



**Sister Act** Nora Ephron (right) and her sister Delia in a family photo.

# Finding Nora

A love note on the occasion of *Everything Is Copy*, an HBO documentary about the iconic writer and filmmaker who left little to the imagination  
*Written by Frances Dodds*

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**NORA EPHRON ONCE WROTE**, “I can make a case that I regret nothing. After all, most of my mistakes turned out to be things I survived, or turned into funny stories, or, on occasion, even made money from.”

This proved true for the entirety of her storied career, from her reportage and critically acclaimed essays to her screenplays and even her novel, *Heartburn*—about the demolition of her marriage to Carl Bernstein—because as Mike Nichols, who directed a film adaptation of the book, said, “In writing it funny, she won.”

Ephron observed the tenuous, electric and baffling matter of romance with a gimlet eye, creating crown jewels of romantic comedy with the likes of *When Harry Met Sally*, *Sleepless in Seattle* and *You’ve Got Mail*. She excavated the unexpectedly warming stuff of life: honestly nice boyfriends with too many allergies, turtlenecks and bunchy wool socks; egg salad; truths about fake orgasms and sex fantasies of faceless men; the wry skepticism of youth softened by age; the charms of Meg Ryan with a cold. We lost much in losing her in 2012, but Ephron left us with a mantra that frames today’s tears in the frozen-food aisle as tomorrow’s masterpiece: “Everything is copy.” ■

**Ephron loved the topic of coupling and uncoupling; she famously said, “Never marry a man you wouldn’t want to be divorced from.”**