

Philip Abrams Memorial Prize

2014 Winner

Negotiating Cohesion, Inequality and Change: Uncomfortable Positions in Local Government

By Hannah Jones

How are multiculturalism, inequality and belonging understood in the day-to-day thinking and practices of local government? Examining original empirical data, this book explores how local government officers and politicians negotiate 'difficult subjects' linked with community cohesion policy: diversity, inequality, discrimination, extremism, migration, religion, class, power and change.

The book argues that such work necessitates 'uncomfortable positions' when managing ethical, professional and political commitments. Based on first-hand experience of working in urban local government and extensive ethnographic, interview and documentary research, the book applies governmentality perspectives in a new way to consider how people working within government are subject to regimes of governmentality themselves, and demonstrates how power operates through emotions.

Its exploration of how 'sociological imaginations' are applied beyond academia will be valuable to those arguing for the future of public services and building connections between the university and wider society, including scholars and students in sociology, social policy, social geography, urban studies and politics, and policy practitioners in local and central government.

Hannah Jones is an Assistant Professor in sociology at the University of Warwick.

