# Episode 5 - Publishing as an ECR: Rejection, patience and conversation

with Fred Paxton and Ayesha Omar

## Key timings:

00:46 – Introductions

02:17 – Publishing journeys so far

12:56 – Mentorship

21:13 – Review process

26:26 – Co-authoring

29:45 – Final advice

## Transcript:

Welcome to Confessions of an Early Career Researcher, the show where we deep dive into the journeys, challenges and successes of ECRs, whether you've just begun navigating the early stages of your research career or you're a seasoned ECR looking to upskill, this is the podcast for you. Join us as we speak with ECRs at varying stages of their careers to discuss their experiences and unpack their academia survival tips. I'm your host, Leonie Smith, a philosopher and lecturer at Lancaster University. In this episode, we're talking about publications. So welcome to the podcast, both of you. It's really great to have you here. I'm just going to ask you to introduce yourselves for the listeners, please.

Thank you so much for having me. It's quite a delight to be here. My name is Ayesha Omar. I'm an Early Career Researcher from South Africa. I'm currently undertaking a three-year British Academy International Fellowship at SOAS the University of London, where I'm undertaking a project entitled 'The liberal engagements of black intellectual history in South Africa.' And I'm working on an extensive book project, which requires me delving into the archives. And I also hold a position at University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa, where I'm a senior lecturer in political theory.

Thank you. And to my second guest.

Thanks so much for having me. My name is Fred Paxton. I'm a research fellow at the University of Glasgow. I started there last September to do a Leverhulme Early Career Fellowship, which has given me the time and resources to focus on research for the

next three years. Prior to that, I completed my PhD at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy, and had a couple of years after that to pursue a postdoc in Milan. And at the moment, I'm working on what I'm calling place-based identity politics, so how populist parties are mobilising on increasingly divided societies.

Brilliant. Okay, thank you. I mean, both of your research sounds so interesting. And actually, I'd quite like to talk about that a bit, but we should probably talk about publications. I wondered if we could start by maybe just getting a sense of your publishing journeys in the sense of what publications have you taken part in or produced? What type of publications were they and maybe just say something about when you started publishing as well. So I'll start with Fred this time around.

Sure, I actually started publishing during my PhD. I thought about trying to work out some ideas through the process of writing and publishing. And I think that was a really worthwhile process, thinking through my fingers in a way. I wrote a book chapter to begin with, which I was lucky enough to be invited to be involved with an edited volume after attending a conference. And after that, I then developed some ideas in a couple of journal articles. Then after the end of my PhD, I took my PhD thesis and turned that into a book. So at this point, it's a mix of different kinds of publications that I've done, but all focused on my own research interests and in the field of political science.

So a range of different things, and you started during the PhD itself, and this is maybe something we'll talk a little bit about, how the landscape has changed and the need to publish has become, perhaps more dominant in careers than it used to be early on. So you said you said you started with a book chapter. I'm quite curious about that. Was that something where you had come up with the idea based on your own area of research, or did you shape towards what somebody else was asking for? How did that come about?

It was actually presenting a very early version of my idea for the PhD project. I was at a conference when I just started the PhD. It was the first time that I ever presented research in that kind of environment. And following that, we were invited to come together, the other participant tonight, to work towards this book. And so it was kind of fleshing out some initial ideas for my research in the form of a book chapter.

And then the articles were they also straight from your research?

The way that my PhD worked was that I was looking at different cases. So I was conducting interviews in various different countries. I was traveling to places like Switzerland, Austria, France, and doing interviews with far-right politicians. And it basically worked out that after having conducted those interviews in each case, I

thought, okay, now is the time to start putting some ideas to paper and then producing some articles based on this.

So emerging from the work you're doing during the PhD? So not this extra thing coming in and imposing on it, but naturally from your research, by the sounds of it. And I wonder Ayesha, if you could tell us a bit about your publishing journey and. Was it similar? Did you start in the PhD Have you waited till a bit later on? How's that gone?

Yeah. So I had a similar experience to Fred. I published my first journal article as a PhD student, which gave me a little bit of confidence. It was an article which had an element which also reflected back on pedagogy. So my experiences of teaching political theory at a time when there were a lot of interesting things going on globally around the decolonisation movement in political theory. So that enthused quite a lot of people, and it was an exciting time to write. And then I got to the end of my PhD, like many early career scholars, and I realised that the major milestone that I was celebrating was not actually as big a milestone as it was, because I, like others, realised it was a kind of publish/perish environment, and I needed to publish. So Fred, I think it seems to me like he had a more seamless sort of decision around, transitioning into just producing a book. So I had that option. I did get a book contract to publish my thesis into a book, but I made a personal decision around that. And for me, I really felt that there were aspects of my PhD which were kind of polished in parts, but rough on the edges. So I thought to myself, I was starting to get perhaps, if I had to sit another two years and work on the same project I was I'd be a little bit bored with it, so I actually published some articles out of it, and then sat with the PhD and re-conceptualised the material into another idea, which, interestingly, or curiously enough, actually also aligned to some of the stuff that I was teaching at the time with post-graduate students. And then I wrote a monograph where I was able to synthesise some of the material for my PhD, but also write a few new chapters, and I published a monograph this year with the Cambridge University Press.

Amazing. Okay, so quite different stories from a similar starting point. So both doing something during the PhD, but in your case, it sounds like it was quite, as you said, pedagogically leaning. So did the opportunity just come up to do that. Or did you think actually, there's something I want to say about teaching in political theory?

So I was a junior scholar at the time, and there was an interesting workshop that was taking place around thinking beyond the canon in political theory and what that might constitute. And there were very interesting debates happening at the same time in South Africa, around Rhodes Must Fall, statues at the University of Cape Town, and the decolonization movement was taking place at Wits, where I was with the Fees Must Fall. And political theory was at the forefront of these discussions, and that incentivized

me to think about some of my own teaching practices. And I failed to mention in the earlier part that I work in a sub field of political theory called Comparative Political Theory, which is about foregrounding non-Western traditions of political thought, but also kind of moving away from the parochialism of political theory. So my focus was on kind of the Islamic tradition, but also on Africa where I was situated. So it allowed me, in an interesting way, to actually align some of the things I was teaching, but also with the research that I was doing at the time and I published that article. And what I've also realised is that one has to be quite excited about what you write about. And sometimes putting a little bit distance to a project and coming back to it gives you that sense of reinvigorating your writing.

Yes, keeping two years at the end of really look at what you were doing and as you called it, re conceptualising the PhD in some ways?

Yes, absolutely. And it's also because what I eventually produced in my monograph, the idea that, which actually binded the whole thesis, was something that I believe now at least, has a level of originality and novelty to it that I'm actually quite proud of. Yeah, but at the PhD level, also, I thought maybe I lacked a little bit of intellectual maturity to do that. And so that's my first confession, in a sense, that sometimes having that distance allows you to reflect back and think, okay, maybe. But it might not be for all people. You know, some people might have reached a kind of intellectual maturity quite early on.

And perhaps in different parts of their work. Yeah. So your experience, Fred, was very different. You're producing articles. You went through the PhD, and did they become part of the PhD? Those articles, directly or indirectly?

Yeah, they really did. They were the building blocks of the PhD. I would say I totally agree with Ayesha that there's a patience to the process which is needed, that in order to get the best out of your ideas, that you need that time. And sometimes there's a bit of a tension between needing that that time and exercising that patience and the urgency that you feel with that kind of publish or perish mentality, which is the reality. It's a challenge.

We keep saying, publish or perish. I think these days use that phrase if you're an ECR. It's something that you kind of get, I don't want to say indoctrinated, but inculcated with a very early stage in the work that: you've got to be publishing, you've got to keep things coming out, and it starts and the PhD, and it continues to the post doc and so on and so on. But you both draw attention to this other side of it. That actually we get into this because we care about the research, not because you want to count the publications. And so it's a choice that you're still having to make about when is the right time for you to publish the findings from the interviews, for example, when is it the right time to be putting the monograph together? And something one person said to me stuck with me

that once you've published it, your names on it, you know, forever. So have either of you ever felt you published too soon or anything, or regretted anything, or is it all felt about right, getting that balance? Maybe, Fred, I'll ask you your experiences.

I think what you say is right, that when you put your name on something and it's out there, it's forever there, and you're forever associated with something, of course. It doesn't take away from the fact that we do want to get our ideas out there and publish and so on, but I think we have to be aware of the signals that are sent by what our name is on, and that publishing is helpful, but there are different ways to approach that, and different forms of publishing that we can consider with any piece of work. I think some people choose to be more patient and wait till the idea the work is fully formed, and therefore aim higher, as it were, because there are hierarchy in academic culture.

Yea let's say something about that, because there is this idea it might be different for different disciplines. I think all three of us have a connection to political theory or philosophy, in my case, and there is a sense that these are better things to be publishing, or these are less high up in the hierarchy, but can still be of value, depending on what you're trying to achieve, maybe with the publication.

Well, I have colleagues who waited years before publishing anything, and I think their attitude was, there is a signal sent with the publication that you want to make sure that you're attached to the very best that you can possibly be that your name is attached to. I'm very happy with what I've published, and I think that all of the outlets that I published in are great and contain a lot of interesting work. But if we look at like impact factors and the reputation of them, that some are lower than others, but I think that it's all worthwhile. Rather than thinking about a hierarchy, we can also think about different focuses that publication outlets have, and some are more general, some are more specific.

Who are you trying to reach with this publication? Right? Yeah, I think that's really good advice, because there can be this pressure just to put this out, and there can be this competing pressure to make sure it's in the so called best place, and so on. But actually the best place can be: where's the audience for this work, and is that something that you've been aware of Ayesha?

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And I agree with Fred on this point quite a lot, that you're very much torn between that pressure to publish and then the pressure to produce or to put out the best kind of version of your work out there. And when you look back and reflect on some of your earlier writings, you can see that writing itself is actually a long process of self-development, and that you get better as you go along, conceptually, methodologically, in all the ways we have to as academics. But I guess here I want to also maybe intervene by speaking about the importance of good mentorship. Because I

think in the early career phases of writing and publishing, there's a kind of utility in sort of appealing to your community, your intellectual community, in whatever form that is, whether it's your former supervisor or the people you currently work with, or supportive colleagues generally, there would be senior scholars, but also junior scholars who are just interested and who can give you that kind of peer review feedback. And what I found, that process always enabled me to go back and refine my work, and so by the time I was ready to actually publish it or submit it for the peer review process, there was a confidence that I had, that people had looked at it already and had given me some valuable feedback. Because, as we know, the peer review cycles are also quite long and can be quite frustrating and strenuous and sometimes very brutal. So I do want to mention that point about the mentoring process that one must where you have the resources, use intellectual resources as much as possible.

This is a really good point. So there's this idea of mentoring process, and whether that's mentors or people reading your work, I think there can be this tendency, can't there, when you're starting out, you read published work, and then you've got your work that isn't published, and you can go and compare the two, but actually you're not comparing like for like to get to that published point. Yes, they've been the anonymous reviewers, but more often than not, there have been readers before it gets sent anywhere. So you talked about, obviously there are supervisors, or there are mentors on a postdoc, for example. But is that something that you've both would you say you do that with your work? Do you get it out there before you send it to journals or send it to the book publisher?

Yes, absolutely. And I'm not in any way ashamed to send my work to as many people who I think are experts and would be able to give me beneficial and constructive criticism. And to be fair, everyone is exhausted. People have a lot on their place, and some people won't get down to reading it, and they'll be very polite and reply back three months later, I'm so sorry I didn't get to it but it looks great I read the abstract, or you'll get somebody who'll thoughtfully engage with the work in a very textured way and give you the kind of feedback that will help you improve it. So you get a range of responses, and I think all of that is important as you attempt to try and strengthen your work.

So get over this fear or sense of shame you might have about putting that work out there. And it can be currency. I mean, it's something that you're very close to, and you're sort of like, oh, I'm cringing a bit because somebody's going to read this, but get over that and send it to people. Fred, has that been the case for you?

Yeah, I agree. And I would add, as well as the value of mentoring, the value of having a kind of team, because a mentor for me is someone who you look up to, or that you look to for their expertise and the kind of experience that they bring. And sometimes, I've

found that it's not necessarily the person who has the longest experience in the field that is most helpful, that sometimes it's also people who are at your level, as it were, but who are able to see things in a slightly different way, critique it, just critique it. And maybe they have a bit more, not skin in the game, but maybe they also care a bit if they are people who are going to want the same from you a bit further down the line.

So building almost like a grouping of people that you're comfortable sending this to, and sometimes that can be within an institution. You might naturally have some colleagues, I guess, but other times, you might need to build a network to do that. And we have an episode on the podcast for people who are listening on networks. So please tune into that one to hear more about how to do some of this. But this idea that you've got to you've got to get people reading the way. You've got to get people seeing it. So have you also presented it at conferences? For the listeners, both people are nodding, nodding, me here, but yeah, so you've presented it at conferences and so on. How do you get over the fear of putting the ideas out there, if there isn't it, or maybe, are you fearless? Ayesha?

Oh, need some time to respond to that one. I'm not sure. So I guess in the early phases of your academic career, you tend to be a little bit more reluctant. But as you go along and you have a positive experiences in different kind of fora, whether it's at a workshop or at a conference or whatever setting it is, and you see that your work is being well received and there's thoughtful engagement around what you presenting, then you realise that the process can be beneficial, and you'd like to get more and more involved in those kinds of settings. And I found workshops and conferences where you actually write a full paper before you go, and that other people pre-read it, the other participants at the workshop, I had an experience like that in Paris two years ago at the University of Chicago, had put together, and everybody who was invited to that workshop read the article, engaged with it, gave me feedback. That was one of the best pieces of work that I eventually published, because when it got to the publication (it will come out in a COP volume this year), when it got to the publication stage, I realised, wow, this was really something that I worked on and developed, because from the outset, it was read by so many people, and it was workshopped in a proper way. Where sometimes I find the conferences that you go for where you just do an oral presentation, yeah, it's, I don't find those to be as beneficial for academic development, for publications in particular. Perhaps I can also just interject here by mentioning the current fellowship that I'm on with the British Academy is called the International Fellowship. And what I really am grateful for is this three years that the fellowship gives me, not just in terms of the research funding and the fact that I'm attached to a host institution with a mentor, and there's a lot of work taking place with the British Academy, for example, on publishing and an early career publishing, which I found to be quite useful. And so this time that I

have, I mean, the second year of my fellowship now, is something that has been greatly beneficial to me. And I also sort of recommend applying for these kinds of fellowships.

And the events that can be put on through them as well. Many of which we have sort of in the network, yes, going on as well. And that's really good advice, I think. And Fred, so have you had that experience of doing these pre-read workshops, or have you mostly been doing the conference Q&A type thing?

I've done both. And like Ayesha, I would definitely say that the two kinds of events are beneficial for different reasons, that the conference is an enormous arena for getting to know people and getting an idea of who does what, and seeing where your work overlaps with others, networking, I guess. But if you get the chance to attend a workshop, the best I ever attended was actually what led to my first book chapter. They called it the 'Joint Sessions' in political science. So it's an entire week, a group of 20 people all in the same room for four or five days, just focusing intensely on each other's work. And that kind of thing really boosts the eventual publication. A huge amount.

Brilliant. Okay, and I think you've both stressed that is very interesting. I think because a window many people might shy away from these more intensive 'everyone's going to read it' kind of thing. But actually what you're saying is it's really useful.

I mean, I was naive at that point. I didn't anticipate how nervous I would feel before I got there, but it was apart from the first morning you get over it, and you realise as well, I think, and this has been my experience consistently. I don't know if it's just because political scientists are abnormally friendly, but my experience has always been that everyone wants each other to do well, no one to try and take you down. So I think, without fail, these are very friendly and productive environments. So apart from the natural nerves of standing up in front of a crowd of people and having to express your own ideas, these are friendly faces that you're looking out onto.

The other thing is, people don't remember every single comma of your own work afterwards. Once the thing's over there, they're thinking about their own work as well, so not storing up like, oh well, their first draft wasn't the best in the world after it's been published. So it's really worth throwing yourself in there and doing those things. And there was an interesting bit, and we've alluded to it anyway, but you mentioned a bit about you at conference, like two years ago, and that's coming out, like this year and this year. So I'm just thinking about the time skills. If publication, it can be a long time, can't it? And in that process, you can also, of course, go through the review process, and people will review your work, and they will critique and so on. Now are either of you superstar publishers who never get any negative comments on your work and it just all gets published?

Never received a negative comment in my life. Never,

I mean, rejection is part of academic life.

Yeah, it's common, isn't it? So how do you cope with that? When you get there, you spend time on a piece of work, you send it out. Is it harder in the early days? Is it harder actually, further along you go, how do you cope with the criticism, the feedback? What do you do with it?

So my former supervisor gave me an advice very early on. He said, You have to be a tough person in academia, and also you shouldn't invest too much of ego. So I don't like cliches, but I do agree with both those pieces of advice, because I found them to be quite helpful for me in terms of, when you do submit something for publication and it comes back, I haven't had a reject so far from any publisher, but I did have a major revise and resubmit once, and that really tested me, because I had put a lot of work into it. And I did feel that some of the criticism initially, when I received it, was, yeah, I thought, oh, but I thought I addressed that. There was a footnote. Did you read the footnote? So I thought it was a little unwarranted. And then when I went back and took that advice seriously, of separating myself from what I had written, then I realised, actually the reviewer does have a point. I need to perhaps substantiate this better. And eventually, when I sat down and reworked, re-conceptualised bits, also sort of really worked on refining the aspects which the reviewer had criticised quite harshly, I felt much better, and then I felt confident, and then when it came back again from the reviewer, they actually sent quite positive feedback. And so, I think that does help, but academia is in a way, because the review process has so much of gatekeeping in it. The review cycle is so long, it can be quite frustrating, because, like we mentioned, you could at the point of reviews, submit something, and then it could take at least two years before it comes out. And sometimes you'd only hear back after a year from the journal, if it's a high-ranking journal, and they'll say, sorry, reject. We haven't even had time to say, oh, we're not going to even say why. A desk reject. A desk reject can be really demoralising for an Early Career Scholar, because you thinking to yourself, but I didn't send this to anybody else. I only sent it to you, and so I've been waiting, and this is part of the whole process, so you have to develop a little bit of thick skin.

And this comes back to the thing that you said, Fred, about find the right place for the work that you're trying to publish. You know, if you've got something that you can afford to leave in the queue for a long time. And you think, yeah, this is good. And then when it's going this, this particular journal that's known for having long cycles send it there. But if you want to get this out to be part of the dialogue, maybe look at different journals, different publication outlets. So Fred, your own experience of getting feedback and critique, rejections. How's that been for you? How was it the first time?

I think it was one of the first times that I got a rejection. And my co-author and I were both very inexperienced, and we both were kind of outraged at this, not at the idea of being rejected, but what we thought were some unfair comments that suggested that the person hadn't really read it and understood what we were trying to say. And we tried to appeal against that which is not something that you do.

And when you say appeal, you mean you emailed back and sent we reject your rejection.

We tried to appeal to the editors of the journal, and it was not taken forward. I mean, it's a competitive process to get into academic journals, so it's not going to happen. So I've learned from that.

And so when I say this, you mentioned take your ego out the process. And it's not ego in or ego mania, but more just like take the self out. Yeah, do you think when you and your co-author was the self involved in that? Would you have done the same thing next time?

To be honest, I think it was genuinely more just that we thought it wasn't being under not understood, but the comments were not kind of seeing the point that we were making, and we thought that it was unfair in a way, but ultimately, I think that it's right to take the ego out of the game, and it's an assessment of a piece of work, rather than yourself. And also rejection, the real difference that I've come to see with the rejection being a part of the publication process is that if you're not getting any rejections, then maybe you're not aiming high enough that you're not being knocked down a step, and then you're finding your place, not only through seeing which outlet best matches your research interests, but also which is at the level of the kind of general...

So treat rejection as a positive thing. I think it's wonderful advice, actually, because, yeah, taking the ego out of it, it's about a piece of work whenever, and eventually, over time, sort of coming to make your own judgments about was, Is this reasonable criticism? Was it the wrong place? They didn't really understand it? And I've got to go somewhere else with it, and trying to make those assessments that comes with experience, doesn't it? That's something that you develop.

I think it's also easier, and this is a general point that I think, co-authoring is so valuable during the whole publishing process. But I think also the benefit of having a co-author who you trust and who you can share something with at the point of rejection, because, I mean, then you can respond to it, also emotionally together, which can be a bit of puzzle.

So have your emotional reactions, and you can also have a sounding board. Have you done a lot of co-authoring, then Fred? I'd say most of my publications have been co-authored. Is that particularly common in political science? I think it's quite common kind of work that you do. Yeah. What about yourself Ayesha?

I've done less co-authoring, but I did do a big project which was an edited volume which was a co-authoring project with a senior professor. And I found that to be a very valuable exercise, and I gained a lot of experience in that the whole process of editing a volume for a university press as an Early Career Scholar gave me huge amounts of insight, especially because I worked with somebody, a senior who taught me a lot and who had published quite a lot in the political theory field. Yeah, that helped me exponential ways, because not just sort of commenting and going through drafts and doing the editing work and all of that, but also realising how to synthesise a volume, bring different themes together, how to write a coherent introduction to a volume in that form that itself can have value when it's published.

So this is interesting because I think, again, it's increasing. It's always been a thing in the sciences, co-authoring working with people. I guess we've always had the odd edited volume and so on. But this co-authoring idea working with another intellectual mind, at least one other person, to create a narrative together, that's something that maybe is increasingly worth doing, and that people are doing in the humanities space. Has your experience, for example, you've done quite a bit of co-authoring. Has it always been positive? Have you got any top advice for successful co-authoring?

I think the most positive experiences I've had with co-authoring really rest on you finding someone who is very invested in the project, so someone who shares the degree of curiosity about the passion. And you're both equally driven in terms of the urgency, which may not be very urgent, but that you have a kind of shared perspective on what you want from it and when you want that to happen. I think there's also, and this is particularly important when there's a hierarchy within that co-authoring relationship. It's important to lay out what are the expectations so that can be really mundane things like who comes first in the list of authors, if when it gets published, so making sure that there's an explicit understanding about who does what and what comes at the end of it.

And don't just rely on ‘Well, we get on great, so it's all going to be fine’ because we've all been there. Well, hopefully we haven't all been there, but many of us have been there, and you can get on really well with somebody. But actually it can fall down, who exactly is doing what parts of this paper? Who exactly is going to be the first author, who exactly is doing these things? So it's worth really nailing that down in your experience.

It's like putting up the cleaning rota in a shared house. Lay down the law.

It’s not a fun part of it, no, but if you've got it, then it helps things, takes the emotional side out. As you say, well, we agreed that you were doing that and I'm doing that right. Yeah, you've got something. Okay? So we've talked about other things, and actually you've given, I think both of you, some really good insights into how this publishing process works for you, and sort of the advice that you'd give in certain respects. But if there was one thing that maybe that you've learned through publishing, or that's your

main bit of advice that you want to pass on, and it could be something you've already said, because you have to say you've given some of that advice, what would that be? What would you want to leave people with? Maybe Ayesha first.

So I think my most important piece of advice that I would give an Early Career Scholar in relation to publishing is: be patient with the process. Because patience, and I know it sounds like something very simple, but it is a long process, not just in terms of what we spoke about earlier, about the cycles, but something at its inception could start off in a very mundane forum, like, you know, a workshop, and you might not even envisage that that will become a publication. It could be an exciting idea that you had, that somebody picked up on and said, you know, you should write something about this, like, develop it further. It's something interesting. I've had that before where I've said something, and someone came back to me and said, 'Why don't you write more about that?' We were very intrigued, and I took that on board, and I did, and I developed something very long, sort of journal article first, which then got good reception. And out of that, I now am slowly putting together a whole archive together. So in political theory, it's on a particular thinker, and eventually, once I collate enough material from the archive, I hope to do a book project. So that's long term. It's a very long term, and it started off with just like a spark, where I mentioned I had come across something, and I thought this was really interesting. So that's one form of patience. And I think the other form of patience is what we've just been talking about now, whether it's in the co-authoring relationship you're going to have with the other person, not to give up, to have sort of good communication, whether it's patience with the actual process of being rejected or being asked to revise and resubmit, or even when you're having to do minor corrections, because we don't anticipate that when we get minor corrections back, like I've had, sometimes I think, oh, this was great. This was exactly the response that I wanted. But then I realised that the few comments that I got were very finicky, and they were expecting me to do something that I really I mean, I remember once I thought this very tangential to the paper, but they asked me to include it, and it required me to read up for a few weeks on something else. But when I read up, then I went down another rabbit hole, and I said, Okay, I now see what the reviewer was asking me to do. This would actually be quite enriching to the paper itself, so I'm going to include this in a footnote.

So there's the patience and actually reading these comments, have your initial reaction, by all means, and then maybe come back to it as well. And it might take some extra research.

Well, absolutely. And I think just rushing through anything can be quite destructive.

And Fred, what about you?

I mean, I totally agree with a lot of what has been said about patience and also openness, that you want to be open to the feedback that you get, open to share your

own ideas as well, to get that feedback in the first place. I think one thing that I would say that I've learned through the process of publishing is about a way of conceiving it as a conversation that you're joining, as opposed to a sort of notice board where you put your ideas up and then they're commented upon. Joining into the stream of something. Yeah, and that has a lot of implications that I think are really important. And for example, one is that you need to have a real awareness what is already going on in that conversation. So it's really important to read very widely and understand what these different outlets are doing. Each outlet being a different conversation, maybe, or a different room that you have to enter and understand, what are the norms, what are the topics and that takes time, and that's where patience is important as well.

I love that. So we've got this patience idea, but also recognising and this probably gels with other people, I think, who are listening that you got into this because you want to be part of this intellectual conversation that's going on. You're not just throwing it out there, and so that will steer your behaviour in certain ways as well. Okay. Thank you so much, both of you, for joining us today.

Thank you so much for having me. Thank you for having me.

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