

### First Person Plural: My Life As a Multiple

By Cameron West



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...written by a man who suffers from Dissociative Identity Disorder...a candid and moving memoir.

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#### First Person Plural: My Life As a Multiple By Cameron West Bibliography

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#### **Editorial Review**

#### From Publishers Weekly

Unlike Flora Rheta Schreiber's Sybil, which presented a fairly dispassionate and professional view of multiple personality disorder, now called dissociative identity disorder (DID), West's account is an intimate memoir of the pain and frustration he encountered before and after being diagnosed. In his 30s, West began experiencing symptoms of the disorder, including the presence of inner voices, periods of blackout, memory loss and the wrenching feeling that something was deeply amiss. With the expertise of a therapist and the often heroic?and sometimes courageous?support of his wife, West eventually identified 24 separate personalities of both sexes and various ages. These "alters" told stories of horrific childhood sexual abuse by family members, which West had erased from his conscious mind. West compellingly recounts his journey toward sanity and his decision to pursue a Ph.D. in psychology in order to better understand his illness. Illustrations from his journal, in which all alters were allowed to write, and drawings done by his child personalities give weight and detail to West's account. Occasionally, in his attempt to get at the experience of DID, West waxes melodramatic and falls back on awkward metaphors. The latter, admittedly, might very well be part of the territory: how can language describe two people passing each other within the same body without awkwardness? Readers who must cope with DID or other debilitating mental illnesses, either in themselves or friends and family, will appreciate West's honesty and insight about the subject. Agent, Laurie Fox.

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#### From Library Journal

West, a psychologist, relates a deeply painful narrative of his battle with dissociative identity disorder (DID). He describes the horrors he endured, both mental and physical, as a child who was grossly abused by his mother, attributing the fragmentation of his adult life to these appalling experiences and telling how his long, happy marriage and family relationships were nearly ruined by the effects of DID. The book is not entirely dark; it provides hope and encouragement to DID victims and suggests how they can be helped through the support and understanding of others. It's also a practical guide for future clinicians, offering insight into a perplexing condition. West concludes with an epilog in which he lays out his theory that abused children can achieve a sense of wholeness through the understanding and acceptance of others and the reinvention of the self. Highly recommended for any public library.?Yan Toma, Queens Borough P.L., Flushing, NY Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

#### From Kirkus Reviews

A singular first-person account of the much-debated condition now known as dissociative identity disorder (DID)formerly termed multiple personality disorderby a man who professes to have 24 separate personalities, or ``alters." West was a successful businessman when he began hearing the voices that led him to a psychologist's office and eventually to the diagnosis of DID. Although he had no memory of childhood sexual abuse by his mother and grandmother, his alters did, and as his psychologist explains, their existence was his mind's way of coping with those experiences. Introductory thumbnail sketches of his 24 alters help the reader to keep straight this extensive cast of characters. Most memorable are Clay, an eight-year-old whose untimely appearances put a damper on Wests' lovemaking, and Switch, another eight-year-old, whose knife attacks on West send him repeatedly to the emergency room. Now a would-be novelist, West exercises his fledgling narrative skills here, not only relating his own strange tale briskly, but adopting an all-seeing eye for scenes where he was not present, e.g., his wife at a DID support meeting or with an admirer whose attentions threaten their marriage. While West's story is primarily about his bizarre condition and how it changed his life (he sold his Massachusetts home and business and moved to California, earned a Ph.D. in

psychology in order to better understand DID, spent time in psychiatric hospitals, and gradually came to accept as true the sexual abuse memories of his alters), it is also the story of a married couple dealing with one partner's mental breakdown and of how they handled the subject with their young son. The volume is illustrated throughout with pages from West's journal showing his alters' childish scrawls and drawings. DID skeptics may view this as an ingenious bit of fantasy; for those who found Sybil or The Three Faces of Eve believable and engrossing, this account will be even more so. -- *Copyright* ©1999, *Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved*.

#### **Users Review**

#### From reader reviews:

#### James Stewart:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to accomplish! A lot of people spent their spare time with their family, or their particular friends. Usually they carrying out activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic inside park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own personal free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book might be option to fill your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of book that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the reserve untitled First Person Plural: My Life As a Multiple can be very good book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

#### **Rachel Robbins:**

Your reading sixth sense will not betray you actually, why because this First Person Plural: My Life As a Multiple guide written by well-known writer we are excited for well how to make book that can be understand by anyone who have read the book. Written inside good manner for you, still dripping wet every ideas and composing skill only for eliminate your current hunger then you still doubt First Person Plural: My Life As a Multiple as good book not merely by the cover but also by the content. This is one e-book that can break don't judge book by its deal with, so do you still needing one more sixth sense to pick this specific!? Oh come on your examining sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to another sixth sense.

#### Larry Devries:

Is it anyone who having spare time and then spend it whole day simply by watching television programs or just resting on the bed? Do you need something new? This First Person Plural: My Life As a Multiple can be the reply, oh how comes? It's a book you know. You are consequently out of date, spending your extra time by reading in this completely new era is common not a geek activity. So what these guides have than the others?

#### **Thomas Smith:**

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