Women’s Human Rights:
The Unfinished Revolution

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The women’s rights movement is one that has experienced success over the long-term, but not without the tireless dedication of activists and hard-fought battles sometimes stretching on for years. The women’s rights division of Human Rights Watch documents abuses all over the world against women, specifically violence against women, women in conflict, maternal health and reproductive rights, economic rights and early marriage. Long-time women’s rights activist Liesl Gerntholtz will speak to the work of the division as it relates to the broader women’s rights movement – the long hauls, the heated advocacy battles won and lost, and the ground left to gain.

“Salma” (India/UK, 2013)
Commentary by Prof. Christopher Lee, Canisius College

Like many other women in rural South Asia, Salma, a young Muslim girl in India, was forced into seclusion once she reached puberty, forbidden by her family to study and pushed into marriage. Words became her salvation as she began covertly composing poems on scraps of paper, which were smuggled out of the house and into the hands of a publisher. Against all odds, Salma received numerous accolades and became a famous poet, which was the first step to discovering her own freedom, and challenging the traditions and code of conduct in her village. Salma’s extraordinary story is one of courage and resilience. She has hopes for a different life for the next generation of girls, but recognizes that familial ties run deep and change is slow.

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