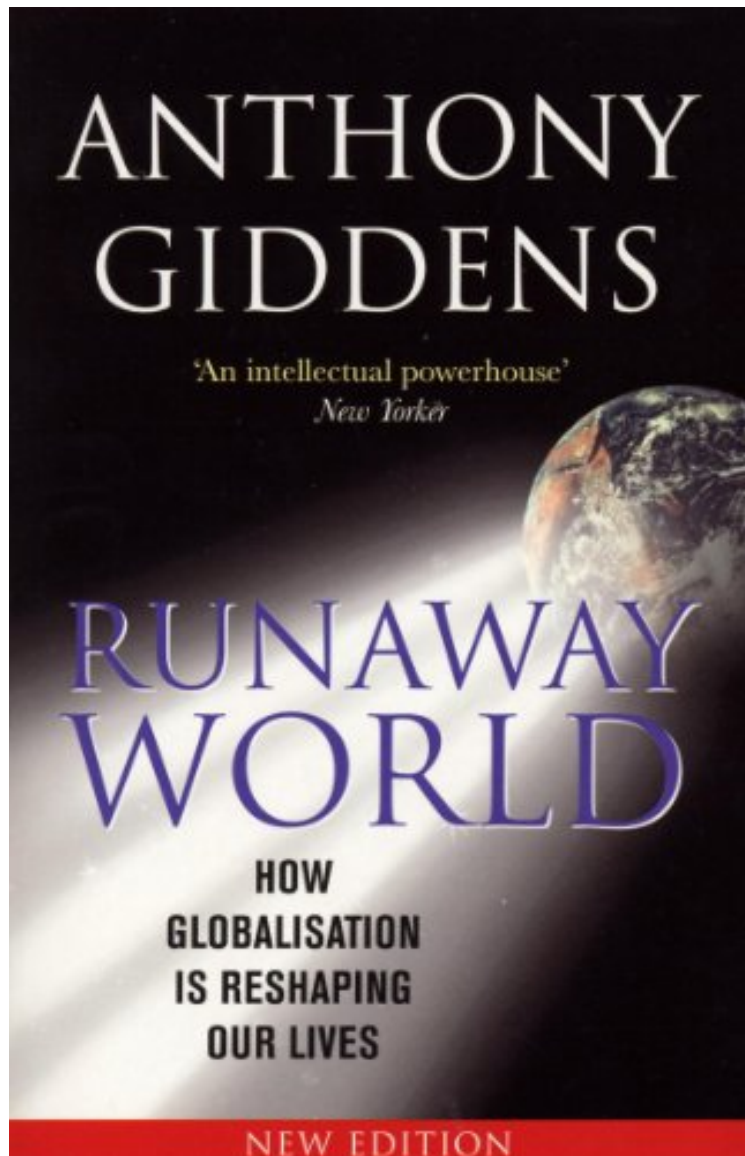


## Runaway World

*Anthony Giddens*

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**Anthony Giddens : Runaway World** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Runaway World:

9 of 17 people found the following review helpful. The basics of a growing freedomBy Theodore A. RushtonFreedom is wonderful. That's the basic message of this book. Americans take freedom for granted, but much if not all of the world had less freedom than the US until the recent past. The first half-century of American independence was marked by chaos, out of which a unique and growing American freedom developed which could not be shattered even by the War Between the States. Now, and I say this as a Canadian nationalist and not an American chauvinist, the rest of the

world is catching up with the US. The result is worldwide chaos. The foundation of Canada has always been peace, order and good government; in recent years, this complacent assumption has been challenged by Quebec separatists and the rise of a new political party in the western provinces. Even at that, Canada is a mild case of chaos compared to what is happening in many countries. Giddens looks at this chaos in relation to a number of universal concerns -- risk, tradition, the family and democracy itself. In each case, as more people are given the right and ability to make their own decisions, a difficult transition to expanded freedom takes place. Giddens examination of family values is an example of the controversy and confusion that is being generated. For almost all of history, families were economic units based on the ability of one person to provide an income and another to look after the household and raise children. Now, with both people in a marriage able to earn a self-sufficient income, the basic nature of marriage is changing. It is no longer a case of economics, marriage now involves a democracy of emotions. On a personal basis, Giddens cites the example of a great aunt who ". . . had one of the longest marriages of anyone. having been with her husband for over 60 years. She once confided that she had been deeply unhappy with him the whole of that time. In her day there was no escape." My own mother could have said the same. Today, there is an escape. Divorce is becoming ever more respectable; once, it would have been unthinkable to elect a divorced president, yet no one questioned Ronald Reagan's divorce and the fact that his next wife was several months pregnant by the time they married. Now, add this freedom to all other elements of society. Then, expand it worldwide. The result of this phenomena is globalisation. Conservatives in foreign lands denounce it as Americanisation, but it is purely an expansion of personal freedom. When you get change, you get chaos. Out of that, as shown by the chaos prior to the writing of the US Constitution, a newer and freer society sometimes emerges. It's happening in Canada, in China, Cuba and worldwide. Giddens examines the basics of this growing freedom. Once these basics are understood, the current chaos of globalisation can be seen as a dawn of expanding freedom rather than an insidious American plot to take over the world. On that basis, every country will develop its own freedom even if it doesn't match the appearance of American institutions. Unless, of course, conservative forces of tradition seize power to end the chaos and restore peace, order and good government. Freedom can be as diverse as every distinct society; repression always wears the same stern face of not allowing people to make decisions for themselves.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This book is well written and i really liked it. It has a good point of view ...By Ana Luiza Wuttke  
This book is well written and i really liked it. It has a good point of view and his opinion is well argued and everything, he really knows what he is talking about  
0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great Eye Opening Read  
By Karen in Kansas  
This was a great read. It was a real eye opener for understanding a lot of the things going on in our society and the world today. It is short, and easy to read. I didn't agree with 100% of what was said, but I think it has some really important ideas for everyone to understand.

'Before the current global era it is impossible to imagine that comparable events [like September 11] could have occurred, reflecting as they do our new-found interdependence. The rise of global terrorism, like world-wide networks involving in money-laundering, drug-running and other forums of organised crime, are all parts of the dark side of globalisation.' From the new Preface  
This book is based on the highly influential BBC Reith lecture series on globalisation delivered in 1999 by Anthony Giddens. Now updated with a new chapter addressing the post-September 11th global landscape, this book remains the intellectual benchmark on how globalisation is reshaping our lives. The changes are explored in five main chapters: \* Globalisation \* Risk \* Tradition \* Family \* Democracy.

.com As director of the London School of Economics, Anthony Giddens is one of the world's foremost academics. He has served as an advisor to both President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair, and is closely tied to the center-left idea of "third-way" politics. In this brief book on globalization (drawn from a series of lectures delivered in 1999), Giddens writes, "We are living through a major period of historical transition." Globalization is reordering societies all over the planet, and although the results are sometimes unpredictable, they are heading in a generally positive direction. But not everybody agrees, as the author freely admits: The battleground of the twenty-first century will pit fundamentalism against cosmopolitan tolerance. In a globalising world, where information and images are routinely transmitted across the globe, we are all regularly in contact with others who think differently, and live differently, from ourselves. Cosmopolitans welcome and embrace this cultural complexity. Fundamentalists find it disturbing and dangerous. Whether in the areas of religion, ethnic identity, or nationalism, they take refuge in a renewed and purified tradition--and, quite often, violence. Giddens is not coy about where he stands: "We can legitimately hope that a cosmopolitan outlook will win out." In what is sure to be a controversial chapter, he examines sex and family life through the prism of this fundamentalist-cosmopolitan divide. He is severely critical of what he calls the "traditional family," which he considers an aspect of fundamentalism the world over and an enemy of sexual equality: "I remember what my great aunt once said to me. She must have had one of the longest marriages of anyone, having been with her husband for over 60 years. She once confided that she had been deeply unhappy with him the whole of that time. In her day there was no escape." Runaway World is certain to provoke a lively debate--Giddens would surely have it no other way. --John J. Miller  
From Publishers Weekly  
Forget the global village, says celebrated London

scholar Giddens in this brief, accessible look at the aftereffects of globalization; on the contrary, we've got "global pillage." Based on a series of lectures originally broadcast on the BBC, this book confronts the benefits and dangers of global processes and asserts that life in the coming century will amount to a precarious game of "risk management." Giddens, whose 1998 work *The Third Way* spurred debate over the course of social democracy, argues that globalization's most profound effects will be not economic but cultural. Drawing on the work of Eric Hobsbawm, Marshall McLuhan and others, Giddens offers thumbnail sketches of broad themes--family, risk, tradition, democracy--as they've been reworked by global political and economic forces. He praises the advent of a "global cosmopolitan society" but cautions that salutary gains, such as equality for women and the spread of democracy, are threatened by a fundamentalist backlash. China has considered making divorce more difficult, he writes, while rhetoric about the traditional family structure remains a pernicious force against change around the world. Many of Giddens's arguments will sound familiar, but certain assertions are bound to be controversial. Sexuality need not be dominated by heterosexuality, he says, at a time when marriage is an increasingly defunct institution. And tradition itself can be seen as a creation of modernity, invented to secure the interests of power. Though our runaway world offers cause for optimism and pessimism in about equal measure, Giddens concludes, democratic ideals are still very much worth fighting for. (Apr.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist

Giddens is a sociologist and the author of 31 books that have been published in 22 languages. He is also the director of the London School of Economics and cofounded Polity Press, a successful publishing house. These days he is most often referred to as British prime minister Tony Blair's "guru" (and he is also said to have the ear of President Clinton) for articulating "the third way" in his so-titled 1998 book. The "third way" is a political philosophy that treads a path between liberalism and conservatism, thereby incurring often harsh criticism from both liberals and conservatives. It espouses "traditional" values, social justice, and a market economy. This slim new book examines globalization, risk, tradition, family, and democracy from that same philosophical perspective. It is based on five addresses Giddens presented in 1999 for the prestigious Reith Lectures, an annual series aired by the British Broadcasting Corporation. David Rouse