

Trump Has No Qualms About Calling Coronavirus the ‘Chinese Virus.’ That’s a Dangerous Attitude, Experts Say

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A single word scrawled in black marker stood out among the prepared remarks President Trump planned to deliver during Thursday’s White House press briefing on the ongoing global [coronavirus](#) pandemic.

In the president’s notes, “Corona” had been crossed out and replaced with “Chinese.”

The last-minute edit was [captured in photos](#) taken by The Washington Post’s Jabin Botsford and marks the latest instance of Trump deliberately [calling the novel virus a name](#) that has been [frowned upon](#) by critics, who say its usage could lead to increased discrimination and racism toward Asian Americans — a marginalized group with a [long history](#) of being scapegoated amid public health crises.

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Charissa Cheah, who is leading a [study examining coronavirus-related discrimination](#) against Chinese Americans, called the language “reckless and irresponsible.” A leader, Cheah said, is “someone that sets the climate for what’s acceptable or not acceptable.”

“[Trump is] essentially throwing his American citizens or residents of Chinese and Asian descent ‘under the bus’ by ignoring the consequences of the language he uses,” said Cheah, a psychology professor at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. “He’s fueling these anti-Chinese sentiments among Americans, ... not caring that the people who will truly suffer the most are Chinese Americans and other Asian Americans, his citizens whom he’s supposed to protect.”

But she noted that the hostile climate Asian Americans are finding themselves in these days is nothing new.

“This pandemic fuels ongoing racist ideas,” she said. “It’s not generating or creating new ideas where none existed before.”