Pulp Film: Violence in American Cinema—Ken Bernoska

The Saw franchise is currently the number one grossing horror franchise in history; movies being made today are increasingly violent and graphic in content and form. At the same time, the line between fiction and nonfiction is becoming blurred, and films that are supposedly telling a "true story" seem to be exploiting true-life violence and situations to eager consumers. Is it possible to tell a true story in film? What counts for truth in film? Focusing on violent content, I will explore a number of themes, centering on audience appeal and critical reaction to graphic media: the marketability of violence; violence used as humor; "true" representations of violent acts; the power of visual staged representation of violence; and the American love affair with violence. As I may major in film, I am especially concerned with what constitutes quality film, whether violent or not.