

## Marginal presences: unorthodox belief and practice, 1837–2014

Inspired by our extraordinary collections, Senate House Library is pleased to call for paper proposals for a one-day (23 April 2015) symposium on marginal thinkers. The beliefs and lifestyles of those on the margins of society are frequently more revealing of the core values of a culture than its leaders and established interpreters. In their persistent, unobtrusive subcultures, or their prominent demands for reform and re-evaluation, such men and women hold up a mirror to those hegemonic structures from which they deviate. The Library is rich in the personal libraries and archives of many such figures – anti-censorship campaigners, paranormal investigators and practitioners, naturists, political radicals, and campaigning teetotallers. To honour their discounted unorthodoxy, we are delighted to hold a one-day symposium on the life, work and impact of the marginal minority with their restless doubts, behavioural vagaries and utopian dreams, existing alongside an unbelieving, heedless culture.

Proposals for 20 minute papers are invited from researchers from any discipline, including librarians, archivists, biographers, literary scholars, psychologists, theologians and historians of all areas of interest. Subjects may include, but are by no means restricted to:

- Societal drives to redefine marginal practices as deviant, sinful or criminal
- Public ridicule or loss of professional standing as a result of marginal beliefs
- Religious or spiritual outsiders, from Wicca to Satanism
- Demands for sexual or marital freedoms beyond legal and cultural tolerance
- Studies of attempts to disseminate unorthodox views through print or other media
- The co-opting of mainstream discourses to support irregular beliefs, such as medical science in anti-inoculation campaigns
- Those who claim to speak for the non-human, whether animal or ethereal
- The contentious celebrity or self-mythologizing of the unorthodox prophet

Proposals should be received by *Monday 9 March 2015*, and should be sent, along with any enquiries, to [shl.officeadmin@london.ac.uk](mailto:shl.officeadmin@london.ac.uk)

<http://senatehouselibrary.ac.uk/2014/12/18/marginal-presences/>