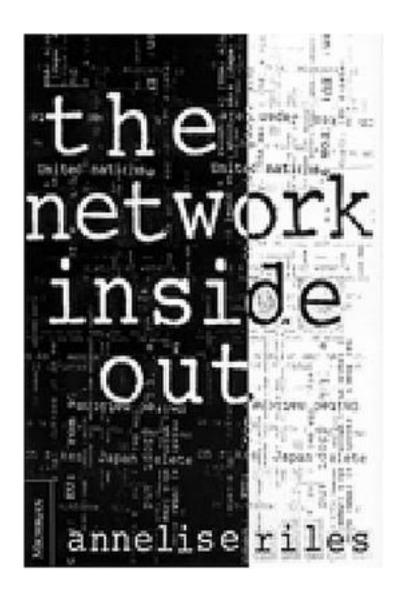
The Network inside out



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"Networks" and other artifacts of institutional life--documents, funding proposals, newsletters, organizational charts--are such ubiquitous aspects of the "information" age" that they go unnoticed to most observers. In this work, Annelise Riles takes a sophisticated theoretical approach to examine the aesthetics of these artifacts and practices, to learn what their very forms and formats can tell us about knowledge and legality in today's world.The immediate subject of Riles's ethnographic work was a group of Fijian bureaucrats and activists preparing for and participating in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Participants in this meeting and the activities surrounding it understood themselves to be "focal points" in national, regional, and global "networks." Starting from the premise that anthropologists are "inside" the Network, that is, that they are producers, consumers, and aesthetes, not simply observers, of the artifacts of late modern institutional life, Riles enacts a new ethnographic method for turning the network "inside out." The resulting experiment in the theory and ethnography of transnational institutional practices makes an important contribution to the anthropology of knowledge. With its focus on developing a method for studying transnational phenomena, "The Network Inside Out" will appeal not only to anthropologists, but also to legal scholars and political scientists. Annelise Riles is Assistant Professor, Northwestern University School of Law, Research Fellow, American Bar Foundation.

作者介绍:

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