



# Sylvia, the Wood Nymph

## Team

Timothy D. Brewerton, M.D.  
White Elephant Enterprises  
Executive Producers

Production Company  
White Elephant Enterprises  
Robyn Hussa Farrell &  
Tim Farrell, Co-Directors  
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Graciously supported by:  
Wendy Oliver-Pyatt, MD

The Film Collaborative

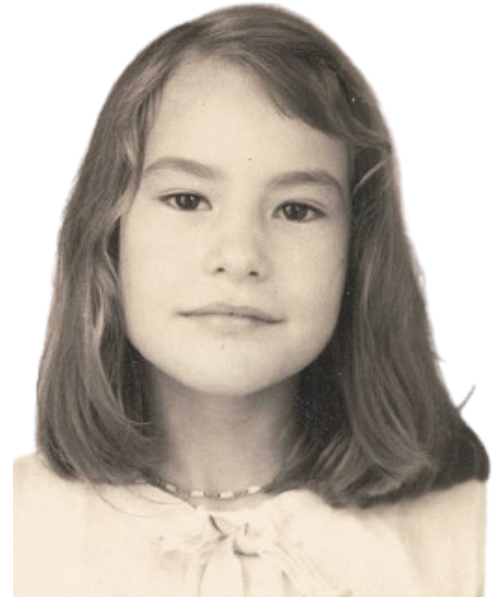


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# Sylvia, the Wood Nymph

## Sylvia's Story

Sylvia, the Wood Nymph is the true story of a child born into a highly dysfunctional family in rural Georgia. From the time she was an infant, Sylvia suffered severe sexual abuse and neglect from her father, brother, uncle, aunt, and mother. She was not allowed inside the family home. She was left to fend for herself in the woods, naked and living off scraps of food left in a dog bowl on the family's front porch. It was only when railroad workers spotted her wandering naked through the woods that she was saved from her situation and moved into foster care until the age of 12.



Sylvia at age 9



This long pattern of assault and neglect left Sylvia with a fractured sense of self and incompletely formed identity. Over time, she developed seven distinct personalities to help her cope with her past and dissociate from her painful memories and experiences. Despite the many obstacles she faced, Sylvia was able to function in the world, unaware of the many layers that formed her complex myriad of altered identities.

## Enter Dr. Timothy Brewerton

In 1988, when Sylvia was 47 years old, a profound meeting took place in the offices of psychiatrist Timothy Brewerton of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC). The complex web of Sylvia's mental state was revealed. Sylvia was initially looking for respite from a long struggle with depression, binge eating, and medical issues. Soon, both she and Dr. Brewerton would learn much more about the battle her unconscious mind had been fighting to keep her painful memories in check as they forged forward into her dissociative identity disorder (DID).

Through several years of therapy, Dr. Brewerton was able to help Sylvia discover all the collective parts of her identity and integrate them together as one. She experienced full recovery. Finally, Sylvia was able to fall in love, find friendship, connectivity, new purpose and meaning, and lead a full life.



# The Documentary

The film contains rarely seen footage of other personalities, alters or ego states in Sylvia's therapy sessions. Through video testimony taken from her own writings and therapy transcripts, viewers will experience an intimate and personal look at Sylvia's journey toward wholeness through the eyes of a compassionate psychiatrist, her close friends, and her husband. In addition, comments from several of the leading clinical researchers in the field outline the evolution of our understanding of this disorder and the devastating effects of early childhood maltreatment.

## In Sylvia's Words

*"I have been thinking a lot about my own reasons for publishing our experience. Over these years, I have remembered things I had long forgotten, had really never knew that had happened to me. Today, with all your help-- I am a real person. I am not living as a fractured entity that I invented my own self-- out of struggling to stay alive through the shame of being me. I see myself as being my own hero. And it was a really brave, long, hard struggle! I want to give back."*

~ April 24, 2013 email from Sylvia to Dr. Brewerton

## Why "Wood Nymph"?

The etymology of the name "Sylvia" originates from the Latin word for forest Silva and its meaning is Spirit of the Wood. The mythological god of the forest was associated with the figure of Silvanus.

Because Sylvia spent a considerable amount of time living in the woods, she always referred to herself as a Wood Nymph. Our team extends the term further to represent anyone who has struggled from child abuse.

## DID Course

For many years, Dr. Brewerton has taught mental health professionals about the topic of DID and eating disorders using tapes and transcripts from his time treating Sylvia. A five-hour course based on his work and the scientific literature is available for Continuing Education (CE) credits for mental health practitioners. Please contact Robyn Hussa Farrell at [rfarrell@sharpenminds.com](mailto:rfarrell@sharpenminds.com) or scan the QR code for further information about the course.



Sylvia as an infant





# Help Tell Sylvia's Story

People who suffer dissociative identity disorder (DID) can and do recover. You can help. With your support, we will bring hope and healing to those who have endured severe childhood trauma. Your involvement will help ensure Sylvia's story is told.

I/We intend to support Sylvia, the Wood Nymph

## Donor Information

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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☐ I/We wish to contribute anonymously.



Sylvia at age 6

## Method of Payment

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### Online

The Film Collaborative (TFC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing programs and services for independent filmmakers. TFC is the first nonprofit focused on distribution-education, educating filmmakers about and helping filmmakers with all aspects of distribution without taking rights. TFC is serving as fiscal sponsor for Sylvia, the Wood Nymph. TFC's federal tax ID number is 32-0295081. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.



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# Our Team

**Executive Producer: Timothy D. Brewerton, MD, DLFAPA, FAED, DFAACAP, CEDS-S** is an experienced clinician, researcher, teacher, mentor, writer, editor, advocate and consultant in the eating disorder and trauma fields. He is currently Affiliate Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, where he is in private practice. He has board certifications in general, child-adolescent, and forensic psychiatry, and addiction medicine. He is: Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association; Distinguished Fellow of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; Founding Fellow and former Board Member of the Academy of Eating Disorders (AED); Founding Fellow and former president of the Eating Disorders Research Society; former president of the SC Psychiatric Association; author of >185 articles/book chapters; editor of 2 texts. He has given >400 presentations nationally and internationally and has reviewed for >60 scientific journals. He has known Sylvia since 1988, her husband Don since 1990 and is developing an educational series for mental health professionals, a narrative film, and a book about their shared journey and Sylvia's legacy.

**Co-Directors / Executive Producers: Robyn Husa Farrell and Tim Farrell** are a husband and wife team who have won awards as NYC theatre and film producers, television news producer, and community journalists. Tim and Robyn each share >25 years of work in entertainment and run White Elephant Enterprises, a full-service production company. They co-Directed the critically-acclaimed "Highland Video Village" public art installation, funded through a \$1M grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Developed over the course of 1.5 years working directly with residents of a challenged community to teach documentary storytelling and community journalism techniques, the results of "Video Village" directly led to residents taking political action in South Carolina.

As Senior Political Producer for NY1 News, Tim Farrell oversaw production of NYC Inside City Hall -- a live, nightly show covering city, state, and national politics. He served as Field Producer for large-scale events, including Democratic and GOP conventions, Nelson Mandela funeral, and as a member of Hillary Clinton's press corps in 2008. For his expertise in political storytelling, Tim was recognized with 2015 and 2010 Press Club Awards.

As producer and director of the documentary, *The Walking Hospital*, Tim had the opportunity to travel to remote regions of Tibet to tell the story of Chinese medicine specialists serving the people of Nepal. *The Walking Hospital: Road to Lomanthang* and *The Walking Hospital: Kathmandu* were exhibited at the Rubin Museum of Art in NYC in 2009 and as part of the Nursing Nepal installation in 2011. *The Walking Hospital: Lomanthang* was featured at the 2012 Napa Valley Film Festival.

Tim's political background marries well with Robyn Husa Farrell's public health work and expertise as an award-winning producer. Husa co-founded the award-winning Transport Group Theatre Company in NYC, now in its 23rd year, and received the 2007 Drama Desk award for *breadth of vision and challenging productions*. Husa founded Mental Fitness a groundbreaking nonprofit that works to educate about mental health literacy in K16 schools across the country. She worked with hundreds of researchers to direct award-winning theatre and film programs that have been featured nationally and used as ongoing training tools in academic and health institutions. Husa's research led her and Farrell to create Sharpen, a digital mental health service that delivers peer stories of strength and resilience to youth and young adults. For Sharpen, the pair has created over 650 documentary film-style educational modules and have won awards for improving resilience through trauma-informed technology.

