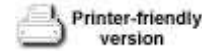


CNBC Anchor: Hugo Chavez is 'Funny,' 'Charming,' 'A Seductor,' but 'Dangerous'

'Power Lunch' co-host explains how she views the Venezuelan dictator's ability to win people over and rise to power.

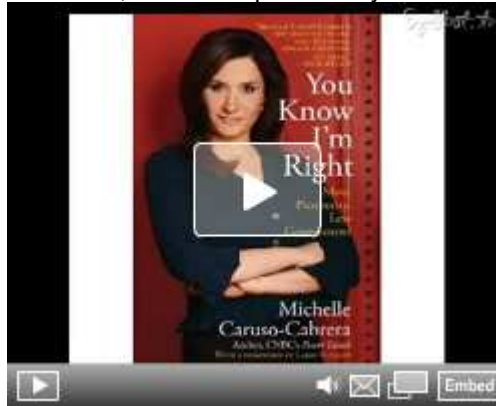
By Jeff Poor
Business & Media Institute
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What is it with Hollywood personalities going to Venezuela and being swept off their feet by the thuggish dictator Hugo Chávez. They come back with these stories claiming [he is just misconstrued by the media](#) and that he's really a great guy.

On Oct. 7, at [an appearance at the Cato Institute in Washington, D.C.](#), CNBC "Power Lunch" co-host Michelle Caruso-Cabrera, in an appearance promoting her book "[You Know I'm Right: More Prosperity, Less Government](#)," explained how this could happen. She told an audience that Chávez has a very charismatic, seductive personality.

"I was telling – my two most interesting interviews I think I've ever done are Milton Friedman, very influential on me, and also Hugo Chávez, because when I interviewed him I was struck by how much I like him," she explained. "He's very funny. He is so charming. He is smooth. He could be a stand-up comedian. He is a seductor, as I suspect most dictators are – that's how they get to where they are."



Seductive isn't probably how most view Chávez, who over the last 12 years [has compiled quite the list of human rights violations](#). But Caruso-Cabrera's observation gives us insights on why [Danny Glover](#), [Sean Penn](#) and [Oliver Stone](#) come back from visits to Venezuela singing the dictator's praises. According to the CNBC host, who gave the impression she saw through this, his abilities are dangerous and are sending Venezuela down the same path Cuba that ruined Cuba under Fidel Castro.

"I got a very clear sense of how dangerous I think he is because clearly what's happening in Venezuela, my mother's Cuban – my family left Cuba for a reason," she continued. "I see what's happening in Venezuela as very similar to what happened in Cuba. It's terrible. Poverty is on the rise. Inflation is on the rise. People are suffering. But, he can win you over. I mean it's very, very impressive."

Chillingly, Caruso-Cabrera likened him to other personalities.

"It reminded me of actually serial killers that I interviewed in Florida," Caruso-Cabrera said. "They're very, very charming. They're seductors. That's how they get where they're going to go and so there's a lot of similar qualities to their personalities."

"Wonder how far we can take that analogy?" Cato Institute Senior Fellow and Business & Media Institute Advisory Board Member Dan Mitchell added.

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