When discussing the American push towards consumerism and mass consumption, there is an assortment of reactions and viewpoints expressed from all sects of society; both positive and negative. The less discussed and popularized viewpoint is the negative interpretation. An example of such perspective is expressed within Jan Logemann’s article *Different Paths to Mass Consumption.* “To the critics, the focus on a credit-fueled material standard of life not only eclipsed public goods and a broader quality of life, but also threatened an older, "inner-directed" ethics of bourgeois individualism.” Another article that exemplifies this concern and adds upon it is Thomas Jundt’s *Greening the Red, White, and Blue: the Bomb, Big Business, and Consumer Resistance in Postwar America.* He discussed the “demoralizing potential of consumption” and the governments support on consumption, economic growth, and mass-production regardless of the environmental or cultural concerns with this shift. “The expanded industrial capacity financed by the government during the war required increased consumption afterward to sustain the massive systems of production. The government, in partnership with corporations and financial institutions, did its part to assure sufficient levels of consumption by doggedly pursuing easy credit and economic growth.” (Jundt)

In contrast to this concerned view of mass-consumption and consumerism, documented in Luke Corden’s exposition, *Mass Consumption and Meaningful Democratic Politics,* is an optimistic view of the possibilities held within a consumer culture*.* A consumer based culture allows people of society to have more of a say in the products they consume. “Mass consumption has changed American society at a more fundamental and structural level. So far it has been argued that society has gradually moved away from mass consumption as a civic duty to mass consumption as a personal act of self-expression and that the marketing industry has been successful in identifying values that has allowed mass production to successfully sell its products to an individuated mass market.” (Corden)

What credit and consumption represented and was valued as within American society during the post-war period of the mid-1940s to late 1960s was controversial in nature due to its importance across a wide variety of industries. The credit card, often regarded as the catalyst to the industry of mass-consumption, was started by a group called The Diners Club. As Lewis Mandell and Sarah Holmes wrote in their article, *Diners Club Begins a New Industry*, “Technological advances usually were borrowed from other industries rather than created specifically for credit card usage. For example, neither satellite transmission nor computer authorization codes were invented for the credit card industry but were put to good use by it. The credit card industry thus influenced technology by offering a new outlet for innovative products and methods.” (Mandell and Holmes)

This argument of cross-industrial interactions between credit and other industries was supported once again in Jan Logemann’s article, *Different Paths to Mass Consumption*. She relates the credit card and credit industry as a whole to democratic politics. She states that this industry is so key in our history due to the influence of consumer spending on economic stability. “After 1945,” she quotes, “a broad consensus among political and economic actors afforded consumer credit an even more central role in an economic growth strategy which was underpinned by a widely shared vision of credit as the key to broad democratic access to middle-class mass consumption and respectability.” (Logemann).

Contributing to the growth in technology, economy, and the overall purchasing power of each shopper within the larger American consumer society, it is easy to argue the positives of mass-consumption and consumerism. However, it is important to reflect upon the negatives. The environmental and cultural concerns of a mass-consumption are irrefutable. Moreover, with more information on the cross-industrial interactions and the societal impacts of consumption, one can develop their own perspective on this shift within American society.