

## **Internet transmission, group discussion, and belief:**

### **An experiment of QQ communication of rumors**

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Traditional rumor research finds that believing rumors will lead people to transmit rumors, and as a result, transmitting rumors will make people believe rumors more deeply. But in the context of Internet communication, will the abundant and easily-accessible information as well as the substantial and free discussions result in different principles of rumor communication? During the 2008 Beijing Olympic Game, we employed a controlled experiment to plant four carefully designed rumors about Olympic to eight participants, and asked them to discuss these rumors in QQ group and then respectively write a blog article. We analyze the data from experiment and interviews to answer the following three research questions: 1) How do participants assess the credibility of rumors in QQ group communication? 2) What patterns of content change occur in QQ group communication? 3) Eventually, whether QQ group discussions lead participants to believe rumors more deeply?

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