

Human Rights Watch

Children's Rights

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2019/03/12/no-tucker-carlson-child-marriage-not-different-lifestyle-0>

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US Media Personality Belittles Child Marriage Victims on Newly Uncovered Audio

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Newly uncovered audio has US political media personality Tucker Carlson defending a man who received a felony conviction for arranging child marriages in the US. The audio was recorded more than a decade ago, during appearances by Carlson on the *Bubba the Love Sponge* radio show. In [subsequent audio recordings](#), Carlson uses racist and homophobic slurs.

[Carlson is heard](#) on the audio backing the accused, saying: Hes in prison because he is weird and unpopular and he has a different lifestyle that other people find creepy. He then went on to say that rape of a child within the context of marriage is somehow different from other types of rape. The rapist, in this case, has made a lifelong commitment to live and take care of this person. So it is a little different, he says. In the audio, Carlson also says that arranging a marriage between a 16-year-old and a 27-year-old isnt the same as pulling a stranger off the street and raping her.

Carlson isnt backing down from his comments. Instead, he says he was caught saying something naughty on a radio show more than a decade ago. He then challenges [a]nyone who disagrees with [his] views to come on to his show and explain why.

Heres why: Human Rights Watch has documented the [devastating impact child marriage](#) has on girls around the world. Compared to women who marry after the age of 18, married girls are more likely to drop out of school, live in poverty, and be victims of domestic violence. Child marriage also often results in serious health risks due to early pregnancy, which threaten the lives of both girls and their babies.

Each year around the world, 12 million girls marry before the age of 18, and the US is no exception. With child marriage comes lifelong harmful effects for girls.

Carlsons comments are deeply troubling. They make light of a practice that threatens the rights and health of girls.

At a time when there is growing recognition that child marriage is a severe human rights violation, Carlsons comments are indefensible.

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