Trade Secrets with Secrets

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Al, and generative Al more specifically, raises unusual issues regarding what information is needed, and why, for public understanding, government regulation, and corporate accountability. Unlike public infrastructure trade secrets like code in voting machines or formulas like those used for hydraulic fracturing, disclosure of trade secret information about Al and machine learning algorithms does not necessarily reveal its inner workings. Instead, such disclosure allows for an intermediate level of transparency and accountability that allows for selection, testing, and interpretability to advance. This areticle expands on prior work involving information networks, public infrastructure, and trade secrets to assess what Al trade secret information might be useful for disclosure, how, and why — and what it means for information access in an era when the code doesn't tell the whole story.