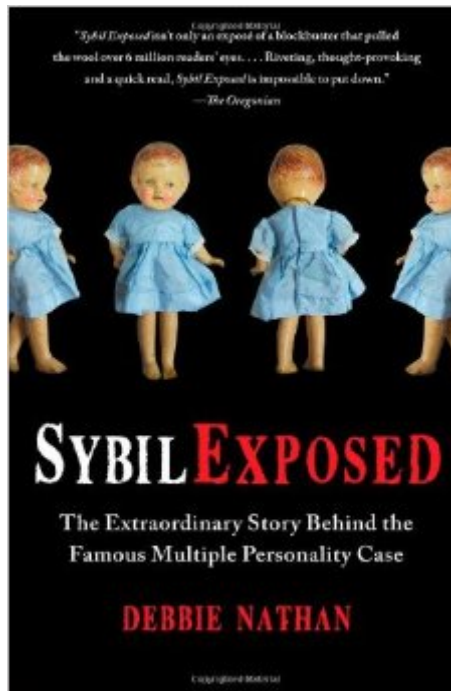


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# Sybil Exposed: The Extraordinary Story Behind The Famous Multiple Personality Case



## Synopsis

Now available in paperback, *Sybil Exposed* is the New York Times bestselling book that offers a new perspective on the smash hit book and film, *Sybil*, and on multiple personality disorder itself. *Sybil*: a name that resonates with legions of obsessed fans who followed the nonfiction blockbuster from 1973. The book rocketed multiple personality disorder into public consciousness and played a major role in having the diagnosis added to the psychiatric bible, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. But what do we really know about how *Sybil* came to be? In her news-breaking book *Sybil Exposed*, journalist Debbie Nathan gives proof that the allegedly true story outlined in the megabestseller was largely fabricated. The actual identity of *Sybil* (Shirley Mason) has been available for some years, as has the idea that the book might have been exaggerated. But Nathan reveals the trio of women behind the legend: the willing patient, her ambitious shrink, and the imaginative journalist who spun their story into bestseller gold. *Sybil Exposed* draws from an enormous trail of papers, records, photos, and tapes to unearth the lives and passions of these three women whose story exploded into an epic movement with consequences beyond their wildest dreams. Set across the twentieth century and rooted in a time when few professional roles were available to women, this is a story of corrosive sexism, bold but unchecked ambition, runaway greed, utter human vulnerability, duplicity and shared delusion, shaky theories of psychoanalysis exuberantly and drastically practiced, and how one modest young woman's life turned psychiatry on its head and radically changed the course of therapy—and our culture, as well.

## Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Free Press; 1 edition (June 12, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1439168288

ISBN-13: 978-1439168288

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.9 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.9 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars— See all reviews— (190 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #186,827 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in— Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Dissociative Disorders #94 in— Books > Medical Books > Psychology > History #95 in— Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Mental Illness

## Customer Reviews

I first read SYBIL in 1976 when I was told, the soon to be aired TV movies principle character, Sybil, was in fact, Shirley Mason, my grandmothers step daughter. Closer to home, Shirley\Sybil was my babysitter in the late 40's and early 50's, in Denver Co. The Masons had been friends of the family for years before my Grandma, Florence, married Walter Mason, Shirley's dad. I especially remember Shirley taking requests to draw cute pictures for my older brother and me. When my grandmother died in 1985, I retrieved about 200 letters destined for the trash, written by Shirley to my Grandma from 1954 - 1974. After reading the letters, lets just say there were discrepancies with the book, SYBIL. Subsequently several researchers contacted me, such as Peter Swales, expressing concern over the ethics and rampant diagnosis of dissociative identity disorder (DID). Debbie Nathan is not the first to come across this controversy, but she is the first to present it to the public, since Peter Swales and Mikkel Borch-Jacobson elected to publish it in a more academic forum in France. Debbie Nathan has been extremely accurate and careful with the documents I have entrusted to her. She doesn't claim to be, or have to be a psychotherapist to be a good investigative reporter. To me that's just what she is, and in some ways better equipped to deal with this controversy. SYBIL EXPOSED is not written by a wanna-be psychotherapist dispensing her biased opinions. This is a 282 page condensation of facts gleaned from documents, letters, case files, and interviews, most of which have only been open to the public, or otherwise available, for just the last 13 years. I am grateful for such a compilation.

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