

# International Collaboration and the Spread of *Girlhood Studies*

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This first issue of *Girlhood Studies* in 2015 heralds the beginning of our move from two to three issues a year. This change acknowledges the burgeoning interest in Girlhood Studies as an academic area, and the increase in submissions from contributors. It also acknowledges the global context for work on girlhood. Indeed, as part of this exciting time, we bring to the Girlhood Studies community the second in a series of themed issues focusing on girlhood in different geographic and political contexts. Thus, following “Nordic Girls’

Studies: Current Themes and Theoretical Approaches” (*Girlhood Studies* 6:1), and in collaboration with the guest editors of that issue, we present this special issue on “Girlhood Studies in Post-Socialist Times.” The mock-up in Figure 1 offers a transliteration of the logo on the cover of *Girlhood Studies* into Russian; it was created for the first Russian Girlhood Studies conference, “Girlhood Studies: Prospects and Setting an Agenda” held in Moscow on 7 December 2012 at the Gorbachev-Foundation. This conference was a momentous event, attended by Mr. Gorbachev himself, that brought together scholars from various Russian universities and institutions to consider what Girlhood Studies as an interdisciplinary



Figure 1: Russian Girlhood Studies conference, 2012. Transliteration by Michelle Harazny.



nary area of feminist scholarship could look like. Many of the presentations at that conference are now articles in this themed issue.

I am very grateful to two leading Russian academics, Olga Zdravomyslova (a longstanding member of the *Girlhood Studies* editorial board) and Elena Iarskaia-Smirnova, for taking on the guest editing of this special issue, and to the Gorbachev Foundation for its support of this first-time event in feminist publishing in Russia. I recognize and value the enthusiasm, commitment and, dare I say, bravery of the contributors, many of whom are publishing for the first time in a journal published in English, and, of course, I thank Ann Smith, the Managing Editor, for her work with the contributors and their manuscripts.

It must also not be left unsaid that the time between the conference “Girlhood Studies: Prospects and Setting an Agenda” and the appearance of this issue of *Girlhood Studies* has also been (and continues to be) one of tremendous change so it is all the more significant that this themed issue has come to fruition. This issue will serve to inform scholars working on Girlhood Studies outside the context of post-socialism about the massive changes that have taken place over the last two decades. Each article in its own way considers post-socialist girlhood in relation to themes and issues that have been addressed in previous issues of *Girlhood Studies* such as popular culture, TV and cinema, teen pregnancy and motherhood, girls’ groups, sexuality, fashion, girls’ aggression, and the fictional representation of girls. This issue provides a reading on social change in post-socialist Russia through girlhood as a category of sex, gender, and age, but it also offers a fascinating basis for comparison with girlhoods elsewhere. Taken together the articles in this issue might be read as a socio-historical landmark, providing a baseline for future work in Girlhood Studies in post-socialist countries.