SCHOLARSHIP AT RISK: ACADEMIC FREEDOM VS. AUTOCRATIC REPRESSION

Posted on February 24, 2026 by Keghart



Category: Opinions

School of Advanced Study Doctoral Training Programme in partnership with Scholars at Risk

Session 1
Scholarship at Risk: Academic Freedom vs. Autocratic Repression
Tuesday 3rd March 2026, 16:00 - 18:00 GMT (UK Time)
Online via Zoom
Register here:
https://www.sas.ac.uk/news-events/events/scholarship-risk-1-academic-freedom-vs-autocratic-repression

Introduction to the three sessions and to the speakers
Professor Alan Whitehorn, Royal Military College of Canada (Emeritus)
Dr Victorie Knox, Refugee Law Initiative, School of Advanced Study, University of London
Dr Amy Kapit, Senior Programme Officer for Advocacy, Scholars at Risk
Beck Haberstroh, Program Manager, Digital Safety Training and Resources (Literature and Education), Pen America
Professor Corinne Lennox, Professor of Human Rights and International Relations. Co-Director, Human Rights Consortium; Institute for Commonwealth Studies, University of London
Professor Susan Breau, Associate Director Doctoral Centre, School of Advanced Study, University of London and Senior Associate Research Fellow, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies

Professor Alan Whitehorn will lead this session with contributions from the other speakers. He will first speak about the history of repression in ancient history, the modern era and Putin's post 2000 Russia and Trump USA 2026. He will then give his personal story on writing on the Armenian Genocide. The Professor will give specific advice on protecting yourself and your research. He will conclude with recommendations.

Beck Haberstroh will then discuss digital safety needs of researchers.

Professor Breau will conclude by introducing the services available at the University of London.

Session 2
Scholarship at Risk: Ethical Obligations Towards Research Participants
Tuesday 10th March 2026, 16:00 - 18:00 GMT (UK Time)
Online via Zoom
Register here:
https://www.sas.ac.uk/news-events/events/scholarship-risk-2-ethical-obligations-towards-research-participants

Dr Victorie Knox will lead this session with participation from the other speakers. She will discuss the ethical issues involved in research participants who are at risk in authoritarian regimes or from other groups (organised crime). Using her personal examples, she will discuss the

imperative to protect those who are directly at risk from their regimes or circumstances and discuss the steps that need to be taken to preserve anonymity and data protection. She will also discuss the fact that it is the case that some research cannot be undertaken in dangerous times with examples from the areas of human rights and refugee studies.

Session 3
Scholarship at Risk: The Principles of Academic Freedom
Tuesday 17th March 2026, 16:00 - 18:00 GMT (UK Time)
Online via Zoom
Register here:
https://www.sas.ac.uk/news-events/events/scholarship-risk-3-principles-academic-freedom

Dr Amy Kapit will lead this session with participation of the other speakers. She will introduce the work of the Scholars at Risk and their groundbreaking Free to Think annual reports and highlight the current situation for scholars across the globe.

Professor Corinne Lennox will introduce the work of the Academic Freedom and Internationalisation Working Group (AFIWG) and their draft model code of conduct.

Together with **Amy and Corinne, Susan Breau** will discuss the international law aspects of academic freedom including the ECOSOC General Comment on the Right to Education and the UN Principles on Academic Freedom.

Professor Whitehorn will close the session with his reflections on the importance of academic freedom.

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There are no comments yet.