

Intoxicated with its own lies

by Dana S. Scanlon

The Media Elite, America's New Powerbrokers

by S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, Linda S. Lichter
Adler and Adler Publishers, Bethesda, Md.
Clothbound, 342 pages, \$19.95.

For anyone serious about understanding the phenomenon sometimes known as "the Eastern Establishment media," this book is definitely worth the time. It is not the fast-moving, easy reading of a thriller. It details the results of a painstaking years long research project, involving hundreds of interviews of journalists, and massive computerized cross-gridding of how the Eastern Establishment media covered stories on nuclear power safety, busing, and the oil industry, comparing that with the views taken by professionals and experts in those fields.

The study's conclusion, after all this, is that "it is not conscious intentions but common assumptions that quietly direct news coverage toward the dominant perspectives of the newsroom," that "routine news judgments . . . daily decisions repeated over the course of several years" have a profound impact in shaping the way the "news" is handed

down to the public. For example: Most students at the elite Columbia University School of Journalism gave Fidel Castro a higher positive rating, as a world leader, than Ronald Reagan. Wouldn't such a perception in the newsroom have a powerful effect in shaping future coverage of issues pertaining to, say, Central America?

Then you have the results from the hundreds of actual journalists interviewed (from the ranks of the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, as well as ABC, CBS, NBC, and PBS). Twenty-eight percent said they felt that "all political systems are repressive." Seventy-five percent see no problem with homosexuality.

Not surprisingly, the psychological tests which the journalists participated in, resulted in a composite picture of the journalist as overwhelmingly narcissistic and concerned with achieving power.

One issue on which the journalists were not polled, an omission which is somewhat to the detriment of this study, was in the area of views concerning drug use. That certainly would have been an eye-opener.

Presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche last year told a standing-room only crowd of some 200 journalists that "the media is intoxicated with its own lies." This book shows precisely how that can work.

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an autobiography by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

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Published by Executive Intelligence Review

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