**Virginia Woolf and Ethics**

31st Annual International Conference on Virginia Woolf

June 9-12, 2022

Lamar University (Beaumont, TX, USA)

The 31st annual International Conference on Virginia Woolf takes as its theme "Virginia Woolf and Ethics," and aims to promote conversation about the topic across disciplinary boundaries. We hope to explore Woolf's engagement with specific ethical issues in her writing. These may include, but are not limited to, war and pacifism, human rights, human-animal relations, environmental ethics, bioethics, fascism, empire, patriarchy, racism, and bigotry.

The theme also suggests a reconsideration of Woolf in relation to various ethical approaches. For instance, participants may wish to read Woolf's thought in conversation with care ethics, narrative ethics, moral psychology, moral imagination, moral luck, virtue ethics, deontology, utilitarianism, communitarianism, liberalism, religious or spiritual ethics (Christian, Quaker, Jewish, Buddhist, Indigenous, etc.), or other moral theories or concepts. Papers might address the moral philosophy of Woolf's milieu, including the thought of Russell, Moore, or Leslie Stephen. Participants may wish to consider Woolf's thought with continental theorists such as Levinas, Derrida, Foucault, Irigaray, Kristeva, Badiou and others who address ethical concerns.

We invite participants to consider Woolf in relation to broader ethical considerations, such as the relation of ethics to reading practices (or to literature); ethics of teaching, scholarly community, and academic life; secularism, religion, and/or mysticism in Woolf's thinking; and reading Woolf as an ethical (or social or political) theorist.

What might a Woolfian ethic look like? How might we read Woolf's aesthetic practices in ethical terms (eg. narrative indeterminacy and the cultivation of certain forms of attention, moral imagination, or empathy)? How does Woolf navigate competing demands of justice, individual liberty and rights, and collectivity and social responsibility, in her fiction and non-fiction?

Papers on members of the Bloomsbury Group and other associates of Virginia Woolf in relation to the conference theme are also appropriate. We welcome proposals for papers, panels, roundtables, and workshops from scholars, students, artists, and common readers from all backgrounds and fields.

Abstracts of maximum **250 words** for single papers and 500 words for panels, as well as questions, should be sent to [**Virginia.Woolf@lamar.edu**](mailto:Virginia.Woolf@usd.edu) by **January 31, 2022**.

The conference welcomes proposals for presentations in languages other than English to foster a more open exchange at this international conference. A few caveats: the organizers ask that all abstracts and proposals be submitted in English. Also, to ensure a more effective exchange among all participants, we ask that non-English presentations be accompanied by a handout of main points in English as well as (if possible) a PowerPoint presentation in English. Note that Q&A sessions will be conducted in English as well.

Possible topics and approaches may include:

* Ethics and reading, ethics of reading
* Ethical scholarly community and academic life
* Woolf as ethical/social/political theorist
* Human-animal relations, the natural world
* Racism, patriarchy, and bigotry
* The ethics of biography and life writing
* Woolfian teaching, ethics in teaching
* War, pacifism, fascism, empire, human rights
* Narrative practices, reading experiences
* Empathy, regard, attention
* Individuality and collectivity
* Knowledge, reason, objectivity, and certainty
* Secularism, religion, and spirituality
* A range of moral philosophies and concepts (listed above and extending further)