Course Description: Modern action films are often derided by critics as brainless, testosterone-driven, thrill rides. Yet, despite their many short-comings, the action film has become the most popular and profitable genre in the world. This course will analyze the historical, political, social, industrial and international components of action film to reveal the complex cultural significance of the genre. The central concern of the course will be an examination of the way action films negotiate issues of power, colonialism, gender and the human body through formulaic texts.