

when he argues that Islamic terrorists are motivated only by opposition to our foreign policy, not by the West's "existence as free nations" (119–20). I refer, of course, to the bloody attacks on Denmark and other western countries for the crime of permitting freedom of the press.

But enough of my dissent from the great dissenter. Libertarians will be especially interested in his answer to the question "Are Pro-war Libertarians Right?" (167–70), in such down-home public-policy sleuthing as "The Pretense of Airport Security" (37–40), and in such Twainian or Menckian essays as "Nation Trembles as Congress Reassembles" (63–65). Higgs is a very entertaining writer. He is also one of the libertarian movement's best historical writers, a judgment supported by such essays as "Free Enterprise and War, a Dangerous Liaison" (73–77). Agree with him or not, there is always something to be learned by reading him.

— Stephen Cox

Killing the liberal media

(You bastards!) — Brian Anderson is a widely published author, currently a senior editor of the Manhattan Institute's *City Journal*, with extensive experience in both print and electronic journalism. Now he's written "South Park Conservatives: The Revolt Against Liberal Media Bias" (Regnery, 2005, 256 pages), a popular book about the rapid shift from mainstream media (MSM) to alternative media (AM). The book is enjoyable if not altogether persuasive.

His thesis is that the MSM is overwhelmingly dominated by the Left, that its leftist bias systematically distorts the news, and that leftist dominated cultural and academic institutions often work to suppress any thought that deviates from leftist orthodoxy. He illustrates this argument with numerous examples. Most of the book, however, nicely chronicles the rise of the AM in reaction to leftist domination.

Anderson covers the rise of political talk radio, now dominated by rightwing commentators, after the ending of the Fairness Doctrine in

the late 1980s. He discusses the development of alternative cable news, driven by the phenomenal success of the Fox News Channel and C-SPAN, and of politically incorrect comedy cable shows, especially "South Park" — a program hilarious at lampooning leftist shibboleths, but raunchy enough to draw fire from some conservatives.

In addition, Anderson surveys the "blogosphere," the collection of internet sites devoted to political punditry. There are political sites of every hue and stripe, but again the most visited ones are right of center: the Drudge Report, FrontPageMagazine, NewsMax, OpinionJournal, PowerLine, NRO, and so on. Anderson grasps the real power of the internet: the massive parallel processing power of hundreds of individuals, many educated far better than the average journalist, to examine a story from every angle.

The book concludes with a discussion of rightist publishing houses and anti-leftist sentiment and organization on college campuses. Surprisingly, Anderson only briefly mentions rightwing think tanks, which are crucial in providing information to the bloggers, talk show hosts, and so forth.

Again, this is a fun read, but at times Anderson is just whistling past the graveyard. The dominance of the Left in the MSM, the academy, and the centers of American culture is still increasing, and the amount of funding given to leftist think tanks and other organizations dwarfs that given to rightist ones. Yes, the audience for Fox News is growing, but it is still less than that for the major network news shows. And the people who read blogs are still far fewer than those who read newspapers and magazines. There may be a revolution under way, but it has only feebly begun.

— Gary Jason

