



UNIVERSITÄT
BIELEFELD

Faculty of Sociology

Colloquium Series
Sociology of Transnationalization
“Frontiers in Transnational Research”

Loyalty Traps under the First Trump Administration

Jaime Lee Kucinkas*
Hamilton College, USA

The Loyalty Trap explores how civil servants navigated competing pressures and duties amid the chaos of the first Trump administration, drawing on over 100 in-depth interviews with mid-level and senior officials working across agencies over the course of a tumultuous term. Federal employees became ensnared in intractable ethical traps, caught between their commitment to nonpartisan public service and the expectation of compliance with political directives. Kucinkas explains different challenges career civil servants face amid organizational decline in the most politicized parts of the government, and the conditions under which select civil servants speak up to maintain their work and democratic integrity.

Wednesday, 16th April 2025
4.15 – 5.45 p.m. CEST
Room: X-C2-110

Further information:
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*Jaime Lee Kucinkas is Associate Professor of Sociology at Hamilton College and Visiting Professor this year at Mid Sweden University. She is the author of *The Loyalty Trap* (forthcoming 2025), *The Mindful Elite: Mobilizing from the Inside Out* (2019) and a co-editor of *Situating Spirituality:*

Context, Practice, and Power (2022). Her work has been published in the *American Sociological Review*, the *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Movement Studies*, and other academic and popular outlets.

All interested are welcome!