**Video Title:** 1977 Sybil's Personalities

**Video URL:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJe0_pPA0x8>

**Run Time:** 14:45

**Source:** Lorimar Productions/YouTube

**Close Caption Available**: No

Summary of Video:

Dissociative identity disorder (DID), formerly known as multiple personality disorder, is one of the most perplexing of all mental disorders. A resurgence of interest in multiple personalities occurred gradually over the middle of the 20th century, likely stimulated by the dramatic cases described in books and movies, such as *Three Faces of Eve* (Thigpen & Cleckley, 1957), *Sybil* (Schreiber, 1973), and *The Minds of Billy Milligan* (Keyes, 1981). *Sybil*, long considered the classic case study of DID as a 1973 book and 1976 movie, was about a young woman who allegedly had 16 different personalities, with a significant history of child abuse at the hands of her mother. In each of these accounts, stories of childhood trauma—often in the form of horrific child abuse—played a central role in the author’s explanation of why multiple personalities subsequently emerged. However, this diagnosis remains controversial today. Even in Sybil, questions regarding the story’s accuracy, billed as a true account, have surfaced. In a 2011 book, *Sybil Exposed*, author Debbie Nathan argues that most of the story is based on a lie. This video showcases Sally Field’s acting ability as she portrays a variety of Sybil’s personalities or alters. Please answer the following questions:

1. How many alters are depicted in this film montage from *Sybil* (1976)?

2. What might life have been like for Sybil during that time when her alters came out seemingly uncontrollably?

3. At one point, Sybil’s therapist claims that “everything you care about survives in those parts that your mother was not able to reach.” What do you think she meant by that statement?

4. What are some key components of the treatment of DID?

5. What do you think about DID and its likely causes? Do therapeutic suggestion and techniques such as hypnosis contribute to the iatrogenesis (medical creation) of this disorder?