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Bogle Ch. 11 Reading Response

Denzel Washington was already a well-established actor, having won an Oscar for his supporting role in *Glory* (1990), before staring in Antoine Fuqua’s *Training Day* (2001). The film was met with praise from many critics and got Washington another Oscar, this time for lead actor. Despite all of this, the film still drew quite a bit of controversy. Bogle criticizes David Ayers’ script, calling Washington’s character a “perversion of fundamental morality” with no attempts to explain his “pathology.” Alonzo, Washington’s character, is violent, corrupt, and highly sexualized. Alonzo is very reminiscent of the “old-style buck” stereotype.

The same night Denzel Washington was awarded his Oscar for *Training Day*, Halle Berry was awarded an Oscar for *Monster Ball* and Sidney Poitier was given an honorary Oscar for his film career. This seemed to be the Hollywood industry approving of these actors. Later, in 2005, the industry seemed to approve of Chris Rock when they hired him to host the Oscars. Bogle often refers to the Oscars and almost uses it to indicate what actors and films Hollywood approves of. Every filmmaker’s dream is to win an Oscar. This got me thinking, why are the Academy Awards the standard of “good cinema”? In a Vanity Fair article by David Thomson, he discusses the union-busting origins of the Academy Awards. Many powerful people in Hollywood began to “dread the day when those other people—the so-called talent: the actors, the directors, and worst of all the writers—got the union idea in their heads.” The entire point of the Academy was to continue to exploit the talent by pitting them against each other and help redeem Hollywood’s image in the eyes of many Americans after multiple scandals. I think it’s important to remember these irredeemable qualities about the Academy. Despite their best efforts to seem progressive and morally superior, they are an institution for maintaining the status-quo hierarchy.

Vanity Fair Source: <https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2014/02/secret-oscar-history>