Title: “Air War, Propaganda, and Woolf’s Anti-Tyranny Aesthetic”

Abstract: In the 1930s, as she witnessed Hitler’s rise to power in Germany and the increasingly militarized rhetoric in her own country, Virginia Woolf struggled with a dilemma: how to reject fascism and patriarchy, which she saw as importantly interconnected, without employing their coercive and autocratic voice. Scholars have concluded that this dilemma rendered *The Years* (1937), the last novel Woolf would publish in her lifetime, circumspect, muted, and even evasive in its politics. I contend that this assessment misses the novel’s striking conjunction of aesthetic and political strategies by which Woolf embedded her critique of fascism and patriarchy within the novel’s narrative form. Charting the shifting resonance of aerial views in Woolf’s oeuvre, I argue that her revisions of the novel draw upon visual perspectives used in Leni Riefenstahl’s film of Nazi propaganda, *Triumph of the Will* (1935) to both represent and subtly undercut the seductive power of authoritarian knowledge.

Biography: Elizabeth F. Evans, Assistant Professor of English at Pennsylvania State University-DuBois, studies the intersections of gendered identities and urban space in modern fiction and culture. She is completing a book on the subject, titled *Liminal London: Gender and Threshold Spaces in Narratives of Urban Modernity,* which examines a critical preoccupation in British writing from 1880-1939 with liminal sites associated with the increasing presence of middle-class women in the public sphere and in public space. Her publications include essays on George Gissing, Amy Levy, and Virginia Woolf, and an edited collection on Woolf’s engagement with urban life and letters, titled *Woolf and the City.* This presentation emerges from her new work on gender, race, national identity, and aerial views in twentieth-century cultural production.