

Angela Lansbury was a 'proud socialist': Actress's politics explored

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Photo by Matt Winkelmeyer/Getty Images

Star of stage, screen and, surprisingly, socialism – late actress Angela Lansbury is being heralded for her work championing socialist causes.

Lansbury passed away on October 11, 2022, just five

days shy of her 97th birthday.

As friends and fans cast their eye over Lansbury's career, one element of her life continues to have the spotlight shone on it – the actress's support of socialism in the UK and US. Angela Lansbury considered herself a “proud socialist,” as reported by Democracy Now.

For those unaware of the actress's family links to socialism, let's take a look at how it influenced her life and work.

Angela Lansbury's grandfather was a proud socialist





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It comes as no surprise Angela Lansbury was a proud socialist as the actress comes from a long line

of politically engaged, left-leaning individuals.

Lansbury's grandfather, George Lansbury, was leader of the Labour Party from 1932 to 1935.

Lansbury led the Poplar Rates Rebellion in 1921, a protest against unequal taxation in one of the poorest areas of London, Democracy Now reports. Lansbury resigned his post in the Labour Party in 1935 because of his extreme pacifism.

He was succeeded as party leader by his deputy, Clement Attlee, who would serve as deputy prime minister below Winston Churchill during the Second World War. After the war, Attlee became prime minister from 1945 to 1951.

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Angela Lansbury's father was a communist mayor

It wasn't just Angela Lansbury's grandfather who entered the world of politics but her father, Edgar, too.

Edgar Lansbury was elected to Poplar Council in 1912 while George Lansbury also served on the council. Edgar Lansbury reportedly represented the Labour Party and the Communist Party Of Great Britain.

In 1921, Edgar Lansbury was one of 30 Poplar councillors jailed as a result of the Poplar Rates Rebellion, led by his father. From 1924 to 1925, Edgar Lansbury served as mayor of Poplar. He was the UK's second Communist mayor after Joe Vaughan.

Others in the Lansbury family engaged in activism

Angela Lansbury's legacy in championing socialist causes has caught the eye of fans. One tweeted: "The Lansburys are one of the OG socialist/radical/suffragette families in the UK."

A number of fans then flagged more Lansburys who engaged in political activism.

Angela Lansbury's aunt, Daisy Postgate, Edgar's sister, reportedly "helped radical socialist

suffragette legend Sylvia Pankhurst escape the police by dressing up as her.” Daisy married Raymond Postgate, a journalist and founding member of the British Communist Party, in 1918.

Another supporter alleged in a Twitter post that Angela’s niece Georgina appeared on a protest calling for the release of Nelson Mandela.

- **MORE: Angela Lansbury was a witch in ‘her best role’ but never starred in Harry Potter**

Lansbury family’s legacy carried through Angela’s work

Given her family history, it comes as no surprise Angela Lansbury was also a socialist. Throughout her career in the acting world, Lansbury allegedly helped many of her colleagues earn union points to help them access insurance and pensions.

An obituary for actress Madlyn Rhue, published by the Los Angeles Times in 2003, revealed Lansbury helped her during an illness. Lansbury heard Rhue was on the cusp of losing her Screen Actors Guild medical coverage because she was short of the

annual earnings requirements.

As a result, Lansbury created a character for Madlyn Rhue in *Murder, She Wrote*. Rhue was cast as a librarian who appeared in the series every three or four episodes.



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