

neously rejected U.S. military intervention against Iraq. It was a moment, falling only a year after the neoconservative onslaught on the Rockford Institute, that solidified the paleoconservative identity.

"The U.S., as paleos have claimed for decades, was only meant to be a constitutional republic, not an empire—as Buchanan's 1999 foreign policy tome *A Republic, Not an Empire* nostalgically states," Scotchie explains. "Republics mind their own business. Their governments have very limited powers, and their people are too busy practicing self-government to worry about problems in other countries. Empires not only bully smaller, defenseless nations, they also can't leave their own, hapless subjects alone.... Empires and the tenth amendment aren't friends.... Empires and small government aren't compatible, either."

If anti-interventionism and a commitment to the Old Republic defined by strict-construction constitutionalism and highly localized and independent social and political institutions defined one major dimension of paleoconservatism, its antipathy to the mass immigration that began to flood the country in the 1980s defined another. Indeed, it was ostensibly and mainly *Chronicles'* declaration of opposition to immigration that incited the neoconservative attack on Rockford and its subsequent defunding. Scotchie devotes a special but short chapter to paleoconservative thought on immigration and makes clear that to paleos, America was an extension of Western civilization. It was intended by the Founding Fathers to be an Anglo-Saxon-Celtic nation also influenced by Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem. Large-scale immigration from non-Western nations would, as Fleming (and most other paleos) maintained, forever spoil a distinct American civilization.

The implication of this passage is that paleoconservatives, unlike libertarians, most neoconservatives, and many contemporary mainstream conservatives, do not consider America to be an "idea," a "proposition," or a "creed." It is instead

a concrete and particular culture, rooted in a particular historical experience, a set of particular institutions as well as particular beliefs and values, and a particular ethnic-racial identity, and, cut off from those roots, it cannot survive. Indeed, it is not surviving now, for all the glint and glitter of empire.

While Scotchie is quite clear and well-informed about the paleos' thought on immigration and its meaning, he fails to discuss at all their views on race. This is unfortunate, as not a few of them have been accused of simple-minded "racism," "white supremacy," and other ill-defined bugaboos. I, for one, like to think that what they believe about race, while definitely not in the liberal-neocon mainstream, is rather more nuanced and considerably more sophisticated than their enemies (and not a few of their friends) want to think.

If Scotchie's book has any great flaw, it is that it is simply too short. Paleoconservatism is worth a much longer and deeper look than his volume can give, though Scotchie himself is both so thoroughly familiar with his subject and so sympathetic to it that he could have produced a much more extended treatment. He might also have revealed more of the personalities of the leading paleoconservative writers, interviewed them, and discussed several writers he omits, for example, Claes Ryn of Catholic University or E. Christian Kopff of the University of Colorado at Boulder, and he might have explored why the *Chronicles* school has not been more successful at defining the American Right.

Have the paleos indeed failed, and if they have, is the neocon stab-in-the-back theory the only reason? Are there perhaps either large historical trends or even mere personality differences among the paleos that made their own crack-up eventually inevitable, and can such trends or conflicts be overcome? Or are the paleos really only dinosaurs, whining nostalgically for a world they have lost and unable or cantankerously unwilling to adapt to the Shining Imperial City on the Hill the neoconservatives

claim to be constructing? Scotchie might have explored these questions and problems more extensively than he did, and one hopes he will do so in a bigger book in the future, but what he has given us in the meantime is an essential and valuable contribution to American intellectual history in the last decade of the last century. ■

Samuel Francis is a nationally syndicated columnist based in Washington and writes a monthly column for Chronicles.

[*The Lovely Bones*, Alice Sebold, Little, Brown, 328 pages; and *The Crimson Petal and the White*, Michael Faber, Harcourt, 838 pages]

What Women (Apparently) Want

By Cynthia Grenier

ALICE SEBOLD TITLED her first book, a memoir about her own vicious rape, *Lucky*. She surely never dreamed how wildly prescient that word would be applied to what has happened with her second work, a novel, *The Lovely Bones*. That book has become the biggest seller of the year, leaving the likes of Tom Clancy, Nicolas Sparks, and Stephen King trailing behind for months.

The *New York Times* and *Washington Post* within days of each other consecrated nearly full pages to her commercial glory—21 weeks on the top or very close to the top of the *New York Times* best-seller list—and to her literary merit. Little, Brown, her publisher, has more than two million copies in print, sending it back for reprint 17 times. Foreign rights have been sold in 18 countries. First serial rights went with weirdly singular appropriateness to *Seventeen* magazine.

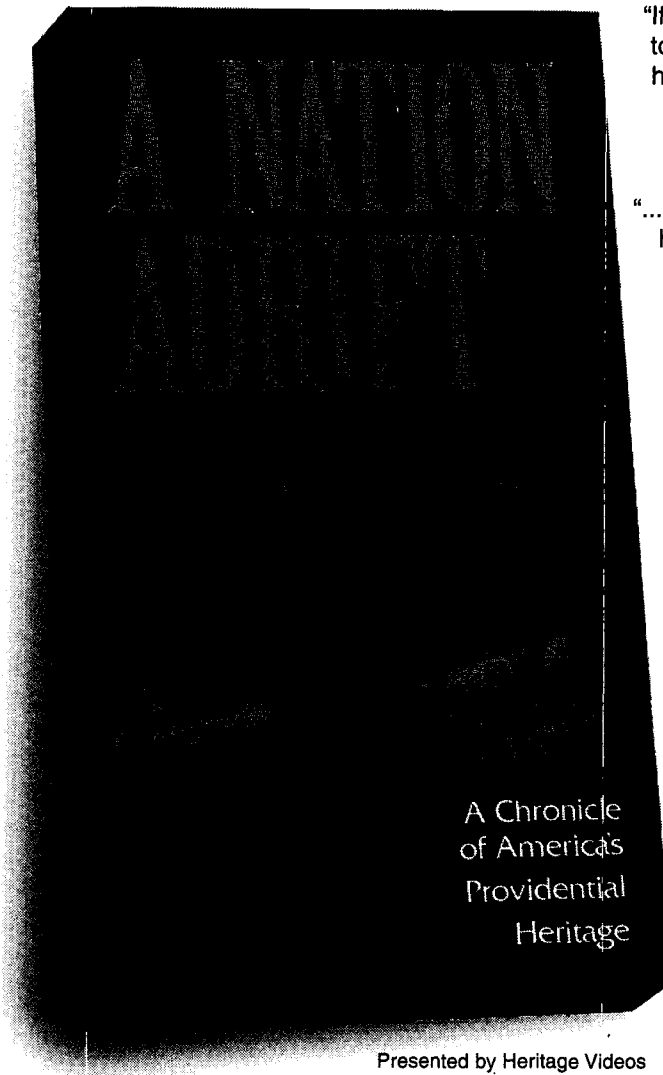
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Her editor at Little, Brown opined to the *Washington Post* that the book wrung hope out of horror, no doubt causing it to resonate with readers after 9/11. She went on to say, "There is something wonderfully healing and kind of joyous even though it deals with such a dark and terrifying topic."

Earlier this year I lost the man to whom I was married for all my adult life. His death was quick, painless, and completely unexpected. Barely an hour passes without my bitterly mourning his loss. Finding a nanosecond of healing or hope from this sugary, sentimental, politically correct book derived largely, it would seem, from "Touched by an Angel" was impossible. Indeed it was downright ridiculous. The book did not simply annoy me; it angered me. It is offensive on so many levels, whether one is a believing Christian or not.

There is no place for God in Sebold's Heaven, let alone Jesus Christ, presumed by all Christians in the world to sit at His father's right hand to judge the quick and the dead. Her heaven does have a Purgatory of sorts, or rather some kind of pleasant waiting room where her narrator, 14-year-old Susie, has wound up after a vicious rape, death, and dismemberment in 1973.

Susie's Heaven/Purgatory is really neat, tailored to teen tastes. She goes to a heavenly high school to experience in a singularly idealized form the high school of which her rapist deprived her. The boys are not rude, and she can just sit around reading fashion magazines instead of having to endure all those boring classes she would have had to on earth. Need one wonder why *Seventeen* wanted first serial rights?

Susie's girlhood crush is on Ray Singh who had moved from England the previous year but had been born in India. Eventually, as the years roll by with Susie interacting in a heavenly sort of way with her emotionally torn family, she is able to consummate this crush by the time the young man is going to medical school by means that will surely resonate with anyone who happened to catch "Ghost" at some time in the last decade or so.

Sebold's Heaven is also a Heaven where family dogs wind up, joyously recognizing former family members. "This Heaven," narrates Susie in the last pages of the novel, "is not about safety just as, in its graciousness, it isn't about gritty reality. We have fun." On the penultimate page, Susie finally wreaks her vengeance upon her rapist many years after the deed. Vengeance is mine,

saith the Lord according to Scripture, but not apparently in Sebold's book.

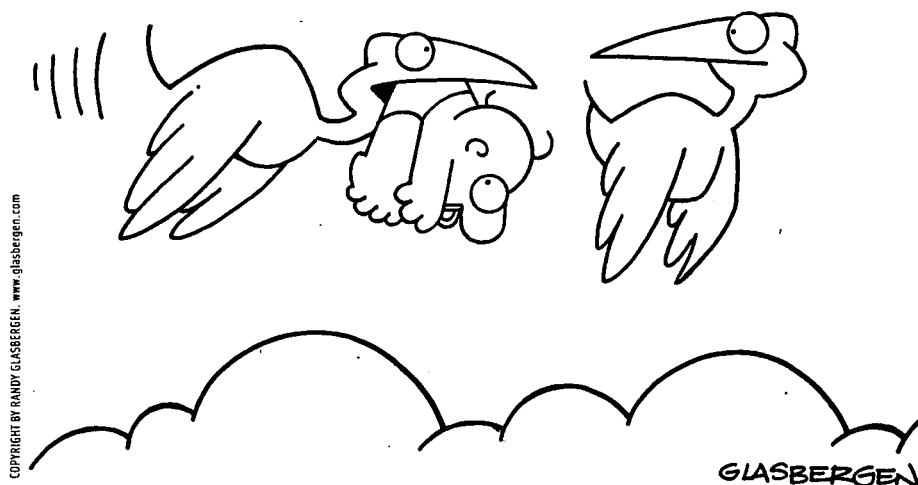
Should one quest after fictional gritty reality, one can certainly find an abundant share of that quality in Michael Faber's *Crimson Petal and the White*, an 838-page novel steadily making its way up the best-seller lists. Set in 1870s London, the heroine is a tall, flat-chested, bony, ginger-haired 19-year-old whore named Sugar who will "do anything the most desperate alley-slut will do, but do it with a smile of child-like innocence."

Faber clearly has carefully studied Mayhew's *London's Poor*, not to mention *My Secret Life* by the anonymous "Walter," a veritable treasure trove of sociological and sexual detailing of 19th century English life. But what he seems really to want to do is demonstrate how an intelligent and determined woman even from the lowest ranks of society can make her way—do forgive the expression—in a male-dominated society.

Sugar eventually advances from the muddy, filthy streets of the capital to the position of mistress of a wealthy perfume magnate, an Oxford graduate, whom she comes to advise and guide in his business, rendering him the services of what would doubtless earn her today the title of vice president for marketing. The magnate is her sexual slave, but such enslavement does have its limit, as Sugar is to learn.

The plotline of the novel is thin for its length, the secondary characters and their stories are lumpy, the emphasis on the conditions of hygiene in the 19th century surely far exceed any reader's interest. Dickens and Trollope it is not, but the author is trying to create a kind of reality never sought by Sebold, for which we can only be grateful. Sentimental pap is never a tasty dish no matter how well seasoned with righteous distress over a vicious crime. Several million readers can be wrong, although I doubt Little, Brown would agree. ■

Cynthia Grenier is a writer based in Washington, DC.



"I stole it off somebody's blanket at the beach. I think it's a ham!"

Palace Intrigue

One of the first letters of congratulations I received when I began writing the Atticus column for the London *Sunday Times* in 1994 was from ... Princess Diana.

I had only met her once and very briefly, at a ball, so I was flattered that she remembered. (I had been rather tipsy at the time.)

When the spin doctors of the estranged Waleses, as the royal couple used to be referred to by the press, first began battling in earnest over media coverage, I received not a small amount of "inside" gossip from their respective publicists. Without hesitation I took the side of Prince Charles, going so far as to write that the divine Di—a woman scorned—was crazy with jealousy and was trying to bring down the monarchy. Then a funny thing happened. At a Sir James Goldsmith bash, where yet again I had too much firewater to drink, shy Di sent a friend to tell me she wanted to see me. Although a bit nervous, I approached her table, was asked by her to sit down, and managed to slip from the chair and fall underneath the table. She roared with laughter, artfully dipped those limpid blue eyes, and said, "Do you really think I'm mad?" Terribly embarrassed, the only thing I could come up with was, "All I know is that I'm mad about you."

As they said in the movie, it was the start of a beautiful friendship, which ended with her death on Aug. 31, 1997. No, I did not have a romance with her, but I did invite every so-called important editor to my house when I gave dinners in her honor, which was the reason she took a liking to me in the first place. Yes, dear readers, Diana was divine, but she

sure knew how to manipulate. So sudden was my change of heart, that a Greek royal (on Prince Charles's side) had me to lunch and posed the inevitable question: Was I having an affair with her? How is it possible for a grown man to switch so completely from one day to the next? "Have you ever seen that look?" was my answer.

Now it seems as if Diana is finally having her revenge from the grave. And I'm not so sure that Prince Charles doesn't deserve it. Diana was too smart to say anything against her ex during her lifetime. Prince Charles ditto. The fight has always been conducted by proxy, by the courtiers, spin doctors, royal servants, and the press. It is a three-way fight. Buckingham Palace representing the

abolition of the monarchy by the Murdoch press in an unholy alliance with the republican *Guardian* and *Mirror*. Babbling butlers, alleged victims of homosexual rape, improper cover-ups, all these are mere skirmishes leading up to the final battle. This will be in the form of sweeping changes that will strip the Queen of her remaining political powers by Parliament, plans of which are already being discussed by a House of Commons committee. Once stripped of political power, the monarchy will become irrelevant, and most likely eased out at the passing of the present Queen. And yet and yet, only last summer, during the Queen's jubilee, hysterical crowds cheered her and Prince Charles to the proverbial rafters. Sensing defeat, the Left and Rupert baby went to work. With servants such as Paul Burrell, and bunglers such as the prosecuting DA, it was like taking candy from a very small baby.

THE OBJECT OF THE WAR OF THE WALESSES IS SURVIVAL ON THE PART OF THE QUEEN, ASCENDANCY ON THE PART OF CHARLES, AND ABOLITION OF THE MONARCHY BY THE MURDOCH PRESS

Queen, St. James's Palace for Prince Charles, and Kensington Palace, the late Diana. The Fourth Estate, in the person of Rupert Murdoch, a confirmed republican, (he and Diana often lunched together alone) and other newspapers of the lefty persuasion now fight under the colors of Princess Di, and as of last month, Kensington Palace seems on its way to victory.

The object of the war of the Waleses is survival on the part of the Queen, ascendancy on the part of Charles, and

It all began when Diana, trying to protect her turf after some idiot advised the Queen to lift Di's royal title, began to gather ammunition against the House of Windsor. Her best sources were the royal servants. These butlers, footmen, valets, drivers, personal assistants, and bodyguards knew where the bodies lay. She thus learned—and taped—the alleged rape of Charles's royal valet, George Smith, by an assistant to the Prince, still on his staff as I write. Smith was an admitted drunk and pill popper,