



For Immediate Release

February 12, 2008

Media Contact: Nancy Hawley
Tryon Palace Communications & Marketing
Phone (252) 514-4937
E-mail: nhawley@tryonpalace.org

“CAPTAIN AHAB HAD A WIFE”

NEW BERN---Mark you calendars now to be at Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens on Saturday, February 23 at 2PM, to hear Lisa Norling, PhD discuss her new prize-winning book, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife*, which emphasizes the significance of the sailors and ships that linked America and the rest of the world for centuries. Norling examines gender dynamics in the American whaling industry from the eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries.

Captain Ahab Had a Wife describes the functional interdependence of maritime men's and women's work and situates this within the ideological interdependence of masculine and feminine gender roles. Professor Norling's findings show how the dramatic growth of the industry and the restructuring of life at sea and onshore both reflected and reinforced evolving concepts about sexual difference, love, and marriage.



2 of 3

Dr. Lisa Norling's scholarship is located at the fascinating but previously unexplored intersection of maritime history and women's history. Her prizewinning study, *Captain Ahab Had a Wife: New England Women and the Whalefishery, 1740-1870*, explores gender dynamics in the American whaling industry from the 18th through the 19th centuries.

Norling's findings show how the dramatic growth of the whaling industry and the restructuring of life at sea and onshore reflected and reinforced evolving concepts about sexual difference, love, and marriage. As United States history incorporates international and comparative perspectives, Norling equally emphasizes recognition of the significance of the sailors and ships that for centuries linked America to the rest of the world.

Captain Ahab Had a Wife, published by the University of North Carolina Press (2000), has won the Frederick Jackson Turner Award for the best first book in American history, from the Organization of American Historians; the John Lyman Award for the best book in American maritime history, from the North Atlantic Society for Oceanic History; and the L. Byrne Waterman Award for outstanding contributions to whales and whaling-related research and pedagogy in the arts, humanities, and sciences, from the Kendall Institute of the New Bedford Whaling Museum.

3 of 3

Tryon Palace

HISTORIC SITES & GARDENS

Norling is also coeditor of the anthology *Iron Men, Wooden Women: Gender and Seafaring in the Atlantic World, 1700-1920* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), and an associate professor of history at the University of Minnesota.

The public is invited to attend this free lecture, which will be held in the Tryon Palace Visitor Center auditorium. If you would like more information about this or other events, go to www.tryonpalace.org or call 252.514.4900 or 1-800-767-1560. # # #



Administered by the Division of State Historic Sites, Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens (www.tryonpalace.org) is part of the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, a state agency dedicated to the promotion and protection of North Carolina's arts, history, and culture. The Cultural Resources theme for 2008 is "Telling Our Stories." For more information, visit www.ncculture.com.