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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
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Wal-Mart Was Wrong...To Apologize

Wal-Mart had another hit to its pr image thanks to its website, which was selling "Planet of the Apes -- The Complete TV Series." Under "similar items" included DVDs on African American figures like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Wal-Mart was wrong, of course. (It usually is.) But this time [it was wrong for apologizing](#), at least for pretending the link was racist. Of course, Wal-Mart was running in the other direction from a seemingly racist slur and none of its top executives have probably even seen the darn movies.

But not only are the "Planet of the Apes" movies not racist, they are explicitly anti-racist. That is, indeed, the entire point of them, especially the first one, "Planet of the Apes." [Entire books have been written on this topic](#). This isn't just one way of considering the movies, and it's not subtext either. It's text. It is entirely what the movies are about: the fact that you shouldn't treat people like animals just because they seem different from you.

It was written by Rod Serling, a very liberal guy, who often used allegories in The Twilight Zone and elsewhere, commenting on social and racial issues via fantasy and sci-fi.

Those links are always silly -- Do you like Citizen Kane? You'll like American Pie too! -- so it could have just been "accidental." More likely, people who looked at POTA also looked at films on civil rights, because that is exactly what POTA is about.

Wal-Mart panicked when they should have just said, "This movie is widely seen by critics and fans as an allegory about the civil rights movement. It was written by Rod Serling of The Twilight Zone, who often used fantasy and sci-fi to tackle the social issues of the time. In

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