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WA2 1-pg Description

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**General Topic:**

For my paper topic I will be analyzing the staples of American society- sex, money and food - in the 1950s and how the changes/transitions within these arenas effected the time as well as the following decades.

**Thesis:**

The events in 1950s America contributed to the society-wide push towards mass consumption, immediate gratification, and the ever-revitalizing American Dream in specific reference to money and the use of credit cards, sex and the rise of Playboy, as well as food and the exponential influx in the fast food industry. I am going to try to analyze at least one film/documentary/video for each sphere: sex; money; and food. I have only found one such film however, “Fast Food Nation,” which you happened to reference in class as a good source for a topic related to one such as mine.

**Explanation of Thesis:**

The use of credit cards and the concept of “buy now— pay later” brought upon a more solidified society-wide consumer mindset and encouraged immediate gratification. This also planted the seeds for future economic difficulties within American society; the increased widespread acceptance and normality of debt within American society redefined economic “stability” and success. This theme only is multiplied and dramatized through the decades.

The wider acceptance and meshing of sex/sexuality within society and the public sphere represented the huge shift towards modern promiscuity and a weakening of traditional modest ideals. The now wider availability of licentious material made indistinct what should and should not be displayed and also blurred where and when appropriate situations for this material was. The overall takeaway of the founding and society-wide acceptance of Playboy Magazine, made known to all Americans that immediate gratification, the concept that you can get “what you want, when you want, wherever you want it,” was supported and easy— all you had to do was pick up a magazine.

The rise of the fast-food industry represented the growing dissociation with the traditional structured meal-time as well as the growing instability of familial and societal roles of the time. For example, if the mothers weren’t the meal-makers, who was? Better yet, who couldn’t be? The increased occurrences of families eating out and buying their food out-of-home directly influenced the exponential rise of the food industry, and moreover, its expansive employment opportunities for Americans across the country.

**Sources:**

1. “Playboy and the Making of the Good Life in Modern America” – Elizabeth Fraterrigo
   1. This article discusses the background of Playboy magazine and what it stood for in 1950s modern society. I have seen this book referenced many times in articles I have been surfing on this topic and feel it has drawn many comprehensive conclusions that it only briefly discusses in the abstract that I feel would be useful for me to look into and later on reference/draw from for my own paper. It is published by the Oxford University Press so I am confident in its validity as a source.
2. “Diners Club Begins a New Industry” – Lewis Mandell, Sarah Holmes
   1. This article discusses the beginnings of the credit card industry and the early records/statistics of its growth within 1950s society. It references why credit cards were invented and how much of an impact they made not only on individual American consumers but the entire country, influencing banks, travel industries, and of course, the retail/food industry.

**Next Steps:**

I have already started to accumulate a list of other sources. I have a rough list of about 15 that I plan to look through to find which would fit best with my paper. I also plan to continue looking for several more “relating sources” that connect my spheres of sex, money, and food to each other in relation to this time period.

**Possible Sources/References:**

Credit Cards:

[Over-indebtedness](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=ae294397-85e5-4ff7-abde-403e05cfc18e%40sessionmgr101&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=121772894&db=ers) – article

[Diners Club Begins a New Industry](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=364eb4fc-bfc4-4f7f-a6fd-b387694753cb%40sessionmgr103&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=89314354&db=ers) – article

[Establishment and expansion of banking](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=56e85a9d-a24e-49ed-9904-a0d7ae364a3c%40sessionmgr120&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=89550903&db=ers) – article

[A look back at the world in the 1950s & 1960s](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=56e85a9d-a24e-49ed-9904-a0d7ae364a3c%40sessionmgr120&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=89550903&db=ers) – article

[Different paths to mass consumption: consumer credit … during the 50s and 60s](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=3f4c5127-91e7-4cc0-80ad-94d5bd0444a0%40sessionmgr102&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=31639604&db=a9h) – article

[Aggregate consumption and debt accumulation](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=299c0ca4-b18a-4514-876b-c2e7ec657188%40sessionmgr101&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=100222247&db=bth) - article

Playboy:

[Playboy and the Making of The Good Life in Modern America – by Elizabeth Frateriggo](http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=a66ae9f6-acf3-4956-b3f1-4d151a0df167%40sessionmgr4007) - book

[Chicago Tribune – How playboy changed the world](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2009-12-13/news/0912100524_1_hugh-hefner-playboy-empire-playmate) - article

[The Redefinition of Cold War Masculinity: How Playboy Magazine and Fidel Castro Helped American Men Belong in 1950s America](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=04f79c73-add2-460d-a808-21e470ef15d5%40sessionmgr102&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=edsoai.733409078&db=edsoai) - online

[The Short Stories of Playboy and the Crisis of Masculinity: Men in Playboy’s Short Fiction and 1950s America](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=3167bd0c-9a5f-4881-8bd9-18323a2e8f22%40sessionmgr103&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=edsoai.871135455&db=edsoai) – online

[Getting Comfortable: Sex, Reading, and Postwar Adjustment in 1950s Playboy](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=b2f98480-6c66-45ce-8102-217ea8a94f24%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=2017393365&db=mzh) – article

Fast Food:

“Fast Food Nation” – movie (book Eric Schlosser – more history)

Dangerous Youth – Doherty article

[Food retail industry](http://eds.b.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=cb961c0b-e59a-4a9a-8f71-fb898f841e91%40sessionmgr103&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=89088160&db=ers) – article

[Convenience Foods](http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=2&sid=fd6d514c-c65d-4847-a986-d413a44ebc8a%40sessionmgr4007&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=25683795&db=cmedm). – article

[Culture as Advertisement: A Synoptic Survey of Fast Food and Family Communication.](http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=fc769499-b0a4-47b6-b98e-63db0ee59f32%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=ED284283&db=eric) – article

[Eating in a survival town; food in 1950s atomic America](http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=05823fe6-801f-485f-8e5a-15b5c4b5fdc4%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=102289243&db=khh) – article

[Fixed stomachs and convenience foods: abundance and food in 1950s](http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=5d98f2e4-e8a6-4125-a1e1-89eb067544f5%40sessionmgr4007&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=oso.9780190600686.003.0003&db=edsoso) – article

[Laura Shapiro, Something from the oven: reinventing dinner in 1950s America](http://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=0&sid=a2dc1ff4-7ab2-4fdd-8468-7884a9236035%40sessionmgr4008&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWRzLWxpdmUmc2NvcGU9c2l0ZQ%3d%3d#AN=edsdoj.926a7f1e7131403aa73562059eccd76f&db=edsdoj) - article