



Western Civilization from 1650 to the Present

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TOPIC 2.1. THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

Supplement to Chambers, *The Western Experience*, Chapter 16: Culture and Society in the Age of the Scientific Revolution, pp. 551-587.

<p>A NEW WAY OF THINKING Observation Experimentation Analysis Induction</p>	<p>The Scientific Revolution (1540-1700) ushered in a new way of thinking based on observation, experimentation, analysis, and induction. For the first time in centuries, people turned away from the church and looked towards logic and objectivity for the answers to their most fundamental questions about life, death, and the universe.</p> <p>For details, see the PowerPoint presentation entitled “The Scientific Revolution” in Course Documents.</p>
<p>ONLINE RESOURCES</p>	<p>For more information on this topic, explore one or more of the following online resources:</p> <p>The Scientific Revolution: Nice overview of this important development in human history.</p> <p>The Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution: Treats the causes, inventions, key figures, and methods of the Scientific Revolution.</p> <p>The Medieval Synthesis and the Secularization of Human Knowledge: The Scientific Revolution, 1642-1730: Excellent scholarly treatment of the Scientific Revolution.</p> <p>The Scientific Revolution, 1543-1600, 1600-1642, 1642-1730: Lectures on the various phases of the revolution.</p>
<p>DISCUSSION QUESTIONS</p>	<p>Drawing on the resources you have had an opportunity to explore (textbook, course documents, online resources, library resources), answer one or more of the following questions:</p> <p>Why was the Church so opposed to the heliocentric theory?</p> <p>If you were Galileo or Copernicus, would you have fought for your beliefs, even at the risk of being executed or jailed? Give examples of men and women, throughout history, who have risked imprisonment and death to defend their ideas or beliefs. Are there ideas or beliefs that you would defend today at all costs?</p> <p>How did Newton's theories change the way people viewed the universe?</p> <p>Do you agree with Bacon's contention that human progress can result from science? What human progress have you seen during your lifetime? What role did science play in making that progress possible?</p> <p>Major advances in science are often controversial because they change our way of thinking, raise important ethical questions, or come into conflict with traditional religious values. Give examples of scientific advances that have raised such controversy during your lifetime.</p> <p>Today scientific ways of thinking are as accepted and taken for granted as traditional ways of thinking were in the 16th century. What might a future change in the ways of thinking be like? Do you think such ways of thinking would be accepted without too much difficulty?</p>