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Taming Uncivil Discourse

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Taming Uncivil Discourse:
Does Reappropriating Group Insults Work?*

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Abstract

In an era of increasingly intense populist politics, a variety of issues of intergroup prejudice, discrimination, and conflict have moved center stage in American politics. Among these is "political correctness" and, in particular, what constitutes a legitimate discourse of political conflict and opposition. Yet the meaning of legitimate discourse is being turned on its head as some disparaged groups seek to reclaim, or *reappropriate*, the slurs directed against them. Using a Supreme Court decision about whether "The Slants" – a band named after a traditional slur against Asians – can trademark its name, we test several hypotheses about reappropriation processes, based on a nationally representative sample with an oversample of Asian-Americans and several survey experiments. In general, we find that contextual factors influence how people understand and evaluate potentially disparaging words, and we suggest that the political discourse of intergroup relations in the U.S. has become more complicated by processes of reappropriation.

Intergroup conflict shows few signs of abating in this era of growing and intensifying populism in the United States and much of the industrialized world. Perhaps driven by the realization that many if not most conflicts – including symbolic conflicts – are zero-sum in nature, the norm of heterogeneous, cross-cutting political coalitions has been swallowed up by polarization and its echo-chambers (e.g., Mutz 2015).

Central to the ways in which groups contest non-violently for power and resources are argumentation and speech. Much of the debate surrounding intergroup conflict is reasoned and reasonable. But throughout history, groups have found it advantageous to attempt to marginalize their opponents with disparaging names and slurs. To the extent that one can de-legitimize one's enemies, it becomes unnecessary to rebut their arguments. Name-calling is certainly not new to American politics (e.g., Geer 2006, and especially the American election of 1800), but concern that entirely free speech is too costly is becoming more commonplace.

One common defense against uncivil discourse is the attempt to ban unwanted speech. From Holocaust denial laws in Europe to the various exceptions carved out by the U.S. Supreme Court from that country's First Amendment (e.g., "fighting words"), governments frequently seek to restrict the entry of certain ideas into the marketplace of ideas. "Group libel" laws, often mobilized in community-based free-speech controversies (e.g., the Nazi attempt to march in Skokie, Illinois – see Gibson and Bingham 1984), exemplify attempts by governments to protect certain groups from the harms of rough speech during intense political struggles.

A second defense has developed more recently: "reappropriation," which is "the process of taking possession of a slur previously used exclusively by dominant groups to reinforce a stigmatized group's lesser status" (Galinsky et al. 2013, 2020, citations omitted). Under this

theory, the targeted group takes "ownership" of a disparaging term—for example, when blacks "add a positive meaning to *nigger*," gays transform *queer* into a badge of pride, and Asian Americans throw the slur *slants* "back in their oppressors' face" (Kennedy 2002, 48).[1] Reappropriation is not new; indeed, some trace the modern use of the technique to Dick Gregory's 1964 auto-biography *Nigger*.[2] What is new is the increasing frequency with which historically underrepresented minorities are adopting reclamation as a means of reasserting their identities and disarming prejudice and discrimination.

Of late, serious social scientific inquiries have investigated the processes and power of reappropriation, under the general hypothesis that "self-labeling with a derogatory group label may ironically weaken its stigmatizing force and even revalue it, transforming the very words designed to demean into expressions of self-respect" (Galinsky et al. 2013, 2020). To some scholars, derogatory terms serve only to reinforce stereotypes (e.g., Brochu and Esses 2011),

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[1] See, e.g., Kennedy (2002, 48): "Many blacks also do with *nigger* what other members of marginalized groups have done with slurs aimed at shaming them. They have thrown the slur right back in their oppressors' faces. They have added a positive meaning to *nigger*, just as women, gays, lesbians, poor whites, and children born out of wedlock have defiantly appropriated and revalued such words as *bitch*, *cunt*, *queer*, *dyke*, *redneck*, *cracker*, and *bastard*." See also Foucault (1978, 101) who, forty years ago, coined the phrase "reverse discourse" to refer to this process of reappropriation.

[2] Gregory quipped: "Dear Momma – Wherever you are, if ever you hear the word 'nigger' again, remember they are advertising my book" (Gregory and Lipsyte 1964, 5).

regardless of the speakers and their motives. To others, reclaiming a "derogatory label can weaken the label's stigmatizing force" and so can both empower the targeted group and prompt outsiders to evaluate the group more positively (Galinsky et al. 2013, 2020; Bianchi 2014). On this account, "the reappropriation of slurs is not a mere exercise in linguistic gymnastics; rather, it is a potent strategy of identity creation and maintenance" (Anten 2006, 434).

To date, however, rigorous empirical evidence is insufficient to draw any firm conclusions about whether reappropriation has its desired effects. While it may be obvious that those who reappropriate the offensive slur disarm it *for themselves*, it is not clear how those efforts affect third-party observers, whether they are members of the stigmatized group or non-members of the group. Moreover, processes of reappropriation almost certainly reflect strong contextual influences. More generally, perceived motives undoubtedly matter. Slurs exchanged by co-members of a stigmatized group differ greatly from slurs issued by one group against another. In general, only scant progress has been made in identifying the contextual factors that help transform slurs from insults to assertions of group empowerment.

Missing as well from scientific research on reappropriation is the "mundane realism" of real political disputes (verisimilitude – see Aronson, et al. 1990), and the use of samples of subjects capable of supporting broad generalizations (non-college sophomores – see Sears 1986). It is not clear to us, for instance, that the intense political conflict surrounding efforts to reappropriate disparaging terms can be recreated in a laboratory on a college campus.

Fortunately, a real-word political struggle involving reappropriation has recently emerged, resulting in an important free speech ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. The conflict involves the efforts by an Asian-American band to trademark its name. Trademark issues do not

normally attract much attention from political scientists (although see the dispute over whether the capital's football team – the "Washington Redskins" – should continue using its name[3]), but the band, "The Slants," specifically and explicitly selected its name in an effort at reappropriation. Ignoring this motive, the U.S. government denied the band's request to trademark its name, insisting that the name disparaged Asian-Americans. The case involves some interesting legal issues (see Anten 2006), but, from our perspective, it offers the chance for a realistic case study of how reappropriation actually works (or does not work).

Our purpose in this research is to test several hypotheses related to this process of reappropriation, using "The Slants" litigation as our general context. Based on a survey of a representative sample of the American population, our analysis examines how members of the majority evaluate reappropriation. Supplementing this sample with an oversample of Americans of Asian ancestry, we also gauge the reactions of Asian-Americans to the band's effort at reappropriation. To do so, we apply an experiment to both samples in which the identity of the group using the name "The Slants" is varied between a fully Asian band and a fully non-Asian band, under the hypothesis that the ancestry of the band members affects attributions of the motives of the group in adopting the name, and therefore affects judgments about how disparaging "slants" is to those of Asian ancestry.

For all these analyses, we posit a moderating role for social dominance orientations

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[3] See Cox, Clement, and Vargas (2016). For an example of the intensity of the conflict over this issue see Keeler (2016). See also the dispute over "slant eyes" in the 2017 baseball World Series (Waldstein 2017).

(SDO), hypothesizing that those with strong dominance orientations are less likely to view intergroup slurs as disparaging and more likely to reject reappropriation. We also hypothesize that group identities ("linked fates") moderate the key relationships. We conclude from this research that the success of reappropriation depends mightily upon the context of the speech. These findings have important implications for intergroup relations in American politics, a topic we address in the concluding section of this paper.

INTERGROUP RELATIONS AND THEORIES OF REAPPROPRIATION

Political psychologists have investigated the hypothesis that the type of relationship between the perpetrator and the target has much to do with how listeners assess possibly disparaging remarks. Whether the relationship is congruent with prototypical expectations is especially crucial. "Most often, this entails a person with more power acting against a person or group with less power" (Cunningham, Ferreira, and Fink 2009, 60). Scholars recognize, however, that non-prototypical relationships may change the interpretation of nominally disparaging comments. "For instance, a Black person making a potentially prejudicial comment toward other Blacks might not be deemed offensive, especially relative to a White person making the same comment. After all, why would a person make disparaging remarks about her or his own group?" (Cunningham, Ferreira, and Fink 2009, 61). More generally, social and political psychologists seem to agree that "the prototypicality of a form of prejudice is highly dependent on the social/historical context" (Marti, Bobier, and Baron 2000, 405), and that "the threshold appears to be higher for perceiving nonprototypical forms of prejudice" (Marti, Bobier, and Baron 2000, 415).

But there is more to contexts than simply membership (or not) in the disparaged group.

Motives matter. Because many observers assume that a member of the disparaged group would not make disparaging comments about her or his own group, they conclude that seeming slurs must not have been intended to be disparaging. Just as in so many areas of law (e.g., criminal assault, hate crimes), perceived intentions provide a context for interpreting actions. Thus, we posit interconnections between nominal group membership, motives for speaking, and assessments of the speech.

We also hypothesize that attributes of the listeners (i.e., bystanders) influence how speech is assessed. The most obvious attribute is whether the bystanders are co-members of the minority group. Inasmuch as the slur "slants" (or "slant-eyes") was mainly popularized in the U.S. during World War II, we also expect significant generational differences in both the recognition of the term and evaluations of it.[4]

In addition, we posit a major moderating role of Social Dominance Orientations (SDO). These are orientations about whether hierarchical relationships among groups in society are acceptable (Sidanius and Pratto 2001). Those who embrace the idea of superordinate and

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[4] "During World War II and thereafter, the media further reinforced the view that possessing Asian features was not only 'un-American' but simply not normal. In 1944, Hollywood produced a series of war films deriding Japanese racial features. These films contained cartoon characters such as Bugs Bunny. In Bugs Nips the Nips, Bugs mocks and abuses Japanese soldiers whom he calls 'slant-eYes.' The soldiers are drawn with buck teeth and painted yellow. This ugly caricature of Asian physical features did not stop with World War II." (Kang 1997, 330).

subordinate groups are less likely to find these putatively disparaging terms offensive. We therefore expect that SDO will moderate many of the relationships we hypothesize.

Finally, we expect variation in group identities ("linked fates") to affect all these relationships (see generally McClain et al. 2009, and specifically Gay, Hochschild, and White 2016). Asian Americans vary in the degree to which they identify with their group (just as variability in identities characterizes all groups)[5], so we test whether having a sense of linked fate with Asian Americans as a group increases judgments that the band's name is disparaging[6], and whether it moderates the main relationships investigated in this paper.

Specific Hypotheses to be Tested

Within the context provided by this case, we formalize our expectations in the following hypotheses[7]:

H_1: Intergroup and Intragroup. Variability: Individuals and groups will vary in the degree

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[5] For earlier research on Asian American group attachments, see Masuoka and Junn 2013, Junn and Masuoka 2008, and Wong et al. 2011.

[6] As Wang et al. (2017, 76) put it: ". . . individuals can psychologically escape from stigma by reducing the centrality of the group to their identities."

[7] We have not pre-registered these hypotheses, although we do note that they were formulated in a proposal for funding this project (available from the authors upon request), a proposal written, of course, well before any data were collected or analyzed.

to which they view "The Slants" as disparaging, with members of majority groups
reacting differently than members of minority groups.

H₂: Context Matters. Perceptions that the name is disparaging depend upon attributions
of intent; the intents of in-group members and of out-group members are perceived
differently.

H₃: Moderating Variables. All these relationships are moderated by social dominance
orientations and group identities and attachments.

THE CONTEXT: *MATAL V. TAM*

The context for our study of reappropriation is far from artificial, contrived, or trivialized. In
2017, the U.S. Supreme Court decided *Matal v. Tam*, one of the most interesting and potentially
important First Amendment cases in recent years.[8] Simon Shiao Tam, an Asian American, is the
founder and leader of a band called "The Slants." Tam's goal in forming the band was not only
to play music; he also saw the band as a medium to express his concern with discrimination
against Asian Americans. That is why he hired Asian-American band members; and that is why
he called the band "The Slants." It was his way of transforming an insulting term into a "badge
of pride." In Tam's words: "We want to take on these stereotypes that people have about us, like
the slanted eyes, and own them."

In 2011, Tam filed an application to register THE SLANTS as a trademark. Under a

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[8] We develop and adapt the facts in this section from the parties' preliminary briefs
(available at: http://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/lee-v-tam/) [accessed 2/27/2017].

section of a U.S. federal law (the Lanham Act), the Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) is supposed to refuse to register trademarks that "disparage … persons, living or dead, institutions, beliefs, or national symbols." Believing that THE SLANTS refers to and disparages "persons of Asian ancestry," the PTO refused registration.

Tam appealed the PTO's decision, claiming, first, that the term THE SLANTS is not disparaging—at least not in the way the band used it. To Tam, the PTO failed to consider the context of the speech, which was the opposite of disparaging; it was, he said, an attempt at reclamation or reappropriation. Second, Tam argued that the "disparagement" clause of the Lanham Act violates the First Amendment. Based on his argument, the clause is a viewpoint-based regulation on speech that the government has not sufficiently justified.

After Tam won in a lower court, the United States (for the PTO) asked the U.S. Supreme Court to hear the case and reverse the lower court's decision. In the spring of 2017, the Court ruled in favor of Tam.

Matal v. Tam is likely to be regarded as important on two levels. First, the case affects how much speech the First Amendment protects. For decades now, the Court has ignored many fields in which governments regulate speech. Intellectual property, which *Tam* implicates, is one. (Other examples are securities disclosure requirements and certain kinds of workplace harassment rules.) Legal scholars and political scientists have started to pay more attention to these "uncovered" categories of speech, but undoubtedly interest will accelerate seeing as to how the Court in *Tam* has injected First Amendment law into the trademark field.

Second, the Court's finding that the PTO discriminated against the viewpoint of Tam's speech goes to the heart of First Amendment doctrine. The anti-disparagement rule in trademark

law closely resembles restrictions on "hate speech" that the Court has previously invalidated under the First Amendment. The Court's decision in the case of The Slants could wind up sharpening the First Amendment's prohibition on viewpoint discrimination by, in particular, solidifying constitutional protection for so-called hate speech.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This paper relies, first, on a survey we commissioned on the American Panel Study (TAPS), a monthly online survey. TAPS panelists were initially recruited as a national probability sample in the fall of 2011 by Knowledge Networks (now GfK) for the Weidenbaum Center at Washington University. Individuals without Internet access were provided a laptop and Internet service at the expense of the Weidenbaum Center. Additional technical information about the survey is available at taps.wustl.edu. Our module of questions on "The Slants" was included in the February/March 2017 version of TAPS.

In addition, we commissioned a survey with GfK (the same firm responsible for the TAPS fieldwork) of the Asian respondents in the KnowledgeNetwork panel. More specifically, we attempted to interview all panelists who had earlier identified themselves as being of either Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, or Vietnamese ancestry. The universe of available respondents in the panel included nearly 800 people. The first question on our survey double-checked the respondent's ancestry: 97.3% reconfirmed their ancestry, resulting in a population of 777 available respondents.[9] Of these, interviews were completed with 511, for a cooperation rate

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[9] Interviews with those not passing the screening question were terminated.

of 67.5%. The fieldwork lasted from March 4 until March 25, with all interviews conducted after oral argument in *Matal v. Tam* and prior to the release of the Court's decision. The median interview length was 9.0 minutes. In terms of national ancestry, the realized sample closely mirrors the GfK population, with the greatest deviation observed for those of Filipino ancestry (28.1% of the population, but 25.8% of the realized sample). In light of this close correspondence, we decided not to post-stratify the realized sample. We did, however, use the sampling weights originally attached to each GfK respondent (without, of course, altering the actual number of completed interviews).

In terms of whether members of each ancestry group had heard of the term "slants" or "slant-eyes," no statistically significant differences exist. And while not many of these respondents of Asian ancestry had heard of the band – fewer than 10% said they had certainly or probably heard of The Slants, and more than three-quarters of the respondents were certain they had not heard of the band – the five national ancestry groups do differ significantly (p = .037) on whether they had heard of the band. Thus, for some analyses, we include a set of dummy variables to control for the national ancestry of the respondent.

For the TAPS sample, we excluded the handful of respondents claiming Asian ancestry. The decision has no implications for any of the substantive results, nor for our ability to generalize to the American people as a whole, but it does purify our Asian versus non-Asian comparisons. The "slants" survey module on both the TAPS and the GfK surveys is virtually identical, with questions pertaining to both the band "The Slants" and to the term "slants."

The Band Ancestry Experiment

The most important experiment in this research concerns the ancestry make-up of the band. At the most basic level, the essential edifying attribute of reappropriation is that those seeking to disarm the term are members of the disparaged group. This is the argument of the band itself when it says it seeks to "own" the term "slants."

We therefore devised an experiment in which half of the respondents (randomly assigned) were asked questions about the slurs while a picture of the actual band (whose members are all Asian Americans) was shown on the screen; the other half of the sample was presented with a picture of a fictitious band whose members had European features.[10] (Figure 1 shows the pictures used in the experiment.) Hypothesis 2 states that context matters. In this experiment, the key context is represented by the apparent ancestry of the band.[11]

[PLACE FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Dependent Variables

Our most important dependent variable is judgments of whether the band's name "The Slants" is disparaging. We operationalized "disparaging" in terms of ratings of appropriateness,

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[10] A significant body of research exists that investigates the influence of non-verbal cues on voters. See for examples Barisione and Iyengar 2016; Laustsen and Petersen 2016; and Bailenson et al. 2008.

[11] See Online Appendix A for a discussion of the manipulation checks on this experiment.

Figure 1. The Experimental Stimuli – The Ancestry of the Band

"The Slants" – Condition 1

"The Slants" – Condition 0

Note: Condition 1 depicts the actual band, "The Slants," involved in the litigation.

offensiveness, the degree of ridicule of the group, and negativity. The questions asked of all respondents about the band's name are:

1. What is your opinion of the band using the name "The Slants?" Please indicate how appropriate you believe it is for the band to use the name "The Slants." Please use the following scale, where 0 means "Not appropriate at all" and 10 means "Entirely appropriate," and the numbers in-between represent varying degrees of appropriateness. (Relatively disparaging[12]: Asian ancestry, 28.8%; non-Asian ancestry, 32.3%; difference of means test, p > .05)[13]

2. How offensive do you believe it is for the band to use the name "The Slants?" Please use the following scale, where 0 means "Not offensive at all" and 10 means "Extremely offensive," and the numbers in-between represent varying degrees of offensiveness. (Relatively disparaging: Asian ancestry, 31.9%; non-Asian ancestry, 29.8%; difference of means test, p > .05)

3. How much would you say the name "The Slants" ridicules those of Asian ancestry, if at all? Please use the following scale, where 0 means "Doesn't ridicule at all" and 10 means "Ridicules a great deal," and the numbers in-

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[12] "Relatively disparaging" is the percentage providing a score of 6 or greater on the 0 to 10 response set to the item.

[13] The difference-of-means tests between the Asian and Non-Asian subsamples are based on the unrecoded distributions. These figures place those without an opinion at the mid-point of the scale.

between represent varying degrees of ridicule. (Relatively disparaging: Asian

ancestry, 33.7%; non-Asian ancestry, 37.8%; difference of means test, p =.019)

4. And finally, regarding the band's name itself, how would you rate the

term "The Slants" in terms of being extremely positive to extremely negative.

(Relatively disparaging: Asian ancestry, 32.9%; non-Asian ancestry, 33.6%;

difference of means test, p =.031)

As the descriptive data reported with each question indicate, the band's name is not, on average,

judged as extremely disparaging. For example, in terms of offensiveness, 12.8% of the Asian

respondents (17.3%, non-Asians) evaluated the name as "not offensive at all," while only 8.5%

rated it as "extremely offensive" (17.5%, non-Asians).

These four indicators all reflect a single underlying latent construct defined as judgments

of the degree to which the term is disparaging. When subjected to Common Factor Analysis

(CFA), a single strong factor emerges (eigenvalue$_2$ = .43), and all items load strongly on that

factor. The item-set is also quite reliable (Cronbach's alpha = .88). Accordingly, we created an

index of perceived disparagement from the responses to these four items (and have scored it to

range from 0 to 1).

Dependent Variable: The Reappropriation Motives of the Band

We hypothesize that the perceived motives of the band mediate the relationship between the

experimental pictures and the judgments of whether the terms are disparaging. To assess this

conjecture, we asked (using five-point Likert response sets) for reactions to the following

statements:

The band probably wanted to use "The Slants" as a badge or symbol of Asian pride rather than ridicule.

The band probably thought that if they themselves used the name it would make the term less insulting and therefore take away the hurt and sting of the term when used by those prejudiced against people of Asian ancestry.

The band probably wanted to throw the slur right back in the faces of those prejudiced against people of Asian ancestry.

For using the name "The Slants," the band ought to be admired because they have shown that it is possible to stand up to those who are prejudiced against people of Asian ancestry.

Because a sizeable proportion of our respondents had never heard of the band, we provided the respondents an explicit "don't know" or "uncertain" option. In general, we hypothesize that attributions of motivations are influenced by the ancestry of the band depicted in the experiment. Table 1 reports the basic results.

[PLACE TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

On each item, a considerable proportion of the respondents was uncertain as to whether the motive attribution fit the band. At the same time, the statements vary considerably in the degree to which the respondents endorsed them. Only a little more than one-fourth of the respondents endorsed the reappropriation motives: 24.8% of the Asian subsample thought the use of the term would make it less insulting, and 27.6% thought the band wanted to throw the term back in the faces of prejudiced people. A somewhat larger percentage (34.1%) of the Asian respondents thought the band wanted to use the name as a symbol of Asian pride. On only a

Table 1. Attitudes Toward the Motives of "The Slants"

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	Percentages				
	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total	N
The band probably thought that if they themselves used the name it would make the term less insulting and therefore take away the hurt and sting of the term when used by those prejudiced against people of Asian ancestry.**					
Asian Subsample	24.8	46.2	29.0	100.0%	502
Non-Asian Subsample	31.0	47.4	21.7	100.0%	2023
The band probably wanted to use "The Slants" as a badge or symbol of Asian pride rather than ridicule.					
Asian Subsample	34.1	42.4	23.5	100.0%	508
Non-Asian Subsample	37.7	43.5	18.8	100.0%	2037
The band probably wanted to throw the slur right back in the faces of those prejudiced against people of Asian ancestry.					
Asian Subsample	27.6	48.3	24.1	100.0%	503
Non-Asian Subsample	30.7	43.8	25.5	100.0%	2022
For using the name "The Slants," the band ought to be admired because they have shown that it is possible to stand up to those who are prejudiced against people of Asian ancestry.					
Asian Subsample	21.5	53.1	25.4	100.0%	509
Non-Asian Subsample	16.1	62.1	21.8	100.0%	2040

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Note: * indicates that the differences of means of the uncollapsed distributions of responses are statistically significant at p ≤ .001.

single item (marked with an "*") is the difference in the responses between the Asian and non-Asian subsamples statistically significant. On this item, non-Asians are actually more likely than Asians to attribute reattribution motives to the band.

We have created an index of perceived reappropriation motives from the responses to these four statements. The four-item set has strong psychometric properties. For both the main non-Asian sample and the Asian oversample, the item-sets are strongly unidimensional and highly reliable. Cronbach's alpha for the Asian oversample is .75; for the non-Asian sample, it is .76. All items load strongly on the first unrotated factor from the Common Factor Analysis, although the last item has a somewhat weaker loading among the non-Asian sample. The two subsamples do not differ significantly on the reappropriation index we constructed.

Among the Asian oversample, the index of reappropriation motives is modestly correlated with assessments of whether the band's name is disparaging (r = -.19); the relationship is considerably weaker for the non-Asian sample (r = -.09). In both instances, those who attribute reappropriation motives to the band are less likely to judge the band's name to be disparaging, as expected. Thus, at this point in the analysis, it seems that perceptions of the band's motives in naming itself "The Slants" have something to do with evaluations of the term, although more so among respondents of Asian ancestry.

Social Dominance Orientations as a Moderating Factor

Social Dominance Orientations (SDO) are conceptualized as the degree to which one believes that minority groups should be subordinate to majority groups, or "the degree to which one endorses group-based social inequality and group-based dominance" (Sidanius and Veniegas

2000, 12). SDO is a widely investigated concept in political psychology, in a variety of contexts. In the context of intergroup prejudice and slurs, we expect SDO to have a direct effect on assessments of the band's name and attributions of motives, as well as exerting a moderating influence. That is, we expect that those high in SDO are likely to perceive slurs and bias differently. As Simmons and Parks-Yancy explain:

> The source of a race-related remark or behavior also affects whether or not an
> individual perceives bias. Previous research indicates that people generally
> perceive more racism when a high-status group member (e.g. a white person)
> engages in discriminatory behaviors toward a low status member (e.g. a black
> person) (Cunningham et al. 2009). However, this may not be the outcome if the
> observer is high in SDO (2014, 533).

Those high in SDO are expected to react more strongly to the source (high versus low status) of the disparaging comment than do those low in SDO. In our case, the theory predicts that those high in SDO will tend to see the band's name as less disparaging when the band is of European rather than Asian ancestry.

Social dominance orientations are a preference for group-based hierarchy and inequality. We employed nearly all the items recommended in the short-form version of the Social Dominance Scale (see Ho et al. 2015; see also Sidanius and Pratto 2001).

It's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom.

Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.

No group should dominate in society.

Group equality should be our ideal.

It would be good if groups could be equal.

We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.

All groups should be given an equal chance to succeed.

Responses to these items were collected with five-point Likert response sets.

In both the Asian and non-Asian samples, the appetite for group-based hierarchy and inequality was extremely weak (see Online Appendix B for further discussion of this point). The largest percentage of respondents endorsing a dominance statement was 16.5, among non-Asians rejecting the statement "It would be good if groups could be equal." Indeed, 72.6% of the Asian oversample endorsed no dominance items; the figure for the non-Asian sample is 67.0%.

In light of the skewed distributions on the variables, and the fact that the first two items had to be reflected (thereby creating a small methods effect), the factor analysis of the seven-item-set is not particularly well-behaved. For the Asian oversample, the second eigenvalue from the Common Factor Analysis is 1.02; for the non-Asians, it is 1.20. In both instances, the reverse-coded items exclusively form the second (rotated) factor. However, the loadings on the first unrotated factor are quite reasonable (ranging from .52 to .84 for the Asian subsample, and .48 to .84 for the non-Asians). Furthermore, the item set is extremely reliable, with Cronbach's alphas of .86 for the Asian oversample and .85 for the non-Asian sample. A simple summated index of dominance orientations is correlated with the first extracted factor at .98. Thus, we acknowledge that our measure is somewhat noisy, but we use the summated index as our indicator of Social Dominance Orientations. On this index, the difference between the Asians and the non-Asians is neither substantively strong nor statistically significant ($r = .03$; $p = .096$).

(See also Online Appendix B.)[14]

"Linked Fate"

As we noted above, we also measured the Asian respondents' group attachments via the

conventional linked fate question (e.g., Dawson 1994).[15] This measure is fairly substantially

correlated with Social Dominance Orientations ($r = -.28$): The more those of Asian ancestry see

their fate linked to Asians as a group, the less likely they are to embrace the appropriateness of

group hierarchies. Stated in reverse, respondents without much of an attachment to Asians as a

group are more likely to endorse group hierarchy and inequality. We note, however, that this

finding must be placed within the context of a fairly strong rejection overall of group dominance

by the Asian oversample.

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[14] We find a statistically significant difference in dominance orientations according to

national ancestry ($p = .024$; see Table B.1, in Online Appendix B). However, this is almost

entirely due to the Vietnamese respondents, who score significantly higher in SDO than the other

ancestry groups. Also, following earlier research (e.g., Ho et al. 2015), minor gender differences

exist within both the Asian oversample and the non-Asian sample, with men in both instances

being slightly more likely than women to endorse group hierarchy and inequality.

[15] In light of the diversity among the non-Asian respondents, we did not ask them the

linked fate question.

ANALYSIS

We first consider whether the band ancestry experiment had the hypothesized effect on disparagement judgments and on the perceived motives of the band. Figure 2 reports the results.

[PLACE FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE]

As the data in the figure show, motive attributions are fairly strongly related to which photograph the respondent observed. For both the Asian and non-Asian subsamples, those who were presented with the Asian band were much more likely to attribute motives of reappropriation, although the relationship is stronger for the Asian subsample. For Asians and non-Asians shown the picture with Asian band members, the mean reappropriation score is identical (.57).

For disparagement judgments, the relationships are much weaker, with the difference of means on the disparagement index for the Asian subsample only achieving marginal statistical significance. More important, the experimental manipulation had a contrary effect on disparagement judgments. While viewing the band with members of Asian ancestry is associated with a higher likelihood of ascribing reappropriation motives, it is also associated with a higher likelihood of viewing the band's name as disparaging. As the figures reveal, the mean disparagement scores for the Asian and non-Asian subsamples who viewed the band with European members is the same (.51). For both subsamples, exposure to the band of Asians increased the disparagement mean, although more so for the *non-Asian* respondents. So, although people in both subsamples reacted somewhat differently to the photo of Asian band members as compared to the photo of non-Asian band members, the effect on motives attributions is much stronger, and the effect on disparagement judgments is weaker and in the

Figure 2. The Effect of the Band-Ancestry Experiment on Attributions of Motives and Disparagement Perceptions

A. Reappropriation Index
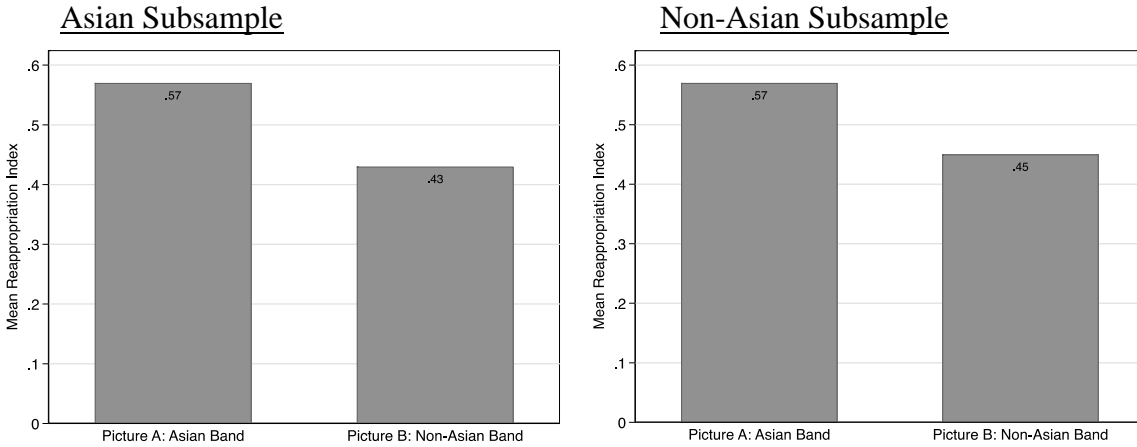
B. Whether the Band's Name is Disparaging
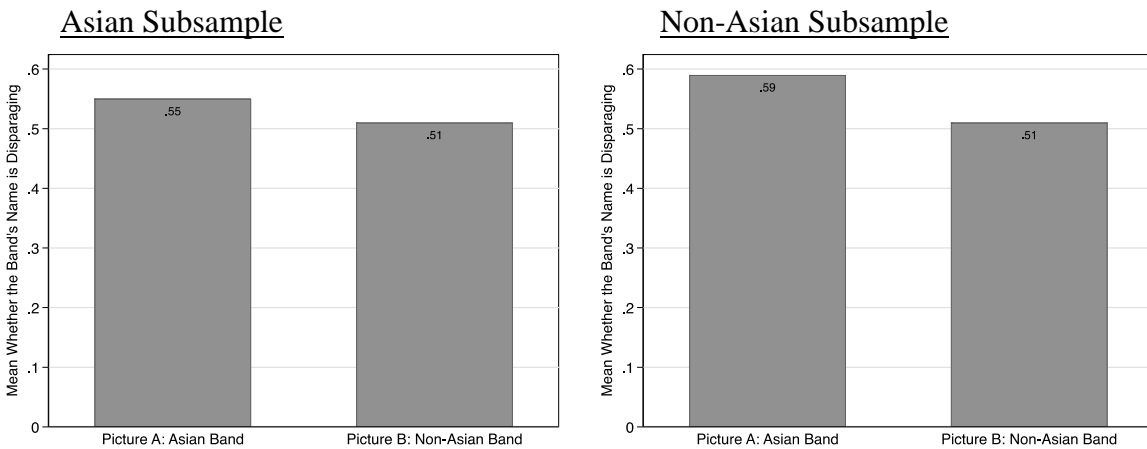
*Notes***:**
1. Reappropriation Index
    For the Asian Subsample: Difference of means, F-test: p < .001; Pearson correlation: .40; N = 509
    For the Non-Asian Subsample: Difference of means, F-test: p < .001; Pearson correlation: .32; N = 2,045
2. Whether the Band's Name is Disparaging
    For the Asian Subsample: Difference of means, F-test: p = .024; Pearson correlation: .10 N = 510
    For the Non-Asian Subsample: Difference of means, F-test: p < .001; Pearson correlation: .15; N = 2,046

opposite direction.

Within both the Asian and non-Asian subsamples, reappropriation motives and disparagement judgments are negatively correlated, although the relationship is stronger for the Asians than it is for the non-Asians (-.19 versus -.09, respectively). However, the correlation of the motives/disparagement variables depends mightily on the type of band shown to the respondent. For the non-Asians, the correlations are -.06 and -.24 for the non-Asian and Asian band conditions, respectively. For the Asians, the difference is even more dramatic: The correlations are -.03 and -.47 for the non-Asian and Asian band conditions, respectively. It seems that the Asian band photograph generated much greater thought about the motives of the band— most likely because the context was non-prototypical in the sense that Asians seemed to be saying something bad about Asians. This is an important finding about the influence of reappropriation on bystanders, even on those who are not members of the target minority. Reappropriation seems to generate an unusual circumstance in the eyes of bystanders, one that does indeed cause them to think further about the meaning of the slur. If the conclusion of this additional thought is that the intent of the band is reappropriation, then assessments of whether the use of the term is disparaging decline.

This finding, of course, requires further testing in a multivariate context. We posit that perceptions of the band's motives are an antecedent to judgments of whether the band's name is disparaging to those of Asian ancestry. Of course, the causal relationship between these variables is debatable; nonetheless, it seems more reasonable to assume that the respondents first made judgments about the band's motives and then, on the basis of those judgments, determined whether the band's name is in fact disparaging, rather than vice versa. For the analysis that

follows, we therefore include the motives variable as a predictor of disparagement judgments. We also treat the motives variable as a dependent variable in its own right, but without using disparagement judgments as a predictor in the motives equation.

We specify a multivariate equation that includes several additional variables: (1) whether the respondent had previously heard of the band, (2) for the Asian subsample, one's sense of linked fate, (3) social dominance orientations, and (4) control variables, consisting of age, gender, education, and social class (whether one owns one's home). Of course, our primary interest in linked fate and SDO centers on their roles as moderating variables, but we begin the analysis with a basic model for each subsample. (Recall that we did not measure linked fate among the non-Asian respondents.) Table 2 reports the results.

[PLACE TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

We consider first the predictors of judgments that the band's name is disparaging. For both subsamples, motive attributions are strong predictors of disparagement, even in the multivariate equations. Those who believe that the band was engaging in reappropriation are considerably more likely to view the band's name as less disparaging. The relationship is stronger among the Asians, but is still strong among the non-Asian respondents. Perceived motives matter.

In addition, the effects of the manipulation of the band's ancestry, although somewhat weaker than the effects of the motives attributions, are still statistically significant and considerable. Respondents shown a picture of the band with Asian members are more likely to view the band's name as disparaging. (However, even in the multivariate case, a strong interaction between the experimental condition and attributions of reappropriation motives

Table 2. Predictors of Reappropriation Motives Attributions and Disparagement Judgments

	Motive Attributions				Disparagement Judgments			
	Asians		Non-Asians		Asians		Non-Asians	
	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.
Motives	–	–	–	–	-0.33***	0.06	-0.23***	0.03
Band Ancestry Manipulation	0.15***	0.02	0.13***	0.01	0.10***	0.02	0.11***	0.01
Heard of the Band	0.12***	0.03	0.11***	0.01	-0.01	0.04	-0.07***	0.02
Linked Fate	-0.01	0.02	–	–	0.07*	0.03	–	–
SDO	0.02	0.05	-0.12***	0.02	-0.04	0.06	-0.31***	0.03
Age	-0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.03**	0.01
Gender (Male)	-0.04**	0.02	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.01
Education	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.06**	0.02	-0.01	0.01
Home Ownership	0.03	0.02	0.02*	0.01	-0.05**	0.02	0.00	0.01
Intercept	0.40***	0.03	0.47***	0.02	0.65***	0.05	0.67***	0.03
Dependent Variable – Standard Deviation	0.19		0.19		0.22		0.26	
Standard Error of Estimate	0.17		0.18		0.21		0.25	
R^2	0.21***		0.15***		0.12***		0.11***	
N	506		2005		506		2005	

*Notes***:**
1. See Online Appendix C for information on the distributions of each of these variables. All variables are scored to range from 0 to 1.
2. Unstandardized regression coefficients and R^2: *** $p < .001$ ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

exists, as will be discussed below.)

The influence of Social Dominance Orientations differs dramatically between the Asian and non-Asian subsamples. For the former, SDO has no influence whatsoever on disparagement judgments. For the latter, however, those with stronger dominance orientations are *very much* less likely to view the band's name as disparaging. Indeed, SDO is the single strongest predictor of these judgments for non-Asians. This finding is all the more interesting in light of the fact that Asians and non-Asians do *not* differ in their average dominance orientations (data not shown).

The sense of linked fate among the Asian respondents has a slight influence on disparagement assessments, with those more strongly attached to the group tending to see the band's name as more disparaging. The relationship, however, is quite weak.

The disparagement judgments of non-Asians are influenced by prior exposure to the band, with those having heard of the band being less likely to judge its name as offensive. For those of Asian ancestry, no such relationship exists. For non-Asians, prior exposure to the band is likely associated with attentiveness to Asian affairs, although we note that the effect is independent of the respondent's age and other demographic variables.

Disparagement judgments are not especially well predicted by these equations, no doubt owing to the fairly large percentage of respondents unable to make a firm judgment of whether the name is offensive. Again, however, we note that the disparagement equations are equally powerful for both subsamples. For those of Asian origin, reappropriation attributions dominate; for those not of Asian origin, social dominance orientations dominate, although attributions are also important.

The equations focusing on motive attributions are considerably more predictive,

especially for respondents of Asian origin. For this subsample, the best predictor of attributions of reappropriation is the experimental treatment, followed by prior exposure to the band. The non-Asian respondents reveal a similar pattern. As with disparagement judgments, SDO plays a significant role in predicting reappropriation attributions for the non-Asians, but no role for the Asians. For the latter, senses of linked fate are not useful predictors of attributions.

In some respects, the Asian and non-Asian samples produce similar results. The experiment influenced both motives attributions and disparagement judgments. Motives are also strongly connected to judgments. Prior exposure to the band has weak effects, although for Asians the effect is on motives attributions, while for non-Asians it is on disparagement judgments.

The big difference between the two subsamples concerns the role of social dominance orientations. Despite the fact that the non-Asians are no more likely to endorse group inequality and hierarchy (see Online Appendix B), those high in SDO are considerably less likely to attribute reappropriation motives and a great deal less likely to view the band's name as disparaging. This finding demonstrates the close connection between this band-name controversy and more general intergroup attitudes.

Linked Fate and Social Dominance Interactive Hypotheses

The analysis above uncovered a weak effect of linked fate on disparagement judgments and no effect on motives attributions within the Asian subsample. But perhaps that is not the entire story of the influence of linked fate.

We hypothesize that the relationship between which photo the respondent observed and

the two dependent variables is conditional upon the respondent's sense of linked fate. To the extent one views one's fate as being tied to one's group, one may have a greater interest in protecting the group from insult. Conversely, one who shares no sense of linked fate with the group is unlikely to care a great deal about group insults. As we saw in the analysis above, linked fate has no direct relationship to motives attributions, but is slightly related to judgments that the band's name is disparaging. Recall as well that only a very small percentage of respondents (5.6%) told us that their own fate was linked "a lot" to the fate of Asian Americans.

Before turning to the analysis, we note that having a sense of linked fate is connected to some important attributes of the respondents. First, significant age differences exist, with younger people of Asian origin feeling substantially more linked to Asian Americans as a group than older people. Second, linked fate is far more common among those of Asian origin who hold at least a Bachelor's degree. Finally, those of Chinese ancestry are more likely to hold a sense of linked fate, whereas those of Filipino ancestry are somewhat less likely to attach their own fates to that of Asian Americans.

In addition to the expected direct connection of SDO with attributions and perceptions, we hypothesize that SDO interacts with the ancestry of the band to which the respondent was exposed, and, in predicting disparagement perceptions, that SDO interacts with motives attributions. Those high in social dominance are unlikely to be sensitive to potentially disparaging terms inasmuch as they view group hierarchy and inequality as desirable. Similarly, high SDO people are also unlikely to recognize and accept reappropriation motives.

Thus, our expectations regarding the interactions are as follows:

Among the Asian respondents:

H₁: One's sense of linked fate will interact with the band ancestry experimental condition, with strong senses of linked fate associated with greater reactivity to the photo condition.

For both Asian and non-Asian respondents, we expect:

H₂: One's orientations toward social dominance will interact with the band ancestry experimental condition, with stronger dominance orientations associated with greater reactivity to the photo condition.

H₃: The degree to which one attributes reappropriation motives to the band will interact with the band ancestry experimental condition, with exposure to the Asian band members exacerbating the effect of motives attributions on disparagement judgments.

Because social dominance orientations are particularly influential within the non-Asian subsample, we also hypothesize that, for non-Asian respondents:

H₄: One's orientations toward social dominance will interact with one's perceptions of reappropriation motives, with stronger dominance orientations reducing the linkage between motive attributions and disparagement judgments.

Table 3 reports the data necessary to test these hypotheses.

[PLACE TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Interaction Results

The coefficients in this table provide very strong support for the band ancestry by motives interaction in the disparagement equation, for both the Asian and the non-Asian subsamples. For the Asians, the coefficient for motives among those who viewed a picture of a band with European members is indistinguishable from 0 (-.09, $p > .05$). For those shown a picture with

Table 3. Interactive Predictors of Reappropriation Motives Attributions and Disparagement Judgments

	Motive Attributions				Disparagement Judgments			
	Asians		Non-Asians		Asians		Non-Asians	
	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.	b	s.e.
Motives	–	–	–	–	-0.09	0.10	-0.26***	0.06
Band Ancestry Manipulation	0.11***	0.02	0.16***	0.01	0.52***	0.06	0.34***	0.04
Heard of the Band	0.12***	0.03	0.11***	0.01	-0.01	0.03	-0.08***	0.02
Linked Fate	-0.07	0.04	–	–	0.09**	0.03	–	–
SDO	0.02	0.05	-0.07*	0.03	-0.00	0.14	-0.53***	0.09
Age	-0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02*	0.01
Gender (Male)	-0.04**	0.02	-0.00	0.01	-0.02	0.02	-0.01	0.01
Education	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.05**	0.02	-0.01	0.01
Home Ownership	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.01	-0.06**	0.02	-0.01	0.01
Band Ancestry * Linked Fate	0.11*	0.04	–	–	–	–	–	–
Band Ancestry * Motives	–	–	–	–	-0.65***	0.11	-0.32***	0.06
Band Ancestry * SDO	–	–	-0.10*	0.04	-0.36***	0.11	-0.22***	0.06
SDO * Motives	–	–	–	–	0.28	0.28	0.66***	0.15
Intercept	0.43***	0.04	0.46***	0.02	0.50***	0.06	0.67***	0.04
Dependent Variable – Standard Deviation	0.19		0.19		0.22		0.26	
Standard Error of Estimate	0.17		0.18		0.20		0.25	
R^2	0.21***		0.15***		0.21***		0.13***	
N	506		2005		506		2005	

Notes:
1. See Online Appendix C for information on the distributions of each of these variables. All variables are scored to range from 0 to 1.
2. Unstandardized regression coefficients and R^2: *** $p < .001$ ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$

Asian band members, the coefficient for motives balloons to -.74 (-.09 - .65): Those attributing

reappropriation motives to the band are *much* less likely to view the band's name as disparaging.

The band ancestry manipulation also significantly interacts with social dominance

orientations, for both the Asian and the non-Asian subsamples. In both instances, the effect is

similar to the motives interaction just discussed. For the Asian subsample, the effect of SDO on

disparagement judgments when exposed to European band members is entirely trivial (-.00).

However, in the instance of exposure to Asian band members, the effect of SDO increases to a

highly significant -.36: Those with strong dominance orientations are substantially less likely to

view the band's name as disparaging under this condition. For those not of Asian origin, the

effect of SDO is similar, although, like the effect of motives, SDO is highly influential even

when the respondent was exposed to the European band members.

Finally, a strong interaction exists between SDO and motives attributions, but only for

the non-Asian subsample. As SDO increases, the effect of motives attributions shifts from

negative (-.26, $p < .001$, at the lowest level of SDO) to positive (+.40, $p < .001$, at the highest

level of SDO). When SDO is high, non-Asians who attribute reappropriation motives to the band

are more likely to judge the band's name to be disparaging.

In terms of predicting the attribution of reappropriation motives, we posit separate

interactions for the two subsamples. For the Asians, we expect that one's sense of linked fate will

interact with the band ancestry manipulation. For non-Asians, we expect a similar interaction,

but with SDO. Table 3 (above) also reports the analysis relevant to these hypotheses.

The data support both hypotheses. For those of Asian ancestry, linked fate interacts with

the band ancestry manipulation such that the effect of the manipulation doubles (from .11 to .22)

as linked fate changes from its lowest to highest levels.[16] Thus, identities do indeed condition

reactions to the band photos – those with a stronger sense of linked fate are more likely than

those with a weak sense of linked fate to attribute reattribution motives to the band.

For non-Asians, the effect of the band manipulation is reduced to insignificance as SDO

moves from its lowest to its highest scores (.16 to .06). Put slightly differently, the effect of

increasing SDO is to reduce the effect of the photos, which is to say that the motives attributions

differ little according to which band photo the respondent observed. At the highest levels of SDO

– where, as we have noted, few respondents are found – the respondent's motives attributions do

not depend much on the characteristics of the band. Neither of these interactions is particularly

strong, however. Still, motives attributions are to some degree dependent upon both the band

ancestry manipulation and the preexisting psychological attributes of the respondents.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING COMMENTS

A primary purpose of this research has been to ask whether reappropriation can be an effective

political strategy, both with members of the disparaged group and with bystanders. Our most

basic conclusion is that, under some circumstances, words that seem to insult a group can be

disarmed and neutralized. That is, when a group is seen as taking control of a historically

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[16] Adding dummy variables for the group with higher (Chinese) and lower (Filipinos)

senses of linked fate has no effect at all on this analysis.

disparaging term, it can indeed neutralize the insulting content of the term. And it does so among the group that is the target of the insult as well as among members of the majority group. So, to answer the question posed in the title of our paper, reappropriation can indeed work.

But reappropriation works best when observers are able to draw inferences about the motives and intent of the speakers. In our case, non-verbal cues indicating that the speakers are themselves members of the disparaged group seem to generate inferences that the intent of using the slur is not to insult. Because no malice is perceived to be intended, the use of the name "The Slants" is not judged to be disparaging. It seems that when non-prototypical instances of intergroup insults occur, people seek an explanation for the unusual conduct by trying to infer the motives of those responsible for the insults.

One implication of these findings is that neither Asians nor non-Asians ought to be assumed to be homogeneous in their reactions to potentially disparaging scenarios; motives attributions are themselves conditional upon several exogenous attributes of the observers, and which attributes come into play depends upon whether one is a member of the minority or majority group. For Asian Americans, group identities matter. Those who identify more with their group tend to see "The Slants" as more offensive. But at the same time, stronger group attachments are associated with attributing reappropriation motives to the band, with those motive attributions then being associated with assessments of the band's name as less offensive. Thus, countervailing processes are at work among those with strong in-group attachments. Still, because so few Asian Americans see their own fates as linked to that of their group, this mitigating effect via motives attributions is not as strong as it might be.

For non-Asians, motive attributions are strongly grounded in Social Dominance

Orientations. Those who accept intergroup inequality are less likely to view the band's name as disparaging. They are also relatively insensitive to whether the slur originates with members of the minority group or with the majority group. Still, in these data, strong Social Dominance Orientations are rare; and it is noteworthy that those low in SDO seem predisposed to attribute reappropriation motives to the band and therefore to judge the band's name as less disparaging.

Our analysis also connects to more general conclusions about uncivil political discourse and intergroup conflict. First, context matters. In one of the U.S. Supreme Court's seminal free speech rulings, the case turned on whether calling someone (a cop) a "goddamn racketeer" constitutes "fighting words." Such an epithet seems quaint in the context of contemporary American politics. The power of words is undoubtedly context-dependent.

Second, it seems unlikely to us that disparaging slurs ever will be effectively excised from political discourse.[17] Bad words exist in a polyglot society, whether they are spoken or not. What seems more important is that such words are allowed to contaminate discourse as little as possible, as true fighting words make further debate improbable. Reappropriation is a strategy for neutralizing the sting of insults, perhaps allowing political arguments to proceed. To the extent that minorities can armor themselves against insults, via reappropriation or other tools, the marketplace of ideas is more likely to be effective.

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[17] As an exception, Gaucher, Hunt, and Sinclair (2015, 129) argue: "Today, *queer* is commonly used as a description of personal sexual identification – without the derogatory value it once had."

Our research does not address the empowerment thesis found in some other work (e.g., Galinsky et al. 2013). We do not know whether a sense of self-efficacy flows from reappropriation, via the effort to take control of one's circumstances. We doubt that this is true of non-Asians, but it may be that one positive consequence of reappropriation is that members of the disparaged group wind up empowering themselves. The empowerment hypothesis certainly deserves further consideration if only because it suggests yet another benefit of reappropriation.

More generally, learning more about reappropriation – among majorities and minorities – seems essential for understanding political discourse and conflict in these politicized times. Reappropriation may not always work and may not always work for all. But political discourse is too important in a democratic society to be shut down by insults that wound minority groups. Because it is unlikely that the views of those who make insults can be easily changed, developing strategies to inoculate against group disparagement seems crucial for taming uncivil discourse.

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ONLINE APPENDIX A: BAND ANCESTRY MANIPULATION CHECKS

Despite the fact that the pictures shown to the respondents are fairly obvious as to the ancestries and genders of the band members, we included two formal manipulation checks in the survey. Because it can virtually never be assumed that respondents perceive what investigators intend, we asked:

> Do you happen to recall the ethnicities of the members of the band? Would you say
>
> > 1. All members of the band were of Asian ancestry.
> >
> > 2. Most members of the band were of Asian ancestry.
> >
> > 3. Some members of the band were of Asian ancestry.
> >
> > 4. No members of the band were of Asian ancestry.
> >
> > 5. I cannot recall.
>
> How certain are you of this?
>
> > 1. Extremely certain
> >
> > 2. Somewhat certain
> >
> > 3. Somewhat uncertain
> >
> > 4. Extremely uncertain

A large majority of the Asian respondents (80.1%) correctly remembered that all of the band members were males.[1]

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[1] The gender manipulation check was implemented after the TAPS survey came out of the field and after the pretest on the Asian subsample. Consequently, too many respondents in the TAPS sample have missing data on this variable to make it useful for analytical purposes.

However, of those Asian respondents shown a picture of the band "The Slants," only 48.4% were able to recall that all band members were of Asian ancestry; of those shown the other band, 37.5% remembered that no band members were of Asian ancestry (non-Asians: 38.1% and 33.7%, respectively). "The Slants" were more memorable than the other band, with 22.2% saying they could not recall the band members' ancestry, compared to 37.2% of those shown the other band being unable to recall the band members' ancestry (non-Asian: 21.8% and 43.8%, respectively). In sum, under this accounting, only 42.9% of the Asian respondents and 36.0% of the non-Asian respondents correctly identified the ancestries of the band members using this test.

Several caveats to this finding are necessary. First, we have scored as correct answers only those reporting that *all* band members were of the correct ancestry. Were we to relax the standard to score as correct answers that "most of the band were of Asian ancestry," then more than three-quarters of respondents shown pictures of the "The Slants" passed the manipulation check, although under one-half of those shown the other band passed the check (77.4% and 37.5%, respectively; non-Asians, 78.0%, 33.7%). Moreover, those unable to recall the ancestries of the band members were given an opportunity to guess[2]; if we count correct guesses then

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[2] We gave a portion of the respondents unable to recall the band members' ancestry (see the preceding footnotes) an opportunity to offer a guess:

"We understand that you can't really remember very well what the characteristics were of the band. But if you had to guess, would you say the band was made up entirely of people who

61.8% of the respondents passed the ancestry manipulation check. Without allowing guessing, 17.0% of the respondents failed both the gender and the ancestry manipulation checks; allowing guessing, this figure drops to only 9.3%. Finally, on follow-up questions to the manipulation checks, those who passed the checks were considerably more certain of their replies than those who did not pass the checks.

That so many of the respondents seemed to have difficulty with the manipulation checks requires us to adopt a strategy of controlling for how accurately the experimental stimulus was perceived. We created a control variable that indicates the degree to which the respondent is correct in identifying the band members' ancestry, as modified by the certainty the respondent assigned to the response.[3] We note that this measure of accuracy differs significantly by which band was shown the respondents, with The Slants generating considerably greater accuracy.

The natural hypothesis is that, as one becomes more certain about what one observed in the experiment, the effect of the experiment becomes more powerful. We tested this hypothesis

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were of Asian ancestry, or that the band was made up of a mixture of people of Asian ancestry and people who were not of Asian ancestry?"

Of those shown a picture of The Slants, 65.1% guessed that the band was entirely Asian; of those shown the other band, 89.3% guessed that the band was made up of people of a mixture of ancestries.

[3] We only employ the certainty modifier for those respondents asserting that all or none of the band members were of Asian ancestry. For those in the intermediate categories, it is unclear how degrees of certainty should be scored.

with the two main dependent variables – judgments of the band name as disparaging and attributions of reappropriation motives to the band. In neither instance is there any evidence whatsoever that the interaction of the manipulation and its check is statistically significant (for neither the Asian nor non-Asian subsamples). We therefore reject the hypothesis that uncertainty about the manipulation conditions its effect, and we exclude the manipulation check variable from any further anlaysis.

Online Appendix B: Social Dominance Orientations

Since social dominance orientations are not typically analyzed within minority groups, we provide here some comparisons across groups and ancestries. Figure B.1 begins this analysis by reporting the differences within the Asian subsample across the various ancestries.

[PLACE FIGURE B.1 ABOUT HERE]

We report in this figure the average number of SDO items endorsed (of seven items) in part to re-emphasize the finding that Social Dominance Orientations are very low among those of Asian ancestry. Still, differences according to national origin do exist and are statistically significant. The big difference is to be found among those of Vietnamese ancestry; these respondents are considerably more likely to express higher dominance orientations. At the other extreme, those of Japanese ancestry are considerably more likely to express quite low dominance orientations. We should reiterate that our limited sample size makes generalizations to ancestry groups quite un-robust, so we do not place much emphasis on these findings.

Within the TAPS data, we have respondents of various races and ethnicities. Using the same index of Social Dominance Orientations, Table B.2 reports the differences across the racial/ethnic groups in the TAPS subsample.

[PLACE TABLE B.2 ABOUT HERE]

Once more, we note how uncommon it is for these respondents to endorse group inequality and hierarchy. Whites score slightly higher than the minority groups in their SDOs, but the differences are quite small. Comparing Figures B.1 and B.2, whites do not stand out in their Social Dominance Orientations.

Figure B.1. Social Dominance Orientations by Country of Ancestry, Asian Subsample
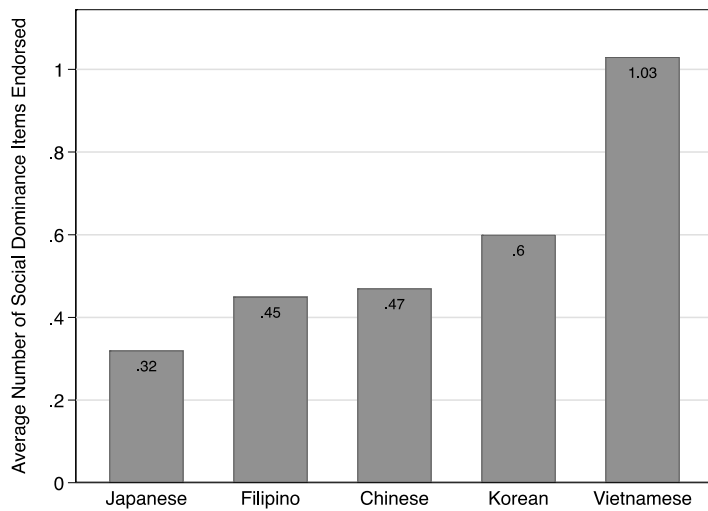
Note: Differences of means F test: p = .006; Eta = 0.17; N = 508

Figure B.2. Social Dominance Orientations by Race/Ethnicity, Non-Asian Subsample
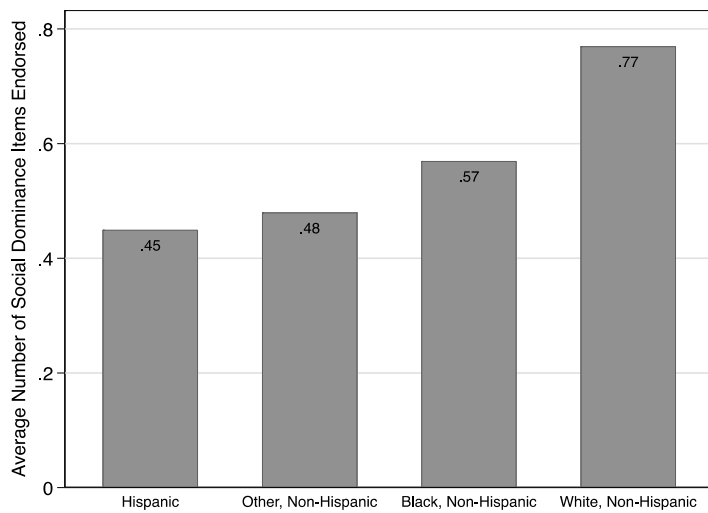
Note: Differences of means F test: p < .001; Eta = 0.10; N = 2024

Online Appendix C: Frequency Distributions

Table C1. Distributional Statistics for Major Variables in the Analysis

Predictor	Independent Variables		
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Range
Disparagement Perceptions	0.55	0.26	0 —> 1
Attributions of Disparagement Motives	0.51	0.19	0 —> 1
Band Ancestry Manipulation	0.51	0.50	0 —> 1
Heard of the Band	0.12	0.29	0 —> 1
Linked Fate	0.37	0.33	0 —> 1
Social Dominance Orientations	0.28	0.19	0 —> 1
Age	0.52	0.35	0 —> 1
Gender (Male)	0.47	0.50	0 —> 1
Education	0.72	0.16	0 —> 1
Home Ownership	0.68	0.47	0 —> 1

Note: N = 2,522, except for Linked Fate, where N = 506.