

# The meaning of rip van winkle biography examples

[Countries](#), [England](#)



While Rip Van Winkle is an amusing story, there is more at work here than a man who saw an eerie group of bowlers before falling asleep for a matter of decades. When Rip wakes up and comes back down out of the Catskill Mountains, his entire village has changed: it is larger, his wife has vanished, and his village has changed from being a British possession to a hamlet in the new United States of America. However, when Rip looks at nature, the land is virtually unchanged. The key theme that emerges from this story is the notion that, while the foundations of a community are important, change can be helpful, indeed necessary, in order for progress to occur (Kann, 1979, p. 183). In the case of the American Revolution, for the colonists to be able to move on towards becoming masters of their own fates, they needed to get rid of the British occupation. Even though it was the British who had financed the initial infrastructure of the colonies, times were moving away from colonialism and toward autonomy of nations. Within sixty years of the American Revolution, most of the rest of the colonial holdings in the Americas, including Mexico and portions of South America, had moved toward independence, and the trend would follow in Asia and then in Africa (Pearce, 1993). In the instance of Rip's village, the people had remained the same, although they had aged significantly, and the land was the same. In other words, human nature and life had not changed, but the way the people lived had changed dramatically. Ultimately, both change and stability work together through the progress of human history.

## **Works Cited**

Kann, D. (1979). Rip Van Winkle: Wheels within wheels. *American Imago* Vol. 36: 178-196.

Pearce, C. (1993). Changing regimes: The case of Rip Van Winkle. CLIO Vol. 22.