BIO

Presidential historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jon Meacham is one of America’s most prominent public intellectuals. A contributor to *TIME* and *The New York Times Book Review*, Meacham is a highly sought-after commentator, regularly appearing on MSNBC, CNN, and other news outlets. A skilled orator with a depth of knowledge about politics, religion, and current affairs, Meacham has the unique ability to bring history to life and offer historical context to current events and issues impacting our daily lives - whether we realize it or not - to audiences of all backgrounds and levels of understanding.

A contributing editor at *TIME*, Meacham also writes “The Long View” column in *The New York Times Book Review* in which he “looks back at books that speak to our current historical and cultural moment.” He served as *Newsweek*’s managing editor from 1998 to 2006 and as editor from 2006 to 2010.

In 2020, Meacham released two podcasts with the History Channel: *Hope Through History* and *It Was Said*. Narrated and written by Meacham, season two of the critically acclaimed *Hope Through History* podcast explores some of the most historic and trying times in American History, how the nation dealt with the impact of these moments, and how we came through these moments a more unified nation. *It Was Said* tells the stories of those crucial words, taking listeners back to inflection points ranging from the McCarthy era to our present time through the real-time rhetoric that shaped and suffused America as the country struggled through storm and strife. *It Was Said* captures the nation we’ve been, and points ahead to the nation we hope to become.


Meacham is a frequent guest on *Morning Joe; Real Time with Bill Maher; The 11th Hour*, and was featured in Ken Burns’ documentary series *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*. In 2015, *Fox News* produced an hour-long special about Meacham’s *Destiny and Power*.

Named a “Global Leader for Tomorrow” by the World Economic Forum, he is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a fellow of the Society of American Historians. Meacham is a distinguished visiting professor at Vanderbilt University where he holds the Rogers Chair in the American Presidency. His latest book, *And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and the American Experiment*, will be published in the fall of 2022.

**SHORT BIO**

Presidential historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jon Meacham is one of America’s most prominent public intellectuals. With a depth of knowledge about politics, history, religion, and current affairs, Meacham has the unique ability to bring historical context to the issues and events impacting our daily lives.

TOPICS

HOPE THROUGH HISTORY: HOW TO ENDURE AND PREVAIL WHEN EVERYTHING APPEARS HOPELESS

As difficult as the present is, the American past is the story of challenges overcome, crises resolved, and progress made. In this nonpartisan speech, Jon Meacham walks audiences through moments that have seemed intractable – which can include the Influenza Pandemic of 1918, the battle against polio, FDR’s reaction to the first days of the Depression, Winston Churchill’s decision to fight on against Hitler, and the Cuban Missile Crisis – to offer lessons for leaders in how to endure and prevail when everything appears hopeless.

THE ART OF LEADERSHIP: LESSONS FROM THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Jon Meacham explores what 21st-century leaders in different fields of endeavor can learn from the greatest moments of our common past.

This non-partisan presentation features lessons ranging from Jefferson's pragmatism and JFK's capacity to recover from his own mistakes to the management of conflicting egos as shown by Reagan and FDR and how George HW Bush dealt with the end of his Presidency. Meacham discusses how history can inform the decisions all of us make every day in positions that demand creative and innovative solutions.

SONGS OF AMERICA: HISTORY, MUSIC, AND THE STORY OF A NATION

This is an illuminating and entertaining presentation of music and history, presented by the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Jon Meacham. In memory we hear the sounds of history: the musketry on the green at Lexington and Concord and the hoofbeats of Paul Revere's midnight ride. We hear the moans of the wounded and dying on the fields of Antietam and Gettysburg. We hear the cries of the enslaved, the pleas of suffragists, the surf at Omaha Beach. We hear a sonorous President, his voice scratchy on the radio, reassuring us that the only thing we had to fear was fear itself; and we hear another President, impossibly young and dashing, his breath white in the inaugural air, telling us to ask not our country can do for us but what we can do for our country. And we hear a minister on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, telling us about his dream.
Such are the sounds of our history. And through it all, we've been shaped not only by our words and our deeds but by our music, by the lyrics and instrumentals that have carried us through dark days and enabled us to celebrate bright ones.

With a multimedia presentation of images and iconic selections from great American songs, Meacham offers a glimpse of the American past and a message for the present: that America has always been defined by strife and discord, yet has managed to move forward.

“The Battle-Hymn of the Republic” vs. “I Wish I Was in Dixie’s Land”; “Happy Days Are Here Again” vs. “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?”; “The Ballad of the Green Berets” vs. “Blowin in the Wind”; “Born in the U.S.A.” vs. “God Bless the USA”—the whole panoply of America can be traced—and more important, heard and felt—in the songs of that echo through our public squares. This is engaging history that speaks to the moment, and beyond.

THE POLITICS OF ECONOMICS

THE SOUL OF AMERICA

In this nonpartisan, anecdotally rich presentation, Meacham describes previous moments of crisis and partisan deadlock in American history and suggests how previous generations — and we, in our own time — transcended hours of fear by heeding what Lincoln called “the better angels of our nature.” Examples range from Reconstruction and President Grant to woman’s suffrage and President Wilson to the crisis of the 1930s and FDR and the passage of civil rights legislation under LBJ.

GOD & POLITICS: THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

THE MEDIA’S SECRET BIAS: LIBERALS, CONSERVATIVES, AND THE TRUTH ABOUT THE NEWS

For some people, the key to understanding the media is ideology—that outlets are driven by politics rather than objectivity. There is much truth to this, and the 21st century is now more like the 18th and 19th in terms of partisan news. But there’s an even more fundamental point Americans should grasp: that many journalists are driven as much by conflict as by creeds. Jon Meacham brings renewed perspective to the issue of media bias, grounded in historical analysis and his own life’s work with print and television news media outlets. Meacham cuts to the core of media bias, explaining how politics and human nature shape the news you see and read.
THE FUTURE OF THE PAST: HOW TO THINK ABOUT RACE AND MEMORY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

In this contentious moment of debate about Confederate memorials and the place of history in an increasingly diverse nation, Jon Meacham describes – in reasonable, non-partisan, non-ideological terms – the long story of race in America and offers audiences new ways to assess what role emblems of the past should play in an increasingly diverse 21st century.

Read Jon Meacham’s TIME cover story, “American Hate, a History,” or watch him discuss race and violence in Charlottesville on Charlie Rose.