

Call for Papers: Subjugated Knowledges

Secrecy and Society

Volume 4, Issue 1

Since January 2025, the Trump administration has undertaken [a large-scale purge of federal data and information](#). For example, more than 8,000 web pages and approximately [3,000 datasets](#) from US government websites are impacted. This [purge](#) targeted public health, education, and [climate change](#) data and resources such as the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey, EPA's [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#), and HIV surveillance tools. Other examples further illustrate the range of the Trump administration's influence on altering public understanding of science, policy, and the historical record:

- Per [Executive Order 14199](#), the US withdrew from the United Nations Human Rights Council, and with it, abdicated the responsibility to submit the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of its human rights record (February, 2025);
- As the [US Agency for International Development](#) was abolished, "a senior official told employees to shred or burn classified documents and personnel files," thus making records unavailable to archivists, researchers, and freedom of information (FOIA) requesters (March 2025);
- The nine members of the US State Department's Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation - a congressionally mandated committee that oversees the declassification and publication of the *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS) series, the official historical record of US foreign policy dating back to the Lincoln administration - [were terminated](#) by the Trump administration (April 2025);
- The [web pages of the US Global Change Research Program](#) were shuttered, which continued the war on climate information and [scientific research](#); the [US Department of Interior was directed](#) to eliminate and/or conceal "inappropriate content" at national parks and national historic sites. Visitors are asked to report any "negative" historical information "[they think should be changed](#)." This information ranges from memorial plaques to films at visitor centers (June, 2025).

These policies and actions lead to the question, as one historian posed, "[what if history died by sanctioned ignorance?](#)"

While the Trump administration has positioned itself as the vanguard of efforts to purge information and steadily erode history, it is not alone in this regard in the United States or internationally. In this special issue of *Secrecy and*

Society (volume 4, issue 1), we therefore encourage submissions from scholars and other researchers considering comparative approaches and all national contexts. We invite researchers, journalists, those in the non-profit policy sector, and others working in the area of history, policy, ethics, sociology, and politics to explore the disappearance of facts and data and their replacement by the superficial.¹ We also encourage contributors to delve into how the removal of data, information, and knowledge as a form of ungoverning leads to a “dumbing” down – indeed “gaslighting” – where false or distorted narratives overturn historical understanding, and with it, diminished trust and veracity. We term this special issue “subjugated knowledges” as it has much in common with concealment, censorship, and power that maintain certain perspectives as superior by excluding other accounts.

This special issue of *Secrecy and Society* poses questions about how to understand the current silencing, overturning, and subjugation of one narrative by another. The issue also investigates how subjugated knowledges are tied to epistemic injustice and explores how secrecy games serve as a “heuristic for approaching the complexity of the social relations, practices, knowledges, and evolving nature of secrecies.”²

Categories of Submission, Important Dates, and Contact Information

Secrecy and Society accepts case studies, concept papers, non-traditional work, position papers, reviews, and scholarly articles. More information on the types of submissions are [found here](#); *Secrecy and Society* style guidelines [here](#).

Call for papers: September 15, 2025

Final paper submissions: March 15, 2026

Email [secrecyandsociety dot gmail dot com](mailto:secrecyandsociety@gmail.com) for further information.

1 See Boehnert (2010), <https://ecolabsblog.com/2010/11/29/data-information-knowledge-and-wisdom/>

2 See respectively, Michel Foucault, “Two Lectures,” In C. Gordon (Ed.) *Michel Foucault Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (Pantheon Books, 1980); Miranda Fricker *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford University Press, 2007), and Ian James Kidd, José Medina, and Gaile Pohlhaus Jr. (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice* (Routledge, 2017); and Elspeth Van Veen, Clare Stevens, and Amaha Senu, 2024, “Secrecy Games, Power, and Resistance in Global Politics,” *Review of International Studies* 1-18.