
Migrant imaginaries of love and ICTs: The case of Punjabi youth in Manila

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Abstract (in French and/or English)

This presentation looks into how migrants use information and communication technologies (ICTs) in negotiating their encounters with diverse imaginaries of love. Through life story interviews with second-generation Punjabi Indian youth living in Manila, the multicultural mega-city capital the Philippines, it provides an account of how these Punjabis employ various communication platforms to navigate two key imaginaries of love: that of Manila's relatively more 'conservative' Punjabi community and that of its relatively more 'liberated' and 'Westernised' local Filipino society. It shows how the young Punjabis' use of ICTs in steering through these imaginaries of love is entwined with the complicated relationship they have with the city's local Filipino society. On one hand, these young Punjabis desire the security of their migrant community (Bauman 2001), as this provides them a feeling of safety from the physical and symbolic threats that they confront in Manila. In exploring love then, they use ICTs to enact a form of networked privacy (Marwick and boyd, 2014), so that they can covertly try out local Filipino society's conception of intimacy as romance whilst also publicly performing an unwavering belief in their Punjabi community's conception of intimacy as arranged marriage. On the other hand, these young Punjabis also desire the freedom to go beyond the confines of their migrant community (see Bauman, 2001). There are instances then in these young Punjabis explorations of love when they use ICTs to visually materialise their ties with local Filipinos and local Filipino culture (see Miller and Madianou, 2012), boldly declaring via their preference for intimacy as romance and their rejection of intimacy as arranged marriage. This presentation hopes to contribute to a richer understanding to how ICTs provide resolutions-even if only temporarily so-to the complexity of imagining love in the context of migration and multiculturalism.

Keywords: ICTs, intimacy, migration, multiculturalism, networked privacy, public visibility

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