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Dis/connecting the Outer World: The New Poor and the Internet

This paper is part of my doctoral thesis which explores precarious lives of underemployed youth and their immaterial labour/leisure in highly digitalised South Korea. Based on a year's ethnographic fieldwork in Seoul, South Korea, this paper tells life stories of three unemployed women who are living under the poverty line. All of them used to stay at home seeking extreme isolation from a society and now are seeking to find a way back into social life through the Internet. This paper investigates the ways in which they negotiate their daily lives in relation to their unemployment and how it is mediated by the network media (such as the Internet and mobile phones). I expect that this study would contribute to a further understanding of the everyday lives of the new poor in a contemporary networked society.