

Publishing Professional Interview

Jessicah A. Jensen

Biography

Jessicah A. Jensen is in her second year of the MPS in Publishing program, and serves as the Marketing Lead for the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing* (GWJEP) at George Washington University, where she combines her passions for publishing, communication, and ethical inquiry. Originally from Utah and now based in Boston, she earned her Bachelor's degree before spending five years working as a paralegal—an experience that deepened her appreciation for integrity, precision, and the power of



language to shape justice and understanding. The publishing industry has always had a place in her heart, and it only seemed right to pursue a career in it. Her transition into publishing reflects her conviction that stories and scholarship can serve as catalysts for change. At the GWJEP, she is dedicated to amplifying diverse voices and exploring the intersection of technology and ethics in modern publishing. When she is not crafting campaigns or connecting readers with new ideas, she enjoys discovering local bookstores, learning from peers, and championing accessible, thoughtful discourse—one publication at a time.

What does ethics in publishing mean to you?

This is such a loaded question! It means many things to me. Ethics in publishing involves recognizing that every editorial and business decision carries cultural responsibility. The industry is not just about producing and distributing content. I believe you cannot have the publishing industry without ethics, as they go hand in hand. Our industry is about shaping stories, voices, and ideas that define how we understand ourselves and others. Ethical publishing requires commitment to integrity, transparency, and inclusivity at every stage of the process. At its core, ethics in publishing is about stewardship, being a careful, conscious participant in the circulation of knowledge, stories, and identities. This entails understanding that publishing is not neutral and choosing to act in ways that promote empathy, justice, and intellectual honesty. Everyone may view these issues differently, which is part of the industry's beauty.

What recent ethical topics in publishing are you interested in and why?

There are many ethical issues in publishing, but one that interests me most is editorial independence, the effect of political pressure, and censorship. There is a strong trend of publishers in academic or trade sectors and editors being caught between legal risks, public opinion, staff pressures, and political forces. An example of this is publications being dropped or delayed because of perceived ideological conflicts or similar pressures from governments. There is a lot of tension between managing risk and advocating for certain views. This topic is very personal to me because I have extensive experience in the legal field, and witnessing what is happening in our industry right now makes me more aware of what might be being hidden or suppressed in publications.

How would you describe your experience with the journal? What is something you would like to see the journal do in the future?

My experience with the journal so far has been outstanding! I enjoy it immensely, and every moment I spend working on it feels incredibly rewarding. I've appreciated the chance to gain more practical experience and deepen my knowledge in the field of publishing, especially in the area of marketing. Leading the marketing team has been a particularly enjoyable aspect of my involvement, as it allows me to apply creative strategies to promote our journal effectively. I've taken great pride in helping to develop and implement innovative ways.

Our marketing committee has launched some engaging social media segments, such as interactive polls, behind-the-scenes content, and member spotlights, which are all aimed at attracting more audience members and increasing engagement with our journal. Blending my passion for publishing and social media has truly been a rewarding experience, and I am excited about the potential for further growth. I would love to see the journal continue to expand its social media presence across multiple platforms, such as Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn, to reach a broader audience and attract even more high-quality submissions from diverse authors worldwide. I believe that with continued effort and innovative ideas, the journal can establish a stronger digital footprint and become a leading voice in our field.

How has ethics in publishing influenced your job/career/profession? How has it influenced your education/learning?

Ethics in publishing have affected my profession in several ways. I have worked as a paralegal for over six years, and I have noticed significant impacts, for example, in the areas of transparency and accountability in legal information. Ethical standards have pushed the legal industry to become more transparent in how legal information is created, edited, and distributed. Legal publishers must now maintain strict accuracy and citation ethics, as their content directly impacts case outcomes, compliance, and the policymaking process. This is just the tip of the iceberg of how the ethics in publishing affect so much around us. It has also impacted my education and learning by shaping the quality, reliability, and diversity of the information I encounter daily. By fact-checking content, crediting authors properly, and avoiding plagiarism, I can learn from trustworthy, well-balanced materials that include diverse perspectives. On the other hand, unethical publishing also has an impact on the spread of false information, exploitation of creators, or silencing marginalized voices, which can distort my education, limiting what I can learn and how I understand the world.

Is there an ethics in publishing topic that you've not seen tackled by the journal that you'd like to see covered?

Yes, there are several issues. One that I am personally noticing is the lack of disability representation and advocacy in the publishing industry. There is a significant lack of education and responsibility within the industry regarding disability representation. Something needs to change, starting with better education on how to effectively advocate for these individuals. Another rising

topic is fanfiction, as many fanfiction authors are transitioning to traditional publishing, and it appears we are beginning to revisit the guidelines related to fanfiction. I could keep going! I have so many ethical topics that cross my mind every day.

As the Lead for the Marketing Committee, how do you ensure that the marketing committee upholds the journal's ethical mission?

As the Marketing Committee lead, I must ensure our team follows and upholds the journal's ethical mission. I do this by regularly emphasizing our mission and making sure we stay true to it. Our team's progress depends on this mission. We also ensure that every marketing campaign aligns with the mission so anyone who sees our content can understand it clearly. Additionally, I have worked closely with John Warren to understand his goals for the journal and have made sure to adhere to them.