

Montgomery, Heather (2001) *Modern Babylon: Prostituting Children in Thailand*. Oxford: Berghahn Books.

This book deals with the topic of child prostitution in Thailand where despite efforts to the contrary, child prostitution is common and widespread. This book, which is written from field research done by Montgomery in Thailand, explores the lives of children from the child's point of view. Montgomery offers a look into this culture where the need to protect children and the view that children are special does not exist.

Children in Thailand are not viewed in the typical Western view. Instead, Thai children are viewed as at most equal to adults. They are not viewed as special or enviable, but are pitied for their lack of ability to take care of themselves. The parents require them to work but keep the money for themselves. Interestingly, from interviews with the children, Montgomery found that children do not oppose working. Instead, the children work out of a feeling of duty to their parents who gave birth to them, raised, and took care of them.

Children in Thailand are expected to complete only six years of education. However, in the poorer areas, most children cannot afford even this education and begin to work at a young age. Many parents protested more compulsory education saying that it took too much time away from their children who could be providing them with income. Due to the poverty of these people, the children set aside goals of education and are instead forced to work. Because of poverty, many young girls resort to prostitution.