

# **Hunt by the Crowd: An Exploratory Qualitative Analysis on Cyber Surveillance in China**

**By**

**Xiayan Pan**

**College of Journalism  
University of Maryland,  
College Park.**

## **Abstract**

This exploratory analysis applied the notion of Participatory Panopticon to examine a particular form of online collaboration in China—unrelated Internet users collaboratively conduct cyber surveillance towards fellow citizens. The study chose the most visited surveillance forum --Human Flesh Search as a primary site. By analyzing the structure and content of the forum, the study examines whether peer-to-peer cyber surveillance serves as a power equalizer and has greater democratic potential. The results suggest that such collective cyber surveillance creates power imbalance between the searchers and the sought, which counters with some scholars' claim that surveillance conducted by regular citizens equalizes power distribution in the digital age.

[Type text]

## **Hunt by the Crowd: An Exploratory Qualitative Analysis on Cyber Surveillance in China**

China secured its first link to the Internet in 1993, and opened the Internet to citizens in 1995 (CNNIC, 1997). With the Internet growing at a rapid pace and becoming accessible to a widespread audience, Internet regulations and surveillance have also become imperative for central governments. Web sites on democracy agendas and other sensitive issues have been frequently blocked. And political speeches online are discouraged and closely monitored by servers out of fear of government sanctions (Collins, 2002). However, China Internet users have still managed to form a variety of online communities based on common interests via bulletin boards, online forums, and web blogs (Tan, 1999; Tisu, 2003; Yang, 2007). Among the diverse forms of online collaboration enabled by the Internet, one form of cyber collaboration has been influential but controversial, which is called Renrou Sousuo in Chinese. Renrou Sousuo refers to an act of searching information about individuals or any subjects through the online collaboration of multiple users.

Renrou Sousuo can be loosely translated to Human Flesh Search (HFS). The term Human Flesh does not literally mean human flesh, but refers to human resources the search mechanism is based on. Different from the Google search engine which operates on Internet technology, Human Flesh Search is a collaborative online behavior conducted by numbers of Internet users through responding to an open inquiry. Users' participation and collaboration plays a vital role in such a search ("Human flesh search", 2008).

[Type text]

A search of this kind often starts with an open query for information about any topics, and a query can be initiated out of any motives, such as pure curiosity about a celebrity's academic record in high school, or desire to track down a potential love interest. But for the majority of high-profile search cases in China, these searches have turned to aggressive, vicious manhunts. Often times, subjects of searches were perceived to be wrongdoers and the searches brought unwanted publicity to the sought, sometimes leading to public humiliation both online and in real life. On one hand, the practice has been accused of privacy violation and defamation by victims, concerned intellectuals and sympathetic citizens (Ford, 2008; Wu, 2008). But on the other hand, it has also been supported and applauded by others as a form of citizen empowerment and civil participation, especially when the subjects of such searches were high-rank officials whose power and behavior had never been checked by regular citizens before (Ford, 2008; Wu, 2008).

The debate over the potential of the Internet as power equalizer has been ongoing. Some scholars have expressed enthusiasm for the participatory potential of the Internet in harness collective intelligence (e.g., Jenkins, 2006; Howe, 2008), and some argue that the democratic potential of cyber space has been overestimated due to a lack of consideration of economic, political and cultural limitations (e.g., Cammaerts ,2008) . However, there are little empirical data to support the latter claim. Applying the concept of Participatory Panopticon, the study examined numerous cyber surveillance groups through textual analysis of a famous China online forum *Human Flesh Search*, with the purpose to examine the notion that the Internet works as power equalizer in cyber surveillance conducted by citizens.

[Type text]

## **Literature Review**

The study is framed around the notion of Participatory Panopticon to examine the claims that cyber surveillance by regular citizens serves as power equalizer in the digital age. Given the distinctive nature of such a search behavior and the subjects involved, the literature review has three parts. It starts with a brief introduction of crowd sourcing, a concept referring to collaborative problem-solving and information gathering. It then follows with the brief introduction of two concepts : Panopticon and Participatory Panopticon. Here collaborative cyber surveillance is recognized as a special form of crowdsourcing in which the target of searches are individual citizens.

### **Crowdsourcing**

Crowdsourcing is a form of problem-solving collaboration. The practice has been around for centuries but it has become more prevalent with the rapid development of the Internet. Crowdsourcing was defined by Jeff Howe (2006) as “the act of taking a job traditionally performed by a designated agent (usually an employee) and outsourcing it to an undefined, generally large group of people in the form of an open call”. Howe emphasized that the essential requisites of crowdsourcing are the use of “open call” and the pool of potential massive laborers at which the call is targeted.

Based on Howe’s definitions, Brabham (2008) examined several applications of crowdsourcing and generalized crowdsourcing as a strategic problem-solving model to attract an interested, motivated crowd of individuals. Both Howe and Brabham see corporations or institutions as primary initiators of crowd sourcing. Those are the ones who make open calls and have tangible financial or intelligent gains from initiating and moderating crowdsourcing projects.

[Type text]

In addition to Howe and Brabham's definitions of crowdsourcing, the term has also been loosely used in other situations. Some web sites based on users' collaboration and contribution are identified as crowdsourcing sites, and Yahoo! answer is an example of the kind. Yahoo! Answer web site is designed primarily for users to contribute content by either posting their questions or answering questions raised by fellow users. The questions raised at Yahoo! Answer site have a wide range, including some queries such as "what's the best restaurant in the town", "what is the average height for males", and so forth (Yahoo, 2008). In this sense, any individual can initiate an information search by making an open call to massive users.

Therefore, in this study, the definition of crowdsourcing focus on as a strategic problem-solving model in which a task is designated to undefined, massive potential laborers in the form of an open call. Based on this definition, *Human Flesh Search* in China constitutes one type of crowdsourcing for it possesses two distinct characteristics of crowdsourcing: the search task is initiated in the form of open call, and the potential task performers are undefined, masses of Internet users.

However, crowdsourcing as a problem-solving model does not capture peculiar features of China HFS. In essence, crowdsourcing is a neutral tool which facilitates collaboration, and all participants have equal potential to exercise power out of free will. But "the sought" through open calls are other human beings, such a search constitutes surveillance, and the notion of Panopticon is highly relevant in this context.

### **Panopticon and Participatory Panopticon**

The notion of Panopticon was first proposed by British philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1788/1995) as an architectural model for prisons. In English, Panoticon means

[Type text]

“observing all”. It refers to a system of observation which allows guards to monitor prisoners without prisoners knowing whether they were being watched or not.

Foucault (1977) invoked the notion of Panopticon as a metaphor for modern “disciplinary” societies. He argues modern societies establish a system of hierarchical observation with which the power of control can be achieved by merely observing people. A Panopticon system gives its users homogenous power to observe and control others regardless of who these users are. In other words, whoever uses the system has power. Foucault posited power relations between observers and observed are asymmetrical, which he described as follows:

It is an important mechanism, for it automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted contribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up. (Foucault, 1977, p. 202).

Since the 1980s, technology development has significantly reduced the price of surveillance equipment and made them accessible and affordable to regular citizens, meanwhile, the prevalent use of the Internet enables any curious users to search and retrieve information online. The act of surveilling no longer sounds abstract or far-reaching to regular citizens (Lyon, 2001; Mann, 2003, Andrejevic, 2005).

In his study on peer-to-peer online surveillance, Andrejevic (2005) identified the most common surveillance in the United States as using the *google* search engine to search someone’s information. The searched may be searchers’ romantic interests, friends and acquaintances. Andrejevic called such a surveillance “lateral surveillance”, for these searches were usually conducted individually and privately. He pointed out these lateral

[Type text]

surveillance actually indicates democratization of access to technology and strategies for cultivating investigatory expertise, that is, everyone can be an Internet detective.

Citing the high-profiled case of Abu Ghraib's photos, which depicted prisoner abuses by American troops in Iraq, futurist Jamais Cascio (2005) pointed out that the real power of citizen surveillance not only lies in its bottom-up form, but also the network connections shared by citizens to spread and develop news. He raised the notion of *Participatory Panopticon* to describe such a voluntary surveillances conducted by citizens in cyber space. Cascio (2005), in a modern society with the characteristics of Participatory Panopticon, "Anyone, anywhere, with a digital camera and a network connection has enormous power, perhaps enough to alter the course of a war or to shake the policies of the most powerful nation on Earth."

By identifying the relation between observers and observed, Mann, Nolan and Wellman (2003) classified surveillance into three categories. Top-down surveillance refers to government and organizations' surveillance of ordinary citizens for control or business purposes, which is the most common form of surveillance; *sousveillance* refers to surveillance conducted by individuals to observe governments and organizations, a bottom-up surveillance, which is also called *inverse surveillance*; *coveillance* is used to describe peer-to-peer surveillance or side-by-side surveillance, in which observed can tell they are observed from surveillance cameras. In Mann's eyes, top-down surveillance creates asymmetrical power relations by making upper class the operator of surveillance, while bottom-up surveillance (also called *souveillance*) help levitate such power imbalance by giving fellow citizens the opportunities of monitoring those in charge..

[Type text]

Both Mann (2003) and Andrejevic (2005, 2007) identified new forms of surveillance conducted by individual citizens. But they focused on citizen surveillance conducted individually, and did not mention the collaborative nature of surveillance conducted in cyber space. Given that there is a lack of empirical data regarding cyber surveillance when conducted in collective manner, the emergence of China cyber surveillance forums make a good site for understanding the nature and implication of such kind of searches.

The following questions were raised as a guidance for data collection and textual analysis:

. RQ1: How are these users involved in cyber surveillance?

RQ2: How do these searchers legitimize their surveillance behavior which may lead to privacy invasion?

RQ3: What are the nature of power relations created between the searchers and the sought?



[Type text]

## Method

The site selected for this study was the Human Flesh Search Forum at web site Mop ( [www.mop.com](http://www.mop.com)). Mop was founded in 1997 and has rapidly grown into one of most popular web sites in China, as best known for its entertainment news and social networking forums. According to China new media consulting firm iResearch, by April 2007, Mop was ranked TOP 2 among China social networking web sites, with a total of 28, 685, 000 regular users (iResearch, 2007).

In 2001, Mop site established a forum for users to submit information queries and to responded to questions, and coined the term “Human Flesh Search” to describe its feature: “ using collective knowledge instead of technology to solve problems. ” Since 2001, many high-profiled search cases have originated from this forum. Now *Human Flesh Search* has become a generic term to describe a type of search. Several similar surveillance forums have been established in other web sites, mimicking Mop’s HFS Forum’s structure and practice, but Mops’s HFS Forum remains the most active and influential.

The study applied qualitative content analysis with the purpose to examine the nature of queries and characteristics of these searches. Qualitative analysis helps researchers get beneath the surface of messages and identify the key themes relevant to the research questions raised (Creswell, 1998). As an unobtrusive source for the study, the HFS Forum contains two types of information. One is large amount of site-generated postings, which were written, compiled or edited by the forum moderators. The other type of

[Type text]

information was user-generated postings. Both types of content constitute indispensable data for answering the research questions, therefore were used as the sampling pool.

The unit of analysis is an individual posting, generated either by the users or forum moderators. Two set of data were selected based on the relevance to research questions. The first set consisted of eight moderator- generated postings, including user's participation guidelines, forum moderators' letters to users, regular forum notices, and complied media coverage on crowdsourcing cases, etc. These postings describe the mechanism of crowdsourcing and indirectly explain how and why the searchers were involved in such a behavior.

To further understand users' motives of participating in cyber surveillance, the study also analyzed users-generated postings, which include the query threads asking for specific information on certain subjects or a particular person, and the postings responding to the questions asked. The postings were purposely chosen based on the question threads and were roughly grouped into two categories based on the nature of queries: people search or knowledge inquiry.

## Results

Altogether, two sets of data were analyzed. The first set of data consisted of eight moderator- generated postings, including user's participation guidelines, forum moderators' letters to users, regular forum notices, and compiled media coverage on crowdsourcing cases, etc. Most of the postings have at least 500 words. The second set of data was twelve query threads; each thread contained the leading question and multiple responding postings. Among twelve threads, the number of responding postings ranged from 71 to 243. These data were coded into the five categories: the nature of the queries,

[Type text]

the mechanism of crowdsourcing, the motives of the searchers, and the process of problematization.

Textual analysis of the HFS Forum indicated that the Mop web site has set up an effective reward mechanism to encourage users to engage in crowdsourcing, and users experienced a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction from being needed and helpful. The need for detailed information to conduct searches serves as a main excuse to justify violating privacy of the sought, especially when the sought were perceived as wrongdoers therefore deserving of condemnations.

### **The nature of the queries**

Different from the high-profile Human Flesh Search cases, which often constituted vicious manhunts, the queries raised on this HFS Forum exhibited a wide range of topics. The number of responses varies greatly. Some threads had less than 10 responses, and some threads received thousands of postings. Approximately, three out of four queries were knowledge inquiries-- either asking information or seeking advice, which constitutes a typical form of crowdsourcing. Meanwhile, about one fourth of queries involved a people search. As one form of cyber surveillance, people searches usually involved privacy violation to certain extent.

For instance, here are a few question threads of information inquiry posted on early May, 2009.

— “Can someone come up with a good Japanese name? I am considering a Japanese name for my daughter. 20000 MPs reward.” (Query 1)

[Type text]

— “I heard a song in a TV commercial yesterday, and stayed up all night searching for it. Unfortunately, I cannot find a place to download. Any hunter can help? I’ll give 888 MPs for return. 253! (Mop user account number)” (Query 2).

Compared with information search, the queries for people searches appear more intrusive. Here are two queries of this kind:

— “#QQ: 366701644. Help me track its IP address. Thanks in advance! (Query 4)”

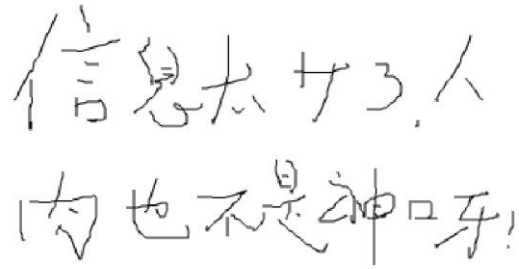
— “Help please. My husband walked out on me and my baby. He is in Ningbo city with his mistress. Help me find him please. ” (Query 5).

QQ is the most used instant messenger service in China. Its function is similar to MSN messenger in the United States. In a people search, QQ numbers of the sought are the most frequently posted information. Often times, the searchers need more information other than QQ number to track down a person, the more, the better.

### **Justification of Privacy Invasion**

For the queries involved people searches, most of them revealed a lot of private information about the sought, sometimes also about the query initiators. The intrusive nature of people searches has to do with how Human Flesh Search works. The searchers always need a vital piece of information about the sought to start with. When a quest is made to undefined, massive potential searchers, the only way the initiators can share information is to put them online for all the searchers. Sometime, there is little information for the searchers, which can make passionate searchers frustrated. This is a searchers’ signature picture, which says, “Too little information. You should have known we are not Gods!”(See Signature Picture 1)

[Type text]

Handwritten Chinese text in two lines. The first line reads "信息太炸了, 人" and the second line reads "肉也不是神口牙!". The characters are written in a casual, cursive style.

(Signature photo 1)

In some search cases, the query initiators perceived themselves as the victims of wrongdoings conducted by the sought. They tended to purposely, even maliciously expose private information of the sought, for the sake of facilitating the search and seeking revenge. In one case, not only the man who was accused of fraud was exposed, but also his wife's photo was posted. Users typically did not question the authenticity of the claims. On the contrary, they usually would share the newly-found, unverified information to further facilitate the search.

### **Mechanism of Crowdsourcing and the Motives of Searching**

Before examining the mechanism of crowdsourcing and the motives of crowdsourcing groups, two important features of the HFS Forum will be addressed: the reward system and the existence of the "Hunters for Reward Club".

#### *MP Rewards System*

Since 2001, Mop site created its virtual currency called MP, which has no monetary value in the real world but can be used or exchanged within Mop site. One MP is equivalent to one China penny in value, and is transferable among users with Mop accounts. Users earn MPs through actively participating in a variety of activities at the Mop site, such as playing games on, posting comments, or adding news link etc. But the fastest way to get "rich" is to respond to questions thread at HFS Forum ("MP", 2009).

[Type text]

The reward system turned out to be an effective incentive for potential searchers, which is manifested by the establishment of “Hunters for Reward Club”. Users can voluntarily apply for a club membership without a fee. They earn MPs through searching information and responding to the queries. Often time, to encourage fellow users to respond to their question thread, people who made requests would promise a certain amount of MPs to reward information providers. Under such a reward system, “hunters” can move up to higher rank when they gain enough points. The “hunters” with highest earning are listed at the salient space at the forum homepage.

“The Hunters club”’s mission statement also pointed out that the MP reward is an appealing incentive. It says,

“Moppers (referring to Mop users) enjoy helping one another, **as well as being paid for their search.** ... Everyone can ask Human Flesh Search for help. You can ask any question, solicit any form of help. We cannot guarantee that you get an answer or help you want, but we ensure our answers are different from what you get from anyplace else, and we can ensure you get most pleasant help ever. ... **We advise you promise a reward for your search query, so others would be more motivated to help.**”

—Taken from “Hunters for Reward Club” mission statement

The promise of providing “different” answers from other sources was based on very personalized and interactive search conducted by these searchers. Often times, the number of people who are willing to respond to queried are largely determined by the amount of reward set by the query initiators. It is not rare to see such a statement in the query threads: “Get 50000 MPs if you have right answer, get 100 MPs just by clicking “reply” button.” (The number of replies positively associates with the salience of thread at the forum) .

[Type text]

Simply searching for key words MP in Chinese, dozens of postings from various sites showed up and most of postings asked how to get more MPs to start or continue their search.

The following postings of MP users were retrieved at Bai.com, another web site with the crowdsourcing function.

—“I need to track a person. (I) Just applied for account and only got 1 MP from it. Can someone tell me how many MPs needed to make these searchers work harder?”

— “I am a new user (which often means fewer MPs). To continue my search, I need to set higher reward. Can you tell me where to buy more MPs? ”

Through enumerating number of postings to each question thread, it has become apparent that the searchers are more likely to respond to the queries associate with high MP reward. A thread asking for a pretty Japanese name received 136 responses within a day despite its generic nature of query; a high reward of 20000 should be a big incentive for people to participate. Though MPs have little monetary value in the real world, it is of still appealing for the searchers who want to be identified as a good hunter with plenty games.

To make searching more efficient and professional, HFS Forum moderator “Ice Cream” proposed to categorize their hardcore searchers based on their interests and specialties. According to his blogs, he himself is an avid searcher specialized in History and Science subjects. “Ice Cream”'s proposal received warm support from other “hunters”, and only one searcher objected for he thought such a specification makes searching “less fun”.

### **Searching for Justice**



[Type text]

The amount of MPs reward is only one form of incentive for the searchers. Many times, the searchers saw higher purpose in their search: serving justice.

In the first week of May, 2008, the posting with most responses was a query made by a new mom, who was asking searchers to find her husband's whereabouts. The title of the thread says:

“Help me please! My husband walked out on me and our baby. He is in Ningbo city with his mistress. Please help me find him, please!”

The women went on to tell a lengthy story about how her husband hooked up with a younger girl during her late pregnancy, and how he walked out on her only a few days before her due date., as well as how he made a brief home visit after her childbirth only to divorce her.

This query revealed lots of information which would be considered private in normal situations, including her husband's name, he and his mistress' QQ numbers, her home address and cell phone number, etc. She also posted their family photo with a baby in it. All this information would be considered private and should be carefully protected, but in HFS Forum, it is common, even normal to reveal it.

The query of this type is very typical people search in the HFS Forum. The query initiators see themselves as the victims of the wrongdoers, and HFS Forum is a place to release their grief and seek revenge and justice.

This posting promised 2000 MPs as reward, which is not a lot. But it did not stop it from receiving a flooding of responses within two days and was rated as the “top 1 ” thread “on the next day. Some postings expressed sympathy to her and fury towards her disloyal husband. Some suggested what she should do to protect her rights, and more

[Type text]

blank postings were posted only to increase the thread’s salience. These prompt responses did not add any tangible information about her husband’s whereabouts, but participants already started to talk about how to track down his husband and bring justice:

—“I am a Ningbo resident. I took the note and will attend to it.”

—“Post your message at Taiyan web site. It has a forum specifically against adulteresses.”

--“I didn’t know how to find him, but I can add 20,000 MPs for reward.”

--“If you can find this guy, my 50000 MPs are yours”.

Among these postings, two signature photos were very telling in how these searchers view their collective activities.



(Signature Picture 2)

This image above was posted as a searcher’s signature picture, which is a vivid portrayal of destructive consequences the searchers may bring to the sought. In this image, a skeleton labeled “MOP human flesh search” is in the center. Below it is a mouse, symbolizing computers, and the shadow of a crowd is on lower part.

[Type text]



(Signature Picture 3) In

another signature picture (See Picture 3), two young girls are waving knives with blood on them, and a slogan at the right bottom of the photo says “We are choppers gang”.

## Conclusions

Textual analysis of the HFS Forum presented alarming evidence that the empowerment of regular citizens does not necessarily lead to equal power distribution. China human flesh search is one form of peer-to-peer surveillance which is conducted by masses of Internet users, and the results of these searches appear more intrusive and detrimental to the sought because enormous power was given to the crowd. Such a search and its inevitable privacy invasion are legitimized by the presence of a “public”, even if the action itself is irrational, judgmental, or violating social norms. The analysis also suggests searchers experienced strong sense of empowerment by hunting others’ information with few restrictions. .

The study indicates that many-to-one cyber surveillance is more complicated than what former scholars thought. Given asymmetrical relations between the searchers and the sought, the empowerment can only be achieved by one section of public, at the cost of

[Type text]

deprivation of others' basic rights to privacy. In essence, these searches are social control exercised by a segment of a public in the form of many-to-one surveillance. In those peer-to-peer surveillance cases, the Internet is anything but power equalizer among publics.

The study reveals the dark side of publics with empirical evidence found in the crowdsourcing site. The findings challenge the notion that participatory potential of the Internet brings more balanced power distributions among regular citizens. The study pointed it out that collaborative cyber surveillance often create vast power imbalance between the searchers and the sought, which may lead to more severe power imbalance than before.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, this textual analysis did not have well-organized categories. The data collection is limited to relatively a small number of postings collected in a short period of time. In future research, it is advisable to identify a well-structure theoretical framework, and to use a larger data sample for textual analysis. In addition, qualitative interviews with the searchers and the sought are also an ideal addition to maximize the depth and quality of the research.

[Type text]

## References

- Andrejevic, M. (2002). The work of being watched: Interactive media and the exploitation of self-disclosure. *Critical studies in media communication*, 19 (2), 230-248.
- Andrejevic, M. (2006). The work of watching one another: Lateral surveillance, risk, and governance. *Surveillance & Society*, 2(4): 479-497.
- Andrejevic, M. (2007). *iSpy: Surveillance and power in the interactive era*, University Press of Kansas.
- Bai, X, & Ji, S.(2008). 'Human flesh search engine': An Internet lynching? Retrieved July 14, 2008, from <http://english.sina.com/china/1/2008/0704/170016.html>
- Bentham, J. (1838/1995), *The Panopticon writings*. Ed. Miran Bozovic (London: Verso, 1995). p. 29-95.
- Blumer, H. (1966). The mass, the public, and public opinion, in B. Berelson and M. Janowitz (eds.), *Reader in Public Opinion and Communication*, 2nd ed. New York: Free Press.
- Brabham, C.D. (2008). Crowdsourcing as a model for problem solving: An introduction and cases, *Convergence: The international journal of research into new media technologies*, 14(1), pp. 75-90.
- CNNIC, (1997). China Internet development report. Retrieved March 12, 2008 at <http://www.cnnic.cn/en/index/>
- Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oak, CA: Sage.

[Type text]

Dewey, J. (1927). *The Public and its problems*. New York: Holt.

Evangelista, B. (2002, September 9). Surveillance society: don't look now, but you may find you're being watched. *San Francisco Chronicle*, Retrieved December 4, 2008, from LexisNexis Academic database.

Ford, F. (2008, November 28). China's virtual vigilantes: Civic action or cyber mobs? *The Christian Science Monitor*, Retrieved December 4, 2008, from LexisNexis Academic database.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish*, trans. A. Sheridan. New York: Vintage.

Grunig, J. E., & Hunt, T. (1984). *Managing Public Relations*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Grunig, J. E. (1997). A situational theory of publics: conceptual history, recent challenges and new research. In D. Moss, T. MacManus, & D. Vercic (Eds.), *Public relations research: An international perspective* (pp. 3-48). London: International Thomson Business Press.

Howe, J. (2006 a). The rise of crowd sourcing, Retrieved March 5, 2009 at <http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/14.06/crowds.html>

Howe, J. (2006 b). Crowd sourcing: A definition, Retrieved March 5, 2009 at [http://crowdsourcing.typepad.com/cs/2006/06/crowdsourcing\\_a.html](http://crowdsourcing.typepad.com/cs/2006/06/crowdsourcing_a.html)

Human flesh search explained, (2008). Retrieved March 5, 2009, from [http://dzh2.mop.com/topic/readQues\\_8462250\\_0\\_0.html](http://dzh2.mop.com/topic/readQues_8462250_0_0.html)

iResearch, 2009. Retrieved

[http://old.iresearch.com.cn/online\\_community/detail\\_views.asp?id=45281](http://old.iresearch.com.cn/online_community/detail_views.asp?id=45281)

Lyon, D. (2001). *Surveillance society: Monitoring everyday life* . Open University Press

[Type text]

Mann, S., Nolan, J. , & Wellman, B. (2003) . Sousveillance: Inventing and using wearable computing devices for data collection in surveillance environments.

*Surveillance & Society*, 1(3), 331-355.

“MP”, 2009, Retrieved

at <http://zhidao.baidu.com/question/79989985.html?fr=qrl&fr2=query>

Park, E. R. (1904/1972). *The crowd and the public*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Tan, Z. (1999). Telecommunications policy regulating China’s Internet: Convergence toward a coherent regulatory regime. *Telecommunication Policy*, (23), 261-276.

Tsui L, (2003). The Panopticon as the antithesis of a space of freedom control and regulation of the Internet in China. *China information*, 17 (2), 65-82.

Vasquez, G. & Taylor, M. (2001). Research perspectives on “the public”. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Handbook of public relations* (pp. 139-154). Thousand Oaks, CA:Sage.

Wang, X. (Ed.). (2009). “Human flesh search” facilitated bloody murder . Retrieved March 10, 2009, from [http://www.dahe.cn/xwzx/sz/t20090304\\_1498181.htm](http://www.dahe.cn/xwzx/sz/t20090304_1498181.htm)

Wikipedia, (2009). Retrieved April 4, 2009 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia>. Wu,

V. (2008, September 2). Vigilantes at the click of a mouse. *South China Morning*

*Post*, Retrieved December 4, 2008, from LexisNexis Academic database. Yang, G.

(2007). How do Chinese civic associations respond to the Internet: Findings from a survey. *The China quarterly*. (189). 122-143.



[Type text]

Yahoo, (2008). "Yahoo! answers community guidelines". Retrieved March, 2009 at  
[http://answers.yahoo.com/info/community\\_guidelines](http://answers.yahoo.com/info/community_guidelines)

Zhu, J. & He, Z. (2002). Perceived characteristics, perceived needs, and perceived popularity:  
Diffusion and use of the Internet in China. *Communication research*. 29 (4), 466-495.