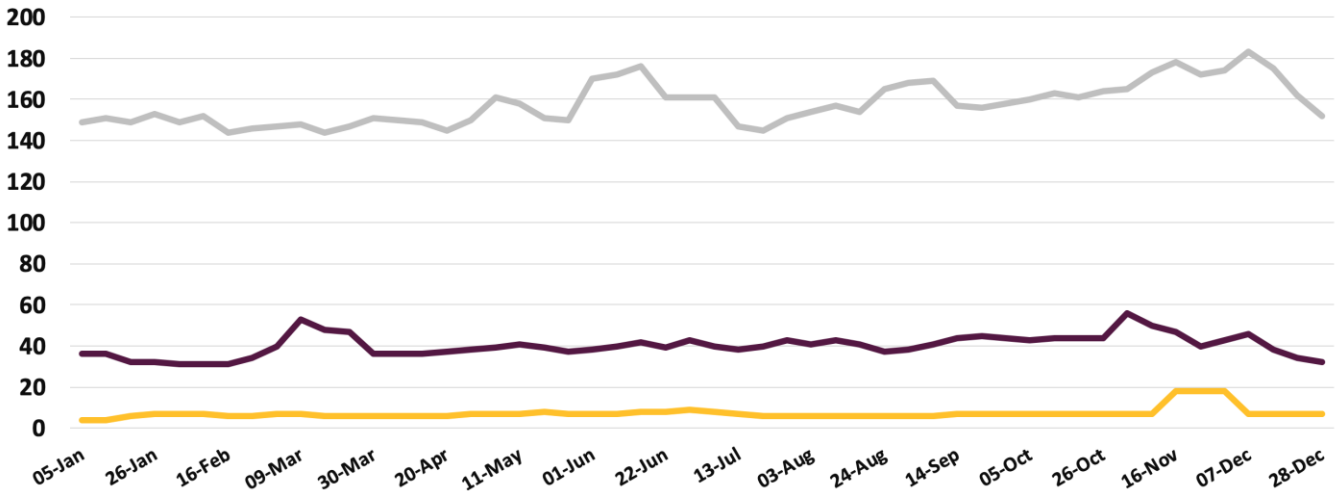


Gender Representation on Sirius XM's *The Highway* in 2019

JADA E. WATSON, [@data_jada](#)

SONGS BY WOMEN AVERAGE 19.6% OF PROGRAMMING

Number of songs by men, women and male-female ensembles played each month on Sirius XM's *The Highway* in 2019



In 2019, an average of 40 songs (19.6%) played on Sirius XM's *The Highway* each week were by female artists, with 158 (76.9%) by men and 7 songs (3.5%) by male-female ensembles. There were two periods in which women performed more than 20% of the songs played, including an average of 23.5% in March 2019, a 20.9% between 20 July and 17 August 2019, and a 9-week stretch of 21.4% between 14 September and 9 November 2019. Combining these averages with airplay for male-female ensembles brings the average to 23.1% in 2019. While this is certainly not parity in airplay, it is nearly double the national average for reporting stations in 2019 and shows that Sirius is playing more women than terrestrial radio.

MORE SONGS BY WOMEN OVERALL AND IN THE TOP POSITIONS

Number of songs by women out of the 545 unique songs on played on Sirius XM's *The Highway* in 2019



134 SONGS
24.7% OVERALL



23 SONGS
20.4% TOP 20



17 SONGS
19.5% TOP 10



6 SONGS
33.3% No. 1

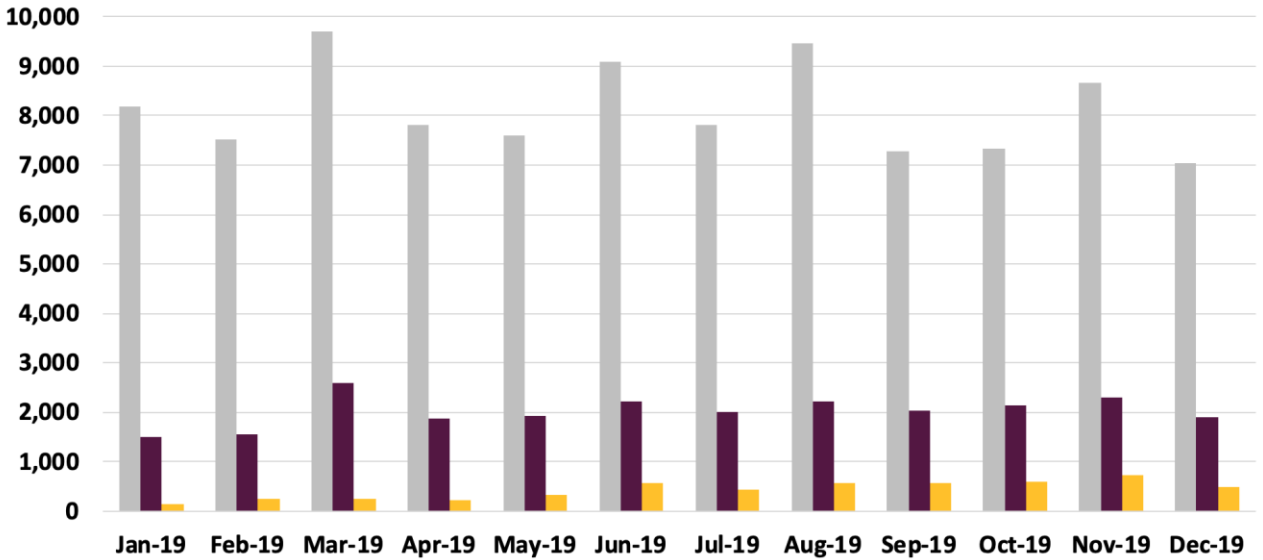
Of the 161 artists whose songs were played on Sirius XM's *The Highway* in 2019, only 7 are artists of colour, representing just 4.3% of the dataset. Together, they are responsible for 15 of the 545 unique songs – 2.8% – on the weekly playlists. All of these songs are performed by men. Not a single song played on Sirius XM in 2019 was performed by a female artist. As with terrestrial radio, women of colour are not just underrepresented here, they are completely absent.

2.8%

of the songs played are by men of colour.

WOMEN RECEIVE AN AVERAGE 19.1% OF AIRPLAY IN 2019

Number of spins for songs by men, women and male-female ensembles each month on Sirius XM's *The Highway* in 2019



Sirius XM's *The Highway* plays an average of 40 individual songs each week, which receive an average of 19.1% of the airplay. In January, these songs received about 377 spins a week, increasing 39.5% by 2 March 2019 and averages 521 spins for the month of March. Following a 27.1% in April, the remaining months average 478 spins a week.

Over the course of this 12-month period, the number of weekly spins for men dropped 16.0% from 2,063 weekly spins the week of 5 Jan. 2019 to 1,732 the week ending 28 Dec. 2019.

Drilling into these numbers, what we see here is an increase in the station playing an average of 54 songs a week by women in January to 68 in the final 8 months of the year.

RATIO OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY MEN TO WOMEN

4:1

TOP 10 MEN AND WOMEN BY SPINS ACCUMULATED IN 2019



THE TOP MALE ARTIST HAS **4.8+** THOUSAND SPINS



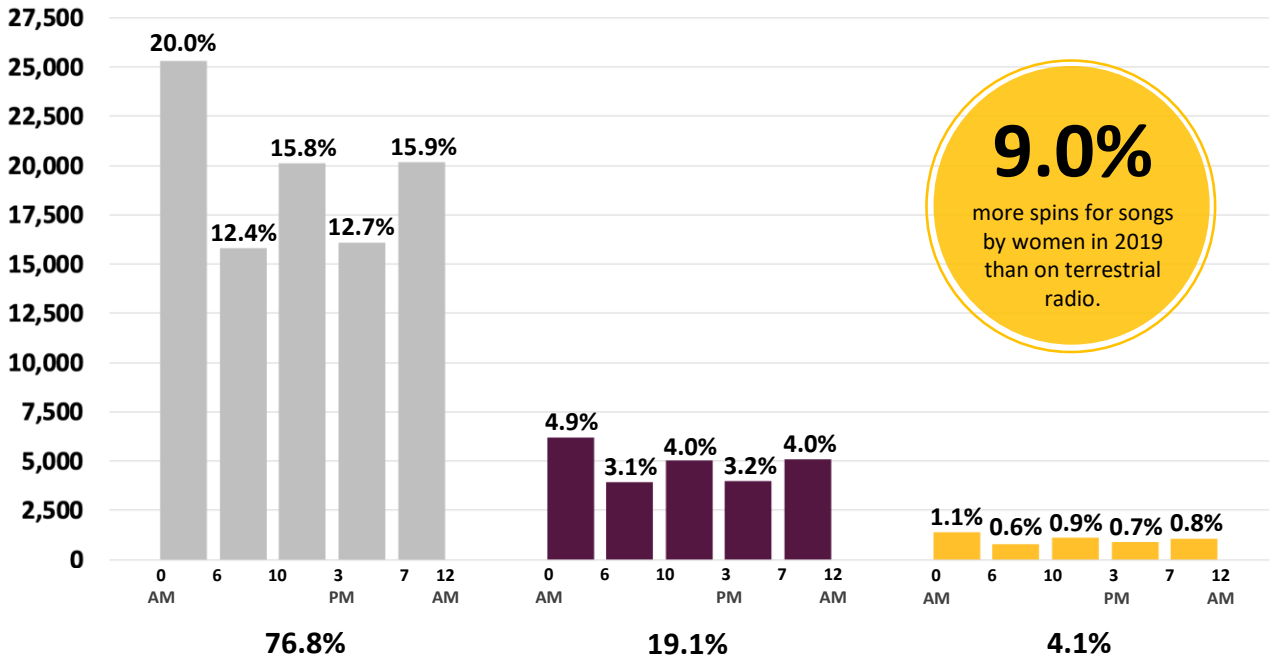
THE TOP FEMALE ARTIST HAS **3.4** THOUSAND SPINS

TOP MALE ARTISTS	TOTAL SPINS	TOP FEMALE ARTISTS	TOTAL SPINS
[1] THOMAS RHETT	4,833	[3] MAREN MORRIS	3,493
[2] OLD DOMINION	3,704	[7] KELSEA BALLERINI	2,483
[4] LUKE COMBS	3,316	[11] GABBY BARRETT	2,206
[5] ERIC CHURCH	2,852	[27] ASHLEY MCBRYDE	1,741
[6] DAN + SHAY	2,830	[30] CARLY PEARCE	1,677
[8] BRETT YOUNG	2,479	[33] CARRIE UNDERWOOD	1,633
[9] HARDY	2,339	[38] MADDIE & TAE	1,496
[10] KANE BROWN	2,270	[42] INGRID ANDRESS	1,372
[13] JON PARDI	2,196	[53] KACEY MUSGRAVES	1,111
[14] MITCHELL TENPENNY	2,177	[56] MIRANDA LAMBERT	946

In all previous SongData reports, the Top 10 artists by accumulated spins have been solely male artists with Carrie Underwood ranking at #11. Sirius XM's *The Highway* Top 10 shows a different picture: two women rank in the Top 10 by spins – with Maren Morris ranking third overall. The Top 10 women, the number of new(er) female artists is incredibly encouraging. Despite this positive change, only three women rank in the Top 20 artists by spins and so there is certainly work to be done to provide greater support for female artists.

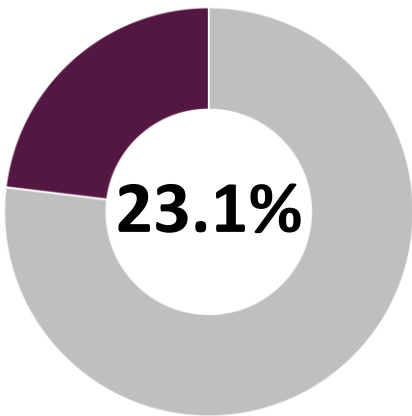
DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS ACROSS 5 DAYPARTS

Number of spins for songs by men, women and male-female ensembles across 5 dayparts on Sirius XM's *The Highway* in 2019



As with previous SongData studies, most radio airplay occurs in the evening and overnight for all artists. What differs here is the distribution for women. While report on 2019 revealed that women received 4.2% of the daytime spins and 5.9% of the evening and overnight spins. On Sirius XM's *The Highway*, however, these percentages are much higher: women received 10.3% of the daytime spins and 8.9% of the evening and overnight airplay. Not only are these percentages higher in each daypart, but the difference between the dayparts is not as pronounced on terrestrial radio.

SIX OF THE HIGHEST RANKING SONGS BY WOMEN



With more airplay than on the Mediabase reporting stations overall and in each time of day, it should not be surprising that songs by women have the support needed to push them into higher rotation.

Six songs by women had enough spins throughout the year to be the #1 song in weekly rotation in 2019:

- Maddie & Tae's "Die from a Broken Heart" (2 wks in January),
- Kelsea Ballerini's "Miss Me More" (1 wk in February),
- Maren Morris' "The Bones" (5 wks in June and July),
- The Highwomen's "Redesigning Women" (1 wk in August),
- Ashley McBride's "One Night Standards" (1 wk in November), and
- Carly Pearce's "I Hope You're Happy Now" ft. Lee Brice (2 wks in December).

Combined, these 6 songs had the most weekly airplay for 12 weeks – 23.1% – of the year. SongData's [February 2020](#) report revealed that songs by women spent just 3 weeks (5.8%) in the #1 position on terrestrial radio – which is 75% less than Sirius XM's *The Highway*.



GENDER CODING

CODE	ARTIST/ENSEMBLE TYPE	# IND. SONGS	% IND. SONGS	# SONGS OVERALL	% OF SONGS BY WEEK
MALE	Male solo artist	260	47.8%	6,121	57.4%
	All-male ensemble	76	14.0%	1,479	13.9%
	Male solo, feat. male solo	15	2.8%	153	1.4%
	Male solo, feat. male ensemble	4	0.7%	141	1.3%
	Male solo, feat. female solo	18	3.3%	251	2.4%
	Male solo, feat. male-female ensemble	2	0.4%	6	0.1%
	Male ensemble, feat. male solo	4	0.7%	26	0.2%
	Male ensemble, feat. male ensemble	1	0.2%	8	0.1%
	Male ensemble, feat. female solo	4	0.7%	23	0.2%
FEMALE	Female solo artist	109	20.0%	1,694	15.9%
	All-female ensemble	13	2.4%	229	2.1%
	Female solo, feat. female solo	3	0.6%	15	0.1%
	Female solo, feat. all-female ensemble	1	0.2%	10	0.1%
	Female solo, feat. male solo	5	0.9%	57	0.5%
	Female solo, feat. all-male ensemble	3	0.6%	74	0.7%
MALE-FEMALE ENS.	Male-female ensemble	26	4.8%	380	3.6%
Total songs		544	100.0%	10,667	100.0%

CODE	ARTIST/ENSEMBLE TYPE	# IND. ARTISTS	% IND. ARTISTS
MALE	Male solo artist	89	55.3%
	All-male ensemble	22	13.7%
FEMALE	Female solo artist	38	23.6%
	All-female ensemble	5	3.1%
MALE-FEMALE ENS.	Male-female ensemble	7	4.3%
Total songs		161	100.0%