

Meg Griffin

RADIO PROGRAM DIRECTOR



Back in 1974, Meg Griffin was certain that she wanted to be a veterinarian. She was attending college at the State University of New York (SUNY) in Cobleskill, with aspirations of doing her graduate work at Cornell University. But one day she took a stroll through the Student Activities building and stumbled upon the campus radio station. She had been there for over a year and had no idea her school even had a radio station! But she thought it would be a fun extra-curricular activity, so she joined the crew.

Since then Meg has spent the last 30 years dedicated to a career on the airwaves. Recently, she took the time to chat with MA! about the ups and downs of her career—from college deejay to her current position as program director at Sirius Satellite Radio—and her quest to do radio on her own terms.

By Veronica Dominguez

What made you mentally make the switch from vet to DJ?

When I did my first show. Between the first two records that I segued together, when I went on the mic to talk about them, it was like a lightning bolt. Immediately, it was really clear to me that I had to do this.

How did you pursue it further?

I made a [demo] tape and sent it to WRNW, a station in Westchester County, New York, where I grew up, and I got a job offer. I stayed there until I got my first job in New York City at WNEW FM. From there, I worked at several other New York City radio stations and at MTV and VH1. I did a lot of different music-related things.

How did you make the move from WNEW to satellite?

Commercial radio became less creative. As an on-air personality, I had less freedom, less choice in

what I was playing, and I was being told what to say. It stopped being an outlet for me. So, I left commercial radio and went to public radio at WFUV, out of Fordham University. I was proud of my work again because there was creative flexibility. Then Sirius called, and they wanted me to do something similar to what I did at WFUV. I said yes because Sirius enables me to

play great artists who don't get time on the radio. Very often the records that you hear have been bought onto the radio and have nothing to do with the love of music. I personally can't do that kind of radio. I've got to do what I believe in. I feel very fortunate that I am doing what I like because once you get a job, it's a daily grind. And if you hate it, life stinks.

So, what's your daily grind like?

I program two radio channels for Sirius. One is called "Sirius Disorder." It's a mix of all kinds of music, from Miles Davis to the

Ramones to Aretha Franklin to Coldplay—it's disorder! The other channel is called "Folk Town." It's folk music from its earliest days up to currently popular people like Ani DiFranco and Suzanne Vega. For both stations, I've hired all the deejays, put all the music in there, and I do a show myself. We also represent Sirius at a lot of music

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festivals, and I interview artists all the time. Really, my day revolves around how much I love music. We're making radio fun again.

Is there anything you don't like about your job?

Well, the hardest thing is there aren't enough hours in the day for what I'd like to accomplish. So if that's the hardest thing, it's good because it demonstrates that I'm still excited about what I do. If someone was censoring me so that I couldn't be Meg, I could never ever put in the kind of hours that I put in here. When I listen to the outcome, I'm proud of it. EVERETT