NEWS

"Only I wasn't steering anything, not even myself."
SYLVIA PLATH AMERICAN AUTHOR

Protesters rally on Beinecke on day of action against Iranian regime

BY ANAYAH ACCILIEN, JOLYNDA WANG AND SARA AGRAWAL
STAFF REPORTERS



ANAYAH ACCILIEN / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER
Around 100 students, faculty and locals gathered on Beinecke Plaza to protest ongoing killings of civilian protesters in Iran.

About 100 faculty, students and locals gathered on Beinecke Plaza on Saturday to express solidarity with people killed in Iran since late December.

The Yale Alliance for Solidarity with Iran hosted the demonstration, which was part of a broader wave of protests around the world, including in Munich, Toronto and Los Angeles. Since late December, Iranian security forces have killed thousands of civilian protestors. Estimates of the death toll vary, with numbers ranging from at least 7,000 dead, according to the Human Rights Activists News Agency, to upwards of 30,000, per The Guardian.

"For me, I cannot see that much blood on the streets of my hometown and stay silent. This is my university as well, and I wanted to demonstrate, to tell my friends, to tell my colleagues that I'm furious, that I'm angry. Being at this demonstration is the very least. Hopefully, we can notify people here at Yale campus about the situation in Iran," Herlock Rahimi ENG '25 GRD '29, a doctoral candidate from Iran, said in an interview. "I wanted to demonstrate this is not justice, this is not civilized, and other countries should act against the regime in Tehran."

Reza Pahlavi — the exiled crown prince of Iran and opposition leader to the Islamic Republic of Iran — announced that Feb. 14 would mark a global day of action for Iranians worldwide to protest the regime of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

A projector displayed graphic videos of violence and protesters being killed on the streets of Iran. During the demonstration, participants chanted "40,000 people killed: this is genocide;" "Not Gaza, not Lebanon, my life for Iran;" "Islamic Republic: terrorists, terrorists;" "Trump act now" and "Death to Khamenei" in English and Persian.

Some wore Iran's lion and sun flag, which was banned in Iran after the 1979 revolution, on their backs. The demonstration concluded with participants singing the Iranian national anthem.

Protests in Iran began on Dec. 28 over the country's economic crisis. After Khamenei ordered officials to crush the protests by any means necessary on Jan 9, officials began to open fire on civilian protesters, according to the New York Times. On Jan. 13, President Donald Trump posted on Truth Social, "keep protesting, help is on the way."

Speakers laid out demands for the international community and for Yale.

Hadi Mahdeyan '27, a student from Iran, organized the event and founded the Yale Alliance for Solidarity with Iran, which was approved as a student organization on Friday. He said in an interview with the News that "to show exactly what was happening on the streets, to show the videos, even though it is disturbing" was particularly important for him.

"One of my friends was killed in the protests, so it was really personal for me. I felt like it's something that I at least owe it to him," Mahdeyan said.

Pourya Navi, a student at the University of New Haven, called upon countries to take action, including by dismantling the Islamic Republic's military machinery, guaranteeing internet access for Iranians, expelling Iranian regime diplomats, securing the release of political prisoners and transitioning to a democratic government by recognizing Pahlavi as a legitimate representative of the Iranian people.

Rahimi, the doctoral candidate, recited names of citizens killed in Iran, and the crowd responded, "rest in peace," in Persian.

Rahimi said that since the 1979 establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, authorities have replaced historic national symbols with state-backed ideological imagery. He said he believes Iran should represent its people and national heritage rather than a governing ideology, describing his decision to wear the lion and sun flag on Beinecke Plaza as an expression of solidarity with the Iranian people.

Rabbi Shmully Hecht, a founder of the Jewish society Shabtai, criticized members of the Yale community who did not attend the demonstration.

"They're so busy with every cause — freedom, human rights, minority rights, women's rights," he said. "Now the people of Iran are fighting for freedom. Where are the thousands of U.S. students who claim to be concerned about freedom in the world?"

He also directed criticism toward Yale's leadership.

"Where is the University? Shame on them, shame on the president of Yale and the deans and faculty," Hecht said. "Tonight was a night to stand in solidarity with the people of Iran. This is a scar on our reputation as a university that portrays itself at the forefront of fighting for human rights."

Tina Posterli said on behalf of the University, "Yale is committed to a diverse and respectful community where free expression is a fundamental value. The university promotes free expression on campus by permitting peaceful talks, vigils, rallies, and protests that adhere to university policy."

Shervin Issakhani GRD' 30, a second-year doctoral candidate who attended the demonstration, said that while he would not call on "foreign military force intervention" at this point, it might be necessary for long-term peace. He said that you "wouldn't ever negotiate" with Iran's current regime.

Reza Pahlavi gave a talk at Yale in 2001.

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Annual lecture on physics Nobel Prize highlights Yale professor's work

BY ANYA GEIST
STAFF REPORTER

Students and faculty packed a lecture hall in the Sloane Physics Laboratory on Monday to hear Rob Schoelkopf, a Sterling professor of applied physics, discuss this year's Nobel Prize-winning physics research.



WILL QIAN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
The lecture about Yale professor emeritus Michel Devoret's Nobel Prize-winning work highlighted the history of quantum computing for a physics audience.

Yale's physics Nobel Prize lecture is held annually to explain and contextualize the most recent Nobel Prize in physics. This year, the lecture concentrated on the work of John Clarke, John Martinis and Michel Devoret, a professor emeritus of applied physics, who jointly won the Nobel Prize for demonstrating quantum phenomena on a scale visible to the human eye.

"The Nobel Prize and Nobel laureates are something that the general public appreciates in some vague way," Schoelkopf said in an interview after the lecture. "Having them understand the research that goes along with it, I mean, it's a good way to get people who are science-curious to get more enthusiastic about it."

The attitude in the lecture hall was enthusiastic as Schoelkopf talked to the audience of undergraduates, graduate students, researchers and faculty through the history of quantum research. He began by describing the work of Tony Leggett, a British-American theoretical physicist who predicted that quantum mechanics could be applied to macroscopic systems. Devoret and his colleagues' work demonstrated Leggett's prediction.

A. Douglas Stone, a professor of applied physics, told the News that in the years immediately following Devoret and his colleagues' research in the 1980s, few researchers built on their work.

However, quantum computing expanded following the 1994 research of Peter Shor, a theoretical computer scientist who is currently a professor of applied math at MIT, Stone explained. Shor proposed a theoretical quantum computer that could break the standard code used to encrypt most websites. As a result, quantum computing became a matter of national security.

"Suddenly, anything that was manipulating, controlling quantum, was a step towards the quantum computer, which was going to be this important national security and economic breakthrough," Stone said.

In the decades since, the field of quantum physics has grown rapidly, as researchers develop more effective and efficient quantum computing systems. In particular, many researchers have explored more efficient and effective methods for producing stable qubits. Qubits, the fundamental unit of information in quantum computing, are notoriously unstable, but are necessary for any quantum computing. Scientists are developing numerous methods of making them more stable.

Schoelkopf also discussed the role of industry in quantum computing. Most large technology companies, such as Microsoft, Intel and IBM, are developing qubits and quantum computing systems.

"One of the things I've learned about being a little bit involved in the industrial side is there's no time to indulge your curiosity or to try something that might not work," Schoelkopf said during the lecture.

Schoelkopf also touched on Yale's contributions to the field.

"Our superpower over the years here at Yale has been that we are small, but we take advantage of that small size by being extra collaborative, extra interactive," Schoelkopf said.

Darya Dayanim '28, the prize lecture chair of the Society for Physics Students, said she appreciated how approachable the lecture was as a synthesis of complicated Nobel Prize research.

It was motivational, she said, to see how Nobel Prize-winning research could inspire future developments in quantum computing.

"Something that stood out to me in particular was the history he took us through, step by step, showing how all these little pieces built on themselves," Dayanim said.

The Sloane Physics Laboratory is located at 217 Prospect St.

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