

## THE *Celebrity* GRADUATE

# Dawn O'Porter

**SHE'S GOT THE BEST HAIR  
IN THE BUSINESS**

She's our favourite documentary-maker, author and tweeter - so how has Dawn O'Porter's acting degree from the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts helped her career?

### Why acting?

I thought it was what I wanted to do, and very soon after getting there, I realised that it wasn't. I knew I wanted to be in the public eye, but I wanted to have a voice. You don't really have a voice when you're acting, you're somebody else's voice. For some people, that's brilliant - like my husband [Chris O'Dowd] - but I got quite frustrated by it.

### What did you think of the course overall?

I think if the be-all and end-all of your existence is to be an actor, the course was really good. For me, I spent most of the time feeling silly. I do think it was a good course - LIPA is phenomenal. We were in these beautiful dance studios and the technology there is brilliant. I wouldn't have gone anywhere else.

### Did you have any interesting flatmates during your degree?

Yes, I lived in a house in my first year with a group of girls who just hated me. It was quite awkward and difficult. If they were doing something, they wouldn't invite me and they were all friends before I moved in. I had a really hot boyfriend at the time though, so it was all right!

### What did you see yourself doing after you graduated?

TV producing and writing. I wanted to go

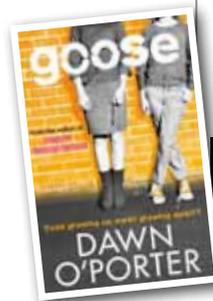


**"I KNEW I WANTED TO BE  
IN THE PUBLIC EYE, BUT I  
WANTED TO HAVE A VOICE.  
YOU DON'T REALLY HAVE A  
VOICE WHEN YOU'RE ACTING"**

down to London to produce TV shows and then get into writing. I did that for a bit and then slipped in front of the camera accidentally at one point.

### What would you say was your big break career-wise?

I'd say writing Paper Aeroplanes was my big one. That was my moment to say: "I'm really serious about writing and this is what I've always wanted to do." Getting a two-book deal, Paper Aeroplanes and Goose - that was really good.



### Is writing something that you always wanted to do?

Writing was always number one. I remember sending off a comment to a magazine and they published it. I still remember the feeling of, 'I'm a published writer.' Right from the start, moving to London after my degree and working in TV, I was writing. I wrote my first novel when I was about 23 but I would never show it to anyone!

### Do you feel like your degree has helped your career?

I do now. At the time, I felt a bit like, 'Why am I here?' But, socially, that first time living away from home, experiencing a new city - I learned a lot. I think it was an amazing time in my life which I certainly don't regret. ●

## WANT MORE?

For more on Dawn's new book, head to [www.sourcemagazine.org.uk](http://www.sourcemagazine.org.uk)

Goose by Dawn O'Porter is out on 3 April, published by Hot Key Books. Dawn will be signing copies of Goose in Waterstones, Edinburgh on 29 March - keep checking [www.dawnporter.co.uk](http://www.dawnporter.co.uk) for details.

