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Oprah Winfrey is a savvy businesswoman whose perspicacity in presenting herself to the public has earned her hundreds of millions of dollars. Recently, Ms. Winfrey announced she is getting out of broadcast television and into cable, with the startup of her own channel fittingly entitled the Oprah Winfrey Network, or OWN. Yes, she owns much of it.

One of Oprah's first moves was to hire Rosie O'Donnell to do a daily afternoon talk show. As you may know, Ms. O'Donnell flamed out on "The View" after saying things like 9/11 was an inside job and that radical Christianity is "just as dangerous" as radical Islam. Even Joy Behar blanched at that one.

For years, Rosie has tried to get back into the TV game. In 2008, NBC hired her to do an Ed Sullivan-type variety program which lasted exactly one episode. Nobody watched. Not even radical Muslims. For many media companies, Rosie is damaged goods, a person who has alienated millions of Americans.

But Oprah is bringing her back.

Now, anyone achieving the success that Oprah has must be taken seriously, but I am betting against Rosie. It's not because of her political viewpoint; I'd have her on my program anytime. But I simply do not believe she can entertain the folks at the level required to have them tune in every day. Rosie is angry. She is a true believer in left-wing causes, and that's okay if you have the frame of reference to back it up. But it's death for a comedian who depends on making folks laugh and feel good.

According to the polls, America remains a center-right country, with just 20% of the citizenry defining themselves as liberal. That's not enough to drive a successful mass market TV or radio program. Despite having big left-wing names like

Al Franken and Janeane Garofalo, the Air America radio network went into bankruptcy. After comedian David Letterman came out as a left-wing guy, his late night ratings took a dive. Even after all the trouble Jay Leno has had, he still beats Letterman by more than 20% in total audience.

It is true that Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert do well catering to left-wing viewers on Comedy Central, but their audience totals are nowhere near that of the Fox News Channel, which is consistently ranked in the top five of all primetime cable programs. FNC is not a liberal concern.

So, Oprah is taking a gamble with Rosie, not only in the ratings department, but also in the public relations area. If Ms. O'Donnell displays her radical side, Oprah will be held somewhat responsible. But maybe she's at the point where she doesn't really care.

President Obama received a huge lift when Oprah embraced him on her program. She also campaigned for him and made no secret of her admiration for Mr. Obama and his philosophy. In the past, Ms. Winfrey has been largely above the political fray, but now, perhaps, her move to cable is signaling a new era of Oprah activism. If so, expect much hell to break loose.