**Chapter 32, Section 4: The “Me” Decade: Life in the 1970s**

**I. The Search for Fulfillment** *(pages 970–972)*

**A.** Writer Tom Wolfe labeled the 1970s the “me decade,” referring to the self-absorbed attitude of the American people.

**B.** Some young Americans looked for fulfillment through an array of secular movements and activities that made up the **New Age movement.** Believers in the movement felt that people were responsible for and capable of everything. They believed spiritual enlightenment could be found in common practices.

**C.** Some Americans looked to new religions or cults. Many new religions originated in Asian and centered on the teachings of a **guru,** or a mystical leader. One of the best known gurus, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, led a religious movement known as **transcendental** **meditation,** in which it was thought that with daily meditation and silent repetitive mantras, peak intelligence, harmony, and health could be reached.

**D.** By 1970 60 percent of all women between the ages of 16 and 24 had joined the workforce. American family life changed with the increase in women working outside of the home. This resulted in smaller families, parents and children spending less time together, and a rise in divorce rates.

**II. Cultural Trends in the 1970s** *(pages 972–974)*

**A.** Television changed during this time, reflecting many of the changes taking place in society. *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* placed an unmarried woman with a meaningful career at the center of the show. Taboo subjects like racism were addressed in the 1971 show ***All in the Family.*** By carefully mixing humor and sensitive issues while not preaching to the audience, the show made viewers examine their own feelings about social issues.

**B.** The music of the 1970s had a softer, more reflective, and less political sound. The rise of **disco** music became the craze in African American and Latin nightclubs. The fast pace and loud persistent beat attracted fans.

**C.** Several other fads became popular during this “me” decade. Skateboards, T-shirts with personalized messages, mood rings, and citizens band (CB) radios all became popular during the 1970s. Fitness was a trend in the 1970s. Aerobic fitness was introduced, and men and women began running and joining gyms as a social activity.