

And Over on the Left We Have...?

by Polly Mann

The only time I watch Charlie Rose on television is when I'm surfing the channels. I don't have anything against Charlie Rose, but, coming from the left, I question that my side receives equal representation on his show. And it appears that I am right.

In the November issue of Extra, the magazine of Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting, there is an analysis of the guests on the Charlie Rose Show, touted by Rose as featuring "people who don't ordinarily appear on television." Really. In the months of May and June 2010, out of 132 guests, 28 percent were journalists from major media outlets; others included seven well-known academics; seven corporate guests, most of them affiliated with Wall Street/financial firms; four corporate philanthropists; four U.S. government officials; seven foreign leaders; 13 medical/science guests; 15 performers (actors and musicians); four novelists and two chefs. The guest list was heavily male, with just 15 percent of women guests (20 total appearances). Of the six African-American guests, five discussed arts or sports.



Map of the world from Coca Cola's Marketing Department indicating countries it will not market to. Charlie Rose's sponsor coincides with U.S. foreign policy. The company has also been implicated by association with murderous oppression in Colombia and Gaza and hence has been the focus of boycotts around the world.

The show is financed by corporations—Coca-Cola, the largest; Rupert Murdoch's News Corp.; and a few financial institutions and investment firms. Media mogul Barry Diller and fashion designer Diane von Furstenberg are program backers as well as guests. As master of ceremonies at a 2002 Coca-Cola shareholders' meeting,

Rose declared it a privilege to be associated with the company. Mugs on Rose's interview table were decorated with both Coke and Charlie Rose logos.

In a 2003 appearance with Amy Goodman of Democracy Now, Rose said in response to her comment about the need for independent reporting: "I promise you, CBS News and ABC News and NBC News are not influenced by the corporations that may own these companies, since I know one of them very well and worked for one of them." Indeed.

Polly Mann is a co-founder of WAMM and continues to be active with the organization. Her column appears regularly in the WAMM newsletter. Also find her writing at www.worldwidewamm.org in the Middle East Committee section and on the WAMM blog..