

# Study on the Influencing Factors of Network Group Polarization Events

-- Taking the Cross-platform Text of Netizens' Criticism of "The Three-body Problem" As an Example

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**Abstract:** In the era of non-network communication, group polarization is a minority, mostly confined to one organization and one region. In the era of network communication, group polarization has a more prominent role and influence through the Internet, and its formation involves subjective factors such as herd mentality and objective factors such as social contradictions. Due to the role of new media technology and new communication context, the causes of group polarization in the network show more diversified characteristics of the times. As an IP that won Hugo Award, every step of the film and television road of "The Three-body Problem" has attracted worldwide attention. As the first derivative drama, "The Three-body Problem" animation bears great hope, but it also brings a lot of controversy and doubts. From the perspective of communication, this paper takes the cross-platform text of netizens' criticism of the animated version of "The Three-body Problem" as an example, and comprehensively uses the knowledge of journalism and communication, social psychology, sociology and psychology to study the connotation, types, causes and countermeasures of the phenomenon of network group polarization in contemporary China.

**Keywords:** Network group, Polarization event, "The Three-body Problem" animation.

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## 1. Introduction

China is currently in a period of great economic and social transformation, with the gradual development of interest groups and various contradictions. Citizens are eager for interest expression and interactive exchange. However, the traditional information exchange has been dominated by government-controlled newspapers, television and radio stations, and the popularity of the Internet has changed this situation [1]. From the perspective of public opinion expression, the network has unparalleled advantages compared with any traditional media, which is faster, more open, more vivid and more interactive, but it is these advantages that make it more chaotic [2]. Being in the era of information explosion, the tendency of media reports has influenced the audience's views on events in different aspects. The media presents the selected information, which is what we often call the media mimicry environment [3]. In the era of network communication, the speed and degree of group polarization are infinite. Group polarization is an abnormal expression of group or public opinions and behaviors, and its evolution direction may be conservative or radical [4]. For many people, the internet is a hotbed of extremism, because like-minded people can communicate easily and frequently online, but they can't hear other people's opinions, and will eventually go to extremes, resulting in split results [5].

At present, the number of netizens in China has reached nearly 1 billion, and the Internet penetration rate has been on the rise for 10 consecutive years. The negative effect of network group polarization has destroyed the ecological balance of network public opinion field, and the risk of network ideology has been increasing [6]. It can be seen that it is an urgent requirement to analyze its causes and put forward corresponding countermeasures to prevent and resolve social risks in the new era. Regardless of novels or movies, the concept of "science fiction" originated from the western scientific system. As an exotic product, "science

fiction" started late in China, which also led to the extremely unbalanced development of the science fiction market at home and abroad. On the occasion of the launch of "The Three-body Problem" animation, Zhang Shengyan, vice president of Bi Li Bi Li, once said that "The Three-body Problem" animation is not only for fans, but also for users who have not read "The Three-body Problem", so that they can finally like "The Three-body Problem" because of the expression of animation, thus entering "The Three" As the first derivative drama, "The Three-body Problem" animation bears great hope, but it also brings a lot of controversy and doubts. From the perspective of communication, this paper takes the cross-platform text of netizens' criticism of the animated version of "The Three-body Problem" as an example, and comprehensively uses the knowledge of journalism and communication, social psychology, sociology and psychology to study the connotation, types, causes and countermeasures of the phenomenon of network group polarization in contemporary China.

## 2. Formation Mechanism and Action Mechanism of Network Group Polarization

### 2.1. Freedom of network communication

Network group polarization is that in the era of network communication, due to the emergence of trigger events, individuals or groups express their opinions with the help of the network, and some opinions are strengthened by exerting pressure on network public opinion and distributing content based on recommendation algorithm, thus making this tendency more obvious [7]. Before the birth of the Internet, people lived in a "mimicry environment" constructed by traditional media newspapers, radio and television. In the spread of traditional media, people were only recipients, and were guided and controlled by the government and filtered by

gatekeepers. The channels for people to give back information and participate in discussions were narrow, and it was not easy to form group polarization. Network group polarization will inevitably fall back after reaching the peak. At this stage, polarization events are often solved relatively reasonably and properly, the group emotions of netizens gradually tend to be gentle and rational, the heat of events gradually decreases, and the phenomenon of network group polarization is in a recession stage.

The social transition period is not only an important strategic opportunity period for economic and social development, but also an outbreak period of various social contradictions and conflicts. After the social adverse events are hyped and fermented by various interest groups on the Internet, group thinking gradually becomes fanatical, which leads to the alienation of netizens' social values and ideological polarization, and cyber violence is derived [8]. As a member of an action group, people's collective psychology is essentially different from their individual psychology. Most individuals will try to avoid isolation due to holding some opinions alone. They will take different actions according to the situation of their own opinions by observing the opinion environment. Pursuing wealth and creating value is the essence of national economic development. Due to the different social systems and opportunities of the times, ordinary people, especially the bottom people, promote the idea of hating wealth and opposing wisdom on the Internet to balance the inner gap. With the wide application of network technology, the decentralization of the network has enhanced people's sense of participation and social responsibility, and people's extensive participation has made the role of online public opinion more and more important. The freedom of the network makes it easier for people to find like-minded people and to be infected by each other's emotions, which makes the probability of group polarization higher and the performance stronger.

## 2.2. Anonymity of network communication

Network group polarization is the functional mapping of group polarization in network environment. People's social attributes determine that individuals must belong to different groups, and groups are the intermediate link between individuals and society. In the process of group polarization, factors such as group infection and individual convergence psychology play an important role [9]. Compared with the era of non-network communication, group polarization in the era of network communication has many new features, such as non-anonymity, heterogeneity, interweaving of emotion and rationality, weak group stickiness, and faster topic evolution. Anonymity exists widely in the network. On the one hand, the anonymity of people's speech brings freedom of expression, on the other hand, it weakens the social responsibility of communicators, and even stimulates netizens to publish extreme speech at will. Anonymity makes the release of information arbitrary, and it is also more susceptible to the infection of the same emotions, thus easily forming extreme remarks and deepening this group polarization.

When a group loses its judgment, group thinking is easily influenced by the extreme and purposeful guidance and extreme sensibility of opinion leaders in the group. To some extent, the formation of group opinions is essentially a process of mental retardation, and the choices and decisions made by groups are not necessarily more rational and suitable than those made by individuals. Network group polarization

not only greatly harms the normal ecology of the network, but also affects the harmony and stability of the real society. Individuals who master political, economic and cultural resources in the traditional social environment often have a high social status, and their discourse power greatly exceeds that of ordinary people, resulting in the "elite discourse power", which also exists in the development of online public opinion. If the opinions of the members in the group are conservative at first, the decision will become more conservative after group discussion; On the contrary, if the opinions of members in the group are risky at first, the decisions obtained after group discussion will be more radical.

## 3. Irrational Interaction and Extreme Views in Group Polarization

When the domestic sci-fi industry is faced with the "Joseph Needham" problem again, how to create Chinese-style sci-fi works and open up the domestic sci-fi market is still an unavoidable problem for many practitioners. To do an adaptation beyond the original plot itself will face the polarized debate [10]. At the beginning, the animation team of "The Three-body Problem" created a plot of Dr. Ding Yi's space experiment (as shown in Figure 1) to prove that there are more than two wise men coming to the earth. In the view of Junze, a sci-fi enthusiast, the essence of this story is to serve "showmanship", which is seriously out of touch with the main story, but in the view of some viewers, this story has a good effect and can resonate.



Figure 1. "The Three-body Problem" animated particle collision experiment

The public opinion field polarized by network groups is mainly in the virtual space, which lacks moral constraints and realistic social norms. Individuals are more inclined to choose to preside over social justice from the perspective of "saints", showing stronger irrational and perceptual colors. This illusion, which seems to uphold fairness and justice, will affect and influence the value choices and judgments of other netizens, forming a religious enthusiasm similar to that of believers. According to the definition of group polarization, the core elements of group polarization include irrational interaction and extreme views. Irrational interaction is a necessary condition for group polarization, and extreme views are the result of group polarization. At present, China society is in a transitional period, and social emotions such as unbalanced psychological structure, increasingly divided social classes, contradictions and impetuosity are increasing day by day. The emergence of group polarization events can often provide a channel for the relief of social emotions and individual emotions and satisfy their emotional

catharsis. The model framework of network group polarization is shown in Figure 2.

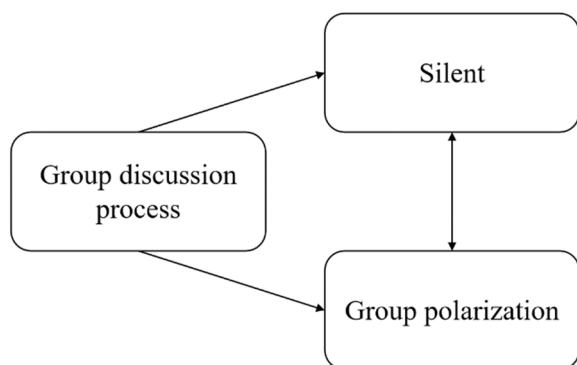


Figure 2. Model framework of network group polarization

People generally regard human practice as a completely pure rational behavior, but in fact, human practice is not only the result of human rational action, but also permeated with the influence of human irrational factors. In the phenomenon of network group polarization, the "one-sided" trend of network public opinion and the moral judgment caused by it are large-scale and deep-seated group pressure, which will prompt more people who have no attitude, neutral position or even opposition to turn to and echo the dominant opinion. Extreme represents great certainty and self-confidence, and this kind of self-confidence is attractive to most individuals. Extreme self-confidence brought by its certainty and certainty, or easy identification and no need to think too much brought by its simplicity, can quickly gather the emotions of the group.

#### 4. Suggestions on Network Group Polarization

The release of *The Wandering Earth* in 2019 is called "the first year of science fiction movies in China". With the sudden emergence of *The Wandering Earth*, the cumulative box office of science fiction movies in that year reached 19.511 billion. *The Wandering Earth* has indeed become a shot in the arm for the industry, but in the eyes of most people in the industry, the answer to what China's science fiction should look like is actually not clear. Even today, it is not an easy task to adapt "The Three-body Problem". Liu Cixin, the author, also bluntly said many times that filming "The Three-body Problem" is really difficult for our current experience and ability. The netizens' criticism of the animated version of "The Three-body Problem" occurs under the effect of "Echo Wall", and polarization may be avoided if effective communication can be achieved. Broadening the channels of public opinion expression can effectively reduce the spread of negative emotions and extreme remarks. Only in a society with diversified expression channels and smooth demands can the polarization of online groups be effectively reduced.

The public sphere is the middle zone between the private sphere and the public power sphere. It is open to all citizens in terms of authority, with the development of mass media as the main tool of operation and enriched and improved by dialogue between different groups. Value rationality is an individual position based on social trust, which requires netizens not to listen to others' opinions on the premise of public opinion support and not to grandstanding on the basis of criticism and condemnation. In the network era, the information spread by the network far exceeds that of the

traditional media, whose influence has declined but still has its own advantages. The most important thing is that the traditional media has high credibility, so we should use our own brand and information advantages to publish true and comprehensive information to effectively resist the spread of false information. With the rapid development of modern network, the moral return of netizens should lead the moral direction of netizens with socialist core values and establish Marxist dialectical critical concepts.

#### 5. Conclusion

As a brand-new media, the appearance of the Internet has completely broken the traditional information dissemination pattern, and has also brought new influences on the information dissemination mode and communication environment. The characteristics of the Internet spanning time and space, interactivity and hyperlink promote the gathering and development of homogeneous groups on the Internet, and people have more opportunities to choose people who have the same interests and views. The high homogeneity within the group also leads to the narrowing of information contact, which makes the members of the group cut off from opposition and their attitudes become simple and extreme. For those who haven't seen the original "The Three-body Problem", it's not easy to understand this animation. There are three original works of "The Three-body Problem", with a total of more than 800,000 words, which involve a lot of astrophysical concepts and the term "The Three-body Problem". Although the operation of clicking comments to view details is set in the animation, it is difficult for many viewers who are new to "The Three-body Problem" to understand the context structure of the whole story through just two episodes of animation. The netizens' criticism of the animated version of "The Three-body Problem" occurs under the effect of "Echo Wall", and polarization may be avoided if effective communication can be achieved. With the rapid development of modern network, the moral return of netizens should lead the moral direction of netizens with socialist core values and establish Marxist dialectical critical concepts.

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