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\*\*\*CAN ANYONE FILL THE SHOES OF AMERICA'S GREATEST LEADERS?\*\*\*

Standing six-foot-three with a resonant voice, re-enactor Dr. Gary Gray pulls on the boots of larger than life figures turning George Washington, James Garfield, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, Andrew Johnson, and General Douglas MacArthur, the only non-president, into history teachers. He captures their spirits and voices through speeches he has created.

It's a dramatic, unforgettable transformation. But Dr. Gray has ulterior motives.

"Impact and education," says Dr. Gray, educator, historian and writer. "Read the papers today and you'll find presidential approval ratings at an all-time low, rampant government corruption, and citizen confidence slipping. I wondered what made these other men so great? Why do they remain American heroes? How could I convey their spirit and values to today's Americans?"

For Dr. Gray it meant the difference between talking the talk and walking the walk. He literally climbed into their shoes and came up with some answers.

"It was the 'vision thing,'" he says of these past leaders. "They were not afraid to embrace new ideas and radical change. They were all very smart—chess smart, in that they thought out the potential consequences of their actions. They turned international threats (both real and imagined) into victories for America. They were visionaries decades ahead of their times. They were leaders who time has proved were on the correct side of the issues."

As Dr. Gray sees it, few leaders in American history have ever had this sense of timeless, global, and moral vision.

In his new book, **Mr. Presidents: Voices of Freedom, Equality, and Dignity**, (The Presidential Press, ISBN: 0-9774194-0-1) with Erma Steward, the award-winning portrayer of Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr. Gary presents these speeches and revisits moments in history in a most entertaining way.

"Our world changed because of a few key guys. I present the essence of what that person was thinking at the time—like FDR having a vision for the future and rallying a nation. I study every aspect of the lives of each and every one of these giants from birth to death," says Dr. Gray.

And how did he choose the leaders he decided to portray? "Some of it was personal, some of it was just natural—many of us would have chosen some of the same people," says Dr. Gray. In a C-Span survey of Presidential Leadership, [www.americanpresidents.org](http://www.americanpresidents.org), in the category of 'Performance within the Context of

Times,' Abraham Lincoln topped the charts immediately followed by Franklin Roosevelt. George Washington made third, with Thomas Jefferson in seventh place.

(**“Mr. Presidents: *Voices of Freedom, Equality, and Dignity*”** by Gary Gray, Ed.D with Erma Stewart; ISBN: to come; \$19.95; soft cover; size; 304 pages; PRESIDENTIAL PRESS)