and to no one’s surprise, becomes intensely jealous and possessive of him, endorsing once again the do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do philosophy She lives by throughout the novel. Add a long, totally irrelevant scene in which He spends months watching a young woman at breakfast at the Morning Kettle, only to be rebuffed when He introduces himself and endeavors to make his “move,” and the blandness of the novel reaches its high point.

Underlying the plot of a good novel is a substratum of meaning and philosophical insight. The thicker and deeper the substratum, the more significant and lasting the novel. The substratum of He/Shes, however, is paper thin, for this is a novel without much substance, one which meanders and gropes its way through many mazes and yet somehow manages not to illuminate a single dark corner. A few more ironic twists and this novel could well be viewed as a parody of itself in which all of these characters would become absurdist cartoons of the emptiness of modern life, the futility of deep and meaningful emotional relationships, the better joys of hedonism over personal growth and fulfillment. But He/Shes is not a failed attempt at satire and parody; it is obviously a novel which asks to be taken seriously. And that is unfortunate, for it is in the asking to be taken seriously that the novel fails most completely, largely because He/Shes is a gutted novel. Missing are the innards and the complexities which would make this a good novel, and present are only superficialities and caricatures of real-life struggles and defeats. In the first half of He/Shes, He seeks explanations for what has happened to him and to his dream of true love. Halfway through the novel, He abandons this search for reasons and goes, instead, with the flow of events deterministically outside his control. He/Shes reads as if Gold, too, began this novel as a journey of explanation, but halfway through abandoned the quest and settled for generalities.

Perhaps the most intriguing questions suggested by He/Shes are precisely those which it fails to explore: why do people fall out of love, why is sexuality such a deep and yet often malevolent bond, why do people use each other, why do people cling, why are people so often self-deceived, and why do people hang on to destructive, incomplete relationships when they could choose better ones? In the absence of any attempt even to search out the implications of these questions and issues, He/Shes remains a largely skeletal novel. Whatever emotional impact it might have had upon the reader is sacrificed to the easier requirements of stasis. The journey of He/Shes is circuitous and leads nowhere. The characters have talked themselves out early in the novel, yet they keep on talking. They have deeply hurt each other, yet they keep on wounding. Perhaps most important, they know the relationship has peaked and died, yet they keep on clinging. To have been given one glimpse of these characters by Gold is to have seen them for all they are. Many glimpses put together do not add substance or depth, only tedium. He and She quickly whittle themselves down to indifference, but the reader has beaten them there by a mile.

Updating the Doctrine
of the Two Spheres

Carl N. Degler: At Odds; Oxford University Press; New York.

Marriage and Family in a Changing Society; Edited by James M. Henslin; The Free Press; New York.

by Gordon M. Pradl

Schizophrenia appears to be the characteristic mental disturbance of our age. This splitting of the personality into two distinct selves parallels our society’s increasing failure to provide the conditions necessary for the development of an individual’s inner experience. With privacy, patience, and commitment ever more suspect virtues in our disposable technocratic culture, our better feelings are denied, and we are systematically foiled in our efforts to establish relationships of true intimacy. To understand this poisonous, hate-filled milieu which nullifies the norms of our humanity is to begin to appreciate the malaise currently afflicting our fundamental social arrangement: the family.

Traditionally in America the woman has stood at the center of the family nexus, while it in turn has served to define her responsibility and mission in life. Such an intertwined relationship suggests prima facie a compelling explanation for the deteriorating position of the modern family and the subsequent erosion of its moral authority: the dramatic shift in women’s allegiances, especially with the last generation. No longer content to focus her identity exclusively around hearth and home, serving the needs and desires of her wage-earning husband and their children, woman has begun to move outward from the family looking for new connections, new meanings for existence away from the world dominated by the male. This so-called “liberation” has supposedly sent shock waves through existing family patterns. Such an appealing analysis, however, not only ignores the real assault on our normal human relationships, but further deludes people into thinking that our domestic problems would all be

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solved if only we could get women back into the fold where they belong.

That these issues must be considered in their true complexity, marked by contradiction and paradox, is rightfully urged upon us by Carl Degler in *At Odds*, his well-researched and nonpolemical history of women and the family in America from the revolution to the present. Faced with the task of presenting an account of ideas, attitudes and sensibilities, rather than a chronology of clearly delineated events, Professor Degler has organized his material around the key questions that have surrounded the evolving relationship between women and the family: What prerogatives does the wife and mother have with respect to her male partner? Who will define and control sexuality, fertility, abortion? How will opportunities, first in higher education and then in the job market, change the social arrangements of women and the family? And finally, how will suffrage and subsequent equality under the law alter woman’s allegiance to her husband and children?

In each instance, as Degler notes, women have expanded their possibilities in order to control their unique destinies and not simply accept the role definitions forced on them by others:

... the history of the family is best understood by recognizing that changes in the role of women—particularly in what has been called the extension of individualism to women—the awakening to self—have been at the root of that history. As women have changed in their relations to men and children, the family has been altered. For in the end that is the family: a congeries of relationships among parents and their children. But instead of considering these alterations merely as responses to exogenous or outside forces, they also need to be acknowledged as flowing from changes in women’s self-perception.

Yet, just as self-determination is never willingly granted by those with power, so it is also never unqualifiedly wel-

comed by those without, as *At Odds* clearly goes on to demonstrate.

While the women’s voices that Degler allows to echo eloquently through his pages speak naturally enough on both sides of every round in the great debate over the extension of women’s rights, what is truly impressive is the intelligence, sensitivity and vitality their words express. Indeed, as the force of their words accumulates, the reader comes to realize that the current controversies need to be viewed from the gathered perspectives of over 200 years. In 1867, Caroline Dall, for instance, made the case that a woman was first her own person, and only second the wearer of roles traditionally prescribed by the family unit—“We have not laid a secure foundation for any statement on the subject unless we have made it clear that ‘woman’s rights’ are identical with ‘human rights’; that no father, brother, or husband can have all the privileges ordained for him of God, till mother and sister and wife are set free to secure them according to instinctive individual bias.”

The central fear raised by such assertions as Ms. Dall’s has always been fueled by the belief that human rights were incompatible with a woman’s domestic role. In these terms the whole history of woman’s self-perception has unfolded as she has attempted to widen her sphere of influence without denying the legitimate demands placed upon her by the family. In each instance, whether women were gaining access to higher education or the polling booths, prophets of doom predicted that women would flee from their family obligations in hordes. Yet although such pessimism has proved groundless, as Degler’s evidence shows, change in the family is still seen as a serious threat:

... with each advancement ... there were those of both sexes who warned that the integrity of the family, or society, or perhaps civilization itself was put at risk by the idea that women were individuals, with interests that might be different from men’s or the family’s. And although in every case in the past these prophecies of disaster have proved false, neither the prophecies nor the fears that generated them have died out. For the family and woman’s relationship to it are still undergoing change. No social changes seem so threatening as those that take place within the family because the family has been for so long the ultimate sanctuary of men and women.

In reaching out to establish their individuality, women have encountered that insurmountable roadblock already experienced by too many men: the unavailability of meaningful jobs. Our identity, our character, is very much a function of a reciprocal set of exchanges. The first involves a turning inward which is nurtured by the intimate loving and long-term commitment made possible by the family—between spouses, between parents and children and beyond in a myriad of possible networks. The second includes having some stake in getting the world’s work done through practicing the skills of some vocation or profession. These two areas of human experience serve a complementary relationship, balancing off our

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**In the Mail**

*The Oracle in the Heart* by Kathleen Raine; The Dolmen Press, George Allen and Unwin Ltd.; Mountrath, Portlaoise, Ireland. A collection of poems from 1974 to 1978, largely inspired by the elements of nature.

*Unions and the Public Interest: Collective Bargaining in the Government Sector* by Sandra Christensen; The Fraser Institute; Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. An examination of the growth of public-sector unions, how they compare to the private sector, and several practical suggestions for how to cope with the problems posed by public sector labor disputes.
natural demands for both private and public, cooperative and competitive, group and individual expression. Or as Degler makes the point:

The family . . . like the great traditional movements, is an anti-individualistic institution. In fact, its denial of individualism is the source of the family's strong attraction for many men and women today. For at least two centuries the best known alternative to the individualism, competitiveness, and egoism that infuse the modern, industrial and urban world has been the family . . . . In the face of an individualistic market economy, the family has seemed the epitome of true humanity and interrelatedness. . . . In short, aside from the evidence that Americans still consider the family a central institution in their lives, the very values for which it has stood over the years suggest that it will endure.

Yet the history of the sexes, rigidly defined by the doctrine of the two spheres with its idealized cult of true womanhood, has been one where these two means of expression have been segregated. As a result, men have been cut off from an equal sharing in the moral obligations of the family, and women have been cut off from an equal sharing in the power opportunities of the world.

This has not meant that women have not labored long and hard outside the home. For instance, of the 100,000 factory workers producing cotton cloth in 1822, 65,000 were women. But as Degler notes, most of the work for women outside the home was viewed in terms of moral uplift and social service in which the world was only a large extension of the home. Thus teaching and social work, or various support functions such as those provided by secretaries or nurses, remained the exclusive purview of women. Degler's comment sums up this distinct division of labor: "Women shaped their work around the family and men shaped family life around work." In this regard today's statistics showing vast numbers of women as members of the work force should not be misinterpreted. They do not mean that women are now "completing" themselves outside the confines of the family because, actually, most of this going to work results from the economic imperative of "making ends meet" rather than from being able to participate in the real opportunities afforded the individual by the job market—in essence, despite surface appearances, a woman's first role of wife and mother still predominates.

The issue then is clearly drawn, as the words of the Smith College Weekly that appeared in 1919 assert: "We cannot believe that it is fixed in the nature of things that a woman must choose between a home and her work, when a man may have both. There must be a way out and it is the problem of our generation to find the way." What we need to recognize is that this assignment of women to predetermined roles represents a tremendous waste of talent and energy and flies in the face of established liberal principles. True liberalism argues for a free economy (with its associated successes and failures) because, borrowing from the philosophy of empiricism, we know that we cannot determine in advance which ideas and products will prevail and which will not. And yet, fearful that an overwhelming number of women would reject childbearing and attendant family responsibilities, we have consigned more than half of our population in advance to a domestic role, not allowing their natural abilities to take them wherever the course of events might lead. In other words, for today's family to succeed both sexes must have equal access to the rights and privileges of each sphere.

For just as the separate-but-equal doctrine did not work in the area of race relations, neither will it solve the problems facing the contemporary family.

In this light the family's real enemy is not woman's emerging individualism; rather, the real enemy is the rise of commercial exploitation of this individualism and the values of lib culture. The family's traditional values of privacy and commitment, for instance, are daily assaulted by the all-pervasive video box. To sell us goods that we do not need, its programming and advertising disconfirm our true sensibilities with the antivalues of fragmentation and instant and self-gratification. Nor is it mere coincidence that just as the integrity and initiative of the individual are systematically being swept away by the burgeoning bureaucracy of the state, so are the prerogatives of the family withering away. As an example, the fact that not all parents do the right thing by their children does not mean that state agencies, especially the school, have to march in with all the answers. Yet, increasingly, parents are caving in to the usurpation of their responsibilities—"Someone else will do it." (Furthermore, in such circumstances all too many of the decent actions and intentions of parents go for naught.) Such a flight from responsibility, of course, ends up diminishing our freedom (which in economic terms, ironically, must be translated into our freedom not to buy). Thus today, as our desires are being flamed and our baser instincts tempted, the countervailing force of the family becomes even more crucial if we are to survive as a people.

Anyone wishing to explore further these issues affecting the family will be well served by Professor Henslin's edited collection of 42 articles, Marriage and Family in a Changing Society. Divided into four main sections ("Premarital Reality: Socialization and Behavior," "Learning Marital Reality: Adjustment, Conflict, and Transition," "Marital Maladjustment, Terminations, and Ther-
apy," and "The Future of Marriage and the Family"), each with its own crisp introduction, this college reader attempts to provide a spectrum of views on everything affecting the family—from the ambivalence of woman's passive role (the constraints placed on all of us by conventional stereotypes of normal masculinity and femininity) to the tragedy of divorce (we can change partners like we change laundry detergents) and single-parent families (up from 11% in 1970 to 19% in 1979). But, after all the analysis, the statistics and the rhetoric have been exhausted, we are still left with the cold fact that those who would attack our basic freedoms are those who benefit most by the breakup of the family's authority. The values and prerogatives of the family run counter to lib culture, and since opposition is not to be tolerated, the virtues of the family must be ridiculed out of existence.

Taking a firm stand against the tyranny of those pushing us toward "exposure" (especially in the area of the pseudosexual revolution) will not be easy. Yet were both spouses to begin to share more equally in morality and power, were the doctrine of the two spheres not abolished but creatively integrated into a unity of opposites, were dialogue, not schizoid detachment, to reign supreme once again, we might witness a new vitality flowing from the potential sources and resources of the family.

Paltry Secrets

Wilbur Crane Eveland: Ropes of Sand: America's Failure in the Middle East; W. W. Norton & Co.; New York.

by Michael W. Albin

On July 25, 1958, Wilbur Crane Eveland left Lebanon after his attempts to prop the government of Camille Chamoun had failed. He tells us that this was the last assignment of importance he ever had from the CIA. By 1961 he had quit the government to make his well-paid way in the oil and construction business. Ropes of Sand is a memoir of his years as a Middle East expert for the Department of Defense and the CIA. It is enlivened by gossip about such personalities as Kim Philby and laced with acerbic digressions on his favorite villains: his employers in the public and private sectors, the Dulles brothers, U.S. foreign policy over the past thirty years and Israel. Because his substantial income depended on American govern-

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out a great deal of material, important and not so important. An instance: he does not acknowledge that the 1958 landing in Beirut by the Army and Marines was one of the only successes the U.S. has ever enjoyed in the Middle East. Another instance: he refuses to mention that there were other American negotiators beside himself, Robert Murphy and Ambassador Robert McChesney who had their spoons in the Lebanese stew in the summer of 1958. As an expose, Ropes of Sand is a big disappointment.

As history it is even worse, although I suppose it is in the nature of political memoirs to be episodic. In this one, the only continuity between the stages of the author's career is his musings on life in the service of a benighted foreign strategy. He uses "his thoughts" to relate American strategy to his role in its execution: "The sight of an E1 A1 Constellation as I took off from Orly turned my thoughts to how our quest for an Arab-Israeli peace agreement had been subordinated to coping with diversionary crises." And, "A rough landing at Istanbul jogged my thoughts back to the mission..." His CIA experiences yielded excellent contacts that he could later use in business, but they are about as useful to the serious reader as a news dispatch from a hack stringer.

Eveland, like so many of us Americans associated with the Arabs, takes the Arab cause seriously and sees Israel as a source of disruption in the region. He is of that overrated-yet-feared breed, the foreign-service Arabist. His career as an expert, operative and coupsmaker began with a few months' training at the military-language school in Monterey, California in 1949. It is not clear whether he ever spoke a word of Arabic beyond marbaba (hello) for the rest of his life. After a posting to Baghdad as military attaché, he began his rapid advancement in the Pentagon bureaucracy. The generals treated his advice with respect because he kept a map of the Middle East under the glass on his