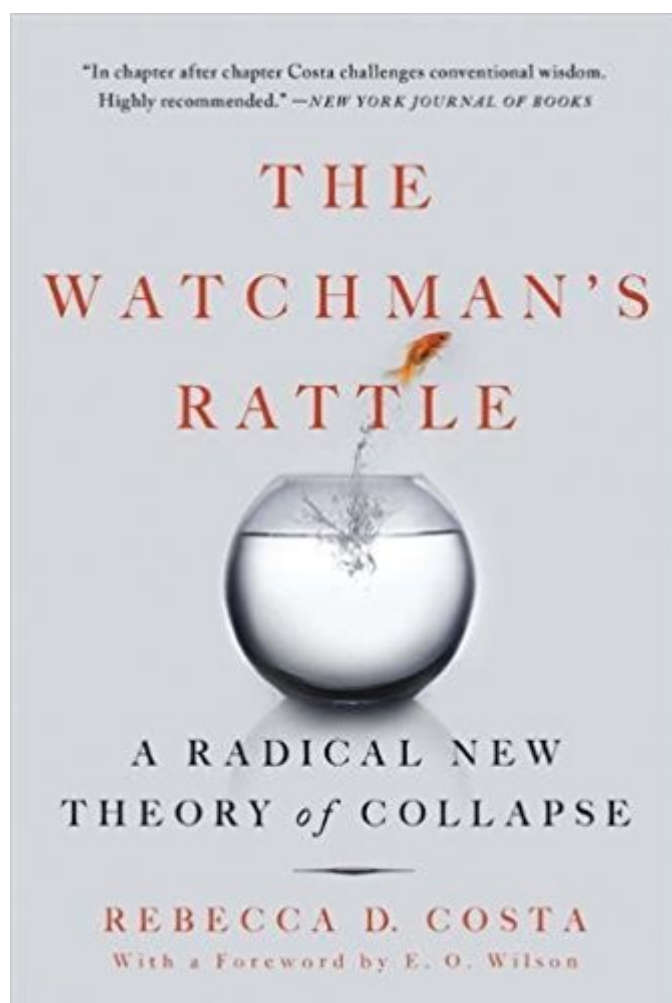


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# The Watchman's Rattle: A Radical New Theory Of Collapse



## Synopsis

Why can't we solve our problems anymore? Why do threats such as the Gulf oil spill, worldwide recession, terrorism, and global warming suddenly seem unstoppable? Are there limits to the kinds of problems humans can solve? Rebecca Costa confronts - and offers a solution to - these questions in her highly anticipated and game-changing book, *The Watchman's Rattle*. Costa pulls headlines from today's news to demonstrate how accelerating complexity quickly outpaces that rate at which the human brain can develop new capabilities. With compelling evidence based on research in the rise and fall of Mayan, Khmer, and Roman empires, Costa shows how the tendency to find a quick solution - leads to frightening long term consequence: Society's ability to solve its most challenging, intractable problems becomes gridlocked, progress slows, and collapse ensues. A provocative new voice in the tradition of thought leaders Thomas Friedman, Jared Diamond and Malcolm Gladwell, Costa reveals how we can reverse the downward spiral. Part history, part social science, part biology, *The Watchman's Rattle* is sure to provoke, engage, and incite change.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Geri Spieler, NY Journal of Books If there were a "Watchman" to protect us from danger, he would be shaking his rattle vigorously right now. We are in danger of becoming extinct, for the signs of the collapse of our civilization are obvious, according to Rebecca Costa's excellent and thought provoking new book, *The Watchman's Rattle*. The theme for *The Watchman's Rattle* can be summed up in the story of the sophisticated and scientifically developed Mayan society:

Unproven beliefs became the substitute for facts. Once this happens, as the practice of beliefs cannot result in real solutions, the inevitability of failure takes place, and disaster is the only outcome. Our inherent hubris about our being as evolved as we can possibly ever be, is another message that one can take from *The Watchman's Rattle*. If we do not heed the lessons of the past, if we continue to ignore all the warning signs that threaten human existence—such as global recession, powerful pandemic viruses, terrorism, rising crime, climate change, rapid depletion of the earth's resources, nuclear proliferation, and failing educational systems—we are doomed to extinction. However, if we do pay attention, Costa lays out a plan that places us in an excellent position to change a repetitive pattern of decline. This is an excellent book, rich with challenging thoughts as well as perceptive solutions. Costa offers excellent research in this fully developed dissertation on the warning signs and potential solutions to human and global destruction. Highly recommended.

Tina Brown, Editor-in-Chief and Founder, *The Daily Beast* — "The Gulf is drowning in oil, the housing market stumbles along, the Afghanistan conflict nears a decade long—why do all these problems seem so intractable and unstoppable? How did we get to this point of gridlock? Instead of hand-wringing we should all read Rebecca Costa's *The Watchman's Rattle* and start figuring out how to really solve these messes. Few other books have so clearly and sharply captured how our symptom-obsessed society means we're always looking for the quick-fix and easy cure rather than searching for the deeper, longer lasting solutions. Her analysis of how we got to this point mixes history, biology, economics and much more to paint a picture of a society overwhelmed by tremendous problems, but with her Silicon Valley rationality and novel guide to intuitive thinking, Costa has pointed a way forward for all of us."

E. O. Wilson, Two-Time Pulitzer Prize Winner — "I am on the side of Rebecca Costa. Let us become realists-in-search-of-a-solution rather than doomsayers."

Dr. James Watson, Nobel Laureate — "Problems eventually become too complicated for the average intelligence—in *The Watchman's Rattle*, Rebecca Costa depicts the challenges this presents."

Donald J. Trump, Real Estate Developer and Entrepreneur — "Rebecca Costa has written a riveting examination of our world's most dire and complex issues. Her message for mankind is an ultimately hopeful one as she explores her fascinating theory about the brain's ability to develop advanced problem solving techniques in times of crisis. A must read!"

Library Journal — "Costa presents innovative messages about dealing with the many issues facing modern civilization....a warning and a resource. It will give concerned readers new hope in human capability."

About Rebecca D. Costa — [www.rebeccacosta.com](http://www.rebeccacosta.com) Rebecca Costa is a sociobiologist who offers

an evolutionary explanation for current events and emerging trends. A new voice in the mold of Thomas Friedman and Malcolm Gladwell, Costa attributes modern consternation - from terrorism, crime on Wall Street, epidemic obesity and upheaval in the Middle East - to genetic imperatives. Retiring from a career in Silicon Valley, Costa spent six years researching and writing *The Watchman's Rattle*. The success of the book in 25 countries led to a weekly syndicated radio program called *The Costa Report*. Costa is presently represented by the American Program Bureau and the Scott Meredith Literary Agency. For more information visit [www.rebeccacosta.com](http://www.rebeccacosta.com).

After hearing Rebecca Costa on a radio interview I had to read her book. She is very interesting to listen to but that did not translate to her book. It was a slow read and although I can tell she put a great deal of work and research into the book (every author deserves great praise) her 250 pages could have been easily articulated in 70 pages or less. There were lots of redundancy and her great concepts were unfortunately surrounded by fluff. I also caught some contradictions that were a disappointment given my respect for her ideas in the book. I gave her three stars because of the fluff, redundancy and slow read. If not for those shortcomings I would have given her 5 stars for her incredible mind, her extensive research, and the many examples she used for this book.

Great insight and interesting subject. It is an easy read and you want to read it quickly to get the whole subject to ponder and then maybe go back and read it again. Coming from a faith background it felt that she is trying to describe spiritual revelation and possible consequences to not heeding heavenly counsel. I hope more comes of it.

Fantastic book. This was a gift for a friend. I bought and read it on Kindle and wanted my friend to read it, too. Loved the sociology, loved the theory and loved the writing. Well documented with a full resource list as well.

An excellent overview of mankind's evolutionary journey toward a sustainable way of life based on rational thinking and an appreciation of how slow biological evolution throttles our ability to solve increasingly complex problems brought on by modern civilization. Yet the author gives us a solution in our awareness of our cognitive threshold and ability to develop enhanced insights to solve these complex problems that will otherwise destroy our civilization. JLO

Excellent!

This should be required reading in high schools, colleges and MBA programs! We think we are so intelligent, but very often we are our own worst enemies!

An excellent look at the intersection of sociology and biology; and, a peek into a world where human evolution and new technologies define our culture.

This is an important book for our times. Rebecca does a great job of connecting the dots in our evolutionary history and presents it in an understandable way. Ultimately she gives hope for the future if we are willing to recognize our collective shortsightedness and implement some basic tools in our solution strategy. I highly recommend it!

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