



Simone Martufi

Coordinating Editor [IMBO](#), writer [Cruiseship Academy](#), South Africa (PG 2010)

Lorna on Simone: I wasn't Simone's tutor, she wasn't on one of my three-day courses (where I get to know everyone individually), and I didn't get to mark any of her work. But I was one of her lecturers, and though I never had the opportunity to speak to her one-to-one, I was sure she'd get there as a journalist for two reasons.

Firstly I could tell she was listening in lectures and processing what I was saying. She stood out because she was receptive. I could see the excitement in her eyes and often when I handed out pieces for students to analyse in the class I could see her willing herself to be writing pieces like this in the future.

Overhearing conversations she was having with other students during the breaks also told me a lot about Simone. She was discovering London with a journalistic mind, and the fact that she was confident enough to go to a particular well-known venue and have oysters and champagne on her own (because that's what it was famed for) told me a lot. She wasn't bragging about this, and clearly it was a milestone, something she just had to do.

I always appreciate seeing students smile because little do they know that it's the smiles not the scowls that get you through. Simone smiled a lot.

Simone on Lorna: I really enjoyed attending Lorna's lectures because that's how I found my niche. I use her methods and tips today in my career. I remember feeling I wanted to be just like her. I love the fact that she also told us some of the mistakes she made in her early career as that taught us some valuable lessons and showed the class what pitfalls to avoid.

I also really took to heart the fact that Lorna said you need to sell yourself and the individual skills that make you and your writing unique and special, because that is what will make potential employers take notice of you.

From Lorna I learnt how to do a killer interview and now interviews are what I most love doing on my radio show and in my articles. In fact it's what I do best. Her best tip was: 'The interview should be like a conversation so that your interviewee doesn't even know they are revealing things about themselves.'

Simone on her long journey to getting the work she loves: When I left the London School of Journalism I was awfully proud of myself for having completed the course even though it was gruelling, highly pressurised and intense, and this unfortunately was reflected in my mark.

I don't take criticism too well and so during the course I wasn't taking the opportunity to improve. I did allow myself a bit of a pat on the back for the three A's I achieved for written work. I stuck my head in the sand like a silly ostrich and cracked on with the course.

I honestly thought that I would never work in the industry and that my writing truly sucked. So I came back to South Africa at the beginning of 2011 for a holiday and did not return to London.

I was happy to be home but I struggled for almost a year to find employment of any kind. Then at the beginning of 2012 broke and disheartened, I turned to [Gumtree](#), as you do when you're at the end of your rope, and there I found an ad looking for someone to write copy for a website that coaches people on how to get jobs on cruise liners. I applied immediately having had five years experience on cruise ships and a diploma from the LSJ to boot! I tell you, it was meant to be.

I started to dig up my old LSJ assignments, as they wanted to see examples of my writing. Looking over my work now I actually see I wasn't that bad and was even bordering on quite good, with a little more talent than I gave myself credit for. I should have believed in myself more.

This is my first paid writing job and getting it really gave my confidence a boost. I am really enjoying writing for [Cruiseship Academy](#). I'm now in the process of writing an e-book for them, and they also want me to manage the site.

A couple of weeks after I got the job, I answered another ad (also on Gumtree) for a co-ordinating editor for the online youth entertainment magazine [IMBO](#). I got the job because they were looking for someone at graduate level and my qualifications really helped me stake the claim.

It's an online magazine for students in Cape Town and focuses on lifestyle and entertainment with mentorship and employment opportunities, and we will be moving into print soon. I also contribute to the magazine which includes styling, compiling and co-ordinating fashion shoots!!

I've also always wanted to be on the radio and now I am thrilled to be co-hosting a two-hour radio show once a week for an online talk show called [thetaxi.co.za](#), which is a live extension of the magazine IMBO.

My message to students is keep trying even if you think you suck. There is work out there but you find it by taking baby steps. I'll never forget what Lorna V said to our class: 'Don't think you are going to walk out of here and write for Vogue tomorrow. You have to start small.'

Well, I'm starting small because it's also a necessary step to growing one's talent, but I'll have you know I still have my sights firmly set on Vogue. **Simone on travelling the world and then taking a journalism course:** I'm now 33 years old. I hadn't done very much writing at all other than when I completed my degree in English and Performing Arts. I quickly realised I wasn't going to make a career out of performing and I felt this degree left me ill prepared for a real world job. I felt I was missing something. My dream was always to travel and study in a different country and being creative I wanted to enrol in a course that would allow all of that while specifically focusing on a career. I chose journalism and applied to the University of Queensland in Australia. Although I got in I was denied a study visa and thought my dreams were done.

So I packed my bags and went travelling and got a job working for a cruise ship. I stayed on for many years travelling all over the globe until I decided I had strayed from my path long enough. I moved to London to finish my studies and found the evening postgraduate diploma course at the LSJ. It was perfectly suited to me because I could work as well. I felt like I would be putting the finishing touches to my studies and wanted this diploma to give me the edge over the competition. By doing this course I not only found my career but my niche. Now having returned to Cape Town I have found a place just for me.

Sadly the money I'm earning isn't great but I'm learning and growing and I'm really happy every day because I'm finally doing what I love.

I don't think I ever would have had the confidence to really go for it in my career without the expert knowledge I gained from doing a journalism course at the LSJ.