**TED Talk – Jared Diamond: Why do societies collapse?**

[**http://www.ted.com/talks/jared\_diamond\_on\_why\_societies\_collapse**](http://www.ted.com/talks/jared_diamond_on_why_societies_collapse)

In his books *Guns, Germs and Steel* and *Collapse*, big-picture scholar Jared Diamond explores civilizations and why they all seem to fall. Now in his latest book, *The World Until Yesterday*, Diamond examines small, traditional, tribal societies -- and suggests that modern civilization is only our latest solution to survival. Diamond’s background in evolutionary biology, geography and physiology informs his integrated vision of human history. He posits that success -- and failure -- depends on how well societies adapt to their changing environment.

Why do societies fail? With lessons from the Norse of Iron Age Greenland, deforested Easter Island and present-day Montana, Jared Diamond talks about the signs that collapse is near, and how -- if we see it in time -- we can prevent it. Jared Diamond investigates why cultures prosper or decline -- and what we can learn by taking a broad look across many kinds of societies

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|  | **E** conomic | **S** ociety | **P** olitics | **En** vironmental |
| 5 point check list |  |  |  |  |
| Norse Collapse in Greenland |  |  |  |  |
| Present day Montana |  |  |  |  |
| General Themes  Other Examples/ Notes |  |  |  |  |

**(Complete for homework)**

**Reflection Questions:**

How do Jared Diamond’s arguments support Environmental Determinism?

Do you agree with Diamond’s generalizations for why societies fail to solve their problems?

What role does Possibilism have within Diamond’s argument?