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This assessment of how the Canadian media perceive and portray Canadian Evangelicals contains both good news and bad news. The good: Evangelicals who have wondered if they’re crazy for thinking that the media portray them negatively have not lost their minds. The reason they’re not crazy is the bad: in a measurable number of instances and in a number of specific ways, Canadian media do betray a negative bias in their treatment of Evangelicals.

But author David Haskell includes a small slice of good news inside the bad: by comparison with how Canadian media portray American Evangelicals, Canadian Evangelicals look tolerant.

Haskell, who teaches journalism at at the Brantford, Ont., campus of Wilfrid Laurier University, knows whereof he writes. And readers will readily see he has researched his subject carefully and exhaustively. At several points he gives readers a view of his raw findings. But he keeps this book accessible. It reads like a story, albeit not the happiest one you will read this year.

Readers will detect an irenic tone in Through a Lens Darkly. Haskell does not hold back from reporting the negative conclusions he has drawn from his research, but he consistently avoids the whiny tone that some of us might adopt in the same circumstances. In fact, throughout, he treats the journalists who have failed Evangelicals in the way Evangelicals would like to be treated.

If some readers of Haskell’s book might prefer that the problem he has researched be rooted entirely in some plot on the journalists’ side, those readers will come away disappointed. Late in his book, he offers some interesting advice to Evangelicals wishing to be heard. Without spoiling the reading experience by revealing his advice, I will commend the book to anyone willing to admit that culpability lies not entirely on the one side.

—KEN BADLEY