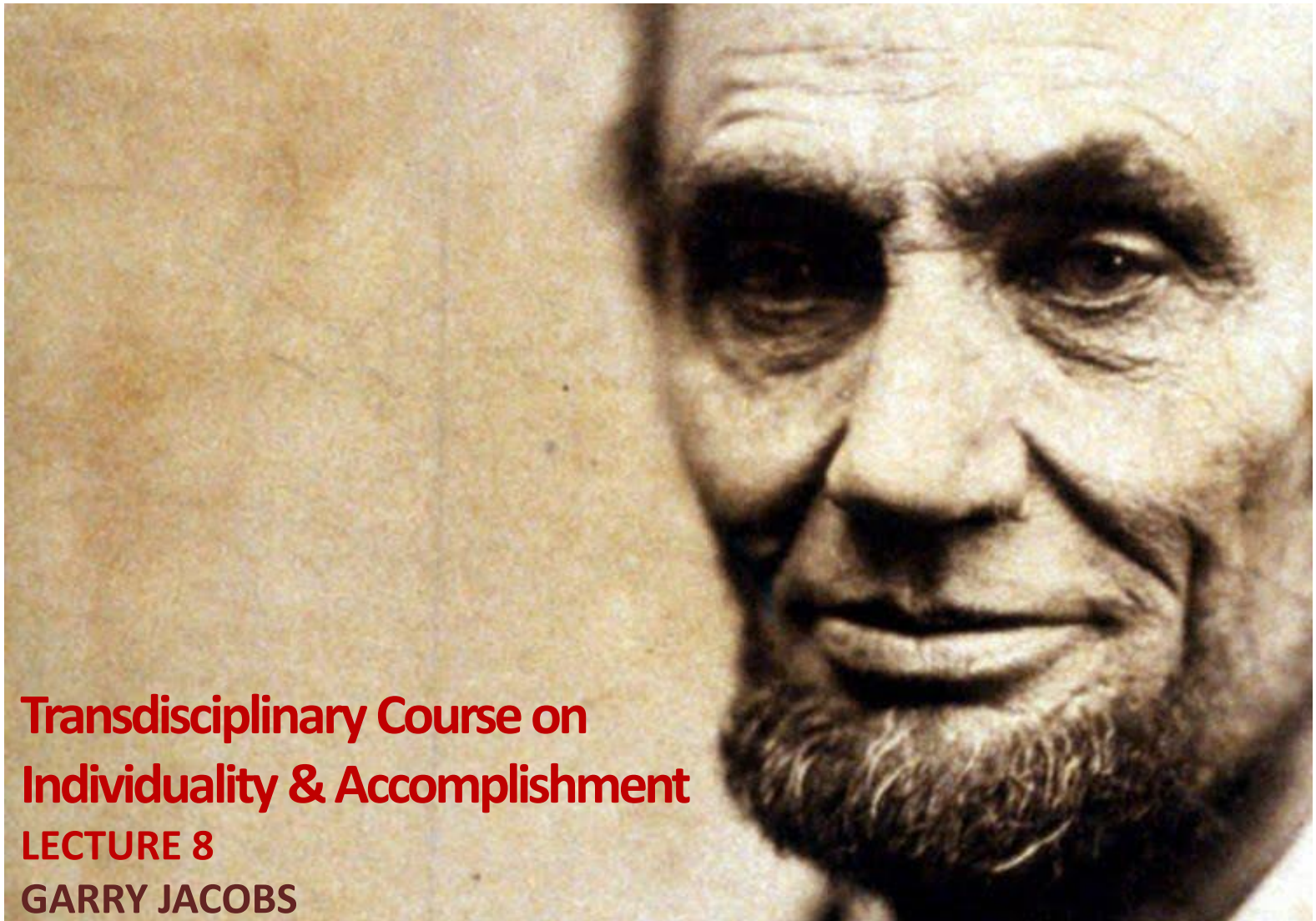


INDIVIDUALITY AND SOCIETY



**Transdisciplinary Course on
Individuality & Accomplishment**

LECTURE 8

GARRY JACOBS

One Man can Change the World



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

America in 1861

Agrarian South vs. Industrial North

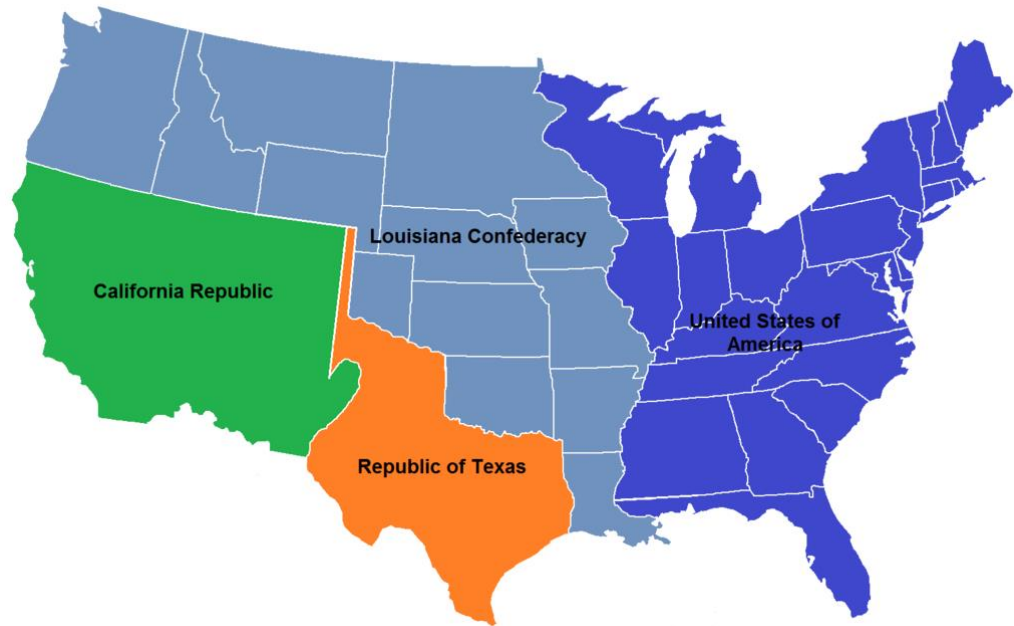
Southern cotton was vital for European Industry & Employment

Democrats supported Slavery & States Rights

Republicans supported Freedom & Unity

Manifest Destiny: American States

- **Texas (1845)**
- **Florida (1845)**
- **Wisconsin (1848)**
- **California (1850)**
- **Nevada (1854)**
- **Oregon (1859)**
- **Kansas (1861)**
- **Homestead Act (1862): 160 acres of land to 600,000 settlers to settle in 6 “free” territories – Nebraska, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Dakotas**



1861: A Nation divided & in peril

- **Most crucial turning point in American history**
- **America was a confederation with weak central govt**
- **Ideal of equality remained a dream on paper**
- **Few Americans favored real racial integration**
- **Slavery legal in 11 of 33 states with plantation economies dependent on slave labor**
- **Slavery was in slow retreat throughout Europe**
- **Europe needed Southern cotton for their industry**
- **South wanted to extend slavery to new territories**
- **1861 South formed CSA & started the war**

Lincoln – The Man

- **Born in a log cabin in the wilderness in 1809**
- **Raised in extreme poverty**
- **Self-educated**
- **Country lawyer, surveyor and post master**
- **Entered politics opposing the spread of slavery**
- **Elected to Congress for a single term in 1846**
- **Ran for Senate and lost**
- **Elected president by minority popular vote**

America in 1861



Lincoln – the President

- ✓ Branded a second-rate country lawyer without experience
- ✓ Thought to be weak, idealistic (unrealistic) and indecisive
- ✓ New England elite looked down on the ‘commoner’
- ✓ No support or respect in Washington
- ✓ He formed bipartisan cabinet to preserve unity
- ✓ Cabinet members thought they could control him
- ✓ His military commander refused to obey his instructions
- ✓ Abolitionists pressed for law banning slavery
- ✓ Congress wanted end of war without abolishing slavery
- ✓ When elected he was given one aide

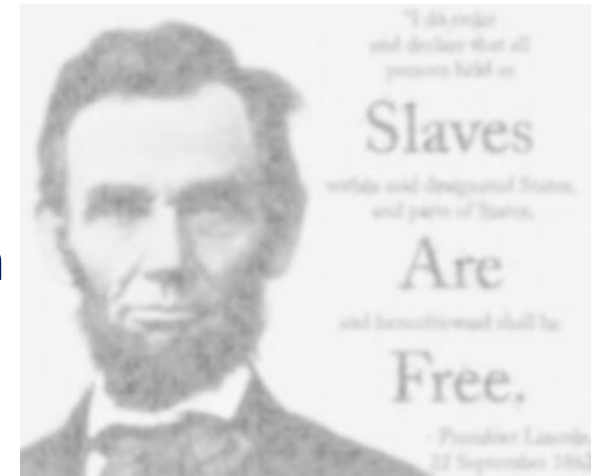
Military Situation

- Confederacy controlled all federal agencies, forts, weapons in South and had all the experienced military leaders
- South controlled the Mississippi, lifeblood of nation's commerce
- Northern army of only 16,000 was scattered, disorganized and inexperienced, including many Southern sympathizers, and generals who competed with one another.
- Lincoln's chief of the army refused to engage the enemy and wanted to be next president
- England and France secretly armed the South
- South won all the early victories



Turning Point

- Country seemed to verge of be splitting a part
- Lincoln waited with enormous patience
- Lee invaded and then retreated from Maryland
- Kentucky refused to support Southern invasion
- Lincoln demanded McClelland attack Virginia
- Immediately after the news of Northern victory, he wrote the Emancipation Proclamation
- Congress passes it by narrow margin
- European abolitionists supported the North
- The tide of the war turned



Outcome & Consequences

- ❑ **North won the war and USA was reunited**
- ❑ **In 1865, Congress passed the 13th amendment abolishing slavery everywhere on US soil**
- ❑ **By 1900 the US economy was larger in size than the UK, Germany and France combined – producing 1/3rd of total global output**
- ❑ **Had Lincoln failed, the country would have split into 2 or possibly a dozen pieces**
- ❑ **Rise of USA to global economic and military supremacy would never have happened**
- ❑ **Discrimination against blacks persisted in the South for another 100 years**

Questions about Lincoln's Achievement

How could one man influence the course of history so dramatically?

Where did he acquire that power?

What capacities of his made it possible?

What was the process by which he achieved it?

What made him so unique?

How did he convert extreme challenge into unimaginable opportunity for America?

Was it luck, chance, or ability that enabled him to overcome impossible circumstances?

Macrocosm and Microcosm

PHYSICAL WORLD

- An infinite macrocosm of planets, stars, solar systems, and galaxies
- An invisible microcosm of infinitesimal particles, atoms, molecules and cells
- Newtonian world we live in lies between them and interacts with both

HUMAN WORLD

- Outer social macrocosm of family, community, national and global society
- Inner psychological microcosm of thoughts, feelings, beliefs, opinions, aspirations, urges, impulses and sensation
- Individual human being lives between them with feet in both world

Consciousness & Organization

“Life evolves through growth of consciousness. Consciousness evolves through greater organization and perfection of life: a greater consciousness means a greater life.”

SRI AUROBINDO

Living Organizations

Organization is the capacity of mind to create order, structure and process

Society is a complex living organization

Human personality is a complex organism

Both are organizations of energy, ideas, attitudes, emotions, intentions and capacities

Organization expresses the power of the human mind for orderly expression of consciousness

Social Capital

Society is a teeming ocean of human energies and capacities – unorganized but latent with unlimited productive potential

Organization of social energies converts social potential into social capital

Society is an infinitely complex network or web of interrelationships

The enormous power of society for accomplishment issues from this organization

Human Capital

Each member of society is an unorganized reservoir of energies, aspirations and capacities.

Organization of the energies and capacities of each member of society converts human potential into human capital

The formed Individual is the summit of social evolution where human capital & social capital intersect and become infinitely productive

Complexity of the Individual

The social macrocosm strikes our senses by its enormous size, variety, incredible speed and the complexity of the interactions between its component elements

The individual consists of an uncountable number of thoughts, feelings, perceptions,, sensations, impressions, desires, impulses, urges, opinions, beliefs, sentiments cross our consciousness every day at lightning speed, too fast for us to even perceive most of them

All of them combine together in complex ways to define our conscious and unconscious experience and our behavior

Take away the individual and society what will we be left with?

HUMAN ACCOMPLISHMENT

Every individual carries within the cumulative experience of all humankind in essence

Yet every moment individuals are altering that collective reality & adding to that experience

Human accomplishment is a product of this interaction

Individuals are Catalysts of Change

Individuals
are products
of society

Societies are
products of
individual
initiative

Individual are
the catalysts
of social
change

Human
catalysts
precipitate
events

How do individuals access social power?

**SOCIAL
POWER**



Lincoln identified with the aspiration of all Americans for freedom and unity

Sears & Rosenwald created an organization to fulfil the aspirations of the rural community

Fred Smith identified with the aspiration for speed & designed an organization to meet it

Google, Amazon, Facebook plugged into the power of social organization of the Internet

LINCOLN'S PERSONALITY

- ✓ High idealistic values, honesty & integrity
- ✓ Devoted to equal rights for all
- ✓ Man 'of the people' sensitive to the will of the people
- ✓ Respected others & related to all on equal basis
- ✓ Determined to preserve the nation
- ✓ Convinced that slavery was evil, must be abolished
- ✓ Self-effacing humility many mistook for weakness
- ✓ Inner strength & determination of his convictions
- ✓ Forged alliances with antagonists
- ✓ Character free of personal resentment
- ✓ Capable of immense patience – knew when not to act
- ✓ Continuously learning – 3Rs, law, military science

What was the source of Lincoln's power to accomplishment?

The power he wielded belonged to the society

His one goal was to discern what the public will would sanction

He recognized that the primary aspiration of the country was unity

He acquired power by eliminating his ego and identifying with the will social

Lincoln's Accomplishment

- **His personality became a channel for the deeper aspirations to become conscious**
- **His actions enabled the abounding energies of a young nation to become organized as the strength of the expanding American nation**
- **His accomplishment altered future aspirations, acting as inspiration for future initiatives**

Rosa Parks – a sequel

