

New SiriusXM channel to mix comedy, news

January 6 2015, by David Bauder

The SiriusXM satellite radio network is launching a channel inspired by topical comics like Jon Stewart, Stephen Colbert and Bill Maher that seeks to attract younger listeners by bringing an entertaining twist to politics and policy discussions.

SiriusXM Insight is scheduled to begin operating Jan. 12, replacing the current channel SiriusXM Public Radio. The current channel was deemed repetitive since the service already carries National Public Radio.

"We're going to look at issues in a slightly edgier, more youthful way than traditional [public radio](#) has done in the past," said Scott Greenstein, president and chief content officer at SiriusXM.

Insight is the brainchild of current Sirius host Pete Dominick, who used to warm up the audience at "The Colbert Report." Dominick will host a three-hour morning [show](#) at Insight. Comic John Fugelsang will have a weekday afternoon show and Muslim-American comedian Dean Obeidallah will be featured once a week.

While some comics aren't comfortable talking politics for much more than a few monologue jokes, people like Stewart and John Oliver can have intelligent discussions on serious topics, Dominick said.

"Comedians are able to get a point across and talk about issues that might be boring and make them more interesting," Dominick said. The radio shows "will be honest and really unpredictable, and I don't think

'unpredictable' is a word that Wolf Blitzer and Terry Gross get to use."

Insight will also give a platform to a variety of other commentators with different perspectives and specialties. Neil deGrasse Tyson will have a daily show merging science and pop culture. Journalist Karen Hunter will have a two-hour nightly talk show. A rabbi will talk about Jewish issues and an expert on transcendental meditation will have a weekly show on stress relief. Republican activist Margaret Hoover will host a daily call-in show.

Hoover, the great-granddaughter of former President Herbert Hoover, leads the American Unity Fund and PAC, two organizations that promote Republicans who support gay marriage. Her husband, The Daily Beast Editor-in-Chief John Avlon, hosts his own weekly show summarizing some of that website's best stories.

Hoover said she'll try to offer a conservative perspective without being hemmed in by orthodoxy. For instance, she recently wrote a column calling for law enforcement to examine their tactics in response to concerns by black Americans, a topic she said many in her party are reluctant to address.

"We're trying to get toward the truth," she said. "Nobody owns it—no party, no political system."

Some features currently on SiriusXM Public Radio, including the best of "Car Talk" and "The Bob Edwards Show," will continue on Insight.

SiriusXM says it currently has more than 27 million subscribers, although it does not release information about the popularity of individual channels or shows.

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