INTRODUCING: SAR's Free to Think Podcast

Hosted by SAR's Executive Director Robert Quinn, *Free to Think* features conversation with interesting, thoughtful, and inspiring individuals whose research, teaching, or expression falls at the always sensitive intersection of power and ideas. We'll be speaking with those who have the courage to seek truth and speak truth, often at great risk, as well as with those who support them and share their stories.

Please send us your comments, questions, or suggestions for future episodes to scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, or by tweeting us at @RobQ_SAR or @ScholarsAtRisk.

Episode 1: Women's Rights, Whatever the Cost

Free to Think talks with Marcia Ross and Jeff Kaufman, the team behind *NASRIN*, a beautiful and inspiring new film about Iranian human rights attorney Nasrin Sotoudeh.

The film shows Sotoudeh's courage and compassion, as she represents those who have been forsaken by a brutal regime: political prisoners, religious minorities, women, and children. Arrested in 2018, while the film was being made, she was sentenced to 38 years and 148 lashes for the "crime" of defending women protesting the mandatory headscarf.

Sotoudeh has been called "Iran's Nelson Mandela." The filmmakers show her as she is: a lawyer, activist, feminist, wife, mother, friend, and a central figure in an extraordinary generation of Iranian women who simply refuse to accept anything less than full and equal rights.

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Free Conservationist Niloufar Bayani

Niloufar Bayani is the program manager of the Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation and a former project consultant for *UN Environment*. On January 24, 2018 alongside eight of her colleagues, Ms. Bayani was arrested on charges of espionage while conducting field research. On November 23, 2019, authorities convicted and sentenced Ms. Bayani to ten years in prison on charges of "contacts with the U.S. enemy state" and "gaining illegitimate income." In the notorious Evin prison, Ms. Bayani has reportedly been subject to mistreatment, including torture and solitary confinement. With the spread of COVID-19 in overcrowded conditions, she is at heightened health risk. You can support Ms. Bayani by signing our letter demanding her release.

Take Action! »

Scholars Seeking Hosts

SAR scholars are at-risk higher education professionals who exemplify the pursuit of academic freedom, freedom of expression, and university values. If your institution is interested in hosting a SAR scholar, please email apply.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.

A Scholar of Mechanical Engineering from Iran

This scholar has a robust research portfolio in his field, and has spent several years conducting research at universities in the Middle East and Asia. His work focuses on nanoscale heat transfer. He also has several years of teaching experience, including on topics such as heat transfer, thermodynamics, and fluid mechanics. He reports risk of arrest in Iran and seeks research and/ or teaching opportunities in a safe location beginning immediately. (Iran 845)

A Scholar of Labor Economics from Turkey

This scholar specializes in labor economics and industrial relations. He has several years of teaching experience on trade, social policy, and management at universities in Turkey. He also has a breadth of research experience, most recently with a focus on labor history and movements. He reports facing risk of arrest, harassment, and academic repercussions in Turkey and seeks research opportunities in a safe location beginning July 2021. (Turkey 766)

A Scholar of Agricultural Sciences from Syria

This scholar has numerous years of research experience at institutes and universities in Syria and North America. His work focuses on legume breeding, and he has published his work in international refereed journals. He also has several years of university teaching experience, including courses such as plant breeding and crop science. He reports risk of arrest and loss of position in Syria, and seeks research and/or teaching opportunities in Canada beginning July 2021. (Syria 835)

All Scholars Seeking Assistance »

Urgent: Save Scholar in Prison Professor G.N. Saibaba from COVID-19

Join SAR in calling on Indian authorities to release Professor G.N. Saibaba immediately on medical parole so he may receive urgent medical care for COVID-19. Professor Saibaba, a scholar of English literature serving a life sentence, is at risk of severe complications from the virus due to various long standing health conditions.

SAR and 17 other organizations issued an appeal to Indian authorities calling for Professor Saibaba's immediate release and access to proper medical treatment.

You can help Professor Saibaba by taking the below actions:

- Sign the letter of appeal in your own name.
- Contact your country's Indian diplomatic mission.
- Share the letter of appeal on social media with the hashtag #FreeSaibaba and tag @ScholarsAtRisk.

It's not too late! Join the online course examining why academic freedom matters

Scholars at Risk, together with our Academic Refuge project partners*, have created a free online course on why academic freedom matters. Faculty can complement their courses with modules from *Dangerous Questions*, when issues around dialogue and debate remain increasingly vital for society. SAR staff can discuss course integration questions and support by writing to scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.

What is the course about?

Participants will examine distinctions between academic freedom and free expression, how academic freedom contributes to a democratic society, and the importance of free and open research to core higher education values. This free, self-paced course is designed for anyone interested in asking critical questions. The course -- divided into three one-week modules -- is now available on FutureLearn. Once registered, participants can access course materials for five weeks. To date, *Dangerous Questions* has brought together over 4,300 participants from 134 countries. Join our global conversation about academic freedom!

*The Academic Refuge project aims to improve the capacity of European universities to assist refugees and threatened academics on campus and to promote understanding and respect for higher education values. Partners include the University of Oslo, the UNICA network, the University of Ljubljana and Scholars at Risk. The European University Association (EUA), the European Association of International Education (EAIE), Al Fanar Media, and University World News are associate partners on the project.

Swetaly University Collaboration

Swetaly is a collaborative initiative between the Italian and Swedish Rectors' Conferences aimed at strengthening the academic relations between Sweden and Italy in research and education. A series of joint seminars are being organized in the Swetaly framework, including a specific strand on aspects related to the protection and promotion of academic freedom. This particular activity is conducted in collaboration with SAR Italy and SAR Sweden, who've taken the lead in designing and organizing a series of workshops.

SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK ITALY SECTION | SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK SWEDEN SECTION

The aim of these Swetaly-SAR workshops is to gain a better understanding of the concrete realities of academic freedom violations and to learn about initiatives and actions carried out, respectively, in Italy and Sweden, to develop plans for future collaborations in fostering higher academic values through education, supporting scholars through protection and hospitality, and in developing joint advocacy interventions. The first event in this series – held on February 3, 2021 – was an opportunity for the two SAR sections to share information about their structure and organization, with a particular focus on advocacy activities and the need to strengthen collaboration both at the national and supranational level to support advocacy interventions.

Future workshops will be focused on hosting and research. Universities and research centers from both Swetaly and SAR national networks are invited to participate in future activities.

Learn More»

Academy in Exile Exhibition: *What We Brought With Us*

Join the Academy in Exile for its second exhibition, *What We Brought With Us*, curated by Vanessa Agnew and Annika Roux. The exhibition is part of Re:Writing the future, a digital festival focusing on artistic freedom, spaces of resilience, and international solidarity. What We Brought with Us exhibits things people took with them when they fled persecution, suffering, and war. It is also a meditation on things people might take if they had to flee.

View the exhibition online here. A physical exhibition will follow once the pandemic restrictions have lifted.

Events

Free Online Course: "Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters" I March 2021 I Webinar

Are some questions too dangerous to ask? What happens to scholars and students who ask those questions? How can you contribute to strengthening core higher education values, such as academic freedom? These are among the questions we will discuss in "Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters," a free online course created by the Academic Refuge project.

Learn More »

Inspireurope Psychosocial Support for Researchers at Risk I March 10, 2021, 10am-12pm (CET) I Webinar and follow up meeting

This webinar and follow-up meeting will focus on the ways in which organizations who are hosting or employing researchers at risk can best support their mental health and wellbeing, while being mindful of the particular needs and challenges they face. The webinar and follow-up meeting speak directly to staff from institutions and organizations, such as international offices, human resources, faculty, departments, and institutes involved in supporting the hosting or employment of researchers at risk, etc.

Learn More »

Academy in Exile 2021 call for applications I March 15, 2021 I Fellowship

A renewal grant from the Volkswagen Foundation will support eight 24-month fellowships under the Academy in Exile at the Forum Transregionale Studien Berlin and the Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut Essen. The deadline for applications is March 15, 2021.

Learn More »

InSPIREurope Stakeholder Forum I April 26, 2021 I Webinar

Save the date for the second Inspireurope Stakeholder Forum to be hosted by Inspireurope's partner, the Alexander Von Humboldt Foundation, in Berlin on April 26-27, 2021. Registration details forthcoming.

Learn More »

Scholars at Risk is an independent not-for-profit corporation, hosted at New York University. Our international network of institutions and individuals shares a mission to protect threatened scholars, promote academic freedom, and prevent attacks on higher education communities around the world.

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Scholars at Risk
411 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10003 USA

Tel: 212-998-2179
scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu
www.scholarsatrisk.org

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