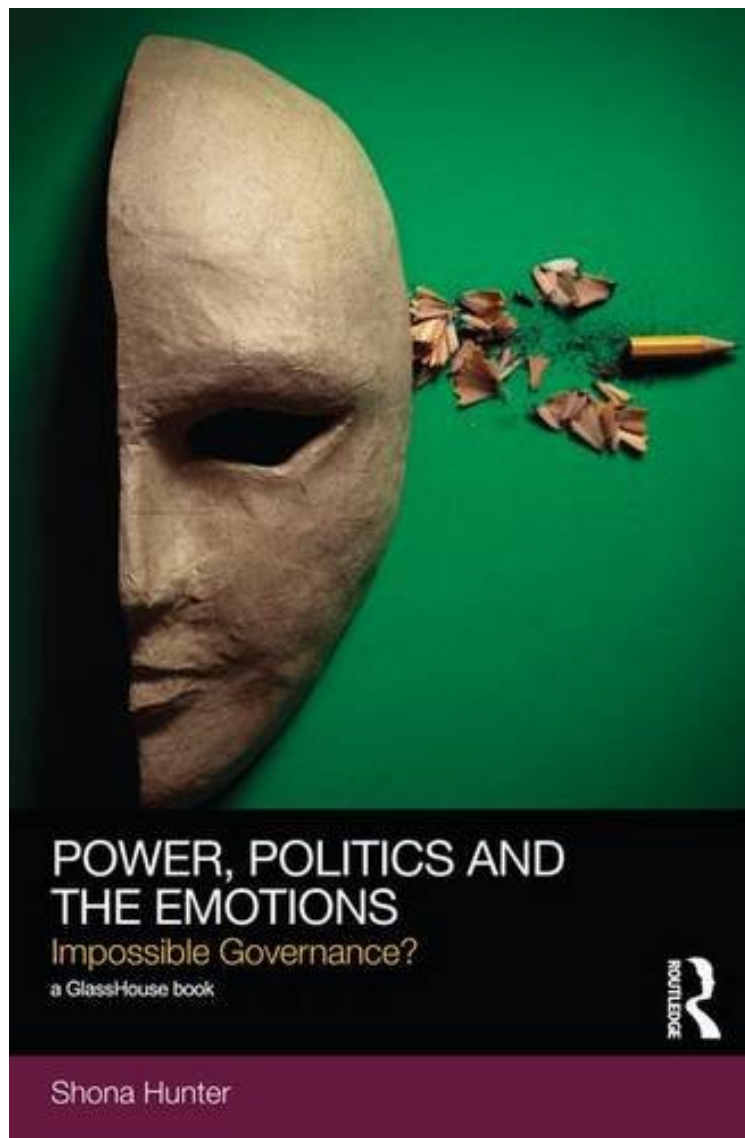


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Power, Politics and the Emotions: Impossible Governance? (Social Justice)

Shona Hunter

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Shona Hunter : Power, Politics and the Emotions: Impossible Governance? (Social Justice) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Power, Politics and the Emotions: Impossible Governance? (Social Justice):

How can we rethink ideas of policy failure to consider its paradoxes and contradictions as a starting point for more hopeful democratic encounters? Offering a provocative and innovative theorisation of governance as relational politics, the central argument of *Power, Politics and the Emotions* is that there are sets of affective dynamics which complicate the already materially and symbolically contested terrain of policy-making. This relational politics is Shona Hunter's starting point for a more hopeful, but realistic understanding of the limits and possibilities enacted through contemporary governing processes. Through this idea Hunter prioritises the everyday lived enactments of policy as a means to understand the state as a more differentiated and changeable entity than is often allowed for in current critiques of neoliberalism. But Hunter reminds us that focusing on lived realities demands a melancholic confrontation with pain, and the risks of social and physical death and violence lived through the contemporary neoliberal state. This is a state characterised by the ascendancy of neoliberal whiteness; a state where no one is innocent and we are all responsible for the multiple intersecting exclusionary practices creating its unequal social orderings. The only way to struggle through the central paradox of governance to produce something different is to accept this troubling interdependence between resistance and reproduction and between hope and loss. Analysing the everyday processes of this relational politics through original empirical studies in health, social care and education the book develops an innovative interdisciplinary theoretical synthesis which engages with and extends work in political science, cultural theory, critical race and feminist analysis, critical psychoanalysis and post-material sociology.

This book will surely come to be recognised as a landmark on the long road towards putting a loving, suffering, struggling subject at the centre of social policy. Psychoanalysis meets Foucault in this hugely ambitious account of the state's melancholic entanglement with social difference. *Fail again. Fail Better!* - Paul Hoggett, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy, UWE, Bristol. Shona Hunter's book offers a welcome reframing of theories and practices of governing. Rather than repeating the failures of a focus on state and institutions as abstract entities, Hunter draws on feminist psychosocial perspectives to open up a focus on the relational politics of governing. Grounded in case studies of everyday practices and experiences, this book highlights the 'impossibility' of conventional governing and explores possibilities for renewal and reparation. - Janet Newman, Emeritus Professor, Open University. By foregrounding the 'feeling work' that characterises the daily practices of state agencies, their staff and their users, Hunter demonstrates with supreme skill and intellectual adroitness the power of feminist, psychosocial analysis to unlock and make meaningful the social, historical, cultural and psychic forces in and through which our subjectivities and collective belongings are made. - Gail Lewis, Reader in Psychosocial Studies, Birkbeck College, University of London. About the Author Shona Hunter is a Lecturer in Sociology and Social Policy Governance at the University of Leeds, England and a Research Associate at the Research Centre into Visual Identities in Architecture and Design at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa.