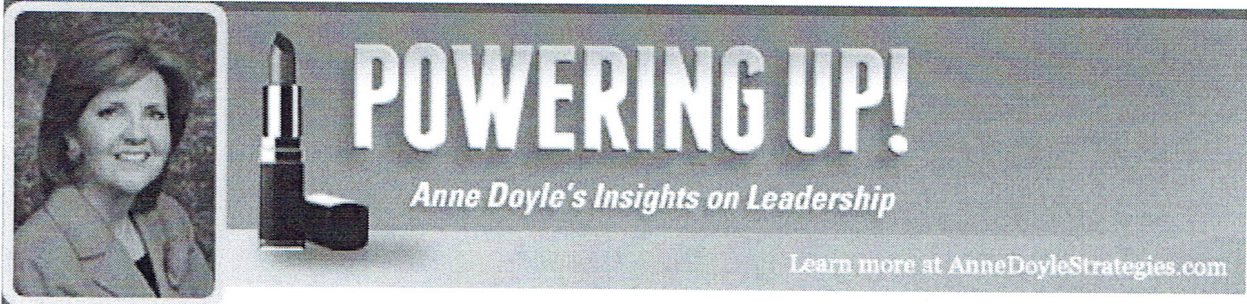


Subj: **SISTERHOOD SPEECH TO ARAB AMERICAN WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL**  
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December 18, 2016 -- Auburn Hills, Michigan USA

Dear Global Friends/Thinkers:

*I was recently privileged to be the Keynote Speaker for the Annual Awards Breakfast of the Arab American Women's Business Council. The event was held in SE Michigan -- home to the largest Arab population in North America. They had asked me to speak about women's leadership. Because the event was held just a few weeks after the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the emotions in the room that morning must have been as complex as my own. So, I thought long and hard about what I could possibly say that would be authentic and come from my heart, but could also inspire the audience to be hopeful and continue working toward women's progress.*

*It was a challenging and emotional speech for me. But when I finished the audience of nearly 200 gave me a standing ovation. Their support gives me hope for a future where, someday, women will achieve equality. I no longer believe I will live long enough to see that day, but I am committed to helping us get there. Here are my remarks.*



Good Morning. Salam Alaikum, Sisters!

I deeply appreciate the honor of being your Keynote Speaker for the Arab American Women's Business Council awards breakfast. Thank you, Jumana



Judeh for inviting me. To all of you, for listening. Congratulations to Jumana Kayrouz, your honoree as the Arab American Businesswoman of the year. It is deeply deserved. I especially appreciate your long-time support, Jumana, of women running for elected office. I have been to your home many times to support those women.

I have to admit that when Jumana Judeh invited me, several months ago, to be your keynote speaker I accepted with pleasure -- thinking to myself: *"What incredible timing! We will be celebrating the election of the first woman president of the United States and preparing for an historic Inauguration."* But, of course, that is not where we find ourselves today.

I can only imagine the emotions in the room this morning. I thought long and hard about what I could say to you . . . that would be authentic and come from my heart. But also hopeful and encourage you to keep following your passion to support women, which brought you here today.

I understand that your organization is non-political. But I couldn't possibly talk to you about Women's Leadership and Ignore the Stunning Message that the United States just sent around the world.

Because, regardless of politics, when you see that, even in the 21st Century, one of the most advanced nations in the world **Would Not Accept an extraordinarily-qualified woman as our President** and **Backed Away from an Unprecedented Opportunity** to send a powerful signal around the world about how Americans feel about women and leadership. . . then, it is a Stunning Reality check on how far we have to go . . . even to achieve EQUALITY for the female half of the human race.

So, I would like to spend my time sharing my thoughts on TWO of the MOST POWERFUL LESSONS that I've learned from the wrenching experience our nation has just gone through . . . as the world watched.

But first, I'd like to tell you just a little about Me . . . and why I CARE SO DEEPLY about the safety, rights and future of women and girls.

I was born the big sister of 7 children in an Irish, Catholic, American family. I was blessed with great parents . . . both university educated. I had a courageous Mother who earned her Master's Degree in the early 1940's. And a Father who respected her as an equal or better! My Mother was also



highly conscious about sexism and misogyny in culture. She made sure the girls in our family received the same messages about education, independence and achievement as the boys. And that our brothers pulled an equal share of the work around the house!

I came of age at the peak of the Women's Movement in the U.S. -- high school in the late 60's and graduating from the University of Michigan in 1972. I marched in the streets for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, which would have put American women into the Constitution. I cried when it failed.

As a journalist in the 1970's and 80's, I had a front row seat, covering the tremendous changes in legal rights and economic opportunity that women achieved in those decades. I was lucky enough to be part of a generation of women who had the opportunity to go where few women had gone before professionally -- including sports locker rooms. But that's another story! So, I know the JOY of riding a powerful wave of women's progress.

But as important as those experiences were in shaping who I am. The Defining Moment of my life was the loss of my sister, Mary. I was 25 and Mary was 22 when she took her own life. Mary gave up on herself, before she had a chance to discover how magical she was. My book, POWERING UP!, and my life's work are dedicated to her. Because when I see women and girls . . . suffering & abused; disrespected & their opinions and needs ignored; and denied equal rights as global citizens . . . **THEY ARE ALL MARY TO ME.**

My work has taken me all over the United States . . . and to every continent except Antarctica. I've been to the Mideast several times. I began work for the U.S. State Department while Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State and made the status of women and girls part of U.S. Foreign Policy for the first time ever. Because she understood that when women thrive, nations thrive. And when nations thrive, they are more stable -- and peaceful.

One of those trips was to Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. When the State Department called me and asked me if I would go to Saudi Arabia, I told them, "You mean, you want me to go to Saudi Arabia to talk about women's leadership?!" They did. So, before I went, I arranged phone calls with key local leaders, including to the Director of the Female Campus of Prince Muhammad University in Tehran, where I was scheduled to speak.

"What can I possibly say to your young women?" Dr. Hanadi AbdelSalam told me, "Give them hope, Anne!"





So I told them about . . . the American Suffragettes, who fought for 75 years for the right to vote for American women . . . chaining themselves to the White House fence, suffering beatings and imprisonment. About the Rosie the Riveters who ran America's factories and farms during World War II. And about the courageous Women's Rights Trailblazers . . . Gloria Steinem, Rosa Parks, Sandra O'Connor. I was full of Hope and Confidence in a future where women and men would work side-by-side as equal partners . . . making the critical decisions for the human family.

**BUT NOW I NEED HOPE.** Not just because the ultimate glass ceiling is much more IMPENETRABLE than many of us thought. But also because of the growing evidence that . . . not only have American women lost our forward momentum. **We are in Free Fall.**

The Global Gender Gap Report is published annually by the World Economic Forum. It ranks 144 developed countries on equality between men and women -- in four major areas: health, education, economic opporutnity and political representation. The U.S. has been ranked in the top 20 countries for years, with the Scandinavian countries leading the list. But in 2015, the U.S. dropped out of the Top 20 to 28th place. And for 2016, in the results just released in October, the U.S. plummeted to 45th in the world -- behind 4 African nations and all major European countries.

**That brings me to the 1st Lesson: The Gender Game is Rigged.** It was a bitter lesson for me, because for the past few years, I've been saying: "We're all done fixing women!" The pipeline is absolutely bursting with millions of highly-educated, skilled women. Never in the history of the world have there been so many. I was certain that a powerful wave of women would soon be moving into LEADERSHIP. But clearly the universe I thought we were living in was a Fantasy!

In the 2016 presidential election, the bar was SO HIGH for the female candidate . . . and so ASTONISHINGLY LOW for the male. That is all the evidence I need that men and women are STILL held to very different standards in our country. No matter how educated . . . experienced . . . the track record of accomplishment . . . or work ethic a woman brings . . . IT JUST DOESN'T MATTER.

Here's the Catch 22 for women when it comes to Leadership. There is an abundance of research that shows the more accomplished men become, the more respected and LIKED they are. But the more accomplished a woman becomes, the LESS





LIKED she is! Not just by men . . . but by members of our own tribe. How many t-shirts and bumper stickers reading, "Trump that Bitch!" and worse do we have to see before we believe the research?

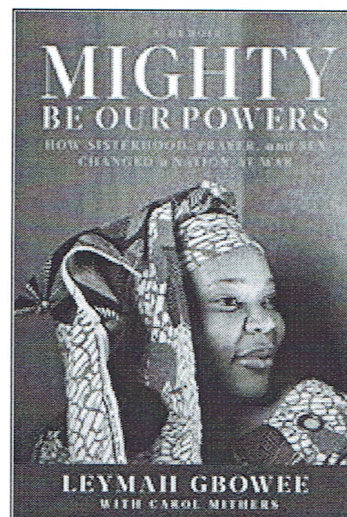
That Brings me to the Second Lesson I've learned from this election. We are half of humanity! But women still have a MINORITY MINDSET that is much worse than I wanted to believe. That mindset makes us Complacently Comfortable with Second Class status. And Deeply Uncomfortable with challenging the status quo.

I guess it's understandable that women have deeply ingrained psychic wounds . . . because we have been treated as LESSER & WEAKER human beings for centuries. Even today, there is not a country in the world where women are even close to being treated equally with men. So, it's no wonder that even Highly Accomplished Women, according to an abundance of research, don't see themselves as Leaders on equal footing with men.

Men honor and try to align themselves with their Strong. Women do just the opposite. Because we don't believe in our own Leadership Capability, we don't believe in other women's leadership ability either. Or, if they are so capable that we can't deny their credentials, we resent and often undermine our Strong!

Leymah Gbowee -- how many of you know who she is? I'll bet you've heard of her. She's the Liberian woman who won the Nobel Peace Prize for leading the Women's Uprising in Liberia that finally put an end to a bloody, 10-year Civil War. And after she and her Liberian Sisterhood achieved peace, they didn't stop there. They helped elect Ellen Sirleaf Johnson the 1st Female President of Liberia.

Gbowee is a woman who has stepped over dogs eating cadavers. She has had a gun held to her head by a Warlord. I have heard her speak several times . . . and will never forget her words when she spoke several years ago at a Women in the World Summit in New York City. She looked at the audience of highly-educated, accomplished American woman and said to us, "What are American women afraid of? You have the legal rights, educational and economic opportunities and freedoms millions of your global sisters can only dream of. Why are you allowing men to make all of the decisions for your lives . . . and your country?"



I believe we allow it because of our **Minority Mindset**. It is an insidious

virus that has infected women and paralyzed us with Fear. We are Afraid . . . that if we step too far out of our narrow gender box, we won't be liked. By men . . . and by women. And we fear that if we do take risks, we'll be all alone, because other women won't have our backs!

Why does it matter that the Mothers of the Human Family . . . have little to say about the world that we and our children are living in? When I ask myself that question, I think of:

. . . the women trapped in Aleppo and Mosul or fleeing war in flimsy rafts, trying desperately to save their children.

. . . the millions of girls sexually trafficked, abducted, forced into marriage at a very young age . . . or raped on our college campuses.

. . . the women in American jails shackled during childbirth. And the list goes on and on and on.

***THE ONLY WAY WOMEN'S LIVES WILL CHANGE IS THROUGH SISTERHOOD!***

We need to recognize the Minority Mindset that has infected our Tribe . . . and begin to come together to awaken the Sleeping Giant of Women's Collective Clout! If you only remember one thing that I have said today, I hope it is this -- my mantra: *"Every Woman for Herself is a Losing Strategy."* We must be the wind beneath each others' wings.

How do we do that? Maybe that's my NEXT book! But I will leave you with SIX THINGS we can all do immediately -- starting as soon as we walk out the door.

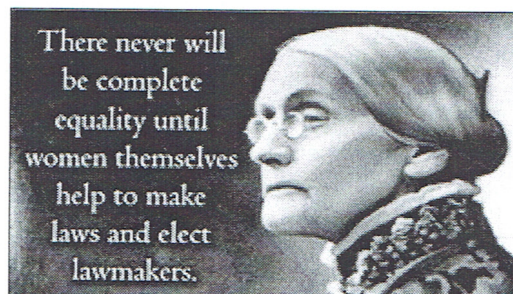
1. **Encourage and celebrate women's accomplishments.** Keep doing what you are doing here today. The world is OOZING with statues of men . . . heroes on horses or wise thinkers holding books. Where are OUR statues? We need to support and honor our SHEROES.
2. **Put your money to work.** Do business with other women -- give them your economic support. Not just for your hair and clothing, but when you need a lawyer, an appraiser, an accountant -- look first for a talented woman.
3. **Invest in our Girls.** We need to inoculate them against the rampant cultural sexism they will face. Encourage them to play sports. And the next time you meet a little girl, resist the temptation to tell her how cute she is. Instead, ask her what books she's reading and what female leaders she admires. And if she can't name any, tell her about a few!



4. **Run for office.** The U.S. is 71st in the world among 144 developed nations when it comes to women in elected office. That's pathetic. Getting more women elected to office is one of the most effective things we can do to change attitudes about women as leaders, because elected officials are visible in the community. And if you can't run yourself, help get other women elected!
5. **Support women who have the courage to stand up and stick their necks out on behalf of others as leaders.** Let them and Others know that you have their back.
6. **Finally, raise great sons and grandsons who respect and value women as their EQUALS.**

I often think about Susan B. Anthony, the courageous American leader who had the audacity -- in 1848 -- to begin the fight for American women's right to vote. She didn't live long enough to see her dream come true in 1920. But if she were with us today, I have no doubt

she would be saying: "*Don't SQUAT on the shoulders of the generations of courageous women who fought so hard for centuries for you to be where you are today!*"

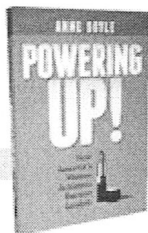


if we keep silent and continue to accept our Minority Status, our daughters and granddaughters will face the same world we face now. They will be qualified and ready to lead, but their abilities and wisdom will be REJECTED and WASTED . . . simply because they were born female.

**DON'T BE QUIET!** I received a holiday card this week with words of wisdom I really liked. It said, "*We Can Only Be What We Give Ourselves Power to Be.*"

I'm no longer certain that I'm going to live long enough to see a woman elected president of the United States. Or to achieve my bigger dream of hearing women's whispers become a Mighty Roar.

But I promise you that I will spend the rest of my life . . . working to lift the female half of the human race to full equality and influence in the world. I hope YOU and growing numbers of our Global Sisters will join me.



Buy Anne's new book, *Powering Up!*  
at <http://AnneDoyleStrategies.com/PoweringUp>



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