

Emily Hoyle and Angela Towers FSA co-chair application, January 2021

## Mission statement

This is a joint mission statement written to express our interest in the co-chair positions for the Feminist Study Association UK and Ireland following the resignation of the current co-chairs, Dr Laura Clancy and Dr Sara De Benedictis. As passionate feminist scholars and activists we are dedicated to the FSA mission of advancing feminist and gender-related research, teaching and studies both at home and internationally. We believe in honouring the legacy of the FSA while furthering the inspirational work of the current co-chairs Dr Clancy and Dr De Benedictis to align FSA with contemporary feminist values, progress the membership through accessibility and widen the network to include both academic and non-academic communities. We support the co-chairs decision to reflect the necessary inclusion of feminist researchers through the name change while maintaining an openness to feminisms by not subscribing to one definition or understanding of feminism. Our aim is to retain the commitment to professional issues relating to feminist, gender-related and women's studies within higher education as the core focus of the FSA; and will continue the current initiatives including the grant and prize schemes, blog, newsletter, mailing list, events, conferences, webinars, and social media presence. We believe the FSA supports the membership through appropriate interventions in contemporary social debates and responding to issues in higher education related to feminist and gender-related research, teaching and studies as well as supporting institutions/centres who work towards furthering equality. We will continue the non-partisan stance. Our agenda for the future of FSA is sustain the solid infrastructure designed and secured by the previous co-chairs and use this to bring in new membership while supporting current members, raise the visibility of the FSA, highlight the transhistorical relationship of feminist activism, praxis and scholarship, and extend the network by engaging with other associations, centres, non-academic communities and grassroots activism. We are of the belief that feminist and gender-related research and pedagogies in higher education can be an intervention into exclusionary historical institutional practices and knowledge production and this itself is feminism in action. This is a central principle to our work as PhD researchers; Emily through citation practice, interventions into future making worlds, and studying power in the transhumanist

imaginary, and Angela through archiving feminist movements through time and space, telling stories of feminist successes, and engagement with grassroots activism. Our hope is to create a supportive and safe community in the FSA that will be beneficial to all members and in turn will advance feminist research.

In addition to the FSAs current objectives, more specifically below are some ideas we would aim to build:

- The formation of a steering group to provide expertise, to help guide the mission of the FSA, and to facilitate the delivery of its core objectives.
- Design and implementation of a robust benefits programme for our members, to increase both the membership base and the engagement, this would include things such as the opportunity to showcase publications, as well as discounts on events and merchandise.
- Facility for the FSA community to feedback to the organisation regarding emerging areas of importance, and to create a sense of collaboration. For example: the facility to suggest topics for events and webinars, making it more collaborative between the membership and committee.
- The creation of an FSA merchandise line to enhance the recognition of the organisation and provide a more interesting dimension to membership benefits, and the design of an email signature to denote membership, helping to raise awareness of the organisation amongst feminist scholars.
- The circulation of contemporary feminist work, with a virtual promotions campaign, where we will share and promote the work of members through social media channels.
- “Reading out loud” publications forum: expanding on Feminist Wednesdays we would like to offer a signal boosting programme, allowing members to share and discuss their new and recent publications, through a periodic ‘café’ style event, which could take place either online or offline to give scholars the opportunity to share and disseminate their work within the Feminist Studies Association membership forum.

## Who are we?

Emily Hoyle

I am currently a third year PhD student at Lancaster University working at the intersection of cultural studies of science and technology, gender studies, and feminist technoscience. The title of my thesis is 'Imagining techno-transcendence; power and culture in the transhumanist imaginary.' Since the start of my PhD, I have sat as the postgraduate (PG) representative on the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) committee for the sociology department at Lancaster University. This position has granted me the opportunities to engage with the Athena Swan process, engage in discussions regarding EDI related issues and speak on behalf of PGs and general teaching assistants in the department. This has given me the experience of committee meetings, how agendas get set, the delegation of roles and responsibilities and how to maintain equality as a core principle in institutional academic settings. I am also one of two seminar tutors for the first-year undergraduate module 'GWS.101: Gender and Women's Studies: Identities, Inequalities and Politics' run by the sociology department at the university. This is my second year teaching the course and I am passionate and committed teacher. I believe the introduction of GWS that is interdisciplinary and intersectional to first years is not only key to shaping knowledge and practice but gives students the ability to apply critical thought to everyday interactions. Teaching is a rewarding experience, not only has this given me the ability to disseminate feminist theory through facilitated discussions, raised my understanding of the learning process but I enjoy the opportunity to refresh my knowledge of feminist activism, theory and practice. This is similar to my work on the DK Publishing book *Feminism Is...* I had to communicate feminist ideas, events, complex theory to a young audience. Published in 2019 this reference book is targeted to a global audience of 13-16 year olds. I am one of four writers, I contributed ten spreads on topics such as 'can men be feminists?', 'becoming invisible' and 'the beauty industry.' A proud moment is after a discussion with the editor explaining that I felt the original brief of 'global sisterhood' would better be considered through Chandra Talpade Mohanty's concept of 'feminism without borders' and as such I was commissioned to write a spread on the topic and 'feminism without borders' is now on the cover. My involvement with *Feminist Movie Mondays* for the Centre of Gender and Women's Studies at Lancaster University, *Feminism Is...* as well as my years of experience as

a copywriter has equipped me with the ability to meet deadlines even if they have a tight turn around, communicate and work with a team, take and act on feedback; I also have experience of managing a team of copywriters as I had a senior role at ASOS.com. In 2016 I launched Good Blood, a passion project aimed at smashing the stigma surrounding menstruation through discussion and visibility. Good Blood launches period focused merch that raises money for charity and bringing with it the opportunity to work with the company TOTM on their period powerful campaign. I apply to this role as a conscientious, dedicated feminist scholar with the knowledge and experience that I believe makes me an appropriate candidate.

Angela Towers

I am a feminist scholar committed to the future of feminist studies. I graduated from Lancaster University in 2018 with an MA in Gender and Women's Studies. I am currently working as a Graduate Teaching Assistant whilst completing my PhD at Lancaster, where I am researching the legacies of digital feminist initiatives and the contours of the 4th wave. I came to feminist studies through grass roots feminist activism, with an innate understanding that the productive relationship between the two is vital for the envisioning of alternative futures. As part of my activist work, I have been involved in a mixture of initiatives, and have a variety of experiences from attending APPG round-tables, to writing press releases, to delivering college workshops, to organising direct actions. I also have extensive experience planning and organising large-scale offline and online events, with the aim of awareness raising. Before my academic career I worked as both an administrative manager and a PA, as well as volunteering for various feminist campaigns giving me a range of organisational experience for example, chairing meetings, writing and disseminating minutes, filing financial reports, bringing together multiple organisations under one objective, and communicating complex ideas to large groups of people within a small time-frame. More recently I was involved in the Development of Arctic Basecamp, a yearly Arctic science summit held in Davos at the World Economic Forum with the aim of drawing attention to the effects of global warming in the Arctic, and the effects this will have on the global economy, which Davos represents. The initiative consisted of a basecamp-style pop-up which acted as an events venue by day, and our sleeping quarters by night. In this role,

(as well as camping in sub-zero temperatures!) I developed the brand of the summit from its flagship event in 2017, and was responsible for online marketing related to the events, including social media channels and the creation of the summit website. During the events themselves I was involved in logistics on the ground in Davos, including the shipping and building of the makeshift camp, filming, live-streaming, and interviews with scientists and world business leaders. During this time I got to work alongside the *UN Global Goals* and Climate activists such as *Greta Thunberg* and *Christiana Figueres*. I also designed and ran a virtual week-long event, with a series of interviews and video clips from our team of scientists and climate infographics, to coincide with the *NY Climate Week*, and the *Global Climate Action Summit* in 2018. Prior to beginning my PhD I volunteered for 350.org where I provided training workshops for activists on effective lobbying tactics, as part of 350.org's global divestment campaign, my students went on to successfully lobby their local MP to sign the divestment pledge. With my experiences in mind, I feel like I am a well-rounded, conscientious and passionate candidate for this role.