**WEEK 15: WRITING AND DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENT**

WHAT THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION HATH WROUGHT

The Scientific Revolution is sometimes referred to as the third great revolution in human history. The first was the cognitive revolution of 100,000 years ago, which gave us the ability to think imaginatively and cooperate in large numbers. The second was the agricultural revolution of 10,000 years, which set the stage for population growth, permanent settlements, and the rise of civilization. The Scientific Revolution, well, it has changed everything as well. But how?

Let’s imagine a couple of Rip Van Winkle scenarios. (Rip Van Winkle was, of course, the fictional character created by author Washington Irving, who falls asleep prior to the American Revolution and wake up 20 years later to a new, independent America).

Our two Rip Van Winkles each sleep for 500 years. One goes to sleep in 1021 AD and wakes up in 1521 AD. Things have changed, yes, but not to an extraordinary degree. There are new nations, some improvements in weaponry (early guns, notably), slightly better sailing ships. But it would not take him long to adjust to life in the world he woke up to.

Our second Rip Van Winkle goes to sleep in 1521 and wakes up in 2021 (ignore the Covid crisis). Obviously, things would be very different for him.

Name three BIG developments this Rip Van Winkle would find fantastically different. Don’t list specific inventions, like, say, cars. But bigger things. For example, our Rip Van Winkle would probably be surprised to see so many old people, since relatively few lived to great age in 1521.

**Please submit the assignment via Blackboard by the beginning of class on Tuesday, May 11.**

Be prepared to discuss your answer in class.