



# Leading from the Center: Why Moderates Make the Best Presidents

*Gil Troy*

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George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy—most would agree their presidencies were among the most successful in American history. But what made these very different men such effective leaders? According to presidential historian Gil Troy, these presidents succeeded not because of their bold political visions, but because of their moderation. Although many of the presidential hopefuls for 2008 will claim to be moderates, the word cannot conceal a political climate defined by extreme rhetoric and virulent partisanship. In *Leading From the Center*, Gil Troy argues that this is a distinctly *un-American* state of affairs. The great presidents of American history have always sought a golden mean—from Washington, who brilliantly mediated between the competing visions of Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, to Lincoln, who rescued the Union with his principled pragmatism, to the two Roosevelts, who united millions of Americans with their powerful, affirmative, nationalist visions. As America lines up to select a president for the future, Gil Troy astutely reminds us of the finest traditions of presidential leadership from our nation's past.

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