

Does Taylor Swift's opinion matter?

Published: January 13, 2026, 7:07 am

In this morning's video, I note that when Taylor Swift endorsed Kamala Harris for US President, everyone took note. But do such endorsements matter, and should more people put their heads above the parapet and declare what they think in public? My answer is a resounding 'yes'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeyDI7tAH4c?si=OawlNJZxpMSjmfX>

The audit file is here:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=egipv-16ce3ac-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&font=Arial&skin=3267a3&font-color=&logo_link=episode_page&tn-skin=ff6d00

This is the transcript:

Does Taylor Swift's opinion matter?

I hate to tell you. I think it does.

Now, I will also be honest about something. I am not a great fan of Taylor Swift's music. I know that there are vast numbers of people who are and that they will pay extraordinary sums of money to go and see her in concert, and good luck to them. That's their right. But for me, I could give it a miss.

However, she is one of the most influential younger people in the world at present, and the fact that she has endorsed Kamala Harris does very clearly give her election campaign in the USA to be the first female president of that country an enormous boost.

My question is not whether Taylor Swift is right to endorse Kamala Harris. I think most people watching this video will know what I think about that. Instead, my question is, should she have engaged on this issue? And my answer is very clearly that, yes, she definitely should.

I believe that it is the duty of people who are in the public domain to engage on issues around politics. There is no aspect of life that is not political.

I loved a quote that came from a Republican, which I saw, I think, on CNBC after she had endorsed Kamala Harris. And that person said, "I love her songs, but I want to live in a world where liberals make my art and conservatives make my laws and policies."

An interesting contrast. He's happy for someone to be liberal, so long as they don't govern the country. I'm sorry, whoever that person is - and I've forgotten. That approach is wrong.

All of politics is about life. Music is most especially about politics because most of the music that is of any quality is about stories, and I know that Taylor Swift's very often are. The point is, you can't differentiate those stories and the power relationships which they explore from the world of political economy, which is what our politicians actually occupy.

Political economy is about power relationships - how we allocate resources in society. So even Taylor Swift's love songs - those about her relationships, about the relative balances of power between her and other pop singers, or her and her partners, or anything else - they're all about political economy. And so too is politics when it comes down to all those socially liberal issues which are of concern to so many people in so many countries around the world, including the USA.

Therefore, if a singer or a writer, or an academic, has an opinion on an issue, and they think that opinion is of worth, I think they have a duty to put their head above the parapet and tell the world what they think, and, if they wish to support a particular political party, to go on and do so, or as in my case, draw out the faults in many of the political parties that we face.

The expression of opinion in public is fundamental to the health and well-being of our political process. If we don't have people like Taylor Swift talking about the importance of elections, saying she's going to vote, encouraging young people to partake in the voting process, then where is democracy going?

This is why I also get so frustrated with academics. As my friend Danny Blanchflower and I agree, why is it that there are so few academics in the UK who are willing to do what we are, which is to express an opinion in public?

We will, they won't, because they're frightened.

It takes courage to sit in front of this camera.

It takes courage to sit in front of a television camera, or to write an article for a newspaper, or to send a tweet. But if you think by doing so you can in some way change things. I believe you should.

And I believe you should too, even if you're not Taylor Swift; even if you're not a professor; even if you're not somebody who is in any way in the public eye; there is still the opportunity to take part in debate. And the more people that do so, the better that debate will be, the louder will be the voices that are heard on the side of fairness and democracy and equality and social democracy and everything else that goes with it. And, therefore, the more chance there is that we will have a decent society.

So, Taylor Swift matters, and what she's done is important. But so, too, does what you do matter. Because you, too, can have an opinion. Whether it is writing a letter to your local newspaper, or whether it is phoning in to your local radio phoning programme, or whether it is sending a tweet, or posting on Instagram, or a TikTok, or whatever it is you might do, all of those things are part of our political narrative.

I admire Taylor Swift for having the courage to come out and say explicitly what she's going to do and to encourage others to engage in the debate, which is actually what she said others should do. She didn't say they should vote as she is planning to do. She said they should research the facts and vote, nonetheless.

In other words, she accepts some will vote for Trump. But whatever happens, she encouraged that debate, and debate is at the heart of a healthy society, as are differences of opinion. She made that clear. I welcome that fact.

Taylor Swift's opinion does, as a result, matter, but just as importantly, so too does yours, and you have the right to express it.