

[MUSIC PLAYING]

**ROBERT W.
STRAYER:**

Chapter 23, Globalization. Over the past several decades, this term has become something of a buzz word, used to describe our intensely interdependent world. Usually, it's presented as something strikingly new. And in speed and scale, it surely is. From a world history prospective, however, globalization has a history that spans many centuries. The most recent phase of this long process is the focus of chapter 23.

When most of us consider globalization, we think about international trade, investment, transnational corporations, the outsourcing of jobs, and maybe the economic conflicts between the industrialized and developing countries. But beyond economic globalization, chapter 23 also highlights several cultural processes that have operated on a global scale, feminism, religious fundamentalism, and environmentalism. Each of them reflects the great transformations of modern world history and each took root in various parts of the world in quite different ways.

Now in both its economic and cultural dimensions, globalization is very much a work in progress, whose outcomes are unknown and frankly unknowable. So this history book ends, as do all historical accounts that approach the present, it ends with uncertainty. The study of world history will not reduce that uncertainty. Nor will it provide clear guidance for the future.

It may, however, enable you to see your own life and your own times as part of something larger. It may help us all to make sense out of the fragmentary and disjointed experiences of our own lives. And in its many examples of creativity, perseverance, and efforts to repair the brokenness of the world, you may find some encouragement for living your own life more richly and more fully. For world history is a field of study that can open your mind. And if you will let it, it can touch your heart as well.