

## Couriermail Australia

### Your parents are hardwired to think you can do better



Mum and dad driving a wedge in your relationship? They just want the best for you, it seems.

*Source:* Supplied

**IT IS an all-too-common scenario - she thinks he is wonderful but her parents simply don't approve.**

Now scientists believe they have discovered why mothers and fathers rarely think their daughter's boyfriend is good enough for her.

The belief stems from a deep evolutionary instinct to see her settle with someone who will look after her and provide for her every need.

The research, conducted by British and Dutch scientists, suggests that parents are pre-programmed to make sure their children end up with love, support and money.

And they would prefer their daughter to find a caring, sharing chap to take some of the load.



Mum and dad did such a good job caring for you. They just want your man to do the same.  
*Source: Supplied*

Daughters can exploit this wish, however, by settling for a man who isn't a good provider - confident in the knowledge that their parents will compensate for his shortcomings.

Dr Tim Fawcett, from Bristol University, said parents' disapproving behaviour appears to be connected to the way we have evolved.

In other words, parents who disapprove of their daughter's choice can't help it - they are simply acting the way nature intended.

Typically, parents would prefer a son-in-law who is more caring and supportive than their daughter would choose. As a result, the two generations will be looking for a different type of man.

Dr Fawcett said: "Parents want all their daughters to end up with the same level of support, so to achieve this they give more to daughters who have less from their partner.

"But this leads to conflict over mate choice because daughters can afford to choose an unsupportive partner in the knowledge their parents will pick up the slack."

He believes that the theory could also explain why many parents are unhappy with their son's choice of partner.