

“Critical Analyses of Source Material for Research”

Blaxploitation was a genre of film that surfaced during the late sixties and early seventies. These films featured black actors and were mainly screened in urban areas made up of a predominantly black audience. The genre notoriously exploited themes around drugs, violence, and sex, which led to hardened debate among both white and black communities. These films dealt with a variety of class, social, and racial issues that troubled many parts of the nation at this time. Although very popular, blaxploitation was a very controversial subject. My interest in the topic deals with the creation of the genre, social conflict, and it’s effect on our culture today. Was blaxploitation mirroring real social conditions, a new emerging awareness or was it a commercially exploitation of black culture?

At this point, I had only a broad topic that I’d like to do research on. So within the confines of the assignment I simply entered the subject matter “Blaxploitation” into the “Yahoo” search engine. The first choice that was offered was “Blaxploitation.com”. I then repeated the search on two other engines and received the same information. I had decided to do the assignment on this site solely on the name alone.

At first glance, “Blaxploitation.com” looked very professionally done with the inclusion of both graphics and music. After further inspection, it became obvious that the

site is only a personal page on the world wide web. The author is unknown, but refers to him/herself as “the man”. However, material from the site originates from the Surrey Institute of Art and Design, University College in England. There is also an address and phone number for the website. An email address is included on the site, but a request for information about his credentials has gone unanswered. There is no other information available to whom the author is, or his background or philosophy. The writer’s purpose seems to be provide details and collect information on the subject matter. The collected in turn seems to cover a wide array of topics covering from origin of the genre to influencing present day culture.

The author provides information through an introduction and an index, but provides no source for this information. The author peculiarly states his moral right over material published on the site. The author does provide some very valuable reputable links. However, they are a few which do not work and the links vary from non reputable personal opinion to biased social commentary. The ones located on this site are not very well ordered. The last link on the page is actually to another site that has a more organized set of links.

The site ranks 705, 670th on the web with 69 other sites linked to it and has been active since June of 1998. The site is included in a few highly regarded directories, although I was unable to find any criticism or thoughts about the site.

The site seems to be developed with the intention of being a fan site, and dedicating itself to the ethnic films and music of the blaxploitation era. It contains many unbiased secondary sources (articles and links) with the intention of education. However, the website fails to document any sources in reference to any written commentary. Many of

the links are by writers whose credentials are unknown. I don't believe this source to be superior or equal value to the resources within the library. I would not recommend this site as a dependable source, but would utilize the site as a tool in assisting my search for other sources.