

From: Shiner, Mark

Sent: 7/7/2011 5:35:20 PM

To: TTAB EFiling

CC:

Subject: U.S. TRADEMARK APPLICATION NO. 77952263 - THE SLANTS - N/A -
Request for Reconsideration Denied - Return to TTAB - Message 2 of 29

Attachment Information:

Count: 4

Files: bigwowo-04.jpg, bigwowo-05.jpg, bigwowo-06.jpg, bigwowo-07.jpg

him popular enough for him to be controversial, that's up to the fans – not the Asian community or the US government.



bigWOWO says:

April 12, 2011 at 9:26 pm

Good points.

You know what also gets me about this form of "empowerment?" It's like their whole identity is tied up in this gimmick. Look at all the Asian American performers who choose or use normal names—Jin, the Morning Benders, David Choi, Jocelyn Enriquez, Francis Kim, etc. They have an identity, a talent, and don't have to rely on a gimmick. There's a difference between simply *using* a slur and *naming* yourself with one.

It would be like a black performer calling himself the N-word. It would be ridiculous, and people would see that performer as ridiculous.



Ben Efsanevim says:

April 13, 2011 at 11:49 pm

I'm glad you wrote this post, I agree completely. I just don't see where the "empowerment" is taking place in this situation. "Owning" and using the N-word has *some* power because it's a reminder to white society of its brutality towards Africans – that's not to say that I think it is or has been a good strategy overall.

By contrast, Asian-American history isn't so straightforwardly understood by mainstream America – most Americans don't know and probably don't even care about the injustices experienced by the early Asian immigrants from which many of the stereotypes and prejudices that we experience today are derived. The result is that anti-Asian attitudes can be, and are, expressed openly and without any conscience to such an extent that anti-Asian slurs and attitudes abound casually without any sense that it is a problem for society.

With this in mind, using such slurs as a means of self-definition actually reinforces

wearing color contacts. It's a good thing I never seen this...

- **Raguel:** Well if they're in Asia they probably wear colored contacts and dye their hair not to look...
- **No Admissions Advantages for Low Income Students (4)**
- **jslele:** Rich students have access to college prep courses, sometimes private schools and private tutoring if they...
- **John Doe:** "how about the female interest group?" Could be a white female interest group?
- **King:** @ Dali how about the female interest group??
- **Deciding Not To Have Kids (12)**
- **Raguel:** Yup, it's the middle income gap. I think that articles preaching a child-free life conveniently hide...
- **bigWOWO:** Raguel, I think it's not so much will to reproduce, but will to spend time raising kids. People on the...
- **Raguel:** The fear of having children is an entirely American construct and export. A species that loses its will to...
- **Highlighted Comment on David Brooks's Article (2)**
- **bigWOWO:** John Doe, Yes, remember David Brooks's column on Tyler Cowan's "Great Stagnation"...
- **John Doe:** @bigWoWo, The other day I was thinking about facebook and Zuckerberg. I am on the fence on this one: I am...
- **The Slap by Christos Tsiolkas (Review) (20)**
- **bigWOWO:** Maria, Exactly my thoughts too! I really

...the belief that it is okay and normal to express anti-Asian prejudices.



bigWOWO says:

April 14, 2011 at 8:02 am

Den,

Yes, you and I are EXACTLY on the same page. I'm surprised that other AA bloggers haven't jumped on this. Dignity still exists; or at least it ought to exist. This slur does nothing to empower us, and it does nothing to change the minds of non-Asian folk. The best word to describe it starts with "gimm" and ends with "ick."



Simon Tam says:

May 4, 2011 at 10:00 pm

I stumbled across this when searching Google and I think it's only appropriate that I respond and give a little more balanced view of the issue. Whether or not you choose to listen, it's up to you but I think it's important to at least present the case.

First of all, you have several statements that are incorrect here.

1) "Just as they wouldn't register "n**ger" or "ch^nk," they shouldn't register "Slants."

That's not true. Although case law doesn't necessarily create the rule, the US Trademark Office has offered protection for a number of terms and brands deemed offensive. For example NWA (Niggaz Wit Attitude), The Redskins, Dykes on Bikes are all famous cases. They've also trademarked terms such as chink, orient, jap, heeb, etc. The point is that it isn't the role of the government to dictate what is appropriate for a community, that should be up to the community themselves to decide.

2) "Contrary to what the leader of the group says about "broad support that we've had from APAs," many APA groups do NOT approve of their name. A few years

didn't think the characters were racist either; most seemed...

- **MojoRider:** J, I'm definitely interested in the book now if it's able to give you a different way of...
- **maria v:** gosh, every time i reread favorite parts, i cringe, as they remind me of how i grew up, among similar people...
- **The Post-PCA Era of the Asian American Blogosphere (84)**
- **King:** Lithuanians!! I thought he was talking about ELEPHANTS meeting in a room!
- **Eurasian Sensation:** I once had a girlfriend who was from that same "certain ethnic group". They meet...
- **bigWOWO:** Mel, That certain ethnic group has achieved great things. We should learn from that ethnic group rather than...
- **Amy Chua: Chinese Conceit, Chinese Ignorance, and the \$24,000 question (234)**
- **Eurasian Sensation:** Go on, B, give it a read. I'd recommend you read it for several reasons. Firstly, the...
- **bigWOWO:** Good summary, Eurasian! Amy Chua also has an interview in Kartika today: <http://www.kartikareview.co...>
- **Eurasian Sensation:** So I actually got around to reading Chua's book. And I have to say: Reserve judgement until...
- **Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life by Annette Lareau (Review) (2)**
- **bigWOWO:** It's true! Both

back, the Oregon Commission on Asian Affairs AND the Asian American Youth Leadership Conference, both LOCAL Oregon organizations, pulled support from the Slants, citing their offensive name. ”

The fact is that we’ve had widespread support from APA’s. No one can deny that. The band has been supported by every bit of Asian America media out there: Asian Reporter, Asian Week, AngryAsianMan.com, Asian American Press, and countless others. We’re also involved with the largest Asian American festivals and cultural celebration events in the world including Asian Street Heritage Fair, numerous events for victims of Hiroshima, the recent re-dedication of the Japanese American plaza here in Portland, OR, etc. Finally, we’re supported by over two dozen API organizations such as the Asian American Arts Alliance, APANO, the Asian Professionals Exchange, the Chinatown Youth Initiative, etc. Many Asian community activists have also voiced their support and written letters of support. These also include numerous leaders on Barack Obama’s API White House Initiative team.

3) We are not alone in our use of the term Slant in a positive, self-referential manner. For example, the well respected documentary “The Slanted Screen.” Chicago TV show, “The Slant,” popular API blog sit “Slant Eye for the Round Eye” and ‘Slant Film Festival” (one of the largest API film festivals in the country running for over ten years now. All of these are promoted and supported by the API community with no controversy.

In a recent poll by a Northwest Asian newspaper, they asked if readers found the name to be offensive – over 95% did not. In a national 3rd party survey, the overwhelming majority also did not find the term offensive (across all age ranges and Asian races)

4) The term “slant” is an antiquated and generational term that is not being used in a hateful manner any longer. Consider the the linguistic history behind the term. Dictionary writers tend to be very conservative before changing definitions. Yet while the 2001 New Oxford American Dictionary contained “derogatory: a contemptuous term for an East Asian or Southeast Asian person,” the 2005 edition states that it is an “informal, offensive term” and in 2010 it was updated to remove any pejorative usage labels because they found that it was more often than not, a term used by pride by members of the Asian American community.

- **bigWOWO:** it's true: both have their advantages and disadvantages.
- **ChineseMom:** I feel this class difference when my son's sports team played kids from some towns with more...
- **Podcast with ChineseMom on American culture, education, and raising kids (14)**
- **ChineseMom:** Alpha Asian, Thanks for the video link. I agree with Dr. Liu that our kids are less emotional expressive...
- **bigWOWO:** Interesting Times article on the significance of age 14. More reason to give our kids good experiences when...
- **Life Sentences for 14 Year Olds (4)**
- **bigWOWO:** I agree with you all. Falling 5 stories has got to be one of the most terrifying ways to die. This kid...
- **Ankhesen:** Omer needs to get over himself already. I'm not sure what else to add to that, but it is what it is...
- **Winnie:** He made a conscious decision to take away this kid's life. Bullying at it's extreme and worst....
- **That Which Did Not Happen (4)**
- **bigWOWO:** I'd better come up with a new scheme for making money...by October 21!
- **jeffat8asians:** Btw, Harold Camping has a new rapture date of October 21.
- **Paper Tigers Climbing the Wrong Tree (37)**
- **ChineseMom:** Oops, wrong again, it should be "I couldn't think of anything in Chinese that equivalent comes to #fble

In a recent report by one the leading English linguistics experts in the country, he stated "even if some Asian Americans in the last century may have felt slant to be an objectionable epithet, the term has been reclaimed by contemporary Asian Americans for use as an informal term representing racial and ethnic pride."

Perpetuating the negativity associated with term will only give license for people to use it in a negative manner. Words change over time. For example, not more than a decade ago, it was obscene to call someone "queer" yet that is the proper way to address the LBTQ community now.

For us, it is important to inject pride into Asian American culture, not disparage it. Every member of The Slants is of API descent and we're deeply involved with the community. As mentioned above, we're a part of over two dozen API organizations and since 2007, have helped raise over \$750,000 for API causes.

Finally, Byron may be quick to cite the AAYLC withdrawing their support yet in their 2009 AAYLC program they proudly displayed "The Slants" within and did not withdraw their support from the band's participation as facilitators or as sponsors. If you want some local Asian organizations, we've have been involved with almost every API event or group in the Northwest - from the Oregon Nikkei Endowment to Japanese American Citizens League.



Simon Tam says:

May 4, 2011 at 10:15 pm

Let me say in closing that the litmus test should ultimately be about the results.

What is the real fear here?

Not once have we ever encountered instances where non-API's felt they were entitled to use the term in a hateful manner. Almost without exception, it has become a conversation starter and allowed us to bring a positive message about the Asian American experience to others.

I travel across the country and speak to over 500,000 people every year through API festivals, cultural events, etc and present workshops on racial identity, discrimination, and advocate for API rights. Every week I receive letters from

saying to "fake..."

- **ChineseMom:** Oops, in second paragraph, it should be "I couldn't think of anything in Chinese that equivalent..."
- **ChineseMom:** tz, Thank you very much for sharing your story. I couldn't think of anything in Chinese that...
- **Gary Locke and the Chinese Reaction (36)**
- **ZhuLi1979:** Occupation of Iraq? Iraq has free elections and those elected officials requested an ongoing US presence...
- **Rich Cho at the Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce (a)**
- **bigWOWO:** This has to be the world's stupidest reason for firing a GM: "That's when it really..."

Archives

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Associates

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