

# **Human Mind Through Film - Dr. J. Mior**

## **i am sam**

- I Am Sam (stylized i am sam) is a 2001 American drama film written and directed by Jessie Nelson, and starring Sean Penn as a father with a developmental disability, Dakota Fanning as his inquisitive seven-year-old daughter, and Michelle Pfeiffer as his lawyer.
- The movie's title is derived from the opening lines "I am Sam / Sam I am" of the book Green Eggs and Ham, which is read in the movie.
- Sam Dawson, a man with a developmental disability, is the single father of Lucy (Dakota Fanning), following their abandonment by her mother, who is revealed to be a homeless woman who "just needed a place to sleep".
- Despite his limitations, Sam is well-adjusted and has a supportive group of friends with developmental disabilities, as well as a kind, agoraphobic neighbour Annie (Dianne Wiest) who takes care of Lucy when Sam cannot.
- Though Sam provides a loving and caring environment for precocious Lucy, she soon surpasses his mental ability. Other children tease her for having a "retard" as a father, and she becomes too embarrassed to accept that she is more intellectually advanced than Sam.
- At a Surprise birthday party for Lucy, the father of one of Lucy's friends accuses Sam of having "assaulted" his son. Consequently a social worker arranges to have Lucy taken away and a custody case is arranged.
- Sam approaches a high-powered lawyer (Rita Harrison) who has a reputation of having a brusque manner, a difficult personal life and is seen as cold and unfeeling. In an attempt to prove that his is not heartless, Rita takes the case "pro bono".
- As they work together to secure Sam's parental rights, Sam unwittingly helps Rita with her family problems, including encouraging her to leave her philandering husband and repairing her fractious relationship with her son.
- At the trial, Sam breaks down after opposing counsel convinces him that he is not capable of being a father. After the trial, Lucy resides in a foster home with Randy Carpenter, but tries to convince Sam to help her run away, and continually escapes in the middle of the night to go to Sam's apartment.
- Ultimately, the foster family who planned to adopt Lucy decide to return her to Sam, with an arrangement that Randy will help him raise her.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I\\_Am\\_Sam#Plot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Am_Sam#Plot)