

## **Description:**

Join us on this episode of *George Washington Slept Here* with esteemed Civil War historian and Abraham Lincoln scholar - [Dr. Allen Guelzo](#). Throughout the interview, we explore Dr. Guelzo's passion for American history and Abraham Lincoln while examining the enduring stability of American ideas, the impact of media on politics, and the recurring theme of political polarization. Dr. Guelzo provides insights into the similarities and differences between America today and the 1850s, along with captivating stories from the Civil War. We conclude with a thought-provoking discussion on the possibility of a Civil War in the United States and how it might differ from the Civil War of 1861-1865.

Tune in and listen as we explore the complexities of American history and its relevance to our present-day challenges.

Allen Guelzo is a Senior Research Scholar at the Council of the Humanities at Princeton University and Director of the James Madison Program's Initiative in Politics and Statesmanship.

## **Quotes:**

*"Patience is crucial in democracy and addressing intricate social issues."* - Allen Guelzo

*"We are united by a profound proposition: a nation conceived in liberty, dedicated to the belief that all men are created equal."* - Allen Guelzo

*"Every generation must dedicate itself to the enduring strength of our nation. Confidence in the proposition is vital."* - Allen Guelzo

## **Featured Guest:**

**Allen Guelzo**

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/allen-guelzo-722b3aa/>

## **Chapters:**

00:00 Introduction

07:14 Lincoln's Influence: Shaping the Author's Intellectual Pursuits

14:34 Satisfying Curiosity: Delving into Lee's Life and Legacy

19:01 Nobility and Grant's Perceived Failure

26:31 Exploring American Politics, History, and Music

34:40 Polarization and Unity: Tracing America's Political Landscape

38:34 Reassurance through History: Finding Hope in America's Past

44:12 Finding Common Ground in a Polarized Society

48:45 Examining Potential Conflicts in the Digital Age

54:39 Uncovering Untold Stories: Chamberlain, Parker, and Powerful Encounters

59:52 United by a Proposition: Lincoln's Belief in Unity and Endurance

01:06:44 Leadership Lessons from Lincoln and Henry Clay

01:15:35 Conclusion

**Transcript:**

**Jason Raia:**

Hello and welcome to *George Washington Slept Here*, a new civic education podcast from Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge, where we explore American history, politics, economics, and the idea of liberty through conversations with some of our favorite thinkers, writers, and leaders. I'm Jason Raia, Chief Operating Officer at Freedoms Foundation, and this week's host for *George Washington Slept Here*. In this new civic education podcast, the format is simple, a long-form conversation with a friend of Freedoms Foundation, where we can learn something new. Today's very first interview is with Civil war Historian and three-time Lincoln Prize-winning author Allen Guelzo. Good afternoon, Allen.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Good afternoon, Jason.

**Jason Raia:**

So glad to have you here. Allen has way too many honors and prizes to be listed in full, but we're going to learn a lot about him today. So this is the first podcast conversation that we have had. It's going to be structured in a way that will keep us on track. We want to explore Allen's origin story, how you became the person sitting here before us, and the current work that you're doing, what's taking up the bulk of your time. And then I want to hear your unique perspective on the state of America today, particularly on the subject of political polarization, And finally, we will end with a quiz, which hopefully will allow listeners to learn something about you. They never knew even the ones who have read all of your books. So, Allen, tell us where were you born and raised?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, surprisingly, I was born, not in the United States. I was born in Japan. I was born in Yokohama. My father was in the U.S. Army. Both my parents were American citizens, but they happen to be in the far east since his posting was actually to Japan and to Korea where he was a translator at the peace talks at P'anmunjom that ended the Korean War. Now one of his specialties was oriental languages, so he was a translator. I made my debut, you might say, in Japan and did it in a department store. Now I have to rush to say, it was a department store that had been converted to an army hospital, so it's not quite as dramatic as it sounds. But on the other hand, the hospital was itself shortly thereafter, converted back to a department store, served as such, and in fact, just a year or two ago, a foreign service officer who I got to know sent me photographs from Yokohama of that very department store. So I actually have a vivid image of exactly the place where I was born. Yes. And it really was a department store.

**Jason Raia:**

Well, that's amazing. I love it. How long were you there? And when did you wind up back here in Pennsylvania, which is where I believe you grew up?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, not long enough to learn the language, I'm sorry to say. But I've mostly grown up in the Philadelphia area because that's where my parents were located originally. That's where my grandparents were. So I consider myself, for the most part, a Philadelphia boy. And in that respect, that means that I've had to devote a life of frustration to rooting for the Philadelphia Phillies.

**Jason Raia:**

I hear you, and so do lots of people around the area here. Now I have - I'm curious about your influences and sort of you know, who encouraged you or what were the experiences that encouraged you eventually into academia and into history, but I know you've mentioned in a number of places both in writing and in-person - your grandmother. So I'm curious about the role your grandmother played, but also your other early influences.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, with my parents being committed to the life of the service, which means you move every six months, the feeling was that as I got to school age I needed a little bit more stability than that. So, that stability came through my grandparents in the Philadelphia area. And so I was put to school in Philadelphia, actually, in the suburbs in Upper Darby. I did not do all that promisingly well in first grade. And that summer following my -- grandmother determined that I was going to make up for any lost speed, and she bought a series of primers and put me to read them. And I have this very clear recollection of one very fine summer's day sitting on the front enclosed porch on Concord Avenue reading a story about King Robert of Sicily. I went back to my grandmother where she sat on her big velour purple chair. I said to her, what is this? And she said that's history. And, Jason, you might say it was a love affair from that moment onwards.

**Jason Raia:**

Wow. I can imagine so but what's interesting is that before history, if we fast forward to university, you started with biblical studies in a seminary in divinity school.

**Allen Guelzo:**

That's right. I had ambitions that way, but history kept elbowing its way in because even after I graduated from seminary, the seminary asked - because I was going on at that point to graduate work to get Pennsylvania - if I would teach courses on church history for them. And I did that for a number of years while I was working my way toward a Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania.

That was in 1986. I did some part-time teaching at Drexel University as well. And then moved on to a teaching post, first of all, at Eastern College, now Eastern University in Saint David's, Pennsylvania. Again, Philadelphia Suburbs. I taught some quick mental mathematics here, for 13 years and from there, moved to Gettysburg College where I was the Luce Professor L-U-C-E, not I double O-S-E. The LUCE Professor of Civil War Era Studies was the head of the Civil War Era Studies Program and taught there for some 15 years. And then the opportunity was presented to join forces at Princeton, and I have been at Princeton as the Thomas W. Smith distinguished research scholar in the James Madison program at American Ideals and Institutions. And I have been teaching history then really for all of my teaching careers. Well, a history of one description or another.

**Jason Raia:**

Absolutely, which I wanna go backward a little bit and talk about when you first started, it was not as a civil war historian or a Lincoln scholar. It was in, you know, an intellectual history that was - and Jonathan Edwards. So tell me about what because there, I see the linchpin of Jonathan Edwards and the religious movements in America to your divinity school studies. I'm curious when Lincoln arrives on the scene for you.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, Lincoln always was somewhere in the background. I'd always had a lively interest in the Civil War and in Lincoln. My grandmother is into this. again. because the very first biography I ever read of Abraham Lincoln was a comic book, the *Biography of Lincoln*, that I pestered my grandmother to buy for me when we were standing at a train station in Philadelphia and there was a news agency in the train station. And somehow that took my eye. The front cover had a picture of Abraham Lincoln getting ready to wrestle some anonymous opponent. That, I suppose, was sufficiently dramatic to take my interest. So I pestered and pestered as only an eight or nine-year-old can do, and she bought it for me. And Jason, believe it or not, I still have that comic book.

**Jason Raia:**

Oh, that's amazing.

**Allen Guelzo:**

So that's where I started with Lincoln. So Lincoln was always there in the background. But my real passion had been American intellectual history, the history of ideas. What are the distinctive ideas that make up the galaxy of American thought? And among those, of course, you run the gamut from 17th-century Puritanism all the way up to, let's say, 20th-century pragmatism and beyond. My inclinations pointed me in the direction of 18th-century moral philosophy. And in the American environment, there's no more important figure in 18th-century American moral philosophy than Jonathan Edwards. So I ended up writing my doctoral dissertation on Edwards on the problem of free will and determinism. And I thought for some time. That was really where I was going to camp out as a historian of American philosophy and American ideas. I even

obtained a fellowship at Harvard to do work on what would be a follow-up volume to that doctoral dissertation. As I was planning the second volume on "Freedom of the Will" moving into the 19th and 20th centuries, I recollected that our friend Lincoln had had a few things to say on the subject of free will and determinism and calling himself a fatalist and a believer in the Doctrine of Necessity. I thought it would be tremendously clever if I could give Abraham Lincoln a walk-on part in this new book I was planning. I wrote a paper about Lincoln and his Doctrine of Necessity -- had the opportunity to read it at the Abraham Lincoln Association's annual meetings in Springfield, Illinois. It was well received. And the first thing I know, I had an overture from a publisher about writing a book about Lincoln's religion. I --

**Jason Raia:**

Which if I recall, you refused multiple times.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Multiple times. Because I was aware of the fact that there were a number of books about Lincoln and religion, a great many of which had kind of disappeared into the swamp. I really didn't wanna join them. But my friends were persistent. The editor of this publisher was persistent. Finally, I said, look let me make you an offer. Let me write -- an intellectual biography of Abraham Lincoln. Not just about his religion, but about the whole galaxy of ideas that he had a part of. And they were agreeable, and that was what became "Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President". And once I got my hand into the Lincoln cookie jar, I couldn't get it out. I've never gotten back to writing that follow-up volume on free will and determinism and American thought. So instead, I've been writing a very great deal about Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War.

**Jason Raia:**

Which we are all grateful for because it's an incredibly varied sort of field out there of people who are writing for Lincoln, and you and you talk in the new preface about the golden age of Lincoln's scholarship that you didn't personally kick-off, but certainly, "Redeemer President" comes out sort of at the four of that golden age. And there's some amazing stuff that has come out. Certainly, the bicentennial contributed to that scholarship. But your book, I remember a couple of years ago when the short volume you did on reconstruction came out, and I was already here at Freedoms Foundation, and my immediate thought was, I wish I had had this when I was in the classroom teaching reconstruction because it is just this slim little volume that, gives you everything you need to know if that's all you're going to get to read. And that's part of what I've loved about the stuff that you do. Did you expect twenty-five years later that that "Redeemer President" was going to still be at play and in some ways still filling a gap that no one else has really entered?

**Allen Guelzo:**

If you had said exactly the things that you were saying, I would probably have laughed. I had no expectation of where things were going to take me or what I was going to produce subsequently on the subject of Abraham Lincoln. I had simply written this book, "Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer

President” and now it was a very real question. Well, what next? And in fact, I remember sitting at a meeting of the Abraham Lincoln Institute in Washington D.C. We had had the annual symposium that the Institute puts on, and we all went out to lunch, and we were sitting together with a number of us Lincolnians. I'm sitting across the table from Douglas Wilson, quite a formidable Lincolnian in his own right. And as I was talking to Doug, the idea shot through my mind, you know, no one seems to have recently written anything about the Emancipation Proclamation. That then germinated and became 2004 Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation-the end of slavery in America. And then once that was out, it was well, let's look around. Let's see if there's another mountain climb. And sure enough, 4 years off from that, I'm writing “Lincoln and Douglas: The Debates that Defined America” about the Lincoln-Douglas debates of 1858. And I have to admit it's really been a step at a time. I have no overarching architectural plan so I checked a box here, and I knew he was going to the next box and the next. At this point, Jason, I would have to say, I'm still in the position of saying anything can happen.

**Jason Raia:**

Absolutely. Well and it's interesting three Lincoln prizes later and, you know, a dozen or more books and multiple publications leads you to what I would consider the most unlikely biography to write for a man who started with Lincoln and then went to Douglas is to write the biography of Robert E Lee. And yet that's exactly what you did. Tell me what led you there. What was it that as you know, union boy, raised at your grandmother's knee made you so interested in Robert E. Lee?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Curiosity. I had spent so much time writing about Lincoln. I had been raised, as you say, at my grandmother's knee hearing her stories about growing up in Philadelphia at the turn of the last century, going to the George Clumber School in North Philadelphia which on Decoration Day, as they called it then, now, of course, we call it Memorial Day, old veterans of the union army would come to the school and their blue jackets and their little blue caps. And they would tell students like my grandmother what the real story of the Civil War was. And, of course, for them, the real story of the Civil War was about Lincoln. It was about emancipation. It was about the union and it certainly was not what those miserable traitorous Johnny Rebs were telling people. So this is what I am from the very beginning. I'm learning from her, Civil War songs, not Dixie. I'm learning “The Battle Hymn of the Republic ” - Trump, tramp, tramp, the boys are marked - I'm learning all the Union songs. So I have, you might say, hard wired as a Yankee from Yankee land, which in the end made it odd for me because I'm wondering what does the Civil War look like? through the other end of the telescope. What would it look like to write about Lee? Who at that point was very much a mystery to me. In fact, he remained a mystery to me for a very long time as I began working on this project. He's not an easy person to understand - to get to know. Even though he writes extraordinary numbers of letters. His personal correspondence must run out to something like eight thousand letters. Nevertheless, self-revelation is not his long suit. And there are so many ironies about the man that it's enough to make the head itch not just scratch. So looking at

Lee presented an opportunity to do something entirely different and to satisfy a curiosity. And so that became "Robert E. Lee: A Life".

**Jason Raia:**

I just have to step back. And the idea that your grandmother, who knew well and who helped raise you, knew or at least met and interacted with people who knew Lincoln. I mean, that's a very short and straight line in American history. And I think it's one of the things that's most fascinating about the subject is we don't have to go very far before we meet somebody who is only just a step removed from these incredible events that we've only read about.

**Allen Guelzo:**

The last certifiable Confederate veteran died in 1951. Pleasant Riggs (Crump) who had actually been in an Alabama unit as a teenager and was part of the surrender at Appomattox. The last Union veteran and the last absolutely certain veteran of the Civil War died in 1956. So I actually overlap, just a little bit, but I actually overlap the lifetimes of people who fought in the armies of the American Civil War. It really is not that long ago.

**Jason Raia:**

So I wanna get to - so you've written this amazing biography of Lee. Is there - and you talked about - when you gave a talk when it first released about how Lee meets this, you know, the textbook definition of a traitor, and yet all of his contemporaries, including Grant, talked about him being an honorable man. And I-I, you know, we're going to come to this discussion later on about the state of the world today, but it seems there's something there that, you know, here's someone who you and I would say, he took an oath to defend the constitution. He abandoned that oath. There's no more question. That's just it. And yet his principal interlocutor, his principal adversary - Grant - thought he was an honorable man.

**Allen Guelzo:**

And in many respects, Grant was more generous to Lee than Lee was to Grant. It's very curious because Lee, of course, is -- is born to one of the foremost families of the American founding. He's related to Richard Henry Lee, who offers the original resolution that leads to independence. His father "Light-Horse Harry" Lee was this beloved cavalry commander of George Washington - went one of that circle of young men that Washington assembled around him like Alexander Hamilton, and Henry Lawrence, who are his surrogate sons. Grant, well, Grant is distantly related to a minuteman who fought at Bunker Hill. But otherwise, nothing particularly distinguished about Grant. And not only Grant's lineage but even his army career. Here's a man who is quite literally forced to resign from the army because of alcoholism. He had a problem with the bottle. His and that and that in fact was not the hardest part of his life because when he leaves the army, life actually gets harder for him. He tries farming. It doesn't work. He tries selling real estate. It doesn't work. He has to pawn his watch in order to buy



Christmas presents for his children. And it's not until the Civil War breaks out that -- in the search for anyone who's had military experience -- the Governor of Illinois hands grants a commission. And from that moment, Grant goes nowhere but up. In eight years, Jason, in eight years, he will be the President of the United States. Now contrast that with Lee. It's almost like while one trajectory is going up, the other trajectory is going to go down because Lee, in fact, even though he's offered, not directly by Lincoln, but indirectly by an emissary, Old Francis Preston Blair - command of the Union army base at the beginning of the Civil War. Lee declines, resigns his army commission, and he will take command first of all - the Virginia forces - and then eventually, by the end of the war, he is the General in Chief of all of the Confederate forces, and he loses. The Confederacy loses. He is compelled to surrender his army. And you might say they cross each other in their trajectories at Appomattox Courthouse. And yet, what is the reputation that these two have enjoyed ever since the war? It has been the Lee who is the embodiment of nobility and chivalry. Whereas Ulysses Grant is often treated, and I think very, very wrongly as a failure in politics, a failure as a President, and the head of administration that wreaked from head to toe of corruption. All of those are misconstructions of Grant. Is it the same thing with Robert E. Lee? Is the celebration of Lee, the model of knightly perfection? Is that also flawed? I'm afraid that it is. In so saying, I realize I am swimming against some tides. The very fact that I would write about Lee raises one set of eyebrows, politically speaking. So I have to run that risk. And so much so that at one point, I actually asked my publisher whether it might not be a good idea to put the Lee manuscript into the refrigerator for our bucket.

**Jason Raia:**

I thought you were going to say you were going to write under Publius.

**Allen Guelzo:**

No. No. No. Not something even worse. Now his response, of course, was no, no, no. This is a very humane biography. This will do very well. We're going to go for it. Everyone agreed. So we did. On the other hand, in the book, I say very frankly and right at the very beginning that Robert E. Lee committed treason. I can't help but say that. I'm not saying that because I'm trying to be vicious or demeaning. I'm looking at the Constitution's definition of treason. I'm looking at Robert E. Lee and what he did. And, Jason, I don't have a way of defining that in any other fashion. What he did was to raise his hand against the Constitution he'd taken an oath to defend, against the flag he had fought under, against the profession that had uniformed him and shaped him, and given him prominence and opportunity. He raised his hand against a flag that my father had taken an oath to protect. That my son, who's a career officer, has taken an oath to protect. It's one I took an oath to protect when I was appointed to the National Council of the Humanities by the President. And I take that oath seriously. The oath of three generations, and Robert E. Lee raised his hand against that. How am I to see him in any other light than that of treason? So the biography points in ways that will, I am sure, get me boxed in both ears. But sometimes the historian is like the umpire of the baseball game has to take that chance when you have to call the balls and strikes as best you see them. And that's what I'm trying to do about Lee. Not to be cruel, not to be vicious, to exercise a measure of compassion on a man who lived in many



respects a very unhappy life. Yet at the same time, to also understand that compassion cannot float untethered from justice. Just as justice cannot float untethered from compassion.

**Jason Raia:**

It's a fascinating exploration that I think is, for me, part of the reason why I wanted to talk with you on this podcast as particularly as we get into talking about the state of America today because there's I think this is a very hard thing to do that for Lee is emblematic of the sides that people take. But I wanna put a pin in that because first I wanna talk about Princeton and the James Madison program and what you're doing today. And part of this is a mutual friend of ours was telling me about this program that he attended that you moderated on Dvořák let me see if I can find the title Dvořák - "Dvořák's Prophecy in the Vexed Fate of Black Classical Music". And he said it was fascinating and that on the panel were certainly a bunch of different viewpoints. And in some ways, it spoke to everything that's good about the academy and the marketplace of ideas that we, you know, hope that universities are, though we know oftentimes they are not. Tell me about what you're doing at James Madison and how you wind up moderating this panel on classical music, Dvořák, and black classical music.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, let me start with the James Madison program which is a wonderful program at Princeton which is housed in the Department of Politics at Princeton. It has its leadership because of Robert George, who I think many of your listeners will recognize at once, a wonderful executive Director in Bradford Wilson, and his assistant Shiloh Brooks. It's a program that runs courses through the Department of Politics for undergraduates, and I teach some of those courses. It also runs special programs during the academic year -- usually on Thursday afternoons, but it varies actually a good deal from program to program and schedule to schedule. On selected topics, a lot of them are connected to politics, but not necessarily so. It also runs summer programs. In fact, I'm running a summer seminar this July at Princeton on Statesmanship in American history and we're doing that in conjunction with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. It takes seriously the importance of ideas and aspirations in American politics. It takes seriously the Constitution, the founders, and the principal figures that are giving shape to the American experiment of which Lincoln obviously is a major figure. The program, while strictly speaking, deals with politics mainly nevertheless, throws a fairly wide arm around a number of American topics because in American life there's no idea that is not connected to politics in one way or another. And I have a very fine musical friend, Joseph Horowitz, former program director for the Brooklyn Philharmonic, music critic for the New York Times - Joe and I crossed paths because I've always had very lively musical interests and especially in American music. Joe, also a professional musician, has had something of a personal crusade to recover the history of American music, especially in the 19th century. And we intersected with that commonality of interest, especially over a new book he had written about Antonín Dvořák. And the 3 years that Dvořák spent in New York as head of the National Conservatory of Music. What was striking about Dvořák's tenure in New York was looking around the American landscape. Alright, bear in mind, Dvořák is from Bohemia, today we call it the Czech Republic, part of the

Austro-Hungarian Empire. He writes a great deal of wonderful music, and I have to triple underscore wonderful, I'm a great lover of Dvořák. He writes a lot of it based on the music he hears all around him from the Bohemian peasantry. And that gets, that gets worked in so many different ways into what he writes. Well, he comes to America, and he says why aren't Americans doing the same thing? Especially, he says, what about W. E. B. Du Bois called the "sorrow songs" of African Americans, so the plantation songs. He said this is native to American soil and American composers should be using this material, and let me show you how. So while he's in America, he writes his 9th symphony, from the new world. And he does exactly that. Does it not only without symphony, does it with the American suite, does it with his 13-string quartet - the American quartet. Alas, it's not a path that people follow. Especially in the 1920s when American culture took this dramatic turn towards modernism.

**Jason Raia:**

Jazz - Harlem Renaissance.

**Allen Guelzo:**

It was simply that well, nothing that had gone before the 1920s should be regarded as in any way worthy of respect. So all that gets all that music gets written off Dvořák's prophecy goes unfulfilled. And I looked at that and said, well, let me tell you something, Joe, that's not the only part of American culture in the gutter. Let me talk to you about American philosophy because the very same thing happens with American philosophy, which happens with American ethics, happens even in American political thought. The same erasure takes place. That's a parallel between these two. So, again, we found ourselves intersecting and we decided, alright, we're going to do a program. It's going to be about Dvořák. It's going to be about Dvořák's prophecy. It's going to be about the vexed fate of black classical music, but you know there really is a much larger context too. That's a context that embraces so many different aspects of American culture. We talked about Dvořák and music, but we also made sure to talk about how the recovery of Dvořák's prophecy is a model for what we want to recover in other places in American life from the American past.

**Jason Raia:**

Oh, that's fascinating. We will definitely have to explore that. I'm really sorry I missed that. Tell me how that conversation, how that program fits into what you were doing in the Madison program at Princeton, more general. What is your goal of being there? I know you are Director of the Institute for Politics and Statesmanship. You're the Council of Humanities. You made the move from Gettysburg and being almost what one might say is strictly a Civil War historian to something that opened up your ability to talk about lots of different things, including modern politics and modern issues. I know you've written a lot of op-eds since you have been at Princeton addressing the issue of the moment and bringing to bear what your scholarship and research and deep consideration has taught you over the years. So I'm curious about, one, what

you're doing and, two, what was that something that you were attracted by, or why were you attracted to this sort of new mission in your life as a scholar?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, for one thing, the James Madison program is about American ideals and institutions. Those ideals are not just political ideals. There are ideals about American culture, American music, and American art. Because in truth, the novelty, the exceptionalism of American politics, is something that bleeds right into the way that we do culture, the way that we do music. There are, you might say, these parallels that move together these resonances so that we do a kind of politics that has, as Alexander Hamilton said, the rest of the world has never seen before, and it becomes the task of the American people to undertake. Well, we see ourselves culturally as doing a number of the same things. So what we create as a republic, we want to create in terms of republican art. For instance, let us take Asher Durand. Let us take Thomas Cole. Let us take Frederick Church. Nineteenth-century painters. What are they painting? They are painting. They are visually telling us what a republic is like. What about American composers? They are telling us what America sounds like. So all of these things do, in fact, work together. And when we talk about a program dedicated to American ideals and institutions, we're not just going to limit ourselves to politics. We are in fact going to take a very broad view of what those ideals and those institutions really are.

**Jason Raia:**

That's really interesting because, yeah, I think it's a perfect transition to what we wanna talk about next, which is America today. I'm particularly interested in the political polarization that we see. But it sounds to me like what you're saying that you're exploring with the Madison program is this this idea in the 19th century of figuring out what America is. And in the 21st century, I would pose the question. Have we forgotten? Have we rejected it? And part of that comes from my deep, or abiding concern, that Americans find it harder and harder to recognize what they share in common with other Americans. That they can see that which divides them. They struggle to see that which ought to unite them. And so that's part of what I want to explore together, and I think what you're talking about is as far as the 19th century in art and music and architecture. And in some ways, it's defining who we are as a nation, as a young nation, coming into prominence. It won't be until the Spanish-American war and really World War I that we sort of burst onto the scene as a nation. So I guess my first question is that and the reason I wanted to start with you as our first guest, in the last you know, since 2016, since 2008 we've seen this growing political polarization. We've seen people who disagree and cannot find a way. to find anything to agree with other people on. And we hear every once in a while thrown around whether it's in mainstream media or in the blog-o-sphere or on the internet, this idea that we are heading toward another civil war. So I thought, let's ask the Civil War expert what is the same and more likely. What is different about America today and America in that antebellum decade of 1850's?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, I think there are really two ways of dealing with that question and that problem. One is to reflect on the fact that there has always been a polarization in American life and American politics. We should not kid ourselves. It's very easy to read the general histories of America in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Whenever this seems to be very predictable because we know what happened, they didn't. And to them on the ground, it always looked like things were coming unstuck. You had Jeffersonians at war with Hamiltonians. You had John Adams and Thomas Jefferson trading the vilest kinds of political ineffectiveness. And we're talking at this point, we're talking 1800. We're talking about how the American Revolution is still something in people's living memories. And yet here are Americans who are perfectly willing to do all kinds of violence to each other. Administrations that are willing to send their officers to go arrest people for saying nasty things about them. I'm thinking of Adams and the Alien and Sedition Acts. We have Presidents who are using the Presidential office to do things in return for their political opponents, I think Jefferson, even though Jefferson swore he wasn't going to do that to the Federalists. Let's not fool ourselves, he did.

**Jason Raia:**

And then generationally, it shifts to John Quincy Adams and Andrew Jackson doing the same thing all over again, the next generation.

**Allen Guelzo:**

You have this vivid political divide and you have personalities in those political divides, which are behaving in, what strikes us today as the most vile in temper and fashion. You have even at a presidential inauguration, you have a crowd of people. Who is pretty well teetering on the edge of being a riot, taking the White House apart, and swinging from the chandeliers? All of it, apparently, with the blessing of the new incumbent, Andrew Jackson, although that's actually pretty dubious and pretty exaggerated. You have moments like that, which are really nasty. And, of course, after Andrew Jackson's Presidency, we're really only thirty years away from the greatest eruption of all, which is the American Civil War. And the decades between the time Jackson leaves office and the outbreak of the American Civil War, the contest this way both in terms of rhetoric and actual practice is extraordinary for its violence. Now you might think maybe after the Civil War, we learned our lesson and we calmed down. No. Actually, it simply takes some different forms. And if you look at the history of what happened just in Washington, D.C. in the years after World War I, you have things like the bonus army and the bonus marchers. And they have to be driven away by United States soldiers under the command of no one less at that point than Douglas MacArthur. It was a disgraceful moment of the Hoover Presidency. And yet this is the kind of thing that's going on in Washington, D. C. itself. So It's very easy if you don't have a good grasp of American history, and I'm sorry to say that many people do not. Many people do not and that's something that, in a lot of respects, not only I, but you, Jason, and Freedoms Foundation have spent years upon years upon years working to correct. If we don't have that historical perspective, we're always going to look around ourselves and say, woah, it's us. How could things ever be worse than this? And I have to tell you frankly, yes, they could be,

and sometimes they have been. So in a way, political polarization is nothing new in American life. In some respects, political polarization almost goes with the territory of being a democracy whose basic principle is that sovereignty resides in the people. It doesn't mean that the people always carry on their political affairs wisely and well. Sometimes they do it wrong headed, and sometimes it's violent. But that is one of the risks you run with democracy. The great thing about democracy is when it works well, nothing else on the planet works better. When it doesn't work well, it can be so embarrassing. So when we look at our historical past, we recognize both ends of that equation. And in a way, it reassures us. It means that, no, we've been in this neighborhood before, and we will get out of this the same way that we have gotten out of it in the past. Hopefully, we'll get out of it with more grace than, let's say, we did in Jacksonian days. And, certainly, we want to get out of it with much less in the way of violence than we experienced in the Civil War, but we will get out of it. So it's a history that gives us some reassurance that way.

**Jason Raia:**

Absolutely. If there's an evident flow that we see, and there are and it there are times where we are united, more united. I grew up in the '70s and '80s. it was certainly in that Cold War practicing the duck and cover under your desk, the worst place you could that offers you zero protection but we all did it. But there was this sense of there was this outside force that we stood against. So whatever we disagreed on as Americans. There were these things that we agreed on. And one of them was at least in some way that there was this common enemy. So I always wonder what what risks there are when we are when we are so disagreeing about the things that and we can't talk to one another. In the Adams/Jefferson period when we're sort of at our worst in the Civil War the violence of the civil rights movement in the 50's 60's and when we think about certain places. These are just these convulsive moments in American history that scare us, and rightfully so. Yeah.

**Allen Guelzo:**

They do. They do.

**Jason Raia:**

But they also mean there are there's one way to correct it is an authoritarian crackdown where we just force everybody to be nice to one another. I don't think any of us want that. So, what are we, what do we give up and what do we gain when we sort of endure these ebbs and flows?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Part of what democracy demands of us is patience. Patience, unfortunately, is also something that can be a very short supply in a democracy because we do want solutions and we expect them quickly. But democracy requires patience. It requires patience with others. It requires patience with ourselves. The answers to great social problems simply do not present themselves the same way that candy on a rack in the convenience store presents itself. Many times the answers are very complicated. They take a lot of time. They take a lot of

self-searching to find. Patience is very much a key. It's also something that has sometimes been in very short supply because I can remember the '70s and '80s. I remember Ronald Reagan as President, and I remember the hectoring that he got. From Tip O'Neill, a Speaker of the House, to Sam Donaldson at press conferences. And I was often thinking back to those days and realized, my goodness, it really was contentious then, too. But we have forgotten that contentiousness because it has drifted off our screen. The job of a historian is to keep pushing those things back onto the screen so that we understand to see today in the light of the past. When we do that, I think that actually becomes the key to exercising patience. When we have the sense of reassurance, that stability, the long-term stability of American ideas is there. We can then give ourselves permission to be patient. When we become impatient, it's because terror has seized us, and we are afraid that everything is going to end tomorrow and the sky is falling in. When we're told, no. It's not. We've been here before. We've gotten through this. We let out a breath. We count to ten. And we go on and say, alright. We will find a solution to these difficulties. One thing which exacerbates our present situation that is not necessarily so much on the ground in these earlier areas of contention is the immediacy of media. Today, we have television, we have the internet, we have social media. We learn in milliseconds what is going on. And we're constantly bombarded with it so that it seems like we are in a constant, incessant uproar. It is the immediacy of technology that has turned up the volume level of our contentions. So now it seems it's totally unprecedented. Well, no. The contention isn't unprecedented. It's the volume. Yeah. It's the volume. It's the immediacy. It's the technology that has made it seem that way.

**Jason Raia:**

That was exactly what I thought of when you said patience is we have lost that virtue to technology that gives everything we want immediately. There is nothing we can't have. There's nothing I can't order from somewhere online and have at the day. I mean, I can probably have it the same day if I live in a big enough city. This is, yeah, it makes it incredibly challenging. And off and what people are getting in those first moments probably needs to be clarified because it hasn't had the time of old school media back, decades ago where it had to go through an editor, and it had there was this process of vetting that made sure that the information was good - wasn't perfect - didn't keep back everything, and there's always the human frailties that are hugely problematic.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Remember, Dewey defeats Truman?

**Jason Raia:**

Right. Right. Exactly. But there, you know, they're at least where these sort of structural, you know, the things that slowed it down and thus, you got a chance to find out, oh, that information is not correct or we're going to check our sources or what have you. And that's certainly not happening when somebody posts on Twitter what they think happened someplace.



**Allen Guelzo:**

That spills over into the other part of the answer - that is about civil war. Are we on some kind of cusp of civil conflict? And that requires a little bit -- a little bit broader of an answer. Are we going to look at a Civil War like the one that we fought in 1861 to '65 because when you say Civil War to Americans, that's what --

**Jason Raia:**

That's what they mean.

**Allen Guelzo:**

-- jumps into mind. And my answer to that pretty categorically is no. In order to have had the Civil War that we had from '61 to '65, you had to have a number of things in place. One of them, you had to have sectionalism. You had to have a group of states all sharing a common principle, in this case, a dedication to the perpetuation of slavery. You had to have them contiguous to each other to form something that actually looked like a nation-state, and you had to have them in such a way that they supported each other. I often say to my classes, if slavery had been legalized in Minnesota, Maine, Florida, and Louisiana, you would never have had a Civil War. They wouldn't have been able to work together.

**Jason Raia:**

But because they drew this line across the middle of the country -- right.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Exactly. Now that's a very narrow way of conceiving of the Civil War. That may be the way we had one, but it's not the way that other nations have had a civil conflict. It's not the way England has had a Civil War, such as the Civil War of the 17th century. It's not the way the French had civil wars in the wars of religion. It's not the way that other nations like Sudan, nations in Asia have endured civil war and China with the Taiping Rebellion in the middle of the 19th century. Those have been civil wars, but they're very unlike the American Civil War. It would be possible to think of a civil war as something like a low-level guerrilla conflict. And given -- the capacity that communications technology has for people to communicate - that may be something more likely to occur in an American context. So on the one hand, I'm saying relax. It's going to be okay. It's not going to be like '61 to '65. At the same time, there are also other kinds of civil conflict, which we may run a risk of. And, again, here is where the element of technology enters. Now one of the difficulties is that we are also enjoying military and communications technology which can much more easily track those kinds of things. That doesn't mean, though, that they might not happen and that they might not cause great problems. Look for instance at the difficulty the Russians had in the 1990s, in dealing in the Caucasus, look in fact at the difficulty they have even now in dealing with the situation in Ukraine. Look at what happened in the Balkans in the 1990s. These have all been to a certain degree and under a certain definition, a kind of civil war. And they have taken place in ways that don't conform to our expectations historically of civil war, but nevertheless, they've been just as damaging if not more so. Will we



avoid that kind of civil conflict? On that point, there - it's much more difficult to be a prophet, which is usually the moment when I remind myself no. I'm not a prophet. I'm a member of the American Historical Association, and the organization of American Historians, I'll tell you what happened in the past. I'll let someone else be the prophet.

**Jason Raia:**

So I understand that. I think you're right. I'm always more optimistic. I think that there is always the chance of conflict and conflict can express itself in many, many ways. But I do think there are things that we can do. And, certainly, that's been part of the mission from its inception of Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge to try and educate the participants in our programs, both students and teachers to see what are the things that we as Americans share in common? And I - and I come back to one of the quintessential for me, Civil War stories, which is of Joshua Chamberlain at Appomattox. Now you may correct me and say this story is utterly not true. And if that's the case, I'm still going to tell it at the end of every program. But that is the one where Chamberlain is asked to receive the actual surrender of the Confederate Army, and he orders the Union Army to salute them as fellow Americans. And, again, if it's not maybe I'm going to say don't even tell me if it's not true because I wanna believe that it's true because I think it is something that's, to me the height of what it means to be an American is to recognize even having just finished war to be able to say, okay, there's something we share. There's something that is worth overcoming the anger and the bitterness and great sadness over friends and brothers who were lost in this war and how this nation was rendered apart, and it would take us decades and a century. And maybe in some ways, we are still trying to put the pieces back together.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Well, Jason, I'm going to do some violence here. Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain was a great self-promoter.

**Jason Raia:**

Yes, I believe that.

**Allen Guelzo:**

And the story he tells is about saluting John Gordon and getting a salute in return as Gordon is surrendering his Confederates. Unfortunately, I don't have any corroboration from anyone else.

**Jason Raia:**

That's how I was afraid you were going to say that.

**Allen Guelzo:**

I'm sorry to prick the balloon, but I'm going to make up for that by telling you an even better Appomattox story. And it's one that occurs in the McLean parlor, the home of Wilmer McLean

where the surrender documents were actually signed. Robert E. Lee is there with his secretary, Colonel Marshall. Lee is there Grant is there with some of his principal officers and especially his military secretary, Lieutenant Colonel Ely S. Parker. Now the interesting thing about Parker is that Parker was actually a full-blood, Seneca Sachem, of the Tonawanda Seneca. He had gotten an engineering education, and Grant got to know him out in Illinois in the years before the war. He had this beautiful copperplate handwriting. And so Grant picks him as his military secretary. So here you have a very burly, swarthy, conflicted Seneca Chieftain, who is the military secretary and Lieutenant Colonel and Grant's staff. Now, after the surrendered documents were exchanged, Grant brought a number of his other officers into the room and began introducing them to Lee, and Lee would go and shake hands with them. Lee had known some of them before the war. When he's introduced to Lieutenant Colonel Parker, Lee stops, stares at him, and this little shiver of apprehension runs through the room. Did Lee think he was being introduced to a black man and being insulted at his surrender by this? Or before the Civil War, Lee had commanded the old second cavalry down in Texas. He had been a chaser of the coaches around the landscape. Was Lee feeling he was insulted by somehow being introduced to an Indian Chieftain? And then the moment passes, Lee puts out his hand, shakes hands with Parker, and says to Parker, "Well, I'm glad to meet at last a real American." To which Parker replies, "Generally, we are all Americans." To me, that's one of the greatest moments of the Civil War.

**Jason Raia:**

Absolutely. I'm going to start telling that story. Yeah, that's a great story. So there is - you make this reference in the preface to the new preface to "Redeemer President" where you say, and I think it speaks volumes to what we're talking about, where Abraham Lincoln says the moral principle is all or nearly all that unites us of the north, he said, in 1856. Pity is not so I've misquoted this - Pity, it is not -- about the pecuniary interest rate. Right? -- looser bond than pecuniary interest. This idea of morality prints this idea of what we share in common. And I had this thought also. It was the law partner of Lincoln from Springfield who talks about how it's something like he knew his Bible and he knew his Shakespeare. And that got me thinking. It's like there used to be these frames of reference, the Bible. Shakespeare, I think at some point, every American is familiar with the Declaration of Independence, and what most of them had, at one point, had to memorize it or at least the opening paragraphs of it. This idea that there are these moral principles that, that everybody shared. And it seems to me that that's one of the as well as social media and lightning-fast communication, the shattering of these frames of reference, these stories that everybody shared in common. When M\*A\*S\*H, the television show had its final episode. It was some ridiculous number, like 40 or 50 or 75,000,000 people who all sat and watched it together. And we don't have that anymore. We don't have these outside things that draw us together. We don't all learn Shakespeare. We're not all from similar churches learning the same biblical stories. In fact, most Americans aren't going to church at all. and here to hear those stories in any kind of church. And so I wonder what you think of this idea that having lost these frames of reference is part of what we're struggling with.

**Allen Guelzo:**

I think it's a particular problem for us because Americans do not identify themselves. They do not bind themselves to each other in the way that other nations and empires in the past have, which have relied on blood, race, soil, ethnicity, religion, and language. We don't have any of those things. We are bound together by a proposition. This is what Lincoln said at Gettysburg. This nation was conceived in liberty and dedicated to a proposition that all men are created equal. Jason thinks for a moment about how that sounded in 1863. Up till this point in history, you don't create nations around propositions. Nations are created by those factors of blood and soil and race and language and so on. The idea that you would create a nation around something as bloodless as a proposition would have made and made Reactionary European political thinkers go fall with laughter. How do you do that? That's like trying to put a bundle of sticks together with nothing to glue them. And yet, the American experiment had been exactly that. It had this confidence that people in fact could find unity in those ideas and especially in those moral principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence. And Lincoln believed that with every fiber of his being. When he came to Philadelphia in February of 1861, he was on his journey from Springfield to Washington for his inauguration. He stops at Independence Hall. And there he speaks and actually gives two different speeches at Independence Hall, but he comes outside and participates in the flag raising because it's Washington's Birthday, February 22nd 18 he won. He says when he talks to people in Independence Hall that he has never had an idea in politics that he did not get from the Declaration of Independence. And rather than surrender that, he said, I would rather be assassinated on the spot. Four years and some weeks later, he is assassinated and lies in state in that very same, Independence Hall with 300,000 mourners filing past the casket to view him one last time. He believed heart and soul in the ideas that bound us together. And he participated in a culture that supported that he knew his Bible. He could quote it off without any difficulty that way. Granted he's not got much in the way of a distinct religious profile himself personally but he certainly knows the elements of the Bible, and anyone who tried to contest him with that would find themselves losing very quickly. He knew Shakespeare. He could recite chunks of Shakespeare by heart and not just by Shakespeare. He could recite Alexander Pope. He could recite all kinds of parts this way. He had a wonderful memory of picking things up like that. He understood that Americans were something very, very different in human history bound together by an idea bound together by a moral principle. In Europe, people looked at what was happening in America. They looked at Lincoln. They looked at the Civil War, and they said, see, this is what we've said all along. The Earl of Rosebery in November of 1861 gave a speech. It's printed in the British newspapers picked up, and reprinted in America. Rosebery predicts this Civil War in America means the end of democracy in America. This is proof democracy doesn't work. The experiment has failed. America's going to wind up with an aristocracy, maybe not due to Earl, but it's going to wind up with an aristocracy. And it's going to happen. You're going to see it take place. In a lot of respect, what Lincoln understood the Civil War to be about was as he put it at Gettysburg - a test. A test of whether this nation or any nation so conceived, so dedicated to a proposition, could endure. His great confidence was that we would endure, and we did. And I think in large measure because of the leadership and the confidence he manifested. What we need from us today is a response similar to that. This response he calls for at Gettysburg, dedicating ourselves. You know, he just doesn't say at the Gettysburg cemetery, well, we're going to consecrate the cemetery. I am

going to say some nice things about the Union soldiers who are buried here, and then it'll be sacred ground. No. He says something else has to happen here. We have to dedicate ourselves. He takes a commemorative event and turns it into a moment that propels us to action and dedicates yourselves. And every generation of Americans has to dedicate themselves similarly. It's very open-ended that way because every generation faces that same challenge. Can this so conceived and so dedicated nation? Can it endure? Can it defy all the expectations of the dukes and tyrants and kings and emperors and continue to prosper? The great thing Lincoln said about Henry Clay, his ideal of a statesman, was that Clay loved his country. First of all, because it was his country. It's a natural instinct. But more, Lincoln said. More because Henry Clay loved his country. For the example that it provided that free men could prosper, we could, in fact, pull off this remarkable improbable arrangement of being dedicated to that proposition that all men are created equal. Lincoln had confidence in that. He called upon his fellow citizens to be confident in that. And I think those words still speak to us and give us confidence that that proposition is real, that it is not going to fall apart, that it is not going to be trampled underground by foolishness and folly, and that we can go forward as he put it. Is this nation under God?

**Jason Raia:**

Absolutely. That's - that is just the way and to put it. And we have to come back and talk about leadership in a future episode because it's one of the things that Lincoln offers in spades that it feels like maybe we could use some more. I have to tell you one, my favorite Henry Clay story. When I was still teaching, I did a summer where I am Adam Scholar at the Massachusetts Historical Society. And so I spent a lot of time in microfiche looking at letters and one of the things I got to look at was John Quincy Adams, one of his journals. Of course, he kept 3 journals all the time from the age of fifteen when he first went to Catherine the Great's court, and he kept them for the rest of his life. But I just focused on GENT when he and Henry Clay were representing the United States and trying to bring the War of 1812 to a conclusion. So this is around 1814. And John Quincy Adams in his very typical New England Puritan pure and botanical way is up before dawn to write in his journal. And he writes this comment in his journal about how he ran into Henry Clay who was just going to bed. And it just reads as so absolutely real. But also and, again, this is me the optimist and the optimistic patriot who here are two people who could not be more different. And yet, they both deeply loved their new young country. To the point of going to Ghent and negotiating I mean, we know that crossing the Atlantic was always dangerous. But these were the risks that they would take for their country. And yet, they were absolutely an opposite. Here is Henry Clay, the frontiersman. The smokes and drinks and plays cards

**Allen Guelzo:**

And John Quincy would never think of doing any of those things. Oh, no. Henry Clay was this raffish man of the world. I mean, lean back in your chair. We're going to have a good time, folks. And Quincy Adams is like, what? But, you know, the funny thing is, was it exactly the same

distinction that you see between Quincy Adams's father and Benjamin Franklin? Absolutely. -- generate before.

**Jason Raia:**

Absolutely. Two ships passed in the night. And yet and this is where I'll wrap this up and yet as different as those two groupings were. They managed to work together for the betterment of the country even though personally, there was and there might have been animas. There was certainly a respectable number one, which for Freedom's Foundation is one of those pillars of civic responsibility we teach to young people. And they were able to put whatever their disagreements were aside in order to accomplish what they needed to for the sake of the nation. And to me, those are the stories and those are the lessons and those are the frames of reference that we need to give to young people. If we if we hope to do to turn down the temperature within society,

**Allen Guelzo:**

And you know we needed them both? Yes. We needed Quincy Adams and Henry Clay. We needed John Adams and Benjamin Franklin. And we could get all of them together because, fundamentally, all of them no matter how much they quelled with each other and said nasty things about each other in their letters and their journals. They were at the end of the day rooted in that proposition. Yes. Bruted in knowing that all men are created equal and that the American Republic embodies the lives that breathe that there will be across the American landscape. People as different from each other as Franklin was from John Adams as Clay was from Quincy Adams, and that will be just fine. We can have all the differences and indulge all the differences we like so long as we are committed to that fundamental proposition, to that moral principle that Lincoln said is all that unites us, put that into place, and everything goes with it. Here we are.

**Jason Raia:**

Well, a tradition that we're going to create right starting today, for this podcast is to end with a little quiz. And so going to and we're going to go through a couple of questions. So, number 1, excluding Washington and Lincoln, who's your favorite president?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Oh. This is difficult. This is difficult. This is difficult. This is very difficult. But I think I will probably select Ronald Reagan. Okay.

**Jason Raia:**

Okay. Number two. This one, I will tell you, was inspired by the preface of "Redeemer President". And so I think I know the answer. Who was the best candidate who never became president?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Henry Clay.

**Jason Raia:**

Okay. See, I was expecting to say, Jack Kemp.

**Allen Guelzo:**

No. Henry Clay. Jack Kemp was a formidable composition, a competition, but I'd have to say, Henry Clay. If we had if we had elected Henry Clay as president in 1848, we might not have had the Civil War that we had. If we'd elected Henry Clay in 1844, we might not have had the Civil War.

**Jason Raia:**

Oh, that's so interesting because that's what this is a whole other podcast. But this is the inevitability of history and that good historians like you teach us that there's nothing inevitable that that it's even simple single changes could have changed the trajectory, and that's an interesting one. What one thing would you want every American to learn more about from history?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Lincoln.

**Jason Raia:**

If you had not become a historian, what would you be today?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Probably a paper hanger.

**Jason Raia:**

This one, I did so I'll give you an example. But here's the question. What is the pet peeve that annoys you the most? Mine are people who confuse numbers and amounts.

**Allen Guelzo:**

Mine is people who confuse succession and secession. Ordinance and ordnance and cavalry and cavalry. Cavalry. Pet peeves. Yes.

**Jason Raia:**

Yes. Favorite movie show or opera?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Favorite movie. Hands down. It's Chariots of Fire.

**Jason Raia:**

Great one. What one thing would most people be surprised to learn about you?

**Allen Guelzo:**

I think they would be surprised to learn many things, but probably that I was born in Japan -- Yeah -- take them by surprise. Absolutely. Yeah. I know I was.

**Jason Raia:**

What American invention do you think most changed the world?

**Allen Guelzo:**

The Telegraph. The Telegraph. If who's the historian who wrote what God wrought Daniel Walker House. And he talks about the telegraph at the center of that story. And Dan Hua is a great historian whom I hold in professional and personal reverence. I was able to meet him once. I got him to participate in a program that we did and he was brilliant. Really, really wonderful.

**Jason Raia:**

If you could meet just one historical person, who would it be?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Lincoln.

**Jason Raia:**

Lincoln. And final question, bourbon or scotch?

**Allen Guelzo:**

Scotch.



**Jason Raia:**

Excellent. Allen, thank you. This was terrific. I can't think of a better way to have started off this podcast.

**Allen Guelzo:**

I really, really appreciate it. Oh, but it's wonderful to be here once again at Freedoms Foundation here in the wonderful Valley Forge where we have all around us. The reminders of what it cost to become American.

**Jason Raia:**

Absolutely. Not only do I wanna thank Allen, but I also wanna thank our producers, Lara Kennedy, and Sarah Rasmussen. And most of all, I want to thank our listeners. Please subscribe. Follow rate and review *George Washington Slept Here* wherever you listen to podcasts and tell your friends to learn more about Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. Check out our website at [freedomfoundation.org](http://freedomfoundation.org), and follow us on social media, Instagram, and Facebook @FreedomsFoundation and on Twitter @FFVF you can email us at [gwshpodcast](mailto:gwshpodcast@gmail.com), as in [georgewashingtonsleptherepodcast@gmail.com](mailto:georgewashingtonsleptherepodcast@gmail.com) with your comments, questions, or suggestions, and we can't wait to be here again. Thank you, everyone.