An Analysis of the Guiding Strategies of Network Public Opinion in the Post-truth Era

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Keywords: post-truth era, network public opinion, guidance

Abstract: At present, due to the emotional convergence of the masses, the media's neglect of bottom-line responsibility, and the malformation of the network environment, it has entered a post-truth era in which emotions precede the truth. This has brought online public opinion guidance including government work philosophy deviations and slower speed of information clarification. A series of issues such as the speed of transmission and the greater sentiment of the masses than reason. Therefore, several methods have been proposed to find the crux of public opinion from the source, analyze and channel netizens' emotions, the government balances the authenticity and timeliness of public opinion events, and change the way of discourse, in order to better guide online public opinion and maintain social stability.

1. Introduction

Cyberspace advocates freedom of speech. However, due to people's inner emotional tendencies, fragmented information dissemination imagination, or deliberate guidance from interested people and Internet veterans, there are always voices that can dominate for a certain period of time. At this time, most of the masses will inadvertently show a phenomenon of "grouping", forming a certain degree of circle. If disagreeing voices appear, they will either become the object of attack or be directly "please" out of the group. Therefore, out of the idea of gregariousness, most people will choose to stand on the side of the same people. This choice is not based on the facts, but on emotional tendencies. The network environment was originally a place where multiple views collided based on a rational level, but because of the fragmented information dissemination today, it has become a place where the same views are expressed and different voices are rejected.

In the incident of a bus crash in Wanzhou, Chongqing, a bus crashed into the river after a bus collided with a car on the Second Yangtze River Bridge in Wanzhou District. Because the driver of the car involved was a woman, and there were pictures on the scene that the female driver was wearing high heels. It is precisely because of these fragmented imaginations that everyone pointed the finger at the female driver, and even implicated the entire society of female drivers. For a time, the focus of public opinion was all on condemning the female driver. Later, Wanzhou police refuted the rumor: "The cause of the Chongqing bus crashing accident was that the bus suddenly crossed the double yellow line in the middle of the road, crashed into a normal car, and then broke the guardrail and fell into the river." The black box was salvaged ashore, and it was also discovered that the accident was caused by a physical conflict between the passenger and the driver. On the one hand, this incident exposed the public's deep prejudice against female drivers. On the other hand, it also exposed the lack of rationality of the masses, which contributed to the spread of rumors.

When emotions dominate information, in order to attract and cater to the needs of the audience, the media neglects the bottom line and responsibilities that the media should have, and neglects their job responsibilities to convey the truth. In order to pursue the timeliness of the event, in order to catch the attention of the audience for the first time, spread those unconfirmed false information,

and become a "title party" whose title and content are seriously inconsistent . This brings challenges to the work of online public opinion, and makes the online public opinion in the post-truth era uncontrollable. It is precisely because the media pursues the explosiveness of information, which makes it more difficult to distinguish the truth. In addition, in order to pursue the heat of the event, some media continue to boost the negative emotions of the masses, by reporting some imaginative fragments, deliberately triggering the masses' subjective conjectures, allowing the emotional tendency to override the facts, thereby allowing online public opinion The trend is moving in the direction of heat demand. However, this information dissemination method that relies on the trust of consumer audiences will inevitably not last. The truth may be late, but it will not fail.

In the sensational incident of the death of Fengya Wang's child, various media rushed to post articles that the donations raised by his mother on various platforms were not used for the treatment of Fengya Wang's child, which led to the death of Fengya Wang's child. This incident caused an extremely sensational effect and became a very serious online public opinion incident. In addition, the media has caught the masses' rejection of the deep-rooted idea of patriotism, saying that the donations were used to treat Fengya Wang's brother's cleft lip and palate. Once again aroused resentment among the masses, and lashed out at Fengya Wang's parents. However, after the official refuted the rumors, all the donations were used for Fengya Wang's children, and his brother's surgery was sponsored by the "Yanran Fund". Although the follow-up self-media all stepped up to apologize and delete articles, but the words are terrible, and the harm caused by public opinion to Fengya Wang's parents is irreparable.

The network public opinion communication environment in the post-truth era is relatively deformed, and it relies on big data analysis and algorithm recommendation technology. Although, this personalized push method meets user needs to a certain extent. However, it also limits the user's receiving range of objective information. Under this kind of technical intervention, users cannot receive a variety of different opinions, so the network environment of each individual user is one-sided. Take the currently very popular Douyin short video, it is a typical push content based on user preferences. And users can choose not to be interested in pushing and clicking on the content they don't like, and the platform will reduce such recommendations. Behind this seemingly convenient and user-friendly design is a certain degree of information cocoon room. The user will only see the content he wants to see, which may be harmless on social media that tends to be entertaining. However, if it is news dissemination, it will cause users to see only the part of information that is consistent with their own opinions and in line with their own emotional trends, thus losing the opportunity to objectively and impartially see the truth. Therefore, the filtering method in which user preferences override objective facts is not suitable for news dissemination.

2. Problems faced by online public opinion guidance in the post-truth era

2.1 Misunderstandings in the concept of government work

As the most authoritative official, the government has failed to actively respond to public opinion incidents. In the face of some emergencies, the government's work philosophy is too "safe", and the pursuit of ambiguity is not wrong. This is a misunderstanding in the work philosophy. Some governments take public opinion incidents too exaggeratedly. In terms of handling, they either take non-responding and evasive methods, or use simple and rude methods of deleting posts and texts. It is more important to hold accountability than to trace the truth. But these governments have overlooked a problem. The outbreak of public opinion on the Internet is often within a few hours or even minutes, but it can bring countless subsequent effects. If there is no immediate voice to seize the commanding heights of public opinion, then public opinion control over this event will be lost. And if you are afraid of the outbreak of public opinion and delete posts and articles without making a correct response, you will mislead the masses about whether the incident is really tricky and whether the government is really using power for personal gain.

For example, when a student fell to death in Luxian County, Sichuan, the local government focused on how to delete posts and how to prevent the incident from spreading. However, the truth

of the incident was neglected to explain and respond seriously. The county government hurriedly announced in a single day that "high-level injuries exclude homicide", which aroused strong resistance from the masses. Suddenly, all kinds of questions about "why high fall injury can be used as evidence to exclude homicide" swept the Internet. Instead of quelling the anger of netizens, netizens believe in rumors and videos about school bullying, protection fees, and the principal's son. Later, reporters were intercepted by local government officials on the way to interview, and the families of victims were maliciously guided during the interview, which made the majority of netizens even more disappointed in government work.

2.2 The speed of clarification is not as fast as the speed of transmission

Today's society has entered an era of rapid development of information, and the speed of information dissemination far exceeds our imagination. Public opinion often erupts within a few hours or even minutes. If the government cannot respond in a timely manner or give some information that can meet the needs of the masses, it will be difficult to control the development of public opinion. The speed of clarification after the fact will never keep up with the speed of information dissemination. Government officials are inefficient in handling affairs. After emergencies, they passively deal with them and do nothing, which delays the best time to deal with public opinion. In the post-truth era, people are in a situation where they use these hot events of online public opinion to vent their emotions, and they are not enthusiastic about the truth. Therefore, there will be the phenomenon of ignoring the information to refute rumors, and after making judgments according to their inner emotional tendencies, they help the spread of rumors.

2.3 The emotion of the masses defeated reason

The biggest feature of the post-truth era is that emotions are ahead of the truth. Capturing the masses' feelings of sympathy for the weak, hatred and hatred, and conveying the most "touching" stories in a variety of ways of information expression. These messages are deliberately packaged and spread through videos, pictures, texts, etc., which can most directly arouse the emotional fluctuations in the hearts of the masses, give people a strong sense of substitution, and thus generate strong emotions about this event. At this time, before the masses have time to understand the truth behind the incident, they are already dominated by this strong emotional resonance and become "accomplices" who misinterpret the truth and spreaders of rumors.

A 12-year-old girl in Zhoukou, Henan Province was repeatedly sexually assaulted by a teacher, accompanied by a picture of a little girl standing in front of the dilapidated campus holding up "The 12-year-old left-behind child was sexually assaulted by two teachers dozens of times, please help me with uncle and aunt" The picture is a hot topic on the Internet. Terms such as "left-behind children", "sexual assault", and "unfair law enforcement" have pushed the masses' disgust to the apex. Netizens began to condemn, regretting what happened to the little girl, and criticizing the teacher's unbearable behavior and the inaction of local law enforcement agencies. As a result, things quickly reversed, and the little girl herself admitted to lie. In an interview, the little girl said: "I also considered telling the truth, but no one would believe me." Behind this incident is emotion instead of reason. Without any conclusive evidence, public opinion has exploded. , But let the truth drown in the condemnation.

3.Online public opinion guidance strategies in the post-truth era

3.1 Accurately trace the root cause of public opinion and grasp the crux from the source

To conduct online public opinion guidance in the post-truth era where emotions precede the truth, it is necessary to accurately grasp the emotional trends of netizens, and trace the root causes of public opinion and the nodes that led to the outbreak of netizens' emotions. Only by deeply understanding the reasons why netizens' emotions are mobilized, grasping the crux from the source, and accurately predicting the attitudes that netizens may have, can it be possible to successfully guide the development of online public opinion in the desired direction. If there is a deviation in the

direction of guidance from the beginning, not only will it not be able to suppress the existing public opinion, but it may also trigger a secondary public opinion, arouse greater conflicts, and attract more doubts.

3.2 Pay attention to the sentiment analysis of netizens and scientifically predict the effect of public opinion guidance

In the post-truth era where the influence of netizens' emotions, attitudes, and tendencies far exceeds the truth, the guidance of online public opinion must start from the emotional level. When netizens fall into a certain kind of high mood, the transmission avenue becomes pale and weak. The reason why those promoters of online public opinion can firmly hold the trend of public opinion in their hands is because they are well versed in the emotional trend of netizens, and deliberately guide netizens with packaged events, inflammatory language, text, and video pictures. Interpretation in the originally preset direction will stimulate their dissatisfaction, attract more attention, and ultimately expand the spread of public opinion events. Based on this, public opinion guidance can also use this kind of emotional boost to reversely manipulate the trend of public opinion. In the work of public opinion guidance, pay attention to analyzing the emotional trends of netizens, and grasp the psychology of netizens eagerly knowing the "insider" of a certain event. Instead of allowing netizens to accept the bewilderment and wanton follow-up from criminals in doubt and speculation, it is better to proceed Sentiment analysis and timely guidance to ease the speed of rising public opinion and buy a certain amount of time for follow-up truth investigation. After this kind of guidance work, we should also pay attention to the real-time response of netizens to predict the effect of public opinion guidance.

3.3　Government departments must grasp the "degree" between authenticity and timeliness

One of the biggest problems faced by online public opinion guidance in the post-truth era is that rumors have been traveling thousands of miles before the truth is revealed. Therefore, timeliness is a major test for the guidance of online public opinion. The outbreak of public opinion is often within a few minutes or a few hours. How to seize the prime time for handling online public opinion in this very tight time is something that public opinion guidance workers need to consider. If you can make good use of this gap period, you can avoid a serious public opinion incident. On the contrary, if you miss such a golden time, you may not only face the current public opinion outbreak of the current incident, but even more. There are many other collateral effects and secondary public opinions. Indeed, it may be too late to give the public the truth directly in such a short period of time. Therefore, we must grasp the relationship between authenticity and timeliness. In fact, netizens are rational, but sometimes emotions may gain the upper hand under certain inducements. However, if they can be handled properly at the beginning, netizens' emotions will not be easily biased. This requires the government to constantly set a new agenda in the process of guiding public opinion, attract netizens to work with the government to keep track of the truth, and the government to keep updating the latest news to avoid blind guesses caused by the unknown.

3.4 Government departments should change their discourse methods and grasp the characteristics of netizens' expressions

In the post-truth era, the reason why netizens can quickly become emotionally infected is largely due to vivid online language. In today's world, various online languages are constantly updated, which invisibly brings challenges to the monitoring and guidance of online public opinion. When various forces use online language to spread bad information and incite netizens' sentiments, if government departments remain in compliance and do not make corresponding changes, they will not only be questioned by netizens for inaction, but will gradually lose their competitiveness in the right to speak online. The guidance of online public opinion must be different from the traditionally understood network propaganda. The purpose of online public opinion guidance is to maintain social stability and safeguard the interests of the masses. Therefore, not only will the vivid expression of words not affect the image of the government, but will also shorten the distance between netizens and the government. What the government has to do is to abandon the mentality

of "official announcements", make full use of the current fashionable videos, pictures, texts and other methods, and use various platforms such as short videos, Weibo, WeChat public accounts, and post bars to use animations and animations. And other forms of communication with netizens. So as to better contact the masses, enhance the government's influence, and control the right to speak online.

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