

Publishing Professional Interview

Gwendolyn Harrison

Biography

Gwendolyn Harrison is in her second year in the MPS in Publishing program at George Washington University, and she is currently serving as the Editorial Committee Lead for the *GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing*. She graduated from the University of Mary Washington with a bachelor's degree in English and Spanish in 2022 and has been working full-time as a copywriter and editor in the DC area ever since.



What does ethics in publishing mean to you?

To me, ethics in publishing is all about setting the highest standards for transparency, integrity, diversity, and reliability in the publishing world. I feel that if publishers raise these standards for themselves, they will not only attract more authors but also a wider audience.

How would you describe your experience with the journal?

I am still very new to the journal, but so far I am loving how communicative everyone is from every committee. It is also empowering to see everyone being so excited about working on this latest edition. I have really enjoyed getting to know the rest of the Editorial Committee, as well as the other committee leads and seeing how everybody's collaborative efforts move the journal forward.

What drew you to the Editorial Committee?

I was primarily drawn to the Editorial Committee because I aspire to be a copywriter and an editor for magazines and book publishers. I am currently working as a copywriter for a business consulting firm and am really enjoying that experience. However, I wanted to gain hands-on experience with editing for a publication and knew that working with this committee would be an excellent way to do so.

What are the biggest ethical concerns you consider when editing a piece that has been submitted to the journal?

I am a very vocal critic of the unethical use of AI in most professional settings, especially in publishing. In fact, I am doing my Ethics in Publishing capstone project on this very subject. As somebody who works with AI every day in my 9 to 5 job, I've seen firsthand how it can really become a problem by creating copy with inaccurate or redundant information, not considering context, or completely plagiarizing other studies and articles. I think we are seeing this becoming a persistent issue in the publishing industry. While selecting and editing new manuscripts for the journal, I want to make sure that we are keeping the process as human as possible from our end. If committee members feel that AI can help save them time, it's certainly something that I think we should be open to. However, I think it is still critically important that the final products are always looked over and edited by us.

What type of articles or submissions are you generally most excited to work on, and why do you enjoy them the most?

I am very excited to work on submissions that tackle the issue of diversity within the publishing industry. I think that this is such an important subject, especially now, and I am curious to see all of the different ways that authors will discuss it in their work. I would enjoy working on these the most because I think there are so many different lenses that we can look at this issue through, such as acquisition processes, representation in publishing houses, or cover design, to name a few. I am very excited to see what authors have to say about this.

Are there lessons you've learned working with the journal that you will carry forward into your publishing career?

Absolutely. My experience with the GWJEP is helping me to understand the production flow of a real journal from editing manuscripts all the way to publication. I am seeing just how many small but critical steps are involved and it has really given me much more respect and appreciation for the process. I will definitely carry this with me as I move forward in my career.