

Communist Party, which came to power in 1949 battling Western influence and the corrupt excesses of the ruling Nationalist Party. Under the Communists, the smallest romantic gestures could lead to a person's being labeled a "bad element," subject to persecution along with rich peasants, landowners and counterrevolutionaries.

"It was a very cold time. You did your romance in darkness, in secret," said He Guanghu, a Renmin University professor who was 16 when the Cultural Revolution

began in 1966. By the time it ended a decade later, a generation of young people had lost not only their chance for an education, but also the ability to speak openly about love and sex and display the emotions of a loving marriage.

Even today there are limits. "We cannot say too much in the radio program and should be careful how we speak, in case some listeners appeal to higher authorities to cancel the show," said Wu, who has co-hosted "Tonight's Whisperings" for eight years.

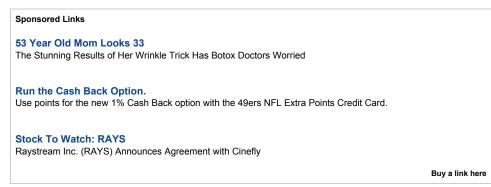
Most of the queries come by e-mail or text message from listeners who want to avoid being overheard by parents or roommates.

On a recent Friday, there were questions about masturbation, sexual harassment and feelings for those of the same sex, as well as a question about whether a virgin bleeds when she has sex. A high school student pining for a boy she slept with two years ago was told to forget him and move on. A girl who had gone swimming with her boyfriend was told that sperm could not swim into her body and make her pregnant.

"Sex education in China does exist, but it's useless," said Zhang Yinmo, author of a bestselling book about high school sex and adolescent yearning. "They stand there and tell the students to read it themselves, or they tell them to study it at home."

The most common form of sex education today is a 45-minute class offered just once, in the middle of a physical hygiene course, in the second year of middle school. Most teachers are too embarrassed to discuss this chapter in the course textbook, which identifies body functions, periods and wet dreams, experts said.

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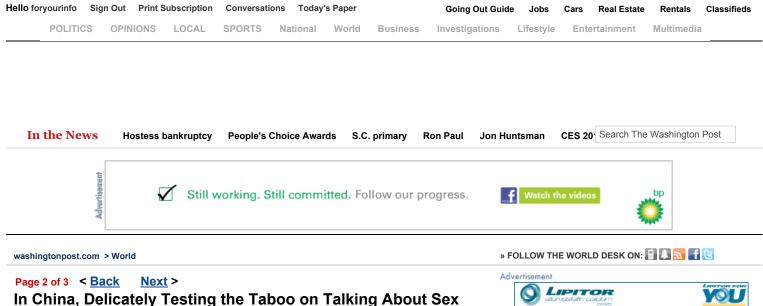
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"If you want to date in middle school, you have to act like a guerrilla," said Su Ran, a 17-year-old student who said she kissed her first boyfriend at 13. "You talk secretly, you kiss in a small alley. The teacher is always like a ghost, she will appear at any time."

Liu Xiaoqing, a recent graduate of an elite Beijing high school, said her girlfriends were too embarrassed to ask questions about sex. She rates her own sex ed -the screening of one film that explained how the egg meets the sperm and another that showed animals having sex -- as woefully inadequate.

But attitudes are changing.

"Twenty years ago, if you looked at a guy or a girl for more than 20 seconds, you would be judged as sick," said Liu, 18. "Now, more and more kids hold hands and kiss in public."

In some schools, sex education is taught several times a year.

"Different districts have different textbooks. Sex education is a comparatively sensitive topic, and it's still in a pilot phase," said Xu Zhenlei, vice secretary of the China Sexology Association, a group of academics that advises government officials. "Generally speaking, most parents are against sex education. If you're talking about the sex education that says, 'Don't date and focus on your studies,' of course they support that."

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When Wu, the radio co-host, first volunteered to lecture in schools in 1992, she was often rejected immediately. She now speaks at about 50 schools a year. "The people in the Education Ministry are already more open than they were 10 years ago," she said. "But they still can't keep up with what students need."

It's no better at home, where parents who have had no sex education themselves don't understand why it's necessary.

Zhang's second book, "Roses Hidden in a



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Book Bag," published in 2004, is full of stories of high school students having unprotected sex and parents unable or unwilling to discuss the issue. Zhang is now working on a third book, about sex and middle school students. The students featured in her first book were born in the early 1980s, and they prized their virginity and worried that too much sex was harmful.

One boy told Zhang he was in elementary school when his mother slapped him after he accompanied her to a museum exhibit and asked what a penis was. Back home, his mother demanded, "How can you get married if you act like a hooligan at so young an age?"

"The most important thing is Chinese traditional ideas about sex," Wu said. "You cannot tell exactly what sex is. And that is exactly what the students want to know. China used to hide this subject under the table. They considered it dirty, and changing attitudes takes a long time."

In the absence of frank discussion, teenagers turn to the Internet or easy-to-find adult videos. Most of the 600,000 registered users of the sites in a large online pornography case were juveniles, prosecutors in Shaanxi province said. Eight out of nine suspects charged were about 20 years old.

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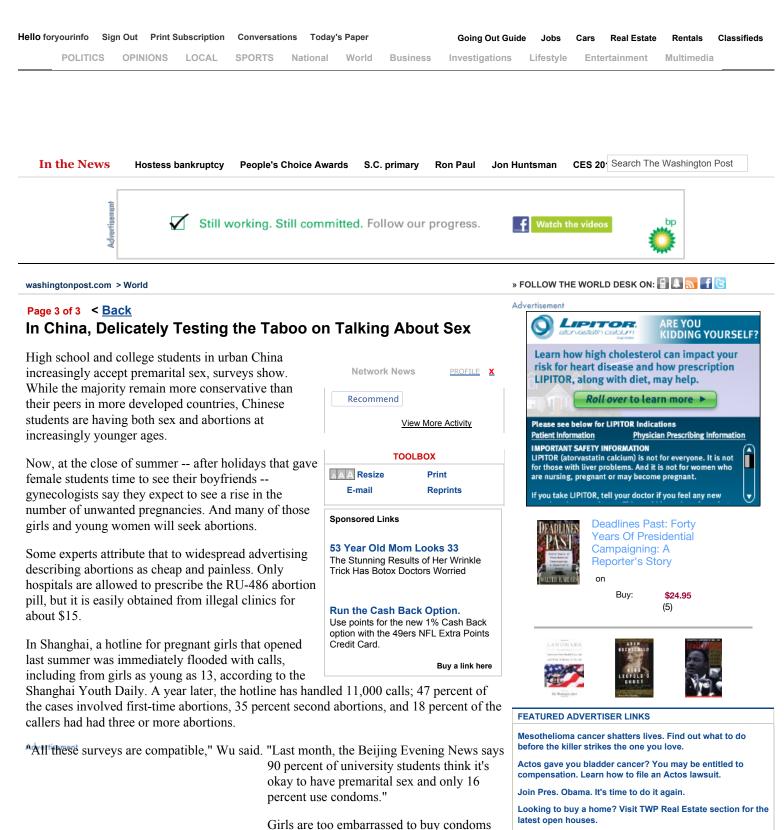


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reputations, said Su, the 17-year-old high school student. Boys never think to bring

them and don't like to use them, she said.

With her kohl-rimmed eyes, long false eyelashes, blue fingernails and stylishly

and worry that carrying them will ruin their reputations, said Su, the 17 year old high

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permed hair, Su looks the part of a rebel. She moved in with her boyfriend, against her mother's wishes. A friend of hers has had two abortions.

But Su said she holds traditional values and is prepared to marry her boyfriend. He is the You need to be logged into Facebook to see Login first boy she has slept with, which she did nine days after her 17th birthday. your friends' recent activity. At the same time, Su said she already likes someone else. Why men need marriage 656 people recommend this. "For kids our age, dating is just for having fun. It has nothing to do with love. You should Girl Scout Cookies boycott sought by teen have sex and talk about love when you're older, when you have a stable life, a job, a after organization admits transgender child salary, when you understand everything," she said. "I'm too young, I know that." 293 people recommend this. Romney revives the Big Republican Lie 三面 Researchers Jiang Fei and Jin Ling contributed to this report. 484 people recommend this. Carla Ma Video appears to show troops urinating on WD < <u>Back 1 2 3</u> corpses 205 people recommend this. Sponsored Links Twinkies maker Hostess Brands files for Ch. 11 bankruptcy protection 53 Year Old Mom Looks 33 329 people recommend this. The Stunning Results of Her Wrinkle Trick Has Botox Doctors Worried Americans are eating less and less meat 168 people recommend this. Run the Cash Back Option. Use points for the new 1% Cash Back option with the 49ers NFL Extra Points Credit Card. Facebook social plugin View More Activity Stock To Watch: RAYS Raystream Inc. (RAYS) Announces Agreement with Cinefly Buy a link here Landmark: The Inside Story of America's New More World Coverage Health Care Law and What It Means for Us All (Publicaffairs **Reports**) on Partner Site Buy: \$5.18 Your portal to global politics, economics and ideas. Become a fan of the

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