

Alix Green, interviewed by Tracey Loughran, 15 September 2025

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Interview

Tracey Loughran (TL): *Can you say when, where and what you studied at university?*

Alix Green (AG): OK, so I didn't actually get into university for history. I went via a couple of different subjects. So what did I apply for? I applied for English and spent a week doing English. I think I went to one seminar and thought these aren't my people and then I was looking for something to switch to. What I really wanted to do was English and German, but you couldn't do that at Cambridge, so then I looked into doing some languages. So then I needed to do a second language and I ended up switching to German and Hebrew because I had always been really interested in Jewish history and culture through my dad's family. I ended up doing that for a couple of years and then I switched to history after two years. So, yeah, I came a bit late to the whole history party. Although what I was most interested in, I think, when I was studying German and Hebrew was the historical side of things. So I was very lucky to be able to switch and do two years of history then.

This is an edited transcript of an interview carried out on Zoom.

TL: *That's really interesting because quite a few people that I've spoken to have either started out doing something else or did a joint degree. It feels like one of the things that's emerging from these interviews is that a lot of people who became historians had an interest in other disciplines and subjects and then come to history via that.*

AG: Yeah, for sure. I mean, I think there are lots of things going on. I think partly it was being in denial that I actually wanted to do history because there's a family legacy there! But I think doing languages got me really interested in tuning into the fine detail of language in sources. So, I did my BA dissertation on two Jewish publicists and really tuned into how they talked about what Jewish identity meant in Germany in the early nineteenth century, really thinking about the linguistic patterns, the ways in which they talked about their relationship to both their Jewish and their German identities and what it meant to inhabit them, to reconcile them in that context. I think being a linguist first maybe did give me a particular kind of interest in historically situated language and questions of identity, citizenship and belonging, which I suppose are still with me today, even though I haven't really thought about it in those terms.

TL: *So the languages side fed quite directly into some of your independent research projects as an undergraduate and then a postgraduate. Do you still feel that they're relevant for the kinds of historical research you do now, which is quite different in some ways?*

AG: Yes, I do. At the moment, I'm reading about the 1930s documentary movement in Britain and the ways in which it was informed by refugees from the early Nazi state. For example, Stefan Lorant, who was the founding editor of *Picture Post*, was imprisoned for six months during a round-up of journalists in 1933. His diary of that time, *I Was Hitler's Prisoner*, went through multiple editions in the UK. You can see a parallel in that idea of documenting experience, of putting injustice on the record, between his diary and the later work of photo-magazines such as *Picture Post*. The impulse to document always has an element of anticipation: a hope that the future will bring the chance for restitution, for holding to account. This connects with my interest in archives and archival practice: we are what we keep, we keep what we are (with all the asymmetries of power that involves). But before you mentioned it, I hadn't really thought about how my earlier training in languages may have influenced what I do now. Maybe I do read sources with a linguist's eye to some of those nuances, particularly around questions of belonging and inclusion and exclusion, maybe also around practice as well: what practising as a historian or a journalist meant, what they thought they were doing and the language in which they expressed it.

TL: *It's fascinating how historians often work on different projects that might look dissimilar on paper, but the threads are there even if we don't always realize while we're doing it.*

AG: That's true. It's a human thing perhaps. I'm reading interviews Mass Observation conducted in 1942, asking people on the street what they hoped and expected from the postwar world. It's fascinating, and often very moving, to read how they made sense of the past and the present in order to anticipate the future. The language and the images they used can create powerful emotional connections for the historian. So I'm quite interested in that kind of close attention to language and finding perhaps unexpected connections between people in very different kinds of contexts.

TL: *Going back to when you were an undergraduate, what was your favourite module and why?*

AG: Well, I had a really different experience of doing undergraduate history because I was out of step with everyone else. So I came into History in what's called Part II of the Cambridge degree and I had to do two years rather than one year. So I did everything on my own, which was really, really odd. I was basically assigned a supervisor for each module, and all I had was these supervisions once a week on my own, apart from my special subject, which was on satirical print. And that was my one experience of actually having a group, having a collective learning experience. I just really enjoyed it, both working in a seminar group and working with the prints, decoding the visual and written language in these caustic commentaries on the rich and famous, national stereotypes and so on, understanding how they would have been consumed, thinking about the print shop window and the ways in which these were circulated. Apart from that special subject seminar, the rest of my experience was pretty isolated. Cycling up to Fitzwilliam College one term for supervisions on the Black Death having never done any medieval history before. Another term on political thought, or Britain's Empire and Commonwealth. All completely disconnected from each other. I really enjoyed doing my dissertation though. Again, on my own, but I appreciated having that close connection with a member of staff, a Germanist, working on my own topic and learning so much from her expertise. So I don't think I have a typical undergraduate experience in history!

TL: *No, not typical in some ways, but one of the things you've picked out is about dealing quite closely with primary sources, which lots of people do find is the thing that sticks in their mind.*

AG: Yeah, definitely. Although I don't think the way I practise history now is particularly like that, which is also interesting. Since then, partly because my PhD experience was also atypical, the research process more often starts for me with historiography than with quote unquote archival primary sources. So it's interesting that, yes, that's

what stuck out in my undergraduate and also at my Masters level, when I spent a year working really intensively with some 1840s German language periodicals in the West Room of the University Library in Cambridge. So that was, again, very primary source driven.

TL: *And did you take any historiography or theory modules as part of the undergraduate degree going into Part II of the degree?*

AG: Everyone had to do this paper called Historical Argument and Practice, which I don't know if it exists anymore. But it wasn't a taught module in the same way as the others I took were. The questions were really open, and, once you had chosen your question, you could answer it any way you wanted to, based on any topic or reading that you'd encountered at any point in your studies. I liked this idea of trying to build an argument from scratch out of the raw materials you'd encountered, although it actually was the paper I did least well on! But I think I missed out on that core teaching, the survey and historiography courses that you often do in years one and two. I still feel that that's a real gap for me.

TL: *I don't know if it will reassure you, but most of the people of our generation who I've been talking to for these interviews didn't do a module of that kind or didn't get to it till they did postgraduate. Also, some of the people reading this may find it encouraging to know that if they're doing historiography modules and they don't like them, that professional historians felt they missed out on not doing them!*

AG: I definitely do! I think I missed out on that sense that you've got a grasp of a period, you know, the main contours of it, the big shifts and turning points and what historians have thought about them. I think that would have really helped me orient myself as a historian. Whereas I often feel I'm going back to undergraduate level or building right from the ground up every single time almost, because I've missed out on that kind of scaffolding. I think that would have done me some good, to have done some of that in my undergraduate studies. But as I said, I just didn't really have the chance to do it. I was given a list of modules. And the advice I got was, pick stuff that gives you a broad range, which is why I ended up with the Black Death, British Empire and Commonwealth, History of Political Thought, and a Special Subject on satirical print. It was a bit eclectic, and I had no real grounding in any of them (apart from nineteenth-century British political reform and the French Revolution at A level!) It felt really piecemeal. And I didn't feel I had any kind of grasp of a topic or period until I did my dissertation, which was on early nineteenth-century German-Jewish publicists, which I then developed at Masters level. But that seemed late to be getting any sense of knowing anything.

TL: *I had similar feelings sometimes because I never did a survey course in modern history ever, and I've ended up as nowadays a post-1945 modern British historian, still feeling a bit shaky about who the prime ministers were and that sort of thing.*

AG: And yeah. I'm so glad you said that. I guess this is why I'm so open to undergraduates starting with those sorts of modules.

TL: *So you did say that you often start your research nowadays with historiography. What do you think is the value of starting in that way?*

AG: I guess I'm just really interested in other currents of thought, what other people are making of things. I'm really interested in argument. When you're reading, you can identify something that intrigues you, or find where there's a gap or puzzle or something. And that's what makes me then turn to the sources, I think. I remember reading some of Mike Savage's work about the emergence of social sciences in Britain, set against a characterization of the 'gentlemanly humanities' as being arrogant, remote and completely uninterested in the 'real world'. It seemed such a neat, convenient but also hostile stereotype. And that got me much more interested in what historians were actually doing at the same time. G.D.H. Cole, for example, may have been part of an academic elite, but he invested huge energies in the problems of the present and future, and publishing for a wide audience. And so I found my way back to the raw materials from an argument that had, at some level, bothered me enough to want to dig into it. But equally, it could be something that you just think, 'This is wonderful and I want to explore more about that.' So I'm really interested in argument. That's what makes me turn back then to the raw materials from which that argument was built.

TL: *It's also, it's a very collaborative view of history that you've just put forward, in terms of it being something where you're responding to the scholarship other people have done, sometimes because you're not keen on it, but also then situating it in a whole broader field of historical writing, and sometimes because it's inspirational.*

AG: Yeah, I think that's at the very core of how I see history, as a collective endeavour. And I think that's because I came to history not straight out of university, but having then had another career and coming back to it as something that I felt was missing from a conversation. And then doing a PhD was inherently about using history in a context of practice. So since then, I've thought of history as something that's a practice, that maybe not directly shaped by the Raphael Samuel view of history as the 'work of a thousand hands', but, once I'd read that phrase it certainly resonated with me. I don't think I would be that kind of historian had I then jumped straight from the MPhil into a PhD. I certainly had ideas for things I wanted to do with that MPhil as I absolutely loved the topic. But that would

have taken me down a much more conventional route. And I'm not sure I would have come to that idea of collective endeavour in the same way.

TL: *That's really interesting, partly because so much of what you do now is collaborative in a different way. Could you recap what you did after the MPhil, to the point of becoming a historian? Because it was a slightly unusual path.*

AG: Yes. So I had a conversation with my supervisor in the spring of my MPhil. And he said, 'What are you thinking? Is there a PhD here?' And I said, 'Well, what would be the reasons to do a PhD?' And he said, 'Well, if you want to become an academic', and I said, 'Hell no.' You know, I didn't even consider doing a PhD, although I really enjoyed the topic of my MPhil. And then I just really didn't know what to do. So I spent a year doing an admin job up in Leeds, having worked sorting parcels for Royal Mail during my Masters, which I wasn't supposed to do, but I needed to support myself (and I liked sorting parcels – remembering all the postcode areas!). So I did a bit more Royal Mail work, then did this admin role, and then did two years as a criminal intelligence analyst for Essex Police, which brought me back to Colchester, where I'd grown up. That was partly because I wanted to be closer to family. But there was also something, I think, in the idea of analysing evidence that appealed to me, and that it would be able to influence what was being done. It was a new scheme that was being set up by Essex Police, and so they advertised nationally, and I just thought that could be interesting as a next step. I wanted to get out of the admin role, which I found pretty soul-crushing, and so I just applied. And in some ways, it was really interesting, because you're looking for patterns, you're looking to make sense out of this incomplete data, and then you have to think, 'OK, but what does it mean in the context of operational policing?' So I ended up doing quite a lot of what are called 'problem profiles', but they're quite strategic. I mean, essentially, you're contextualizing data, right? And I ended up doing a series of these problem profiles, which are basically looking at patterns of data. So you can map that using software, but then you had to interpret the data and suggest what the priorities on the police side of it might be based on that interpretation.

But over time, I just think it wasn't quite enough for me. And then I discovered this job in London working for the National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy, and it was a bridging role between academia and policy. It was a different time funding-wise, as it was core-funded by the Department for Education and Skills and involved a network of different academic units nationally doing qualitative and quantitative work, so from big cohort studies to really quite granular in-depth studies with adult

learners. And that's when I discovered policy work and I absolutely loved this bridging role. So I spent half my time in the department, and half my time at the Institute of Education in London. So my job was really to help shape a research agenda that would generate findings of value to the policymakers, but also to take those policy agendas or priorities back into research to help shape a programme of work. So one of the things I did midway through my time there was to help secure renewal of the contract, for something like four million pounds, to create a coherent research programme for the NRDC universities that would have integrity in that academic sense, but also generate findings that were usable by policymakers. I also enjoyed the writing. One of the first things I got commissioned to do was a short history of further education for the Department after they found out I'd done history. That was a historical policy note, or a policy paper, before I knew about History and Policy, the organization.

But the problem with that post was the funding. So we had seen this renewal of the contract, but it was pretty clear that there wouldn't be another big contract after that. It was just at that cusp of really trying to reduce the number of these roles like mine that were inside government but not civil servants, a bit like the wartime irregulars. We were irregulars. I wasn't employed by the Department of Education and Skills, but I had access and was funded under the Department contract. In that period, in that Blair administration, there were the moves to consolidate the civil service, to have much less of this grant funding for research, and fewer people like me that weren't directly employed by the state. There was much more pushing of civil service operations outside London. It was pretty clear to me that we weren't going to get core-funded on the same basis again. And it just felt quite insecure.

So then I hopped very briefly and inadvisedly into a think tank. I was the research manager, but it was even more short-term funding, you're constantly looking for project-based funding to fund you and your team. I realized I needed a bit more security than that, and I got this job as policy advisor to the Vice-Chancellor at the University of Hertfordshire, which gave me again a kind of bridging role. But that was a weird role too, because you sit outside the university hierarchy. You've got access to the Vice-Chancellor, you work really closely with them. But you haven't really got any status. And I didn't have a PhD, and I think I was viewed with suspicion in some respects, like 'who are you to have any say?' But I really enjoyed that role. I loved going for meetings at Westminster and going to the party conferences. And I think we did some good work advocating for post-92 universities and for their value. But I realized at some point that I needed to think more strategically about what I did next.

And I was really noticing how absent historical modes of thinking were from the discussions we were having. So no one was really asking when we hit a problem, ‘But how did we get here? You know, what’s the history of this issue at this institution?’ Or just not asking contextual questions. ‘OK, so why would that particular partner see things that way, or what’s behind that policy agenda? What’s the kind of context that would help us understand why they want to do X or Y?’

So that’s why I got interested in thinking about the role of history in decision-making, or historical modes of thinking. Hertfordshire came out of that technical college heritage, a lot of the senior leaders came out of practice, or out of science and social science. And I just thought, why is there not that historical thinking there, despite the fact we had fantastic history colleagues. So I started firstly, an EdD [Professional Doctorate in Education], because I felt I couldn’t justify doing a PhD, there had to be some immediate tie to my job, although the Vice-Chancellor was very, very supportive. And that just wasn’t, it wasn’t *historical* enough. And I was like, I just need to do a history PhD, right? So I just started doing a history PhD as a member of staff. And it became less focused on universities and much more on historical thinking and policymaking, there was a chapter on trying to place the discipline of history within the evolution of universities in the UK and trying to understand how the idea of history as a ‘useful’ subject, I suppose, has ebbed and flowed over two centuries. But really, I think the better chapters then looked at what does the policymaking process involve? And how might historical thinking interconnect with that? Sorry, that’s a very long answer!

TL: *No, I think it’s, in terms of the audience for this web resource, it’s probably very encouraging to people to read about the different number of things you can go on to do with a history degree and the different sorts of skills it fosters, and how they can be deployed. But when you were talking about the value of a historical perspective on policy, this is obviously what your chapter in A Practical Guide is all about. Could you summarize for readers one reason why a historical perspective on policy matters?*

AG: Well, in the chapter we talk about the five tools in the historian’s toolbox. But if I had to pick out one thing, it would be that we can never get a perfect, evidence-based picture of any policy issue. And that can be really difficult for policymakers to deal with. If we can’t understand a problem perfectly, how do we generate a policy response to that? And one of the most important arguments in the book and in the chapter is that historians are really good with dealing with this uncertainty. We are comfortable with it, because that’s the reality of historical practice, right? We always, inevitably, have an incomplete picture. Our evidence is often conflicting and

partial and contradictory. And we understand that it always depends on perspective. We know that what survives in the archives is a tiny fraction. We know that all of that is inflected by human beings' agendas. All those complexities, I think we're very comfortable with that. Whereas the disciplines that tend to be turned to by policymakers will want to try and control the variables or say, well, because we don't have a perfect set of data, we can't generalize from it, and therefore it's not useful.

But having access to a discipline that can deal with complexity and uncertainty and partiality and all those kind of things *is* really useful, because fundamentally politics and policymaking are messy because human beings are involved. And historians are like, we deal with messiness all the time! So that's what history offers and all the other tools, like contextualization, understanding change and so on, are all, I guess, tools to find ways of making order amid the chaos.

TL: *I think that sense of being able to cope with a degree of uncertainty is probably something that, as well, comes from the longer perspective that the past gives you. It seems that for policymakers, even when they're talking about a historical perspective, they're often thinking about a very recent past. And therefore, you don't get that sense of structural shifts that history can give, and which is probably necessary to deal effectively with any problem.*

AG: Yes, it's partially that, and one of the things we can do is try and restore some of that sense of structure, but it's also that they may have other structures in mind already that you then have to *de-structure* first. It's not that the past isn't available, it's that there are some really powerful, usable pasts that are already structured into their thinking. If you go into politics, you've got a world of ideas about what a good society looks like, how change happens, what are the most important reference points. We bring that world with us. But sometimes, I guess, what the historian can do is say, well, you know, you think of the Blitz, or Dunkirk, or the winter of discontent, or whatever it might be, in *this* way, but actually, if we set it in this other context, you can understand it in X, Y or Z ways.

So sometimes it's that history is too available. Or, it's not available in some ways, but it's too available in others, so you have to navigate both of those problems. It's not enough to just say, well, you're wrong, or it's more complicated than that, or that didn't happen, or that's a myth. Because actually, what is a policymaker supposed to do with that? So critiquing is just the first stage. We can critique, but what do we replace that critique with? So I think we have to be willing to give them some other ways of ordering time, or thinking about shifts and changes and those kind of things. We have to replace what we deconstruct with something. So, I think it's being willing to

take that extra step that makes a difference, and not just be saying, 'oh, you've got no idea about history, you're all wrong'.

TL: *Which is perhaps not that different to the process of learning to do history. You know, you start out by deconstructing, pulling apart other people's arguments, and that's kind of, to a degree, what you start doing with a historiographical perspective, but then the next stage is going and working out a different interpretation, and engaging with sources in a different way, and building something.*

AG: I suppose an extra kind of layer to the problem in thinking about history and policy is that there is often something quite dismissive or hostile in the way that historians can think about policymakers. At least when you're a history undergraduate, there's a kind of respect for the historiography, for the historians you might be engaging with, you know, that we're all part of a scholarly community, and I respect what you do. Whereas I suppose the problem is, there can be a line that is historians' thinking that policymakers are never going to listen, they're always going to be ahistorical, as they're using history for their own ends, or it's just history in the service of the state. The same could be said of working in quite a lot of collaborative contexts. With businesses, for example. 'Why would I, why should I? Because it's all going to be dumbed down, agenda-driven history', you know. So that's, I suppose, the added complication, with attitudes within the historical profession.

TL: *One of the things you've done quite a lot in your career is to work with all sorts of different collaborators, so businesses, archivists, community organizations. And one of the constant features of your work is a deep respect for what those other parties bring, so could you elaborate a bit on what they bring to a sense of history?*

AG: I suppose what I've always worked with is a sense that there's an ecosystem of expertise, or that different forms of expertise are complementary. I suppose the smallest step is to think about that in terms of archivists, so, to recognize that archivists know their collections and how those collections have been built. So, you'll get more out of the research if you recognize that expertise and work with them to help navigate and understand the collections. And we think about any kind of organizational history, and that could be, you know, the state as well as a business. To understand the context in which records were collected and how that organization was itself organized when it was generating those records, and why those records have been kept and organized in the way they have, that should make you a better historian, right? So you're not just seeing the records in a vacuum.

So that's, I suppose, the most obvious form where you can recognize the expertise, but then, take that into a business setting, the business archivist not only understands the historical organization

and all those things that I've just said, but also then understands how the archive and those collections relate to the present-day operational business, and therefore how to advocate for the archive in a present-day setting, using the organization's historical records. And again, that's a form of expertise that you'd never have as a historian.

And then, or if you take it into the voluntary sector, it seems really presumptuous and wrong and unethical when you hear about researchers trying to go into community groups, community organizations, and extract things like oral histories or whatever it might be from those communities having no understanding of those communities in their lived reality. The people who have that understanding and can be, I think, honest brokers and intermediaries are the voluntary and community sector organizations that are there working at grassroots level on a daily basis. So I guess it's not just about expertise, it's also about ethics, and having a kind of fundamental understanding of the value of what those other groups bring, and to try to seek mutual benefit. Every project for me should have a value and a purpose for all of those who are involved, and I will always try to do my best to help ensure that that project realizes those purposes for everyone who's involved. It's not about going in and extracting what I need and going away again. And there's expertise in every collaboration, right? There's expertise in the people that you interview for an oral history, there's expertise inherent in the voluntary organization that has built a grassroots support network for that community. There's expertise in the archivist that helps you create a collection in the catalogue for the research materials you generate, there's expertise in the communication of those messages to policymakers to advocate for funding, or whatever it might be.

TL: *That comes back very strongly to that idea of history as a collaborative endeavour. So, an awkward bridge to the final questions! What do you like most about being a historian?*

AG: That's really tricky! I think it does come back down to trying to share that view of history as being this rich practice. So, on the teaching side of things, to be able to work through these things that really matter, whether it's through direct engagement with a source base, or by thinking through a problem, but to share that with students, and to workshop things with them, to me, is very similar to when I then have a conversation with a voluntary sector organization about their records. It seems to be fundamentally the same thing. I don't think I really divide my teaching and my research and knowledge exchange, or whatever you want to call it, particularly strongly, and often there'll be things that I take between them. So I think it's that sense of how history enables us to connect really meaningfully to human experience, and whether you're immersing

yourselves in what people stopped in the street in 1942 thought about the future (my current research), or whether you're asking a voluntary sector organization, 'What do you hope for in the next 40 years?', that seems to me the same practice. So I think it's that sense of a really close engagement with human experience, people's values, emotions, beliefs, hopes, that human connection.

TL: *That's lovely. Moving onto the next question, what do you think has changed most about the student experience since you were an undergraduate? Bearing in mind you already said that your own undergraduate experience was atypical.*

AG: I really wish that I'd had more of the experience, I think, that we try to give our students today. Having had a bit of a weird, isolated undergraduate experience and then doing an MPhil on my own with one supervisor, so I never got the MA experience either, and I just try to teach in a way that I would have like to have been taught, in some ways. Now, I absolutely recognize there was a massive privilege in being able to write an essay and spend an hour talking about it, with someone who's read it closely. You know, those are hugely enriching experiences. I definitely got a lot out of it, but I think what we're trying to do today with our students is really spend time working with them as emerging practitioners and do things collectively. I just didn't have that, and I think I would have really liked it. We do value that experience more than we did. I certainly got the feeling as an undergraduate that you could go to lectures or not go to lectures, it didn't matter. You turn up, you write your essays, and everything was on final exams at the end of my final year, bar my dissertation, which is pretty brutal, if you think about it! Everything rides on that. It's a bit inhumane, really.

TL: *Inhumane and not really very much like how the rest of life works.*

AG: Exactly. So I think, in many ways, the student experience is better now. We think more about students as historians, we engage with them as historians and we go on a journey together. I love teaching like that, and that sense of building their efficacy, and their competence, and their enjoyment, and their engagement with history. I don't think I had that, you know; it felt a bit more like, here's the stuff, tell me about it, OK, away you go, next topic. So I don't think I ever felt that I was building *towards* something, or gaining expertise or confidence in it. It felt quite piecemeal, not cumulative or positive and purposeful. Whereas I like to think that what we try to do with our students is, from year to year to year, build their sense of their identity as historians, build their confidence, build their enjoyment and engagement with the subject as a whole. And no more exams. Exams were evil! I don't think they test anything meaningful. So I'm glad we don't do that to our students. So, other people might think

the student experience has all gone down the pan, but I feel it's a lot better in many ways.

TL: *Oh, that's very positive and a great way to think about it. Okay, and this is the final question. What would be your top tip for students today on getting the most out of studying history at university?*

AG: I really like it when students come to talk to me early on. It's really nice when a student about three weeks into a module just says, I'm really interested in this, or I'm a bit worried about this, or can you fill in this gap? And it becomes less about going through the motions of a module, and actually really thinking about what the module's trying to *do*. And whether you engage with that in the context of the classroom, or in a personal tutor meeting, or whatever it might be, try to think about what the module's about, and what we're trying to get you to think about, and how we want you to develop through the module, rather than just seeing a series of steps towards the assessment. Because for most tutors, we're trying to do something, we're trying to communicate something that's really important. We want people to think about things differently, get new perspectives, unbuild, rebuild, all those kind of things. And so you just get much more out of a module thinking about it like that, rather than thinking about it as a series of chunks of knowledge that you need to learn, and then you'll be tested, and then you move on. I think that's probably what my experience was, in a way, and I don't think it really gave me a sense of being a historian, whereas you can go to what the tutors are trying to elicit, and that will help you to develop in all sorts of ways.

TL: *That's a really good bit of advice.*

AG: And also just to ask, if anything's not clear, or you're curious, just to ask. It's so nice when a student comes to you and goes, I'm really interested in this, or I'm struggling with this, can you just give me a sense of where this fits? And then you can say, aha, this is all part of the plan, right? The reason the assessment is as it is, and the reason why those sessions are there, is because of that bigger picture. So, yeah, it's always welcome to be able to have those conversations.