

# QUEER BANGKOK

Twenty-First-Century Markets,  
Media, and Rights

Edited by  
**Peter A. Jackson**



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# Queer Bangkok after the Millennium

## Beyond Twentieth-Century Paradigms

*Peter A. Jackson*

### Introduction

Sexual and gender cultures change constantly in response to shifts in social, political, and economic forces. This book details major changes that have taken place in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender/transsexual (LGBT) cultures and communities in Bangkok in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The capital of Thailand since 1782, Bangkok is a sprawling metropolis of more than 10 million people, and, as home to almost one-sixth of the country's population, it is the unrivalled centre of national economic, political, and cultural activity. Highly visible gay, lesbian (*tom-dee*), and transgender/transsexual (*kathoey*) cultures emerged in the city in the decades after World War II, and Bangkok is also unrivalled as the centre of Thai queer life. As shown in the studies collected here, the first years of the new century have marked a significant transition moment for all of Thailand's LGBT cultures, with a multidimensional expansion in the geographical extent, media presence, economic importance, political impact, social standing, and cultural relevance of Thai queer communities, which were already among the largest in the region—and, indeed, the world.

This book traces the roles of the market and the media, notably cinema and the Internet, in the recent transformations of Bangkok's queer communities and considers the ambiguous consequences that the growing commodification and mediatization of LGBT lives have had for queer rights in Thailand. The studies here consider Bangkok queer cultures until mid-2008, just before the onset of the global financial crisis in the second half of that year and before the intensification of political conflicts between supporters and opponents of the September 2006 military coup that toppled former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. The impact on Bangkok queer scenes of the dramatic changes in Thailand's economic and political circumstances since 2008 awaits future analysis.



## Beyond Stereotypes

Outside Thailand, the country's queer cultures are often known primarily by way of stereotypes of a supposed "gay paradise" (Jackson 1999a), a prevalence of transgender *kathoey*s or "ladyboys", the widespread presence of both male and female sex work, and a supposedly queer-accepting culture where almost anything goes. Insider views that challenge these exoticizing stereotypes are surprisingly rare. In part this is a consequence of the fact that the international sectors of Bangkok's queer scenes that are visited by most foreign tourists are linguistically compartmentalized and spatially separate from the much larger number of venues in other parts of the city that are frequented by Thai queers. By analysing what has been happening in the domestic Thai and intra-Asian sectors of Bangkok's queer scenes, the chapters here correct widespread misrepresentations presented by monolingual foreign commentators for whom the large Thai LGBT worlds beyond international tourist zones such as Silom Road remain all but invisible.

This book brings together a genuinely transnational range of perspectives on twenty-first-century queer Bangkok; the authors come from Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, and the United States. This reflects the significant extent of academic interest in queer Thailand in the West and in other Asian countries. This collection emerges from papers presented in the genders and sexualities stream of panels convened as part of the Tenth International Conference of Thai Studies at Thammasat University in Bangkok in January 2008. More than half the papers presented in that conference stream were on LGBT topics, reflecting the rapid growth as well as the increasing mainstream relevance of research on queer Thailand. A significant proportion of the papers in that conference stream were presented by younger scholars at the M.A. and Ph.D. levels. Several chapters here showcase the path-breaking research that younger scholars in Asia and the West are conducting on queer Thailand. It is only in the past decade that research programmes at the Ph.D. level, using Thai as their medium, have expanded across the country's tertiary education sector. It is still the case that the most advanced level of research undertaken by many Thai scholars is at the M.A. level. While this level of research is more focused in scope when compared with doctoral research, a growing body of M.A. work on queer themes has emerged in recent years, and it has increasingly challenged the pathologizing, biomedical focus of much twentieth-century Thai research on LGBT topics (Jackson 1997; Sinnott in this volume). As Timo Ojanen has observed:

The recent literature [on Thai LGBTs] . . . seems almost universally accepting of the sexual/gender identities of study participants; unlike

earlier research, current studies no longer call for curing or preventing such identities. Today's researchers, both Thai and foreign, seem to hold that society should adapt to the needs of these minorities, rather than vice versa. (2009, 17)

The studies here draw on a range of academic and other approaches, including anthropology, cinema and literary studies, political analysis, and the narrative reflections of an Asian gay activist. While methodologically diverse, all analyses in this book are united by a shared commitment to expose, resist, and challenge the heteronormative assumptions that marked much earlier research on queer Thailand and which continue to restrict the lives and opportunities of Thailand's gay, *tom-dee*, and *kathoey* citizens.

### The Linguaging of "Queer" in Thailand

In this book the term "queer" denotes sexual and gender practices, identities, cultures, and communities that challenge normative masculine and feminine gender roles and/or transgress the borders of heterosexuality. "Queer" here also labels a critical theoretical stance that analyses all genderings and sexualities as emerging from contingent historical conditions. Queer studies views both hegemonically normative and minority genders and sexualities as interrelated components of an overarching gender/sex system in which notions of heterosexuality are constructed in relation to ideas of homosexuality and in which understandings of transgenderism/transsexuality emerge in opposition to notions of normatively gendered and sexed behaviour.

However, the English-language term "queer" as such is not used in Thailand's LGBT cultures. Rather, the Thai term *phet*—which incorporates ideas of sex, gender, and sexuality—is a master concept that is central to all legal, academic, and popular discourses of gender and sexuality. In Thai, heteronormative identities (e.g. "man", *phu-chai*; "woman", *phu-ying*) and queer subjectivities (e.g. *kathoey*, *gay king*, *gay queen*, *tom*, *dee*) are all regarded as varieties of *phet*. While all identities are imagined as blending different degrees of masculinity and femininity—and a gender binary underpins Thai understandings of sexual identity—the discourse of *phet* is not as such a binary construct. Rather, Thai discourses of *phet* reflect an understanding of proliferating diversity. When Thai scholars, journalists, and others write of *phet*, whether in formal or popular contexts, they typically do so by listing several, not just two, identities.

#### *The proliferating diversity of Thai gender/sex categories*

The growth of Bangkok queer scenes in the second half of the twentieth century was paralleled by a proliferation in the number and diversity of categories to

label distinctive gay, transgender/transsexual, and lesbian identities. This explosion of Thai queer identity categories (Jackson 2000) began in the late 1950s and early 1960s and continued through the 1970s and early 1980s, with discourses of Thai queer identity undergoing yet further changes in the past decade. The proliferation of queer identities appears to have resulted from a range of influences, including these:

- A nineteenth- and early twentieth-century state project to “civilize” normative Siamese genders by accentuating the differentiation of masculine and feminine fashions, hairstyles, and names. This instituted a regime of biopower (Foucault 1980) over Thai genders that has, in turn, contributed to an incitement of transgenderism and new sexualities (Jackson 2003a).
- The emergence of new understandings of masculine and feminine gendering as a consequence of the spread of market capitalism in Thailand and the commodification of both urban and rural labour across the twentieth century (Jackson 2003b, 2009a, 2009b).
- Beginning in the 1950s, vernacular print capitalism (newspapers, magazines, books) supported the growth of imaginings of national-level queer cultures and communities (Jackson 2009a).
- In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, globalizing capitalism, new electronic media, and transnational influences from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Australia, Europe, and the United States (Altman 2001) brought previously isolated homosexuals into contact with each other (Berry et al. 2003).

Thai lesbian culture reflects the continuing linguistic dynamism of the country’s LGBT communities in the early twenty-first century. Until recently, the single term *tom* (from “tomboy”) has encompassed all variations of female masculinity. However, Ojanen (2009, 7) notes that the binary gendering of female homosexual couples between a masculine *tom* and feminine *dee* (from “lady”) is being challenged, with the term *les* (from “lesbian”) now being used by women who seek to break out of gendered role play in their romantic and sexual relationships with other women. Megan Sinnott here notes that the Internet is providing a medium for younger *ying rak ying*, “women who love women”, to coin a range of new labels that more appropriately reflect the gendered diversity of their lives. Sinnott shows how young women who love women are creating hybrid categories such as *les king* and *les queen* that draw on established notions of *gay king* (sexually active partner) and *gay queen* (sexually receptive partner) in Thai gay cultures to create more nuanced ways to refer to female same-sex experience and sexual preference. The ready accessibility of the Internet to

younger Thais from all socio-economic backgrounds has provided a medium to renegotiate identity categories that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, a period when imaginings of Thai queerness were predominantly mediated through print media (Jackson 1995, 2009a).

Attempts to translate Western understandings of “queer” have had an unusual outcome in Thailand. In the context of helping organize the First International Conference of Asian Queer Studies in Bangkok in July 2005, Prempreeda Pramroj Na Ayutthaya, a transgender-identified researcher and activist, coined the compound expression *kham-phet* in an attempt to render notions of gender/sex fluidity into Thai. *Kham* means “to cross over”, and Prempreeda’s intent was to convey a sense of the blurring of identities within understandings of *phet*. Informed by her readings of Western queer theory, Prempreeda’s neologism of *kham-phet* was an attempt to disrupt the apparent stability of the many identities labelled within Thai discourses of *phet*. However, *kham* is also used to translate the English prefix “trans”, as in *kham-prathet*, “transnational”. Most Thai readers interpreted Prempreeda’s neologism as an attempt to render the English terms “transgender” and “transsexual” into Thai, and since 2005 *kham-phet* has quickly become a generally recognized translation of these two terms, which nonetheless are not always clearly differentiated in Thai.

Prempreeda’s attempt to translate “queer” into Thai quickly slipped beyond her control and became appropriated to local notions of transgenderism/transsexuality. Thai still lacks an agreed academic rendering of “queer”, and authors who wish to refer to Western ideas of “queer” often write the word in roman script within their Thai texts—a common practice adopted by Thai authors when no local equivalent term is available. Hence, “queer theory” may be rendered as *tharitsadi queer*. In crossing the linguistic/discursive/cultural divide from the Anglophone West to Thailand, “queer” itself has been subjected to localized processes of queering, reflecting both the significant autonomy of Thai discourses in representing sex/gender/sexuality, even at the height of early twenty-first-century globalization, as well as demonstrating the centrality of notions of transgenderism/transsexuality in contemporary Thai understandings of gender and sexual difference.

While Thai lacks a precise local rendering of “queer”, terms for “gender” and “sexuality” have been coined. Since the 1990s, the English-language term “gender” has been variously rendered as *sathanaphap thang-phet*, *phet-sathan*, *phet-phawa*, *phet-saphap*, and *phet-saphawa* (all denoting “*phet* condition” or “*phet* status”), with *phet-saphap* ultimately emerging as the most commonly accepted translation among Thai feminist scholars. Over the past decade, the term “sexuality” has been translated as *phet-withi* (“*phet* orientation”).

Given the diversity and dynamism of Thai queer terminologies, Thai academics and LGBT activists have struggled to find an agreed-upon, overarching term for all the country's queer genders and sexualities. The need for such a common term emerged in 2007 with the formation of a united front of lesbians, gays, and *kathoeyes* to lobby the Thai government on a range of human rights issues. As Douglas Sanders details here, these efforts focused on attempts to enshrine an anti-discrimination clause in the Thai constitution, to permit male-to-female transgenders and transsexuals to have their feminine status recognized on identity cards and passports, and to overturn the Thai army's definition of *kathoey* conscripts as mentally ill. Since 2007, the expression *khwam-lak-lai thang-phet*—which can be rendered variously as “gender/sexual diversity” or “diverse genders/sexualities”—has emerged as the banner under which Thailand's diverse queer communities have come together in common political cause and remains the closest Thai equivalent to Western understandings of “queer”. The language of “queer rights” has been translated formally into Thai as *sithi khong khon thi mi khwam-lak-lai thang-phet*, literally “The rights of people who possess *phet*-diversity”. More popularly, the Thai term for “rainbow” (*si-rung*) has become a much more concise and locally evocative marker of diverse queer identities and cultures. The queer connotations of the term *si-rung* now circulate in the wider community; a 2009 Thai TV soap opera about a gay man's problematic relations with his adopted son was entitled *Phra Jan Si-rung*, or “Rainbow Moon”.

While writing their contributions in English has often required this book's authors to draw on Anglophone terminologies such as “lesbian”, “transgender”, “transsexual”, “LGBT”, and “queer”, all the studies here emphasize the distinctiveness of Thai discourses of sex, gender, and sexuality. English terms and concepts are used for linguistic convenience and should not be taken to indicate any identity, or convergence, between Thai and Western discourses. Most of the authors here conduct their analyses through the lens of Thai terminologies, and a glossary of key terms is included at the end of this book as a reference guide for readers.

## **Glocal Queering and Thai Vernacular Queer Modernity**

### *Think Bollywood (not Hollywood)*

The role of international (Euro-American) versus domestic factors in the explosion of Thai queer *phet* categories and the historical growth of Bangkok queer communities in the second half of the last century has been a matter of some discussion. The studies here reflect a growing consensus among students

of modern Asian queer cultures of the need to challenge simplistic accounts of global queering that emphasize the causative influences of either “unique local essentialism”, on the one hand, or Westernizing “global homogenization” on the other (McLelland 2006, 159). Like Eng-Beng Lim (2005) and Fran Martin et al. (2008), this book traces the transformations of early twenty-first-century queer Bangkok to complex hybridizing processes inflected by “transnational capital, and regional, inter-Asian diasporic circuits and exchanges” (Lim 2005, 384). Drawing on Dennis Altman’s (1996b) influential notion of “global queering”, Lim labels this emphasis on hybridizing processes the study of “glocal queering”. I suggest that a comparison with the history of South Asian cinema provides insight into the nature of the intersecting relationship between Thai and Western queer cultures in processes of glocal queering, and that it also gives a sense of the distinctive character of Thai vernacular queer modernity as an alternative modernity that differs both from premodern Thai “tradition” and modern Western queer cultures.

In describing trends in contemporary Indian popular culture, Bhaskar Mukhopadhyay (2006) distinguishes between folk traditions and vernacular modernisms. In his study here of recent Thai queer cinema Brett Farmer also engages the notion of vernacular modernity as a frame for understanding the distinctiveness of Thai queer cultural production within a global context of expanding and intensifying cross-border interconnections. Farmer describes Thai queer cinema as a popular cultural artifact that has helped naturalize new forms of sexual and gender identity within a Thai cultural context. Indeed, Thai queer identities—such as *gay king*, *gay queen*, *kathoey*, *tom*, and *dee*—can be seen as vernacular modernisms of *phet* that have emerged out of premodern notions of gender and sexual difference. These modern Thai queer identities relate to Western queer cultures in a way somewhat similar to the manner in which India’s Bollywood cinema industry relates to the American cinema capital of Hollywood. While drawing on the same film and digital technologies, the market, and advertising, Bollywood has nonetheless forged a distinctive cinematic idiom that remains largely independent of Hollywood. Mukhopadhyay notes, “One of the key questions raised by the ‘new’ film studies was how cinema came to assume an Indian identity” (2006, 281). In a similar vein, one of the key questions for Asian queer studies is how queerness has come to assume a Thai identity, a Chinese identity, an Indonesian identity, and so on.

Mukhopadhyay describes Bollywood as having constituted “something like a ‘nation-space’ without the backing of the state” (2006, 280). Modern Thai vernacular queer identities similarly constitute something like an imagined national space of gender and sexual diversity that has emerged, and found an increasingly secure space for existence, without the backing of the state.

Vernacular print and electronic media have been central historical forces in this queer cultural development. With regard to Indonesia, Tom Boellstorff argues:

It appears that print media, television, and movies have been crucial to the formation of gay and lesbian subject positions . . . This seems more consequential than either the historically rare consumption of Western gay and lesbian media or publications produced by [gay and lesbian] Southeast Asians themselves . . . (2007, 213)

In Thailand, Thai-language print and electronic media have also been central to the emergence of national-level queer cultures (Jackson 1989, 1995, 1999b). In this context, Cindy Patton's comments on Benedict Anderson's argument in his influential *Imagined communities* (1983) have relevance to understanding the origins of Thai vernacular queer modernity:

[T]he development of a semi-independent print capitalism allowed people who were widely dispersed to see themselves existing in a coexisting time . . . This enabled the development of cross-regional consensus about politics among the literate middle classes and enhanced the sense that a nation was a community, even if that national identity—called 'imagined community' by Anderson—existed only in a hypothetical space. (Patton 2002, 200–201)

Nationally distributed commercial print media were central to Thai gay identity formation in the decades from the 1960s to the 1980s (Jackson 1995). Anderson has characterized the Thai press from the 1960s onward as being "an ally of the new bourgeois political ascendancy" (1990, 41). As an originally middle-class phenomenon, the Thai national press has been a key vehicle for disseminating non-state views of Thai gay identity. That is, a vernacular press that voices largely middle-class concerns has disseminated middle-class political and cultural ideas, including originally middle-class ideas of gay sexual identity, across the country.

### *Waves of queer cultural development in Bangkok*

Modern gay/*kathoey*/*tom-dee* cultures in Thailand are now half a century old and have gone through several stages of development as the country's market economy and new media emerged and grew, albeit unevenly and at different rates and intensities, through different geographical regions and socio-economic sectors. Queer communities and commercial scenes have been marked by periodic spurts of growth, as they have expanded into new sectors and classes:

- The 1960s: The first public “outing” of Bangkok’s emerging gay, *kathoey*, and *tom-dee* cultures with sensationalist coverage in the national Thai- and English-language press (Jackson 1999b).
- The 1970s: The first small-scale openings of gay bars in Bangkok and publication of the first gay-themed Thai-language books.
- The 1980s: Publication of the first commercially successful gay magazines, *Mithuna Junior* and *Neon* (Jackson 2009a), the opening of the first gay saunas, the first wave of Thai queer cinema (Serhat Ünaldi in this volume), and the emergence of a more diversified gay commercial sector. In the wave of queer cultural development in this decade, Thai gay men, lesbians, and *kathoeyes* began to take control of print and cinematic media to produce representations of and for themselves.
- The 1990s: Further expansion of Bangkok’s commercial gay sector targeting the urban middle class.
- The 2000s: The rapid expansion of Thai queer modernity among youth and working-class men and women, accompanied by the mainstreaming and massification of representations of sexual and gender diversity.

New electronic and digital media and the continuation of rapid economic growth in East and Southeast Asia in the first decade of the new century have contributed to further waves of modern Thai queer cultural development, and this book looks at how one of Asia’s oldest modern queer cultures is being transformed by these twenty-first-century processes. As in India, Thailand’s vernacular modern queer cultures reflect “the maturity of consumerism due to the opening up of the economy” (Mukhopadhyay 2006, 288). Several chapters here consider the maturing of Thai queer consumerism, which emerged in the 1970s and early 1980s with the first commercially successful gay magazines and the development of a distinctive culture based on saunas, bars, pubs, and discos that targeted a Thai gay middle-class market (Nikos Dacanay in this volume).

Western queer cultures are known and recognized by Thai queers, but they are neither looked to as exemplary models to be imitated nor resisted or critiqued as paths to be avoided. Despite the presence of large numbers of Western gay tourists, the circulation of dubbed and subtitled Western gay movies, the reproduction (often via unlicensed pirating) of Western gay pornography and images from Western gay magazines, the relationship with the West cannot be categorized in simplistic terms as either “neocolonial” cultural imperialism or “postcolonial resistance”. As Rachel Harrison and I have noted elsewhere, the fact that Thailand was never colonized by a Western power places this society in an ambiguous relationship with accounts of Euro-American imperialism (Harrison and Jackson 2010). Indeed, I have argued that the fact Thailand and



Japan remained politically independent during the era of Western imperialism is one reason Asia's first modern LGBT cultures emerged in Tokyo and Bangkok and not in the capitals of former European or American colonies in the region (Jackson 2009a, 366–367). A distinctive Thai vernacular queer modernism has emerged and found an increasingly secure foothold by forging a distinctive sense of identity within the commodified spaces of Thai popular culture, as well as by drawing on international discourses of human rights, to claim a space within the Thai polity (Megan Sinnott and Doug Sanders in this volume). Internationally circulating Western discourses of sexuality, homosexuality, gayness, queer, and so on have not led to unmediated “cultural borrowing” of Western sexualities in Thailand so much as a new repertoire of ways to retell local stories and alternative ways to remember local histories. As Fran Martin et al. (2008) point out in a comparative study of queer cultural developments across East and Southeast Asia, notions of cultural hybridity that foreground the power of local agency and the resilience of local discourses provide a more fruitful lens for conceptualizing what has been happening in queer Asia, including queer Bangkok, over recent decades.

### **Rethinking Globalization and Capitalism in the Asian Century**

The following chapters are assembled into three thematic sections: Part I concerns markets and media in Bangkok's queer cultural transformations; Part II explores queer Bangkok in twenty-first-century global and regional networks; Part III illuminates LGBT activism, rights, and autonomy in Thailand.

The evidence and analyses presented in each section require us to rethink a range of issues in transnational queer studies, including the pattern of relations between Asian and Western queer cultures; the forms and direction of queer cultural globalization, and the role of capitalism in advancing LGBT rights and the emergence of spaces of queer cultural autonomy in Asia.

#### ***Part I: Markets and media in Bangkok's queer cultural transformations***

In the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, much critical analysis tended to assume Western, or American, dominance and hegemony in processes of capitalist globalization. Globalization was seen predominantly in terms of Westernization, while most critical analysts envisioned capitalism as a Western-controlled force for exploiting and subjecting the non-West. However, with the rise of economies across East, Southeast, and South Asia, the unipolar world of the 1990s has given way to an increasingly complex international pattern of multiple economic, political, and

cultural powers. While the chapters here do not directly address the geotectonic shifts now taking place in global markets and political arrangements, they nonetheless reflect the impact of contemporary geopolitical transitions. As I detail in my two later chapters here, among the analytical challenges for early twenty-first-century queer studies are the need to rethink both globalization and transnational capitalism in an era when the West is no longer an unchallenged global hegemon.

Focusing on different queer genders and identities, the chapters in Part I provide insights into why, in the early twenty-first century, the LGBT cultures of Southeast Asia's "gay capital" have developed in somewhat different directions from those in some Western countries. Bangkok's queer scenes boomed over the same period that gay and lesbian scenes of comparable age in some Western cities have appeared to decline. I consider this phenomenon in detail in the following chapter, where I also consider the evidence that the other chapters in Part I provide on the intersecting impact of media and commodifying processes on Bangkok's transgender/transsexual and gay communities.

### *Part II: Queer Bangkok in twenty-first-century global and regional networks*

The chapters in Part II detail Bangkok's role as a major nodal point of global queering (Altman 1996a, 1996b, 2001). The border-crossing impacts of expanding markets, new electronic media, and consumerist lifestyles are key forces in cultural globalization, including the globalization of LGBT cultures. However, in contrast to some accounts that have equated globalization with Westernization or Americanization (e.g. Waters 1995), the chapters in the middle section of this book reflect Bangkok's role as a source of radiating influences in queer cultural transformations across both Asia and the West. This challenges and reverses Eurocentric narratives of global queering that posit the West as the originating site of major transformations in modern Asian queer cultures (Wilson 2006). As Aren Aizura details here, Western male-to-female transsexual communities are increasingly drawing upon Thailand as a source, and resource, of both physiological and cultural feminization. In the early twenty-first century, transnational queer cultural flows are also advancing from Thailand to the West—that is, they are not unidirectional from the West to Thailand. In their chapters, Alex Au and Ben Murtagh show that Bangkok's queer cultures have also had powerful influences on the emergence of gay identities in neighbouring Southeast Asian countries, from economically developed Singapore to the emerging democracy of Indonesia.

The chapters in this and other sections of this book reveal that in the early twenty-first-century intra-Asian flows have become more important than

cultural and other influences from the West in the emergence of a regional network of interconnected Asian queer cultures. This network links LGBT communities in a growing number of regional metropolises—notably Bangkok, Singapore, Hong Kong, Tokyo, and Taipei—with Asianization and regionalism now the dominant directions of queer cultural change.

### *Part III: LGBT activism, rights, and autonomy in Thailand*

As noted above, the studies here require us to rethink the power dynamics of capitalism in the early twenty-first-century world system. As we enter a period when a range of Asian societies, or at least the elites and middle classes of a range of Asian societies, are arguably beneficiaries rather than victims of transnational capitalism, we need to rethink twentieth-century views that equate the progressive marketization of social life with subjection to Western dictates. Capitalism undoubtedly remains a force for the production of inequality. As Aren Aizura highlights, Thai m-t-f transsexuals have been disadvantaged by the internationalization of the country's cosmetic-surgery industry. At the same time, however, LGBT communities across Asia, including those in Bangkok, have often found the market to provide a refuge from politically repressive and culturally heteronormative governments. As Asian economies have grown, gay men, lesbians, and transgenders/transsexuals across the region have used their increasing disposable incomes to purchase spaces of at least partial queer autonomy. Bangkok's queer cultures are highly commercialized, but the central place of the market in the city's LGBT communities should not be read in solely negative terms as a subjection to the dictates of capital. Bangkok's commercialized queer scenes also need to be seen in more positive terms as a negotiation with the market to craft zones of autonomy from the gender-conformist policies of the Thai state and bureaucracy.

In the past, some Western commentators have asserted that, while Bangkok may have extensive commercial gay, lesbian, and transgender scenes, it lacks "genuine" forms of LGBT community organization as found in cities such as San Francisco. This perhaps reflects an unduly negative view of the market as a domain for community development, and Bangkok queers do not have such a disparaging perception of their own situation. Expressions such as *chum-chon gay* ("gay community") and *sangkhom gay* ("gay social life", "gay scene") have long denoted a sense of shared queer cultural life and collective identity in Thailand. In this book, expressions such as "Bangkok's LGBT community" reflect Thai, rather than Western, understandings of shared collective life. The chapters in the final section of this book document advances that community-based activism achieved in institutionalizing gay, lesbian, and transgender/transsexual rights

in Thailand in the first decade of the twenty-first century while also highlighting the persistence of discrimination and the limitations of LGBT activism in the country's highly volatile and unstable political culture.

## **Future Directions for Research on Queer Thailand**

### *Regional, class, and ethnic divides*

The following chapters focus on urban queer cultures and communities in Bangkok and its immediate hinterland, including the nearby resort city of Pattaya. Thailand's culturally and linguistically distinctive Southern (Tai), Northern (Lanna), and Northeastern (Isan) regions, and the many rural communities across the country where a large proportion of the Thai population continues to live, are not studied here. While "queer Bangkok" can in no way be equated with "queer Thailand", the country's mega-capital is, in geographers' terms, a primate city that dominates the nation economically, politically, and culturally. This is also true for the country's LGBT communities; Bangkok's queer cultures have powerful influences across the nation. Nonetheless, the ways that regional and rural queer communities relate to, and perhaps differ from, those in the capital remain topics for future research. The differentiation of Thai queer scenes along class and ethnic lines also remains poorly researched. Nikos Dacanay here takes us behind the doors of Bangkok's gay saunas to reveal the ethnicized and class-inflected patterns of sexual interaction that structure male-male casual sex in the city. However, much remains to be done on the questions of how Thai queer cultures and communities in the country's culturally and linguistically distinct regions differ from those in Bangkok, and how religious affiliation (e.g. for Thailand's Muslim minority) and ethnic status (e.g. for non-Thai "hill tribe" groups in the North and ethnic Khmer in the Northeast) influence patterns of queer culture and identity.

### *Women who love women*

Bangkok's gay, *kathoey*, and *tom-dee* communities are not equally represented in the chapters presented here. This does not denote their relative size or cultural significance but rather is a further reflection of the uneven character of current research on queer Thailand. Considerably more research has been conducted on gay men and *kathoeyes* than on Thai women who love women. This book is, then, a mirror of the incomplete and imperfect state of academic knowledge of queer Bangkok; it does fully reflect the scope and diversity of all the queer lives lived within that city.

## *HIV/AIDS*

A further topic in need of urgent research is the social, cultural, and economic impact of the HIV/AIDS health crisis among Bangkok gay men and *kathoeyes*. From 2003 to 2005, the rate of HIV prevalence among men who have sex with men (MSM) in Bangkok increased from 17 percent to 28 percent (van Griensven et al. 2005), rising to almost 31 percent in 2007 (van Griensven et al. 2009). These alarming figures have led both the Thai Ministry of Public Health and a range of international agencies to fund HIV/AIDS education and prevention initiatives through local non-governmental organizations such as the Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand, Bangkok Rainbow, MPlus, and SWING (Sanders in this volume). While at the time of writing the results of recent interventions in containing the HIV/AIDS epidemic are not yet clear, this increased Thai and international funding for NGOs has had a significant positive impact in facilitating community-building and collective, organized lobbying on human rights issues. As Megan Sinnott and Douglas Sanders detail here, some of the newly funded gay and *kathoey* NGOs have joined forces with lesbian organizations to establish a united front, the Sexual Diversity Network, to lobby for the overturning of institutional discrimination and call for institutional recognition of LGBT rights in Thailand's halls of power.

# Notes

## Chapter 1

1. Information provided by Wipas Wimonsate, Medical Research Technologist/MSM Community Associate, Thailand Ministry of Public Health — United States Centers for Disease Control (MoPH — US CDC) Collaboration.
2. Or. Tor. Kor. is the Thai acronym for *Ongkan Talat pheua Kasettakorn*, the Marketing Agency for Agricultural Workers, a government agency whose office building is near this locale.
3. Source: National Economic and Social Development Board. Cited in the *Bangkok Post*, “Price pressure on rise, says NESDB”, 27 May 2008, p. B1.
4. Chang Noi (a pseudonym), “Thailand’s huge rich-poor divide”, *The Nation*, 18 August 2003, p. 5A.
5. amfAR (Foundation for AIDS Research) MSM Initiative, “As AIDS conference opens, amfAR releases report exposing global failure to address HIV among MSM”, [media.amfar.org](http://media.amfar.org) (accessed 5 August 2008).

## Chapter 2

1. At that time the subject of transvestite Muay Thai boxers was not at the centre of my research, and the data here are largely from my field notes, in which I recorded my discussions with Thais about the phenomenon and their perceptions of it from local media coverage. Unfortunately, I have not had the opportunity to conduct a detailed analysis of local press and media accounts of the phenomenon of Thai *kathoey* kickboxers.
2. *Nong Tum* was, for example, invited in July 1999 to be a guest on a variety show on an Argentine television channel. Furthermore, he has been the subject of several articles in the foreign press, such as *The New York Times*, 4 April 1998, “Bangkok journal; Was that a lady I saw you boxing?” [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com) (accessed 10 December 2009); *National Geographic*, 25 March 2004, “Thai ‘Ladyboy’ kickboxer is gender-bending knockout”, <http://news.nationalgeographic.com> (accessed 10 December 2009).
3. *Bangkok Post*, 17 February 2004, “Ruthless transvestite Apinya to debut against US boxer”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); *Bangkok Post*, 29 February 2004, “Apinya kicks into top gear”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); *The Nation*, 18 February 2004, “Another kratoy steps into the ring”, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com> (accessed 8 December 2009); *The Nation*, 25 February 2004, “Transvestite fighter a winner”, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com> (accessed 8 December 2009).

- 2009); *The Nation*, 9 June 2004, “No handbags allowed”, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com> (accessed 8 December 2009).
4. *The Nation*, 26 February 1998, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com> (accessed 8 December 2009); *Bangkok Post*, 25 February 1998, “Transvestite slugger snatches manly points win at Lumpini”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); *Bangkok Post*, 1 March 1998, “Transvestite slugger dispels all doubt of his ‘manhood’”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); *Bangkok Post*, 18 March 1998, “Parinya’s fight delayed for a week”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); *Bangkok Post*, 29 March 1998, “Parinya too good for Danish challenger”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009).
  5. *Bangkok Post*, 3 March 1999, “Boxer prepares for new title challenge”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); *Bangkok Post*, 5 March 1999, “Is all change for better?”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); *Bangkok Post*, 9 December 1999, “Boxer’s operation”, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009).
  6. *The Nation*, 22 February 2006, “Nong Tum to have another go in the ring”, [www.nationmultimedia.com](http://www.nationmultimedia.com) (accessed 8 December 2009); 23 February 2006, “Sex-change boxer back in the ring”, [www.nationmultimedia.com](http://www.nationmultimedia.com) (accessed 8 December 2009).
  7. The roundhouse kick is renowned to be the most devastating kick technique among the various martial arts. It is a chin blow that necessitates a rotation of the entire upper body. The movement is initiated by the shoulders (as in a rugby pass) and takes in successively the hips and then the leg, such that the kick will be delivered with maximum speed and power.
  8. *The Nation*, 18 February 2004, “Another kratoeay steps into the ring”, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com> (accessed 8 December 2009).
  9. *The Nation*, 26 February 1998, <http://www.nationmultimedia.com> (accessed 8 December 2009); “Transvestite slugger snatches manly points win at Lumpini”, *Bangkok Post*, 25 February 1998, [www.bangkokpost.com](http://www.bangkokpost.com) (accessed 8 December 2009).

### Chapter 3

1. Thai New Wave Cinema is an unofficial label denoting movies produced since the Asian financial crisis of 1997. Dominated by advertising-based directors such as Nonzee Nimibutr and Pen-ek Ratanaruang, the strong visual style of these movies brought Thai audiences back into that nation’s cinemas after a period of relative decline for Thai cinema.
2. *Tomboys* are masculine-dressing homosexual women, whereas their feminine counterparts are called *dee* (from the English “lady”).
3. Interview, Bangkok, 11 November 2007.
4. In 2005, the Thai film market was worth 4 billion baht a year and was made up of 60 percent Hollywood films, 35 percent Thai productions, and the rest comprising East Asian and other movies (Bamrung 2006).
5. In 2004, Tai Entertainment joined forces with GMM Pictures and Hub Ho Hin Films to form GMM Tai Hub (GTH). The chief executive of the newly formed company was quick to clarify that GTH was seeking a forty percent share of the domestic film market and thus “might not invest in alternative movie projects that could be risky in terms of profits” (Parinyaporn 2004).
6. Since there is no authority in Thailand that accurately reports box-office figures, the numbers used here are based on information circulated by the studios themselves and should not be taken as exact. However, they put the success of the films in a statistical perspective.
7. This reflects Jackson’s findings about different degrees of *kathoeay* acceptance. “The transgender males most criticised . . . are those considered loud-mouthed, aggressive or

- lewd; qualities widely regarded as low-class. . . . In contrast, the most admired *kathoey* are those who appropriate and exhibit a high standard of feminine beauty" (1999, 230).
8. DVD, Bonus material.
  9. For a more comprehensive discussion of *Tropical Malady*, see Ferrari, 2006, 47–62.
  10. Films are coded "P" for "promotion" of educational films that all Thais are encouraged to see and "G" for general audiences. Age-restricted movies are divided into the categories "13+", "15+", "18+", and "20+" for audiences of the indicated age and above.
  11. See [www.bangkokpost.com/entertainment/movie/33160/learning-and-adapting](http://www.bangkokpost.com/entertainment/movie/33160/learning-and-adapting) (accessed 21 February 2010).
  12. The sources for these audience responses are my own observations and conversations with other viewers that corresponded to media reports and Internet discussions. See <http://bkkmindscape.blogspot.com/2007/11/love-of-siam-reaction-part-1.html> (accessed 14 November 2007).
  13. Pasuk Phongpaichit, speaking in the question-and-answer session at the seminar "Coup, Capital and Crown" on 13 December 2007. Information obtained through personal attendance.
  14. The media impact on homosexual identities has been highlighted by Tom Boellstorff (2003, 33) in the case of Indonesia, where 95 percent of his informants cited mass media as the means by which they first understood themselves through the local concepts of *lesbi* or *gay*.

#### Chapter 4

1. The question of modernity's historicity and, in particular, its current and future status is notoriously vexed. Contrary to accounts that would proclaim modernity a process that has finished or even collapsed, this chapter proceeds from the understanding that modernity is by definition incomplete and ongoing. This is not so much in the classic Habermasian sense of an assertion of the continuing relevance and promise of Western modernity qua post-Enlightenment rationality, but, rather, more in the sense that the critical reconceptualization of modernity as a constellation of overlapping and competing processes and histories returns modernity as plural and continuously renewing. "To think in terms of 'alternative modernities,'" writes Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (2001, 1), "is to admit that modernity is inescapable and to desist from speculations about the end of modernity. Born in and of the West some centuries ago under specific socio-historical conditions, modernity is now everywhere. It has arrived not suddenly but slowly, bit by bit, over the *longue durée*—awakened by contact; transported through commerce; administered by empires, bearing colonial inscriptions; propelled by nationalism, and now increasingly steered by global media, migration, and capital. And it continues to 'arrive and emerge', as always in opportunistic fragments . . . but no longer from the West alone."
2. Drawing on the revisionist critical theories of Oskar Negt and Alexander Kluge, Miriam Hansen explicitly argues for cinema as an adjunct or alternative public sphere. Cinema, she asserts, "functions both as a public sphere of its own, defined by specific relations of representation and reception, and as part of a larger social horizon, defined by other media, by overlapping local, national and global, face-to-face and deterritorialized structures of public life" (Hansen 1993, 198).
3. An alternative spelling of this director's name is Youngyooth Thongkonthun.
4. This director's name is also sometimes spelt as Poj Anon.
5. In this sense, as much as *Love of Siam* actively subverts the teen film's central convention of heteronormative coupling, it faithfully adheres to the genre's other core conventions,



notably an accent on *bildungsroman*-style narrative and melodramatic characterization. Studies of the teen film suggest that, for all its diversity, many, if not most, entries in the genre share a central concern with the dramatization of modern adolescence and its specific tensions and dilemmas, primarily the passage to adulthood and fully socialized identity played out, more often than not, as a classic coming-of-age narrative (Shary 2005). Rooted in the structural liminality, or in-betweenness, of adolescence, the coming-of-age narrative of the teen film makes a metaphor of the transition from childhood to adulthood as a symbolic drama of self-becoming, a crucial aspect of which is the development of sexual agency and the search for a stable sexual selfhood out of the irruptions and ambiguities of incipient teen sexual activity.

6. An earlier study by Wimal Dissanayake suggests that this type of accented familialism is, in fact, a defining element of Asian cinematic melodrama and one that serves to distinguish it from Western modes. Where “in Western melodramas”, he writes, “it is the individual self in relation to the family that is explored . . . in Asian melodramas it is the familial self that is the focus of interest” (Dissanayake 1993, 4).
7. As an indication, below is a sample of comments from a single thread sourced virtually at random from an English-language forum:

“I don’t get the ending! Why does it end that way? When he asked his mom about making decisions . . . didn’t that mean that it was ok for him to do what he wants? Shouldn’t it have ended differently? I am completely lost . . .”

“I was loving the movie and everything seemed like we would get a happy ending but when Tong says . . . what he says, I was floored. Yes, I don’t think it should have ended that way either because everything leading up to it made you think otherwise but, hey, I did not direct it. However, it was beautifully done and I have to say it took me awhile to stop crying after the end of the movie. I just did not understand or expect the ending.”

“I rewatched it twice today and just can’t figure out why the hell it ended the way it did . . . made no kind of sense. Everything points to them being together . . . and when Tong is running to hear him sing, when he is smiling when the song is again actually being sung directly to him and when he runs through the crowd to catch up to Mew . . . and then you have to hear ‘I cannot be with you as your boyfriend.’ . . . WTF !! !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I get so pissed and angry because it makes no damn sense. Everything that happened in the movie did NOT lead up to that ending.”

“The Love of Siam—Discuss.” *Subscene*, 13–18 March 2008. <http://subscene.com/forums/t/7433.aspx> (accessed 27 April 2010).

8. Even Mew ultimately ends up in a position of family-coded queerness, assuming the very role performed by his grandmother in the prologue sequence as guardian of the family home and keeper of the romantic flame. In the film’s beginning, a young Mew is shown having been left behind in Bangkok by his parents, who have relocated upcountry. Explaining that his role is to care for her, his grandmother says to Mew that she must stay on in the family home, and he by her side, to tend vigil should the spirit of her husband, Mew’s grandfather, return. The film’s final scene, with a teary-eyed Mew sitting in his house as he looks into an uncertain but hope-filled future of waiting for love’s return, effectively puts Mew in this same role. It is a scene that equally buys into the insistent valorization of suffering as ennobling and life-affirming, identified by Dissanayake (1993, 4–5) and others as a distinguishing aspect of Asian film melodramas and one that is particularly prevalent in Thai melodrama. See also Serhat Ünaldi’s account in this volume of the prominence of the moral value of “suffering” in early Thai queer films.

## Chapter 5

1. This chapter is an edited version of a paper I wrote for the Southeast Asia Consortium on Gender, Sexuality, and Health at Mahidol University, in 2005. My research for Mahidol focused on the structuring process between gay places in Bangkok and performances of Thai gay identities.
2. The gay saunas that I describe are similar to gay bathhouses in North America. Thais have borrowed the expression “gay sauna”, or *sauna gay* in Thai, from gay communities in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Europe.
3. There has been considerable debate among scholars of queer genders and sexualities in Thailand on the new identities such as *gay*, *tom*, *dee*, etc. in the Thai sex and gender order. For further discussion on these debates see Jackson (1999a, 2000), Morris (1994, 1997), Sinnott (2004), and Storer (1999a, 1999b).
4. I thank Tong Tawalwongsri, a graduate student at Thammasat University, for interpreting and then transcribing the interviews.
5. For a fuller description of types of gay business establishments, see “The Purple Baht: History and Types of Thai Gay Businesses”, *The Men of Thailand*. <http://www.floatinglotus.com/tmot/gaybiz.html> (accessed 1 November 2008).
6. The built environment of the gay sauna primarily facilitates and hosts anonymous sexual activities of various forms between men. The constructed landscape is a highly sexualized terrain suggesting an exclusive focus on sex. Typically, it consists of “fantasy environments” that recreate erotic situations that may be illegal or dangerous when performed in public locations. Orgy rooms encourage group sex, while “glory holes” recreate the setting of public toilets, and mazes take the place of bushes and undergrowth in public parks. Steam rooms and gyms are modelled after gym locker areas, while video rooms recreate the balconies and back rows of movie theatres. Sauna customers are regulated by a set of situationally defined norms, including restrictions on modes of communication, styles of behaviour, and regulations about the use of physical space. For example, different areas are designated as being either for sex or a “sex-free zone” (e.g. the television lounge, the area in the main entry, and the locker rooms). Sex occurs—at varying rates and to varying degrees—either inside private cubicles, in semi-private facilities such as the dry saunas and steam rooms, or in open orgy rooms, and, depending on the number of customers, in communal open facilities such as the pool. Bangkok gay saunas also regularly feature promotions such as discounted rates for students or early visitors, no-towel nights, underwear nights, and holiday parties.
7. At the time of writing, there were more than thirty gay saunas throughout the Bangkok metropolitan area.
8. Thai perceptions of class status do not necessarily mean actual socio-economic status. According to Jackson (1995), designations of “upper” or “lower” class in the Bangkok gay community refer as much to a person’s presentation or perceptions of style and may also reflect and individual’s class aspirations as much as actual class status as such.
9. Siam, an abbreviation for Siam Square, is a downtown shopping precinct noted for its up-market youth-fashion stores. It is a very popular hang-out for middle-class Bangkok youth. See Brett Farmer’s account of this precinct in his chapter here on the film *Love of Siam*.
10. The site of the old The Babylon has since been converted into a restaurant and a series of condominiums.
11. While the business name of the sauna is “The Babylon”, the venue is widely known in gay communities in both Thailand and internationally simply as “Babylon”.

12. See, for instance, the accounts of The Babylon on gay web sites such as [www.dreadedned.com](http://www.dreadedned.com) and [www.squirt.org](http://www.squirt.org).
13. This idea was suggested by Gary Atkins (2005). Although Babel and Babylon are two different stories in the Old Testament of the Bible, where Babylon is represented as a city of debauchery, and while it is often associated with harlotry and whoredom, “the story of Babel as a cosmopolitan place is said to have inspired the architecture of The Babylon sauna.
14. The Babylon is close to the major area of Sathorn Road, which was one of four key zones of the city identified by international property consultancies in the 1980s as sites for developing high-status residential and business districts (Askew 2002). The neighbourhood of The Babylon is now composed of luxury condominiums, consular and embassy offices, and up-market residences. In recent years, the quiet neighbourhood has been gentrified into a gay residential place for upper middle-class Thai gay men and foreign gay expatriates. This information is based on the impressions of my informants as to the composition of the neighbourhood of The Babylon, as well as information from gay Filipino informants and other foreign expatriates who live in the condominiums that line Sathon Soi 1.
15. I borrow the idea of “homonormativity” from a lecture delivered by Dr. Martin Manalansan at the University of the Philippines in 2005, wherein he explained and critiqued the concepts of heteronormativity and homonormativity. According to Manalansan, homonormativity refers to the global landscape of Western gay culture that has created the sense that it is ever-present and has in fact entered the mainstream public domain, appropriating heteronormative values.
16. There is no evidence that Thai men who patronize The Babylon actually come from middle-class backgrounds. However, the projection of middle-class cultural capital is evident from Thai patrons of The Babylon, including those who were identified by my informants as “money boys”. This is thus an instance of the performance of a class-inflected gay identity. As Tom Boellstorff (2007) notes, and as detailed by Peter Jackson in his opening chapters in this volume, Southeast Asian gay identities are inflected with an aspirational middle-class caché.
17. This is a reference to Tata Young’s song of the same title.

## Chapter 6

1. See <http://learners.in.th/blog/mas-comed/62426> (accessed 1 April 2010).
2. The borrowed English word “stroke” here means masturbation.
3. Zeed-sard, written as *sit-sat* in the official Thai romanization, is an exclamation used to express intense pleasure, including sexual pleasure.
4. The study was originally reported in Thai in Ronnapoom Samakkeekarom, Pimpawun Boonmongkon and Wachira Chantong (2008).
5. These figures are based on observation of roughly 200 users in four chat rooms for 12 nights in three consecutive monthly periods, totalling approximately 7,200 cases. Some of these cases may have constituted regular users logging on several times.
6. Tha Nam Non is the Nonthaburi Pier, located in Nonthaburi Province in Central Thailand.
7. This means: “From Ramkhamhaeng Road, Soi 65 [in eastern Bangkok]; age 16, height 173 cm, weight 65 kg.”
8. *Chak wao* (literally “to fly a kite”) is Thai slang meaning “to masturbate”.
9. *Ma Du K*. literally means, “come see p. (pricks)”. The English letter “K” here stands for the romanized spelling of *khuay*, “cock, prick”.
10. *Na-rak* means “cute”.

11. *Krapok* means “testicles”.
12. Y 2 K refers to the pre-millennium rumour of a collapse of computers worldwide in the year 2000. The letter “K” also refers to the Thai word *khuay*, “cock”, as noted above.
13. *Kradae* means “to be affected”.
14. Krung Thep is the Thai name for Bangkok.
15. Chiang Mai is a province and city in northern Thailand.
16. Isan denotes the northeastern region of Thailand.
17. For example, the name of the chat room Gay Ha Fan (“Gays Looking for a Partner”) would communicate to experienced users that they have to divulge their age, weight, height, location, and sexual identity to comply with the rituals at work in this chat room, whereas in Gay Stroke, for example, this would not be required.
18. An IP (Internet Protocol) address is a series of numbers that identifies which particular computer or network is connected to the Internet.
19. A *wai* is a traditional Thai greeting that consists of placing one’s hands, palms together, before one’s face and bowing slightly. It is performed to show respect to a senior.
20. IM, “instant messaging”, is an Internet service that allows for the quick exchange of written messages.

## Chapter 7

1. This chapter forms part of a doctoral dissertation on the valorization of travel metaphors within gender-variant discourses. It is the product of many conversations with people interested in gender-variant travel practices, inside and outside of Thailand. I am grateful to Fran Martin, Vera Mackie and Peter A. Jackson; and in Thailand to Prempreeda Pramroj Na Ayutthaya, Nantiya Sukontapatipark, and Sitthiphon Boonyapisompan for offering their expert knowledge on *kathoey* health care.
2. The expressions trans and gender-variant are used here to describe any cross-gender identifications or practices. Trans men include those who were assigned female at birth and who now live as men. Trans women include those who were assigned male at birth and who now live as women.
3. Interviews were conducted with trans women from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, the United States, and Australia who obtained surgery at Thai gender reassignment clinics in 2006 and 2007 in Thailand and Australia.
4. The manager asked to remain anonymous. Interview, 15 July 2006.
5. In this chapter I use GRS, gender reassignment surgery, to denote both genital and non-genital procedures. It is sometimes referred to as SRS (sex reassignment surgery). The trans women participants in this project underwent many different surgical procedures, including castration, or orchiectomy; vaginoplasty, the construction of a neo-vagina; breast augmentation, or augmentation mammoplasty (AM), and facial feminization surgery (FFS).
6. See the English-language web site of Dr. Chettawut Tulayaphanich, [www.chet-plasticsurgery.com](http://www.chet-plasticsurgery.com) (accessed 19 May 2007).
7. According to Dr. Preecha’s estimates in a 2006 interview, less than one percent of patients at the Preecha Aesthetic Institute were Thai. The Suporn Clinic’s manager noted in an interview that the vast majority of Dr. Suporn’s patients were non-Thai. The Phuket Plastic Surgery Center had a clientele that was around 95 percent non-Thai clientele in 2006. I follow Thai etiquette in referring to the Thai surgeons by their given [names].
8. I use pseudonyms to identify research participants in this chapter to preserve their anonymity.

9. The Thai word *farang* here is generally understood to mean white non-Thais, rather than foreign visitors from other regions in Asia or other non-white, non-Thai people. To avoid any suggestion of Eurocentrism, in this chapter I use Thai-language terms to write about Thai gender-variant identities and practices. *Kathoeay* can refer to male-to-female transgender or transsexual categories (Jackson 2003c, paragraph 2), but historically it has had many different connotations, including male homosexuality, a “third sex or gender” (*phet thi-sam*), and cross-dressers who are assigned male or female at birth (Jackson 1997b, 171). “Ladyboy” is a Thai coinage of English words to mean *kathoeay*. *Sao praphet sorng* is a Thai term meaning “second type of woman”. It is used by many gender-variant Thais to identify themselves in preference to the term *kathoeay*.
10. Interview, Sydney, 18 February 2007.
11. Interview, Bangkok, 18 June 2006.
12. Interview, Brisbane, 30 July 2006.
13. “Trans masculine” here refers to masculine gender-variant identities or practices. Anecdotally, chest-reconstruction surgery is popular with *toms* and available in urban and provincial hospitals.
14. An excellent Foucauldian analysis of the medicalization of gender variance in the WPATH Standards of Care, as well as psychiatric frameworks such as the *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*, can be found in Spade (2006).
15. Interview, 18 June 2006.
16. Thirty percent was the figure cited by Siththiphan Boonyapisomparn (Hua), a *sao praphet sorng* activist and health worker who coordinated a Pattaya-based drop-in centre for *sao praphet sorng* and *kathoeays*. Interview, Bangkok, 17 January 2008.
17. Interview, 18 June 2006.
18. Interview, Dr. Suporn, 24 June 2006.
19. Personal communication with the clinic manager at the Suporn Clinic, June 2006.
20. “Medical tourism for Saudi vacationers in focus.” *Arab News*, 3 August 2006. [www.arabnews.com/?page=1&section=0&article=85985&d=3&m=8&y=2006&pix=kingdom.jpg&category=Kingdom](http://www.arabnews.com/?page=1&section=0&article=85985&d=3&m=8&y=2006&pix=kingdom.jpg&category=Kingdom) (accessed 1 October 2008).
21. The difference in estimates here may reflect the fact that most non-Thais who receive medical treatment in any given year are expatriate workers or tourists who did not travel to the country for medical purposes.
22. This fantasy is not limited to heterosexuality. Similar fantasies operate anecdotally within gay “rice queen” portrayals of Thai gay men. A rice queen is a white man who desires “Asian” men as partners.
23. Tourism Authority of Thailand, [www.tatnews.org/emagazine/1983.asp](http://www.tatnews.org/emagazine/1983.asp) (accessed 14 June 2007).
24. This is one Thai tourist-marketing strategy amongst many. Other narratives stress different aspects of Thailand, such as the “rugged adventure” of visiting hill tribes in the north of the country, or eco-adventures that promise to reveal the “real situation” to the tourist.
25. Interview, 18 June 2006.
26. Interview, 16 July 2006.
27. [www.phuket-plasticsurgery.com](http://www.phuket-plasticsurgery.com) (accessed 25 May 2008).
28. [www.hygeiabauty.com/sex-change.html](http://www.hygeiabauty.com/sex-change.html) (accessed 23 May 2008).
29. Interview, 19 February 2007.
30. Interview, 17 December 2007.
31. Interview, 17 December 2007.
32. The convention that one must obtain genital surgery to be a “real” man or woman has been

soundly critiqued within trans theory, beginning with Sandy Stone's "Post-transsexual manifesto" (1992).

33. See "Rebecca's life on Mars", <http://hometown.aol.com/mches48837/> (accessed 12 July 2007).
34. <http://hometown.aol.com/mches48837/> (accessed 12 July 2007).
35. This situation seems consistent with more generalized labour relations in Thailand, particularly the ideological power of *bun khun* (reciprocal obligation), or family obligations, between employers and employees. Under the terms of *bun khun*, employers occupy a similar symbolic status to parents, and employees occupy the position of children who owe their employer-parents loyalty and obedience. See Mills (1999, 122–124).

## Chapter 8

1. An earlier version of this chapter was published in 2007 in *South East Asia Research* (15 [2], 281–99). I would like to thank Andrei Aksana for taking the time to discuss his writing with me in Jakarta in December 2006. Thanks also to Pauline Khng, Sarah Hicks, Rachel Harrison, and an anonymous reviewer for *South East Asia Research* for their comments on earlier drafts of this article.
2. All quotations from this novel are taken from the 2004 edition. Translations are my own.
3. The book is now in its 4th printing, and sales have exceeded fifty thousand copies, which would suggest as many as 200,000 readers (Interview with Aksana, 10 December 2006). Aksana is probably one of the best-selling fiction writers in Indonesia today.
4. Following Tom Boellstorff, I recognize the Indonesian terms *gay* and *lesbi* to be distinct from the English "gay" and "lesbian" (2005, 8). The Indonesian term *normal*, which is used by *gay* and *lesbi* Indonesians, refers to dominant understandings of modern sexuality (Boellstorff 2005, 8) and should similarly be seen as distinct from the English term "normal".
5. See, for example, Fran Martin (2003) on Taiwan and Peter Jackson (2001) on Thailand.
6. Hill and Sen (2005, 57, 62) quote estimates of 12 million Internet users in Indonesia as a whole in 2004, with most access being via Internet cafes, workplaces, and schools or campuses. The number has undoubtedly increased significantly since that date.
7. This book has had twenty-nine reprints, and there is now a sequel, *Jakarta undercover 2: karnaval malam* (Jakarta undercover 2: night carnival), and a spin-off movie, *Jakarta Undercover* (2007, directed by Lance).
8. These follow a number of books that have taken lesbian love as their main theme, most notably *Garis tepi seorang lesbian* (The margins of lesbianism) by Herlinatiens (2003). Note also the *gay* content, even if it is not the central theme, of, for example, Dee's *Supernova* (2000) and *Jazz parfum dan insiden* (Jazz perfume and the incident) by Seno Gumira Ajidarma (1996). Seno's short story *Lelaki yang terindah* (The most beautiful man), first published in 1991 and included in his 2003 collection, *Sebuah pertanyaan untuk cinta* (A question for love), also has a *gay* theme.
9. While this might reflect the reluctance of Indonesians publicly to define themselves according to their sexuality, we should also note Boellstorff's findings that most Indonesian men would not identify with the idea of being "out" or "not out". Instead, they tend to talk about being open (*terbuka*) in particular spaces. *Gay* Indonesians do not necessarily see a contradiction in being open only in certain *gay* spaces. In other spaces, those of the *normal* world, it is neither desirable nor necessary to be open (Boellstorff 2005, 91). It seems that for the moment the *normal* world should probably be seen as including the world of publishing, or at least its public face.

10. Chris Berry (1997, 14) has argued this point with respect to the upsurge in the production of gay films in various Asian countries.
11. Andrei Aksana, born in Jakarta (19 January 1970), is the latest in the line of a somewhat prestigious literary heritage. Aksana's mother, Nina Pane, is a novelist and screenwriter, and Andrei is the grandson of the prewar writers Armijn Pane and Sanoesi Pane. His official web site is <http://andreiaksana.blogdrive.com>.
12. He reportedly published his first novel, *Mengukir mimpi terlalu pagi*, when he was nineteen. After a break to concentrate on his education and career he returned to writing and his novels to date are *Abadilah cinta* (Let love be eternal) (2003a), *Cinta penuh air mata* (Love full of tears) (2003b), *Lelaki terindah* (The most beautiful man) (2004a), *Sebagai pengganti dirimu* (In place of you) (2004b), *Cinta 24 jam* (24 hour love) (2004c), *Pretty Prita* (Pretty Prita) (2005), *Karena aku mencintaimu* (Because I love you) (2006a).
13. The English-language title and chapter headings notwithstanding, the book is written in Indonesian.
14. See, for example, the discussion "Lelaki terindah karya Andrei Aksana" on *AjangKita Forum*, [www.ajangkita.com/forum/viewtopic](http://www.ajangkita.com/forum/viewtopic) (accessed 10 April 2007); comment on *Lelaki terindah* on the *Kupunyabuku* blog, <http://kupunyabuku.blogdrive.com/comments?id=7> (accessed 11 April 2007); reviews of *Lelaki terindah* on *A Feminist Blog*, <http://afemaleguest.blog.co.uk/?tag=lelaki%20terindah> (accessed 12 April 2007), and "Lelaki terindah—the gay community exposed!" on *Agauthor*, <http://agauthor.multiply.com/reviews> (accessed 12 April 2007). The novel is also mentioned on various discussion boards on the Indonesian gay site *BoyzForum*, <http://www.readybb.com/boyzforum/> (accessed 10 April 2007). For an example of a negative blog commentary, see Nanas Homo (2006).
15. All section headings are in English in the original.
16. See Peter Jackson (1999a) and Douglas Sanders (2002) for further details of this discussion.
17. See, for example, the entries on Bangkok on the popular gay web sites *fridae.com*, <http://www.fridae.com/cityguides/bangkok/bk-intro.php> (accessed 10 April 2007), and *Utopia Asia*, <http://www.utopia-asia.com/tipsthai.htm> (accessed 10 April 2007).
18. *QueerCast #23: Pre-Party Bitching!*, [http://mediac01m01.libsyn.com/podcasts/a3f728811c8fb15b3cc2dfa244\\_a38b82/4628e794/queercast/queercast\\_23-pre-party\\_bitching.mp3](http://mediac01m01.libsyn.com/podcasts/a3f728811c8fb15b3cc2dfa244_a38b82/4628e794/queercast/queercast_23-pre-party_bitching.mp3) (accessed 10 April 2007). *Queercast*, hosted by Ian Lee and Nicholas Deroose, describes itself as "Singapore's juiciest queer podcast".
19. In the novel, one of the first sights visited is Jatujak Market. DJ station, one of the most well-known gay nightclubs in Bangkok, is also the site of a key scene in the novel. Rafky and Valent have to return home to Jakarta before they are tempted to visit Babylon, perhaps the best-known gay spa/sauna in the Thai capital.
20. Texas being a play on the word *terminal*, the bus station being nearby, and Kalifor being a play on the *kali* (river) near which that location was sited (Boellstorff 2005, 24).
21. The text here hints that Valent has long been aware of his sexuality, though we are told little else of what he has experienced on previous visits to the city.
22. Certainly there are cases of forced marriage. Boellstorff (2005, 110) notes that for some gay men marriage is highly traumatic, with some choosing suicide rather than accepting a marriage forced upon them.
23. Aksana (Interview, 10 December 2006) claims that after having included this character, readers and his publisher asked him to write a book with a central gay character.

## Chapter 11

1. I wish to thank Nantiya Sukontapatipark for her invaluable help in keeping me well stocked with articles, magazines, books, and theses during my time away from Thailand. I am very grateful for her insights and information. I also wish to thank Kallayanee Techapatikul for her help in checking translations and guiding me through difficult moments in writing. Financial assistance from Yale University's Gay and Lesbian Studies Program was essential in completing this research.
2. The influence of the Marxist concept of hegemony and of Foucault's concept of discourse is so widespread in anthropology, as well as queer studies, that it would be difficult to find many new publications without some appropriation of these concepts. I have cited a few well-known texts that focus specifically on these concepts, but an exhaustive list would prove nearly impossible.
3. For more on Thai NGO history, see Delcore (2003) and Ungpakorn (n.d., 2006).
4. Astraea: Lesbian Foundation for Justice is an organization based in the United States that provides small grants to LGBT and progressive organizations around the world. See [www.astraea.org](http://www.astraea.org).
5. See Jackson (1997b) and (2004c) for a more in-depth discussion of the historical emergence of the term "gay" and its positioning relative to the category *kathoey*.
6. I use the phrase "Anjaree organizers" rather than giving specific names of individuals because not all of the members and organizers are public figures or have agreed to have their names used.
7. My thanks to Peter Jackson for this historical note. Jackson dates the emergence of these discourses to the work of Sut Saengwichian on *kathoey* in 1956. See Jackson (1997b, 60, n. 13, and 62, n. 15) for the early references to American publications from the 1930s and 1940s.
8. Lesla web site was [www.lesla.com](http://www.lesla.com). It was inactive at the time of writing and the current status of Lesla is not clear.
9. See Sinnott (2004, chapter 6) for more detailed discussion of the relationship between these groups and the reaction of *toms* to Anjaree's gender-neutral discourse of "women who love women".
10. *LeslaZine*, No. 1, October 2000, pp. 7–10.
11. See Sinnott (2004, 29–30) for more discussion of the negative connotations of the term "lesbian" for *toms* and *dees*.

## Chapter 12

1. The Social Order Campaign was concerned with ensuring that entertainment venues throughout Thailand observed legal closing hours, excluded minors, and discouraged the use of recreational drugs. The campaign was highly publicized during the time that Purachai was interior minister and was widely supported by the Thai middle class.
2. High-society hairdresser Pan Bunnak was a publicly gay figure in the 1970s, while scholar-turned-actor Seri Wongmontha was a public voice for Thai *kathoeyes* and homosexuals in the 1980s (see Jackson 1995).
3. Interview, 20 September 2007.
4. "Thai LGBT activists fight for constitutional protection", International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, 11 July 2007. See [www.iglhrc.org](http://www.iglhrc.org) (accessed 20 September 2008).
5. Kultida Samabuddhi, "We've laid a foundation", interview with Saneh Chamarik, *Bangkok Post*, 13 July 2007, p. 2.



6. A number of politicians assumed that Naiyana was lesbian because of her advocacy in issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. She has a husband and at least one child.
7. Interview, Naiyana Suphapung, 20 September 2007.
8. "Gay women face higher risk: expert", *The Nation*, 29 November 2001, p. 6A.
9. Karnjariya Sukrung, "A Forgotten Minority", *Bangkok Post, Outlook*, 12 December 2001, p. 1. The "right to love" is a formulation popularized by Amnesty International in its publications and activism on LGBT rights.
10. *Bangkok Post, Outlook*, 12 December 2001, p. 1.
11. Annual Pride parades were held in Bangkok from 1999 to 2006. Figures at the meeting represented gay businesses and LGBT organizations. Some pride events occurred in 2007, but no parade was held.
12. Author's notes from the meeting. Translation by Timo Ojanen.
13. Wassana Nanuam, "Military scraps offending label against gays", *Bangkok Post*, 2 April 2006, p. 3.
14. "Gays take on Novotel in club row", *The Nation*, 28 June 2007, p. 1A; "Anti-Novotel campaign grows", *The Nation*, 29 June 2007, p. 1A.
15. "An historic victory for human rights", *The Nation*, 22 August 2007, p. 9A.
16. Most notably Anjana Suvarnananda, Natee Teerarojanapongs, and the Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand and Sapaan NGOs.
17. Interview, Naiyana Suphapung, 20 September 2007.
18. Anjana Suvarnananda, e-mail transmission, 1 June 2007.
19. Sanitsuda Ekachai, "Activists want gay rights in charter", *Bangkok Post*, 26 May 2007, p. 4.
20. Alisa went on to run for mayor of Pattaya in April 2008, gaining 6,000 to 7,000 votes of a total vote of 30,000, not enough to win the post.
21. Anjana Suvarnananda, e-mail transmission, 10 June 2007.
22. The Thai-language document is available at [www.sapaan.org/article/72.htm](http://www.sapaan.org/article/72.htm) (accessed 10 March 2010). My thanks to Peter Jackson for his preliminary translation into English. I have modified his language slightly.
23. At the request of Anjana Suvarnananda of Anjaree, I drafted a background paper on how other countries handled the question of the sex indicated on the personal documentation of transgendered individuals. The examples were partly from the West but also from the jurisdictions in Asia that permit a change in documents for post-operative transsexuals (Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and parts of China). I attended the planning meetings and the two National Legislative Assembly committee meetings that are described in this section.
24. Prapasri Osathanon, Wannapa Phetdee, "Draft 'ignores transvestites'", *The Nation*, 23 October 2007, p. 4A; Manop Thip-Osod, "Honorifics bill goes to cabinet for deliberation", *Bangkok Post*, 25 October 2007, p. 3.
25. Wannapa Phetdee, "Women to get choice of Mrs, Miss", *The Nation*, 8 February 2008, 4A.
26. Bhanravee Tansubhapol, "On the lookout for citizens' rights", *Bangkok Post*, 13 July 2007, p. 10.
27. Thongbai Thongpao, "NHRC selection is deeply flawed", *Bangkok Post*, 26 April 2009, p. 11. See also Supalak Ganjanakhundee, "Selection of new rights commissioners is a legal farce", *The Nation*, 23 April 2009, p. 2B; "Unearthing strange facts", *Bangkok Post*, 25 April 2009, p. 12; Achara Ashayagachat, "Selection of rights panel runs into flak", *Bangkok Post*, 21 April 2009, p. 4; Achara Ashayagachat, "Nominees for NHRC job have their say", *Bangkok Post*, 22 April 2009, p. 4.
28. Achara Ashayagachat, "A question of credibility dogs new panel already", *Bangkok Post*, 16 May 2009, p. 9.
29. "New NHRC embraces spirit of cooperation", *Bangkok Post*, 21 July 2009, p. 3.

30. Achara Ashayagachat, “Thailand seeks entry to UN rights council”, *Bangkok Post*, 25 February 2010, p. 4.

### Chapter 13

1. This chapter is based on a paper entitled “Transpeople in Thailand: Acceptance or oppression”, presented at the Tenth International Conference of Thai Studies, “Thai societies in a transnationalised world”, which was held at Thammasat University, Bangkok, in January 2008. In preparing this fuller version, I am grateful to Peter Jackson, Krissana Mamane (Sana), Prempreeda Pramoj Na Ayutthaya (Bon), and Kosum Omphornuwat (Jigsaw) for their observations and patience in answering my questions.
2. <http://www.globalgayz.com/g-thailand07-1.html> (accessed 15 September 2008).
3. This expression is used, for example, on the “Transgender Women of Thailand” web site at <http://www.thailadyboyz.net> (accessed 15 September 2008).
4. Nada Chaiyajit of the ThaiLadyboyz group in e-mail communication with the author, 16 May 2008.
5. For a recent review of international transgender hate crime, see Kidd and Witten (2007) and TransGender Europe (2009).
6. Leaving aside the accuracy (or otherwise) of this figure, the prevalence of gender variance is almost certainly higher in Thailand than in many other cultures worldwide. I consider why this might be so in Winter (2002b).
7. For a critique of Thailand’s reputation as a “gay paradise”, see Jackson (1999).
8. See an in-depth discussion in Costa and Matzner (2007, 17ff).
9. Jackson, e-mail to author, 29 October 2008.
10. See, for example, Costa and Matzner (2007); Gallagher (2005); Jackson (1995); Jenkins et al. (2005); Luhmann (2006); Matzner (2001); Nanda (2000); Totman (2003); Winter (2006a); Cameron (2006).
11. See, for example, Jackson (1995).
12. For more detail on the rights of “people of diverse sexualities” in the current Thai constitution, see Douglas Sanders’ chapter in this volume.
13. This appears to be the view of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, which declared in the 1990s that the Commonwealth of Australia had breached the ICCPR in allowing the state of Tasmania to persist in criminalizing homosexuality. The committee noted that the protected category of “sex” in ICCPR Article 2 is to be taken as including sexual orientation.
14. The other six nations were the United States, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, and China. The research is reported in Winter et al. (2009). The Thai version of the questionnaire employed the term “*phu-ying praphet song*” (“second kind of woman”).
15. Jackson, e-mail to the author, 29 October 2008.
16. I use the term “natal” (i.e. “birth”) here. The more commonly used term, “biological” sex, is problematic. There is increasing evidence for a facet of biological sex called brain sex (or brain gender, as in Hines, [2004]), and that individuals may be hard-wired for sex-linked behaviour and personality differences at birth. This hard-wiring may extend to transpeople; they may be born with brains that are in a physical (biological) sense cross-sexed (GIREs, 2006). The implication is that transwomen may be viewed as biological women, as are their natal female counterparts (and that transmen may be viewed as biological men).
17. Worldwide, and perhaps in Thailand too, transmen may find it easier to pass socially than transwomen, if only because the cross-sex hormones available to them often induce physical changes faster, and sometimes with longer-term effects, than for transwomen taking female hormones.

18. See Cameron (2006, 29), and Jenkins et al. (2005, 14). Jenkins et al. note that this designation as psychologically damaged has also undermined the possibility of getting a passport. In August 2005, the Thai military, under pressure, indicated that it would no longer use this phrase. The decision appears not to be retrospective, i.e. does not make possible replacement of old *Sor. Dor.* 43 papers with new ones.
19. See Jackson (2002). It appears that no follow-up study was undertaken to examine the effect of this affair upon the already low numbers of *phu-ying kham-phet* working as teachers.
20. In Asia, change of legal gender status (as evidenced in the right to a heterosexual marriage) is now possible in Japan, South Korea, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Saudi Arabia. Reports also suggest it is possible in Indonesia (Dédé Oetomo, e-mail to the author, 22 February 2008).
21. In the United Kingdom these legislative changes were incorporated into the Gender Recognition Act of 2004.
22. Until recently, the perpetrator of rape upon a *phu-ying kham-phet* could be tried only for physical assault (Cameron 2006, 27).
23. In British English, a "bar fine" is a fee that a customer pays the management of a bar or commercial sex establishment to take a sex worker off the premises. In Australian and American English, this is more commonly called an "off fee", which is a direct translation of the Thai expression *kha off*.
24. Cameron (2006, 19) reports anecdotal evidence suggesting that the willingness of partners of *phu-ying kham-phet* to use condoms is very low.
25. For more information see Jenkins et al. (2005, 17) and Cameron (2006, 17).
26. For example, Luhmann (2006) reports that among his *phu-ying kham-phet* research participants who had ever had a regular sexual partner, 28 percent had never used a condom with that partner.
27. From a presentation by F. Van Griensven, "Epidemiology of HIV and STI in MSM in the greater Mekong region: what do we know?" (PowerPoint presentation at the Regional Consultative Forum in Bangkok, 15–16 August 2005). Cited in Jenkins et al. (2005, 5).
28. Andrew Hunter, head of the Asia Pacific Network of Sex Workers, reported in Cameron (2006, 17). Research quoted by Cameron reveals that intravenous drug users are usually thought to be the group with the highest HIV infection rate.
29. See Jenkins et al. (2005, 22) and Cameron (2006, 31).
30. See Luhmann (2006), who found that only 50 percent of his sample had consulted a doctor prior to initiating hormone use, while only 28 percent had gone to a doctor to establish current dose levels. My 2007 study with Chaisuak Lertraksakun (report in progress) revealed that within our sample of 150 *phu-ying kham-phet*, 139 had taken cross-sex hormones at some time in their lives. Though the vast majority had taken advice before doing so, it was most often from other *phu-ying kham-phet*. Only 44 had taken advice from qualified nurses or doctors. The figures for medical consultation were hardly better after starting to take hormones; only 68 went to a qualified nurse or doctor for care.
31. Fathers typically appear less accepting than mothers towards their *phu-ying kham-phet* children. See, for example, Jenkins et al. (2005, 8); and Winter (2006a).
32. See Jenkins et al. (2005, 11) and Winter (2006c). This second study (a sample of 195 young *phu-ying kham-phet*) found that around 11 percent anticipated presenting themselves as male by the time they were fifty years of age.
33. Jenkins et al. (2005, 16–17).
34. In an unpublished study of 225 *phu-ying kham-phet* aged 15 to 55 (mean age 24.6 years), Winter and Vink found that 34.5 percent had at some time in their life thought about killing themselves (usually or all the time for 4.5 percent of them). Even more worrying, over

- one in five (22 percent) reported having attempted suicide at least once in their lives; 12.6 percent of the sample had done so more than once.
35. Note, for example, the work done by broad LGBT groups such as Anjaree, the Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand, and Bangkok Rainbow for the promotion of *khon kham-phet* rights. See Megan Sinnott and Douglas Sanders in this volume.
  36. The research team was comprised of Pornthip Chalungsooth (US), Yik Koon Teh (Malaysia), Ying Wuen Wong (Singapore), Anne Beaumont (UK), Loretta Man Wah Ho (Hong Kong, China), Francis “Chuck” Gomez and Raymond Aquino Macapagal (Philippines), Nongnuch Rojanalert and Kulthida Maneerat (Thailand), and me. See Winter et al. (2009).
  37. Mental pathology correlated with denial as women at 0.55, with social rejection at 0.50, peer rejection at 0.64, and sexual deviance at 0.44. All these correlation co-efficients were statistically significant beyond the 99 percent level of confidence.
  38. Mental pathology correlated with denial as women at 0.12, with social rejection at 0.26, peer rejection at 0.18, and sexual deviance at 0.42. The two highest correlations were statistically significant beyond the 99 percent level of confidence, the third-highest was significant beyond the 95 percent level. The lowest correlation fell slightly short of significance.
  39. See Sherer (2006) and Matzner (n.d.).
  40. American Psychiatric Association Task Force (1994).
  41. See Bartlett et al. (2000); Hale (2007); Langer and Martin (2004); Newman (2002); Richardson (1999); Vasey and Bartlett (2007); Vitale (2005); Wilson et al. (2002); Winter (2007); Winters (2006).
  42. Other possibilities also exist. Some individuals may hold to broad, “essentialist” belief systems about sex and gender (for example, that sex and gender are indivisible and unchangeable), which, in turn, lead them to believe that transpeople are mentally ill, and also to deny them gender rights, to regard them as sexual deviants, and avoid social contact with them.
  43. See, for example, Clements-Nolle et al. (2006), and Grossman and D’Augelli (2007).
  44. See, for example, the discussion of transwomen in Malaysia in Teh (2002).
  45. In our 2007 study, 57 percent of Thai respondents believed that *phu-ying kham-phet* are sexually perverted (*wiparit thang-phet*). By contrast, only 22 percent of US students took this view about transwomen.
  46. Costa and Matzner (2007) discuss the Thai feminine virtue of *khvam-riap-roi* at some length in their book on *sao praphet song* (“women of the second kind”). For further discussion of how perceptions of impropriety can dramatically undermine acceptance towards *phu-ying kham-phet* see Matzner (2001).
  47. See the US research of Klamen et al. (1999), who found that a quarter century after depathologization, nine percent of second-year medical students still believed homosexuality to be a mental disorder.

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