



**Lilly Adams**

She/Her

Junior

Political Science

*“You wined me and dined me  
When I was your girl  
Promised if I’d be your wife  
You’d show me the world  
But all I’ve seen of this old world  
Is a bed and a doctor bill  
I’m tearin’ down your brooder house  
‘Cause now I’ve got the pill.”*

These are lyrics from Loretta Lynn’s 1975 country song, “The Pill,” which celebrated women’s autonomous access to birth control. Despite much of what is seen now in more contemporary country music, the genre used to be about the plights of rural and working class people and, at times could be very anti-establishment. Unique, bold and disruptive, Lynn’s heartfelt song shows how political views go beyond cultural stereotypes. We could all use some of this tune today.

In late February, Texas was hit by a devastating snowstorm that resulted in a power grid failure, leading 57 people to die from hypothermia, carbon monoxide poisoning and failure of medical equipment, according to the Texas Tribune. Some of the immediate online responses to Texas’s situation were jokes.

People made fun of Texans for having the audacity to ask for help, since some of their Republican officials have routinely endorsed the Lone Star state’s secession from the union. Critical commenters said that Texans should try “pulling themselves up by the bootstraps” that they love so much, stop complaining and vote Democrat next time. Voices online said that it was hard to feel sorry for people that were experiencing the consequences of their own Republican government. All of a sudden, the public service-supporting, NPR-listening, Bernie Sanders-loving liberals

online were mocking the deaths and hardships of their fellow Americans.

This kind of discourse fails to consider voting rights issues, such as gerrymandering and suppression, that disenfranchise liberal voters of color to make predominantly conservative, white states, according to Texas Monthly. Ignoring Texans’ cries for help ignores disenfranchised people, but also the 46% of Texans that did in fact vote Democrat in the 2020 election. Withholding your progressive politics from these voters—poor, working class and people of color— makes it seem as if they only matter if they live in certain states.

Sticking to your guns can be challenging. Candance Owens is a well-known conservative commentator who often talks about why she, as a Black woman, is a conservative. She trends every so often because of her often controversial statements, and the responses can often go a bit far. There are always a slew of people who say racist and sexist things to her when they disagree with something she says. In the comments section of her Twitter, this ranges from racial slurs to telling her to “go back to the kitchen.” To protest Owens’s own internalized racism, commenters use racism: a confusing cycle.

It is easy to care about social issues such as racism and sexism online, but you cannot let all of it go out the window when someone does not agree with you politically. This kind of attitude toward activism is unsustainable and is conditional on politics, not policy. It implies that only certain people are allowed to qualify for basic human rights.

Loretta Lynn’s poetic lyrics are a powerful example that not all “country” people, singers or voters think and act the same way. Take a listen to the plurality of voices and opinions in the genre—you might learn a thing or two about politics, policy and how to be a sustainable protestor.

# Lone Star, Loretta Lynn and Learning to Fight Right