

Nyad vs. Nyad

Nyad on Film

1977

Nyad's first film: **Courage to Succeed**

[from [Other Shores](#), 1978, p. 121]:

“August 5, 1976. I was wedged into one of British Airway’s [sic] economy seats happily accompanied by my two closest friends, who were to act as my trainers, and by **an American film crew of seven. We were off to make, assist, and record history.** I was attempting to become the first woman to complete the double crossing of the English Channel.”

[Courage to Succeed](#) was released in 1977. It documents two of Nyad’s three English Channel failures. Nyad’s commentary in [Other Shores](#) suggests that the producers, Saxton Communications Group, likely lost a bundle on the project.

Worldcat only shows four copies. I had to borrow a 16mm version from Washington State University. Some clips:

*[Psychic Prep](#) • [Attempt #1](#) • [Attempt #2](#)
[English Channel Debrief](#) • [Compilation: Watch For Nyad!](#)*

NOTE: A year after Nyad’s attempt, Cynthia Nicholas [swam both ways across the channel](#). Not only did she become the first woman to do it, but she also smashed Jon Erikson’s record by over 10 hours. Nyad never returned for another go at the EC.

Also note that Nyad states she gets “15 minutes only” at the turnaround. In fact, English Channel rules allow for no more than 10. Nyad notes this multiple times in [Other Shores](#). “All official double crossings in marathon swimming,” she writes while detailing her Lake Ontario two-way attempt, “allow no more than ten minutes on the other shore.”

1978, July

Kind of like Rocky

“I’ve written a screenplay based on my life,” she says. “It’s kind of like Rocky. And the happy ending is the Cuba swim.”

Barry Bearak, “[The Selling of Diana Nyad](#),” Miami Herald

1978, August

I want the American public to recognize me

“I’m not saying I have to make two hundred thousand dollars when I reach the other shore. But this swim has to translate into something else for me. I want the American public to recognize me. I want to open a women’s fitness center in Manhattan. **I’ve written a screenplay.** I could make films. I could stop swimming. It has to be that for me.”

Jane Shapiro, “[Diana Nyad: The Obsession of the Long Distance Swimmer](#),” Ms. Magazine

2013

Tim's astounding movie

"Tim has made an astounding film. It's creative. It's dramatic. There is no sports cliché moment in it, not one... And Tim also was here yesterday shooting so that he can massage that ending that I wanted. The film was already beautiful. It's poetic, it's deep, it's really my life. What it is is my life...." (view [clip on YouTube](#))

See also [Nyad speaking last month on the upcoming biopic](#): "We've seen the movie. It's powerful. It's beautiful. And it really captures — and, and, I mean, get this Molly, the movie is called *Nyad*." She never tells us what it captures.

Timothy Wheeler's The Other Shore had its world premiere at SXSW in March 2013. The massaged version became available online [on September 26](#), a little over three weeks after Nyad's "success." Showtime began airing that November.

2015

Tim's not-so-astounding movie

[Host asks if Nyad was happy with *The Other Shore*]

"As a full disclosure, Timothy Wheeler is my nephew is my personal nephew. And he's a very talented filmmaker. So, is that the exact story I would have told? No, but it's his film. And as soon as I gave him permission to make the film — and there were frankly several filmmakers who wanted to make the film — I was so proud of what he created, and I was so astonished at the storyline and what he's his vision."

[KOED, 26 Oct 2015](#), 36 seconds into [this clip](#).

2015

Robert Specland's *Nyad* makes [The Black List](#)

2015

Running in the other direction

"I've been approached now for the feature film, and there are a number of A-list Hollywood people — I, [I'm] just running in the other direction.

[Nyad can't allow herself to reveal how desperate she is for a film that will prove her epicness once and for all, both to her and to the public. But mainly to her — Ed.]

"....But I'm probably gonna get a chance to write the adaptation for that film. But it's gonna be a collaboration. Whole bunch of people are gonna come in and say, "no, no, no, no—we need to have this theme and this scene and whatnot...."

HOST: "Who would you want to play you in a feature film?"

NYAD: "Well, you know, if Sandra Bullock put her name in the mix, how could I complain about that? She'd have to age up to play me. A lot of people have suggested Charlize Theron: tough, and actually looks more like a swimmer than I do. She's huge, with big, broad shoulders. And fierce."

[KOED, 26 Oct 2015](#), clip [here](#)

2015, Nov

Writing the screenplay can't be that hard, can it?

“Nyad has been approached by Hollywood producers who want to put her story to film — and she wants to write the screenplay. ‘I can’t see myself sitting with a writer and telling them about my life,” Nyad said.

Brodeur, Nicole. [“Diana Nyad...explains how her record swim snapped her back to life,”](#) *Seattle Times*

2016

A movie about me was inevitable

“Well, I guess it was inevitable. Hollywood has come a-knocking. Yes, they want to do the movie version of my story, my life.”

[Workplace Summit](#)

2016

[DECONSTRUCT THE SCRIPT](#) looks at Specland's *Nyad*

“What she's doing is completely pointless. . . . This is a story about **clinical obsessive narcissism.**”

2017, October

If I'm unlike any other, so be it

[A clinically obsessive narcissist may not be the best candidate to write a screenplay about herself.]

“My direct, conscious goal is not to be better than others. My intense focus is to be my best self. If that self winds up being interpreted as ‘unlike any other,’ so be it. It may be counterintuitive to the concept of rising to the top of a human chain of achievement, but it sometimes winds up that my letting something go takes more courage and fulfills my vision of always being my best self more than my plodding ahead. Lately, I relinquished my position as screenwriter of my life story. I was hired to write the script. All parties involved felt I am a writer and storyteller and, although a novice to the genre of the screenplay, I could produce the best script. After a year, it took more strength for me to admit it is a very special and specific genre and would take me a few years to become competent, much less artful, at the genre and so I rose to the occasion and turned it over to a seasoned screenwriter. That was my best self, making the right decision for the project. The people who I admire are those who are authentic to their vision, despite the practical or public obstacles of their journeys.”

Sarah Sung, [“Diana Nyad | On Inspiration, Motivation and the Drive to Succeed”](#)

2017

Evidently, they're making a movie

“Just as a light note to start, Hollywood has come knocking. And, yes, evidently, they're going to do the story of my adventures and my life. Evidently Sandra Bullock's interested in playing my role.”

Visionary Women, [Keynote Speaker: Diana Nyad](#), 1:27

2018, Oct

High Hopes

“The feature film is evidently going to be made of my life and my story. I am hoping, just like the book, that it will be something that children see and women see and all kinds of people have a lasting experience that, 10 years later, that movie will still have the validity, you know, of those precepts. You’re never too old to chase your dreams. Everybody needs a team, you know.”

with Nely Galán, [“Diana Nyad Self Made Story,”](#) 16:27

2021

The coveted Oscar

“Ms Bening is now the exact age I was when I made the historic crossing. My hope for the film is that it will be a classic, that it will touch audiences for generations to come. And my hope for Ms. Bening is that this will be the role that will bring her the coveted Oscar.”

[Facebook](#), 4 March 2021

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Much of the above comes from my posts

- [Nyad: The Motion Picture \(pre-Facebook-Live briefing\)](#)
- [Nyad: The Motion Picture](#)

First Nyad to do business in Hollywood:

