



GIRLHOOD STUDIES

An Interdisciplinary Journal

Call for Papers

A Seat at the Table: Recalling the Promises of Girl Activism and Advocacy

In this Special Issue we aim to bring together girl activists, young women, practitioners, artists, community organizers, and academic feminist partners involved in girl-led movements to share experiences and lessons learned. We seek to explore different forms and possibilities of intergenerational feminist activism and creative visioning, beginning with the girls we assist in their projects and those with whom we partner. We plan to chronicle best practices and essential tools for contesting divisive neoliberal edicts about girls and their girlhoods to make room for the generative possibilities of girl activism as intergenerational activist-praxis. Audre Lorde (1985) reminds us that it is not easy to sustain belief in the efficacy of possibility; it is our hope that in inviting scholars, activists, allies of girls, and girls themselves to explore their lived experiences of partnership we will illuminate new pathways and opportunities for solidarity, inclusivity, and transformation.

Adult allies to girl leaders understand the often-complex challenges associated with girl activist praxis (Bent 2020; Brown 2006; Brown 2016; Edell et al. 2016; Endsley 2018; Taft 2014). Despite the challenges associated with these efforts, we remain committed to the promise of girl activism and to our advocacy with and for girls. This shared commitment is rooted in the understanding that girls' voices and creative visioning have the power to transform movements in undeniable ways, and that we, as adult allies and partners, have an obligation to consider, share, and examine critically what it means to support girls' agency in different arenas and places of power. We believe this reflexive process means having open, honest conversations about where we, as adults, fall short and sometimes succeed in our work with girls while making clear the essential elements of nurturing girl-led movements and girl activism or advocacy, broadly defined. In this Special Issue, we want to bring readers face to face with our challenges, tensions, and moments of joy in our journeys with girl activists, artists, and advocates who have taken the lead on dealing with pressing social issues in different community contexts. We invite authors to share their approaches to intergenerational partnerships and the amplification of girls' voices and visions of justice.

We invite submissions, including single, multi-authored, and intergenerational ones, from girls, practitioners, artists, policy makers, researchers, community-based organizers, movements, and organizations. We welcome especially global and/or transnational perspectives. We are also interested in reflections on personal experiences of being a girl activist or advocate for girls in the past or present.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- What does it mean to recall the promise of girl activism? How does this promise inform our work with and for girls?
- What does girls' activism that engages with their intersectional identities look like?
- Who are the girls envisioned as activists and as the targets of girl programming?
- Who funds girls' programming and how has this changed over time?
- What does girl-led activism or advocacy mean? And what is the role of adults?
- What are the possibilities and complications of intergenerational activism?
- What are the media stories told about girls' activism and advocacy? How does social media adapt and change such stories?
- How might feminism reclaim notions of what counts as girls' empowerment from neo-liberal appropriations and meanings of the term?
- What are the social issues engaging girls currently and what were they in the past?
- What are the means and methods girls use to enact their activism or advocacy?
- What does being involved in activism and/or advocacy mean for girls and girlhood identities?
- What are the nuances of partnering with girls and/or working with other adults who desire to amplify girls' political agency?

Submissions may include empirical research and/or case studies, reflection pieces, accounts of autoethnographic work, examples of workshop curricula, and may also address theoretical and/or methodological issues. Artistic/poetic/visual expressions are also welcome.

Abstract and Article Submission

Abstracts of 125 words and a short biographical note (100 words) should be sent by **15 January 2025** to cfpspecissueghs@gmail.com.

Final unpublished articles of 6000 to 6500 words must be submitted by **1 June 2025** (total word count includes title, abstract, keywords (6 to 8 in alphabetical order), article, bio, acknowledgements, notes, and references). Images count for 200 words, and authors are responsible for securing copyright. The texts must comply fully with [Berghahn's modified Chicago style](#).

This special issue will be published in May 2026 and will be guest edited by Crystal Leigh Endsley, Emily Bent, Marnina Gonick, and Adwoa Aidoo.

GUEST EDITORS

Crystal Leigh Endsley is an internationally renowned spoken word artist. She is an award-winning poet, performer, and professor, and serves young folks as an artist, advocate, and academic who pursues social justice through Hip-Hop based pedagogy. She is an Associate Professor in the department of Africana Studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY.

Emily Bent is an Associate Professor in Women's and Gender Studies at Pace University. Her research interests include girl-led activist movements, girls' human rights, and intergenerational feminist partnerships in transnational contexts. For almost twenty years, she has been working side-by-side with girl leaders at the United Nations.

Marnina Gonick is Professor of Education and Women and Gender Studies at Mount St Vincent University. Her research interests include girls' identities and subjectification, representations of girls and girlhood in media, gender and education, and arts-based and participatory action research with girls.

Adwoa Aidoo is a youth development executive with over twenty years' experience working with young people with a particular focus on girls' leadership, participation, and rights. Her work has included working in partnership with girl activists and their allies at the United Nations and the development of global programs and partnerships.

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