

Anglais / discours 2

Réunion : 125^{ème} anniversaire de l'université Barnard.

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Oratrice : Samantha Power, ambassadrice des Etats-Unis près les Nations Unies

Difficulté : niveau 2

Introduction : Deuxième discours : Intervention d'une représentante des Etats-Unis sur l'égalité.

Éléments à fournir (vocabulaire) :

Columbia grad	Diplômée de l'université de Columbia
Adlai Stevenson, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Madeleine Albright	Anciens ambassadeurs des Etats-Unis près les Nations Unies.

Good afternoon,

I'm truly honored to be here, and to be among the amazing women, and men, on this stage.

Columbia grad Madeleine Albright has said, "It used to be that the only way a woman could truly make her foreign policy views felt was by marrying a diplomat, and then pouring tea on an offending ambassador's lap." I'm here to tell you that we have other options!

What I want to talk to you about today is how some of the remaining barriers to true equality can, and must, be overcome.

First, true equality will mean not letting our doubts silence our voices.

We live in a time where women have made tremendous strides, particularly here in the United States. And you all know the statistics. Women earn 60 percent of all undergraduate and graduate degrees; hold more than half of all professional-level jobs; and study after study shows that companies employing greater numbers of women outperform their competitors. So why do you still feel that

persistent self-doubt? That fear of making mistakes? And why do those doubts sometimes get in the way of your voices being heard?

I wish I had the answer. Instead, all I can tell you is that we all experience that feeling - even if it's not obvious on the outside. I have even adopted a name for it - the Bat Cave; it's that dark place in your head where all the voices tell you every reason you can't do something.

Let me give you an example. Rewind to August 2008. I am working as a senior advisor on the campaign for then-Senator Barack Obama. And I find out that I'm pregnant with my first child. Now, I have an amazing husband, and this news - it's seismic. I am over the moon.

And I tell no one at work.

I have never gone through this before, and I am worried that if I advertise my blissful state, it will affect how seriously I will be taken by the campaign, and potentially even shut me out of the kind of job that could make an impact.

Everything I know of then-Senator Obama and the people around him tells me at the time that this makes zero sense. After all, this is a man who was raised by a

single, working mother. A man whose brilliant wife worked while raising two daughters. A man who would go on to demonstrate daily as President his commitment to supporting working moms and dads. But at the time, I am way too deep in the Bat Cave to see any of that.

Eventually, it is my body that tells people the news - not me.

I ended up having two babies while spending four years at the White House, and thereafter still managed to get to serve in my dream job, representing the United States at the United Nations. If I felt the way I did, I can only imagine how other women feel - the ecstasy of a pregnancy clouded by the fear it could cause severe professional damage.

Last year, when the Ukraine crisis began, I momentarily experienced another version of this anxiety. Russia, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, is trying to lop off part of its neighbor, Ukraine - a clear violation of the rules that the United Nations was created to defend. An urgent UN Security Council session is called on Russia's attempted takeover of Crimea. I take my seat, and my mind recalls Prague 1968, Budapest 1956, and some epic occasions in the twentieth century when Ambassadors Adlai Stevenson, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Madeleine

Albright, and other legends made memorable, forceful interventions at the United Nations on behalf of the United States.

Then it dawns on me: that's me now! I'm the United States!

Deep in the Bat Cave, I think of the consequences if my response - the United States' response - is too forceful, or not forceful enough. I think of the overwhelming responsibility that comes with speaking on behalf of America and the ideals we stand for. And I think of the people of Ukraine who are counting on me. And I speak.

The fact is that doubt - and his more lovable big sister, self-awareness – are more pronounced, both are more pronounced among women.

True equality will not mean shedding our doubts or our self-awareness - but rather not letting them quiet us when we should be speaking up. There are more than enough forces out there doing that without needing our help. And it will mean that, while everyone will have moments of uncertainty - and humility is an especially prized quality - women should not have to worry that, if we stumble, it will be more noticed than when men do the same.

But it is not enough to find our own voices. True equality also requires that we learn to hear, and lift up the voices of those whom others choose not to hear. This is my second point: you have to teach yourself to see the people and communities who live in society's blind spots. Of course, everyone should strive to do this. But as women who, even to this day, know what it feels like to be unheard or unseen, we have an additional responsibility. I think the burden of being treated differently is also our strength - because it gives us the capacity to notice when others are treated differently. To see the blind spots.

That includes the discussion of gender identity. We must see that seemingly simple actions that most of us don't have to think twice about - the bathroom we walk into; the gender listed on our driver's licenses; the name people use to address us; the boxes "male" and "female" on a college application - can be a source of profound anguish for others. We must recognize the cruel and hostile treatment that transgender people experience in so many communities, which, according to one study, has contributed to 40 percent of transgender people in the United States attempting suicide during the course of their lives.

You often hear people say that past generations struggled so that you would not have to. But I say, past generations struggled so you would be free to fight on behalf of someone else.

The idea of seeing the struggles of others around you, whether the other is a gender or an ethnic or religious group, or even an entire nation that usually does not have a voice, is one of the principles that has defined President Obama's foreign policy. We know that America is stronger, that our policies are more effective, and that the world is better off when America is listening. And that includes listening to countries and communities that often feel invisible to the world's superpowers.

True equality will mean not just seeing the unseen, but also finding a way to make invisible problems visible - and this is my third point. I think the contemporary conversation about the challenge that women face in balancing a demanding job with raising a family is important. Women are opening up about how overwhelmed they feel trying to "have it all." Back in 2013, when I arrived in my job, I was still nursing my one-year-old daughter as I tried to move my family to New York and find schools for my two kids. I had to do all this at the same time, roughly, that the Syrian regime decided to stage massive chemical weapons

attacks against its people, horrific atrocities were being committed in the Central African Republic, and a new government was cracking down on the opposition in Egypt.

The juggling act that I am attempting pales compared to that faced by moms who are raising kids alone; or who struggle to provide for families on a minimum wage that is not a livable wage; or who risk losing their jobs if they have to stay home to care for a sick child. But I share these stories because - even with all of the support that I am lucky enough to have - the balancing is hard and making that visible might be useful to somebody somewhere.

This challenge of rendering the invisible visible is one I face every day at the United Nations, where the people most directly affected by the policies discussed are often far removed from sight and mind. We talk so often in terms of thousands or even millions of people that it's easy to lose a sense of what one person is - and why even a single human being's dignity is so important. So, wherever possible, the United States tries to bring those voices into the debate as a way of sharpening understanding of the human consequences of what can otherwise seem like abstract challenges.

Thank you.

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