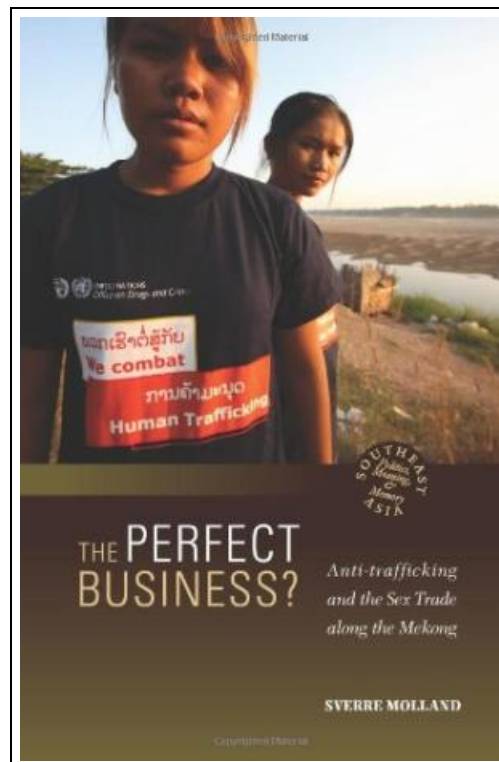


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University of Hawai i Press, United States, 2012. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. For those at the high end of the trafficking chain, the sex trade is an alluring and lucrative business: the supply of girls is constant, the costs of operations are low, and interference from law enforcement is weak to non-existent. Anti-trafficking organisations and governments commonly appropriate such market metaphors of supply and demand as they struggle with the moral-political dimensions of a business involving trade, labour, prostitution, migration, and national borders. But how apt are they? Is the sex trade really the perfect business? This provocative new book examines the social worlds and interrelationships of traffickers, victims, and trafficking activists along the Thai-Lao border. It explores local efforts to reconcile international legal concepts, the bureaucratic prescriptions of aid organisations, and global development ideologies with on-the-ground realities of sexual commerce. Author Sverre Molland provides an insider s view of recruitment and sex commerce gleaned from countless conversations and interviews in bars and brothels-a view that complicates popular stereotypes of women forced or duped into prostitution by organised crime. Molland s fine-grained ethnography shows a much more varied picture of friends recruiting friends, and families helping relatives. A recruiter rationalises her act as a benefit or favour to a village friend; relationships between prostitutes and bar owners are cloaked in kin terms and familial metaphors. Sex work in the Mekong region follows patron-client cultural scripts about mutual help and obligation, which makes distinguishing the victims from the traffickers difficult. Molland s research illuminates the methods and motivations of recruiters as well as the economic incentives and predicaments of victims. The Perfect Business? is the first book to go beyond the usual focus on migrants and sex commerce to explore the institutional context of anti-trafficking. Its...

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