



## Prof. Dr Dorota Mokrosinska

### Specialisation

Ethics and Political Philosophy



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<https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/research/research-projects/humanities/democratic-secrecy>

### Profile

As a political philosopher, I engage in ethical reflection on issues from current political and social life, such as “How is a tax collector different from a thief?” or “Does Wikileaks empower democratic citizenry or inhibit governance mechanisms?” Answering such questions requires reflection at the point where political morality meets the social, political, and legal sciences. My background in both philosophy and the social sciences forms an excellent basis for this interdisciplinary and practice-oriented approach.

The overarching theme of my research has long been the problem of the legitimacy of political power: an unsurprising topic for a scholar born in the former communist Poland. This was the thread of my dissertation project investigating the grounds for political authority and obligation. Reflection on political power relations informed my postdoctoral research on balancing individual privacy against governmental and societal surveillance. It played a critical role in my research project investigating the issues of secrecy and transparency in democratic governance. It constitutes an important reference point for my current research projects investigating the democratic legitimacy of the government use of algorithmic tools and the political accountability of the media.

### Major publications (selection)

1. *Secrecy and Democracy: Philosophical Analysis*, Routledge, 2023
2. *Rethinking Political Obligation. Moral Principles, Communal Ties, Citizenship*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012 (Nominated for the 2013 Book Award, the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA))
3. *Transparency and Secrecy in European Democracies: Contested Trade-Offs*, Routledge, 2020 (editor)

### Major grants (selection)

1. 2019-2020 Laurance S. Rockefeller Visiting Faculty Fellow at the Center for Human Values at Princeton University
2. 2019-2020 Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies (declined)
3. 2015-2021 ERC starting grant: “Democratic Secrecy: The Philosophical Analysis of the Role of Secrecy in Democratic Governance”
4. 2010-2013 NWO Open Competition: “The Social Value of Privacy”, (initiated and co-wrote the grant proposal; PI: Prof. B. Roessler)
5. 2009-2010 NWO Rubicon: “The Value of Privacy”

### Education

- 2007 PhD (*cum laude*), Department of Philosophy, University of Amsterdam (won 2008 National Biennial Dissertation Award for the Best Dissertation in Ethics in the Netherlands, Research School in Philosophy (OZSW))

### Employment history

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| 2024-present | Professor of Practical Philosophy, Institute of Philosophy, Leiden University                  |
| 2020-present | Head of Practical Philosophy research group, Institute of Philosophy, Leiden University        |
| 2020-2024    | Associate Professor, Institute of Philosophy, Leiden University                                |
| 2015-2021    | Principal Investigator ERC StG Grant (European Research Council) (2 postdocs, 1 PhD)           |
| 2015-2020    | Assistant Professor, Institute of Philosophy, Leiden University                                |
| 2014-2015    | Research Fellow, Department of Political Science, Goethe University in Frankfurt/Main, Germany |
| 2013-2014    | (Part-time) Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, University of Amsterdam                        |
| 2013-2014    | (Part-time) Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, Leiden University                              |
| 2010-2013    | Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Department of Philosophy, University of Amsterdam                |
| 2009-2010    | Research Fellow, Department of Philosophy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA    |

### Research projects

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|-----------|---|
| 2015-2021 | “Democratic Secrecy: The Philosophical Analysis of the Role of Secrecy in Democratic Governance,” Leiden University (ERC StG) |
| 2013      | Departmental Guest, Department of Politics, Princeton University, USA (Sponsor: Prof. R. Sagar)                               |
| 2014-2015 | “Strukturwandel des Privaten” Goethe University, Frankfurt/Main, Germany (Volkswagen Stiftung)                                |
| 2010-2013 | “The Social Value of Privacy”, University of Amsterdam (Open Competition NWO)   |
| 2009-2010 | “The Value of Privacy”, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA (Rubicon NWO)  |

## Invited talks (selection 2018-present)

2022	"Reclaiming <i>raison d'état</i> : The necessity-based defense of state secrecy", Hamburg University
2021	"Legislative (in)capacity to act: a proposal for dual open-secret voting in legislatures", ECPR Joint sessions, Charles University, Prague (online) (with S. Bloks)
2019	"Why Snowden and Not Greenwald? On the Accountability of the Press for Unauthorized Disclosures", Human Values Forum, Princeton University.
2019	"Strategic Uses of Secrecy in Decision-Making and Democratic Accountability", Center for Human Values, Princeton University
2018	"Immunity of the Press for Unauthorized Disclosures of Classified Information: Dispelling the Myth", University of Modena.
2018	"The Political Imperative of Transparency: Its Grounds and Limits", TiLPS, Tilburg University

## Conference presentations (selection 2018-present)

2023	"Public Media and political activism", <i>ECPR General Conference</i> , CHARLES UNIVERSITY, Czech Republic.
2019	"The Press as a Vehicle for Whistleblowing", International Workshop on Debating Media Responsibility (with E. Ceva), Leiden University
2019	"Why Snowden and not Greenwald: On the Accountability of the Press for Unauthorized Disclosures of Classified Information", Society for Applied Philosophy Annual Conference, Cardiff
2018	"Media and Unauthorized Disclosures of Classified Information", IX Braga Meetings on Ethics and Political Philosophy, University of Minho.
2018	"Why Snowden and not Greenwald: On the Accountability of the Press for Unauthorized Disclosures of Classified Information", Disputationes Quadrangulae 13, Leiden University.

## Outreach (selection 2018-present)

2023	Interview in E-zone, magazine of the THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND CLIMATE, "De voor- en nadelen van transparantie", <a href="https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/transparantie">De voor- en nadelen van transparantie   I-zine (rijksoverheid.nl)</a>
2022	Keynote address "The Limits of Transparency" at <i>Programma Transparantie in Informatie</i> . THE MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND CLIMATE AND THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, NATURE AND FOOD QUALITY.
2021	Interview in the national newspaper <i>Trouw</i> , "Politieke transparantie heeft ook nadelen"
2021	Invited speaker Wijsgerig Festival DRIFT
2020-2021	Member, Ethics Committee Unlock (Covid-app design and implementation), <a href="https://unlockapp.nl">https://unlockapp.nl</a>
2020	Blog entry in <i>Justice Everywhere: a blog about philosophy in public affairs</i> ( <a href="http://justice-everywhere.org/democracy/the-news-media-are-a-watchdog-but-so-are-you/">http://justice-everywhere.org/democracy/the-news-media-are-a-watchdog-but-so-are-you/</a> )
2019	Blog entry for <i>Cambridge Core Blog</i> ( <a href="https://www.cambridge.org/core/blog/2019/06/27/the-peoples-right-to-know-and-state-secrecy/">https://www.cambridge.org/core/blog/2019/06/27/the-peoples-right-to-know-and-state-secrecy/</a> )
2018	Convener of the Studium Generale series of lectures for general public "Geheimen in de Democratie" (Democratic Secrecy), Leiden University, The Hague, 25 April – 23 May 2018
2018	Invited expert at the Movies that Matter Festival in Leiden (comment and Q&A after the screening of "Risk", directed by Laura Poitras, (12 February 2018).

## Awards

2013	Nominated for the 2013 Book Award, the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA)
2009	Nominated for the 2009 Teaching Award in the Humanities, the Department of Philosophy, University of Amsterdam.
2008	National Biennial Dissertation Award for the Best Dissertation in Ethics in the Netherlands, Dutch Research School in Philosophy (OZSW)

## Organization of scientific meetings (selection since 2017)

2015-2020	Program Director Center for Political Philosophy (CPP) Leiden (organized 36 monthly colloquia)
2016-2020	Co-convener bi-annual International Workshop Disputationes Quadrangulae (with KU Leuven, UCL Louvain la Neve, Glasgow)
2019	International Workshop on "Debating Media Responsibility", Leiden University, 23-24/09
2017	International Conference "Democratic Legitimacy of State Secrecy," Leiden University, 13-15/09

## Teaching activities and supervision

Taught lectures and seminars at BA and MA level at the University of Amsterdam and Leiden University. Contributed to PhD courses offered by Netherlands Research School in Philosophy. Representative courses: Introduction to Ethics; Introduction to Political Philosophy; Concealment and Disclosure: Transparency, Secrecy and Privacy in Democratic Societies; Political Obligation; Power and Resistance; Privacy: Moral, Social, Legal Problems. Regular supervision of MA and BA thesis (8-10 theses a year). Two Ph.D. students 2015-present Leiden University, one defense completed in May 2021. Two-post-docs.

## Reviewer activities

2019-present	Associate Editor international peer-reviewed journal <i>Res Publica</i>
2009-present	Reviewer for 19 journals. Reviewer for funding institutions: Flanders Organization for Scientific Research (Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek – Vlaanderen (FWO)); Estonian Research Council; Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)

## Commissions of trust

2018	Member, Open Competition Grants Committee, NWO
2017	Member, VIDI Committee, NWO
2012	Member, Dissertation Prize Committee, Dutch Research School in Philosophy (OZSW)

## Department service

2024-present	Member, University Ethics Committee for Partnerships, Leiden University
2016-present	Member, Faculty of Humanities Committee on Second Source of Funding, Leiden University
2021-present	Chair Advisory Board, Institute of Philosophy, Leiden University (member since 2017)
2018-present	Chair, Faculty of Humanities Ethics Committee, Leiden University
2015-2020	Program Director, Centre for Political Philosophy (CPP), Leiden University
2017	Member, Faculty of Humanities Committee for the 2017 NWO call "Promoties in de Geesteswetenschappen", Leiden University
2015 - 2018	Member, Advisory Board Leiden University Centre for Digital Humanities (LUCDH), Leiden University

## Publications

## Peer-reviewed books

1. 2023 *State Secrecy and Democracy: Philosophical Inquiry*, Routledge.
2. 2012 *Rethinking Political Obligation. Moral Principles, Communal Ties, Citizenship*, Palgrave Macmillan.

## Peer-reviewed edited volumes

1. 2020 *Transparency and Secrecy in European Democracies: Contested Trade-Offs*, Routledge.
2. 2015 *Social Dimensions of Privacy: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (co-edited with B. Roessler), Cambridge University Press.

## Peer-reviewed articles

1. 2024 Review of *The Grounds of Authority* by Fabienne Peter. *Ethics* 135(1) (forthcoming)
2. 2024. "Methods of Collective Decision-making in a Democracy", *Res Publica* (with S. Bloks, forthcoming).
3. 2023 "Necessary but Illegitimate: On Democracy's Secrets", *The Review of Politics* 85(1), 73-97  
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0034670522000936>.
4. 2020 "Failing Institutions, Whistle-Blowing, and the Role of the News Media" (with E. Ceva) *Journal of Applied Philosophy*  
[doi.org/10.1111/japp.12476](https://doi.org/10.1111/japp.12476).
5. 2019 "Why Snowden and not Greenwald: On the accountability of the Press for Unauthorized Disclosures", *Law and Philosophy* 39, 203-238.
6. 2019 "Political Authority and State Secrecy", *Public Affairs Quarterly* 33 (1), 1-19.
7. 2018 "Why States Have No Right to Privacy, but May Be Entitled to Secrecy" *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, DOI: 10.1080/13698230.2018.1482097.
8. 2018 "The People's Right to Know and State Secrecy," *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence* 31, 87-106.
9. 2017 "Privacy and Autonomy: On Some Misconceptions Concerning the Political Dimensions of Privacy," *Law and Philosophy* 37, 117-143.
10. 2017 "Secret Politics. A Qualified Defense" (in Polish), *Civitas* 20, 141-160.
11. 2015 "Lever 'On Privacy'", *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 18, 665-666.
12. 2014 "Privacy and the Integrity of Liberal Politics: The Case of Governmental Internet Searches", *Journal of Social Philosophy* 45, 369-389.
13. 2013 "Communal Ties and Political Obligation", *Ratio Juris* 26, 187-214.
14. 2013 "What is Political about Political Obligation? A Neglected Lesson from Consent Theory", *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 16, 88-108.
15. 2013 "Privacy and Social Interaction" (with B. Roessler), *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 39, 771-791.
16. 2012 Soziale Dimensionen des Privaten" (with B. Roessler), *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 46, 101-128.
17. 2011 "Privatheit im Internet. Eine liberale Analyse", *juridikum. zeitschrift für kritik | recht | gesellschaft* 4, 500-517.
18. 2010 "Het gemeenschapskarakter van politieke verplichtingen", *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 72, 717-747.
19. 2008 "Wat is er Politiek aan Politieke Verplichtingen? Een Vergeten Kwestie in het Debat", in: *Als Vuur Verbeek*, B.J.E., Wijsbek. H., & van Donselaar, G. (eds.), Boom Juridisch Press, pp. 73-91.
20. 2005 "From Natural Duties to Political Obligation: a Problematic Passage", *Rechtstheorie* 21, 95-105.

## Book chapters

1. 2024 "Political Obligation and Unjust States" in: Klosko, G. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Obligation*. Oxford University Press (under contract).
2. 2024 "Government Transparency: Dispelling the Myth" in: Hillebrandt, M., Leino-Sandberg, P., Koivisto, I. (In)visible European government. *Critical approaches to transparency as an ideal and a practice*. Routledge. 171-191.
3. 2024 (forthcoming) Democratic Legitimacy of State Secrecy" in V. Abazi and G. Rosén (Eds.) *Foreign Policy Secrets in the Age of Transparency*, Oxford University Press.
4. 2023 "In the business of revealing state secrets", in: C. Fox and J. Saunders (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Philosophy and Media Ethics*, Routledge. 96-109.
5. 2022 "The Political Imperative of Transparency: Its Grounds and Limits" in: E. Alloa and B. Verschaffel (Eds.) *The Limits of Transparency*, Leuven: Peeters, 2021.
6. 2020 "Transparency and Secrecy in European Democracies" in: Mokrosinska D.M. (Ed.) *Transparency and Secrecy in European Democracies: Contested Trade-offs*. New York: Routledge. 1-13.
7. 2020 "On the Individual, Social and Political Value of Privacy" in: H. Behrendt, W. Loh, T. Matzner and C. Misselhorn (Eds) *Privatsphäre 4.0. Eine Neuverortung des Privaten im Zeitalter der Digitalisierung*, Springer.
8. 2022 "Polityczny wymiar prywatności" in: M. Gawin, A. Nogal and R. Wonicki (Eds) *Filozofia, edukacja, polityka*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.
9. 2015 "How Much Privacy for Public Officials?" in: B. Roessler and D. Mokrosinska, *Social Dimensions of Privacy: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press.

10. 2015 "Social Dimensions of Privacy: Introduction" (with B. Roessler), in: B. Roessler and D. Mokrosinska, *Social Dimensions of Privacy: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press.
11. 2015 "Privacy, Freedom of Speech and the Sexual Lives of Office Holders", in A Moore (Ed.), *Privacy, Security and Accountability: Ethics, Law, and Policy*, Rowman and Littlefield.

#### Editorships of special issues

1. 2024 (forthcoming, with S. Bloks) Special Issue on "Methods of Collective Decision-making in a Democracy", *Res Publica*
2. 2022 (with E. Ceva) Special Issue on "Media Ethics", *Journal of Applied Philosophy*.

#### In progress

1. "Political Obligation and Unjust States" (under contract)
2. "Strategic Uses of Secrecy and Democratic Decision-Making" (with S. Bloks).
3. "Vindicating uncivil disobedience"
4. "Public media and political activism"