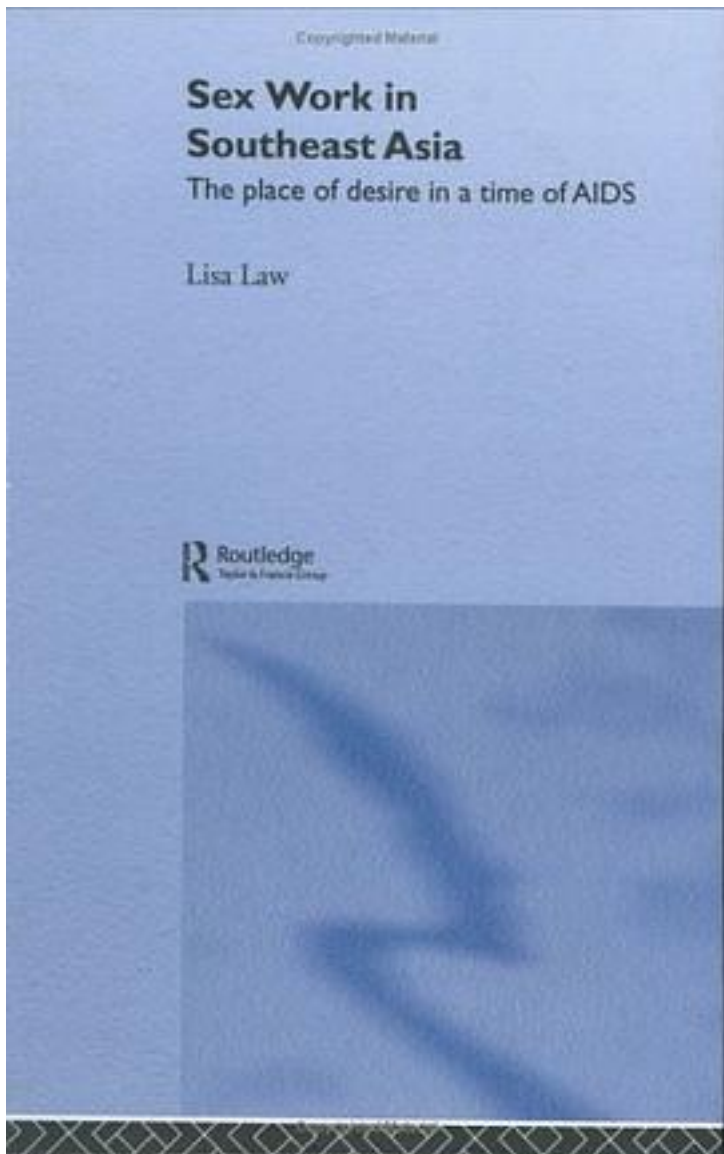


Sex Work in Southeast Asia



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著者:Lisa Law

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Southeast Asian sex workers are stereotypically understood as passive victims of the political economy, and submissive to western men. The advent of HIV/AIDS only compounds this image, as sex workers come to represent the victims of, and vectors for, a deadly virus. From sensationalist stories of Bangkok bar girls to United Nations conventions on global sex trafficking, the media, activists and academics alike condemn uneven processes of economic development and uneven relations of power in the sale of sex. Whilst the goal of such commentary may be to transform the economic and social relationships that make sex tourism a reality, the stereotypical images it produces often bear little resemblance to the everyday experience of sex work. *Sex Work in Southeast Asia* is a cultural critique of HIV/AIDS prevention programmes targeting sex tourism industries in Southeast Asia. Drawing on experiences of community-based organisations, national governments and emerging opinions from the international prostitutes rights movement, it highlights how feminist and postcolonial politics shape practices of global AIDS prevention. Women in the industry until now have rarely been included in the dialogue, so in this book they are given voice to reveal their own conceptions of working in the sex industry. By juxtaposing practical, contemporary issues of AIDS prevention with current theories of subjectivity and identity, *Sex Work in Southeast Asia* posits a new place for a speaking sex worker subject. This book will be vital up-to-date research for scholars in cultural, political, social and urban geography, as well as in development and gender studies.

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