



Tokyo Jukujo

Middle-aged Sex Workers in Contemporary Japan

Dr. Chiaki Nishijima

19:00-20:30, Monday, 22nd April

Room 301, 3F, Building 10, Sophia University

Once viewed as pariahs in Japan's sex industry, women in their forties through sixties entered the mainstream in the 2000's when enterprising managers saw an opportunity to capitalize on their growing economic vulnerability and marketed them as "jukujo" [mature or ripe women].

This talk examines the expansion of the sex industry to encompass middle-aged women who work long-term due to the dearth of social safety nets. Based on in-depth interviews with sex workers and managers, I consider the choices of women to become sex workers in the context of contemporary Japanese politics, that is to say, the prioritization of corporate welfare over social welfare and the production the largest gendered wage disparity relative to other industrial countries.

Chiaki Nishijima is a social anthropologist of contemporary Japan whose research interests include sexual labor, social welfare, and political economy. From 2016 to 2017, she was a visiting researcher at the Institute of Comparative Culture, Sophia University. She received her PhD from Harvard University and BA from Wellesley College.

This talk is organized by Professor David H. SLATER (FLA) / Lecture in English / No RSVP required