



# THE SUBTWEET

## discussion questions

- 1 Neela thinks, “No one listens to a cocksure woman.” How did you respond to her confidence? Do you think you would respond differently if she were a man? Can you think of positive representations of confident women in pop culture?
- 2 *The Subtweet* is an intertextual book, with song lyrics, tweets, emails, texts, critical theory, and news stories. How did these other kinds of communication affect your reading? How do you approach them differently in real life?
- 3 There are very few men and white people in *The Subtweet*, and the few who do appear are satirized. Why do you think the author made this choice, and how did it affect your reading of the book?
- 4 Are cover songs art? How should we acknowledge various creators who contributed to a work? Whose labour is often overlooked in the creation of a song or a book? Is that labour art?
- 5 Most of the book switches between two narrators. What useful perspective does this give you? How does it make you see events differently? In the book’s third section, the narrator shifts to first person. What did you think of this switch?
- 6 What do you think this book says about call-out culture? What has been your experience with call-out culture? Where can it be beneficial and where can it be harmful?
- 7 *The Subtweet* contains both a desire to be seen and a fear of it. How does social media intensify this? Is being seen riskier for some people than for others?
- 8 *The Subtweet* is a book without romantic relationships. In what ways is Neela and Rukmini’s friendship like a romance? Can you think of other novels without any romantic relationships whatsoever? When Neela creates *Selfhood* is she experiencing romance with herself?
- 9 Sumi remains unapologetic about her article and claims she simply reported the facts. Do you agree with her? Do you think she’s being completely honest with herself?
- 10 What do you think of Neela and Kasi’s performance of “Wanting” at the end of the novel? How does it tie in the other women?
- 11 Why do you think the author chose not to bring back Rukmini after the subtweet? Do you think Neela and Rukmini ever reconcile?
- 12 Subaltern Speaks’s song “Wanting” contains the line “wanting is dangerous.” Why is wanting dangerous? Is it more dangerous for women, for people of colour?
- 13 Consider the epigraph: how does capitalism affect the events of the story?
- 14 What’s more important: the creation of art or the interpretation of art? How important is the audience?

