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Dixie Sedgwick, Part Two

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**Dixie Sedgwick, Part Two**

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By Petrea Burchard (04-11-2007) [Click for Bio](#)



It's time to let go and laugh at ourselves as Petrea takes us on a journey through her career that may seem only too familiar to the rest of us.

Not particularly intrigued by roles available to her, Dixie Sedgwick created the role she wanted. Then she wrote the play, and made it into a short film. ([Click here to read Part One of our interview.](#))

Dixie's film, *Bonnie and Clyde - End of the Line*, shines an unusual light on the outlaws, delving into their psychology and the poverty of their times. Dixie gives tough-girl Bonnie an ethereal quality, Dominic Comperatore (as Clyde) matches her passion, and cinematographer Massimiliano Trevis makes the whole thing glow.

In Part Two, Dixie talks about what it takes to make your film a reality. Some of the points she makes are worth looking at two or three or ten times. It's tempting to put them in bold or to underline. But I'll let Dixie speak to you, and I think her points will come through on their own.

What was the budget for *Bonnie and Clyde - End of the Line*?

The film is 16½ minutes. We shot it for under \$20,000.00. The final budget was \$25,000.00, which includes post-production, publicity, festivals, travel, digi-beta and HD transfers, copies, website, and edited trailer.

It seems impossible to find money to make a movie. How did you get investors?

If you really believe in what you're doing, put your money where your mouth is. I did that with the play. Since the production was successful with awards and critics, we used that as ammunition with investors when the time came to take the show to New York.

The investor, first of all, needs to like you, needs to trust you. You must communicate your ideas effectively, build relationships with people and be yourself, then ask for the money and shut up. If he likes you, he'll listen more, if he likes your story and you have the proper legal paperwork (they'll look for that, it tells them whether you're for real or not) then he may say yes. He'll want to think it over or talk to his wife, or he may get

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Box Office (04/08)

1. *Blades of Glory*
  2. *Meet the Robinsons*
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the check book out right then and there.

Either way, keep moving and you'll find your investor team. Initially I talked with anyone who had the money and an interest in the subject. If there was interest, I sent a packet which included The Offering, Budget, Reviews, Awards, Pictures, and the Potential Profit Profile. (The entertainment industry is considered high risk and there's no guarantee they'll get a return or profit. There are tax provisions, so that's a benefit: even if they don't make a profit, they'll have the write-off.)

Then follow up, find out who's in, who's out. Be prepared, know what you're talking about. If you don't know, say, I DON'T KNOW, then find out and get back to them.

Never promise anything. It's out of your control whether your film makes money. Short films rarely make money and the short film isn't the goal; it's a calling card for the feature. The potential money lies in the feature film.

Look the part, The Producer! Don't flirt or manipulate, in the end you'll lose if you go that route. How you see yourself is how others see you. Believe in yourself and the work, it will sell itself if it's good enough.

You must be passionate about your project, be bold and believe in the work (that means you). I have no problem asking for money if it's something I believe in.

Lastly I pray! I ask God for divine guidance every day.

What have you learned about the filmmaking process?

Work with the best you can get in every category. We had a small budget, we shot on film, and we had to get all the shots in two days. We were moving at a rapid pace and that's why it's so important to have experienced people on your team. Sometimes I'd get one, maybe two takes, then we'd move on. If it felt right to me as an actress and the director liked the performance, the boom operator didn't hear planes and the DP felt the composition was fine, then we kept going. If you have a crew or cast that's unprepared and doesn't work well under high stress situations, you've got problems. Preparation and flexibility are key. Everything must be ready the day of shooting, there's no time for screwing around.

The filmmaking process is all-consuming. You must do whatever it takes to get the job done right. When something goes wrong, deal with it immediately. Don't wait, because something else will come along and distract you from the first issue that should have been dealt with. It's like waves hitting the beach, one after another, they keep coming. Don't be distracted, and delegate wherever possible.

Each phase requires energy and focus: from writing the script, to forming the LLC, to negotiating with investors, all the pre-production, shooting (and you thought you were done), film to video transfers, editing, sound design and score and, lastly, the final cut.

All people are to be respected regardless of where they stand on the ladder. I don't believe we're supposed to be nice to everyone because someday they might be somebody, that's crap. Why not just be nice to people because they're people?

There may come a time when your support system breaks down, when all around have lost interest and enthusiasm. That's why it's so important that you know deep within your guts that this is the thing you're supposed to be doing. It's not that people are against you, it's that you have to prove yourself, and you do that by creating a track record with the piece.

In the end, you are responsible for the final product, so maintain your

vision and keep everyone motivated and on track. You must be willing to voice your opinion and prepare for debate. The editing room can be full of tension because the director, producers and editor all have their own ideas about how to shape the film. There were some very tense moments, but we worked through our differences. That's key. We all had the same goal: to make the best film possible.

What happens next for you?

The short film will enter festival/markets where I'll be pitching the feature with screenplay in hand. I'm in the midst of writing another draft, and that is consuming.

Any more advice for other actor/writer/producers?

Work with what's in your hands now--what interests you, not what's hot. You have to LOVE the subject matter, because that's what will keep you motivated. Know what you like and what you don't.

If you aren't willing to sacrifice everything (other than family) for your film, then stop and re-evaluate your motives, and why you were interested in the subject in the first place. Starting out, I had no ambitions of being a producer or writer, it was a progression.

Above all, have fun with the process and enjoy the people you get to work with. It's the journey, not the destination.

Check out Dixie Sedgwick and her film at:  
[www.bonnieandclydeendoftheline.com](http://www.bonnieandclydeendoftheline.com)

Bonnie and Clyde, End of the Line will be screened, and Dixie Sedgwick will give a lecture and Q&A, on May 26th at the Bonnie and Clyde Festival in Gibsland, Louisiana.

If you have questions for Dixie or you'd like to be notified of future screenings of Bonnie and Clyde - End of the Line, e-mail her at [dixie@bonnieandclydeendoftheline.com](mailto:dixie@bonnieandclydeendoftheline.com)

You can email Petrea at [petrea@nowcasting.com](mailto:petrea@nowcasting.com)

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