

POLITICS AND PRACTICES OF SECRECY

Sponsored by the Institute of North American Studies

14th May, 6.30pm

Edmund J.Safra Lecture Theatre

Keynote Talk

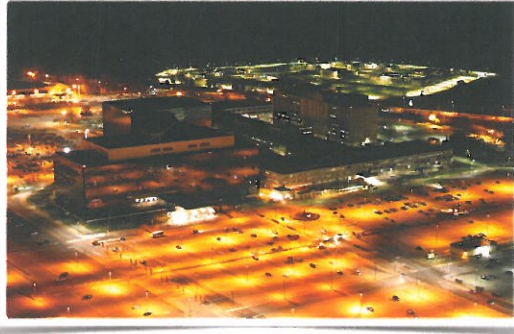
'Secrets of the Dark Net'

Jamie Bartlett, Demos

Respondent: Zach Blas

In this talk, Jamie Bartlett, author of *The Dark Net*, will discuss some of the net's most shocking and unexplored subcultures including trolling, neo-Nazis, child pornography, bitcoin and crypto-anarchy. He will examine how people behave under the conditions of real or perceived anonymity online, and what it means for society today.

Artist and scholar Zach Blas will respond with reference to his latest project on what he calls the 'Contra-Internet'.



In contemporary liberal democracies there is a polarisation between ideals of transparency – borne out in open government legislation, freedom of information, and confessionary culture – and what we might call a secret sphere, an institutionalised commitment to covert security operations that exist beyond the public view. In the wake of the Snowden revelations about the surveillance capabilities of intelligence agencies around the globe, this interdisciplinary symposium gathers experts to discuss the place and implications of secrecy in contemporary cultural politics. Speakers will address what is politically, ethically, socially and ontologically at stake in cultures of secrecy at the individual, national, and international level.

15th May

Politics and Practices of Secrecy:

A Free Day Symposium

9-9.15

Introduction: Secrecy's Frame

Clare Birchall (King's College London) & Matt Potolsky (University of Utah)

9.15-10.45

Roundtable 1: Between Opacity and Openness Chair: Tim Melley

Mark Fenster
(University of Florida)
'Secrecy and the Hypothetical State Archive'

Zach Blas
(University of Buffalo)
'Informatic Opacity'

Mikkel Flyvverbom
(Copenhagen Business School)
'Transparency and the Management of Visibilities'

Vian Bakir
(Bangor University)
'Deceptive Organised Persuasive Communication: (a) Misdirection and (b) Secretly Altering Reality to Fit the Lie you want to Tell'

11.15-12.30 Roundtable 2: Aesthetics of the Secret Chair: Matt Potolsky

John Beck (University of Westminster)
'Photography's Open Secret'

Neal White (Bournemouth University)
'Secrecy and Art in Practice'

Clare Birchall (King's College London)
'Art "After" Snowden'

12.30-1.30: Lunch

1.30-3.00 Roundtable 3: Open Secrets Chair: John Beck

Jack Bratich (Rutgers University)
'Spectacular Secrecy and the Public Secret Sphere: Rumsfeld, Anonymous, and Snowden'

Deme Kasimis (Yale University)
'Passing as Open Secrecy: Migrants and the Performance of Citizenship in Classical Greek Thought'

Adam Piette (Sheffield University)
'The Open Secret of Nuclear Waste'

Matt Potolsky (University of Utah)
'Beyond Fiction: The NSA and Representation'

3.30-4.45 Roundtable 4: Covert Spheres Chair: Peter Knight

Timothy Melley (Miami University)
'The Democratic Security State: Operating Between Secrecy and Publicity'

Øyvind Vågnes (University of Copenhagen)
'Drone Warfare and the Language of Precision'

Hugh Urban (Ohio State)
'The Silent Brotherhood: Secrecy, Violence, and Surveillance from the Brüder Schweigen to the War on Terror'

5.00-5.30

Summary: Secrecy's Future