

# Lacy J.'s wailin' is like Waylon

*Campus Digest News Service*

The J. Dalton sounds like a female Waylon Jennings who left her innocence tied to the hitching post outside some saloon.

She can flirt with a country phrase like a honky-tonk woman making advances at a good-timin' man.

Earthy, you might call her. Or teasingly tender, perhaps.

Whatever, there is an honest quality about her singing that, sure enough, spills over into her songwriting.

She does both very well, this lady from Santa Cruz who, at 33, is just getting started in the country music business.

"I may be a singing grandmother before my career takes hold," she said the other day.

Not hardly. Dalton's debut album, "Lacy J. Dalton," is high on the country charts and has spawned a couple of Top 20 country singles, "Tennessee Waltz" and "Crazy Blue Eyes."

She's toured the country, from honky-tonks to theaters and colleges.

Here she is, a product of Bloomsburg, Pa., who was singing psychedelic rock a decade ago and once was told by a producer that she sounded too much like Joan Baez to ever make it.

Well, today--singing those progressive country songs of hers--she sounds a whole lot more like Waylon Jennings than Joan Baez.

Back when she was Jill Crosston ("I changed my name because nobody could remember it") she made up her mind that she wasn't going to sing "horrible, ol' country."

"At first, I was into protest songs. Then the blues, then rock 'n' roll. As a rock singer I was offered a contract by every major recording company, but I refused to leave my band. After the band broke up and I was on my own again, I became more oriented to country-folk music."

Now she is comfortable with country. "It's grown up a lot in the last 10 years," she said. "With Waylon and Willie Nelson, Bobby Bare and Jerry Jeff Walker. It's allowed us to do folk-oriented and rock-oriented country."

"I find that the country artists have changed, or I haven't been aware of how enlightened they are.

To listen to her songs, you'd think Dalton spends a lot of time at honky-tonks, befriending cowboys and truckers who spend more time with a bottle than the same woman.

In reality, she is a widow raising a 9-year-old son.

"Some of what I write is purely speculative," she said. "Some dwells upon my own life or the lives of people around me."

"I've been writing for 12 years, probably 100 songs. I go through periods where I can't find anything that sounds good, fresh or different. Then there are times when it comes easily, five or six songs a week.

"I guess I'm a little out of my era," she said. "Maybe I'm a bit earthier than 1980s folks. I like open space, peace and quiet, real down-to-earth things. There's a generation like that, but there's also the disco people.

"I feel more kinship to Waylon and Willie than I ever will to the slick-city thing."

Dedicated Capitol Campus students trudge to class during last Friday's blizzard. **READER** Photo by Harry H. Moyer



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