

# Megan Mullally

We'll miss her as Karen, but lucky us—she's got a new talk show by Lisa Arcella

**F**or eight years Megan Mullally was completely convincing as the hysterical, gin-soaked socialite Karen Walker on *Will & Grace*. In real life, the actress is thoughtful and warm, but, yes, still hysterically funny. This month, she starts a new life as the host of a daytime talk show, *The Megan Mullally Show*, premiering September 18. Look out, Ellen D.!

**Why do you think *Will & Grace* was such a successful show?**

It was the right chemistry and timing, and the writing and the universality of the friendships... and also because it's dirty and everyone loves that. Even people who think they don't, do.

**So what's your favorite TV show?**

I love *American Idol*. It is the greatest show ever. On the last night of the first season, my husband and I voted 775 times for Kelly Clarkson!

**If you had three hours to kill, what would you do?**

I would read a book. I like J. M. Coetzee; Haruki Murakami, who wrote *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*; Gabriel Garcia Márquez and many others. I have really mainstream tastes in terms of TV and movies, but with books, I'm more snooty. [laughs]

**What advice would you give to women in their 20s and 30s?**

Right now there is so much pressure to be a superstar by the time you are 23 in whatever profession you are in. But things don't always happen in the same timeline for everybody. In fact, they never do.

**Spontaneous or scheduled?**

I'm an incredibly spontaneous person in terms of my work. Sean Hayes is the same way. We never analyzed any moment in any scene of that show. We just did it. We would tease each other sometimes and say, "Do you even know, what you are saying?" "No. Do you?" "No." Eric [McCormack] and Debra [Messing] would break down the story and then they would go and get into detailed discussions with the writers, and Sean and I would be on the side with our eyes unfocused and staring out into space.

**What did you splurge on with your first big paycheck?**

I was so filled with certainty that *Will & Grace* was going to go after shooting the pilot that I went out and bought a Range Rover before the show had gotten picked up. If we hadn't gotten picked up, I would have been stuck with a giant car payment. I had \$200 to my name when the show started.

**What don't you understand about the opposite sex?**

Nothing! I have it all down! I am a Scorpio and they can't get anything past us Scorpio girls.

**Do you do anything to stay in shape?**

Nothing too strenuous. I feel like my cardio days, outside of walking, are over. I'm never going to take a Spin class. I've done it and I don't want to do that anymore.

**What's your definition of happiness?**

To know who you are and feel good about that, because I think if you can do that, everything else seems to fall into place.



PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS BUCK. HAIR: RHEANNE WHITE FOR ARTIST MANAGEMENT. MAKEUP: DENISE HARKEY FOR ARTISTS BY TIMOTHY PIRANO

**\* PSST! WHO MAKES HER LAUGH? "MY HUSBAND IS THE FUNNIEST PERSON IN THE WORLD—AND THE SHOW *CAMPUS LADIES* JUST KILLS ME."**