

ALLEN PIETROBON



By Marcus Pfeifer, Volunteer Contributor

Allen brings the curiosity of a historian and the ease of a natural storyteller to every class he teaches. Trained academically as an historian, his intellectual range extends far beyond any single specialty. Although his formal expertise lies in global affairs, his interests span economics, politics, culture, and social issues, an expansive curiosity that shapes both his research and his public talks. He readily admits that when a subject captures his attention, he dives deeply into it, absorbing ideas, patterns, and perspectives that later surface in his lectures.

At the core of Allen's teaching philosophy is a simple but powerful belief: history is storytelling. For him, the discipline is not merely about dates or events, but about understanding how we arrived where we are today. He structures every lecture around a central narrative, reflecting his view that the human brain is naturally wired for stories. Long before books became common, knowledge passed from one generation to

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the next through spoken narratives: shared experiences, lessons, and memory carried by voice. In that sense, he sees storytelling as deeply human, while reading, historically speaking, is a very recent development. By framing ideas within stories, he helps learners retain and connect with complex material more intuitively.

This narrative-driven approach also defines his work with public audiences. While his academic classroom may lean more heavily into theory, his public lectures strike a deliberate balance between education and engagement. Allen aims for a blend of insight and accessibility, ensuring that intellectual depth never comes at the expense of enjoyment. The result is a learning experience that feels lively, memorable, and grounded in real human experience rather than abstraction.

That same curiosity and interdisciplinary instinct eventually led him into an unexpected but fitting area of study: food. A passionate home cook, he began exploring cuisine with the same analytical lens he applied to history. His classes on American cuisine reveal how quickly cultural habits can shift, showing learners that what feels timeless is often surprisingly recent. From changing breakfast norms to the societal effects of World War II, Allen invites students to see food as a reflection of technology, labor, and social change.

Whether examining geopolitics or everyday rituals, he encourages learners to view the familiar with fresh eyes. His classes offer more than information. They cultivate curiosity, reward attention, and remind audiences that learning itself can be both intellectually rich and genuinely enjoyable.

Visit Allen's website: <http://www.allenpietrobon.com/>