

“Disconnected: Social Media, the Neoliberal Selfie, and Gendered Encounters”

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Social media is often touted as the platform where voices of the marginalized people can finally be broadcasted and heard, and thus new connections across culture and nations are reimagined. In this paper, however, I argue that because social media is governed by the neoliberal logic, it produces the subjectivity of the neoliberal selfie who connects at the performative, rather than collective or meaningful, level. As such, the more we spend time on social media, the more disconnected we feel. We feel alienated even from our own feelings. The case studies for this paper come from Asian American feminists who use social media to raise awareness against sexual harassment and gendered pain. Using the digital platform, they absorb its logic and perform and perpetuate the neoliberal selfie gaze, thereby stopping short of making structural changes