

## Child Marriage Under The Lens

**Researcher Robyne Hayes Conveys Her Work Towards Stopping Child Marriage Through Photography.**

**While women in the first world plan their dream weddings, girls that live in developing nations are married off before the age of 18 with no say.**

There are 67 million child brides on this earth today, located all over the world with different circumstances - yet share the same commonality of having no voice. Robyn Hayes has chosen to devote her life to putting a focus on this global issue through her captivating images and stories for the better.

Child marriage researcher Robyne Hayes discovered the power of photography after she noticed a lack of interest when presenting the issues of child brides in a traditional way. So instead, she chose to present photographic portraits of these brides and soon started to engage with her audience on a higher level.



Robyne Hayes at a recent talk that many high schoolers attended.



Child bride in a community located in Ethiopia

Capturing the anguish in the child bride's eyes, to the heartbreaking reality of their new lives, each image links a real human face to the problem of child marriage.

Robyne never trained in photography and only briefly studied it in high school. But she had always loved working with children and was a teacher who worked with girls in small communities. After her husband gave her a camera as a gift, Robyne combined her passion for working with children and talent for photography.

Working across three countries: (Ethiopia, Nepal and Bangladesh), her work aims to empower girls and ensure equality among communities by working with families alike.

**“Words Don’t come easy to me, But photography does” - Robyne Hayes**

Not only does putting a spotlight on child marriage through photography help to give exposure to the issue, but it also helps the girls themselves. “Giving cameras to little girls with no voice, was one of my life-defining moments” Robyne said. The cameras are used by the girls as a tool to document their life first hand. This way, their families are able to see for themselves, the change that needs to be made and the new opportunities.



Little girl telling her story through the lense of a camera

By giving the cameras to the girls she is allowing them to show her what she has to do to improve the families lifestyle, For example she saw a lack of equality amongst the community and saw a chance to improve girls and women’s income by empowering them to go out and get jobs. Robyn Hayes works closely with the client and the clients families in order to set up a sustainable future.



Inspiring change for the better, generations moving forward with the act of education

You don’t have to be a professional photographer to help empower girls in 3rd world countries, we all have a voice that can be put to use by spreading the word or educating relatives, peers and teachers on the topic of child marriage. Every time we put an effort forward to help stop child marriage there is hope and meaning behind it, there is improvements and new beggins behind it but most of all there is change.

Robyn Hayes has a simple philosophy. When asked “how do you feel when you see change” , she replied “ I see hope”. By capturing the essence of change through a camera lens she is developing communities for the better.

## **Bibliography:**

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## **Images:**

- 1) [Writers fortnight session with Robyne Hayes](#)
- 2) [Child bride in ethiopia taken by Robyne Hayes](#)
- 3) [A little girl taking over a camera, picture taken by Robyne Hayes](#)
- 4) [Girls at school starting the beginning of their education, action being taken Picture taken by Robyne Hayes](#)