

## **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: A Courageous Radical**

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. She was just a regular, Puerto Rican bartender from the Bronx, but after seeing that the politicians in Trump's government aren't working fast enough or for the right cause, she threw her hat in the ring for congressperson of District 14 of New York City. She won the Democratic Primary against the incumbent Joseph Crowley, who did not have a primary challenger since 2004 (Goldmacher & Martin). Her chances of winning were slim, and her chances of winning the election were even slimmer, but she took the risk and it paid off.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is now currently the youngest congresswoman in the history of the United States. Her agenda is very radical to Republicans, but it is also very radical to Democrats, because she wants to help the immigrants, the workers, the Hispanics, the Blacks, the Latinxs, and most recently, Earth. She wants to help the people, and planet, that have been ignored by the government since its birth. The House Republicans don't care about anyone who isn't white, male, cis, and straight, and older Democrats have been known to be push-overs or moderates in our government, but Ocasio-Cortez being unapologetically liberal and daresay radical with her views is courageous. To be a person that is openly against the ideas of white supremacists, who have been known to be openly violent, is brave. Her career is an act of political courage. She is a political act of courage.

It was Martin Luther King Jr in his *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, who said that, "the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate... who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"... who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season" (King Jr.). Like stated before, Democrats have had the reputation of being push overs in

government, since they don't fight that hard on things that actually matter and give up easily after the slightest push back from Republicans. But Ocasio-Cortez, as a liberal young person, has ideas that are radical to the older Democrats and all of the Republicans. Not only do her ideas align with what the vast majority of socially conscious Americans want, her ideas and methods are also spreading to other Democrats such as Cory Booker, Kamala Harris, and Elizabeth Warren (Goldmacher). But we know what society does to women of color, and people of color in general, who deign to have an opinion or challenge the status quo. In June of 2018, Maxine Waters received many death threats, to which she replied "You better shoot straight" which, side note, is the best response possible, but the reason she got those threats because she voiced her disgust on Trump's decision to separate and lock up children from their parents. Christine Blasey Ford, just your average doctor, was also sent death threats in September of 2018, for accusing Brett Kavanaugh of sexual assault back when they were in high school. Kamala Harris, along with many other famous Democrats such as the Obamas, Joe Biden, and Hilary Clinton. And it's not only famous people who criticize the way things are that are being attacked. Regular people are too. The son of Melissa McKinnies, a Black Lives Matter activist from Ferguson, was hanged. Authorities suspect that it was a suicide, however, McKinnies does not think so (Associated Press). She believes that her son was lynched by white supremacists, who don't like that she is fighting for equality for Black people. The perpetrators of these crimes are very likely misogynistic, homophobic white supremacists, a group of people that believe they have the right to silence anyone who has the audacity to believe that all people deserve equal rights. So, for Ocasio-Cortez to be so openly liberal, during a time where people are openly violent against people who want equal rights for all people, is so incredibly brave. Her ideas, which include raising taxes for the rich, which former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said was "too

radical”, free healthcare, and cleaning the air we breathe with her New Green Deal, go against everything that the people with power want (Bowden). She is making herself a target, because she wants to help the powerless and the poor. She is a political act of courage. She is fighting the wealthy and the powerful with every step she takes, every bill she passes, and every word she speaks.

## Bibliography

Associated Press. "Ferguson activist believes son was 'lynched,' police investigating death as suicide." *NBCBLK* (2018).

Bowden, John. "Harry Reid knocks Ocasio-Cortez's tax proposal: Fast 'radical change' doesn't work." *The Hill* (2019).

Goldmacher, Shane and Jonathan Martin. "Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez Defeats Joseph Crowley in Major Democratic House Upset." *The New York Times* (2018).

Goldmacher, Shane. "Ocasio-Cortez Pushes Democrats to the Left, Whether They Like It or Not." *The New York Times* (2019).

King Jr., Martin Luther. "Letter from Birmingham Jail." 1963.