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## **Rosa Clemente**

2008 United States Vice-Presidential Candidate, Journalist, Political Commentator & Scholar- Activist

Rosa Alicia Clemente is an organizer, political commentator and independent journalist. An Afro-Puerto Rican born and raised in the Bronx, NY she has dedicated her life to organizing, scholarship and activism. She is one of the most raw, honest, political, social, and cultural voices in the country. From Harvard to prisons, Rosa has spent her life dedicated to grassroots organizing and scholar activism. Throughout her scholarly career, Rosa has been a constant on the ground presence through the many political struggles facing people of color in the 21st century. She travels nationally as a public speaker, at colleges and universities, various organizations organizing and speaking to a wide range of communities. She was the first ever Afro-Latina women to run for Vice-President of the United States in 2008 on the Green Party ticket. She and her running mate, Cynthia McKinney, were to this date the only women of color ticket in American history.

Rosa is the president and founder of Know Thy Self Productions, which has produced seven major community activism tours and consults on issues such as hip-hop feminism, media justice, voter engagement among youth of color, third party politics, United States political prisoners and the right of Puerto Rico to become an independent nation free of United States colonial domination. She is a frequent guest on television, radio and online media, as her opinions on critical current events are widely sought after.

Rosa is a leading scholar on the issues of Afro-Latinx identity. Rosa is a leading scholar on the issues of Afro-Latinx identity. Her groundbreaking article, *Who is Black?*, published in 2001, was the catalyst for many discussions regarding Blackness in the Latinx culture. As an activist with Black Lives Matter she has continued to address issues of Afro-Latinx Identity and anti-Blackness

through her writings. As a co-founder and national coordinator of the first ever National Hip-Hop Political Convention, Rosa helped bring together more than 3000 activists to create and implement a national political agenda for the Hip-Hop generation. She also co-founded the REACH Hip-Hop Coalition, a Hip-Hop generation-based media justice organization.

Rosa's academic work has been dedicated to researching national liberation struggles inside the United States with a specific focus on The Young Lords Party (which she wrote her master's thesis on), The Black Panther Party, and the Black and Brown Liberation Movements of the 60s and 70s, as well as the effects of COINTELPRO (Counter Intelligence Program) on such movements. She has also written extensively on Afro-Latinx identity and politics, the intersection of race, gender and class, Hip-Hop feminisms and media justice.

Rosa is no stranger to taking on high profile celebrities. From her very first article in 2001 calling out Russell Simmons for his lack of understanding of Hip-Hop culture to her 2013 video in response to Rick Ross' lyrics and calling upon men to put an end to rape culture. Additionally, she continually offers the public a view into her own life and experience. This is hauntingly evident in her 2013 essay *Not Ready to Die but Wanting to Die: Depression, Hip-Hop and the Death of Chris Lightly*. Rosa shared the story of her own depression, shining a light on the problem within the Hip-Hop community and encouraged people to break the silence and shame.

As an independent journalist she traveled to Vieques, Puerto Rico to document the US Naval withdrawal from the island after 67 years of US military control. She was in New Orleans and Mississippi, as an independent journalist, a mere ten days after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the area. Her on-the-ground reports were distributed to media outlets around the world. In September 2018 days after Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico she created of PR (Puerto Rico) On the Map, an independent, unapologetic, Afro-Latinx centered media collective. She is currently completing her Ph.D. at the W.E.B. DuBois Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

On January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Rosa and 6 other women of color organizers joined actresses from Hollywood as part of the Times Up initiative and the #metoo movement. Rosa was the guest of Oscar winner Susan Sarandon and stated that evening, “We are human beings who deserve the right to dignity, whether we are working on a Hollywood set, or working at Wal-Mart, whether we’re a mother in the South Bronx, or a mother in Beverly Hills. So, we are here not only to walk the red carpet we are here to work the red carpet and give voice to the many millions of women who are often marginalized.”

**Topics:**

- From Moments to Movements: The Power of Community Activism & Organizing
- Hip Hop Intersectionality: Centering Class, Feminism & Race
- Nevertheless, We Persist: Black & Brown Women
- Puerto Rico on the Map: Hurricane Maria, The Legacy of Colonialism & How to Make a Nation
- We the People: Resisting & Speaking Truth to Power in Uncertain Times
- When an Afro-Latina Woman Ran for Vice-President & Nobody Knew Her Name
- Unapologetically Black: Afro-Latinx Culture, Identity & Politics in the 21st Century