

# Mrs. Doubtfire (1993)



**Directed by**

Chris Columbus

**Writing credits)**

Anne Fine (novel) Randi Mayem Singer

**Runtime:** 125 min **Country:** USA

**Genre:** Comedy / Drama

**User Rating:** ★★★★★★★☆☆☆ **6.4/10** (13,218 votes) [Vote Here](#)

Daniel Hillard (Robin Williams) is a struggling father who loses his job in which he does "voices" for a cartoon. When he throws a surprise birthday party for his son, Chris, everything takes a turn for the worst. Daniel's wife, Miranda (Sally Field), has had enough of Daniel and wants a divorce. When the divorce hearings arrive, Daniel is denied custody of the children, but is allowed visitations. Seeing his children once a week isn't enough, so Daniel pretends to be Mrs. Euphegenia Doubtfire, an old Scottish nanny who is hired as the Hillard's housekeeper.

Free to be the "woman" he never knew he could be, the disguised Daniel creates a whole new life with his family.

Discussion:

1. Which scene did you like best?
2. Do you think Robin Williams made a convincing woman? Why or why not? How does "Daniel" change throughout the film?
3. Although it is a comedy, the film looks at some serious issues - what happens to families after divorce and traditional male/female roles.

In what ways does the film offer solutions to these problems?



## About Anne Fine, author of the novel "Madame Doubtfire"

Anne Fine was born in Leicester, one of five girls. After graduating from Warwick University, where she read Politics and History, she began her career as a teacher. Married in 1968, Anne spent several years living in the USA, Canada and Scotland with her husband and two daughters. She now lives in County Durham. She has won many awards including: The Guardian Children's Fiction Award, the Carnegie Medal and The Children's Category of the Whitbread Award. She has also worked as Information Officer for Oxfam, where she first became interested in environmental issues.

ANNE FINE HAS enjoyed huge success writing books for both adults and children. She has also picked up innumerable prizes including the Whitbread Children's Book of the Year Award, the Guardian Children's Fiction award, the Carnegie Medal and a Smarties Prize. Her writing has been adapted for both film and TV. *Madame Doubtfire* has become a major feature film, *Mrs Doubtfire*, starring Robin Williams.

How would you describe yourself?

I'm cheerful. I'm somewhat untidy. I bite my nails quite horribly, sometimes until they bleed. I'm good at concentrating - or perhaps it would be fairer to say that I know when I am concentrating and I know when I'm not. So, if I'm not, I give up and do something else for a while. I hate my time being wasted (Though I don't mind being lazy with myself).

What kind of background do you come from?

I have 4 sisters and we all grew up in a rather rickety old house my parents had bought when big, cold houses were cheap. It had a lovely walled garden. My parents were very concerned that all of us had a good education. (They'd neither of them been nearly so lucky with their own parents in this regard). So I had lots of support, and, ideal for a writer-to-be, I had everyone's library tickets, and a bedroom of my own. Quiet for reading.

What kind of person were you at school?

I think I was rather untidy in primary school. I can remember being quite terrified of at least two teachers. I had much more confidence by secondary school. I loved English and languages, I struggled with maths. I hated being bored - absolutely hated it. (Still do). I also hated working in groups or in pairs. I'm a loner work wise. Otherwise I think I was friendly enough. And I was bossy and gossipy. I have to admit I loved school.

What are the best and worst things about writing?

The loveliest thing is that you can lie in bed reading in the mornings, and I call it work because, just now and then, you'll read something that gives you a good idea for a book. The worst thing is that, from the moment you start a book, it weighs on your mind - it hovers over you, making you tense - 'til it's satisfactorily written - a year later

Where are your favourite places?

I love graveyards, especially overgrown ones. They're brilliant for thinking. I like riverside walks since I'm too lazy to enjoy walking uphill. I like woods. I love cool, airy Italian restaurants. I love California. My favourite place of all is my own warm bed.

If you're bored, tired or fed up, what do you do to cheer yourself up?

Have a bath and read in it.

Take the dog out.

Go to the pictures. (I do that a lot)

Go to the library.

Do something I never wanted to do anyway, so might as well get done while I'm bored, tired and fed up.