

US History

The Nixon, Ford, & Carter Years

Learning Target:

I can interpret why many believed the 1970s had become the "Me" decade by examining culture during the time.

5. The 1970s

Demographics –

Immigration –

- Rising immigration from Asia (China) and Latin America (Mexico & Cuba)
- Non-English speakers found discrimination prevalent
- Two laws passed to aid non-English immigrants
 - Voting Rights Act of 1975 – Voting materials printed in various foreign languages
 - Bilingual Education Act – Instruction provided in native language while students learn English

The Sunbelt –

- 1970s saw a migration from the Frostbelt or Rustbelt (Northeast) to the Sunbelt (South & West)
- Sunbelt became increasingly important in national politics due this population explosion
- Civil rights advancements, larger suburbs, and air-conditioning encouraged this migration

The Family –

- Rise in people living alone, divorce rate and remarriage rate rose
- 1960 – 2.2 divorces per 1000 Americans 1970 – 3.5 1980 – 5.2
- Baby boom – 3 children per family 1980 – 1.6 children per family
- Traditional 1950s family had to be changed
 - Single mother households increased by 50% to 8 million

Culture Trends

Self-Improvement –

- Political & economic turmoil led many to look for self-improvement which was in their control
- Self-help books became very popular *Looking Out for Number One & I'm Ok – You're OK*

Fitness & Health –

- Self-improvement also included a new interest in physical fitness
- Running became popular and running shoes sales boomed
 - Jimm Fixx's *The Complete Book of Running* became a bestseller
- American's diets also became concerning
 - McDonalds passed the Army as the number one supplier of meals
 - 1977 – 35% of money spent on food went towards restaurants

Entertainment & Technology

Movies –

- Major boom in the movie industry
- The invention of blockbusters helped convince people to leave their TV and go to the theater
- Steven Spielberg directed Jaws(1975) to start the trend would later make Close Encounters of the Third Kind(1977) , E.T.(1982), and Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark(1981)

Music –

- For many the 1970s marked the end of an era in music
- Music changed from the music of the counterculture to big business
- Rock music was packaged and targeted towards consumers
- Disco became to most popular music
 - Millions went to discotheques to dance to pre-recorded music
- Also saw the emergence of punk rock music – the Ramones

Technology –

- 1976 – Steve Jobs and Stephen Wozniak founded Apple Computer company
- 1977 they introduced Apple II, the first personal computer
- 1975 – Atari introduced the first video game system
- VCR's were introduced along with answering machines
- The 1970s saw the introduction of the technological age we live in today