

Child Bride

US : 1938 : dir. : : 62 min
 prod: : scr: : dir.ph.:
 Shirley Mills; Bob Bollinger
 Warner Richmond; Diana Durrell; Dorothy Carrol; George Humphreys; Frank Martin;
 Rex Baxter; Don Barrett; Al Bannon

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	8	€	M	⌘	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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Tender prey to the bestial lusts of a doggone Bad Guy. They just don't make 'em like that anymore. They do make 'em – incessantly in fact – just not like that anymore. The topic has been promoted from cornball melodrama to epidemic social paranoia in the space of half a century. I wonder why?
 Source: Classic Movie Kids website



Bob Bollinger (right, shirt slashed open to the waist) has his own plans – entirely proper ones of course – for the gratuitously under-aged Shirley Mills.
Source: CVMC website

CVMC video retail/rental website review:

"Back in the "good ol' days up in der hills," a horny old man could get himself a child bride without the slightest worry..., that is until this flick came out and stirred up so much emotion with the public laws just had to be passed.

Ummm, well, no, it really didn't have such an impact, but "**CHILD BRIDE**" has developed a cult following over the years for its attempt to have one as well as for its corny plot and poor acting. The tale involves two feuding men. One kills the other and then frames the deceased's wife, telling the woman he'll keep his mouth shut about her supposed murder of her husband if she consents to him marrying her twelve year old daughter, Jenny (Shirley Miles). The girl is against it yet feels she must accept to save her mother from prison.

So, it is then up to the local teacher, who is on a vendetta to eliminate the tradition of child brides, and Jenny's jealous boyfriend (Bob Bollinger), roughly thirteen, to save the day. Can they pull it off before the "youngin'" is violated?!?! Give it thirty minutes and it becomes a lot of fun. This is the uncut version

of this film and includes the controversial (at least for its time) skinny-dipping scene.

Rated NR: adult themes [sic]; brief nudity; sexual themes; violence

Categories: Boy Films, Little to Preteen, Adolescent, Coming-of-Age, Cult, Drama, First Love, Girl Films, Little to Preteen, Adolescent ."

Classic Movie Kids website biographical note on Shirley Mills:

"Shirley Mills had the starring role in "**CHILD BRIDE**", a campy movie about life in the Ozarks. She appeared in some 17 other movies between 1938 and 1951, appearing with many of the classic child stars. Her credits include "**THE UNDERPUP**" with Gloria Jean, Virginia Weidler, and Ann Gillis, "**THE GRAPES OF WRATH**" with Darryl Hickman, "**FIVE LITTLE PEPPERS IN TROUBLE**" with Tommy "Butch" Bond, Edith Fellows, and Ronald Sinclair, and "**YOUNG PEOPLE**" with Shirley Temple.

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "Speelfilm Encyclopedie", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. Not to be confused with the 1981 TV movie (see what I mean?) "**CHILD BRIDE OF SHORT CREEK**". This probably belongs as a companion piece – not to "**BABY DOLL**" or "**PRETTY BABY**" – but the laughable social conscience melodrama "**BOY SLAVES**", released the same year, where the youngsters in question were put to slaving, not in a boy brothel (American kids are too *manly* for such an outrage) but on a turpentine farm.

The tradition of the Ozarks child bride points, if anything does, to the absurdity of "age of consent" laws, which draw arbitrary lines in the sand at anywhere from 12 to 21, based on no proven medical or psychological threshold, and which shift back and forth according to trends in public opinion, while the actual age of human puberty continues to drop. In both Catholic and Jewish traditions, twelve remains the nominal age of attaining majority (as defined in the Bar Mitzvah, or confirmation ceremonies) reflecting a fact of history some would have us forget. Romeo and Juliet were prevented from marrying, not by Juliet's age (+/-14), but by a long-standing feud between their families.

Barnstormer melodramas like this one stand in marked contrast to films in which a boy of 12 is compelled by custom to marry a far older woman. Where the younger party is male, the situation is presented either as an indignity to the woman – "**HAZAL**" – or as a farce – "**HOLY MATRIMONY**" – and merges imperceptibly with the "initiation" comedies where a boy of that age has his first sex with an adult woman. Not one of these titles present the boy as a "victim" of adult sexual appetites. In other words, such films express a blatant heterosexual double standard, which defines women as sexual receptacles and yet is fulsomely endorsed by today's politicised womanhood, because it casts male sexuality in a pejorative light. One double standard has merely replaced the other, and everything remains just as it was.

I write this review on the day that a tabloid news story has wound to its conclusion concerning a British girl of 14 who stole her parents' credit cards to fly off to Turkey and marry a 25-year old Turkish man she fell in love with on holiday. Her parents, with the aid of the British paparazzi, hauled the girl back in irons to the safety of home, but she flew back today to testify in her husband's defense, now facing a prison sentence in Turkey for "statutory rape". The girl's own grandmother condemned the trial as a gross injustice to the man, and implicitly blamed her granddaughter for embroiling him in a national scandal to his ruin. Irritating little incidents like this just *will* keep happening to undermine the Clear and Signal Truth that 14-year olds must be the terrified victims of predatory male appetites.

Nothing else is known of Shirley Mills or Bob Bollinger. He's not listed in *The Moving Picture Boy*. Nor is she, come to that, but can you honestly claim to be surprised?

See subject index under **BOY MEETS GIRL**, and under [SEX & SEXUALITY](#) for a section on arranged child marriages.