

# Department of History Colloquium presents

**Guest Speaker:**

**Dr. Annette Timm**  
(Department of History,  
University of Calgary; Editor -  
Journal of the History of  
Sexuality)

**Day/Date:**  
**Friday, October 25, 2019**

**Location: C-674**

**Time: 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.**

**Everyone is  
welcome**



## **Lebensborn: Mysticism, Racism and Sexual Myths about the Nazis**

**Abstract:** This talk will summarize findings from a forthcoming book project about the history of Heinrich Himmler's Lebensborn homes.

Lebensborn was a network of maternity homes constructed across Germany and occupied Europe between 1938 and 1945 with the goal of preventing single mothers from aborting babies who met Nazi criteria for racial purity. Although this was an entirely voluntary program that rewarded racial insiders, from its inception until today, Allied propagandists, novelists, filmmakers, journalists and even some historians have depicted Lebensborn as a system of “breeding farms” that facilitated rape, forced pregnancy, forced adoptions, medicalized match-making and lascivious encounters. Dr. Timm will describe the origins of the Lebensborn myth and then counter it with the argument that the homes are best understood as a proving ground for an ersatz religion that Himmler was developing for wider implementation after German victory.