

## Japanese American Citizens League

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Japanese American Citizens League  
Anti-Hate Program  
www.jacl.org



Words  
can kill  
the  
spirit...

“Jap” is a  
derogatory  
term!

Japanese American Citizens League  
Anti-Hate Program

... And,  
so are  
terms like  
“chink,”  
“chinaman,”  
“gook,”  
“nip,”  
“sand nigger,”  
and  
“slant.”

**T**hese terms are racial slurs and they offend in the same way that slurs such as “nigger,” “kike,” “fag” or “wop” do. These terms are demeaning and they cripple the spirit by causing a person or an entire racial or ethnic group to feel vulnerable and isolated.

Words like “jap” have a long and bitter history. When immigrants first began arriving from Japan, the use of “jap” became a convenient expression of contempt and hate. Bigots and racists used the term to exploit the fictitious “Yellow Peril.”

Today, even the term “oriental” is considered offensive. The State of Washington has prohibited the use of “oriental” in statutes, codes, rules and regulations. Historically, the term conveyed negative stereotypes of Asians as being inscrutable, untrustworthy, threatening or unable to assimilate. The term “Asians” is preferred.

**W**hat to do...

**At Work:** Ethnic slurs, racial “jokes,” offensive or derogatory comments, or other verbal or physical conduct based on an individual’s race/color constitutes unlawful harassment if the conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. If your employer does not resolve the situation, report it to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

**At School:** The use of racial epithets in schools should be reported immediately to a teacher or school official.

**In the Media:** Talk radio programs are the most frequent abusers of racial slurs. If you hear slurs on radio or television, or see one in newspapers—immediately contact the station manager or the newspaper editor.