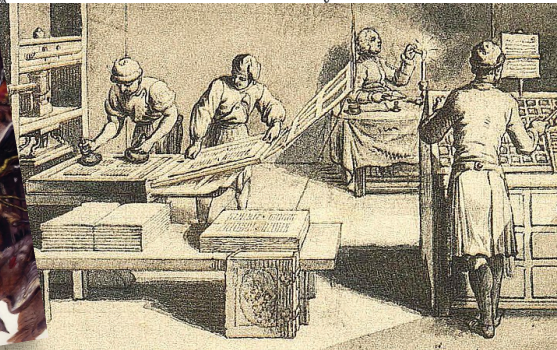
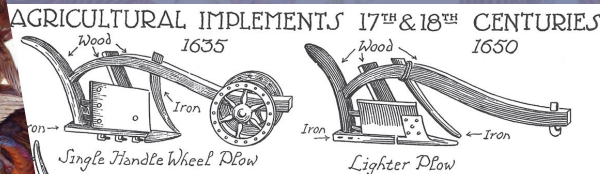
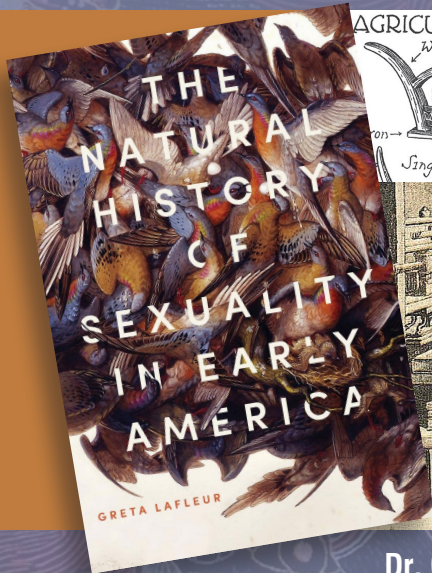


14TH ANNUAL PAUL LYONS MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES

DR. GRETA LAFLEUR

NOTES FROM THE COLONIAL CASTRATION ARCHIVE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2024 | 4:30 PM | CAMPUS CENTER THEATRE



Dr. Greta LaFleur, Associate Professor
and Graduate Director of American Studies at Yale University.

Studies of early American sexuality tend to focus on the voluminous 19th century discourses on sex and gender. But what of earlier periods? How was sex, sexuality and gender understood and experienced in colonial America? Dr. LaFleur's work engages the incredible breadth and diversity of sexual cultures and subcultures in "the primordial ooze of sexuality's early modernity." At a time when the reality and legitimacy of LGBT, queer and trans experiences are being denied – through book bans, gender affirming care bans, "Don't Say Gay" laws and more – LaFleur restores the historicity of individuals and communities often presented as having no past at all.

Dr. LaFleur's talk highlights two collections of eighteenth-century materials: a set of pleas for commutations of death sentences filed by Black boys and men in Connecticut, asking for castration in lieu of being executed; and a set of reports published in periodicals during the same time of free white New Englanders who chose self-castration as a form of autonomous body modification. These historical records, read together, help trace state anti-Black violence and racialized sexual discipline alongside transgendered enfranchisement and sexual freedom in early America.

The Master of Arts in American Studies thanks its supporting partners, AFRI, HIST, LITT, PHIL, POLS, SOAN plus additional co-sponsors WGSS, MAHG and SOWK.

A reception with light refreshments will follow in the CC Theater Gallery.