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# **I Liked It, Didn't Love It: Screenplay Development From The Inside Out**



## Synopsis

The most commonly used rejection line spewed by studio executive honchos when passing on a script is, "I liked it, didn't love it." What happens to your screenplay or novel when it leaves your hands and is submitted to a studio or production company? What does "in development" really mean? Rona Edwards and Monika Skerbelis answer those questions and more in this newly revised, greatly expanded 3rd edition of their critically acclaimed book, long considered the quintessential bible on development. A required textbook at universities worldwide for writing, producing, and development courses, the book sheds light on the inner workings of the feature film and TV development process, who all the players are, and how they fit together as content creators at film studios, TV networks, agencies, and production companies. They tackle how to find new ideas, what it takes to be a development executive or a story analyst, tips on pitching, and how television and the Internet are changing and evolving, creating greater opportunities for storytellers. Are you ready for Hollywood? Get the answers from industry Pros, Rona Edwards and Monika Skerbelis. Through personal experiences and examples they'll teach you what it takes to make it in Hollywood as a development executive, producer, writer or director. Chapters also include exercises that will help readers find new ideas and developing them as well as offer tips on pitching your projects, a comprehensive resource chapter and much, much more.

## Book Information

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The most commonly used rejection line spewed by studio executive honchos when they do not buy

a script is, "I liked it, didn't love it." What happens to your screenplay or novel when it leaves your hands and is submitted to a studio or production company? What happens to it after it's optioned or sold? What does "in development" really mean? Rona Edwards and Monika Skerbelis will shed light on all those questions for both those who are new to the business, and those already journeying through the "storied" halls at a film studio, television network, or production company. Edwards and Skerbelis will tackle how to find new ideas, what it takes to be a development executive or a story analyst, how to work with producers and writers, and tips for pitching. They present exercises created to assist the reader in developing their writing skills. Monika Skerbelis and Rona Edwards have lived the life of a studio and development executive, having developed and sold screenplays for the past 15 years. They have taught feature film development classes at UCLA for the past six years.. Both authors live in Los Angeles. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

RONA EDWARDS worked as Vice President of Creative Affairs for Emmy-winner John Larroquette (Night Court), Academy-Award Winner Michael Phillips (Close Encounters Of The Third Kind) and Emmy-winner Fern Field (Monk) before she becoming an independent producer. Her producing credits include: One Special Victory (NBC) starring Larroquette, The Companion (USA/SCI FI CHANNEL) directed by Gary Fleder, I Know What You Did (ABC), Out Of Sync (VH1), & Der Morder Meiner Mutter (Sat.1/Studio Hamburg) for German television. She set up a number of feature films including Matchmakers at Warner Bros. & produced the movie, Blind Trust for Lifetime. In addition, she produced two movies for Lifetime based upon a series of books she optioned by Ellen Byerrum entitled Killer Hair and Hostile Makeover (Crime of Fashion mysteries). Edwards has had projects made or in development with many of the major networks & studios. She is an accomplished journalist, having published numerous articles in both print & on the net for the past 15 years covering a wide range of subject matter from entertainment & film to human interest & travel. As an Assistant Professor at Chapman University's Singapore campus teaching a wide variety of subjects in Creative Producing for four years, she currently teaches at Chapman in Orange, CA. With Monika Skerbelis, she co-founded ESE FILM WORKSHOPS ONLINE, global online courses, providing professional instruction without leaving your home and together they wrote "I Liked It, Didn't Love It: Screenplay Development from the Inside Out" and "The Complete Filmmakers Guide to Film Festivals: Your All Access Pass to Launching your Film on the Festival Circuit." MONIKA SKERBELIS is a former Vice President of Creative and Executive Story Editor for Universal Pictures's story department. Prior to

Universal, she was Story Editor for 20th Century Fox & began her career as an assistant in the Story Department for Paramount Pictures. She is a programming director for The American Pavilion Emerging Filmmaker Showcase at the Cannes Film Festival & was the artistic & programming director for the Big Bear Lake International Film Festival for 14 years. Skerbelis teaches feature film development at UCLA Extension, Riverside City College, and also taught Basic Screenwriting at Chapman University. A producer with ES Entertainment, she Associate Produced on "Killer Hair" & "Hostile Makeover" for Lifetime Television. Both authors are members of the Producers Guild of America.

As a screenwriting and film instructor and a former development executive, *I Liked It, I Didn't Love It* has been required reading for my students for the last few years. It succinctly breaks down the development process for film and television, and demystifies the role of the studio executive. For my screenwriting students, I use this book as part of my "Next Steps" lecture to help them understand the path a script travels when it gets optioned or sold. I also use it to teach students interested in creative development or producing to give an overview of the roles of the key players and the routes projects travel on the road to production and distribution. It is the best road map of the business I know of. Anyone starting out as an intern or assistant in Hollywood must read this book.

This book is, beyond a doubt, one of the most comprehensive and revealing books on the business of film that has ever been written. If you must "know thy enemy" in order to triumph, then you need to purchase, read, and re-read this book. The bookshelves and internet are overflowing with "How-To's" instructing the aspiring writer on how to conceive, write, and perfect their screenplay, but not many tell you what will happen to it once it is submitted and considered. This book does just that. Thank you to Ms. Edwards and Ms. Skerbelis for lifting the veil on a subject that has stayed so mysterious for far too long.

I could be wrong, but I think this may be one of the only books that focuses on development. Well written. The authors are extremely knowledgeable. I recommend this book to all of my screenwriting students.

As a writer who has yet to sell a script, I've been told snippets of the information in this book by my agent and manager, but I never had the whole picture of what happens when my script leaves my hands. It was both sobering and comforting to get what sounds like a very accurate description. I

also see now what I did--both right and wrong--the time a script of mine, a romantic comedy, went out and didn't sell but got me meetings. There is a useful diagram of the Hollywood food chain, descriptions of the different players and what makes each tick, and on a bonus creative note, a seemingly simplistic but ultimately quite useful template for finding and fleshing out new story ideas. I have a lot of books about screenwriting, but none explains the business as well as this one. It was also an entertaining read. Thanks Rona! Lisa Rothstein[...]

Perfect in this issue (I believe the only one about it). That's the abc of development. Clear, methodic and deep. I strongly recommend it. A clarify tool for those serious on that subject.

For anyone interested in story development and story analysis -- this is a good book with valuable info.

This book is marvelous in that it clearly shows new writers what will happen to their material once it is ready for Hollywood. There's movie history and present day information. Edwards & Skerbelis really know their stuff and share it with you in a very readable and understandable way. All screenwriters need to have this knowledge to work in the Hollywood system. Finding out how the "development" of your screenplay will happen is fascinating and eye-opening. This book belongs in your arsenal! Michele Wallerstein, Author, screenplay & novel consultant  
*Mind Your Business: A Hollywood Literary Agent's Guide To Your Writing Career*

In Hollywood, tourists buy maps to the homes of the stars. But if you really want to know the lay of the land -- how things work and where the power lives -- buy this book, instead! The authors know what they're talking about, and even better: they write about it so clearly that \*you\* know what they're talking about. Edwards and Skerbelis map the trails and terrors of the Hollywood jungle and cover every step -- from finding an idea, to the red carpet premiere. If you have any interest in this subject at all -- *How Movies Get Made* -- this is the one best resource to buy.

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