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# 使用Zoom，风险自负

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The New York Times | 纽约时报中文网



GLENN HARVEY

Ever since many of us started working from home in the coronavirus pandemic, I've been invited to countless gatherings taking place on Zoom, the videoconferencing app. Virtual happy hours, work meetings, dinners, you name it.

自从许多人因为新冠病毒疫情开始居家办公以来，我多次被邀请参加使用视频会议应用程序Zoom进行的聚会。不但有虚拟欢乐时光，还有虚拟工作会议、晚餐等等。

I've been a no-show, and it's not just because my hair has grown embarrassingly long. It's because I have a fundamental problem with Zoom.

我始终失约，不仅仅因为我的头发长到令人尴尬的地步。我失约是因为我压根不喜欢Zoom。

Let me first say I understand why Zoom has been so popular in the pandemic. The company designed its app to be free and extremely easy to use; in tech lingo, we call it “frictionless.” Even our friends and relatives with zero technical know-how can join a Zoom meeting just by clicking a link. Then, voilà, you are looking at a screen with familiar faces and can begin chatting away.

首先我得说，我明白为什么Zoom在疫情期间如此受欢迎。该公司将其应用程序设为免费，而且极其易于使用；在技术术语中，我们管这个叫“无阻”设计。即使我们的科技零基础的亲朋好友也能通过点击一个链接加入Zoom聚会。然后，哇，你就在屏幕上看到一个个熟悉的面孔并可以马上开始聊天了。

At least 200 million of us, desperate to see people outside our homes, now use Zoom, up from 10 million a few months ago. Many of us use it for free, though Zoom also has a paid product. For lots of us, it's a lifeline to see and converse with a friend or relative.

我们之中，至少有2亿迫切希望见到家人以外的人现在用上了Zoom，而几个月前，使用Zoom的只有1000万人。我们之中的许多人在免费使用Zoom，尽管它也有一个付费的产品。能与亲戚朋友见面并交谈，对于我们很多人来说，它简直就是救命的稻草。

But for the last year, I've been wary of the app. Zoom has had multiple privacy snafus in that period, which have come up so frequently that they became a game of Whac-a-Mole.

但是过去一年，我一直对这个应用程序保持警惕。在那段时期，Zoom曾出现过多次隐私隐患，频率之高，简直犹如打地鼠一般。

The missteps included a weakness that would have allowed malware to attach to Zoom and hijack our web cameras. The issues with basic security practices culminated with “Zoombombing,” in which trolls crashed people's video meetings and bombarded them with inappropriate material like pornography.

隐患包括一个可能导致恶意软件附着到Zoom上并劫持摄像头的漏洞。基本安全措施问题的高峰是“Zoom轰炸”(Zoombombing)的出现，捣乱者闯入人们的视频会议，不断用色情等不良内容轰炸他们。

In a blog post last week, Zoom's chief executive, Eric Yuan, apologized for all the mistakes and said the recent problems had largely been addressed. The company promised to focus on fixing its privacy and security issues over the coming months; it reiterated the plan on Wednesday.

Zoom首席执行官袁征上周在一篇博客文章中为所有错误表示歉意，并表示最近出现的问题已经基本得到解决。该公司承诺将在未来几个月内集中解决隐私和安全问题。它在周三重申了该计划。

If there is something déjà vu about all of this, you aren't wrong. That's because we find ourselves dealing with the same situation over and over again, focusing on the convenience of easy-to-use tech products over issues like data security and privacy.

如果所有这些让你有似曾相识感觉的话，你的感觉没错。那是因为我们一次又一次地处理着相同的情况，专注于科技产品在使用上的便利性，而忽视数据安全和隐私等问题。

We went through this not long ago with Ring, the doorbell camera, another product with a catchy name. Ring, which is owned by Amazon, became popular during another crummy situation: an increase in the petty crime of package thefts. It was also easy to install. But despite glowing customer reviews, Ring became mired in privacy scandals, including one that involved hackers hijacking the Ring cameras of multiple families.

不久前，我们在门铃摄像头Ring上——另一个名字琅琅上口的产品——也经历了同样的问题。由于盗窃包裹的轻微犯罪上升，在这个令人恼火的情况下，亚马逊旗下的Ring变得流行起来。它的安装也很简便。但是，尽管好评连连，Ring还是陷入了隐私丑闻中，包括一桩涉及黑客劫持多户人家Ring摄像头的事件。

The lesson is one we need to learn and relearn. When a company fails to protect our privacy, we shouldn't just continue to use its product — and tell the people we care about to use it — just because it works well and is simple to use. Once we lose our privacy, we rarely get it back again.

这样的教训，我们需要一再学习。当一家公司未能保护我们的隐私时，我们不应该仅仅因为方便好用而坚持使用它的产品，甚至让我们关心的人也一起使用。隐私一旦丢失，就很难回来了。

“There’s a revolving door,” said Matthew Guariglia, a policy analyst for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a digital rights nonprofit. “When you give your data to one company, you have no idea who else is going to have access to it, because so much of it happens behind the black box of company secrecy.”

“来来回回总是如此，”数字权益非营利组织电子前沿基金会(Electronic Frontier Foundation)的政策分析师马修·瓜里利亚(Matthew Guariglia)说。“当你将你的数据提供给一家公司时，根本不知道还有谁可以访问它，因为许多都发生在公司的秘密黑匣子背后。”

The onus is certainly on Zoom, not us, to fix the privacy and security problems of its app. But we can put pressure on Zoom by not accepting the situation. If you do use Zoom, do so with caution and strong security settings. More on this later.

解决应用程序的隐私和安全问题肯定是Zoom的责任，而不是我们的责任。但是我们可以对Zoom施加压力，拒绝接受这种情况。如果你的确需要使用Zoom，请谨慎使用并将安全性设置提高。稍后再详细介绍。

## Zoom’s Privacy and Security Issues

### Zoom的隐私和安全问题

Let’s first take a closer look at why Zoom has been under the microscope. The issues boil down to two main things: its privacy policy and the architecture of its security.

首先，让我们仔细研究一下，为什么Zoom一直被遭到仔细审查。问题主要归结为两点：隐私政策和安全架构。

### Zoom’s privacy policy

### Zoom的隐私政策

Zoom recently announced that it had revised its privacy policy to be clearer and more transparent. In it, the company emphasized that it does not and has never sold people’s personal data, and has no plans to.

Zoom最近宣布已经修改了隐私政策，使其更加清晰和透明。公司在声明中强调，无论过去、现在还是将来，都不会出售人们的个人数据。

But the policy does not address whether Zoom shares data with third parties, as companies such as Apple and Cisco explicitly state in their privacy policies.

但该政策并未涉及Zoom是否与第三方共享数据，苹果(Apple)和思科(Cisco)等公司在其隐私政策中都明确指出了这一点。

This is a notable omission. Tech companies can monetize user data in many ways without directly selling it, including by sharing it with other companies that mine the information for insights, according to research published by the M.I.T. Sloan School of Management. In some cases, tools to collect data from users are “rented” to third parties. Such practices would technically make it true that your personal data was not “sold,” but a company would still make money from your data.

这一缺失值得注意。麻省理工学院斯隆管理学院(M.I.T. Sloan School of Management)发表的研究报告显示，科技公司无需直接出售也可以通过多种方式将用户数据货币化，包括与其他挖掘用户信息以获取深入知识的公司共享数据。在某些情况下，收集用户数据的工具被“租借”给第三方。这种做法在技术上可以使你的个人数据不被“出售”，但公司仍然可以用你的数据赚钱。

Lynn Haaland, Zoom’s global risk and compliance officer, said the company does not anonymize or aggregate user data or rent it out in exchange for money.

Zoom的全球风险和合规负责人林恩·哈兰德(Lynn Haaland)表示，公司不会匿名或汇总用户数据，也不会出租数据赚钱。

So why is this not addressed in the privacy policy?

那么，为什么隐私政策中没有提到这一点呢？

“We try to be clear here about what we do do with the data,” Ms. Haaland said about the updated policy. “Sometimes when you try to list all the things you don’t do with data, if you leave one out, then people say, ‘Oh, well, you must be doing that.’”

“我们试图在这里澄清我们确实如何处理这些数据，”哈兰德在谈到新政策时说。“有时候，当你试图列出所有和数据无关的事情时，如果漏掉了一件，人们会说，‘哦，好吧，你一定是在这么做。’”

## **Zoom's security flaws**

### **Zoom的安全缺陷**

While Zoom has worked furiously to plug the security holes that have emerged in the last few weeks, its products for Windows and Mac computers have weaker security by design.

**虽然Zoom公司一直在努力修补过去几周出现的安全漏洞，但其针对Windows和Mac电脑的产品在安全上较弱是有意而为。**

That is largely because the company opted not to provide its app through Apple's official Mac app store or the Microsoft Windows app store. Instead, consumers download it directly from the web. In this way, Zoom's software avoids living in a so-called sandboxed environment, which would have restricted its access to Apple and Microsoft operating systems.

**这主要是因为公司选择不通过苹果官方的Mac应用商店或微软的Windows应用商店提供其应用程序，而是由消费者直接从网上下载。通过这种方式，Zoom公司的软件避免了限制其访问苹果和微软操作系统的所谓沙箱环境。**

As a result, Zoom is able to gain access to deeper parts of the operating systems and their web browsers. That is largely what makes Zoom sessions so simple to join.

**这样一来，Zoom就能够访问两种操作系统及其网络浏览器的更深层部分。这在很大程度上使得Zoom会话非常容易加入。**

By choosing to circumvent safer methods for installing its app, Zoom has opted for weaker security architecture, said Sinan Eren, chief executive of Fyde, an app security firm.

**应用安全公司Fyde首席执行官斯南·埃伦(Sinan Eren)表示，通过绕过更安全的安装方法，Zoom公司选择了较弱的安全架构。**

“They want to make the installation process a lot easier and streamlined, but at the same time they want deeper hooks into the operating system so they can collect more things,” he said. “That also exposes us to potential vulnerabilities.”

“他们想让安装过程更简单流畅，但同时他们想让软件进入到操作系统的更深层次，这样他们就能收集更多东西，”他说。“这也让我们受到它潜在弱点的影响。”

Zoom declined to comment on its security architecture.

**Zoom拒绝就其安全架构置评。**

### **Use Zoom at Your Own Risk**

**使用Zoom，风险自负**

So what to do? In these difficult times, many of us have no better option than to use Zoom. So here are some steps to keep in mind.

**那么，该怎么做呢？在困难时期，我们中的许多人没有比Zoom更好的选项。这里有一些步骤要记住。**

- Use Zoom with caution. In general, it's safer to use Zoom on a mobile device, like an iPad or an Android phone, than on a Mac or Windows PC. Mobile apps operate in a more restricted environment with limited access to your data. In addition, apps served through the App Store or Play store undergo a review process by Apple and Google that include an inspection for security vulnerabilities.
- 使用Zoom时，保持警惕。总的来说，在平板电脑或安卓手机等移动设备上使用Zoom比在Mac或Windows电脑上使用更安全。移动应用在一个更严格的环境下运行，对数据的访问也受到限制。此外，通过App Store或Play应用商店上架的应用程序必须接受苹果和谷歌的审核，其中包括对安全漏洞的检查。
- Also, be sure to turn on Zoom security settings, like meeting passwords, to prevent unwanted guests from Zoombombing your sessions.
- 另外，一定要打开Zoom的安全设置，如会议密码，以防止不速之客突然“轰炸”您的会议。
- Last but not least, be mindful of what it means to tell others to use a product with weak data security. Try to avoid using it for sensitive matters, like work meetings that discuss trade secrets.

• 最后但同样重要的是，要了解告诉别人使用一款数据安全系数低的产品意味着什么。尽量避免用它谈论敏感议题，比如召开讨论商业机密的工作会议。

• If you are concerned about privacy, try an alternative. There are video chatting tools from companies with better reputations, like Google's Hangouts, Cisco's Webex and FaceTime for Apple devices. These products may not be as simple to use as Zoom, but they work and you can worry less.

• 如果你对隐私仍存疑虑，试着使用一款替代产品。还有一些声誉更好的公司提供的视频聊天工具，比如谷歌Hangouts、思科Webex以及苹果设备上的FaceTime。这些产品可能不像Zoom那样使用简便，但它们确实能用，你也可以少些担心。

A product's being great just isn't good enough if it's lousy at protecting our privacy. Many people appear to have learned this lesson already and have reacted accordingly. Elon Musk's rocket company, SpaceX, barred employees from using Zoom. New York City's school district recently banned Zoom for online learning.

如果一个产品在保护我们的隐私方面做得很糟糕，那么它还远远不够优秀。许多人似乎已经吸取了这一教训，并作出了相应的反应。埃隆·马斯克(Elon Musk)的火箭公司SpaceX已经禁止员工使用Zoom。纽约市学区最近也已禁止使用Zoom在线学习。

And us? It may be our turn to pause, too.

而我们呢？也许我们也该暂停了。

本文作者Brian X. Chen是时报首席消费科技作者。他撰写产品评测以及科技工坊(Tech Fix)——一个关于解决科技相关问题的专栏。在2011年加入《纽约时报》之前，他为《连线》(Wired)杂志做苹果及无线工业报道。

翻译：晋其角、邓妍

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**安卓**：全新安卓客户端可通过Google Play下载安装，或点击本文下方的“阅读原文”，在浏览器中打开链接下载APK文件直接安装。

**iOS**：苹果手机用户可在非中国大陆地区应用商店下载，也可发送邮件至 cn.letters@nytimes.com 获取新版客户端，或私信时报君获取下载方式。

感谢各位读者的关注和支持。

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# 图集精选

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## ■ *Why are we keeping our offices open ?*

This is something that I and our leadership feel really strongly about, even though we now have 95% of our people working from home which is great. There are 2 key reasons – firstly if you don't have a bigger house – and maybe you have a couple of kids that are trying to do school from home, plus 2 parents trying to work from home, you may well need to come into the office for a break from that environment ! Secondly, we have to remember that for some that suffer domestic violence, their workplace is often their only safe haven. We don't want to take that away from them at a time when we know mental health, domestic violence etc is on the rise.

今天ceo发邮件，我之前也想过为什么大街上都没人了，办公室还不关门，多浪费电。今天看到这个觉得还是太欠考虑了。墨尔本真的好有人情味。

[source](#)

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# Harlem

BY LANGSTON HUGHES

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore—  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over—  
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.

*Or does it explode?*

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The second is from a *Tribune* column in 1944:

The fallacy is to believe that under a dictatorial government you can be free *inside*.... Why is this idea false? I pass over the fact that modern dictatorships don't, in fact, leave the loopholes that the old-fashioned despotisms did; and also the probable weakening of the *desire* for liberty owing to totalitarian methods of education. The greatest mistake is to imagine that the human being is an autonomous individual. The secret freedom which you can supposedly enjoy under a despotic government is nonsense, because your thoughts are never entirely your own. Philosophers, artists, writers, even scientists, not only need encouragement and an audience, they need constant stimulation from other people.... Take away freedom of speech, and the creative faculties dry up.

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真的喜欢奥威尔，这个道理，几年前的我不懂 [source](#)

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Ryan Knight @ProudResister



Masculinity is not under attack.  
Masculinity is being redefined to not include harassing women or bullying people who are different than you.  
Masculinity is being expanded to a more loving space and if you can't handle that then you deserve to be left in the past with your hate.

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$dA = (1 + u^2 + v^2) du \wedge dv$ ,  $D^\mu D^\nu = D^{\mu+\nu}$

# Girls Who Fell In Love with Math

Women in TCS and Math Film Events  
 Time: April 22 and April 25, 2020, 08:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)  
 Zoom Meeting ID: 783-076-6544  
 Password: mathgirl

Professor Sun-Yung Alice Chang  
 Mathematician  
 Princeton University



Professor Fan Chung Graham  
 Mathematician  
 UCSD



The film is about two girls, Alice Zhang & Fan Chung Graham, who grew up together in the 60s of Taiwan, the story of their dream in pursuing math. It depicts how they face the ideal and dilemma of their life and the key to their success. The film also stated that gender should not be the restriction of studying math, but that women's unique delicate and quiet qualities may surely be the advantage of studying math.

2017 Women Make Waves Film Festival  
 Nominated for Taiwan Competition

REMI WINNER  
 51st ANNUAL  
 WORLDFEST-HOUSTON  
 INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL  
 2018

DIRECTOR: WEITSY WANG , YNG-JAW JIING



#女同#

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问答

图

+

根据相关法律法规和政策，话题页未予显示。



#同性恋#

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热门

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问答

图

+

根据相关法律法规和政策，话题页未予显示。



#男同#

综合

实时

热门

视频

问答

图

+

根据相关法律法规和政策，话题页未予显示。



#双性恋#

综合

实时

热门

视频

问答

图

+

根据相关法律法规和政策，话题页未予显示。

You can't even find "lesbian" on Sina Weibo, one of the biggest social media platforms in [#China](#) .... [t.co/BOngeWgteh source](#)

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# 消息精选

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[youtu.be/jMGeVX4fClw](https://youtu.be/jMGeVX4fClw)

YouTube

Steve Bannon GOES OFF On CCP, Kissinger, 'Davos' Accomplices of Xi  
War Room: Pandemic EP 103. Former White House Chief Strategist Steve  
Bannon unleashes on CCP, Kissinger, and accomplices of the totalitarian  
Chinese. Subscri...

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[telegra.ph/使用Zoom风险自负-04-09-2](https://telegra.ph/使用Zoom风险自负-04-09-2)

Telegraph

使用Zoom， 风险自负

GLENN HARVEY Ever since many of us started working from home in the coronavirus pandemic, I've been invited to countless gatherings taking place on Zoom, the videoconferencing app. Virtual happy hours, work meetings, dinners, you name it. 自从许多人因为新冠病毒疫情开始...

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This is the kind of research we need more of: careful, detailed, expert. They find China's policy banks lend to BRI countries at 3.1%, while proper "concessional" lending from the World Bank is priced at 1.2%. sample is during 2000-14.

<https://www.cgdev.org/publication/chinese-and-world-bank-lending-terms-systematic-comparison>

[source](#)

Center For Global Development

Chinese and World Bank Lending Terms: A Systematic Comparison Across China's lending volumes in developing countries far surpass those of other bilateral creditors and compare in scale only to World Bank lending practices.

Where World Bank lending terms, volumes, and

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<https://freewilllibrary.blogspot.com/2020/04/noam-chomsky-bernie-sanders-campaign.html>

[telegra.ph/诺姆乔姆斯基伯尼桑德斯的竞选运动并未失败它激励了数百万人并改变了美国政治-04-14|source](#)

Free willl

Noam Chomsky: Bernie Sanders Campaign Didn't Fail. It Energized Millions & Shifted U.S. Politics

Noam Chomsky: Bernie Sanders Campaign Didn't Fail. It Energized Millions & Shifted U.S. Politics In a new interview , world-reno...

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**The assumption that boys are more likely to be adept at math and science than girls has no foundation in the brain, according to a new study. It is the first to look at human neurobiology to try and understand whether supposed gender differences in mathematical ability are grounded in biology.**

[Read Full Article](#)

Inverse

A tired stereotype about men and women's brains has been debunked

No, the sexes are not hard-wired to process mathematical information differently, scientists say.

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The Feminist on Cellblock Y

A convicted felon builds a feminist movement from behind bars at an all-male prison in Soledad, California.

[www.cnn.com/videos/us/2018/04/18/the-feminist-on-cellblock-y-doc-orig.cnn](http://www.cnn.com/videos/us/2018/04/18/the-feminist-on-cellblock-y-doc-orig.cnn)

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[telegra.ph/Chaguan-04-28](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/Chaguan-04-28)

Telegraph

The push to raise China's age of consent from 14

Chinese society is locked in a dispiriting argument, worthy of a more callous age. The public is debating whether a 14-year-old girl was a victim of rape by her wealthy guardian—three decades her senior—or a willing partner, trading sex for gifts and attention....

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[telegra.ph/China-Coronavirus-How-Misinformation-Spreads-on-Twitter-04-28](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/China-Coronavirus-How-Misinformation-Spreads-on-Twitter-04-28)

Telegraph

China Coronavirus: How Misinformation Spreads on Twitter

A few minutes before 11 p.m. on January 20, Eric Feigl-Ding was pretty much just another guy on the internet. Sure, he is a Harvard-affiliated public-health researcher who lives in Washington, D.C., and has multiple degrees, but his Twitter account was nothing...

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<https://www.coursera.org/learn/fashion-design/lecture/uH9mK/designer-kerby-jean-raymond-on-the-hoodie>

设计, 帽衫, 黑人文化, 与社会正义

Coursera

Designer Kerby Jean-Raymond on the Hoodie - Heroes | Coursera

Video created by The Museum of Modern Art for the course ...

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<https://www.coursera.org/learn/modern-art-ideas/lecture/zchLM/andrew-wyeth-christinas-world-1948>

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Dirty money piling up in L.A. as coronavirus cripples international money laundering

Dirty money is piling up in Los Angeles. In the last three weeks, federal agents made three seizures that each netted more than \$1 million in suspected drug proceeds. The reason, according to the city's top drug enforcement official: The coronavirus pandemic...

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# China Coronavirus: How Misinformation Spreads on Twitter

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Carlos Garcia Rawlins / Reuters

A few minutes before 11 p.m. on January 20, Eric Feigl-Ding was pretty much just another guy on the internet. Sure, he is a Harvard-affiliated public-health researcher who lives in Washington, D.C., and has multiple degrees, but his Twitter account was nothing special. He had about 2,000 followers—a modest count on a scale that reaches into the millions—and his average tweet got about one retweet and five likes.

That all changed when Feigl-Ding read a paper about the new coronavirus spreading out of Wuhan, China, and spotted an eye-popping stat. The paper estimated that the virus's contagiousness, which is captured in a variable called R<sub>0</sub>, was 3.8—meaning that every person who caught the disease would give it to almost 4 other people. The paper cautioned that there was “considerable uncertainty associated with the outbreak,” but Feigl-Ding still worried that such a highly transmissible disease would be a key ingredient in the recipe for a major

pandemic. “I read that 3.8 value and I was like: ‘Oh my gosh!’” he told me. “I tweeted it out.”

That’s an understatement. “HOLY MOTHER OF GOD—the new coronavirus is a 3.8!!!” Feigl-Ding’s tweet read. “How bad is that reproductive R0 value? It is thermonuclear pandemic level bad—never seen an actual virality coefficient outside of Twitter in my entire career. I’m not exaggerating.” During the next five minutes, Feigl-Ding put together a thread on Twitter, mostly quoting the paper itself, that declared we were “faced with the most virulent virus epidemic the world has ever seen.”

Read: [The deceptively simple number sparking coronavirus fears](#)

Twitter ate it up. Many people seemed to be experiencing the outbreak, especially from afar, as some kind of distributed movie, watched in grainy cellphone videos sent out of China and populated by Twitter heads filling in the backstory. The thread soon had thousands of retweets. Feigl-Ding’s account was flooded with new followers. Here was a Harvard epidemiologist naming the world’s darkest fear about the new disease and confirming it.

Yet there were issues with Feigl-Ding’s analysis, even if they were not immediately apparent to the people simply scrolling through Twitter. The thread exemplified a deep problem on Twitter: The most extreme statements can be far more amplified than more measured messages. In the information sphere, while public-health researchers are doing their best to distribute scientific evidence, viral Twitter threads, context-free videos, and even conspiracy theories are reaching far more people.

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The coronavirus outbreak is a serious public-health problem. Although reports began to surface in early January, the Chinese government massively escalated its response last week, calling for an unprecedented quarantine of tens of millions of people. The outbreak struck within a fraught set of geopolitical circumstances. There is the history of the respiratory illness SARS. There is the uncertainty about how transparent the factions of the Chinese government are being about the severity of the outbreak. There is the sheer size of China—and the appearance of the disease in the weeks leading up to the new year, which sends hundreds of millions of people traveling across the country. And, of course, there is global competition between the U.S. and China, which provides

a little extra incentive (and prospective attention) for Americans on Twitter trying to garner an audience.

Most Americans cannot read Chinese, nor are they present in large numbers on Chinese social-media sites such as Weibo and WeChat. The internet has fractured over the past decade, with American and Chinese social-media companies carving up distinct parts of the world. While that makes it difficult for many Americans to parse what's happening on Chinese social media, it also creates an opportunity for people who are tapped in on both sides. They can arbitrage from the Chinese to the American internet, turning WeChat videos into Twitter gold. Accounts big and small have whipped up quite an apocalyptic fervor in the past weeks, posting scary videos of dubious provenance and veracity. The mainstream media has proceeded carefully, and reporters' stories have seemingly been unable to satiate the rising hunger for more information about coronavirus.

This was the ecosystem in which Feigl-Ding's thread landed. No wonder it took off. Unfortunately, there were some mistakes. While Feigl-Ding included quotes and screenshots of the paper, which was preliminary and not peer-reviewed, he omitted some context, primarily that other infectious diseases such as measles also have very high R<sub>0</sub> numbers. He also made a clear error: "Ding claimed that the new virus was eight times as infectious as SARS, when in fact SARS had an R<sub>0</sub> ranging from 2 to 5, very comparable with these estimates for the new coronavirus," the science journalist Ferris Jabr, who watched Feigl-Ding's thread wing around the internet that Friday night, told me. Feigl-Ding deleted the SARS tweet once he realized the mistake.

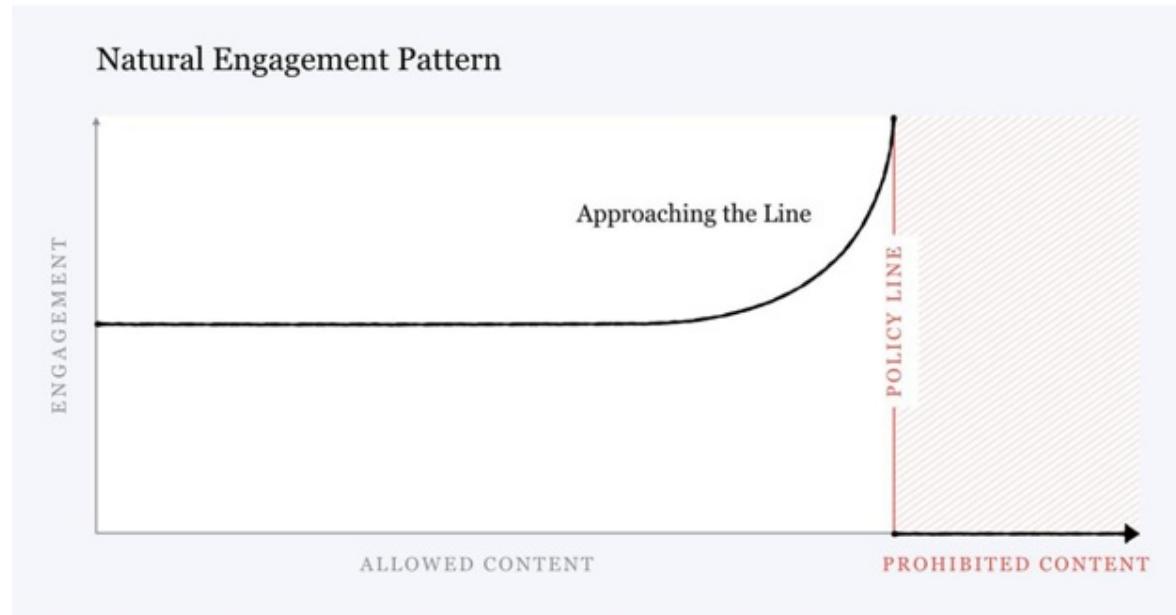
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The problems didn't end there, though. Feigl-Ding hadn't known that by the time he tweeted about the paper, the researchers had already lowered their estimate to 2.5. And R<sub>0</sub>, for that matter, is not the be-all and end-all of the danger of a virus. Some highly transmissible diseases are not actually that dangerous. Other experts chimed in to chide his characterizations (and some of his Harvard colleagues talked directly to him, he told me). One epidemiologist, Michael Bazaco, quote-tweeted Feigl-Ding and proclaimed, "This is fearmongering hyperbole, and borderline public health malpractice." The tone was clearly not straight out of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nor was the form of the tweets.

When Jabr began to add up all the issues, he realized that he should create his own corrective thread. “I decided to counter with a thread that filled in the missing context and collated some of the known facts at the time, along with their sources,” he said. “By the next morning, both our threads had been amplified, but his had still been RTed and liked at least twice as many times.”

By the time of this writing, Feigl-Ding’s thread has roughly triple the likes and retweets of Jabr’s. This is one of the realities of the current information ecosystem: While out-and-out conspiracies and hoaxes will draw some attention, it’s really the stuff that’s close to the boundaries of discourse that grabs the most eyeballs. That is, the information that’s plausible, and that fits into a narrative mounting outside the mainstream, gets the most clicks, likes, and retweets. Bonus points if it’s sensational or something that someone might want to censor. After all, which is more interesting: “HOLY MOTHER OF GOD,” or “the essential data are still being collected and assessed,” as Jabr ended his thread?

In 2018, after years of research into the trouble Facebook was having moderating material on its platform, the company’s CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, identified a dark pattern in Facebook’s data concerning what he called “borderline content”—stuff that was almost prohibited by Facebook, but not quite. He made this chart.



Facebook

Feigl-Ding’s tweets seem to approach the line of what professional ethics would

permit public-health authorities to say. He certainly wasn't endorsing full-on conspiracy theories about bioweapons and zombies, as some people have suggested during the coronavirus outbreak. But he also was far from the calm, slow-down-there stance of the majority of other officials. And, of course, that's what made his message so irresistible.

Twitter has made some effort to slow the spread of misinformation on its platform. Searches for *coronavirus* now produce a link to the CDC with the message "Know the facts."

Feigl-Ding, for his part, admits that he wishes he'd worded things a little differently. "I really wish Twitter was like Facebook and you could edit," he told me. Since his thread went big, he's moderated the tone of his tweets considerably and hewed closer to the public-health consensus on how to describe the situation.

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Still, Feigl-Ding is just one guy on the internet. Many people have been tweeting into the borderline space, and not everyone shows signs of remorse.

Misinformation has always been an element of people's response to disease; we didn't have to wait around for social media to be invented to spread rumors or contest facts. But the fundamental difference today is the scope and speed by which social-media platforms enable this to happen—and the strangeness of the information networks that are formed in crisis.

One user in particular, @howroute, has had tremendously viral tweets about the terrible danger the world faces. These have drawn more likes and retweets than anything from Feigl-Ding or Jabr. One shows people in hazmat suits on an airplane. "BREAKING NEWS: This is not a scene from some apocalyptic horror movie, this is a #coronavirus outbreak in China," @howroute posted. The tweet has been retweeted and liked about 50,000 times. "The SARS like virus has already spread to four countries and infected more than 1700 people. US airports are monitored. Be on alert, stay safe!"

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The account has also posted videos supposedly showing people dead in the hallways of hospitals and someone twitching under a hospital sheet. Most of the videos seem to be real, but the context is missing. Within the apocalyptic frame

that they've been given, they are terrifying.

The name on the account is Max Howroute, but I've been unable to find any person by that name in public-records searches. There's no record of Max Howroute working at a publication or producing work other than some satirical YouTube videos, yet the account describes Howroute as a "journalist." Before the Wuhan crisis, @howroute had mostly posted anti-Trump memes. Since the viral hit, the account has gone all in, tweeting completely context-free videos and charging its critics with being Chinese Communist Party trolls. "You're liar and I will report you to Twitter," @howroute tweeted at the Hong Kong dissident artist Badiucao. "You're obviously new here. I'm one of the most trusted sources on coronavirus reporting on Twitter. How dare are you to question my reporting!!"

It's not clear what @howroute is doing, or who is responsible. The account—it often posts using *we*—has not responded to my requests for an interview, and studiously maintains that everything it has posted has been verified. According to fact-checking by *BuzzFeed*'s Jane Lytvynenko, that is not true.

Is @howroute someone seeking global attention, someone who believes what they are doing is righteous, someone who's simply an exploitative grifter? Perhaps the only clear thing about the account is that it has shaped the online conversation about the coronavirus outbreak, regardless of its intentions. It may be that @howroute is "one of the most trusted sources on coronavirus reporting on Twitter," which is exactly the problem. Some entity with no discernible knowledge about China, epidemiology, or infectious disease, working from a pseudonymous account, has become a leading source for people across the world about a global pandemic.

We want to hear what you think about this article. Submit a letter to the editor or write to [letters@theatlantic.com](mailto:letters@theatlantic.com).

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# **Dirty money piling up in L.A. as coronavirus cripples international money laundering**

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Dirty money is piling up in Los Angeles. In the last three weeks, federal agents made three seizures that each netted more than \$1 million in suspected drug proceeds.

The reason, according to the city's top drug enforcement official: The coronavirus pandemic has slowed trade-based money laundering systems that drug trafficking groups use to repatriate profits and move Chinese capital into Southern California.

With storefronts closed, supply chains in disarray and the global economy in peril, these complex schemes are hobbled and cash is backing up in Los Angeles, Bill Bodner, special agent in charge of the Drug Enforcement

Administration's Los Angeles field division, said in an interview.

The recent million-dollar interceptions were reminiscent of seizures the DEA made before drug traffickers embraced trade-based money laundering, said Bodner, a 28-year agent.

The shuttering of nonessential businesses has made a “tremendous impact” on a money laundering system dubbed the black market peso exchange, he said. In the fashion district in downtown Los Angeles — the exchange’s epicenter — drug trafficking groups from throughout the country use wholesalers to remit profits to Mexico, according to cases filed in federal courts in Los Angeles and elsewhere.



Steven Mygrant, a federal prosecutor in Oregon who charged six people with laundering heroin proceeds through Los Angeles businesses, said two primary factors drive the exchange: Drug trafficking groups need to convert dollars to

pesos, which is expensive to do legitimately, and they need to move money from the United States to Mexico, which is risky to transport in cash.

To accomplish this, Mygrant said, a broker pays pesos for the drug traffickers' dollars. The traffickers deliver cash to an exporter in Los Angeles, who ships goods — commonly clothing, cosmetics, jewelry or sportswear — to a retailer in Mexico. The retailer sells the goods for pesos and pays the broker.

Developed by Colombian cocaine traffickers, Mexican cartels initially did not embrace the black market peso exchange, Bodner said, finding it easier to simply smuggle bulk cash across the border and launder it in Mexico. That changed about 10 years ago, he said, when the Mexican government tightened financial regulations and restricted the flow of dollars into its banks.

California Man charged with trafficking millions of dollars worth of drugs via tunnel from Mexico



California Man charged with trafficking millions of dollars worth of drugs via tunnel from Mexico Rogelio Flores Guzman, a Mexican national with legal U.S.

residency, was charged Friday with trafficking five types of drugs.

Recently, with storefronts closed and agents seizing millions in cash packaged for transport, it appears drug trafficking groups are resorting to older, riskier ways of repatriating profits, Bodner said.

The coronavirus has also cooled Chinese capital flight, he said, which before the pandemic was the primary driver of international money laundering.

With the Chinese government curtailing the amount of money its citizens can shift overseas, drug traffickers and money brokers set up the following system, Bodner said: A Chinese national who wants to convert yuan to dollars and stash it in the United States will contact a broker. The broker instructs this person to pay a factory that produces chemicals used to make methamphetamine or fentanyl.

The factory ships the precursors to Mexico, where they're converted into narcotics, smuggled into the United States and sold for dollars. The broker directs the drug trafficking group to deliver cash to a relative or an associate of the Chinese national whose money initiated the entire sequence.

The money is now in the United States and in dollars, without ever entering the global financial system. "The more money that wants to leave China, the more chemicals go to Mexico and the more synthetic drugs end up in L.A.," Bodner said.

World & Nation Coronavirus chokes the drug trade — from Wuhan, through Mexico and onto U.S. streets



World & Nation Coronavirus chokes the drug trade — from Wuhan, through Mexico and onto U.S. streets The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted many industries, both legal and illicit. Production of fentanyl, which relies on chemical ingredients sourced mainly from Wuhan, China, has been particularly hard hit.

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But the pandemic has slowed the cycle significantly, he said. Most narcotics precursors from China are made in Wuhan, the epicenter of the coronavirus outbreak, and factories there are shuttered or operating at a reduced capacity.

“When chemicals aren’t flowing from China, there’s no churn in the money laundering system,” Bodner said. Further, with global markets in upheaval, many of the Chinese nationals who were moving money through the system are now hesitant to stash funds overseas, he said.

Slowdowns in Los Angeles’ money laundering systems come as drug prices rise in the city. With supply chains in disarray, Bodner said, the wholesale price of methamphetamine has soared to about \$1,800 a pound, compared with about \$900 a pound five months ago.

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# The push to raise China's age of consent from 14

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Hanna Barczyk

Chinese society is locked in a dispiriting argument, worthy of a more callous age. The public is debating whether a 14-year-old girl was a victim of rape by her wealthy guardian—three decades her senior—or a willing partner, trading sex for gifts and attention. Bored and fractious after weeks of quarantine, many have followed the case eagerly. With each twist in the tale, the public mood has swung. In their hundreds of millions, social-media users have condemned the accused man, a successful lawyer, and expressed disgust at police in the coastal city of Yantai, who declined to pursue rape charges despite several complaints by the girl, who also brought them semen- and blood-stained sanitary pads. On April 13th the central government responded, dispatching prosecutors and detectives to probe Yantai's handling of the case. Three employers—an oil company, a large technology firm and a university—severed ties with the lawyer, who is on bail pending a fresh investigation. More recently the public has tut-tutted over seemingly affectionate telephone calls between the teenager

and her guardian that caused some to doubt her story. Others have scorned the girl's birth mother for handing her child to a middle-aged bachelor offering to be an unofficial foster father.

China's news industry has not covered itself in glory. Spotting a story that stokes readers' indignation, while skirting overtly political themes sure to draw the censors' wrath, outlets have carried prurient interviews with the alleged rapist. He calls himself a man wronged by an ungrateful lover, and shares recorded phone calls from his accuser to back his claims. Quote-seeking reporters have hounded the teenager, now 18, though she has tried to take her own life more than once. They have visited the anonymous girl's hometown, revealing her identity to relatives and neighbours.

Still, reformist lawyers and advocates for children's rights wonder whether some good might emerge from this horrible tale. Notably, they hope that fresh light is being cast on the contradictory tangle of Chinese laws that regulate sexual activity and the young.

At least superficially, China is a conservative country, where rural and small-town elders still chide girls to save themselves for an eligible man. The legal age of marriage in China is high: 20 for women and 22 for men. Before 1980 it was even higher. Towards the end of the Maoist era, when the state sought total control over citizens' bodies and minds, late marriage was used as a tool of population control. Urban couples needed permission from work units to wed. In the 1970s if a couple's combined ages did not add up to 50 they were told to wait, or be denied housing and ration coupons needed to furnish a home. Yet since 1949, when the Communist Party took power, the effective age of sexual consent—as fixed by judicial rulings and then by the law—has been 14. The alleged assaults in Yantai began weeks after the girl reached that age.

Chinese laws do not define a stand-alone age of consent. Instead, the age is derived from rape-related laws. The tradition dates back at least 800 years, when the Southern Song dynasty deemed intercourse with a child under 10 to be statutory rape. Put another way, China's age of consent does not reflect debate about when the young can be trusted to control their own bodies. Instead, it is based on judgments, amended many times over the centuries, about whether men who seek sex with children are always culpable or may have arguments to offer in their defence.

There is nothing new about girls facing harsh and unfair questions about why they let men, including foster fathers, assault them. China's final imperial dynasty, the Qing, required raped women to prove that they had struggled violently throughout their assault, even at the risk of death. If they had ceased resisting at any point, women faced 80 strokes with a heavy cane for consenting to "illicit intercourse". The Qing tolerated the use of adoption as a cover for buying young girls as brides, or for forcing them into prostitution. Even Qing laws on child rape rested on judgments about female lust. A textbook from 1878 cites a commentator opining in tones of prim approval that girls of 12 and under "have no capacity for licentiousness". Not until 2015, after scandals involving officials assaulting under-age girls, did China's legislature revoke a statute from 1979 that defined sex with child prostitutes as a lesser crime than child rape. The law had offered a loophole by allowing men to claim to have paid to assault children.

### **When the real problem is men with impunity**

Guo Jianmei founded Qianqian, a law firm which is representing the victim in the Yantai case. Together with fellow lawyers she has drafted amendments to raise the age of consent, and is seeking legislators willing to help. In a country like China, where feudal morality retains some sway, she asks: "What does a girl at 14 know about sex?" China also needs a debate about coercion and abuses of power, adds Ms Guo. Chinese judges find it easy to decide rape cases involving violent attacks by strangers. But her firm sees too many cases of children sexually abused by authority figures they know well, from schoolteachers to fathers, elder brothers and uncles. The victims struggle to obtain justice.

Another public-interest lawyer, Wang Yongmei, argues for still larger reforms. She would like to see adults barred from sex with anyone under 18. Ms Wang would allow some provision for consenting sex between teenagers, for she has seen cases where angry mothers have unjustly accused their daughter's boyfriend of rape. China needs a child-protection agency and female police trained to support rape victims, she adds.

It takes courage to accuse people in authority of sexual assault. A fledgling #MeToo movement has faced official pressure after young women challenged university professors, television presenters and other powerful men. Ms Wang sees such courage in a new generation of women who refuse to blame themselves for being assaulted. Their bravery is grounds for hope, if the law ever

changes to keep up with them. ■

This article appeared in the China section of the print edition under the headline  
"When children say #MeToo"

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