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Hollywood and film critics:
Is journalistic criticism about cinema now a part of the culture industry helping economy more than art?
Argo: a case study of the movie and film reviews published in the printed media in United States

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Abstract

The term "Culture industry" coined by Adorno and Horkheimer in 1944, is now a very fundamental concept to analyse social and cultural problems in social sciences. When it comes to media studies, it is more useful to investigate problematics in this field. The purpose of this study is to focus on a special part of the culture industry which relates to the movies but not directly about them. The fact that Hollywood, as the biggest industry of film production, has all of the characteristics of the culture industry is something clear. What this study concerns about is film criticism (film reviews). This journalistic genre for years had the position of judging and criticizing the products of the movie industry. In this study it is discovered that journalistic reviews today are themselves a part of the culture industry.

The investigation of this problem is done through a case study in two different steps. In the first step "Argo" is selected to be studied and proved as a product of the culture industry with all properties mentioned by Adorno and Horkheimer. In the second step the journalistic reviews published about this film is investigated. The result is that the same ideologies, political views and capitalistic values in the film, could be found in the reviews.

This study is considered as a critical work (with critical paradigm) observing the production of journalistic texts about the films, discovering that at least in this case, film critics do not criticize, they reinforce the industry.

Key words: culture industry, Hollywood, Argo, film critics, review, ideology

Introduction

In capitalist societies, film production has been a form of commercial entertainment controlled by media corporations. Thus, the Frankfurt School coined the term "culture industries" to call attention to the industrialization and commercialization of culture under capitalist relations of production. This situation was most marked in the United States, which has had little state support of the film industry. Consequently, the concept of culture industries in film studies finds its paradigm in analysis of Hollywood as a distinctive mode of cinematic production, originating in the United States in a specific time and place, but spreading throughout the world as film became a global business and major form of commercialized culture.

But clearly the huge industry of Hollywood is not only based on the movies only. Today there is a big circle working to produce every single product: From the star making system and the fashion and dress business to cover of magazines, from the Computer Graphic designers and their software markets to touristic locations, from the big advertising campaigns and big brands to the process of releasing the movie in the theatres, selling different types of products, DVDs, Blue ray format and streaming methods. It is a big industry with so many actors and a huge amount of financial investment.

Criticism plays an important role in this so called industry. First it influences on the 'consumer's decision' and therefor the success of the product (in our case movie market), and second it can influence on the minds of the artists/producers (film makers) and causes new tendencies and movements. In other words, journalistic criticism (in this work, film criticism), is a creative job which has the role of watchfulness and criticising the movie industry; An industry which is a perfect match of what Adorno and Horkhimer described as Culture Industry.

Film critics and reviews published in hundreds of newspapers and magazines in the United States make a critical system to judge and analyze the movies released every week in this country and surely in all over the world.

The study in this work contains investigating the role of critic system in the movie industry, focusing on how journalistic criticism in recent years reacts to the products of movie industry. In other words criticism today not only has lost its role to change or create but also in some cases joins the culture industry and becomes a part of dominant capitalist system and does not criticise it at all.

Accordingly, we first discuss the development of the concept of the culture industries in the Frankfurt School and then delineate some conceptions of Hollywood film as ways of understanding how the culture industry shape the commercial mode of film production, resulting in a specific sort of cinema with distinctive effects. Then we will study the case of Argo. And in the next step, we analyze the reviews that has been published about this movie in the in printed media in the United States.

Theoretical Framework

Frankfurt School and Critical theory

The story of the establishment of what today is known as "Frankfurt School" is interesting, but more than that, shows the efforts of a group of Marxists who tried to find new ways to develop this philosophy. That is why in the beginning of this work it worth to look over the Frankfurt School or better say "The Institute of Social Research" and the Critical Theory.

One of the most far-reaching changes brought by the First World War, at least in terms of its impact on intellectuals, was the shifting of the socialist center of gravity eastward. The unexpected success of the Bolshevik Revolution — in contrast to the dramatic failure of its Central European imitators — created a serious dilemma for those who had previously been at the center of European Marxism, the left-wing intellectuals of Germany. In rough outline, the choices left to them were as follows: first, they might support the moderate socialists and their freshly created Weimar Republic, thus avoiding revolution and scorning the Russian experiment; or second, they could accept Moscow's leadership, join the newly formed German Communist Party, and work to undermine Weimar's bourgeois compromise. Although rendered more immediate by the war and rise of the moderate socialists to power, these alternatives in one form or another had been at the center of socialist controversies for decades. A third course of action, however, was almost entirely a product of the radical disruption of Marxist assumptions, a disruption brought about by the war and its aftermath. This last alternative was the searching reexamination of the very foundations of Marxist theory, with the dual hope of explaining past errors and preparing for future action. This began a process that inevitably led back to the dimly lit regions of Marx's philosophical past. (Jay, 1973)

However, personal inclinations led to a greater commitment to theory than to party, even when this meant suspending for a while the unifying of theory and praxis, the results in terms of theoretical innovation could be highly fruitful. The relative autonomy of the men, who comprised the so-called Frankfurt School of the *Institut für Sozialforschung*, although entailing certain disadvantages, was one of the primary reasons for the theoretical achievements produced by their collaboration. Although without much impact in Weimar, and with even less during the period of exile that followed, the Frankfurt School was to become a major force in the revitalization of Western European Marxism in the postwar years. In addition, through the sudden popularity of Herbert Marcuse in the America of the late 1960's, the Frankfurt School's Critical Theory (Kritische Theorie) has also had a significant influence on the New Left in this country.

From its very beginning, independence was understood as a necessary prerequisite for the task of theoretical innovation and unrestrained social research. Fortunately, the means to ensure such conditions were available. The idea of an institutional framework in which these goals might be pursued was conceived by Félix J. Weil in 1922. Drawing upon his own considerable funds inherited from his mother, as well as his father's wealth, Weil began to support a number of radical ventures in Germany. With the encouragement of several friends at the University of Frankfurt, Weil's idea of a more

permanent institute, which he had conceived during the EMA (First Marxist work week held in 1923), became increasingly clarified. That is how the Institute was born.

It should also be stressed that Critical Theory as it was articulated by certain members of the Institute, contained important, implicit criticisms of the Soviet ideological justification for its actions. Although most of the figures in the Institut's early history already mentioned — Grünberg, Weil, Sorge, Borkenau, Wittfogel, and Grossmann — were unconcerned with the reexamination of the foundations of Marxism to which Horkheimer was becoming increasingly devoted, he was not entirely without allies. Pollock, although primarily interested in economics, had studied philosophy with Cornelius and shared his friend's rejection of orthodox Marxism. Increasingly caught up in the administrative affairs of the Institute after Grünberg suffered a stroke in late 1927, Pollock was nevertheless able to add his voice to Horkheimer's in the Institut's seminars. In the late 1920's he was joined by two younger intellectuals who were to have an increasingly important influence in subsequent years, Leo Lowenthal and Theodor Wiesengrund-Adorno (who was known solely by his mother's name, Adorno, after the emigration).

In January of 1931, Horkheimer was officially installed as the director of the institute. Horkheimer outlined the first task of the Institute under his leadership: a study of workers' and employees' attitudes towards a variety of issues in Germany and the rest of developed Europe. Its methods were to include the use of public statistics and questionnaires backed up by sociological, psychological, and economic interpretation of the data.

With the Nazi assumption of power on January 30, 1933, the future of an avowedly Marxist organization, staffed almost exclusively by men of Jewish descent — at least by Nazi standards — was obviously bleak. Horkheimer had spent most of 1932 in Geneva, where he was ill with diphtheria. Shortly before Hitler came to power he returned to Frankfurt, moving with his wife from their home in the suburb of Kronberg to a hotel near the Frankfurt railroad station. During February, the last month of the winter semester, he suspended his lectures on logic to speak on the question of freedom, which was indeed becoming more questionable with each passing day. In March he slipped across the border to Switzerland, just as the Institute was being closed down for "tendencies hostile to the state." The greater part of the Institute library in the building on the Victoria-Allee, then numbering over sixty thousand volumes, was seized by the government; the transfer of the endowment two years earlier prevented a similar confiscation of the Institute's financial resources. The crisis had begun and it affected every member of the institute.

Adorno, whose politics were not as controversial as some members like Wittfogel, maintained a residence in Germany, although he spent most of the next four years in England, studying at Merton College, Oxford. Grossmann found refuge in Paris for three years and went to England for one more, rather unhappy, year in 1937, before finally coming to the United States. Lowenthal remained in Frankfurt only until March 2, when he followed Marcuse, Horkheimer, and other Institute figures to Geneva, the last to depart before the Institute was closed. (Jay, 1973)

The use of American empirical techniques that its members learned in exile was an important lesson brought back to Germany after the war. In general, the Institute was not especially eager to leave its past and become fully American. After the defeat of Hitler, together once again in the security of its new home on Morningside Heights —

of the inner circle, only Adorno remained abroad for several years more — the Institute was thus able to resume without much difficulty the work it had started in Europe.

Now Frankfurt School is still alive experiencing several generations with different views who have endeavored to develop the philosophical project that has begun years ago.

Critical theory

Horkheimer's definition of this term is that a critical theory is adequate only if it meets three criteria: it must be explanatory, practical, and normative, all at the same time. That is, it must explain what is wrong with current social reality, identify the actors to change it, and provide both clear norms for criticism and achievable practical goals for social transformation. Any truly critical theory of society, as Horkheimer further defined it in his writings as Director of the Frankfurt School's Institute for Social Research, "has as its object human beings as producers of their own historical form of life" (Horkeimer 1993, 21). In light of the practical goal of identifying and overcoming all the circumstances that limit human freedom, the explanatory goal could be furthered only through interdisciplinary research that includes psychological, cultural, and social dimensions, as well as institutional forms of domination. Given the emphasis among the first generation of Critical Theory on human beings as the self-creating producers of their own history, a unique practical aim of social inquiry suggests itself: to transform contemporary capitalism into a consensual form of social life. For Horkheimer a capitalist society could be transformed only by becoming more democratic, to make it such that "all conditions of social life that are controllable by human beings depend on real consensus" in a rational society (Horkheimer 1972, 249–250). The normative orientation of Critical Theory, at least in its form of critical social inquiry, is therefore towards the transformation of capitalism into a "real democracy" in which such control could be exercised (Horkheimer 1972, 250).

The concept of culture industry

The early 20th century witnessed a proliferation of new forms of mass communication, and the emergence of an enormous entertainment industry geared towards the creation of a profit through the production and distribution of cultural products. Adorno and Horkheimer (two members of the Frankfurt School) were some of the first scholars to critically engage with these new cultural conditions. They argued that, in modern capitalist society, the increasing commodification of culture had transformed culture itself into a crucial medium of ideological domination, and a vital means by which the capitalist order itself was maintained. In their book "The Dialectic of the enlightenment", which today is considered as a classic critical text, they argue about how the culture industry affects its consumers in different ways. "Culture today is infecting everything with sameness. Film, radio and magazines form a system. Each branch of culture is unanimous within itself and all are unanimous together." (Adorno, 1972, 114).

In the chapter 3 of their book, 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception' Adorno and Horkheimer discuss this concept through their critical view. According to them as cultural objects become more interchangeable, each one declines in significance, loses its "aura" (a concept created originally by Walter Benjamin) hence declines in monopolistic rent. Since the value of the cultural object is based on the

monopolistic rent or, to a subordinate degree, on the object's utility, the value of the cultural object should decline as well. This doesn't occur under capitalism, however. As Horkheimer and Adorno have put it, "what might be called use value in the reception of cultural commodities is replaced by exchange value." (Adorno,1972,158). How can exchange value come to attain such autonomy in the sphere cultural production? Only through a widespread process of *fetishization*. In Karl Marx's critique of political economy , commodity fetishism is the perception of the social relationships involved in production, not as relationships among people, but as economic relationships among the money and commodities exchanged in market trade. As such, commodity fetishism transforms the subjective, abstract aspects of economic value into objective, real things that people believe have intrinsic value. In the culture industry, the consumer is paying, not for the product but for the packaging. Rather than assessments of value based on the qualities of the product, judgments about the qualities of the product are based upon its exchange value, its price, its top-ten rating. This is the height of commodity fetishism.

 As Horkheimer and Adorno stressed, the essential characteristic of the culture industry is *repetition*. Adorno illustrates this by contrasting "popular" and "serious" music. As early as his 1936 essay "On Jazz," Adorno had argued that an essential characteristic of popular music was its *standardization*. "The whole structure of popular music is standardized, even where the attempt is made to circumvent standardization. Standardization extends from the most general features to the most specific ones."(Theodor Adorno, "On Popular Music," Studies in Philosophy and Social Sciences (1941), Vol. IX, No. 1, pp. 17-18). Standardization implies the interchangeability, the substitutability of parts. By contrast, "serious music" is a "concrete totality" for Adorno, whereby "every detail derives its musical sense from the concrete totality of the piece." This is a dialectical relationship, whereby the totality is constituted of the organic interrelation of the particulars. In the case of serious music, interchangeability is not possible; if a detail is omitted, "all is lost."

Other illustrations could be given, such as the soap operas with their substitutable episodes, horror films with their formulas, etc. This repetition is due to the reflection in the sphere of cultural production of the standardized and repetitive processes of monopoly capitalist industry. Under late capitalism, what happens at work, in the factory, or in the office can only be escaped by approximating it in one's leisure time. This sets the terms for cultural products: "no independent thinking must be expected from the audiences" instead, "the product prescribes every reaction." (Adorno, 137) The standardization of the cultural product leads to the standardization of the audience. "Man as a member of a species has been made a reality by the culture industry. Now any person signifies only those attributes by which he can replace everybody else; he is interchangeable." Standardization, says Adorno, "divests the listener of his spontaneity and promotes conditioned reflexes." To this point, the argument suggests that both popular culture and its audience suffer a radical loss of significance under late capitalism.

As Horkheimer and Adorno point out, "modern communications media have an isolating effect." (Adorno, 121). This includes both social and physical isolation. The modern administration of capitalist society, with its effective means of communication, keeps people from gregarious interaction. Automobiles facilitate travel of people "in

complete isolation from each other." They continue that "communication establishes uniformity among men by isolating them."

Popular music for instance, (as it has been a subject of study for Adorno in his different works), either promotes the thoughtlessness of the masses or else provides the content of their thought. Regarding the first of these, Adorno invokes the *Distraction* Thesis. "Distraction" is a correlate of capitalism; this way of production, "which engenders fears and anxiety about unemployment, loss of income, war, has its "non-productive" correlate in entertainment; that is, relaxation which does not involve the effort of concentration at all."(Adorno, on popular music) Thus, distraction is a presupposition of popular music. It is also a product of that music; "the tunes becalm the listener to inattention."

Regarding the next of these, Adorno suggests that popular music serves an ideological function for its listeners. Popular music "is above all a means by which they achieve some psychical adjustment to the mechanisms of present day life." There are two major types of mass response to popular music, that of the "rhythmically obedient" type and that of the "emotional" type. Listeners of the rhythmically obedient type are particularly susceptible to "masochistic adjustment to authoritarian collectivism." As Adorno explains, any musical experience of this type is based upon the underlying time unit of the music — its "beat". To play rhythmically means, to these people, to play in such a way that even if pseudo-individualizations — counter-accents and other "differentiations" — occur; the relation to the ground meter is preserved. listeners of the emotional type "consume music in order to be allowed to weep. They are taken in by the musical expression of frustration rather than by that of happiness." Adorno continues: "Music that permits its listeners the confession of their unhappiness reconciles them, by means of this 'release,' to their social dependence."

In sum, Adorno and Horkheimer have provided a theory of the nature of the cultural product and its valuation at an appropriate level of discourse. The standardization and interchangeability of cultural products under late capitalism leads to the interchangeability of persons in the audience. Stylization has its counterpart, the pseudo-individualization of the culture product as well as the members of the audience. Both stylization and pseudo-individualization contribute to the possibilities of mass marketing. The consequences for the audience in late capitalism are distraction on the one hand, and a means of ensuring the audience's "adjustment" - whether fascistic or sorrowful accommodation - to dependency on the other. In other words, the culture industry is the logical consequence of capitalist industrial production. It purports to offer escape from sophistications in a fashion requiring the minimum of effort. Since the worker is paid for his efforts over time, it seems natural that he should pay for a period of time requiring no effort. The escape he experiences is largely a flawed attempt to make extraordinary the realities of his life; those things he identifies with are symbolic of existing society. Most alarmingly, he knows what to expect before the experience begins, for it is a standardized (and recognisable) form, masked with the pseudo-individualization of a novel appearance. He may not realize that his reactions are standardized, too.

According to Adorno and Horkheimer, the same happens in film industry. "This is the incurable sickness of all entertainment. Amusement congeals into boredom, since, to be amusement, it must cost no effort and therefore moves strictly along the well-worn grooves of association. The spectator must need no thoughts of his own: the product

prescribes each reaction, not through any actual coherence-which collapses once exposed to thought-but through signals. Any logical connection presupposing mental capacity is scrupulously avoided. Developments are to emerge from the directly preceding situation, not from the idea of the whole. There is no plot which could withstand the screenwriters' eagerness to extract the maximum effect from the individual scene. Finally, even the schematic formula seems dangerous, since it provides some coherence of meaning, however meager, when only meaninglessness is acceptable.

Often the plot is willfully denied the development called for by characters and theme under the old schema. Instead, the next step is determined by what the writers take to be their most effective idea. Obtusely ingenious surprises disrupt the plot. The product's tendency to fall back perniciously on the pure nonsense which, as buffoonery and clowning, was a legitimate part of popular art up to Chaplin and the Marx brothers, emerges most strikingly in the less sophisticated genres. Whereas the films of Greer Garson and Bette Davis can still derive some claim to a coherent plot from the unity of the socio-psychological case represented, the tendency to subvert meaning has taken over completely in the text of novelty songs," suspense films, and cartoons. The idea itself, like objects in comic and horror films, is massacred and mutilated. In crime and adventure films the spectators are begrudged even the opportunity to witness the resolution. Even in non-ironic examples of the genre they must make do with the mere horror of situations connected in only the most perfunctory way." (Adorno,1972, 109)

The Culture Industry and Film

Adorno in his essay 'Transparencies on the Film' (published in the book The Culture Industry, 1966) argues how movies are important outcomes of the culture industry, although according to many, film has more artistic aspects than being only products to consume. He points out that among different functions of film industry; it provides models for collective behaviour which is not just additional imposition of ideology. Such collectivity, rather, exists in the innermost elements of film. The movements which the film presents are mimetic impulses which, prior to all content and meaning, incite the viewers and listeners to fall into step as if in a parade. In this respect, film resembles music just as, in the early days of radio, music resembled film strips. Then he goes further and says "It would not be incorrect to describe the constitutive subject of film as a 'we' in which the aesthetic and sociological aspects of the medium converge. (Adorno 1966, 183)

To make it clear, he gives an example of what, according to him, happens to the audience while watching a movie. He considers the movie called 'anything goes'; a musical production of Paramount Pictures in. ("Anything Goes" is a 1936 American musical film directed by Lewis Milestone and starring Bing Crosby, Ethel Merman, Charles Ruggles, and Ida Lupino. Based on the stage musical Anything Goes by Guy Bolton and P.G. Wodehouse, the stage version contains songs by Cole Porter. The film is about a young man who falls in love with a beautiful woman whom he follows onto a luxury liner, where he discovers she is an English heiress who ran away from home and is now being returned to England. He also discovers that his boss is on the ship. To avoid discovery, he disguises himself as the gangster accomplice of a minister, who is

actually a gangster on the run from the law). Adorno discusses that the title of the movie, this 'anything' part captures the very substance of film's formal movement, prior to all content. As the eye is carried along, it joins the current of all those who are responding to the same appeal. The indeterminate nature of this collective 'anything' which is linked to the formal character of film facilitates the ideological misuse of the medium: "the pseudo-revolutionary blurring in which the phrase 'things must change' is conveyed by the gesture of banging one's fist on the table. The liberated film would have to wrest its collectivity from the mechanisms of unconscious and irrational influence and enlist this collectivity in the service of emancipatory intentions". (Adorno, 184)

Calling the mainstream American movies as "Daddy's Cinema", Adorno addresses products that have pure properties of the culture industry. This 'Daddy's Cinema' according to him corresponds to what the consumers want, or, perhaps, rather than it provides them with an unconscious canon of what they do not want, that is, something different from what they are presently being fed. Otherwise, the culture industry could not have become a mass culture. Therefore "the favourite argument of the whole –and half-hearted apologists, that culture industry is the art of the consumer, is untrue; it is the ideology of ideology".

Finally Adorno shows that he has no optimistic view of the film as a liberate work of art at all. He ends his essay commenting on those types of movies trying to experience different aspects of cinema and taking distance with the mainstream or 'Daddy's Cinema'. He argues that this types of movies also are the products of the culture industry just to be sure the business will go on safely "One is especially drawn to this conclusion in reaction to those snobbish psychological, class A, pictures which the culture industry forces itself to make for the sake of cultural legitimation. Even so, one must guard against taking such optimism too far: the standardized Western and thrillers are even worse than the official hits. In integrated culture one cannot even depend on the dregs. " (Adorno, 186)

About Hollywood

One of the defining features of contemporary society, at the high-income countries of the world, is the conspicuous convergence that is occurring between the domain of the economic on the one hand and the domain of the cultural on the other. Vast segments of the modern economy are inscribed with significant cultural content, while culture itself is increasingly being supplied in the form of goods and services produced by private firms for a profit under conditions of market exchange. These trends can be described variously in term of the commodification of culture.

An especially dramatic case of this peculiar conjunction of culture and economics is presented by the motion picture industry of Hollywood. In purely geographic terms, Hollywood proper is a relatively small district lying just to the northwest of downtown Los Angeles. It was in this district that the motion picture industry was initially concentrated in pre-World War II days. After its initial emergence, Hollywood (which at this time was no more than a straggling suburb some even miles from downtown Los Angeles) rapidly established itself as the preeminent center of motion picture production not only in United States but also the world. By the late 1920's the classical studio system of production was firmly established and Hollywood was now poised at the threshold of a golden age that would continue through the Second World War until

the late 1940s (Schatz, 1988). All the famous names were born in this period. First Fox, Paramount and Universal, then in 1918 the Warner Brothers Company opened its first studio on Sunset Boulevard. The following year, United Artists Corporation was founded by Charles Chaplin and some others. CBC Sales Film Corporation was established in 1920 and renamed Columbia Pictures in 1924. In the same year, Metro Goldwyn Mayer was born out of a complex merger operation. (Wasko, 2008)

Control of the movie industry was exercised by the so-called Big Eight studios, whose film making factories in Hollywood fed their nationwide distribution operations. The most powerful of these firms were the fully integrated Big Five studios (MGM, Warner Bros.,20th century Fox, Paramount and RKO) which not only produced and distributed films but operated their own theatre chains as well. Meanwhile the Little Three "major minor" studios (Universal, Columbia and United Artists) produced and distributed top feature films but did not own their own theatres. The 1940s proved to be a watershed era for Hollywood with an unprecedented boom due to war related social and economic conditions early in the decade followed by a drastic industry decline and an abrupt end to the studio's long-standing hegemony. The emergence of TV and though the change in American lifestyle in the late 1940s turned to be a challenge for the studio system but in response and to survive, studios changed the way they made movies. They started to do business establishing a modus operandi that still prevails today. Adopting the model of UA (United Artists), the studios concentrated on financing and distribution rather than production. Lacking the financial resources and contract talent to mass-produce movie for a declining market they no longer controlled, the studios now relied on independent producers to supply "packaged" projects that the studios would "green light" for production, putting up some portion of the budget in exchange for the distribution rights, and often leasing out their production facilities as well. This meant ceding creative control to independent producers and freelance directors and also to top stars whose "marquee value" gave them tremendous power to the leading talent agencies. The studios still generated their own films but they produced fewer, "bigger" pictures (biblical epics and wide screen Westerns during the 1950s, for instance) which made more sense economically and laid the groundwork for the blockbuster mentality that now prevails.

Since then till now, some things have changed and Hollywood has passed different periods and its ups and downs. Today there has been a significant power shift in Hollywood, and the powers have been devising new modes of vertical (and horizontal) integration to minimize risk and maximize profits.

Horizontal integration: In the beginning of last century, such integration took place in production processes, where large studios mass-produced films through employing creative and technical labour on long-term basis. However, in the last 50 years, outsourcing of creative and technical processes of production has proved more flexible as well as fruitful for product innovation, which is why most production companies are now system coordinators, focusing upon the planning and finance of films and taking advantage of large pools of freelance labour and specialized suppliers for actual production of them. By contrast, horizontal integration in marketing and distribution of films, which also happened from the early stages of the film industry, took place on a much larger scale in Hollywood than in Europe and Asia, and has since persevered here (Wildman and Siwek, 1988; Wildman, 1995). US film producers were first movers in sinking endogenous costs into large-scale marketing and distribution meant that

Hollywood became and stayed comparatively efficient at serving mass markets (Bakker, 2005).

Vertical integration: Just as Hollywood at an early stage sunk more costs than film clusters in other large film producing countries into large-scale marketing and distribution, it was also Hollywood companies that went furthest in integrating production, marketing, distribution and exhibition into big corporations (Hoskins et al., 1997). After the advent of other exhibition channels for films (TV, home video, and now the Internet) and other sources of revenue arising from films (merchandize as well as royalties from film-related copyrights used in other media, such as music, games, and publishing), Hollywood companies integrated these new exhibition channels and media instead of cinemas, in effect becoming multi-media corporations (Litman, 1998; Schatz, 2000; Wasko, 2003; Scott, 2005; Epstein, 2006; Flew, 2007).

But the power scarcely resided with the studios of old. The new rules of Hollywood – and of the global entertainment industry at large – were not the studios, but their parent companies, the media giants like Viacome (owner of Paramount Pictures), Sony (Columbia), Time Warner (Warner Bros.) and News Corporation (20th Century Fox) which controlled not only the movie but the US television industry as well. This control now can be seen on the printed media too as most of the famous and successful magazines and daily newspapers belong to these corporations. To be more detailed, News Corporation (now known as News Corp) is a good example. Its major holdings at the time of the split (2014) were News Limited (a group of newspaper publishers in Murdoch's native Australia), News International (a newspaper publisher in the United Kingdom, whose properties include The Times, The Sun, and the now-defunct News of the World—which was the subject of a phone hacking scandal that led to its closure in July 2011), Dow Jones & Company (an American publisher of financial news outlets, including The Wall Street Journal), the book publisher HarperCollins, and the Fox Entertainment Group (owners of the 20th Century Fox film studio and the Fox Broadcasting Company—one of the United States' major television networks).

This tectonic shift in the structure and economics of Hollywood actually began a decade earlier when News Corporation bought 20th Century Fox and launched the Fox Broadcasting network. That created a paradigm for the global media giants to come. As the burgeoning New Hollywood steady morphed into Conglomerate Hollywood, and as the studio's role in the industry drastically changed. The studios were vital to their parent companies' media empires, of course, since Hollywood-produced blockbusters have been the driving force in the global entertainment industry. But the movie studios, along with the conglomerates' "indie film" divisions, television and cable networks, and myriad other holdings, have become players in a game they no longer control.

Not only have media scholars and anthropologists made researches into films, film making, and filmmakers for at least a century, economists, sociologists, geographers, and management scholars have also taken to study this, the biggest of the commercial cultural industries, with interest. Highly simplified, the latter literatures have made two main observations about the industrial and institutional dynamics of the film industry.

The first observation is that because feature films have high development costs, they also have a relatively large minimum market size for making profit (Vogel, 2003; Caves, 2000; Wasko, 2003; Eliashberg et al., 2006). The small home markets for e.g. European

films mean that even when producers here hold production budgets down by opting for low production values, the production of most films hinges upon state subsidies (Moran, 1996; de Turegano, 2006). The countries that have become specialized in film production, i.e. those with a high annual number of non-subsidized feature film releases, are countries with vast home audiences.

The second main observation made by economists, sociologists and other analysts of the film industry is that when the market size increases, so do demand uncertainty and the importance of scale economies. As for most cultural industries, consumer tastes for films are unpredictable, and it is difficult to foresee any film's success or failure at the box office. Whereas the markets for niche films are small and demand varies on a relatively predictable scale (Cameron, 2003), uncertainty grows with market size, and there is potentially infinite revenue distribution on mass markets for commercial mainstream films (Sawhney and Elishberg, 1996; de Vany and Walls, 1997; Walls, 2005). Due to such uncertainty, on mass markets, there are scale economies in production of films, as the use of expensive stars and high production values have proven to be important factors, albeit not guarantees, for capturing mass audiences (de Vany and Walls, 1996; 1999; 2004; Elberse and Eliashberg, 2003; Elberse, 2006).

The last but not the least point about Hollywood as the biggest industry and an obvious, important model of the term Culture Industry is Globalization. Globalization is often defined as a process beyond that of internationalization. It encompasses not just the spread of products, people or practices from one or few countries, it also entails interconnectedness between a multitude of countries, leading to their integration into one (or several) global economic, cultural, and to some extent also political, systems or networks (Held et al., 1999; Friedman, 2000; Stiglitz, 2002; Amin and Cohendet, 2004; and see a recent special issue of Industry and Innovation on Knowledge Geographies, vol. 12, issue 4, 2004).

As cultural products circulate through the world across the virtual infinity of consumer-cultural "trade routes" the successful reception of such products in "foreign" marketplace provides a key index of products' transnational symbolic currency. For instance even as social theorists caution against the reduction of global culture to one that is uniformly Americanized, the international box-office success of American action-adventure films testifies at the very least to the presence of an international audience that is responsive to the kind of spectacle nationalism characteristic of the genre. That different national and ethnic communities, finds a common vocabulary in mainstream Hollywood film genres like the action movie raises the contentious matter of the role of nationalism and cultural logic of the nation-state in transnational milieu. The existence of a responsive international audience for cultural products that stress certain assumed affinities with American nationalism testifies to the success with which many corporate cultural industries sustain Western influence abroad while working to countervail trends toward diversification and localism. (Schatz, 2004)

The process of globalization is uneven, the staggering budgets allotted for the production and international publicization, distribution and exhibition of many Hollywood blockbusters like action pictures play a central role in the uneven development of international media markets and their subsequent consumer desires.

Hollywood and Ideology

The revival of militarist, racist, patriarchal and capitalist ideologies in post 1977

Hollywood films, which continue until today, would seem to suggest that the United States had turned significantly rightward. There is evidence to the contrary. Indeed one could say the virulence of contemporary conservatism is itself ample evidence that something very non-conservative was still active in U.S society but in the mainstream movies this conservatism is clear. Douglas Kellner work on the political Hollywood contains a proper argument about the nature of this ideology. He believes this comes from the power of the individualist ideology in American culture.

As a result of the residual appeal of the ideology, the socialist possibility of the sort that would address certain pre-political popular desires is denied any general availability in public debate. That ban fostered by longstanding, carefully manufactured antisocialist prejudices that equate socialism with statism and play to populist anxiety regarding the impersonal power of big government. The overwhelming power of capitalist interests in prompting their anticommunitarian philosophy of social life also accounts for the almost total silence on the issue of socialism in the media as a whole and in film particularly. With some exceptions, few filmmakers criticize capitalism itself, and none overtly suggest that a socialist alternative might be better.

This implicit ban is aided by the dominant representational codes of Hollywood, codes shaped in the same cultural climate of liberal individualism that fosters the uncritical acceptance of the entrepreneurial capitalist model and the unquestioned popular prejudice that all socialism is "totalitarian", a denial of individual freedom. Because those codes are inseparable from the perceptual codes that frame audience experience of the world, it is difficult to rework them in ways conductive to the development of a more critical attitude toward capitalism or a more positive attitude toward socialism without prompting a negative audience reaction, a mismatch between representational strategy and audience receptivity - in film lingo, a flop.

The form of film as well as its content promotes radical alternatives. Form, or means of representation, as much as the content of film, needs to be transformed because the prevailing patterns of thought, perception, and behavior that help sustain capitalism and patriarchy are determined, the dominant forms or modes through which people experience the world. Whether one presents the history of the United States as an epic of realized destiny or as a series of only contiguously related episodes of alternating idealism and brutality makes a difference for how one acts in the world. In addition, socialism would imply a new form of life, a new (more democratic and egalitarian) style of social organization, which would be inseparable from different modes of representation. If the maintenance of capitalism is dependent on the prevalence of cultural representation that construct a shared social reality, then the development of socialism necessitates different cultural representations, different forms or ways of constructing the world and a sense of one's place in it. If current representations position women as passive objects, blacks as dancers and comics, and poor people as somehow inferior to white male businessmen, then a more egalitarian social arrangement would require different representations.

Form exists in the very substance of social life. Form not only determines cognition, how one experiences the world; it also determines the shape of social institutions, practices, and values. Morality is a question of ways of being, modes of action, and forms of behavior. And the same can be said of politics, economics, or psychology. The political struggle between Left and Right comes down to a contest over the shape of life, the form it will take. The form of Hollywood film has in recent years come to be

characterized as inherently ideological because it tends invariably to reinforce the dominant forms of patriarchal and capitalist life. We differ from the common characterization of this ideological procedure in that we see it not as a matter of cognition, the positioning of spectators as spuriously self-identical, specular subjects who are lured into imaginary identification that is inherently ideological. Rather, Hollywood forms are in our view ideological because they replicate the figures and narratives that constitute the very substance of those values, practices, and institutions that shape a society of domination. (Kellner, 1988)

Spectatorial cognition is merely the end result of a broad process of rhetorical replication whereby those grounding figures of the society (the narrative of individual success, the metaphor of freedom, the synecdochic privileging of efficiency over democracy, the litotic liberal ideal of pluralist neutrality, etc.) are transcoded into specifically cinematic forms – the male quest narrative, the camera positions of individuated identification, the domestic mis-en-scene, short continuity as a realization of a spurious model of psychological motivation, the instantiation of a dichotomous Christian morality through contrapuntal editing, and so on. Rather than disable the question of form, this reconceptualization of ideology gives it even more force as a required concern of a reconstructive politics. But it does displace the specific importance accorded the undermining of narrative realism, of the basic film illusion, by structuralist film theory. (Camera Politica, Ryan and Kellner 1988, 266)

About Film Critic Genre
According to the Oxford Dictionary the word criticism has two meanings:
1. The expression of disapproval of someone or something on the basis of perceived faults or mistakes.

2. The analysis and judgement of the merits and faults of a literary or artistic work.

Focusing on the second definition, there could be criticism in every artistic or literary work including films. In film critics there are two different activities which could consider as critics. The first one is called to the texts that have academic characters and are based on Film Theories. Academic critic explores cinema beyond journalistic film review. These film critics try to examine why film works, how it works, what it means, and what effects it has on people. Rather than write for mass-market publications their articles are usually published in scholarly journals and texts which tend to be affiliated with university presses; or sometimes in up-market magazines (like Cahiers du Cinéma). Some notable academic film critics include André Bazin, Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut (all writers for Cahiers du Cinéma); Kristin Thompson, David Bordwell, and Douglas Kellner.

The second type of film critic is the normal familiar journalistic film criticism which is known as *review*. Film critics working for newspapers, magazines, broadcast media, and online publications, mainly review new releases. The plot summary and description of a film that makes up the majority of the review can have an impact on whether people decide to see a film. Some well-known journalistic critics have included: James Agee (Time (magazine), The Nation); James Berardinelli; Vincent Canby (The New York Times); Roger Ebert (Chicago Sun-Times, At the Movies with Ebert &

Roeper); Pauline Kael (The New Yorker); Derek Malcolm (The Guardian); Michael Phillips (Chicago Tribune); and Joel Siegel (Good Morning America).

Critics play a significant role in consumers' decisions in many industries (Vogel 2001; Walker 1995). More than one-third of Americans actively seek the advice of film critics (The Wall Street Journal 2001), and approximately one of every three filmgoers say they choose films because of favourable reviews. But in recent years it seems that the genre has been facing a big challenge: what is really today's role of film reviews?

Critics have educated generations of discriminating moviegoers on the difference between good films and bad, and, more importantly, pointed out what was good in bad films and was bad in good films. They resurrected prematurely dismissed pictures or those that could not find immediate audiences. They called attention to great directors, often emphasizing the contributions of their collaborators—cinematographers, production designers, screenwriters, costumers, and actors. Critics heralded foreign films, especially in the post war era. Critics such as Manny Farber, Robert Warshow, and Sarris studied the bodies of work of the long-tenured Hollywood directors. Their revisions of these directors' reputations helped establish the notion that film was the 20th century's most significant art form.

Critics put up the signposts for the readers to understand as much as they do about the aesthetic visions, storytelling sensibilities, and emotional intent inherent in movies created by such artists as John Ford, Howard Hawks, Alfred Hitchcock, George Stevens, William Wyler, John Huston, Frank Capra, Anthony Mann, and hundreds of other filmmakers. Many critics continued in this tradition of showing the way, analyzing, probing, praising, and griping.

Jimmy Roberts in his book The Complete History of American Film Criticism (2010) argues about the role of critics and film reviews today. In the first decade of the 21st century, the drastic contraction of cultural news and feature coverage at newspapers and magazines put many print film critics out of business while newspapers and magazines retrenched in the face of an industry-wide economic crisis. Meanwhile, new blogs and Web sites devoted to judging movies popped up seemingly each week. There were seismic changes in the presentation of film reviews as the movie culture continued to turn away from the so-called "expert" and proclaimed anyone a critic who had an opinion and Internet access. Articles in 2008 by Anne Thompson in Daily Variety, David Carr in The New York Times, and Patrick Goldstein in the Los Angeles Times tolled the death knell for print film critics. Reactions on blogs and elsewhere on the Internet in 2009 fanned the notion that the era of the informed critic was over.

About Argo

Antonio Joseph "Tony" Mendez (born November 15, 1940) is an American CIA technical operations officer, now retired, who specialized in support of clandestine and covert CIA operations. He has written three memoirs about his CIA experiences.

Mendez was decorated, and is now widely known, for his on-the-scene management of the "Canadian Caper" during the Iran hostage crisis, in which he exfiltrated six American diplomats from Iran in January 1980. They posed as a Canadian film crew, and as part of their cover, the diplomats carried passports issued by the Canadian government to document them as Canadian citizens. After declassification of records, the full details of the operation were reported in a 2007 article by Joshuah Bearman in Wired magazine.

The article which is an example of narrative journalism tells the story of the escape with details. Its title is "How the CIA Used a Fake Sci-Fi Flick to Rescue Americans From Tehran" and This is how it starts:

November 4, 1979, began like any other day at the US embassy in Tehran. The staff filtered in under gray skies, the marines manned their posts, and the daily crush of anti-American protestors massed outside the gate chanting, "Allahu akbar! Marg bar Amrika!"

Mark and Cora Lijek, a young couple serving in their first foreign service post, knew the slogans — "God is great! Death to America!" — and had learned to ignore the din as they went about their duties. But today, the protest sounded louder than usual. And when some of the local employees came in and said there was "a problem at the gate," they knew this morning would be different. Militant students were soon scaling the walls of the embassy complex. Someone forced open the front gate, and the trickle of invaders became a flood. The mob quickly fanned across the 27-acre compound, waving posters of the Ayatollah Khomeini. They took the ambassador's residence, then set upon the chancery, the citadel of the embassy where most of the staff was stationed.

Tony Mendez, the agency's top exfiltration expert, comes up with the idea of having the diplomats pose as a Hollywood film crew on a location scout for a science fiction film. A film called Argo.

The Wired article about this operation was loosely adapted for the screenplay and development of the 2012 Academy Award-winning film Argo, directed by Ben Affleck, who also starred as Mendez. Mendez also attended the 70th Golden Globe Awards to give a speech about the film, where it was nominated (and later won) for Best Motion Picture – Drama.

Argo won almost all of the important awards for the best picture of the year in 2013 including Academy Awards (Oscar), Golden Globe, Bafta, César, Broadcast Film Critics Association Awards and even Gay and Lesbian Entertainment Critics Association (GALECA).

The presentation of the nominees of the best picture award (in the Oscar ceremony) and announcing the winner, Argo, was done by Michelle Obama which was broadcasted live from the White House.

Hypothesis and Methodology

Hypothesis

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relation between Hollywood movie productions (as products of the term culture industry) and the journalistic genre of film critics (reviews). The main hypothesis would be that today this genre not only does not criticize the movie industry anymore, but supports it.

This, never the less, needs a complete work considering different aspects of media studies. Therefore, to make it fit in a Master Thesis, the study would focus on a case study of a specific movie: Argo (2012). And the reviews about this movie published in printed media in U.S. in this way the study will have two different parts.

First we need to show that Argo is a proper choice to be investigated as a normal and usual product of the culture industry (Hollywood in our case) and is a good representative of the mainstream movies produced by Hollywood; a kind of movie which has all the ideological elements of conservative and capitalistic movie industry in U.S.

Secondly we need to study and observe the texts that have been published, during the screening period of Argo in the theatres of U.S and in the whole world, which were published as reviews in the dailies and magazines in this country. The work in this part would be investigating the reaction of these journalistic texts about the movie and the form of representing it.

The main hypothesis in this way will turn into a more specific one:

Hypothesis of the study: The journalistic critics (reviews) about Argo not only do not criticize this movie, but strongly support it as if these reviews are a part of the culture industry (Hollywood)

In other words, Argo, as a typical product of Hollywood movie industry, is fully supported by the film critics in the printed media in United States

With the strategy of the study explained before, there would be two steps to investigate in this work:

Step one: showing that Argo is a typical product of Hollywood movie industry with ideological properties

Step two: showing that the reviews published in American printed media supported the movie

Designing the research for analyzing the movie Argo

In this part of the work I am going to analyze the case of "Argo" and I am going to show how much this movie is reproducing the stereotype picture of Self/good people/Americans and Others/strange/not normal/middle easterners. From this point of view we will understand the Idea logic approach that is present strongly behind the making it. To do so I will use three methods each based on theoretical works and thoughts. In the first and principal part I will analyze three sequences that I have selected from the whole movie in a systematic method. Secondly I will use the argumentation of Edward Said in his book "Orientalism" (1978) to point out the way Middle East (Iran in our study) is being represented in the movie Argo. Finally and in the third part I will use the work of Douglas Kellner in his book "Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film"(1988) to analyze the aspects of

the familiar Hollywood type values which are found easily in this movie (Argo).

To study the ideology behind the movie I have selected three sequences. This selection is based on the common content of these sequences: the encounter of Americans and Iranians. The first sequence tells the story of the hostage crisis (how Iranians occupied the US embassy on 4th of November 1979) and the escape of six American staff from the embassy; here we see the big encounter of the Iranian revolutionaries against U.S. Next sequence that has been analyzed is when the CIA agent Tony Mendez comes to town (enters Tehran) to start the operation of saving and taking back these people to U.S; Another encounter but this time in a close way focusing more on the situation in which people live in Iran. Finally the last sequence, the ending part of the movie, is analyzed. In this part, after a series of chase and run, CIA plan to rescue the Americans works out and they can leave Iran. The encounter in this sequence is much stronger. The American "spies" are trying to escape and the "Komite" or the "revolutionaries" are trying to stop them.

To analyze these three sequences, I have studied the characters of the story in the selected part and also the filmic and technical aspects of the sequence. To see the way these too side of the encounters are described in the movie, I have separated the scenes in which Americans are represented and the scenes in which Iranians are. In this way the differences can be observed with more detail and the two sides of the encounters can be compared easier and with more focus. The results have been presented in three tables. These tables are my tools to organize the data I have gathered.

The First Sequence	Americans	Iranians
The personages		
Filmic elements: (mise-en-scène, Cinematography, Editing and Sound)	**Mise-en-scène**: **Cinematography**: **Editing**: **Sound**:	**Mise-en-scène**: we see a **Cinematography**: **Editing**: **Sound**:

At the first step I will study the characters (the second row of the tables named the personages) to see how they shape a certain type of ideological and political point of view in representing the historical story. I have used the theory of characters created by Vladimir Propp. Vladimir Propp's "Morphology of the Folktale" was published in Russian in 1928. Although it represented a breakthrough in both folkloristics and morphology and influenced Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, it was generally unnoticed in the West until it was translated in 1958. His character types are used in media education and can be applied to almost any story, be it in literature, theatre, film, television series, games, etc.

The Character Theory of Propp suggests that there are 7 types of characters in most of the narratives:
1. The villain (struggles against the hero)

2. The donor (prepares the hero or gives the hero some magical object)

3. The (magical) helper (helps the hero in the quest)

4. The princess (person the hero marries, often sought for during the narrative)

5. The false hero (perceived as good character in beginning but emerges as evil)

6. The dispatcher (character who makes the lack known and sends the hero off)

7. The hero (victim/seeker/paladin/winner, reacts to the donor, weds the princess)

At the second step in this part, I will analyze the third row in the tables (filmic elements). Analyzing this part is based on the film theory argued by David Bordwell in his book "Film Art: An Introduction" (2004). This analysis according to Bordwell's work has four parts. Every part is argued based on one of these filmic elements which shape the form of a film: mise-en-scène, Cinematography, Editing and Sound. I will compare the results of the study in each column regarding how the movie represents Americans and Iranians in every element.

To make the argumentation about the movie and its ideological properties I will use two other theories for the analysis: The theory of Orientalism by Edward Said and then Douglas Kelner's theory of the new political Hollywood. I believe these two different approaches will reinforce the empirical part of the study.

At the second step in this part, I will analyze the third row in the tables (filmic elements). Analyzing this part is based on the film theory argued by David Bordwell in his book "Film Art: An Introduction" (2004). This analysis according to Bordwell's work has four parts. Every part is argued based on one of these filmic elements which shape the form of a film: mise-en-scène, Cinematography, Editing and Sound. Here comes a brief view of the theory that Bordweell gives to understand the form of a film.

Mise-en-scène (meez-on-sen)
Fr. "put into the scene"
This aspect of film form includes everything that appears before the camera within a shot. It can include planned elements like various props, lighting, costuming, make-up, staged body motions and facial expressions, the actors themselves, and computer-generated imagery as well as unplanned elements like passing traffic and insects flying through the frame. Remember, even obviously static elements in the shot (like architecture and landscape) are still part of the shot's mise-en-scène because the director made the choice to include such elements in the frame.

Cinematography
This is a general term for all the manipulations of the film strip by the camera in the shooting phase. It also includes processes that occur in the laboratory after shooting. There are three general aspects of cinematography to keep in mind:
1. Camera Angles (High, Low, Straight-on, Bird's -eye)
2. Camera Distances (Extreme long shot, long shot, medium, close-up, extreme close-

up)
3. Camera Movement (tracking/dollying, hand held, crane, pan, tilt, helicopter!)
It's also sometimes appropriate to determine the type lens used (wide angle, long, or normal), the type of film stock, and the speed at which a shot was filmed, all of which produce quite different visual effects.

Editing

In the simplest sense, editing is the linking of two different pieces of film (two different shots). Usually, the editing of a film follows some logic of development (e.g., an image of a woman staring into off-screen space followed by an image of a ticking clock, the object she is presumably looking at) or is meant to make some kind of statement through juxtaposition that might require the viewer to "fill in the gap" (e.g., an image of a pompous politico giving a speech followed by an image of a monkey hurling excrement).
•Graphic relations of editing
The filmmaker may link shots by graphic similarities, thus making what is called a graphic match (e.g., the helicopter blades and ceiling fan match in the opening sequence from Apocalypse Now). The graphic composition of linked shots may also appear abrupt and discontinuous.
•Spatial relations of editing
Editing also serves to give the viewer a sense of space, to literally construct the world in which the film's narrative is taking place. In other words, without careful editing, there is no "world of the story" (called diegesis). Some key concepts in spatial editing are as follows:Establishing shot: A shot, usually framed from a distance, that shows the spatial relations among the important figures and setting in a scene. A film might begin with a long shot of a suburban home; a subsequent cut to an interior scene of domestic activity establishes a clear spatial link between the two shots, though they could have been shot on different continents. Shot/reverse shot : An editing pattern that cuts between individuals according to the logic of their conversation Eyeline match: The joining of different shots by following the logic and direction of a character's glance or look.

Sound

Because we tend to think of film as a fundamentally visual medium, the importance of film sound is often overlooked. Whether noticed or not, sound is a powerful film technique. Indeed, sound can actively shape how we perceive and interpret the image. In the context of a film, moreover, sound falls into two categories: diegetic and non-diegetic. Again, the film's diegesis is the world of the film's story; this includes events that are presumed to have occurred and actions and spaces not shown on screen.
Diegetic sound, then, includes any voice, musical passage, or sound effect represented as originating within the film's world. This can include the sounds of cars and conversations during a scene depicting a busy metropolitan street. In contrast, non-diegetic sound would include mood music or narrator's commentary represented as coming from outside the space of the narrative (think of most film scores).

Designing the research for analyzing the film critics (reviews)

For this part of the study I gather a number of the reviews published in the U.S about Argo as a sample. According to metacritic.com which is a reference website for critics about all the entertainment industry (better said the culture industry), there are 45 critics related to the movie Argo. These reviews belong to a verity of printed media in U.S. including newspapers, weekly magazines and monthlies. From the 45 texts, 41 are positive critics, 4 are mixed and 0 reviews are negative. To prepare the sample of the study I have considered two factors: first publishing period (so that they could be compared equally) and second, the media's circulation (the domain of its audience and the power of influence). The sample contains ten reviews from ten American daily newspapers in 2012 (The Associated Press, 2013-04-30). I have selected these ten newspapers because they are the most circulated dailies publishing in U.S. Here is the table presenting the sample I am going to study in this part.

Rank	Newspaper	Primary Locality	State	Weekday Circulation	Owner
1	The Wall Street Journal	Nationwide		2,378,827	News Corp
2	The New York Times	Nationwide New York City	New York	1,865,318	The New York Times Company
3	USA Today	Nationwide		1,674,306	Gannett Company
4	Los Angeles Times	Los Angeles	California	653,868	Tribune Publishing
5	Daily News	New York City	New York	516,165	Daily News, L.P.
6	New York Post	New York City	New York	500,521	News Corp
7	The Washington Post	Washington Nationwide	D.C.	474,767	Nash Holdings
8	Chicago Sun-Times	Chicago	Illinois	470,548	Wrapports
9	The Denver Post	Denver	Colorado	416,676	Digital First Media
10	Chicago Tribune	Chicago	Illinois	414,930	Tribune Publishing

I have not considered the reviews published in the film magazines because the publishing period of magazines is different (weekly and monthly). Also in the study I have analyzed the online version of the texts which are accessible in their websites. The method to study these texts is Critical Discourse Analysis. It should be noted that since all the reviews did not contain title or subtitle and also some other journalistic elements including pictures were used differently (in the online version the websites use images as slide shows) I will not consider them in the study. Therefore process of analyzing is done on the texts only.

The tool I have prepared to use in this part of the study includes three questions:

1. How does the text represent the movie? What are the positive and negative points about Argo in the text and what are the main themes? (Macro Propositions)

2. What are the lexical choices of the writer? What kinds of adjectives, adverbs, verbs, metaphors, etc have been selected to represent the movie? (Lexical Choices)

3. How Americans and Iranians are represented in the text? (Implications)

Name of the daily: ……………………….   **Writer/critic**:……………………   **Publish date**: 2012/10/?
Web Address: http://www……………………………………………. …………………………………… …………………………………………
Title: …………………………………..
Number of the words: ???   **metacritic score**:??/100

What is the text about?

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? -**positive points**: -**negative points**: **The main themes of the text**:	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?**	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?**

For every review there is a file which contains answers to the above questions. On the header of the file there is some general information about the media including the name, the writer, date of publishing, the web address, number of the words in the text and more importantly the score this daily has given to the film in metacritic.com. There is also an abstract of the text. There are three columns in which the data for analysis is gathered. One for the Macro Propositions, the second for the writer's Lexical Choices and the third one for the Implications in the text. In the next step the data is observed and I have analyzed every text. Finally the results of each analysis are given.

Testing the Hypotheses

After the analysis of the movie and the critical texts, it will be time to examine the hypothesis. The results of each part of the study will make it clear whether each minor hypothesis of the study had been valid or not. Then by comparing the results of these

two parts and testing the validity of the minor hypotheses, we can discuss the validity of the main hypothesis and that is final step of this investigation.

Analyzing the movie Argo

In the first part of the study we discussed about the term "culture Industry" and its social and cultural effects. Then we considered American movie industry know as Hollywood, as an important example of such term. It was discussed that this industry, by its products, always reproduces values which are strongly ideological. This ideology, as Kellner and others discuss, has a political and capitalistic nature. Now it is time to pick a movie (a product of the culture industry) which has the characteristics of such products. The movie I have chosen here is Argo (2012).

The strategy of the study as mentioned before, will be analyzing the movie and then analyzing the critical texts about this movie. Comparing these two analyzes at the end, will demonstrate the validity of the hypothesis.

In this part of the work I am going to analyze the case of "Argo" and I am going to show how much this movie fits in the study and could be a proper case. I will discuss that how this movie reproduces those American capitalistic values and also how the stereotype picture of Self/good people/Americans and Others/strange/not normal/middle easterners is reconstructed. From this point of view we will understand the Ideological approach that is present strongly behind the making it. To do so I will use three methods each based on theoretical works in three separated parts. I have utilized these three parts to reinforce the argumentation about the movie. While we can see details of the "us and them" ideology in the most important scenes of the movie in the part 1, we will observe more conservative and ideological characteristics of this movie related to the domination of specific values which are construct and reconstructed in the culture industry (Hollywood in this case) in the part 2 and part 3 of this section.

In the first and principal part I will analyze three sequences that I have selected from the whole movie in a systematic method. Secondly I will use the argumentation of Edward Said in his book "Orientalism" (1978) to point out the way Middle East (Iran in our study) is being represented in the movie Argo. Finally and in the third part I will use the work of Douglas Kellner in his book "Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film"(1988) to analyze the aspects of the familiar Hollywood type values which are found easily in this movie (Argo).

Part 1: Americans against Iranians

The story as it has been told before is about a secret CIA operation to rescue six Americans who had escaped from the occupation of the USA embassy occurred in 1979 known as Iran Hostage Crisis. The movie tells the story in a very classic structure and within 6 sequences. To study the ideology behind the movie I have selected three sequences. This selection is based on the common content of these sequences: the encounter of Americans and Iranians. The first sequence tells the story of the hostage crisis (how Iranians occupied the US embassy on 4th of November 1979) and the escape of six American staff from the embassy; here we see the big encounter of the Iranian revolutionaries against U.S. Next sequence that has been analyzed is when the CIA agent Tony Mendez comes to town (enters Tehran) to start the operation of saving and taking back these people to U.S; Another encounter but this time in a close way focusing more on the situation in which people live in Iran. Finally the last sequence,

the ending part of the movie, is analyzed. In this part, after a series of chase and run, CIA plan to rescue the Americans works out and they can leave Iran. The encounter in this sequence is much stronger. The American "spies" are trying to escape and the "Komite" or the "revolutionaries" are trying to stop them.

To analyze these three sequences, I have studied the characters of the story in that part and also the filmic and technical aspects of the sequence. To see the way these too sides of the encounters are described in the movie, I have separated the scenes in which Americans are represented and the scenes in which Iranians are. In this way the differences can be observed with more detail and the two sides of the encounters can be compared easier and with more focus. In the following tables the results of this study can be observed.

First Sequence, Occupation and Escape (12 min and 35 sec)
The summary of the Sequence: after a short animation which explains the motivations of Iranian people complaining and demonstrating outside the USA embassy (political interventions of the USA government which led to the emergence of the Shah regime and then the Islamic revolution), the story begins. Mad people break through the USA embassy in Tehran. Americans try to destroy de documents. No one from the Iranian security forces helps them. They are arrested by the angry people who want the US government to get back Shah in order to be judged in the court and be punished for what he has done. Everyone gets arrested except for 6 Americans who can escape from the embassy.

The First Sequence	Americans	Iranians
The personages	**The six American diplomats**: Robert Anders, Consular officer (Tate Donovan) A dialogue: Can we get some fucking police please? Mark J. Lijek, Consular officer (Christopher Denham) A dialogue: No body is coming, we need to go Cora A. Lijek, Consular assistant (Clea DuVall) A dialogue: anyone who can here this, we need help! Henry L. Schatz, Agricultural attaché (Rory Cochrane) A dialogue: - Joseph D. Stafford, Consular officer (Scoot McNairy) A dialogue: we are not going out in this…	No character or personage, we see a mad crowed who shout loudly and are very angry and unreasonable Dialogue: Marg bar Amrika (down with America), Marg bar Shah (Down with Shah)

	Kathleen F. Stafford, Consular assistant (Kerry Bishé) A dialogue: - **Some employees of the US embassy:** Alan B. Golacinski, Chief officer of the Marrines (Bill Tangradi) A dialogue: Don't shoot! You shoot one person, they'll kill every one of us in here! Elizabeth Ann Swift Defense Attaché's Staff (Karina Logue) A dialogue: It's done…, they are in…	
Filmic elements: (mise-en-scène, Cinematography, Editing and Sound)	**Mise-en-scène**: obviously the shots are all internal and happen inside the US embassy offices. Most of them are shots to introduce the main characters of the story **Cinematography**: the camera moves fast, just like a person who is present in the embassy following what happens. When we see the 6 characters, they are pictured in close shots. **Editing**: we see very short shots joined together to make a fast editing; a form of editing that gives two feelings to the audience. Feeling the speed	**Mise-en-scène**: we see a mass of shouting angry people in the shots. No specific character is shown. People burn the US flag and hold banners and pictures everywhere. Most of the shots are long shots although we see some close ups of strange men or women crying out loud **Cinematography**: the camera moves fast and focuses in and out, the type of lights and grains in the shots are just like a documentary **Editing**: the idea of documentary shots are completed by editing. The

and rush and meanwhile a strong suspense **Sound**: first the scenes have shocking silence, the main sound in the sequence is voice of American forces and employees talking and ordering and requesting help anxiously, in the last shot of this sequence when the occupation of the embassy is completed and the 6 have escaped, we here a sad tragic music theme over the shot	rhythm of editing makes us feel like the shots come from a super 8 camera that an amateur person has shot among the crowd. The length of the shots are very short trying to picture the strong amount of tension in the situation **Sound**: we here only shouts. There is no dialogue or discussion, only mad people shouting loudly with a great amount of anger. It is when they arrest Americans in the embassy that we here the tragic music over

Fourth Sequence, Rescuer enters the town (18 min and 10 sec)

The summary of the Sequence: Tony Mendez, the special agent who has suggested the idea of making a fake movie to rescue the 6 Americans, defends his idea in front of the high members of the security agencies. After their permission, he travels to Turkey to visit the CIA agent and get information about the situation in Iran. Then he travels to Tehran to begin the operation. We see Tehran from his point of view and we see the difficult situation of the 6 Americans hiding in the Canada ambassador's house in Tehran.

The Fourth Sequence	Americans	Iranians
The personages	**Tony Mendez** (Ben Affleck), the CIA agent who comes to bring out the 6 Americans. Drinks a lot, has a family problem and has not seen his son for some time, does not talk much and always seems calm and cold blood. Almost in all the movie we see him in grey clothes A dialogue: [to the 6 Americans waiting in Canada ambassador's house] Hi, my name is Kevin Harkins, I am here to take you home **Jack O'Donnell** (Bryan Cranston), The boss of Agent Mendez in the CIA, helps him and fights with the officials to get the permission of doing the operation, has a sense of humour, a little nervous, looks like a classic American with	Some Iranian office managers with no name and with beard, suspicious looks (the man in the Iran's embassy in Turkey, the police man in Tehran airport, the man in charge in the ministry of culture, the man in charge in Iran's security agency) **Sahar** (Sheila Vand), Iranian housekeeper in Canad Ambassador's home, young and smart, he only Iranian who has a name in the movie, gets suspicious and asks Ambassador's wife about their "guests", she is considered as a threat to the lives of the Americans hiding in Ambassador's home

	white skin and is suit up like a classic middle manager, he acts and looks like a patriot A dialogue: [in defence of the idea of the fake movie says to the US minister of defence] This is the best bad idea we've got sir! **Ken Taylor**, Ambassador of Canada in Iran (Victor Garber), a very kind and sympathetic middle aged man who helps the Americans with all the power he has, hosts the 6 Americans in his house for a long time although he knows that there are serious risks, he acts like he is an American and that's why his name is added in this column as an "American" A dialogue: [to Agent Mendez] There's something you should know. We think one of our housekeepers figured out who they are. We don't know if we can trust her.	
Filmic elements: (mise-en-scène, Cinematography, Editing and Sound)	**Mise-en-scène**: The shots in the US are "normal", long shots of beautiful Washington D.C, night shots of ordinary life in US with lights, everything is just in its order, people look OK, characters in US are funny and make jokes all the time while they seem to know they are in "danger", we see close	**Mise-en-scène**: the main part of this sequence happens in Tehran. We see the city and its situation from the point of view of Tony Mendez. The picture of Khomeini is in the back ground of the external shots giving the feeling that he is watching you everywhere, at the Tehran airport we see a

up shots of some sentimental objects: the wedding ring of Mendez which reminds him of his family, the post card to his son to say good bye, like many other movies the emphasis in the shots is on the protagonist or the hero, the last point is that we can see an element (flag, statue or picture) of the US in the shots

Cinematography: the camera in US scenes does not move a lot. The camera is fixed and dialogue shots (which shape the most parts of the sequence in US) have been shoot with the familiar one third rule in cinematography (the main object/character always appear in the 2/3 of the screen), everything is "normal"

Editing: the cuts are classic. We first see a general shot of the location (secretary of defence office, the airport) and then we have more detailed shots of the characters or the objects, the form of editing gives the feeling like everything is calm and normal

Sound: the music on the US shots has a slow and sad theme similar to that on the first sequence. The music of tragedy, but when Mendez is on the way to the airport, the music turns into a more rhythmic one getting the feeling of the action: the hero has begun his mission

We don't hear back ground sounds, when there is no music, we hear nothing but the dialogues. US shots are silent

huge amount of desperate people. In close up shots They look tired, sad and hopeless. We see banners of Revolution Guardians with Arabic words, there is no friendly face, people are serious and angry

We see some introducing shots of Tehran: a banner in which US flag is deformed, the banners of revolution with strong words (like we have drowned in our blood), the sign of a KFC restaurant which still exists and women with Chador eat American product, a shot in which a truck carries a group of armed people who seem to control the city and finally a shot of a man hanged in the street in the back ground of the Iran map, the internal shots in Tehran (the airport, the Iranian embassy in Turkey and the Iranian Ministry offices) it is dark, grey and disordered while the internal shots in Washington, Hollywood and the Canada Ambassador house is full of light, with big windows and well ordered

Cinematography: the camera in the airport shots shakes and moves because they have used steady cam to shoot, it feels like we are among the people in the airport moving and not feeling secure, we see a lot of close ups showing the deep sentiments and sorrows of the people, in external Tehran shots camera tilts so that we (and Mendez) see what is going on in the streets

Editing: we see several jump cuts to show the situation in Tehran, the shots are cut so that there is no classic normal and logical relation between them, this form gives us a feeling of getting confused and not safe

Sound: the sound in this sequence plays a big role. At

		the airport we hear a buzz sound from the crowd and a type of music adding to this sound makes a feeling of suspense and restlessness. The voice of a fight and arresting a person around Mendez is heard on the shot in which he is getting permission to enter Iran, this tension type of sound effect continues on the city shots. We hear loud car noises and horns and the music turns to some kind of eastern Arabic kind of melody

Last sequence: The escape (24 min and 10 sec)

The summary of the sequence: in the last minute the operation is cancelled by the CIA. It means no rescue for the 6 Americans. Mendez decides to continue due to his sense of responsibility about them. He takes them to the airport and therefor a chain of events with a high degree of suspense happen. Jack O'Donnell (Mendez Boss) stands for him in the CIA trying to arrange things and rerun the operation that has been announced off. Meanwhile the Hollywood guys return to the office of the fake movie and Americans try to pass the different levels of check points in Tehran airport. The sequence ends when a cabin crew announces that the airplane has passed the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

This is the longest sequence of the film. All the stories and characters get together to make the ending strong. It is important to note that here the Americans and Iranians one more time (after the first sequence) literally face each other.

Last Sequence	Americans	Iranians
The personage	**Tony Mendez** (Ben Affleck), the CIA agent now has changed, he takes a bottle to his room after the news about the operation getting cancelled but he does not drink, he makes a choice to be a hero and save the Americans, in his eyes we see the will A dialogue: [to O'Donnell] some body is responsible jack, when things happen. I am responsible. I am taking them through **Jack O'Donnell** (Bryan Cranston), The boss of Agent Mendez in the CIA, he makes a decision too. He stands for Mendez, takes permission from the president to support the operation. he does not act like	A group of unnamed men who appear in different parts of the sequence: in the airport as Iranian Police, in the street as The Komite, in a strange building as security agents and most of all at exit gate to the airplane as the revolutionary guards, they all have beard, suspicious looks and usually very angry **Sahar** (Sheila Vand), Iranian housekeeper in Canad Ambassador's home, it turns out that she is loyal to Americans and does not tell anything about them to the security agents who come to the ambassador's house to investigate her get information,

	a wise politician anymore, he is suddenly a man of action, guiding the operation from his office, leads his team and fights and shouts against the authorities if necessary to make the escape happen	she escapes too because they will find her and punish her as a traitor to her country, at the end we see her entering to Iraq with a not that interesting situation and unknown future
	A dialogue: [to one of his staff] find White House Chief of Staff!	
	-how do I find him?	
	-we are a fucking spy agency, find him!	
	Ken Taylor, Ambassador of Canada in Iran (Victor Garber) he is still calm and sympathetic, although he has orders to shot the embassy down and leave the country, he waits for Mendez to come helping him in any way possible. He supports Mendez decision	
	A dialogue: [to Agent Mendez] Sahar (their house keeper) is one of us, you don't need to worry about her	
	Lester Siegel (Aron Arkin) and **John Chambers** (John Goodman) the Hollywood guys who are in charge of the fake movie and run the office, they are experts in making movies, they run the campaign of the movie Argo which supposes to be a Si Fi production but they know it is a cover for the operation, they are serious in their job but always make jokes about it and laugh, the slogan they have made for their movie is Argo fuck yourself!, in this sequence they show up right on time (although they know everything is cancelled they have been asked to close the office) and save the Americans, they make jokes about everything but we see when it comes to their country they are very serious	
	A dialogue:	
	Siegel: it is history, it is what it is, history plays out first as	

	farce then as tragedy Chambers: the quote is the other way around -who said it? -Marx -Groucho said it? -Karl!	
Filmic elements (mise-en-scène, Cinematography, Editing and Sound)	**Mise-en-scène**: in the American side of the story we see CIA office, White House and Hollywood, there are many close up shots showing the characters deciding about important stuff, every shot in CIA contains an American flag at the back ground, the actors move fast and talk loud showing the importance of the situation, in the airport the shots are close up showing the stress and feelings of the Americans We see also some shots of the Variety Magazine and close shots of some movie posters like Kramer Vs Kramer **Cinematography**: in CIA office everything happens fast that is why the camera moves fast and makes different moves, it tilts and pans, goes after the characters, circles around them, at the airport instead we see less camera moves, it is fixed on the faces of the characters **Editing**: this sequence is about speed, there is a competition between Americans and Iranians and here is the final game so we see very short shots that cut to each other in a very fast way, meanwhile we are watching several events that happen at the same time, so the editing not only joins the shots of a certain event (for example the airport) but it joins the events of several stories (from CIA to Hollywood to Tehran), every event has its own rhythm, sometimes the	**Mise-en-scène**: the airport shots again show chaos while nothing is in order on the screen, the external shots of the airport we see armed men (probably members of the revolutionary guards) beside the clergies (Mullas), inside the airport the first thing we see is a close shot of a colourful parrot in a cage We see also some shots in which children are being used to remake the damaged documents of the occupied embassy under the order of armed men A symbolic shot is the one in which the revolutionary guards are so excited by the story boards of the movie Mendez give them as a gift **Cinematography**: the airport shots are fixed and close, but when it comes to the Iranian security agency it moves fast, the shots are done with steady cam technique and the camera follows characters **Editing:** we can see that the film makers have used cross-cutting. Cross-cutting is an editing technique most often used in films to establish action occurring at the same time in two different locations. In a cross-cut, the camera will cut away from one action to another action, which can suggest the simultaneity of these two actions The form of editing in Tehran streets and in the airport is one more time full of surprises, close up shots of people cut to

	director has made some symbolic choices like the cut that we see from a shot of a parrot in the cage to a shot of an Iranian woman in Hijab **Sound**: there is no silence in this sequence, it all starts with the sound of Azan when Mendez has made his decision to run the plan and after that music starts and never stops, it goes up and down, slows down or speeds up but never stops, it plays an important role to create suspension (an example is when Mendez goes for checking out the tickets and the names are not approved, meanwhile in Washington people are working fast to confirm the tickets again, the music over these shots is very rhythmic and stressful until the lady at the check out desk says that it os approved and the music suddenly slows) The sound of the objects are louder in this sequence, telegraph machines in CIA sound like a train and the tone of the telephone rings are unusually loud The theme of the music changes when the Americans have successfully been out of the Iran, a relief calm theme with the sense of victory	each other, the rhythm of cutting shots in the airport is at the service of producing a strong feeling of suspense **Sound**: just like before, when we are in the streets of Tehran we hear noises and car engine sounds and a lot of horn, in the airport the noises are different, the speakers announce information in Farsi, a lot of people are talking simultaneously and the music never stops The type of the music in Tehran has the same oriental exotic Arabic theme The music on the scene when the police and Revolutionary Guards find out about the American and follow them to stop the plane has a fast and stressful rhythm

Results of the analysis part 1

There are two categories of results in this part: First results of the analysis of the characters or personages and then results of the analysis of the filmic elements.

Methodology of character analysis: At the first step I will study the characters (the second row of the tables named the personage) to see how they shape a certain type of ideological and political point of view in representing the historical story. I have used the theory of characters created by Vladimir Propp. Vladimir Propp's "Morphology of the Folktale" was published in Russian in 1928. Although it represented a breakthrough in both folkloristics and morphology and influenced Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, it was generally unnoticed in the West until it was translated in 1958. His character types are used in media education and can be applied to almost any story, be

it in literature, theatre, film, television series, games, etc.

The Character Theory of Propp suggests that there are 7 types of characters in most of the narratives:

1. The villain (struggles against the hero)

2. The donor (prepares the hero or gives the hero some magical object)

3. The (magical) helper (helps the hero in the quest)

4. The princess (person the hero marries, often sought for during the narrative)

5. The false hero (perceived as good character in beginning but emerges as evil)

6. The dispatcher (character who makes the lack known and sends the hero off)

7. The hero (victim/seeker/paladin/winner, reacts to the donor, weds the princess)

Results of character analysis

Before discussing about the characters with the Propp's approach we should note that the six Americans are not really characters of the story. That is because they never change and have no influence on the main plot of the movie. To make it clearer, we can consider them as some diamonds that Mendez comes to Iran to carry out with him. They don't change anything. They are just there to be rescued (just like the princess in a castle waiting for the hero).But I have put them in the table because in the phase of comparing the appearances of the two sides of the story (Americans and Iranians) their presence matters.

The hero according to Propp's theory is the "protagonist", the seeker and it is not difficult to understand that in this movie the hero would be the CIA agent Tony Mendez who comes to do a very hard mission. The dispatcher or the character who informs the hero of the danger and sends him off to the adventure, here is Mendez boss Jack O'Donnell. He is an almost aged man who really cares about the hero (Mendez). He supports him; fights for him and sends him to Iran in order to do the mission. The princess or the character the hero fights for is the group of the Americans hiding in Tehran and waiting to be rescued. According to Propp's work, there is always a Helper. Someone that has magical power and helps the hero fulfil his mission. In Argo this character can be distinguished in Ken Taylor, the ambassador of Canada in Tehran. He hides the six Americans in his house and protects them. He has special spaces in which they can hide if Iranians come after. There are devices in his house to connect Mendez to CIA and speak with them and finally he is the one who prepares fake Canadian passport for the Americans to have new identity.

Identifying the Donor character is not complicated. Propp says the donor is the one who prepares the hero or gives him some magical objects. In Argo such character can be found in the shape of the CIA. This is the agency which gives Mendez new identity, connects him to the agent in Istanbul for the latest information, gives him money for establishing a studio in order to produce a fake movie, etc. Finally the villain who is the one struggling against the hero, the bad one, the evil; we can consider him the "Komite" or revolutionary guards or angry Iranians. We can even consider him as the

"Ayatllah" who is everywhere, in the streets, on TV, at the airport, looking the hero with his sharp and deep eyes.

From the Propp's approach, Argo is a classic fairy-tail with familiar elements and characters. Decoding the types of characters shows that the audience watches a very ancient and familiar form of story-telling: The hero and the villain, the angel and the devil, the good and the bad and the Americans and the Iranians. The interesting point is that there is no sign of the false hero (the one that appears to be the hero at first, but emerges as evil). Argo has all types of Propp's characters except for the false hero. It seems that the movie is so politically important for its producers that they cannot stand such a character. A false hero would mean an American who is like a hero but it turns out that is a traitor or a bad person. Deleting this type of character from the story means the political and ideological message of the movie should be understood rapidly and clearly. Nothing should confuse the audience: Americans are good people. There is no exception for that. Instead on the other side we see a false villain; A character who appears bad but emerges as a good person helping the hero. In Argo this character is Sahar. She is an Iranian person working in the Canada Ambassador as a house keeper. Although she seems like someone who might inform Iranian revolutionary guards about the ambassador "guests", later she proves her loyalty to them and saves them. Here is another ideological point of the movie: the traitors are not in "our" side, they belong to the "other" side only.

In the table below I have reviewed the characters of the movie according to Propp's theory and have compared them to a very famous story, Lord of The Rings

Character type	Argo	Lord Of The Rings
Hero	Tony Mendez	Frodo Baggins
Donor	The CIA	Galadriel
Helper	Canadian Ambassador	Sam
Princess	6 Americans	The Ring of power
False hero	-	Saruman
Dispatcher	Jack O'Donnell	Gandalf
Villain	Ayatollah/Iranians	Sauron

Results of the Filmic Elements analysis

I have compared the results of the study in each column regarding how the movie represents Americans and Iranians in every element.

mise-en-scène: this French phrase means "put to the scene" and points to all the things which is or happens before the camera. As it can be seen, in all three sequences that have been studied, the elements on the screen make meanings that matter for my purpose of study. In the Internal shots in U.S we see everything in order, the offices in the USA embassy, the house of Canada ambassador, the office in CIA they are all well-organized with light and colours. People look OK they are well-dressed and good looking even if they have difficult situations. In the most shots there is a flag of U.S or the White House in the back ground. Internal shots in Iran are just the opposite. The rooms and offices are dark. The objects are disordered and people wear dark and old

dress. In the shots in which there is a sign or map of Iran we can see guns too. Faces are either angry and aggressive or desperate.

The same happens in the external shots. While in U.S the traffic is fine, normal life is going on, we see romantic inserts of the wedding ring and post cards (family) and in long shots there can be seen the marks of American power (like the famous obelisk), in Iran things are different. Streets are full of crowds who look desperate and confused, armed men are everywhere, the traffic is crazy, on the walls there are lots of banners and graphics with hard slogans and the picture of Ayatollah are in every shot.

Cinematography: except for the last sequence, the camera in U.S scenes is fixed and calm. It makes the feeling that the audience is a person who is present in CIA or the White House or Hollywood; Someone from our own who Wonders about the complication and crisis but knows that in the time of action, the characters will do whatever is necessary to win the game (last sequence). Camera looks to the agents and office staff as if they can be trusted. In Iran things are different. Camera moves faster, tilts and pans to discover this new land. Close shots of people in the street or at the airport picture a different world. Somewhere in the east that everything might happen. That is why the camera acts like in a documentary.

Editing: the length of the shots is just the same as an ordinary Hollywood movie. We never see a plan-sequence or extra ordinary shots. The type of cutting shots to each other varies in different sequences. While in U.S we see the old familiar type of editing, in Iran it is different. Close ups of people cut to each other to make an exotic feeling. If the things in US are ordinary and normal, things in Iran with this form of editing looks strange and weird. In the first and last sequence as we see action scenes, the form of editing is at the service of making suspense. The rhythm of shots is fast and length of them is very short. The editing in some scenes makes symbolic meanings. In Tehran airport we see a cut from a colourful parrot in a cage to a woman in Hijab. This kind of editing makes the mind of the audience think about the relation between these two image cut to each other. As it does not contain a technical or narrative based logic, it turns to a symbol; a puzzle that should be solved to understand its message. In Argo there are several cuttings in this way to symbolize the objects and characters.

Sound: the ideological messages that are sent through the images and pictures are completed with the sound and music. Silence and calmness in US is broken by the noises and cries in Iran. The sounds in Tehran give a feeling of threat. Every moment something bad might happen. Even the cars are very noisy and the streets are full of horns and ructions. It is like there is no peace in this city, if you need peace you have to get out of it as soon as you can. And that is exactly the purpose of the protagonist, taking the Americans out of this place.

The stereotype approach of the movie gets more obvious when we hear the music on the scenes. When the six Americans are on the scene we hear a sad and tragic melody (the sad destiny of these people who are stocked and cannot get out of the trouble). Over the images of Tehran the music has an Arabic theme, creating a sense of strangeness and distance. Two times we hear the sound of Azan (a song to invite people getting prepared for praying) on the shots; Once in Istanbul and once in Tehran. The interesting point is that the type of the Azan and the music is completely Arabic style and different from the Turkish and Persian music style. While we hear the sound of a famous Led Zeppelin track (when the levee breaks) with the atmosphere of the U.S in 70s, the music on Iran scenes has no character. It is just like every other part of the

Middle East, somewhere far away.

The music and the sounds in the last sequence are very essential elements to make suspense and excitement for the audience. The melody of inspirational hero ready to go for the action (at first part of the last sequence) and the theme of victory right after the rescue in the airplane also make symbolic meanings: there was a war and Americans won that war.

Analyzing the three sequences in which there is encounter between Americans and Iranians shows these results:

Reproduction of the Self and The other (or Us and Them): the narrative in characterization and also the filmic elements have emphasis on the difference between "Us" as Americans who are in danger and "Them" as Iranians who are looking for trouble.

Definition of being normal: the Americans are those who always act normal, Iranians are not normal. They are always unpredictable with dangerous intentions. Americans are calm and reasonable while Iranians always look angry and unfriendly.

Hero and the villain: the hero is in the American side of the story. While he has detailed identity, family, appearance and ideology, on the other side we see a crowd of unreasonable people who have no details. They are only the enemy/devil/villain

The idea of nationalism: on the American side the idea of nationalism is clear, they protect their family, their land, their people and there is the U.S flag everywhere to remind it. On the Iranian side this is not clear. They never show what exactly they want; there is no sign of a nation. Iran flag as a symbol of the country and the nation does not exist in the world of the movie. They are people with no identity, no family and even no name.

Some screenshots of the filmic elements:

The big picture of Ayatollah Khomeini appears in the most shots in Tehran

The hero has done his mission and has come back to regain his family, the flag of US can be seen in the most shots in Washington

Part 2: the concept of orientalism

In his 1978 book "Orientalism", Edward Said argued that Western representations of the Middle East and India are constructed in ways that support the West's vision of itself and justify Western control over these areas. The implied supremacy of the Western tradition has been argued to be denoted in texts portraying non-Western societies in at least three ways that are relevant to this portion of Argo.

First, since the non-western societies' primary purpose within the films is to be a foil or contrast to Western society, the divisions within the non-Western societies are irrelevant. American-made media are argued to portray the Middle East as a single block without any internal variation or individuality. In the fourth sequence of Argo we see Tehran from the point of view of Tony Mendez, the CIA agent who has come to rescue Americans. The scenes we see and the sounds and music reproduce the familiar Middle-Eastern city with all the noises, strange faces, car driving and heavy traffics, big population and the sound of Azan. It is just like every other city in the region (Baghdad, Beirut, Istanbul, Damascus, etc) The lack of specificity of the location and the reduction of the entire region to a few salient markers can be seen to imply a lack of distinction across Middle-Eastern settings and peoples. No matter where in the Middle East this takes place, it is all the same.

A second means through which power relations are denoted in the text is by portraying the non-Western society as perpetually the subject of a Western gaze without presenting the "other's" perspective on the West (Shohat & Stam, 1994; Shome, 1996). The only time that we see the Americans from the point of view of Iranians is in the sequence in which they go to Bazar as Canadian film makers to visit the location. We see that a hidden person takes some pictures of them. Later we find out that it has been the Iranian security agents who had took the pictures. The other sequences all are narrated from the American point of view. It is never mentioned how Iranians look to the issue. For instance historically they let women and black hostages free, but this is never pointed in the movie.

A final means through which ethnocentric or orientalist perspectives are thought to be instantiated in film is through the representation of Whiteness or Westerness as a race-less, cultureless, category. Western texts often feature White, North American or European characters that come to be able to move comfortably within societies other than their own, whereas characters from non-European or non-North American societies are portrayed as inevitably culture-bound (Hall, 1981; Shohat & Stam, 1994; Shome, 1996). An example of this view can be seen where Mendez who has just arrived to Tehran and will stay only two days, goes to a black market and buys a vehicle to carry the Americans to the Bazar and later to the airport. He acts just like he knows every street and can find his way easily in a big crowded city he has never been before.

Part 3: Hollywood ideology and capitalism

Douglas Kellner in his book "Camera Politica: The Politics and Ideology of Contemporary Hollywood Film"(1988) argues about the domination of certain

conservative values that construct Hollywood approaches in making movies. He discusses that the form of Hollywood film has in recent years come to be characterized as inherently ideological because it tends invariably to reinforce the dominant forms of patriarchal and capitalist life. We differ from the common characterization of this ideological procedure in that we see it not as a matter of cognition, the positioning of spectators as spuriously self-identical, specular subjects who are lured into imaginary identification that is inherently ideological. Rather, Hollywood forms are in our view ideological because they replicate the figures and narratives that constitute the very substance of those values, practices, and institutions that shape a society of domination. With this approach we can find some of the most ideological aspects of Argo that represent the capitalistic values of the contemporary Hollywood.

Race: the hero/protagonist in the mainstream movies is always the American white man; from the superhero comic books to the comedy romantics and most dramas. This is the way Hollywood represent the culture it prefers and it reproduces. Blacks are for the dancing and playing, Asians for being in the distance and strange, Middle Easterners for exotic ancient-type style who are rich and wild; and so on for others. In Argo we see exactly the same. There is no character with different color or race. All the "good" people belong to whiteness. In CIA there is no black or Asian, Latin or any other race, neither in the White House. Even among the hostages (that are shown in the movie) and the six Americans who have escaped there is no other race. This becomes even stranger when the picture of the real Tony Mendez (CIA agent and hero of the movie) is far different from the face of Ben Affleck. The real Mendez has a Latin root and it can be easily distinguished but the Mendez in the movie is again the White man.

Women/sex: from the late 1960's and early 1970's, as feminists challenged the confines of women's social, political, and economic roles, feminist critics and theorists examined the roles and representations of women in the production, distribution and consumption of cultural texts; they questioned the process that constructs and reconstructs "women", aiming to intervene in that process. One important image which for the years reconstructed the passive role of women, is the image made by Hollywood mainstream movies. Although the feminist critical approach in different studies has tried to improve this image and make it more realistic, it still exists strongly. In the movie Argo it can be observed that the traditional passive role defined for women in Hollywood is reproducing itself. There is no female character in the story. The two women among the six Americans are only employees and wives to their husbands and never have influence on anything. There is no woman in the staff of CIA, in the White House or in Hollywood producers. The works in this movie are done by men and by men only. The most important woman in the story is the wife of agent Mendez who only appears in one scene and his role is accepting his brave and tired husband to make the family work again. Isn't that the same classic image that has been criticized by the feminists for decades?

Family/country/soil: according to Kellner, The revival of militarist, racist, patriarchal and capitalist ideologies in post 1977 Hollywood films, which continue until today, would seem to suggest that the United States had turned significantly rightward. He points out that the idea of defending the family and then defending the nation/country/soil (which is the collection of the families) becomes a major valor in recent Hollywood. In the society under the capitalist values and Christian morality, the man should "provide" and "defend" while the woman is the one who is provided and

protected and give birth to children to make the "family". The conservative spirit which contains the mainstream Hollywood movies strongly continues to reproduce this idea of the value of providing and protection which results to individual heros and also a sense of American nationalism.

Argo is a complete example of this Hollywood which Kelner discusses, reconstructing these ideas. Mendez should fight and win his mission to be able to see his son and his wife (the family). Here the family becomes a symbol of the country/nation. America has lost his sons and the hero as the representative of U.S goes to the heart of the enemy in order to save his family/country/nation.

Conclusion

The analysis of the movie Argo in three parts demonstrates clearly that Argo is a very appropriate example of a culture industry product. It contains all the ideological and capitalistic aspects of such products.

In the next part the "critics" about this product will be analyzed to guide us to the purpose of the study which is showing that critics (movie reviews in our study) do not criticize the culture industry. They are now a part of it.

Analyzing the film reviews

For this part of the study I gather a number of the reviews published in the U.S about Argo as a sample. According to metacritic.com[1] which is a reference website for critics about all the entertainment industry (better said the culture industry), there are 45 critics related to the movie Argo. These reviews belong to a verity of printed media in U.S. including newspapers, weekly magazines and monthlies. From the 45 texts, 41 are positive critics, 4 are mixed and 0 reviews are negative. To prepare the sample of the study I have considered two factors: first publishing period (so that they could be compared equally) and second, the media's circulation (the domain of its audience and the power of influence). The sample contains ten reviews from ten American daily newspapers in 2012. I have selected these ten newspapers because they are the most circulated dailies publishing in U.S. Here is the table presenting the sample I am going to study in this part (in the section of the methodology of the study the complete information about the texts are presented).

Wall Street Journal	New York Post
New York Times	Washington Post
USA Today	Chicago Sun-Times
Los Angeles Times	Denver Post
Daily News	Chicago Tribune

I have not considered the reviews published in the film magazines because the publishing period of magazines is different (weekly and monthly). Also in the study I have analyzed the online version of the texts which are accessible in their websites. The method to study these texts is Critical Discourse Analysis. It should be noted that since all the reviews did not contain title or subtitle and also some other journalistic elements including pictures were used differently (in the online version the websites use images as slide shows) I will not consider them in the study. Therefore process of analyzing is done on the texts only.

The tool I have prepared to use in this part of the study includes three questions:

1. How does the text represent the movie? What are the positive and negative points about Argo in the text and what are the main themes? (Macro Propositions)

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[1] *Metacritic is a website that aggregates reviews of music albums, games, movies, TV shows, DVDs, and formerly, books. For each product, a numerical score from each review is obtained and the total is averaged. It was created and founded by Jason Dietz, Marc Doyle, and Julie Doyle Roberts. An excerpt of each review is provided along with a hyperlink to the source. Three colour codes of Green, Yellow and Red summarize the critic's recommendation, giving an idea of the general appeal of the product among reviewers and, to a lesser extent, the public*

2. What are the lexical choices of the writer? What kinds of adjectives, adverbs, verbs, metaphors, etc have been selected to represent the movie? (Lexical Choices)

3. How Americans and Iranians are represented in the text? (Implications)

For every review there is a file which contains answers to the above questions. On the header of the file there is some general information about the media including the name, the writer, date of publishing, the web address, number of the words in the text and more importantly the score this daily has given to the film in metacritic.com. There is also an abstract of the text. There are three columns in which the data for analysis is gathered. One for the Macro Propositions, the second for the writer's Lexical Choices and the third one for the Implications in the text. In the next step the data is observed and I have analyzed every text. Finally the results of each analysis are given.

To make the reading the study easier, I have put one example of the analysis in the main body. The reviews and other nine text analysis could be found in the Annex part of the work.

What is the text about?
The text has three parts. First some general positive points about the movie, then it comes to the story line which is described with complete details, in the second part there are some points about the talents of Ben Affleck in making the movie. The final part belongs to the points about the other casts and crews including the actors, cinematography, editing. The last paragraph is about the fact that the whole story in the movie is not true and things has been added but this is a good thing and helps the movie

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:

How does the text represent the movie?

-Now, as director and star of "Argo," he has deployed a studio's full-scale resources on an intrinsically dramatic story, and the results are nothing less than sensational.

- The factual details, are brilliantly embellished in the screenplay that Chris Terrio based on a Wired Magazine article by Joshua Bearman.

- As a filmmaker working on a large canvas in a quasidocumentary style, Mr. Affleck rises to one challenge after another with a sure touch

- If you've forgotten how gratifying a Hollywood studio film can be, this is the best good idea you could ask for.

How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?

- Far from being a boy, Ben Affleck is his own man, a distinctive actor who, in recent years, directed "Gone Baby Gone" and "The Town," a couple of medium-size movies that established him as an accomplished filmmaker

-Tony's crash program to teach his six frightened charges their assigned roles feels convincing and fresh.

- Now, as director and star of "Argo," he has deployed a studio's full-scale resources on an intrinsically dramatic story, and the results are nothing less than sensational

- There's very little fat on the narrative bones

How Iranians are presented in the text?
How Americans are presented in the text?

- What makes the whole thing delicious in the bargain is that the CIA really did enlist Hollywood's help in creating a sham production company to give the agency's fake movie the ring of truth

- The crisis began when Islamist revolutionaries stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took more than 50 Americans hostage

- The revolutionaries themselves are neither demonized nor romanticized

- It's also remarkable how the advent of the film coincides with yet another crisis involving Iran.

The observations on the text (Wall Street Journal)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that
In the text and in the selected fragments we can see that the writer has used positive comments about the movie.
No negative points have been mentioned.
General themes the writer has used in the texts are: the story plot, the screenplay, the director, Hollywood, acting, documentation of historical events, movie within a movie style
- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that
In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors. The functon of these choices is to describe the movie as a successful one.
Ben Affleck is presented as "distinctive" actor and "accomplished" filmmaker, the ideas of the screenplay including Tony's program to teach the six Americans their roles are "fresh and convincing". The results of the work of Affleck is described "nothing less than sensational", and the story line is described with this metaphor "little fat on the narrative bones"
- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that
There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
What makes the whole thing delicious in the bargain is that the CIA really did enlist Hollywood's help in creating a sham production company to give the agency's fake movie the ring of truth	In the time of action CIA trusts Hollywood. Americans trust each other
The crisis began when Islamist revolutionaries stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took more than 50 Americans hostage	The use of Islamist as a recent made adjective to describe the Iranians relates the Radicals to a whole nation. It is relating the revolutionaries in 1979 with the picture of radical groups like ISIS in today The number of Americans taken hostage was 52, using "more than 50"American is a way of dramatizing the historical event
The revolutionaries themselves are neither demonized nor romanticized	Which means what we see in the movie is very close to reality. This is the truth about the Iranians
It's also remarkable how the advent of the film coincides with yet another crisis involving Iran.	The writer does not clarify what exactly this could mean. It probably points to the Iran's nuclear issue. Also addressing the readers in a way that these people are dangerous, there is always a crisis about them

Results of the observation:

The critical text supports the movie in the technical aspect

The critical text has some statements fully in favor of the movie which are due to selecting certain adjectives and other linguistic tools

The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and Them or the good and the evil

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?

The text has three parts. First some general positive points about the movie, then it comes to the story line which is described with complete details, in the second part there are some points about the talents of Ben Affleck in making the movie. The final part belongs to the points about the other casts and crews including the actors, cinematography, editing. The last paragraph is about the fact that the whole story in the movie is not true and things has been added but this is a good thing and helps the movie

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie?	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?**	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?**
-Now, as director and star of "Argo," he has deployed a studio's full-scale resources on an intrinsically dramatic story, and the results are nothing less than sensational.	- Far from being a boy, Ben Affleck is his own man, a distinctive actor who, in recent years, directed "Gone Baby Gone" and "The Town," a couple of medium-size movies that established him as an accomplished filmmaker	- What makes the whole thing delicious in the bargain is that the CIA really did enlist Hollywood's help in creating a sham production company to give the agency's fake movie the ring of truth
- The factual details, are brilliantly embellished in the screenplay that Chris Terrio based on a Wired Magazine article by Joshua Bearman.	-Tony's crash program to teach his six frightened charges their assigned roles feels convincing and fresh.	- The crisis began when Islamist revolutionaries stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took more than 50 Americans hostage
- As a filmmaker working on a large canvas in a quasidocumentary style, Mr. Affleck rises to one challenge after another with a sure touch	- Now, as director and star of "Argo," he has deployed a studio's full-scale resources on an intrinsically dramatic story, and the results are nothing less than sensational	- The revolutionaries themselves are neither demonized nor romanticized
- If you've forgotten how gratifying a Hollywood studio film can be, this is the best good idea you could ask for.	- There's very little fat on the narrative bones	- It's also remarkable how the advent of the film coincides with yet another crisis involving Iran.

The observations on the text (Wall Street Journal)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

In the text and in the selected fragments we can see that the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

No negative points have been mentioned.

General themes the writer has used in the texts are: the story plot, the screenplay, the director, Hollywood, acting, documentation of historical events, movie within a movie style

- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors. The functon of these choices is to describe the movie as a successful one.

Ben Affleck is presented as "distinctive" actor and "accomplished" filmmaker, the ideas of the screenplay including Tony's program to teach the six Americans their roles are "fresh and convincing". The results of the work of Affleck is described "nothing less than sensational", and the story line is described with this metaphor "little fat on the narrative bones"

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
What makes the whole thing delicious in the bargain is that the CIA really did enlist Hollywood's help in creating a sham production company to give the agency's fake movie the ring of truth	In the time of action CIA trusts Hollywood. Americans trust each other
The crisis began when Islamist revolutionaries stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took more than 50 Americans hostage	The use of Islamist as a recent made adjective to describe the Iranians relates the Radicals to a whole nation. It is relating the revolutionaries in 1979 with the picture of radical groups like ISIS in today The number of Americans taken hostage was 52, using "more than 50"American is a way of dramatizing the historical event

The revolutionaries themselves are neither demonized nor romanticized	Which means what we see in the movie is very close to reality. This is the truth about the Iranians
It's also remarkable how the advent of the film coincides with yet another crisis involving Iran.	The writer does not clarify what exactly this could mean. It probably points to the Iran's nuclear issue. Also addressing the readers in a way that these people are dangerous, there is always a crisis about them

Results of the observation:

The critical text supports the movie in the technical aspect

The critical text has some statements fully in favour of the movie which are due to selecting certain adjectives and other linguistic tools

The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and Them or the good and the evil

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?
The author of the text uses a metaphor in the whole article which is about the show and theatre. He says that what Iranians have done is a big show and that is why the operation of Argo is a good thing. Because this also about the movies and theatre. Based on this idea the writer describes the story, points to some historical events, reviews the acting, directing and technical aspects of the movie.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? -It's a doozy of a story and so borderline ridiculous that it sounds — ta-da! — like something that could have been cooked up only by Hollywood. - a series of photographs from the hostage crisis that is juxtaposed with stills from the movie show how close Mr. Affleck hews to the evidence - after setting your pulse racing, he smoothly downshifts, easing from the high anxiety of the opener — which evokes 1970s political thrillers like Sydney Pollack's "Three Days of the Condor" — into something looser, mellower and funny	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?** - At one point in "Argo," a smart, jittery thriller about a freakish and little-known chapter of the Iranian hostage crisis … - Fast and faster, he sets the skittish stage with convincing you-are-there re-creations. - Mr. Affleck, working from Mr. Mendez's book, "The Master of Disguise," and a 2007 Wired magazine article, "The Great Escape," by the journalist Joshuah Bearman, embellishes the official story without eviscerating it -there is a certain kinship between the spectacle they're putting on and the really big show the Iranian revolutionaries have staged	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?** - much like the revolutionary shock troops who seized the United States embassy on Nov. 4, 1979, and turned the crisis into gripping political theater watched by the entire world — tune in tomorrow when America goes on trial, with the special guest star the Ayatollah Khomeini — the producer knows that historical events alone don't cut it. You need lights, camera, action. - The Hollywood angle brings lightness and levity into the movie, serving as comic relief that Mr. Affleck uses contrapuntally with the increasingly tense, perilous situation in Tehran

The observations on the text (the New York Times)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

In the text and in the selected fragments we can see that the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

No negative points have been mentioned.

General themes the writer has used in the texts are: the historical back ground of the story, the adapted screenplay, the details of the scenes belonged to the 70s, Hollywood role in the story, acting, good ideas in the form of narrative

Second column (Lexical Choices)

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors. The function of these choices is to describe the movie as a successful one.

The Thriller is "jittery" but in a "smart" way. The form of executing of the movie is so "convincing" that it looks like "you are there". The writer names Ben Affleck as "Mr.Affleck", just as he calls the real CIA agent "Mr.Mendez" and a few lines later does not call the journalist who has written the story for the first time like this. The writer describes the work of Affleck as "embellishing" without "eviscerating". This means according to him all the not real events in the movie have worked very well.

The two Hollywood characters are described as" breezy" and "wonderful".

The writer uses the metaphor of "a big show" to describe the situation that Iranian revolutionaries have "staged"

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
much like the revolutionary shock troops who seized the United States embassy on Nov. 4, 1979, and turned the crisis into gripping political theater watched by the entire world — tune in tomorrow when America goes on trial, with the special guest star the Ayatollah Khomeini — the producer knows that historical events alone don't cut it. You need lights, camera, action	The writer believes that It has been a greater game in which the Ayatollah is against the Americans. Iran is playing a political show and so must America do
The Hollywood angle brings lightness and levity into the movie, serving as comic relief that Mr. Affleck uses contrapuntally with the increasingly tense, perilous situation in Tehran	According to the writer here is the encounter: the joyful, funny and calm Americans versus peril and serious Iranians. The idea of us and them, good and bad
in the end, this is a story about outwitting rather than killing the enemy, making it a homage to actual intelligence and an example of the same.	The idea of screening a show, ends to here: the Americans are smarter than Iranians. The actual intelligence (which can also point to the intelligence services) belongs to the American side who fooled the Iranian side

Results of the observation:

The critical text supports the movie in the technical aspect and narrative form

The critical text has some statements fully in favour of the movie which are due to selecting certain adjectives and other linguistic tools

The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and Them or the good and the evil

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?

the writer first gives a historical back ground of the story in one paragraph, then reviews the story line during which points to the positive aspects of the movie (it is about real life event but has the form of a spy fiction, the risking plan of CIA that the movie is based on is admiring) in two paragraphs. Finally writes about the role of Ben Affleck as actor and director in the movie which according to him is successful.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? - Fusing suspense and humor in a political thriller is a tricky prospect, but *Argo* is more than up to the task. - *Argo* is the rare nail-biter that's also riotously funny as it focuses on a real-life incident that was not exactly ripped from the headlines - Affleck, whose talents as a filmmaker have come to overshadow his acting roles, shines in both categories here. He nails the part of Mendez, the savvy, shaggy-haired rescuer, captures the feel of the era and establishes a thoroughly credible sense of urgency -**positive points:** -**negative points**: **The main themes of the text**:	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?** - Ben Affleck's 'Argo' is a superbly crafted and darkly funny real-life political thriller, with pitch-perfect performances - *Argo* is the rare nail-biter that's also riotously funny as it focuses on a real-life incident that was not exactly ripped from the headlines - an outrageously daring covert rescue of a half-dozen American diplomats from the Canadian Embassy went unreported	**How Iranians are presented in the text?** **How Americans are presented in the text?** While the Iran hostage crisis was at the top of nightly newscasts for much of 1980, an outrageously daring covert rescue of a half-dozen American diplomats from the Canadian Embassy went unreported. The story was kept under wraps, deemed classified information until Bill Clinton's presidency over a dozen years later - The embassy workers knew it would not be long before they were found out and executed - Equal parts great escape caper, Hollywood satire, and political commentary, Argo is easily one of the year's best films.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? -Equal parts great escape caper, Hollywood satire, and political commentary, Argo is easily one of the year's best films	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?** - The CIA, Canadian government and some small-to-middling Hollywood players joined forces for a big role in the release of six Americans in hiding. Their secret weapon? An oh-so-cheesy, fake sci-fi flick. - The scheme Mendez concocted involved a veteran Hollywood producer. - . The embassy workers knew it would not be long before they were found out and executed	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?** - But once their false identities were set, they would have to fool the Revolutionary Guard to board a flight to Switzerland. While it's hard to imagine anyone today convincing authorities that they are shooting a movie in a country undergoing a revolution, in 1980 this scheme was just crazy enough to work

The observations on the text (USA Today)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

In the text and in the selected fragments we can see that the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

No negative points have been mentioned.

General themes the writer has used in the texts are: the historical back ground of the story, interesting plot, good job of Ben Affleck in acting and directing

Second column (Lexical Choices)

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

The writer describes Argo as "superbly crafted" and "darkly funny". Also according to him it is a "rare nail-biter" movie.

He calls the movie a "political thriller" and emphasises on the "Real life incidents" of Argo

He admires the acts of CIA to plan an "outrageously daring covert rescue".

He calls the idea of making a fake movie "secret weapon" of a group including "the CIA, Canadian government and Hollywood"

He names the Hollywood producer as a "veteran".

According to the writer, the Americans would be found and "executed" if the plan was not done (uses passive from of the verb not mentioning the ones who would execute them)

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
While the Iran hostage crisis was at the top of nightly newscasts for much of 1980, an outrageously daring covert rescue of a half-dozen American diplomats from the Canadian Embassy went unreported. The story was kept under wraps, deemed classified information until Bill Clinton's presidency over a dozen years later	The implication here is pointing to the power of the U.S in doing two things. First planning for a secret operation that has been successful, second ,that Americans have the power to protect their confidential information
The embassy workers knew it would not be long before they were found out and executed	Although the verb is passive and there is no pronoun in the sentence, it is understood that the writer addresses to the Iranians as dangerous forces who find and execute people
Equal parts great escape caper, Hollywood satire, and political commentary, Argo is easily one of the year's best films.	The writer believes that political commentary besides other parts of the movie is good and valid, as if he is defending the ideological idea of the movie
But once their false identities were set, they would have to fool the Revolutionary Guard to board a flight to Switzerland. While it's hard to imagine anyone today convincing authorities that they are shooting a movie in a country undergoing a revolution, in 1980 this scheme was just crazy enough to work	Americans are smart and brave enough to perform such a risky plan and Iranians are fool enough to be deceived

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing

-The critical text has some statements fully in favour of the movie which are due to selecting certain adjectives and other linguistic tools. Besides this there are lexical choices that represent the ideological ideas of the movie

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and them, brave Americans and dangerous Iranians, smart Americans and foolish Iranians

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?
 The text contains three main parts. First a quick review of Ben Affleck's professional career as an actor and director. The second part is about reviewing the technical aspects of the movie. From the script to cinematography and editing to even casting. In the last part the writer tells the story of the movie with details and ends with the Hollywood parts as the funniest part of the film.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? - Ben Affleck's gripping film based on a true story is well acted and directed as a movie about a movie that is used as a cover to help six Americans escape during the Iranian hostage crisis -Very much like Clint Eastwood before him, actor turned actor-director Ben Affleck not only has a passion for those kinds of throwback entertainments, he knows that the only way to get them on the screen effectively is to do the work himself - It's all based on a true story persuasively conveyed — and amplified — in the best classic movie tradition -**positive points:** -**negative points**: **The main themes of the text**:	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?** - "Argo" takes you back to a brighter, earlier time, when Hollywood regularly turned out smart and engaging films that crackled with energy and purpose. - Very much like Clint Eastwood before him, Ben Affleck not only has a passion for those kinds of throwback entertainments, he knows that the only way to get them on the screen effectively is to do the work himself. - tale of how an ace CIA agent rescued six Americans from the jaws of the Iranian Revolution with a little help from, hard as it may be to believe, the good folks of Hollywood.	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?** "Argo" takes you back to a brighter, earlier time, when Hollywood regularly turned out smart and engaging films that crackled with energy and purpose - how an ace CIA agent rescued six Americans from the jaws of the Iranian Revolution with a little help from, hard as it may be to believe, the good folks of Hollywood.

How does the text represent the movie?	How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?	How Iranians are presented in the text? How Americans are presented in the text?
- Affleck's abilities start with an instinct for storytelling, for always moving the action forward while never losing track of the need to keep events convincingly realistic. The beautifully textured shots by cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto and the brisk, propulsive editing of William Goldenberg combine to relentlessly advance the plot, with not an ounce of narrative fat getting in the way - we see a compelling, expertly done re-creation of the Nov. 4, 1979, storming of the American Embassy in Tehran - Affleck's abilities start with an instinct for storytelling, for always moving the action forward while never losing track of the need to keep events convincingly realistic	- Convincingly scripted by debuting screenwriter Chris Terrio from the real-life exploits of retired agent Tony Mendez (played by Affleck), "Argo" is most impressive in the number of moods its director has casually mastered. -relentlessly advance the plot, with not an ounce of narrative fat getting in the way. - . He and casting director Lora Kennedy have wisely given the six American hostages roles to talented actors	

The observations on the text (Los Angeles Times)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

-In the text and in the selected fragments we can see that the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

-No negative points have been mentioned.

-General themes the writer has used in the texts are: Ben Affleck and his professional career, good old Hollywood, good script, quality of the technical aspects of the movie, the story line

- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

-According to the writer Argo is a "smart" movie that has a "purpose". This purpose could be the ideology that the movie reproduces but in a smart form.

-the writer speaks of "throwback" as if there is a tradition that the film tries to come back to. This tradition, as he compares Argo with the works of Clint Eastwood, looks like a type of conservative political movie. And the writer emphasises that Argo is "very much like" Eastwood's works.

-in the fragment we see three choices in the words that makes it like a political view of the writer: first the metaphor of "ace" for the CIA agent, second the metaphor of "jaws" for Iran revolution and third using "good folks" to describe Hollywood people.

-the writer has used "exploits" to describe the experiences of Mendez (CIA agent) to make it clear that these experiences are very valuable and then expresses that Affleck has casually "mastered" in filming those moods of experience. We see a huge amount of respect in these choices of words.

- in describing the good quality of the narrative of the movie the writer has used the metaphor of "not an ounce of fat" on the narrative.

-the strangest word is the term "hostages" for naming the six Americans hiding in the Canadian Ambassador's house. It is known that they had escaped from the embassy and surely were not hostages. Could it be a simple mistake from the writer or an intention to manipulate the mind of the reader of the review?

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
"Argo" takes you back to a brighter, earlier time, when Hollywood regularly turned out smart and engaging films that crackled with energy and purpose	Today Hollywood does not regularly makes movies with energy and purpose. We need more ideological movies like Argo these days
How an ace CIA agent rescued six Americans from the jaws of the Iranian Revolution with a little help from, hard as it may be to believe, the good folks of Hollywood.	The aces and the good folks in one side, the jaws of the revolution in the other side. Jaws here brings in mind the famous movie of Steven Spielberg in which American hero fights against a wild shark

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing

-The critical text has some statements fully in favour of the movie which are due to selecting certain adjectives and other linguistic tools. Besides this there are lexical choices that represent the ideological ideas of the movie

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and them, brave Americans and dangerous Iranians, ace agents against jaws

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?
 The text contains a short review of the historical back ground. In the next three paragraphs, it discusses about the story which is based on the historical events. Adores the role of script and the Hollywood men helping the plan and finally describes the role of Affleck who has been successful in making a balance between different moods of the movie.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? - How can you not love a film that has a smart sense of history, an affection for all things '70s, a well-tuned political compass and a plot kick-started by a chance viewing of "Battle for the Planet of the Apes"? -Which is not to say "Argo" ever treats the events it portrays less than seriously - Affleck. A longtime political animal — and before that a big-ticket actor, and before that the Oscar-winning screenwriter, with Matt Damon, of "Good Will Hunting" — he doesn't let his shaggy, watchful portrayal of Mendez steal the show. -**positive points:** -**negative points**: **The main themes of the text**:	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?** A credit sequence sums up how enraged Iranians came to storm the U.S. embassy. With Tehran's streets overflowing with rage, the diplomats are trapped — and aware they may be exposed any minute. - How can you not love a film that has a smart sense of history, an affection for all things '70s, a well-tuned political compass and a plot kick-started by a chance viewing of "Battle for the Planet of the Apes"?	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?** How can you not love a film that has a smart sense of history, an affection for all things '70s, a well-tuned political compass and a plot kick-started by a chance viewing of "Battle for the Planet of the Apes"? -"Argo" — based on a real story, declassified in the mid-'90s — gets every cinematic detail right. And if it seems wild, or any part didn't happen exactly as shown … well, that's what movies are for

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? - Affleck is as confident with the Hollywood scenes as he is with the thrills. That's especially true in the terrific final act, when the film goes from "Wag the Dog"-type satire to "Dog Day Afternoon" and "Midnight Express"-style tension	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?**	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?**

The observations on the text (Daily News)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

-In the text and in the selected fragments we can see the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

-No negative points have been mentioned.

- The writer has defended the movie by commenting on these themes:

Good work of Ben Affleck, good plot and script, good casting and brave decisions in selecting non-star actors, good start and ending

-according to the writer in this text, Ben Affleck has had a great success in picturing the historical and political aspects of the 70s and has turned to be a very good director

- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

-the credit sequence in the movie is not what the writer points put. The credit sequence (opening of the movie) is where we see a short story of historical back ground in the form of animation about how CIA planned a coup d'État against Mohammad Mosadegh in Iran. Describing the sequence of occupying the U.S embassy as the "credit sequence could mean that the writer has omitted this part of the movie for himself and for his reader

-the stereotype vision of the movie about "outraged Iranians" is repeated here in the text. It is mentioned that "Tehran's street overflowing with rage" which means the whole city is full of angry unreasonable people who want to kill "Americans". This generalizing (Tehran's streets, Iranians) helps to exaggerates the picture of "them" as the ideological enemy.

-the writer believes that the movie has a "smart sense of history". As there is no explanation of how the movie has this sense, the reader should accept that generally what is showed and said historically in the movie is true or at least important because the sense of the history in the movie is "smart".

-the writer has described political view of the movie by a metaphor: "compass". According to him the political compass of the movie is "well-tuned" and therefore it

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points to the right direction. The right political direction is what exists in the movie: its ideology- in describing the good quality of the narrative of the movie the writer has used the metaphor of "not an ounce of fat" on the narrative.

-the strangest word is the term "hostages" for naming the six Americans hiding in the Canadian Ambassador's house. It is known that they had escaped from the embassy and surely were not hostages. Could it be a simple mistake from the writer or an intention to manipulate the mind of the reader of the review?

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
How can you not love a film that has a smart sense of history, an affection for all things '70s, a well-tuned political compass and a plot kick-started by a chance viewing of "Battle for the Planet of the Apes"?	Historically and politically this movie is reliable and valid. Whatever you see in Argo is good and true
-"Argo" — based on a real story, declassified in the mid-'90s — gets every cinematic detail right. And if it seems wild, or any part didn't happen exactly as shown ... well, that's what movies are for	It all has happened more or less. Although sometimes it does not seem real, but it is a good movie based on a real story and that is enough to accept its ideology

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing

-The critical text has some statements fully in favour of the movie and its ideological ideas

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and them, brave Americans and dangerous Iranians,

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?
 The text has three parts. First describes a historical back ground of the time when events of the story occurs. In the second part tells the story of the movie in detail and for the last part admires the good work of Ben Affleck as an actor and director in the movie and the work of script writer.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:

How does the text represent the movie?
- A blue-chip Oscar contender that's also a rousing popcorn movie, Ben Affleck's "Argo'' offers plenty of nail-biting thrills as well as funnier scenes than you'd ever imagine possible in the grim context of the Iran hostage crisis, which began in 1979
-named Tony Mendez (a bearded Affleck in his finest screen performance to date)
- Affleck aces the tonal shifts so flawlessly that it's surprising this is only his third movie as a director — if you didn't know otherwise, you'd swear this was the work of a veteran master like Steven Soderbergh

The main themes of the text:

How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?
Quick history lesson: That's when 52 employees of the American Embassy in Tehran were held captive for 444 days by followers of the Ayatollah Khomeini
The long-classified true story of how the six were able to finally sneak out of Iran — by posing as the Canadian crew of a phony science-fiction film led by a steel-nerved CIA agent turned improbable modern-day Moses — is stranger than any fiction that Hollywood could possibly invent.
- if you didn't know otherwise, you'd swear this was the work of a veteran master like Steven Soderbergh

How Iranians are presented in the text?
How Americans are presented in the text?
The long-classified true story of how the six were able to finally sneak out of Iran — by posing as the Canadian crew of a phony science-fiction film led by a steel-nerved CIA agent turned improbable modern-day Moses — is stranger than any fiction that Hollywood could possibly invent
 -This allows Affleck to offer some white-knuckle suspense for a grand show — and a slam-bang ending to "Argo'' that's guaranteed to have audiences cheering. Well, maybe not in Iran.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie? - Affleck is as confident with the Hollywood scenes as he is with the thrills. That's especially true in the terrific final act, when the film goes from "Wag the Dog"-type satire to "Dog Day Afternoon" and "Midnight Express"-style tension	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?** -Most daringly, Affleck cross-cuts a photo-op read-through of the cheesy "Argo'' script by costumed actors with terrifying scenes of the embassy hostages (the ones not being hidden by the Canadians) -Screenwriter Chris Terrio's superb script — which avoids caricaturing the Iranian extremists or their beliefs — takes what I'd consider acceptable liberties with the facts, especially in the final section.	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?**

The observations on the text (New York Post)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

-In the text and in the selected fragments we can see the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

-No negative points have been mentioned.

- The writer has defended the movie by commenting on these themes:

Good work of Ben Affleck, brave plan of CIA, details of the story plot, balance in thriller and being funny

-according to the writer in this text, Ben Affleck has directed the movie that good that reminds him of the veteran masters

- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

-the writer gives a historical back ground of the story. He calls it a "history lesson". By lesson the reader expects detailed and precise information but in this lesson there is nothing but what everyone knows, except for one thing: "followers of Ayatollah Khomeini" did everything.

-"followers of Ayatollah Khomeini" is a kind of generalization in the same way we see in the movie too. The writer gives no more information of them. Are they students? (as it has been mentioned in another part of the text) are they religious followers or political followers? Are they ordinary people or armed revolutionaries? This generalization creates the concept of the enemy without details. The others.

-Tony Mendez, the CIA agent is described as "steel-nerved". This relates to the mission he had to do. The metaphor used to describe him brings some super heroic character in mind. It is a way of constructing a hero in the" American style". But this heroism goes too far when Mendez is described as "Modern-day Moses". This metaphor takes everything to a religious level, where we have concepts like" the saviour" or "the chosen nation". The metaphor of Moses makes the text very conservative.

-the writer admires the work of Affleck so much that calls him "a veteran master". The veteran part is very important because it relates the text to the idea of American Nationalism that was discussed in the last section when I was analysing the movie.

-using the word hostage for the six Americans hiding in Tehran is a very ideological and political view. The writer calls those six persons as "hostages" which is a very radical vision. According to him everyone in Tehran is a hostage.

-the movie is based on a true story. But the filmmakers have done changes to dramatize the story. The writer emphasizes that this is an acceptable action. We as readers know that in the movies there is always such dramatization. Nobody expects a documentary about what had happened in Tehran. But the writer talks about these dramatic changes as "acceptable liberties". As if he wants to say although you are watching a Hollywood product, but don't forget that what you see is the truth, or an acceptable part of the truth.

- **Third column (implications)**
The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
The long-classified true story of how the six were able to finally sneak out of Iran — by posing as the Canadian crew of a phony science-fiction film led by a steel-nerved CIA agent turned improbable modern-day Moses — is stranger than any fiction that Hollywood could possibly invent	What Americans achieved was a great historical victory with heroic ad religious aspects
This allows Affleck to offer some white-knuckle suspense for a grand show — and a slam-bang ending to "Argo'' that's guaranteed to have audiences cheering. Well, maybe not in Iran.	The American won this political game and adding or deleting some details to the main story is fine. The losers (Iranians) will not like the story any way

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing

-The critical text has some statements fully in favour of the movie and its ideological ideas

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and them, winners and losers

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?

The writer starts with a sensational paragraph about the different aspects of Argo, then narrates the story line with details, focusing on the script and new ideas of the plot. There is also a paragraph in which she discusses about the show business and how it is presented in the media. Reviewing the details of the 70s in the movie as a nostalgic point is another part of the text. Finally she terminates the review with some points about the good Affleck

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie?	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?**	**How Iranians are presented in the text**?
- Have you heard that cinema is dying? That the movies are kaput? That Hollywood just doesn't make films for grown-ups anymore? You've heard wrong -- at least if "Argo" is any indication	-it's his command of artifice -- the staging, editing and judiciously calibrated unfolding of the story, especially its harrowing final moments -- that proves his mettle as a director of genuine chops	**How Americans are presented in the text?** "Argo" deserves to find the discerning audience it has been made for: After all, if we buy tickets, that means more smart, sophisticated filmmaking -- and less Stalingrad -- for all of us.
- It's serious and substantive, an ingeniously written and executed drama fashioned from a fascinating, little-known chapter of recent history. It also happens to be extremely funny, crafty and enormously entertaining	-This captivating, expertly machined political thriller jumps through every hoop the naysayer can set up: It's serious and substantive, an ingeniously written and executed drama fashioned from a fascinating, little-known chapter of recent history	-A closing-credits side-by-side montage shows to what lengths Affleck has gone to re-create the real-life places and people of "Argo
- "Argo" is all the more remarkable for having been so adroitly directed by Ben Affleck who in recent years has emerged as a filmmaker of astonishing assurance and depth.		
The main themes of the text:		

The observations on the text (Washington Post)

- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

-In the text and in the selected fragments we can see the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

-No negative points have been mentioned.

- The writer has defended the movie by commenting on these themes:

Good work of Ben Affleck, brave plan of CIA, details of the story plot, the details of recreating the 70s in the movie

-according to the writer in this text, Ben Affleck has directed the movie that good that reminds him of the veteran masters

- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

-a general point in this part is that the type of language the writer has used to review the movie is full of adjectives, adverbs and especial descriptions. These linguistic choices mostly have been used to create a heroic or epic atmosphere about the way movie is produced.

- one example of such literature is the way the writer describes the capabilities of Ben Affleck in organizing the different parts and levels of the movie with his "command of artifice". He has proved his "mettle" as a director of "genuine chops".

- the author believes that Argo is a "political thriller" which is "expertly machined". When later the writer mentions that the movie is based on a "fascinating" chapter of "recent history", those descriptions find another meaning: the movie is fascinating because the history is fascinating. Argo is a political thriller which is expertly machined, just because CIA had been planned a political real thriller in those days.

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
"Argo" deserves to find the discerning audience it has been made for: After all, if we buy tickets, that means more smart, sophisticated filmmaking -- and less Stalingrad -- for all of us.	Argo is a smart sophisticated filmmaking, this is the movie people should go watch. Political thrillers about how intelligent and powerful we are
-A closing-credits side-by-side montage shows to what lengths Affleck has gone to re-create the real-life places and people of Argo	The film is showing the truth. We can believe the story because the filmmakers have done a precise job

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing

-The critical text has some statements in favour of the movie and its ideological ideas but not as far as other journalistic texts. The most part of this article speaks about the cinematic aspects of the movie with not much amounts of political ideas

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie, here the texts points to only one side of the story (Americans): we are the good, smart ones

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?
The writer starts with the Hollywood effects on ordinary people when it they have the opportunity to be on the scene or see the cast and crew. Then describes the story plot which is based on the real event. He makes good comments on the work of Ben Affleck as director and actor, the work of other actors, and finally the form of mixing drama with comedy by the director.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:

How does the text represent the movie?
- "Argo," the real movie about the fake movie, is both spellbinding and surprisingly funny.
-Affleck is brilliant at choreographing the step-by-step risks that the team take in exiting Tehran, and "Argo" has cliff-hanging moments when the whole delicate plan seems likely to split at the seams
- The craft in this film is rare. It is so easy to manufacture a thriller from chases and gunfire, and so very hard to fine-tune it out of exquisite timing

How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?
This preposterous scheme is based on fact. Yes, it is. Countless movies are "inspired by real events," but this one truly took place.
- Key supporting roles are filled by Bryan Cranston, as the CIA chief who green-lights the scheme, and Victor Garber, as the Canadian ambassador who at great risk opens his embassy's doors to the secret guests

How Iranians are presented in the text?
How Americans are presented in the text?
It's the same the world over. A Hollywood production comes to town, and the locals all turn movie crazy
-At the end of the scene, when Mendez tells them "you can keep em," they're like kids being given an "E.T." poster by Steven Spielberg.
-After all, who in their right mind would believe a space opera was being filmed in Iran during the hostage crisis? Just about everyone, it turns out. Hooray for Hollywood.
-and a plot that's so clear to us we wonder why it isn't obvious to the Iranians.

The observations on the text (Chicago Sun Times)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

-In the text and in the selected fragments we can see the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

-No negative points have been mentioned.

- The writer has defended the movie by commenting on these themes:

Good work of Ben Affleck, details of the story plot, balance in thriller and being funny

- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

-the writer has emphasis on the events of the movie to be based on "fact". Then he repeats it two more times. First with saying "yes it is" to make the reader pay enough attention to this matter and then says it fir second time that everything that you see in this movie "truly took place".

-the work of the Canadian Ambassador is described as taking "great risk". The writer feels necessary that in the middle of talking about the roles and actors it would be a good time to admire the political role of Canadian Ambassador in the real world; representative of a country who has always stood besides US politically.

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
It's the same the world over. A Hollywood production comes to town, and the locals all turn movie crazy	Iranians like Hollywood. They are interested in American movies and that is why they can be fooled
At the end of the scene, when Mendez tells them "you can keep em," they're like kids being given an "E.T." poster by Steven Spielberg	Iranians are so interested in American movies that they can be fooled by e few Hollywood toys just like the kids
After all, who in their right mind would believe a space opera was being filmed in Iran during the hostage crisis? Just about everyone, it turns out. Hooray for Hollywood.	Here is the influence Hollywood as a part of American culture has on the whole world. Everyone will believe whatever we say
And a plot that's so clear to us we wonder why it isn't obvious to the Iranians.	We fooled Iranians and even now we can't believe how easy they were deceived

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing

-The critical text has some statements in favour of the movie and its ideological ideas but not as strongly as some other texts

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and them, smarts and fools

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	
Average	*
low	

What is the text about?
She starts with some details in the movie that show the social and political situation in the US and some historical points. Then she writes about the plot, reviews the escape plan in the film, then some comments about the actors, the role of Affleck that has done his job well and finally the good mixture of thrill and comedy.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:
How does the text represent the movie?	**How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?**	**How Iranians are presented in the text**? **How Americans are presented in the text?**
- the director and actor, makes sure we feel the anxiety of the six.	-hewing to details matters. Especially when you have a tale as unbelievable on paper as this one, which finds the U.S. government greenlighting a sci-fi adventure flick in order to free Americans in Iran	- The year is 1979, Hollywood isn't faring particularly well. The Carter Administration is doing worse, due in no small measure to an international disaster unfolding in Iran.
- The combination of two vastly different moods shouldn't work so well together, but it does — and brilliantly	- Reverberations from the toppling of the Shah, the rise of the Ayatollahs and the forging of an Iranian theocracy continue to inform the U.S. relationship to Iran and Middle East	-- After beginning with a animated lesson in late 20th century Iranian history, "Argo" shifts to the frenetic moments before the gates of the U.S Embassy are breached.
- the six actors portraying the foreign service workers do a great job of not seeming particularly exceptional	-… the fate of the six foreign service workers who escaped the U.S. compound and found sanctuary in Canadian ambassador	-"Argo" deals with one of the most volatile moments in American foreign affairs in the last 50 years
- Argo" has that solid, kick-the-tires feel of those studio films from the 70s that were about something but also entertained		
We won't over-describe the way his epiphany happens because Affleck proves to be an assured and subtle filmmaker		

The observations on the text (Denver Post)

- ### First column (Macro propositions)

The observation on the text shows that

-In the text and in the selected fragments we can see the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

-No negative points have been mentioned.

- The writer has defended the movie by commenting on these themes:

Good work of Ben Affleck, details of the story plot, balance in thriller and being funny

- ### Second column (Lexical Choices)

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

-the writer speaks of getting "free Americans in Iran" as if the six diplomats too have been hostages. The situation for these people as we see in the movie is completely different from the other 52. Putting all of them in one category as "the Americans in Iran" means pointing to the distance that should be considered between us and them. The victims and the dangerous people.

-the writer uses a type of literature as he is telling some dark fantasy story. "rise of the Ayotallaha" brings in mind the "rise of the empire" an episode of the Star wars movie in which the dark force is getting the power in the galaxy. next interesting metaphor of the writer is "forging an Iranian theocracy" which continues the form of literature as if the dark force has changed its relationship with the U.S.

-in the most of the texts we see that six Americans usually "take refugee" to the Canadian Ambassador's house. Here the writer uses "sanctuary" which has the same meaning but with a feeling of sacred place to go.; a holy place to hide in the house of the kind neighbor who protects us from the evil outside.

- ### Third column (implications)

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
The year is 1979, Hollywood isn't faring particularly well. The Carter Administration is doing worse, due in no small measure to an international disaster unfolding in Iran.	There should have been done something better and stronger. The Carter Administration should have made better decisions. A war maybe
After beginning with an animated lesson in late 20th century Iranian history, "Argo" shifts to the frenetic moments before the gates of the U.S Embassy are breached.	The parts about the Iran History for us are boring and not important. They are just animated lesson. But the important part is where the movie narrates our side of the history
"Argo" deals with one of the most volatile moments in American foreign affairs in the last 50 years	In the last 50 years this has been the most important moment but we forget it. We should not forget about what they did to us

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing

-The critical text has some statements in favour of the movie and its ideological ideas but not as strongly as some other texts

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and them

How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	*
Average	
low	

What is the text about?
 The writer starts with some references to the book real Tony Mendez has written about the Argo. In the text he returns to the facts of this book several times. He reviews the plot which is based on the reality, reviews the style of Affleck's directing and some other technical aspects of the movie. This text is one of the rare articles that has not totally describing the movie as a good one, There can be seen some critical points too.

Macro Propositions	Lexical choices	Implications:

How does the text represent the movie?
The propulsive hostage thriller "Argo" just plain works. It's heartening to encounter a film, based on fact but happy to include all sorts of exciting fictions to amp up the suspense, The execution is clean, sharp and rock-solid.
- The technique is not subtle or original; his camera always seems most comfortable when framing a sweaty face under duress in chin-to-hairline close-up. But Affleck's approach works
- The script of "Argo" works from an extremely efficient outline of story beats and payoffs.

How adjectives, adverbs, metaphors,… used to describe the movie or filmmaker?
- It's as apolitical as a political crisis story set in Iran can get. But "the first rule in any deception operation is to understand who your audience is."
- a film, based on fact but happy to include all sorts of exciting fictions to amp up the suspense, whose entertainment intentions are clear
- The real stuff first. In 1979, the year of "Kramer vs. Kramer," 52 Americans were taken hostage in Tehran by Iranian revolutionary factions sympathetic to the Ayatollah Khomeini.

How Iranians are presented in the text?
How Americans are presented in the text?
- Affleck understands that movies are deception operations, too, and that his potential audience for "Argo" is large and wide, conservative and liberal and centrist.
- and by the time maniacal, knife-wielding Iranian thugs are giving chase on the Mehrabad airport runway ... well, even if it seems hoked-up as you're watching it, and it does, it works
- In the populist vein of Ron Howard's "Apollo 13," Affleck's rouser salutes the Americans (and, more offhandedly, the Canadians) who restored our sense of can-do spirit when we needed it

The observations on the text (Chicago Tribune)
- **First column (Macro propositions)**

The observation on the text shows that

-In the text and in the selected fragments we can see the writer has used positive comments about the movie.

- There are some critical points, especially about Affleck directing style. But the writer is very careful, more that giving negative points he does not give positive points to the movie

- The writer has defended the movie by commenting on these themes:

 details of the story plot, points about directing, screenplay, acting and most of all some details and facts about the book written by the real Mendez

- **Second column (Lexical Choices)**

The observation on the text shows that

In different parts of the texts, the writer has chosen adjectives, adverbs or metaphors, etc. The function of these choices is to describe the movie and also ideological comments about the events in the movie

-the writer uses a kind of irony about the movie by saying "apolitical as a political crisis story set in Iran can get". He is making an interesting point: you cannot make a movie in Hollywood about Iran which is NOT political. That is why in the next sentence he brings a quote from Tony Mendez (the one in the real world) who believes the "audience" is important. The writer then continues his irony with the point that this also true in the movie business. It is all about deception the audience in the best way

-according to the writer, although the movie is based on the "facts" (real events) but it is full of fictions that are added to the story to crate entertainment. He says this is the " intentions" that the movie clearly follows.

-the writer is very careful in choosing the words when he wants to describe the Iranians. He prefers to make a long phrase to refer to them. His choice is "Iranian revolutionary factions sympathetic to the Ayatollah Khomeini" which although is not clear to whom exactly it refers, is not as general and stereotypic as other articles

- **Third column (implications)**

The observation on the text shows that

There are some phrases or sentences that contain some implicit meanings. In the selected fragments we see a number of them in which Iranians and Americans are represented:

The fragment	Implication
Affleck understands that movies are deception operations, too, and that his potential audience for "Argo" is large and wide, conservative and liberal and centrist.	Affleck is aware that to make a success by this movie, he should do it so that" Americans" like it. Everyone that belong to "us"
And by the time maniacal, knife-wielding Iranian thugs are giving chase on the Mehrabad airport runway ... well, even if it seems hoked-up as you're watching it, and it does, it works	Iranians in the movie are maniacs and wild and this is something that may not look like the reality, but it's OK, because we like it this way
In the populist vein of Ron Howard's "Apollo 13," Affleck's rouser salutes the Americans (and, more offhandedly, the Canadians) who restored our sense of can-do spirit when we needed it	We always have heroes that in the time of danger come to help us and we need those people and Argo reminds us of our heroes

Results of the observation:

-The critical text supports the movie in the aspects like story line (screenplay), acting and directing but not strongly and with some doubts

-The critical text has some statements in favour of the movie and its ideological ideas but not as strongly as the other texts

-The critical text has implications that support the ideology behind the movie: Us and them

 How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

High	
Average	*
low	

Results of analyzing the film reviews

To see the results of every analysis of each text, I have put them in a table. For every review of a media there are two columns. One of them shows the value of the movie Argo according to that media (the score they have given). In the other there is the answer to this question: How much the text supports the ideology inside the movie?

Name of the Media	How it supports the movie Argo	How it supports the ideology inside the movie Argo
Wall Street Journal	100/100	High
New York Times	100/100	High
USA Today	100/100	High
Los Angeles Times	90/100	High
Daily News	100/100	High
New York Post	100/100	High
Washington Post	100/100	High
Chicago Sun-Times	100/100	Average
Denver Post	100/100	High
Chicago Tribune	88/100	Average

Conclusion:

The table shows that the daily newspapers of United States have strongly supported the movie Argo. The reviews about this movie not only are very positive (there is only one score under 90), but the ideological approach of the writer in most of the reviews (only two do not contain a high level) is in the same direction as the movie.

Comparing the results of the two parts

(the movie and the reviews)

Now it is time to do the comparing part. It was proved in the previous parts that Argo has the characteristics of a typical product of Culture Industry and can be selected as a case of study. Also through the analysis the nature of its ideological aspects was discovered. We saw how this movie, which is a representative of Hollywood mainstream products, contains certain ideologies that in fact belong to every product of Culture Industry (Hollywood in our study).

It was shown that the Argo reconstruct some capitalistic ideologies in the form of American values. Racism, Sexism and Nationalism are among the most important ones. The result of the filmic analysis of the movie also showed that there is another ideological aspect in the film that can be described as the ideology of *Self and Other* or *Us and Them*. Here is a summary of the results of the analysis in the first part (the movie) showing how in Argo the two sides of the story are presented:

Americans	Iranians
Us	Them
Identified persons with detail	crowed with no name and individuality
Normal	Not normal, nervous, desperate
Hero	Villain
Occidental	Oriental
Belonged to a nation	No nation

In the second part the film reviews of the most circulated newspapers of the United States was analyzed. In this analysis two subjects was discovered. First we saw that the reviews are strongly positive and in favour of the movie and the director. Almost all of the review writers (film critics) have encouraged their readers to go and see this movie. There was no negative point mentioned in the texts.

Secondly, it was discovered that the texts support the movie in a more important way than the technical and cinematic matter. The analysis demonstrates that the film critics also accept and validate the ideological aspects of this movie. In almost all the texts the critics, just like the movie its self, reproduce the ideological view of Us and Them. They go much further of "reviewing a movie" and begin to reconstruct the ideological idea which we discovered inside the movie. To make it more clear I have listed the way Americans and Iranians are represented in the texts as the results of the analysis:

Americans	Iranians
Good	Evil
Brave	Dangerous

Smart	Foolish
Good folks	Revolution Jaws
Winners	Losers

Comparing the results of the study, which are done in two different parts, show that the hypothesis of the study is valid:

The journalistic critics (reviews) about Argo not only do not criticize this movie, but strongly support it as if these reviews are a part of the culture industry (Hollywood)

Conclusion

This study was concerned about the role of film critics in contemporary journalistic genres and its influence on the products of Hollywood as a part of the Culture Industry. It was discussed that in the case of Argo- which during this work, was proved that is a representative of a culture industry product- the reviews and critics in printed media strongly support it as if their role is to defend this movie instead of criticizing it. Argo in the other hand was analyzed and proved as a typical product of Hollywood film industry containing the principal properties of a main stream movie with all the capitalistic and ideological characteristics.

This case study surely will not generalize its idea to the whole critics about the culture industry products, but has tried to open a way in order to observe the contemporary situation more deeply. From my point of view this hypothesis can be true that today film criticism tradition (in the form of reviews and not academic works) as a journalistic genre has lost its function. If some day not very long ago, critics where about looking at the movie from a distance and finding "the good things about a bad movie or bad things about a good movie", it all has changed. It can be claimed that the critics now serve the movie industry as if they are a part of that. I assume that we can even go much further and say that this has happened in the whole entertainment business. The Culture Industry in its new form will not accept critics. If there are critics, they should be at the service of the objectives of the system. But all these claims need to be investigated and proved methodologically. We need further studies with wide observations and analyzes to demonstrate them.

There are some considerations that necessitate such studies. The term Culture Industry which was coined in the 40s by Adorno and Horkheimer, now should be reconsidered and redefined. Although there have been some scholar works about this concept in recent years but after more than 70 years we need to reread those texts considering the great changes that has happened socially and technologically. In this part I have discussed some ideas about Culture Industry in our contemporary society focusing on the terms that Adorno and Horkhiemer used in their "Dialectic of Enlightenment".

Culture Industry and Globalization

There are, aspects about the culture industry we know considerably less about, and one notable such is globalization. Globalization is often defined as a process beyond that of internationalization. It encompasses not just the spread of products, people or practices from one or few countries, it also entails interconnectedness between a multitude of countries, leading to their integration into one (or several) global economic, cultural, and to some extent also political, systems or networks (Held et al., 1999; Friedman, 2000; Stiglitz, 2002). There are several aspects of globalization of the culture industry, namely globalization of involvement in culture products; consumption of culture products; production of them; and organization of making these products. Among those, the aspect of consumption has a great importance.

Not only are the global mass markets ever expanding, producers can also now reach niche audiences – be that art fans, Kung Fu experts, Manga lovers, or hip-hop music fans and erotic novels readers – in several countries simultaneously. This means that the export of products is shifting in nature from being step-by-step internationalization of entertainments produced for home audiences and released in subsequently windows abroad, to being a global phenomenon, where products produced for global audiences are released on many national markets simultaneously. In film industry for instance, even if Hollywood seeks to take the lead in this process, to a growing extent, it includes film producers elsewhere. Film export patterns are rapidly becoming increasingly complex. The globalization of consumption is facilitated by new distribution and exhibition forms (satellite TV, DVD, Internet) able to reach niche audiences around the world.

Although Western culture was previously divided into national markets, the contemporary view of the culture industry is that there is a single marketplace in which the best or most popular works succeed. This recognizes that the consolidation of media companies has centralized power in the hands of the few remaining multinational corporations now controlling production and distribution. The theory proposes that culture not only mirrors society, but also takes an important role in shaping society through the processes of standardization and commodification, creating objects rather than subjects. The culture industry claims to serve the consumers' needs for entertainment, but conceals the way that it standardizes these needs, manipulating the consumers to desire what it produces. The outcome is that mass production feeds a mass market where the identity and tastes of the individual consumers is increasingly less important and the consumers themselves are as interchangeable as the products they consume.

Culture Industry and technological changes

Adorno and Horkheimer were concerned that the over-abundance of culture was leading to a 'satiation' where no-one would look for real aesthetic enjoyment and instead be content with access to a lesser form of satisfaction, characterised in their eyes by the 'hook' of a popular song or the laughter of affirmation at a film. They were strikingly prescient about the transformative power of the television on society, but matters are perhaps graver than they imagined with the rise of the internet and personal digital music players. On the other hand, in its present state the internet allows access to a wider variety of culture which falls outside the remit of the industry itself and so could be a neutralising influence on the dominance of the culture industry. However, the industry itself seems to be aware of such a threat and the steady locking-down of the internet into a few highly regulated services such as Facebook and YouTube makes it seem more likely that this is a mere aberration, rather than a sign of future developments in culture.

The Dialectic is also prescient in its analysis of the ways that the culture industry attempts to assimilate anything lying outside its remit and to thereby remain dominant. Adorno writes of 'talent scouts' and 'competitions' which bring independent or autonomous music into its fold. Television programmes such as "America's Got Talent", "The Voice" and "The X factor" show that this observation is as relevant today

as it was in the 1940s. The argument that such programmes perform a service by giving an otherwise unavailable opening into the performing arts is itself an admission of the inseparable nature of the works of culture and the social system within which they are produced. In these programmes the industry plays the role of a beneficent gatekeeper, willing to allow admission into some sort of Great City of Culture whilst hiding the fact that it is they who erected the walls to this city in the first place.

Culture industry and pseudo-individualism

Adorno and Horkheimer in "Dialectic of Enlightenment" discuss about the terms of pseudo-individualism and standardization. Through different images, meanings are injected into the product to make it seem unique. By differentiating products through images, we come to accept that what we are consuming is something different, something that has uniquely produced to fulfil our need. According to Adorno Culture Industry standardizes its products for everyone, but it is masked with the pseudo-individualization of a novel appearance. We may not realize that our reactions are standardized.

Considering the results of this study, it could be said that film reviews also have changed to a product of the system to reinforce this process of pseudo-individualism. Reviews no more criticize the movies. What they do is convincing (with the similar text structures and giving stars to the movies) their readers to go and watch the movies; to make this feeling for them that the movie they are writing about is something special, unique and must-see.

Culture industry against culture industry

In this study I tried to demonstrate that with the domination of the culture industry, critics might disappear. But critics are not the only things. In the new era of culture industry, other eliminations may take place. The philosophical concept of culture industry now is easily mistaken with cultural industry. Recent academic studies focus on the economic aspects of the different industries including cultural products. governments compete with each other in producing such products to have more domination in regional or global markets. That is why the concept, during more than nearly 70 years after its birth, is in danger of turning into something with a completely different meaning.

These industrial titles which now can be observed or heard everywhere – of which the culture industry is just one frank derivative – exist in mutually confirming aggregate with other multitudes of such phrases and dependably pseudo organics as: the "family tree of industries," "a family of electronic devices," "corporate culture," "the business community," and "the banking community." This means today, the concept during the time has been changed to something opposite to itself and different from what Adorno had in mind.

What I put in this part were some ideas to be followed in further investigations. Never the less, the work of Adorno and Horkheimer still explains many things about the dominant ideology of the time we are living in. But we need extra studies to develop their work and figure out new aspects of the

culture industry. Focusing on the role of critics (reviews) in the movie market is just a starting point for future works.

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Annex – Text of reviews

The wall street journal
<u>'Argo,' on Fake Film, Is Real Sensation</u>

A movie studio, Orson Welles famously said, is the best toy a boy ever had. Far from being a boy, Ben Affleck is his own man, a distinctive actor who, in recent years, directed "Gone Baby Gone" and "The Town," a couple of medium-size movies that established him as an accomplished filmmaker. Now, as director and star of "Argo," he has deployed a studio's full-scale resources on an intrinsically dramatic story, and the results are nothing less than sensational. This political thriller has it all: a suspense plot centered on Americans in mortal peril during the Iranian hostage crisis that erupted in late 1979; a stranger-than-fiction subplot that was, in fact, concocted by the CIA to effect the Americans' escape; and a movie within the movie that's all the funnier for being fake.

The crisis began when Islamist revolutionaries stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and took more than 50 Americans hostage. In the midst of the terror and chaos, however, six of them escaped into the streets, then took refuge in the home of the Canadian ambassador. It's their tale the film tells, not that of the 444-day crisis in its sprawling entirety, and what a tale it turns out to be. (The factual details, declassified by President Bill Clinton in 1997, are brilliantly embellished in the screenplay that Chris Terrio based on a Wired Magazine article by Joshua Bearman.) To rescue the six before their whereabouts are discovered, the CIA's top "exfiltration" operative, Tony Mendez—a real-life figure played by Mr. Affleck—devises a cloak-and-camera plan to sneak into Iran, give the sequestered Americans new identities as Canadian filmmakers scouting locations for a sci-fi film called "Argo," then whisk them out on a regular commercial flight from Tehran's international airport.

It's often said of incredible but true stories that you can't make such stuff up. Sure you can; you're free to do whatever you want in the wonderful world of motion pictures. But you wouldn't want to make this story up if it weren't rooted in reality, because Tony's plan is, before anything else, utterly preposterous as well as inventive and wildly daring: "This is the best bad idea we have, sir," his superior, Jack O'Donnell (Bryan Cranston), tells the CIA's director in a meeting at Langley headquarters.

What makes the whole thing delicious in the bargain is that the CIA really did enlist Hollywood's help in creating a sham production company to give the agency's fake movie the ring of truth. John Goodman brings his droll wit to the role of John Chambers, the Hollywood makeup artist who was, in fact, Tony Mendez's friend and co-conspirator. As the fictional director Lester Siegel, an acidulous has-been who drives a gold Rolls-Royce, Alan Arkin gets some of the best lines—it would take too many asterisks to quote the topper, which becomes a running gag—and he turns a smallish part into a thriller's antic soul.

As the hero of the enterprise, Mr. Affleck is sufficiently restrained to be believable, yet he provides enough of a star presence to sustain what is, after all, a mainstream entertainment. As the director of a large and diverse cast, he has done himself proud: "Argo" abounds in fine actors—none of them household names—who don't look like they're acting at all. Victor Garber is the Canadian ambassador, while his six involuntary houseguests are played by Tate Donovan, Scoot McNairy, Kerry Bishé, Christopher Denham, Clea DuVall and Rory Cochrane.

As a filmmaker working on a large canvas in a quasidocumentary style, Mr. Affleck rises to one challenge after another with a sure touch. (And with the help of such collaborators as the cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto, the production designer Sharon Seymour, the editor William Goldenberg, and Alexandre Desplat, who did the original score.) Tony's crash program to teach his six frightened charges their assigned roles feels convincing and fresh. The sci-fi script, billed as a "cosmic conflagration" for the benefit of the Hollywood trade press, gets a reading by actors in full regalia at a Beverly Hills hotel during a set piece that's staged with a delightfully straight face. The action sequences, with revolutionaries on a rampage in an epic conflagration, combine news clips culled from archival sources—shades of Walter Cronkite and Peter Jennings, plus a doggedly optimistic Jimmy Carter—with footage adeptly shot and directed to look archival.

The production plays fast with events of the period, but not loose. A lucid introduction puts Iran's 1979 revolution in the historical context of the 1953 coup, engineered by U.S. and British intelligence agencies, that replaced the democratically elected government of Mohammad Mossadegh with an increasingly repressive regime headed by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The revolutionaries themselves are neither demonized nor romanticized; it's quite remarkable how many of the perfervid young soldiers and gimlet-eyed bureaucrats come to life, however briefly, as individuals. (It's also remarkable how the advent of the film coincides with yet another crisis involving Iran.) Most studio productions these days are about nothing but entertainment; this one treats the world of volatile politics, both at home and abroad, with mature interest and respect.

Yet it does so with a flair for showmanship. "Argo" is a movie about storytelling that tells its own story briskly and clearly; there's very little fat on the narrative bones. It's a movie about movies that savors the medium's silliness. Mr. Goodman's bottom-feeding makeup artist could be an escapee from "Ed Wood," or one of Wood's sleazy productions. After listening to Tony outline his desperate scheme, he asks: "So you want to come to Hollywood and act like a big shot without doing anything?" When Tony says "Yeah," the makeup man replies gleefully, "You'll fit right in." The script is smart about the medium's allure: Tony wouldn't have a chance of pulling his scheme off if the Iranians, like everyone else in this star-struck world, weren't instantly intrigued by the prospect of a movie being made.

And "Argo" exults in what a movie can do when its story has a compelling core. There's been no shying away from the joys of expert manipulation, no reluctance to heighten the fact-based drama with fictional inventions. What's startling is that the invented

elements have been done so well. (One tolerable, perhaps inevitable, exception is a moist, uplifting coda.) Without giving any plot points away, I can tell you that a climactic scene turns on a marvelous surprise, and promise you frequent spasms of suspense that will grow almost unbearable. If you've forgotten how gratifying a Hollywood studio film can be, this is the best good idea you could ask for.

Ny times
Outwitting the Ayatollah With Hollywood's Help

At one point in "Argo," a smart, jittery thriller about a freakish and little-known chapter of the Iranian hostage crisis, a Hollywood producer says that history starts as farce and ends up as tragedy. He seems, as someone rightly points out, to have it backward. But as a professional dissembler, he knows better. Because much like the revolutionary shock troops who seized the United States embassy on Nov. 4, 1979, and turned the crisis into gripping political theater watched by the entire world — tune in tomorrow when America goes on trial, with the special guest star the Ayatollah Khomeini — the producer knows that historical events alone don't cut it. You need lights, camera, action.

Turning history into farce probably wasn't what Antonio J. Mendez, a Central Intelligence Agency officer, was after when he was tapped to help free six State Department employees stranded in Tehran. While revolutionary forces were overrunning the embassy and taking hostages, including the 52 men and women who were held for 444 days, five Americans fled undetected. Eventually, they made their way to safety, including at the Canadian ambassador's house, staying hidden (with a sixth escapee) while the C.I.A., the State Department and the president struggled to find a way to ferry them home. Mr. Mendez, a wizard of disguise, came up with the cover story for the six escapees that improbably stuck: They would pose as a Canadian movie crew.

It's a doozy of a story and so borderline ridiculous that it sounds — ta-da! — like something that could have been cooked up only by Hollywood. Ben Affleck, however, who directed "Argo" from a script by Chris Terrio and cast himself in the pivotal role of Tony Mendez, realized that comedy alone wouldn't do. American lives, after all, were at stake (a situation that contemporary viewers will be all too familiar with), and so, after opening the movie with a bit of history and archival imagery, he rushes into the moment's jarring, unsettling craziness with a cinematic whoosh. Fast and faster, he sets the skittish stage with convincing you-are-there re-creations and then jumps back and forth between the chanting, exultant Iranian protesters outside the embassy and the freaked-out Americans inside it.

Mr. Affleck, working from Mr. Mendez's book, "The Master of Disguise," and a 2007 Wired magazine article, "The Great Escape," by the journalist Joshuah Bearman, embellishes the official story without eviscerating it. Given how great the very premise is, it makes sense to stick more or less to the official record — a series of photographs from the hostage crisis that is juxtaposed with stills from the movie show how close Mr. Affleck hews to the evidence — and he and his production team clearly had fun

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with the Chia Pet facial hair, oversize glasses, wide collars, fat ties and earth-toned threads. Shrewdly, he visually transmits the escalating claustrophobia of the escapees' confinement with billowing cigarette smoke, small rooms, a limited palette and shallow depth of field.

Better yet, after setting your pulse racing, he smoothly downshifts, easing from the high anxiety of the opener — which evokes 1970s political thrillers like Sydney Pollack's "Three Days of the Condor" — into something looser, mellower and funny. After Mendez spitballs escape plans with his bosses (including an amusing Bryan Cranston, popping neck tendons), he receives the green light to go Hollywood. To make the movie idea work, he flies to Los Angeles, where he brings in an old colleague, John Chambers (John Goodman, breezy and reined in), a real makeup artist who received an honorary Oscar for "Planet of the Apes." Next on board is a dyspeptically seasoned producer, Lester Siegel (a wonderful Alan Arkin), who helps make the fake project, now a science-fiction flick called "Argo," look legit.

The Hollywood angle brings lightness and levity into the movie, serving as comic relief that Mr. Affleck uses contrapuntally with the increasingly tense, perilous situation in Tehran. The scenes of Mendez swanning through Los Angeles, across a rooftop party at the Beverly Hilton and a studio lot, where Chambers and Siegel set up shop, are enjoyably preposterous. Then again, as the Hollywood veterans knowingly observe, there is a certain kinship between the spectacle they're putting on and the really big show the Iranian revolutionaries have staged. Budget aside, it comes down to selling the story and the roles persuasively, which the escapees — nicely played by Clea DuVall, Tate Donovan, Scoot McNairy, Rory Cochrane, Christopher Denham and Kerry Bishé — soon learn.

Mr. Affleck handles his own roles, on camera and behind it, with a noticeable lack of self-aggrandizement. He doesn't show off with his direction or the performances, going for detail instead of bombast with eerie silences, traded glances, trembling gestures and beaded sweat. (It's a good guess that he's committed the unnerving opening of "Three Days of the Condor" to memory.) His own delivery can be so tamped down that he sometimes registers as overly restrained, almost bland, yet his control serves the material, partly because it would have been a mistake for him to try to upstage this story, much less Mr. Goodman and Mr. Arkin. And then, in the end, this is a story about outwitting rather than killing the enemy, making it a homage to actual intelligence and an example of the same.

Usa today
'Argo': Suspenseful spy thriller meets Hollywood satire
Ben Affleck's 'Argo' is a superbly crafted and darkly funny real-life political thriller, with pitch-perfect performances.

Fusing suspense and humor in a political thriller is a tricky prospect, but *Argo* is more than up to the task.

Argo is the rare nail-biter that's also riotously funny as it focuses on a real-life incident that was not exactly ripped from the headlines.

While the Iran hostage crisis was at the top of nightly newscasts for much of 1980, an outrageously daring covert rescue of a half-dozen American diplomats from the Canadian Embassy went unreported. The story was kept under wraps, deemed classified information until Bill Clinton's presidency over a dozen years later.

The mission reads like far-fetched spy fiction rather than actual political history. The CIA, Canadian government and some small-to-middling Hollywood players joined forces for a big role in the release of six Americans in hiding. Their secret weapon? An oh-so-cheesy, fake sci-fi flick.

When Iranian militants stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in November 1979,and took 52 Americans hostage, six workers escaped during the commotion. They were given refuge by Canadian Ambassador Ken Taylor (Victor Garber) and holed up in his Tehran home for more than two months. The embassy workers knew it would not be long before they were found out and executed. The CIA turned to operative Tony Mendez (Ben Affleck) to hatch a plan for delivering them safely home.

The scheme Mendez concocted involved a veteran Hollywood producer (Alan Arkin) and a make-up artist (John Goodman) lending their names to a phony B movie called Argo. The six American would be part of a film crew scouting locations. The logistics were nothing if not complicated. Turning six foreign-service workers into temporary actors (playing roles like director and cinematographer of the faux film) was a dicey enough proposition. But once their false identities were set, they would have to fool the Revolutionary Guard to board a flight to Switzerland. While it's hard to imagine anyone today convincing authorities that they are shooting a movie in a country undergoing a revolution, in 1980 this scheme was just crazy enough to work.
Affleck, whose talents as a filmmaker have come to overshadow his acting roles, shines in both categories here. He nails the part of Mendez, the savvy, shaggy-haired rescuer, captures the feel of the era and establishes a thoroughly credible sense of urgency.
Equal parts great escape caper, Hollywood satire, and political commentary, Argo is easily one of the year's best films.

Los Angeles Times
Review: 'Argo' is a Hollywood story with a real-world outcome
http://articles.latimes.com/2012/oct/11/entertainment/la-et-mn-argo-review-20121012

Ben Affleck's gripping film based on a true story is well acted and directed as a movie about a movie that is used as a cover to help six Americans escape during the Iranian hostage crisis.
"Argo" takes you back. Not just to the dark days of the 1979-81 Iranian hostage crisis but to a brighter, earlier time, when Hollywood regularly turned out smart and engaging films that crackled with energy and purpose.

Very much like Clint Eastwood before him, actor turned actor-director Ben Affleck not only has a passion for those kinds of throwback entertainments, he knows that the only way to get them on the screen effectively is to do the work himself.

After a hesitant start with "Gone Baby Gone," Affleck found his footing with the crackling crime drama "The Town" and now takes things one step further with this breakneck tale of how an ace CIA agent rescued six Americans from the jaws of the Iranian Revolution with a little help from, hard as it may be to believe, the good folks of Hollywood. It's all based on a true story persuasively conveyed — and amplified — in the best classic movie tradition.

Convincingly scripted by debuting screenwriter Chris Terrio from the real-life exploits of retired agent Tony Mendez (played by Affleck), "Argo" is most impressive in the number of moods its director has casually mastered. Affleck easily orchestrates this complex film with 120 speaking parts as it moves from inside-the-Beltway espionage thriller to inside Hollywood dark comedy to gripping international hostage drama, all without missing a step.

Affleck's abilities start with an instinct for storytelling, for always moving the action forward while never losing track of the need to keep events convincingly realistic. The beautifully textured shots by cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto and the brisk, propulsive editing of William Goldenberg combine to relentlessly advance the plot, with not an ounce of narrative fat getting in the way.

Affleck has made sure that "Argo's" acting is reined in — and that starts with him. He and casting director Lora Kennedy have wisely given the six American hostages roles to talented actors (Tate Donovan, Clea DuVall, Scoot McNairy, Rory Cochrane, Christopher Denham, Kerry Bishe) with not necessarily familiar names or faces.

Even when the film calls for performers with bigger, more recognizable names — Bryan Cranston, Alan Arkin and John Goodman, all in top comic form — Affleck's seen to it that their irresistible wise-cracking stays focused and low-key.

Before Affleck's character, Tony Mendez, enters the picture, "Argo" brings us up to speed two times over. First we see a brisk history of Iran, artfully designed by Kyle Cooper of Prologue Pictures with a combination of comic strip imagery and newsreel footage, that fills us in on the 1953 CIA-backed Iranian coup against the Mohammad Mosaddegh regime and the bringing of the Shah to power.

Then we see a compelling, expertly done re-creation of the Nov. 4, 1979, storming of the American Embassy in Tehran and how it was that six Americans were able to escape the building. Collectively known as "the houseguests," they take refuge in the residence of Canadian Ambassador Ken Taylor (Victor Garber).

"Argo's" story begins in earnest 69 days later when Mendez, estranged from his wife and living in bachelor squalor, is summoned by his tart-tongued boss, CIA assistant deputy director Jack O'Donnell (Cranston), to a key meeting.

Mendez is the CIA's top man in exfiltration, an expert at the stealth removal of people from hostile territory, and because the time has come to get those six out of Iran his expertise is sorely needed.

Unhappy with the plans his superiors present, Mendez gets an idea while watching "Battle for the Planet of the Apes" with his young son. He remembers a civilian the CIA has worked with before, Hollywood makeup expert John Chambers (whose real-life credits include Oscar-winning work on the "Apes" series and creating Spock's ears for the original "Star Trek").

From this memory comes the notion of getting the Americans out of Iran by pretending they're a team of Canadians who entered the country to do location scouting for a forthcoming Hollywood movie. As Jack O'Donnell truthfully tells Secretary of State Cyrus Vance (Bob Gunton), "This is the best bad idea we have."

The funniest part of "Argo" (named after the fake science-fiction film the Canadians are supposedly scouting for) involves Mendez going to Hollywood to ensure that that make-believe production is real enough to fool the Iranians. John Goodman is wildly funny as Chambers, and Alan Arkin is even funnier as composite character producer Lester Siegel. He gets off one of the film's best inside Hollywood lines when, before a hilarious negotiation with agent Max Klein (Richard Kind), he tells Mendez, "You're worried about the Ayatollah? Try the WGA."

Daily news

http://www.nydailynews.com/entertainment/movies/movie-review-argo-article-1.1180804

"Argo" is movie magic

Ben Affleck's third directorial outing, is an entertaining, real-life, race-the-clock thriller that nabs you at the start and never makes a wrong move.

How can you not love a film that has a smart sense of history, an affection for all things '70s, a well-tuned political compass and a plot kick-started by a chance viewing of "Battle for the Planet of the Apes"?

Which is not to say "Argo" ever treats the events it portrays less than seriously. A credit sequence sums up how enraged Iranians came to storm the U.S. embassy in November 1979. As 52 Americans are taken hostage, six low-level diplomats get out and hide in the home of the Canadian ambassador (Victor Garber).

With Tehran's streets overflowing with rage, the diplomats are trapped — and aware they may be exposed any minute.

In Washington, the CIA's Tony Mendez (Affleck), a specialist in getting people out of dangerous spots, hatches a plan. Pretending to be a Hollywood producer, Mendez will go to Tehran with fake IDs, give the diplomats a cover story — they're scouting locations for a new movie — and get them on a Swissair jet.

But every small detail has to seem real, so Mendez calls on John Chambers (John Goodman), a Hollywood makeup artist who won an Oscar for his work in the "Planet of the Apes" movies. Along with blustery has-been producer Lester Spiegel (Alan Arkin), Mendez and Chambers prepare to "make" a cheesy "Star Wars" rip-off called "Argo." They get an office, create posters, hold a casting call and trick the press. They draw up artwork to show Iranian officials the film is real.

Only it isn't. And convincing the nervous diplomats that this is "the best bad idea" the CIA has, as Mendez's boss (Bryan Cranston) puts it, isn't easy. But the danger is getting closer, and a little imagination might just save their lives.

"Argo" moves deftly from the diplomats' claustrophobic quagmire to the spies' D.C. offices to Hollywood backlots. Chris Terrio's wry screenplay keeps things on parallel tracks, but in focus.

Chambers and Spiegel are cranky, expletive-spewing movie vets, and Arkin and

Goodman eat it up ("If I'm gonna do a fake movie," Lester bellows, "it's gonna be a fake hit !"). Casting these pros is an anti-Hollywood move, "Argo's" way of saying, "F—movie stars, here's how it's done."

Which reflects well on Affleck. A longtime political animal — and before that a big-ticket actor, and before that the Oscar-winning screenwriter, with Matt Damon, of "Good Will Hunting" — he doesn't let his shaggy, watchful portrayal of Mendez steal the show.Here it's Affleck the director ("Gone Baby Gone," "The Town") who's in the spotlight, as "Argo" marks a major arrival.

Affleck is as confident with the Hollywood scenes as he is with the thrills. That's especially true in the terrific final act, when the film goes from "Wag the Dog"-type satire to "Dog Day Afternoon" and "Midnight Express"-style tension.

"Argo" — based on a real story, declassified in the mid-'90s — gets every cinematic detail right. And if it seems wild, or any part didn't happen exactly as shown ... well, that's what movies are for.

New York Post
Big Ben
http://nypost.com/2012/10/12/big-ben/

Ben Affleck, who directed and stars in the film, plays a CIA agent who concocts a crazy scheme to spirit Americans out of Ayatollah Khomeini's Iran.

A blue-chip Oscar contender that's also a rousing popcorn movie, Ben Affleck's "Argo'' offers plenty of nail-biting thrills as well as funnier scenes than you'd ever imagine possible in the grim context of the Iran hostage crisis, which began in 1979.

Quick history lesson: That's when 52 employees of the American Embassy in Tehran were held captive for 444 days by followers of the Ayatollah Khomeini after the country's ailing longtime ruler, the shah, fled Iran for asylum in the US.

The film focuses on half a dozen employees who managed to flee into the streets when the embassy was overrun by an angry mob of students. The escapees were hidden, for nearly three months, and at considerable personal risk, in the residence of the brave Canadian Ambassador Ken Taylor (Victor Garber).

The long-classified true story of how the six were able to finally sneak out of Iran — by posing as the Canadian crew of a phony science-fiction film led by a steel-nerved CIA agent turned improbable modern-day Moses — is stranger than any fiction that Hollywood could possibly invent.

This preposterous and dangerous-sounding scheme is the brainchild of a CIA extraction expert named Tony Mendez (a bearded Affleck in his finest screen performance to date).

With the Canadians preparing to abandon Iran, Mendez presents it as the "best bad idea'' to safely fly the Americans out of the country on a commercial aircraft. Intelligence agencies had been seriously considering an even more ridiculous plan that would have required the six, posing as agricultural experts, to bicycle hundreds of miles, in winter, to the Turkish border.

To concoct a convincing cover story that would fool Iranians aggressively searching for the unaccounted-for Americans, Mendez turns to his pal John Chambers (John

Goodman), an Oscar-winning makeup artist. Chambers then recruits a cynical veteran movie producer (Alan Arkin as a composite character, never funnier).

The three of them quickly option a script for a "$20 million 'Star Wars' ripoff'' called "Argo'' and plant a story in Variety about the project's imminent production plans (next to an ad announcing the same).

This is the most uproariously hilarious part of the movie — "You can teach a rhesus monkey how to direct,'' Chambers tells Mendez — and the trickiest for Affleck as a director, who has to keep the humor from swamping the suspense he's been building in earlier scenes.

Affleck aces the tonal shifts so flawlessly that it's surprising this is only his third movie as a director — if you didn't know otherwise, you'd swear this was the work of a veteran master like Steven Soderbergh.

Most daringly, Affleck cross-cuts a photo-op read-through of the cheesy "Argo'' script by costumed actors with terrifying scenes of the embassy hostages (the ones not being hidden by the Canadians) being subjected to mock executions.

Purely for lack of options, the White House reluctantly agrees to send Mendez off to Tehran on this mad mission.

The Canadians have agreed to provide phony passports for their "guests,'' but it's up to Mendez (a rare heroic portrayal of a CIA agent in a movie) to teach the six how to pose as a film crew — and lie their way past highly suspicious armed guards at the airport in the space of 48 hours.

The six are understandably skeptical about the scheme and terrified about what will happen if they're caught. The only one of them who actually speaks the native Farsi (Scoot McNairy) is so hostile that he threatens to derail the entire mission.

Even with cooperation secured, Mendez and his boss (Bryan Cranston) back in Washington have to think fast when the Carter administration gets cold feet because of the potential embarrassment (not to mention probable executions of the six as spies) should Mendez fail.

Screenwriter Chris Terrio's superb script — which avoids caricaturing the Iranian extremists or their beliefs — takes what I'd consider acceptable liberties with the facts, especially in the final section.

This allows Affleck to offer some white-knuckle suspense for a grand show — and a slam-bang ending to "Argo'' that's guaranteed to have audiences cheering. Well, maybe not in Iran.

Washington Post
No title
http://www.washingtonpost.com/gog/movies/argo,1215808.html#reviewNum1

Have you heard that cinema is dying? That the movies are kaput? That Hollywood just doesn't make films for grown-ups anymore? You've heard wrong -- at least if "Argo" is any indication.

This captivating, expertly machined political thriller jumps through every hoop the naysayer can set up: It's serious and substantive, an ingeniously written and executed drama fashioned from a fascinating, little-known chapter of recent history. It also happens to be extremely funny, crafty and enormously entertaining. It's two, maybe

even three, films in one -- all of which work as enjoyably on their own as they do in concert.

"Argo" is all the more remarkable for having been so adroitly directed by Ben Affleck -- who it seems just yesterday was being dismissed as the paparazzi's favorite pretty boy, but who in recent years has emerged as a filmmaker of astonishing assurance and depth.

In "Argo," Affleck plays Tony Mendez, a CIA expert in disguises and "exfiltration," who at the height of the Iran hostage crisis in 1979 is called on to get six American diplomats out of Tehran, where they've been hiding in the Canadian ambassador's residence. His scheme is so crazy, it just might work: He proposes to impersonate a movie producer who arrives in Iran to scout locations for his upcoming science-fiction flick, "Argo." After some legerdemain with paperwork and spending a day or two chatting up the new revolutionary government's cultural ministers, he'll depart with the Americans in tow, each of them playing someone on the film's crew.

Working from a superbly well-crafted script by Chris Terrio, Affleck threads viewers through the dauntingly tricky geopolitics and tonal shifts of "Argo" with an utterly flawless sense of control, starting with an efficient, boldly graphic prologue explaining the roots of the Iranian Islamic revolution and putting viewers inside the U.S. Embassy in Tehran when it is stormed in November 1979. From the chaos of those moments and ensuing days, he moves to the home of Canadian ambassador Ken Taylor (Victor Garber), who has agreed to house six Americans who managed to escape the takeover. From the quiet tick-tock of that situation (which ranks somewhere between house arrest and an Edward Albee play), he smoothly shifts to Washington, where the State Department and the CIA weigh rescue options that include bicycles and trumped-up agricultural missions.

Once Tony hits on the movie idea, "Argo" goes to Hollywood, where a makeup man played by John Goodman and a producer played by Alan Arkin advise Tony on how to set up a phony movie -- a shockingly easy feat in a town where, as Arkin's character observes, "people lie for a living." Like "Wag the Dog" before it, "Argo" takes full advantage of the overlap between tradecraft and showbiz, depicting the movie industry at its most tacky, mendacious and fulsomely amoral. The studios "would shoot in Stalingrad with Pol Pot directing if they thought it would sell tickets," an insider observes at one point; an earlier bit involving Warren Beatty and the Golden Globes isn't just flawlessly delivered, but perfectly captures the cult of proximity that is so often confused with power in the business of show.

While yellow ribbons begin to swathe the rest of America -- and a little show called "Nightline" becomes citizens' go-to source of hostage crisis updates -- Mendez and his colleagues refine their plan until he's ready to take it live, at which point "Argo" suddenly but seamlessly switches from an antic Hollywood send-up back to a taut "Mission: Impossible"-type thriller. And by "Mission: Impossible," I refer to the television show of the 1970s, a time period that Affleck captures with stylistic touches as authentic as they are inadvertently witty, from IBM Selectrics that were the state-of-the-art word processors of their day to the pneumatic tubes CIA bureaucrats used for intra-office communications (hey, they never crashed).

"The whole country is watching you, they just don't know it," says Mendez's boss, played by Bryan Cranston. The neat trick that Affleck pulls off is making "Argo" play like a real-time nail-biter, even if most viewers already know the outcome. (The scheme

was attributed solely to the Canadian government for years, until it was declassified in 1997.)

A closing-credits side-by-side montage shows to what lengths Affleck has gone to re-create the real-life places and people of "Argo" (the mini-ensemble of Tate Donovan, Rory Cochrane, Scoot McNairy, Clea Duvall, Christopher Denham and Kerry Bishe deserve special mention for their work channeling the six American houseguests). But it's his command of artifice -- the staging, editing and judiciously calibrated unfolding of the story, especially its harrowing final moments -- that proves his mettle as a director of genuine chops.

"Argo" deserves to find the discerning audience it has been made for: After all, if we buy tickets, that means more smart, sophisticated filmmaking -- and less Stalingrad -- for all of us.

Chicago Sun-times
http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/argo-2012

It's the same the world over. A Hollywood production comes to town, and the locals all turn movie crazy. When a little picture named "Prancer" came to Three Oaks, Mich., I was sitting in the bar and overheard one bearded regular confide in his friend, "See that guy? He's assistant makeup."

As in Michigan, so in Iran. At the height of the 1979 Iranian hostage crisis, with yellow ribbons tied around half the old oak trees in America, a CIA agent and a couple of Hollywood professionals dreamed up a cockamamie scheme to free six Americans who had found refuge in the Canadian embassy. Their existence had to remain a secret to protect Canada's diplomatic status.

Enter the CIA "extractor" Tony Mendez (Ben Affleck), a producer named Lester Siegel (Alan Arkin) and a makeup man named John Chambers (John Goodman). Chambers has a brainstorm: He and Siegel would fabricate a fake sci-fi thriller named "Argo." They would commission a screenplay, pay for storyboards, and buy a big ad in Variety. Mendez would fly alone into Tehran and train the six Americans to impersonate Hollywood pros — the cinematographer and so on.

Their cover: They need desert locations for their movie, which would vaguely resemble "Star Wars." They would tell the Iranians the six people were Canadians who were scouting locations and now need to fly back to North America. One of the most enchanting scenes has Mendez showing the sci-fi storyboards to Iranian authorities, who try their best to conceal what movie buffs they are. At the end of the scene, when Mendez tells them "you can keep em," they're like kids being given an "E.T." poster by Steven Spielberg.

This preposterous scheme is based on fact. Yes, it is. Countless movies are "inspired by real events," but this one truly took place. The extraction of the six Americans remained top secret for 18 years. They all returned safely to America. "Argo," needless to say, was never filmed.

Ben Affleck not only stars in but also directs, and "Argo," the real movie about the fake movie, is both spellbinding and surprisingly funny. Many of the laughs come from the Hollywood guys played by Goodman and Arkin, although to be sure, as they set up a

fake production office and hold meetings poolside at the Beverly Hills Hotel, they aren't in danger like their "crew members" in Iran.

Key supporting roles are filled by Bryan Cranston, as the CIA chief who green-lights the scheme, and Victor Garber, as the Canadian ambassador who at great risk opens his embassy's doors to the secret guests. Affleck is brilliant at choreographing the step-by-step risks that the team take in exiting Tehran, and "Argo" has cliff-hanging moments when the whole delicate plan seems likely to split at the seams.

The craft in this film is rare. It is so easy to manufacture a thriller from chases and gunfire, and so very hard to fine-tune it out of exquisite timing and a plot that's so clear to us we wonder why it isn't obvious to the Iranians. After all, who in their right mind would believe a space opera was being filmed in Iran during the hostage crisis? Just about everyone, it turns out. Hooray for Hollywood.

The Denver Post

Movie review: Ben Affleck's star rises as a director with "Argo"

http://www.denverpost.com/ci_21750783/movie-review-ben-afflecks-star-rises-director-argo

One of the suprisingly resonant images in the political thriller "Argo" is a fleeting one. An aerial pan of Los Angeles catches the famous Hollywood sign looking worse for the wear. Letters are tilted. At least one has toppled.

It seems like a throwaway detail. But then one of the admirable things about "Argo" director Ben Affleck — whose third film confirms his behind-the-camera talents — is that hewing to details matters. Especially when you have a tale as unbelievable on paper as this one, which finds the U.S. government greenlighting a sci-fi adventure flick in order to free Americans in Iran.

The year is 1979, Hollywood isn't faring particularly well. The Carter Administration is doing worse, due in no small measure to an international disaster unfolding in Iran.

Darkly comic, politically thoughtful and nerve-wrackingly paced, "Argo" deals with one of the most volatile moments in American foreign affairs in the last 50 years: the storming of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran on Nov. 4, 1979. Reverberations from the toppling of the Shah, the rise of the Ayatollahs and the forging of an Iranian theocracy continue to inform the U.S. relationship to Iran and Middle East.

After beginning with a animated lesson in late 20th century Iranian history, "Argo" shifts to the frenetic moments before the gates of the U.S Embassy are breached. Affleck, cinematographer Rodrigo Prieto and editor William Goldenberg make visceral, with grainy images, fast cuts and jostling motion, the crowd surging energy and fury building outside the embassy.

It took 444 days before the 52 American hostages were released. "Argo" spins a lesser known saga about the fate of the six foreign service workers who escaped the U.S. compound and found sanctuary in Canadian ambassador Ken Taylor's home.

In 1997, President Clinton declassified documents that revealed CIA efforts to extract the six led by agency exfiltration expert Tony Mendez and aided by an Oscar-winning

Hollywood makeup artist named John Chambers.

All shaggy hair and unshaven, Affleck portrays Mendez with a level intensity. When we meet him, he's living in a messy hotel room, not with his wife and young son in their Maryland home. It's during one of his nightly chats with his son that he gets the idea for how to spirit the six out of Iran.

We won't over-describe the way his epiphany happens because Affleck proves to be an assured and subtle filmmaker. We will say that "Battle for the Planet of the Apes" figures into it. And that Mendez's lightbulb moment is one of the finest we've seen on screen in quite a while. His plan: make the six Americans a Canadian movie crew who've been scouting locations in the Middle East for a sci-fi adventure along the lines of "Star Wars." The movie's title? "Argo."

Bryan Cranston does terrific deadpan, craggy work as CIA assistant deputy director Jack O'Donnell. Asked by a superior about the cockamamie idea, he replies "This is the best bad idea we have, sir. By far."

John Goodman brings a droll knowingness to Mendez go-to guy in Hollywood, make-up pioneer John Chambers. Alan Arkin may get a Oscar nomination for his turn as composite character Lester Siegel, the fabulously dyspeptic producer whom Mendez and Chambers convince to join in making the fake movie seem real. His observations about Hollywood are priceless and he also launches the film's best catchphrase, which can't be printed here.

"Argo" has that solid, kick-the-tires feel of those studio films from the 70s that were about something but also entertained. Only it's as laugh outright amusing as it is sobering.

One might think from this review that the film spends more time in Lalaland than Tehran. That's not the case. And the six actors portraying the foreign service workers do a great job of not seeming particularly exceptional. Before things unraveled, they were processing visas, trying to sell farm equipment, and so forth. They are capable, fairly young folk under duress, bickering about how to proceed, wondering if they made a mistake not just in leaving the embassy but in coming to Iran in the first place.

Of course there was something preposterous about the CIA inviting Hollywood into a clandestine mission. That fact makes "Argo" is very funny.

The combination of two vastly different moods shouldn't work so well together, but it does — and brilliantly.

Affleck, the director and actor, makes sure we feel the anxiety of the six. That we honor what was at stake even as we enjoy the tense, roller-coaster ride.

Chicago tribune
Ben Affleck's mission accomplished in 'Argo'
http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/movies/sc-mov-argo-movie-review-20121010-column.html

The propulsive hostage thriller "Argo," the third feature directed by Ben Affleck, just plain works. It's heartening to encounter a film, based on fact but happy to include all sorts of exciting fictions to amp up the suspense, whose entertainment intentions are clear. The execution is clean, sharp and rock-solid. It's as apolitical as a political crisis

story set in Iran can get. But "the first rule in any deception operation is to understand who your audience is."

So wrote Antonio J. Mendez, the Central Intelligence Agency operative played in "Argo" by Affleck, in his most recent book dealing with the strange undercover operation dramatized here. Working from a nimble script by first-time feature scribe Chris Terrio (who has a sense of humor to go with a sense of pace), Affleck understands that movies are deception operations, too, and that his potential audience for "Argo" is large and wide, conservative and liberal and centrist.

Prior to "Argo," Affleck directed the Boston-set features "Gone Baby Gone" (2007) and "The Town" (2010), and his strengths are very old-school. Not to pin it on his jaw, but Affleck's directorial approach is what you might call square-jawed. The technique is not subtle or original; his camera always seems most comfortable when framing a sweaty face under duress in chin-to-hairline close-up. But Affleck's approach works; it gets the job done. At a key moment near the end of "Argo," a moment designed expressly for cathartic applause and a swell of relief, you know what happened the other night? The audience applauded.

The real stuff first. In 1979, the year of "Kramer vs. Kramer," 52 Americans were taken hostage in Tehran by Iranian revolutionary factions sympathetic to the Ayatollah Khomeini. Meantime, however, six U.S. State Department officials in the employ of the American Embassy escaped before they could be captured and ended up hiding in the Canadian ambassador's home.

Mendez concocted a plan: Fly into Tehran, posing as a member of a Canadian film crew scouting exotic locations for a "Star Wars" rip-off titled "Argo." Then fly out again, this time with the six Americans playing the roles of his Hollywood colleagues. In preparation, Mendez worked with Hollywood makeup artist (and longtime CIA contractor) John Chambers, played by John Goodman, in setting up phony offices for use by "Studio Six Productions." The movie in preproduction needed to appear semilegitimate and quasi-plausible. Alan Arkin does wonderful, incrementally sly things with the fictional role of an old-time producer enlisted by Chambers and Mendez to assist in the dodge.

Most of "Argo" sticks with the fortunes of the escaped State Department officials, and once Mendez arrives in Tehran, the debates turn to their chances of surviving such a flagrant ruse. The film begins with noise and chaos, with the Iranian mob storming the embassy. Even when "Argo" is kicking back and taking time for more casual moments among the officials, the tensions (and the close-ups designed for tension) rarely cease. One of the peculiarities of the real-life situation was how the officials' days and nights in the home of the Canadian ambassador (Victor Garber) were made easier by good food and wine. The clock was ticking, however. The Iranians, they believed, knew the six U.S. citizens were hiding somewhere. Affleck, as director, never lets the audience forget it.

Bryan Cranston plays a composite authority figure back in the states, Mendez's overseer. His is a face (you may know it from "Breaking Bad") that says: I mean what I just said. Damn it. The real-life "Argo" mission, according to Mendez, was risky but went off essentially without a hitch or a hiccup. The movie throws in all sorts of hitches and screw-tightening bits, and by the time maniacal, knife-wielding Iranian thugs are giving chase on the Mehrabad airport runway ... well, even if it seems hoked-up as you're watching it, and it does, it works.

The film's Oscar nominations are presumed to be a sure thing. I do hope that Affleck, behind the camera, can learn the value of letting a shot play out more than four or five seconds. The script of "Argo" works from an extremely efficient outline of story beats and payoffs. It's not rich in portraiture; the State Department officials, all well played (I loved the moment when Kerry Bishe, as Kathy Stafford, lets loose with a laugh near the end), aren't especially well particularized on the page. As Mendez, Affleck's performance comes with a touch of Movie Tough Guydom that pushes "Argo" into familiar territory; a more neutral sort of anonymity might be closer to the real guy. I'm just guessing.

Parts of "Argo" belong strictly to the movies. Other parts, the best parts, have one foot in the movies and the other in a real-life pressure cooker. In the populist vein of Ron Howard's "Apollo 13," Affleck's rouser salutes the Americans (and, more offhandedly, the Canadians) who restored our sense of can-do spirit when we needed it. We get into jams; we get out of them. The movies like those stories, wherever they fall on the fiction/fact measuring stick.