Nineteenth-century world’s fairs inspired a new way of thinking about the future. This view, which Christina Henderson calls the architectural view of time, led U.S. Americans to imagine the future as an urban site being constructed in the (nineteenth-century) present. In this talk, Henderson explores the legacy of world’s fairs and “Woman’s Buildings” on women activists and authors. She argues that two fairs, the 1876 Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia and the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, were crucial to women’s activism at the turn of the century. These fairs influenced writers such as Frances Harper, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Marietta Holley to outline diverse blueprints of ideal worlds that all depended on this concept of a built future.

Christina Henderson is a Ph.D. candidate in the English Department at the University of Connecticut. She has published articles in *MELUS, Children’s Literature*, and the *Southern Literary Journal*. Christina received a research fellowship from Winterthur Museum and Library. She was also selected as the 2013 AETNA Graduate Teaching Award winner by the University of Connecticut’s English Department. Her major advisor is Professor Sharon M. Harris.