Critical Perspectives on Leadership
Emotion, Toxicity, and Dysfunction
New Horizons in Leadership Studies series

Edited by Jeanette Lemmergaard, Associate Professor of Human Resource Management and Internal Communication, Department of Marketing and Management, University of Southern Denmark and Sara Louise Muhr, Associate Professor of Organization Studies and Human Resource Management, Department of Organization, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Situated in the field of critical leadership studies, the chapters of this book set out to challenge the general assumption that emotionality is the antithesis of rationality. The authors expand upon the existing discussions of leadership emotions and reveal how toxicity and dysfunctionality are not merely simple, negatively coercive, or repressive phenomena, but can also have productive and enabling connotations. The book includes comprehensive overviews of traditional leadership thinking and in addition provides readers with critical reflections on concepts such as ignorance, authenticity, functional stupidity and vanity in leadership.

‘All too frequently leadership is depicted as an unequivocal “good”. Lemmergaard and Muhr’s excellent collection disabuses us of this misleading view, serving as a timely and salutary reminder that leadership is often emotionally charged, toxic, dysfunctional or downright stupid. This book’s critical message should be read and heeded by students and practitioners of leadership alike.’
– Peter Case, James Cook University, Australia

‘The book provides a rich kaleidoscope of critical engagements with leadership in all its complexity and ambiguity. The contributors to this collection do not deny the vital role that leadership can play nor the many ways in which it can affect the emotional dynamics of organizations for good and bad. What they do is to shift thinking away from the comforting but misleading simplicities of toxic leaders and inert followers, offering a welcome tonic to the critical study of leadership. The book will appeal to leadership scholars as well as to students and to reflective practitioners.’
– Yiannis Gabriel, University of Bath, UK

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