd still be in her life. With that kind of track record, how can she be trusted to get it right this time? Who is this guy, anyway? He could be anything -- a thief, a con artist, a member of Congress. Just because he's clever enough to burrow into the family doesn't mea...