

How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument¹

Gary King²

Institute for Quantitative Social Science
Harvard University

MIT Distinguished Lecture Series, IDSS, 3/7/2017

¹Based on joint work with Jennifer Pan (Stanford) and Margaret Roberts (UCSD)

²GaryKing.org

Copies at GaryKing.org

- Empirical Results:

Copies at GaryKing.org

- Empirical Results:
 - How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression (*APSR*)

Copies at GaryKing.org

- Empirical Results:
 - How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression (*APSR*)
 - Reverse Engineering Chinese Censorship (*Science*)

Copies at GaryKing.org

Papers

- Empirical Results:
 - How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression (*APSR*)
 - Reverse Engineering Chinese Censorship (*Science*)
 - How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument (*Today's talk; in press, APSR*)

Copies at GaryKing.org

Papers

- Empirical Results:
 - How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression (*APSR*)
 - Reverse Engineering Chinese Censorship (*Science*)
 - How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument (*Today's talk; in press, APSR*)
- Automated Text Analysis Methods:

Copies at GaryKing.org

Papers

- **Empirical Results:**
 - How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression (*APSR*)
 - Reverse Engineering Chinese Censorship (*Science*)
 - How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument (*Today's talk; in press, APSR*)
- **Automated Text Analysis Methods:**
 - General Purpose Computer-Assisted Clustering and Conceptualization (*PNAS*)

Copies at GaryKing.org

Papers

- **Empirical Results:**
 - How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression (*APSR*)
 - Reverse Engineering Chinese Censorship (*Science*)
 - How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument (*Today's talk; in press, APSR*)
- **Automated Text Analysis Methods:**
 - General Purpose Computer-Assisted Clustering and Conceptualization (*PNAS*)
 - A Method of Automated Nonparametric Content Analysis for Social Science (*AJPS*)

Copies at GaryKing.org

Papers

- **Empirical Results:**
 - How Censorship in China Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression (*APSR*)
 - Reverse Engineering Chinese Censorship (*Science*)
 - How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, not Engaged Argument (*Today's talk; in press, APSR*)
- **Automated Text Analysis Methods:**
 - General Purpose Computer-Assisted Clustering and Conceptualization (*PNAS*)
 - A Method of Automated Nonparametric Content Analysis for Social Science (*AJPS*)
 - Computer-Assisted Keyword and Document Set Discovery from Unstructured Text (*in press, AJPS*)

Copies at GaryKing.org

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① Stop criticism of the state

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① Stop criticism of the state
 - ② Stop collective action

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② Stop collective action

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② Stop collective action *Right*

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② ~~Stop collective action~~ *Right*
- Implications: Social Media is Actionable!

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② ~~Stop collective action~~ *Right*
- Implications: Social Media is Actionable!
 - Chinese leaders:

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② Stop collective action *Right*
- Implications: Social Media is Actionable!
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② ~~Stop collective action~~ *Right*
- Implications: Social Media is Actionable!
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials
 - censor: to stop events with collective action potential

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② Stop collective action *Right*
- Implications: Social Media is Actionable!
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials
 - censor: to stop events with collective action potential
 - Thus, we can use criticism & censorship to predict:

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- What Could be the Goal?
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② Stop collective action *Right*
- Implications: Social Media is Actionable!
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials
 - censor: to stop events with collective action potential
 - Thus, we can use criticism & censorship to predict:
 - Officials in trouble, likely to be replaced

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- **What Could be the Goal?**
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② ~~Stop collective action~~ *Right*
- **Implications: Social Media is Actionable!**
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials
 - censor: to stop events with collective action potential
 - Thus, we can use criticism & censorship to predict:
 - Officials in trouble, likely to be replaced
 - Policies that generate dissent (& interest of leaders)

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- **What Could be the Goal?**
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② ~~Stop collective action~~ *Right*
- **Implications: Social Media is Actionable!**
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials
 - censor: to stop events with collective action potential
 - Thus, we can use criticism & censorship to predict:
 - Officials in trouble, likely to be replaced
 - Policies that generate dissent (& interest of leaders)
 - Government action outside the Internet

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

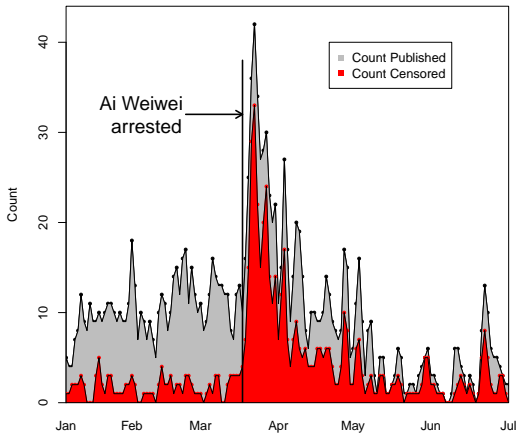
- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- ~~What Could be the Goal?~~
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② ~~Stop collective action~~ *Right*
- ~~Implications: Social Media is Actionable!~~
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials
 - censor: to stop events with collective action potential
 - Thus, we can use criticism & censorship to predict:
 - Officials in trouble, likely to be replaced
 - Policies that generate dissent (& interest of leaders)
 - Government action outside the Internet
 - Dissidents to be arrested; peace treaties to sign; emerging scandals

Summary of Our Prior Work on Censorship

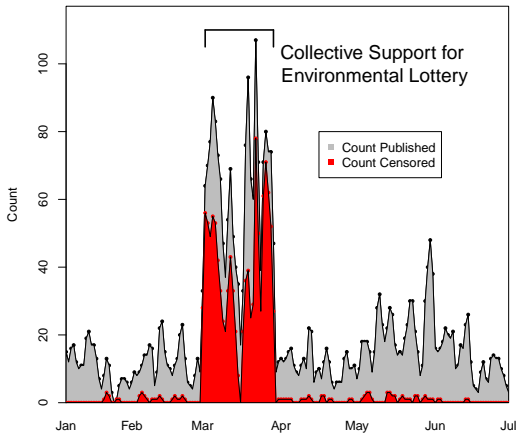
- ~~E.g., Everyone knows the goal of censorship:
Stop criticism, protest, & collective action about the state,
its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- ~~What Could be the Goal?~~
 - ① ~~Stop criticism of the state~~ *Wrong*
 - ② ~~Stop collective action~~ *Right*
- ~~Implications: Social Media is Actionable!~~
 - Chinese leaders:
 - measure criticism: to judge local officials
 - censor: to stop events with collective action potential
 - Thus, we can use criticism & censorship to predict:
 - Officials in trouble, likely to be replaced
 - Policies that generate dissent (& interest of leaders)
 - Government action outside the Internet
 - Dissidents to be arrested; peace treaties to sign; emerging scandals
 - Disagreements between central and local leaders

Censorship Reveals Government Goals

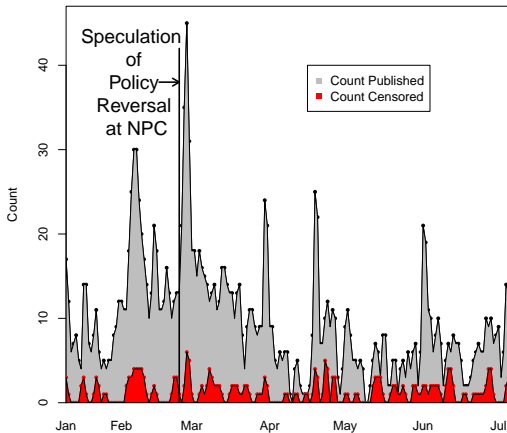
Censorship Reveals Government Goals



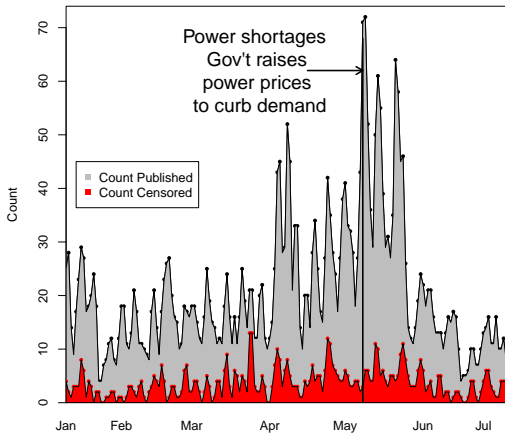
Censorship Reveals Government Goals



Censorship Reveals Government Goals



Censorship Reveals Government Goals



Goal of China's 50c Party

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants:

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies

It's antisestablishmentarianism!

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies

Evidence?

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies

Evidence? A few anecdotes;

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies

Evidence? A few anecdotes; “no ground truth”;

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies

Evidence? A few anecdotes; “no ground truth”; “no successful attempts to quantify” 50c party activity;

Goal of China's 50c Party

- Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies

Evidence? A few anecdotes; “no ground truth”; “no successful attempts to quantify” 50c party activity; even several analyses with made up dependent variables!

Goal of China's 50c Party

- ~~Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*

Goal of China's 50c Party

- ~~Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- Does not argue; does not engage on controversial issues

Goal of China's 50c Party

- ~~Prevailing view of scholars, activists, journalists, social media participants: 50c party argues with & debates against those who criticize the government, its leaders, and their policies~~ *Wrong*
- Does not argue; does not engage on controversial issues
- **Distracts**; redirects public attention from criticism and central issues to **cheerleading** and positive discussions of valence issues

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhonggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored
 - Large, unstructured, messy data

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored
 - Large, unstructured, messy data \rightsquigarrow systematized (*hard to do!*)

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored
 - Large, unstructured, messy data \rightsquigarrow systematized (*hard to do!*)
 - 2,341 emails (covering 2013 & 2014)

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored
 - Large, unstructured, messy data \rightsquigarrow systematized (*hard to do!*)
 - 2,341 emails (covering 2013 & 2014)
 - 1,245 contained 50c posts

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored
 - Large, unstructured, messy data ~> systematized (*hard to do!*)
 - 2,341 emails (covering 2013 & 2014)
 - 1,245 contained 50c posts
 - 43,797 known 50c cent posts

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

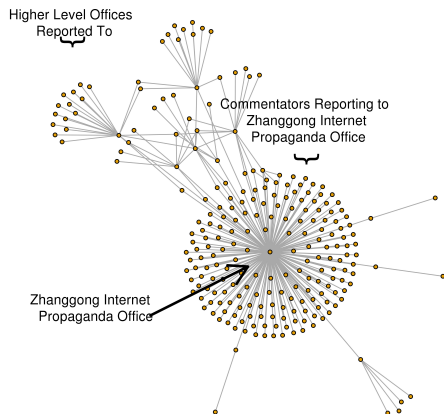
- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored
 - Large, unstructured, messy data ~> systematized (*hard to do!*)
 - 2,341 emails (covering 2013 & 2014)
 - 1,245 contained 50c posts
 - 43,797 known 50c cent posts
- **Survey 1:** 50c party members

First Systematic Evidence on China's 50c Party

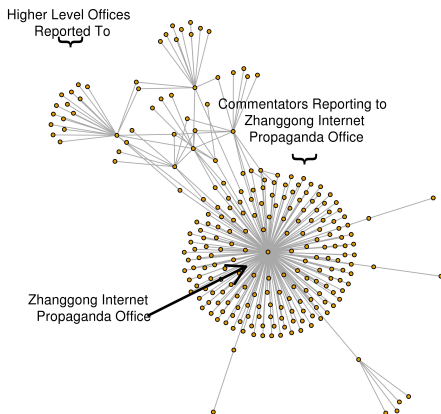
- **Leaked emails:** Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Office (网宣办)
 - Workers claiming credit for their 50c posts
 - On the web, but overlooked and ignored
 - Large, unstructured, messy data ~> systematized (*hard to do!*)
 - 2,341 emails (covering 2013 & 2014)
 - 1,245 contained 50c posts
 - 43,797 known 50c cent posts
- **Survey 1:** 50c party members
- **"Survey" 2:** the Chinese regime

The Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Operation

The Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Operation

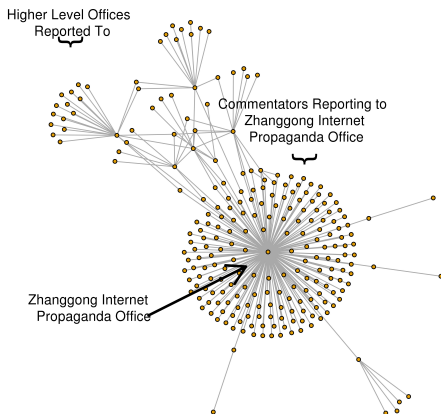


The Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Operation



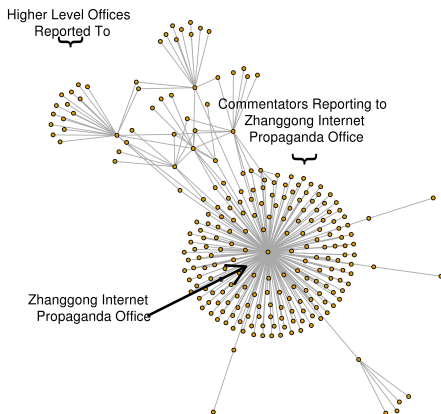
- Who is posting?

The Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Operation



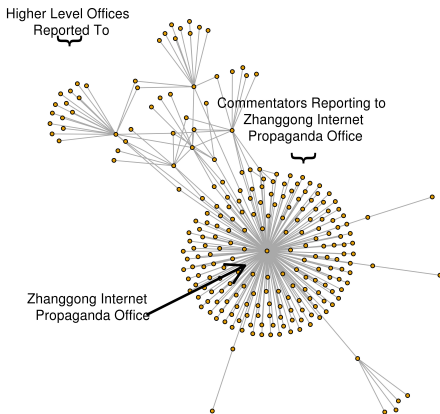
- Who is posting?
 - **Prevailing view:** ordinary citizens getting paid 50c to make each post

The Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Operation



- Who is posting?
 - **Prevailing view:** ordinary citizens getting paid 50c to make each post
 - **In fact:** 99.3% of posts made by >200 government offices

The Zhanggong Internet Propaganda Operation



- Who is posting?
 - **Prevailing view:** ordinary citizens getting paid 50c to make each post
 - **In fact:** 99.3% of posts made by >200 government offices
 - **No evidence of 50c (or any piecemeal) payments;** probably part of their jobs

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries
 - Argumentative praise or criticism

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting
 - Cheerleading

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting
 - Cheerleading

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - ① Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts
 - 3 Partition accounts for extrapolation (using Bayesian falling rule lists)

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts
 - 3 Partition accounts for extrapolation (using Bayesian falling rule lists) into *ordinary* (59%)

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts
 - 3 Partition accounts for extrapolation (using Bayesian falling rule lists) into *ordinary* (59%) & *exclusive* (41%)

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts
 - 3 Partition accounts for extrapolation (using Bayesian falling rule lists) into *ordinary* (59%) & *exclusive* (41%)
 - ↳ Accounts that engage with Zhanggong weibo

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts
 - 3 Partition accounts for extrapolation (using Bayesian falling rule lists) into *ordinary* (59%) & *exclusive* (41%)
 - ↪ Accounts that engage with Zhanggong weibo
 - ↪ ≤ 10 followers

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

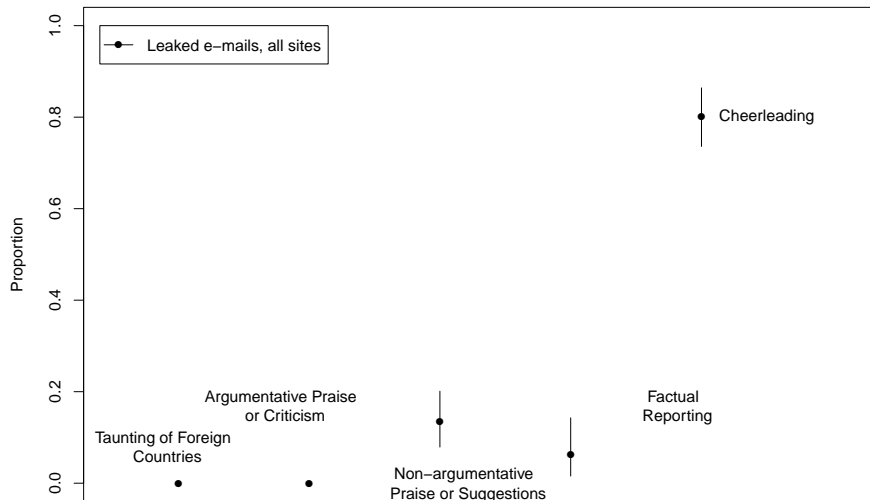
- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (“readme,” Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts
 - 3 Partition accounts for extrapolation (using Bayesian falling rule lists) into *ordinary* (59%) & *exclusive* (41%)
 - ↪ Accounts that engage with Zhanggong weibo
 - ↪ ≤ 10 followers
 - 4 Unleaked posts from Zhanggong exclusive 50c weibo accounts

Categories and Analyses of 50c Party Posts

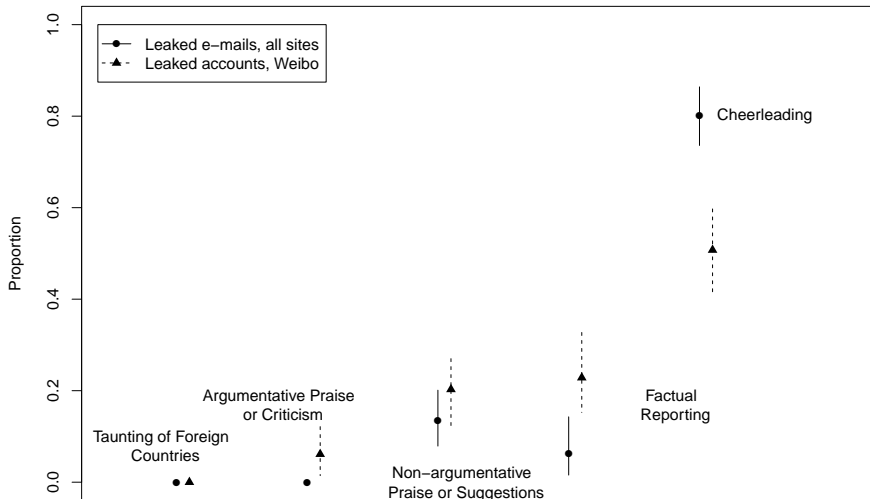
- Estimate distribution of posts across 5 categories (‘‘readme,’’ Hopkins & King 2010)
 - Taunting of foreign countries (prevailing view)
 - Argumentative praise or criticism
 - Non-argumentative praise or suggestions
 - Factual reporting (our evidence)
 - Cheerleading
- Separate analyses — from Zhanggong to China:
 - 1 Leaked Zhanggong 50c posts: 43,797 posts
 - 2 Leaked Zhanggong 50c weibo accounts: 167,971 posts
 - 3 Partition accounts for extrapolation (using Bayesian falling rule lists) into *ordinary* (59%) & *exclusive* (41%)
 - ↪ Accounts that engage with Zhanggong weibo
 - ↪ ≤ 10 followers
 - 4 Unleaked posts from Zhanggong exclusive 50c weibo accounts
 - 5 Unleaked posts from exclusive 50c weibo accounts across China

Content of Leaked and Predicted 50c Party Posts

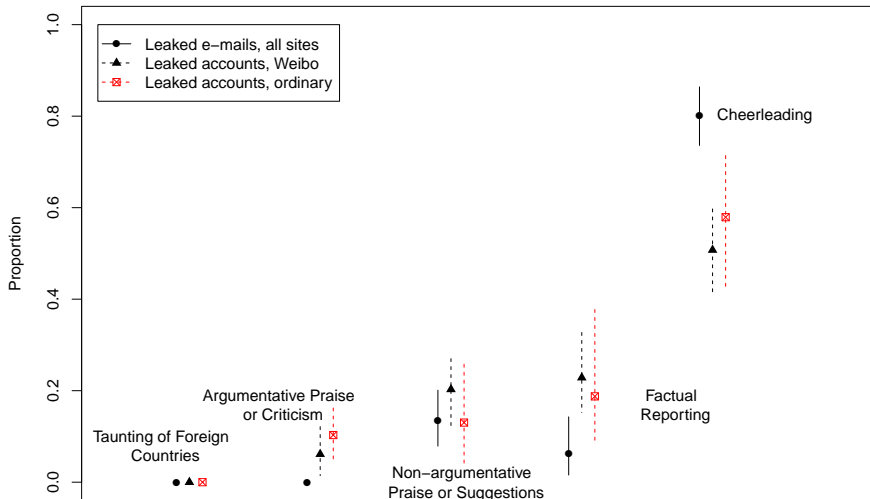
Content of Leaked and Predicted 50c Party Posts



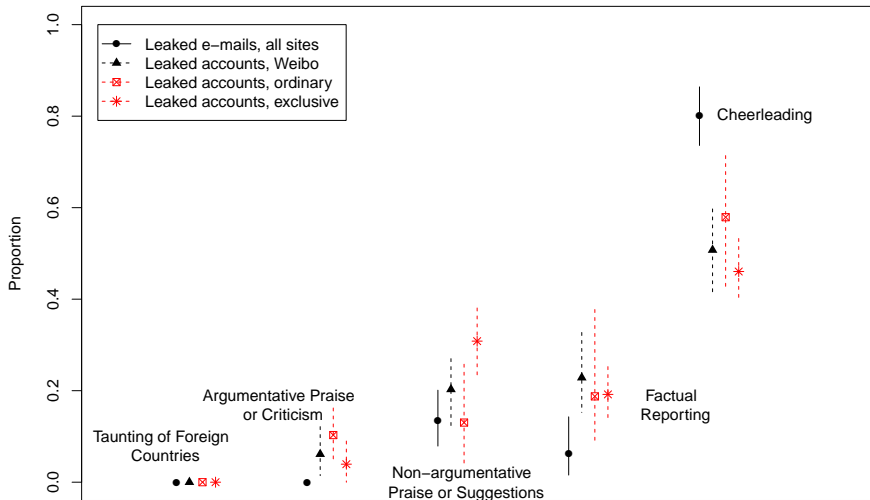
Content of Leaked and Predicted 50c Party Posts



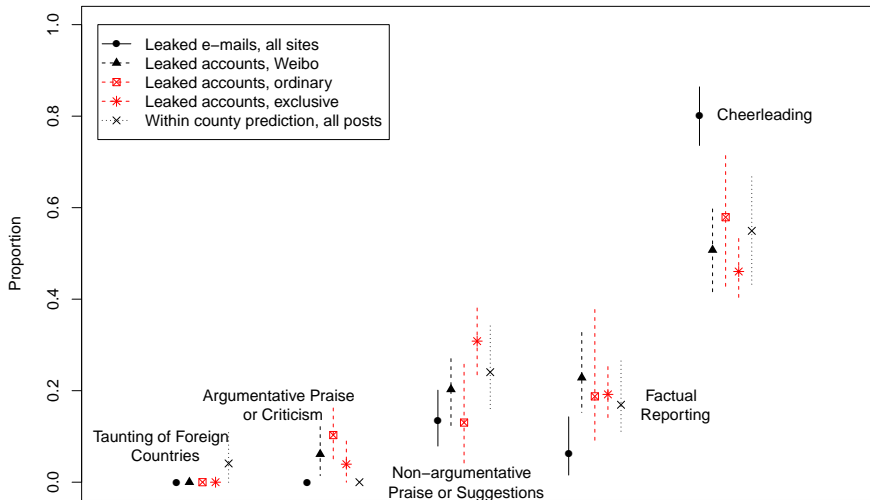
Content of Leaked and Predicted 50c Party Posts



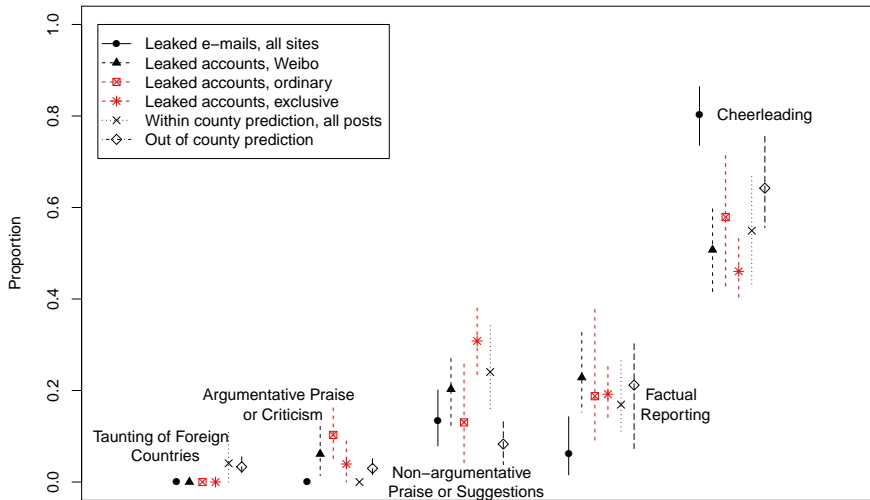
Content of Leaked and Predicted 50c Party Posts



Content of Leaked and Predicted 50c Party Posts



Content of Leaked and Predicted 50c Party Posts



Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China:

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong:

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong: 154,216

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong: 154,216
- Number of 50c Posts in Jiangxi Province:

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong: 154,216
- Number of 50c Posts in Jiangxi Province: 10.65 M

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong: 154,216
- Number of 50c Posts in Jiangxi Province: 10.65 M
- Number of 50c Posts in China:

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong: 154,216
- Number of 50c Posts in Jiangxi Province: 10.65 M
- Number of 50c Posts in China: 448 M

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

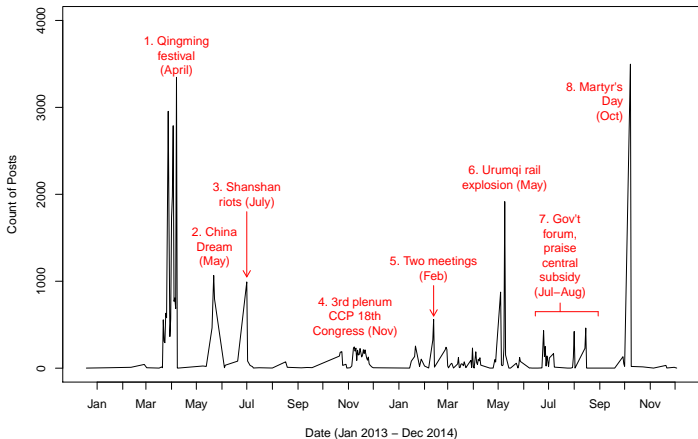
- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong: 154,216
- Number of 50c Posts in Jiangxi Province: 10.65 M
- Number of 50c Posts in China: 448 M
 - 53% on government sites (a noticeable proportion of all)

Size of the 50c Party (in 2013)

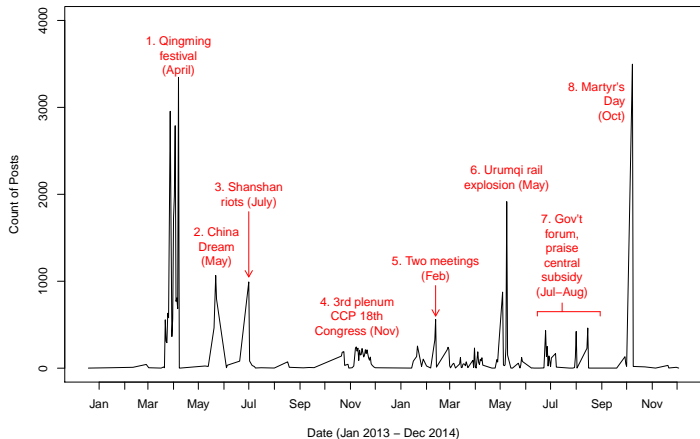
- Number of social media posts in China: >80.4 B
- Number of 50c Posts in Zhanggong: 154,216
- Number of 50c Posts in Jiangxi Province: 10.65 M
- Number of 50c Posts in China: 448 M
 - 53% on government sites (a noticeable proportion of all)
 - 47% on commercial sites (1 of every 178 posts)

43,797 Zhanggong 50c Posts: Highly Coordinated

43,797 Zhanggong 50c Posts: Highly Coordinated

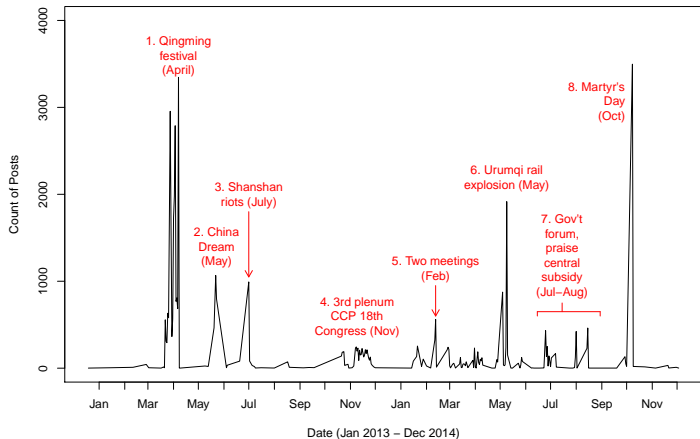


43,797 Zhanggong 50c Posts: Highly Coordinated



- Coordinated bursts, many for events with collective action potential

43,797 Zhanggong 50c Posts: Highly Coordinated



- Coordinated bursts, many for events with collective action potential
- A clear measure of government intent.

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions? Let's ask them(!)

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions? Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job:

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*,

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions? Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- The Survey:

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- The Survey:
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- **Not your optimal survey respondents:**
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- **The Survey:**
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- Not your optimal survey respondents:
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- The Survey:
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions
 - Carefully study local social media context

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- **Not your optimal survey respondents:**
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- **The Survey:**
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions
 - Carefully study local social media context
 - Administer *double blind* survey via direct messaging

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- **Not your optimal survey respondents:**
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- **The Survey:**
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions
 - Carefully study local social media context
 - Administer *double blind* survey via direct messaging
 - Specially designed, pre-tested survey question:

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- **Not your optimal survey respondents:**
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- **The Survey:**
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions
 - Carefully study local social media context
 - Administer *double blind* survey via direct messaging
 - Specially designed, pre-tested survey question: *"I saw your comment, it's really inspiring, I want to ask, do you have any public opinion guidance management, or online commenting experience?"*

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- **Not your optimal survey respondents:**
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- **The Survey:**
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions
 - Carefully study local social media context
 - Administer *double blind* survey via direct messaging
 - Specially designed, pre-tested survey question: *"I saw your comment, it's really inspiring, I want to ask, do you have any public opinion guidance management, or online commenting experience?"*
- **Validating the Validation**

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- **Not your optimal survey respondents:**
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- **The Survey:**
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions
 - Carefully study local social media context
 - Administer *double blind* survey via direct messaging
 - Specially designed, pre-tested survey question: *"I saw your comment, it's really inspiring, I want to ask, do you have any public opinion guidance management, or online commenting experience?"*
- **Validating the Validation**
 - Ask same question of random sample of *known* 50c (from Zhanggong)

How Can We Validate 50c Party Membership Predictions?

Let's ask them(!)

- **Not your optimal survey respondents:**
 - Their job: to intentionally *mislead*, about the subject of the survey
 - Take orders from an *uncompromising government*
 - Their *employer*: The government
 - *Potentially at stake*: their job, or more
- **The Survey:**
 - *Random sample* of predicted 50c accounts
 - Follow extensive literature on asking sensitive questions
 - Carefully study local social media context
 - Administer *double blind* survey via direct messaging
 - Specially designed, pre-tested survey question: *"I saw your comment, it's really inspiring, I want to ask, do you have any public opinion guidance management, or online commenting experience?"*
- **Validating the Validation**
 - Ask same question of random sample of *known* 50c (from Zhanggong)
 - Ask same question of accounts *known not to be* 50c

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status

Origin

Percent Yes

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	59%

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	59%
Known 50c	Leaked Zhanggong Archive	

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	59%
Known 50c	Leaked Zhanggong Archive	57%

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	59%
Known 50c	Leaked Zhanggong Archive	57%
Known "Not" 50c	Random sample	

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	59%
Known 50c	Leaked Zhanggong Archive	57%
Known "Not" 50c	Random sample	19%

Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	59%
Known 50c	Leaked Zhanggong Archive	57%
Known "Not" 50c	Random sample	19%

not significantly different



Survey Validation of 50c Party Membership Predictions

50c Status	Origin	Percent Yes
Predicted 50c	Across China	59%
Known 50c	Leaked Zhanggong Archive	57%
Known "Not" 50c	Random sample	19%

significantly different



Validation by the Chinese Government

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . .

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government,

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?”

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government,

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said:

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ”

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!
 - Supportive comments on the nationalist website:

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!
 - Supportive comments on the nationalist website: 82%

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!
 - Supportive comments on the nationalist website: 82%
 - Supportive posts on (more representative) Weibo:

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!
 - Supportive comments on the nationalist website: 82%
 - Supportive posts on (more representative) Weibo: 30%

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!
 - Supportive comments on the nationalist website: 82%
 - Supportive posts on (more representative) Weibo: 30%
 - Results indicate:

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!
 - Supportive comments on the nationalist website: 82%
 - Supportive posts on (more representative) Weibo: 30%
 - Results indicate: figures are accurate,

Validation by the Chinese Government

- Privately sharing draft paper among colleagues. . . does not last
- The Chinese government responds with an editorial in the nationalist, CCP-controlled *Global Times*:
 - Published only in Chinese, revealing a focus only on their own people
 - Admits to the existence of the 50c party
 - Confirms veracity of our leaked archive
 - Summarizes our results, takes no issue with any of our conclusions
 - Acknowledges the purpose of public opinion guidance is to stop the spread of “grassroots social issues” with collective action potential
- ≈ posing a survey question to the government, “Do you agree with our results?” And the government, effectively said: “yes”
- Why would they do this?
 - Editorial: “Chinese society is generally in agreement regarding the necessity of ‘public opinion guidance’ ” — a testable hypothesis!
 - Supportive comments on the nationalist website: 82%
 - Supportive posts on (more representative) Weibo: 30%
 - Results indicate: figures are accurate, the regime has a problem

Theoretical Implications

Theoretical Implications

- For China:

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge
 - Grievances (allowed)

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge
 - Grievances (allowed) no problem, already well known

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge
 - Grievances (allowed) no problem, already well known
 - Collective action (not allowed)

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge
 - Grievances (allowed) no problem, already well known
 - Collective action (not allowed) big problem, emergency action required

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge
 - Grievances (allowed) no problem, already well known
 - Collective action (not allowed) big problem, emergency action required
 - Arguments never end arguments; but distraction does

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge
 - Grievances (allowed) no problem, already well known
 - Collective action (not allowed) big problem, emergency action required
 - Arguments never end arguments; but distraction does
- For future research:

Theoretical Implications

- For China:
 - Do not engage on controversial issues:
 - No censoring of criticism
 - No 50c posts arguing against criticism
 - Stop collective action:
 - Respond to grievances to prevent collective action
 - Censor discussion of real-world collective action
 - Distract with cheerleading and positive valence
- For authoritarian regimes:
 - Scholars have thought autocrats want to
 - ↓ common knowledge of grievances \rightsquigarrow ↑ cost of coordination
 - We find: China has two versions of common knowledge
 - Grievances (allowed) no problem, already well known
 - Collective action (not allowed) big problem, emergency action required
 - Arguments never end arguments; but distraction does
- For future research:
 - WHEN STUDIED AT SCALE, CHINESE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION CONTROLS LEAVE BIG FOOTPRINTS.

For more information



GaryKing.org



JenPan.com



MargaretRoberts.net