参考译文

How to Keep COVID-19 Conspiracies Contained

如何控制COVID-19阴谋论

Along with COVID-19, something else is spreading across America: conspiracy theories. In the dark alleys of the Internet, people have concocted a dizzying array of unfounded explanations for the pandemic.

除了新型冠状肺炎，还有一种东西正在美国蔓延:阴谋论。在互联网的黑暗角落里，人们编造了一系列令人眼花缭乱的、毫无根据的疫情言论。

The phenomenon doesn’t surprise John Cook, a cognitive scientist at George Mason University.

乔治梅森大学的认知科学家约翰•库克(John Cook)对这种现象并不感到惊讶。

“When people feel threatened, when they feel out of control, when they feel like random events are sweeping over them, they are more vulnerable or likely to gravitate toward conspiracy theories, because it gives people a sense of control. We’re just uncomfortable with randomness. Humans are pattern detectors. We need meaning; we need control; we need to know that there is a system—there’s an order to how the world works.”

“当人们感到威胁时，当感到失去控制时，当感到随机事件席卷自己时，他们会更脆弱或更容易被阴谋论所吸引，因为这给了人们一种控制感。我们仅仅只是对随机性感到不自在。人类是模式探测器。我们需要意义;我们需要控制;我们需要知道存在一个系统——世界是如何运转的。”

Cook’s expertise is studying climate denial, and he sees many similarities with COVID conspiracies. Both play on distrust of science and the tension between personal liberty and the need to protect society as a whole. The difference, Cook says, is the sheer number of COVID myths and how fast they’re spreading.

库克的专长是研究气候变化否定论，他认为这与科维德的阴谋有许多相似之处。两者都利用了对科学的不信任，以及个人自由和保护整个社会需要之间的紧张关系。库克说，不同之处在于关于COVID神话的绝对数量和传播速度。

“I feel like I’m trying to scoop up floodwater with a spoon.”

“我觉得自己像是在用勺子舀起洪水。”

He and colleagues hope to build a dam by alerting the public to the prevalence of misinformation. They recently released a guide called How to Spot COVID-19 Conspiracy Theories. Cook is also producing a series of YouTube videos.

他和同事们希望通过阻止提醒公众错误信息的流行。并于最近发布了一份名为《如何发现COVID-19阴谋论》的指南。库克还在YouTube上制作了一系列视频。

The key is to identify the hallmarks of conspiratorial thinking. Telltale signs include holding contradictory beliefs, seeing signs of nefarious intent at work and reinterpreting random events as proof of a hidden scheme. For example, some have tried to link the coronavirus outbreak to 5G wireless, which also rolled out in 2019.

关键是要确定阴谋思维的特征。泄密的迹象包括持有矛盾的信念，在工作中看到邪恶意图的迹象，重新解释随机事件作为隐藏计划的证据。例如，一些人试图将冠状病毒爆发与同样于2019年推出的5G无线连接起来。

“That can’t be coincidence, right? Actually, yes, it is coincidence. Baby Yoda came out in 2019, but Baby Yoda didn’t cause COVID.”

这不可能是巧合，对吧?”事实上，这是巧合。《尤达宝宝》于2019年上映，但《尤达宝宝》并没有引起COVID的关注。”

Cook says it can be hard to dislodge a conspiracy theory once it’s taken hold. People often discredit conflicting information by simply expanding the scale of the plot: those behind the new evidence must be in on it, too.

库克表示，阴谋论一旦根深蒂固，就很难被推翻。人们常常仅仅通过扩大阴谋的规模来怀疑相互矛盾的信息:那些新证据背后的人也必须参与其中。

A better approach, Cook says, is to inoculate people against misinformation by explaining what to look for in advance.

库克表示，更好的方法是提前解释应该寻找什么，让人们免受错误信息的影响。

“When someone throws an argument at you, if you see these red flags, then be wary that it could be a baseless conspiracy theory.”

“当有人跟你争论时，如果你看到了危险信号，那么要小心，那可能是毫无根据的阴谋论。”

Cook’s research has shown that inoculation helps prevent people from falling for climate conspiracies. Until there’s a COVID vaccine, perhaps it can at least provide protection from coronavirus quackery.

库克的研究表明，接种疫苗有助于防止人们陷入气候阴谋。在COVID疫苗出现之前，也许它至少可以防止冠状病毒的欺骗行为。

听力原文

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