



Roberto Priolo

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Lorna on Roberto: One of the greatest reasons for training new journalists is that it's so satisfying to relive one's own journey from so wanting to be a journalist, to actually being one. I always tell students that they must enjoy the process of starting out because they will look back on this time nostalgically. I recognised a lot of my young self in Roberto, the me that took absolutely all advice when I was starting out. The other source of satisfaction is that students can themselves be inspiring. Roberto set out not only to be a journalist, but to also make it as a journalist outside Italy. I was inspired by the audacity of his vision. Proving that ambition does not go hand in hand with being an extrovert, he was very quiet on the LSJ one-month intensive summer school course in 2006. We spoke briefly on the very last day and I connected his name to work I had marked. When I got a request for a reference for Point Reyes Light, a local newspaper in Marin County, California I smiled. There was no stopping the boy from San Remo. He got the three-month internship.

And when Roberto came on the postgraduate course he used his time effectively, constantly approaching editors for freelance work and work experience. While most students didn't take advantage of having the editor of a trade publication taking the same course at the school (because it wasn't the area of journalism they wanted to go into), Roberto jumped at the opportunity to try something new. Work experience led to freelance work, so when a job came up editing a related trade title, he had a great track record.

Having spent the first four years of my career on trade press while freelancing for consumer titles, I'm always pleased when students go on to do the same. Sadly too many students make the mistake of seeing trade and consumer press as an either/or situation, and invariably end up with nothing. Roberto's hard work and perseverance paid off. Travel writing is one of the most competitive areas, yet in addition to his full time job, he managed to secure editing his own travel page too.


Roberto on Lorna: There is something about Lorna that immediately has you look inside yourself, and wonder: 'How badly do I want to be a journalist?' Her lectures, like her answers to your questions, are often a reality check. Sugarcoating, she doesn't do! Her comments on my CV (namely that it was boring and I seemed bored writing it) were so insightful and heart-felt (and, looking back, funny and witty) that I scrapped the entire thing and started all over again. The new CV got me an interview at Conde Nast (I didn't get the job, but I had amazing feedback from the editor who interviewed me), and soon after I was hired as editor of a business magazine. I like to think of this as quite an accomplishment, especially considering how difficult it is to find a job in journalism these days, and the fact that English isn't even my first language. I am sure that without the lessons I learnt from Lorna, this wouldn't have been possible.

As a teacher, she challenged me on a constant basis, asking questions no other tutor asked and providing thought-provoking answers to my own questions. The most valuable lesson she taught me is to believe in myself as a writer and a person. I soon discovered there is no room for moaning and self-pity in her classroom: you are either committed to being a journalist or you are not, and she will make sure you know that. Lorna uses a practical approach to

teaching how to write and approach publications. In her lectures she told us what it's really like out there. Get in her classroom with an open mind and with the intention of getting as much as you can out of her extraordinary experience as a journalist and a teacher. It will pay off.

Roberto's advice:

The piece of advice I'd give Italian people who want to get into journalism in the UK is this: don't be afraid to dare, and don't let the fact that you are not a native speaker stop you from pursuing a career here. My experience in London so far is that even if your English is not perfect, your piece will be accepted as long as it is clear and well researched and delivers what it promises. Sub-editors will help you. See your coming from abroad as an advantage rather than a handicap: after all, it gives a fresh, different perspective.

 Il consiglio che vorrei dare agli italiani interessati a lavorare come giornalisti nel Regno Unito è questo: non abbiate paura di osare, e non lasciate che il fatto che non siate madrelingua vi freni nel cercare di costruire una carriera qui. A giudicare dalla mia esperienza a Londra fino ad ora, anche se il vostro inglese non è perfetto il vostro articolo sarà accettato a patto che sia chiaro e supportato da una buona ricerca e che offra quello che promette di offrire. I sub-editors vi aiuteranno. Vedete il vostro arrivare da un altro paese come un vantaggio piuttosto che come un handicap: dopo tutto, vi offre una prospettiva differente.