

Leave Jordan Peele Alone

By [Alexis Collins](#) • PSU Contributor • [Entertainment](#) April 3, 2019 at 4:15pm

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Oscar-nominated "Get Out" and "Us" Director Jordan Peele, created a racially-infused debate this week on social media. During a recent appearance at East Hollywood's Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre, Peele declared that he will never make a movie with a white protagonist. While this appeared shocking (to white people only) many blacks raised their fists in agreement. "I don't see myself casting a white dude as the lead in my movie. Not that I don't like white dudes. But I've seen that movie," he said. "The way I look at it, I get to cast black people in my movies. I feel fortunate to be in this position where I can say to Universal, 'I want to make a \$20 million horror movie with a black family.' And they say yes."

Of course social media keyboard warriors were "outraged," calling Peele's statement an act of "reverse racism." Nevermind that white directors have been implicitly doing this for decades, which is why Peele felt the need to provide equal representation. Black people have always been cast out of things, or forced to play stereotypical tropes, whether it's comedic figures, gangbangers, or the black friend that dies first in every horror movie. The only time we do get nominated for something is if we're shucking and jiving in the cotton fields to massa's whip or marching in the streets of Selma.

Why do you think we needed to create our own award programs to finally gain real recognition, such as the NAACP Image Awards or the BET and Soul Train Awards, who give a platform to black actors, directors and producers?

People who cry reverse racism are people who are butthurt at the painful truth and refuse to take accountability for the racial pain and exclusion that has been inflicted upon people of color for decades. At the end of the day, Hollywood is a social hierarchy devised by whites to be able to control the narrative the way they see fit. If it was the other way around, and a white man said he wanted to cast more black leads in order to accurately portray the black experience, he would be hailed as an almighty savior.

Luckily, we have gotten films such as "Get Out," "Black Klansman," "Black Panther" and "Us," which better helped define the black experience. These films portray what is like to be black in America along with the social repercussions that come with that identity. It also exalts black culture and lets audiences know that black people far exceed racial caricatures that Hollywood has tried to put us in.

Peele can tell his story however he wants because they're his movies and his stories to tell. He is one of my modern day heroes because he speaks in his truth and is unapologetic for it. Just like he makes his leads unapologetically black.