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Feminist Practices: Exploring the Podcast as a Feminist Practice

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This course considers various strategies and practices affected by women that have been labeled as 'feminist' by members of global civil society, including non-governmental organizations and women's movements internationally, regionally, and domestically; experts and academics working on 'feminist' issues; and individuals in their own local spaces wishing to address what they consider to be feminist issues through various platforms, such as social media, to an audience beyond their local spaces. We will examine these strategies and how their validity as 'feminist practices' has been evaluated in various ways, for example: by gauging the degree to which they may be guided by common historical tropes such as by Western feminist colonial postulations of the native, colonized women (now in the Developing Nations) as in need of saving by Western society; by discerning if they are guided by questionable 'feminist' lenses that seek to exclude LGBTQI rights from feminism; and examining whether racial and religious biases globally are labeling as inappropriate and 'wrong' feminist interpretations into the agency of women engaged in terrorism and other security matters and, in doing so, generally undermine women's security in those very same conflicts.

While this course will introduce students to feminist practices through a range of material---from theoretical articles to UN and NGO reports to documentaries---it will focus on the use of the podcast as a medium through which to interpret and relay feminist issues to a wide-ranging audience. Through that medium in particular, students will explore critical inquiries such as: What exactly are 'feminist' issues and who has the authority to define them as such?; Who is qualified to interpret, teach, and/or speak about feminist subject matter?; How should one discuss such matters in a way that engages, rather than alienates, an audience?; How are social media platforms, such as podcasts, and other tools impacting the way that feminism is practiced in local, state, and global contexts, and how might the very same tools be complicit in misinformation about feminism?; Can and how can feminists speak about feminist concerns in other spaces without imposing their own cultural understandings of feminism onto those spaces? and Are human rights mechanisms and regional and international justice systems sufficient to address feminist issues ranging from universal to local concerns?