

Student Interview

Rachael Rhine Milliard

Biography



A former English teacher, US Army Field Artillery Officer, and current stay-at-home parent of three highly energetic, beautiful children, Rachael Rhine Milliard (she/her) started editing full-time in 2021. She has a master's degree in diplomacy (MDY) from Norwich University and will complete her MPS in Publishing from the George Washington University in December 2024. She also has a copyediting certification from ACES and Poynter. While attending GW, Rachael joined the Editorial and Content Committees for the GW Journal of Ethics in Publishing. She is deeply

passionate about the written word and making others' prose shine—when she's not playing taxi, cook, nurse, and counselor to her brood. She is an active member of the PTA who enjoys dancing, traveling with the family as much as possible, reading, throwing pots, crocheting, knitting, and writing. In 2017, she published an article on land rights in the East China Sea. She is currently working on her debut novel.

What does “ethics in publishing” mean to you?

For me, ethics in publishing is about applying the best practices of being human to the world of publishing. It is about encouraging all the best human traits

and applying them to the practical profession of publishing, which is one of the most powerful vehicles of influence in the world. It is important to me that not only is there equal representation in the stories we tell ourselves, but also that marginalized populations are given an opportunity to shape the most influential profession on the planet. Publishers of books, academic journals, news media, social media content, and government resources hold the power to influence the course of human history and socio-political change. Those within the industry must act with integrity and a view to benefit humanity.

How would you describe your experience with the journal?

My experience with the journal has been amazing. I have the best team members on both committees, and I've learned so much from all of them. The staff leads are fabulous mentors. All of my interactions and work I've been privileged to do has greatly informed my interactions with my freelance clients.

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

Something that has piqued my interest since joining the MPS in Publishing program and the GWJEP is APCs in OA publishing. In scholarly pursuits, it is "publish or perish" for many students and faculty. The Gold OA model of academic publishing is extremely predatory. While the public can freely access OA work, high APCs limit who can publish to established and wealthy individuals and institutions.

What lessons have you learned that you want to carry forward into your publishing career?

I have been blessed with two separate experiences with the journal. There are practical lessons I will take with me to my work after I graduate. Perhaps the most important thing I've learned from both committees, from the leadership I've served under, and from my teammates is that it is okay to care for ourselves first. I've always known that you can't pour from an empty cup, but achieving the balance of it has always confounded me. I have watched everyone on these committees and at GW be empathetic, understanding, and forgiving. And it is beautiful. They modeled a healthy prioritization of their time and energy. It has changed my approach to my life, personal and professional. I've never seen such empathy in leadership; it is a beautiful, wonderful thing. I only hope I can be successful in carrying this forward.

How do your personal ethical values influence the selection of books for review or the tone and direction of interviews?

I strive always to be professional and fair. Empathy, kindness, and doing no harm are guiding principles in my life. As such, I read the books from the review list (which is also the reading list for the GW Publishing Book Club) with an open mind and humility. I ask what I can learn. And the answer is usually, A LOT! When it comes time to write the reviews, I try to highlight the parts of the books that were most meaningful to me personally or professionally and also relate to the topic at hand—ethics in publishing. The same is true of interviews. I try to make sure I am respectful and professional. I relate where I can with the interviewee and listen with an open mind. I think we all learn best from others when we take our ego out of it.

What are your hopes for the future of the Content Committee as the journal continues to grow and evolve?

My hope is that more passionate people will join the committee and help it keep moving in a good direction. I'd love to see debates and difficult topics. I'd also love to see a blog with current ethics stories published and commented on. Eventually, I think it would be great if the committee could foster a place of civil debate on ethics topics of the day.

What do youz enjoy most about working on content, and how do you feel it contributes to the journal's mission? How do you go about making “ethics in publishing” into content that is accessible and interesting to those without a publishing background?

I enjoy the working relationships we've built. But as to our work, we're just getting started. Certainly, the work we've already done helps illustrate the values of the people involved in the journal and its publication. We've also tried to raise diverse voices through the book reviews we've published. But I'm very excited about the innovations to come. It is my hope that they will create a wonderful space to debate complex, ethical topics in the world of publishing. In these ways, we also try to make ethics in publishing accessible to more than just publishing professionals.