The figure of the Victorian governess—desirable, tyrannical, or put upon—has intrigued authors for nearly two centuries. When Henry James wrote *The Turn of the Screw* in 1898, he drew on a rich tradition of governess stories that call gender binaries, class segregation, and Romantic ideals of childhood innocence up for scrutiny. Yet twentieth-century film adaptations of his novella create a new tradition: removing the governess from James’s frame and diagnosing her as a dangerous, sex-starved hysteric. By tracing one text’s lineage of adaptation, this talk examines the shifting ways that writers, readers, and scholars mediate the Victorian era and especially the independent Victorian woman.

**Christiana Salah** is a Ph.D. candidate in the English Department at the University of Connecticut. She has published articles in *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature, Children's Literature, The Journal of Neo-Victorian Studies*, and the centennial critical volume on *Anne of Green Gables*. She is currently completing her dissertation, "The Popular Invention of the Victorian Governess, 1815-2015," which examines intersections of gender and class in the Victorian literary imaginary and its afterlife. Her major advisor is Professor Margaret Higonnet.