

- 8 I was once at a conference giving a paper and I had these two quite eminent historians in my field questioning me, what, there can't be working class people, you can't be right, and I said, well of course I'm right, you know, what would you think, a rag sorter and a dock worker, what would you call them? And they kept saying Oh no but they couldn't be joining a religion, that makes no sense. And it was their a priori category: working class people are not religious. Therefore these people can't be religious and I actually found it quite fascinating that they were adamant that I was wrong and they walked away shaking their heads, she's wrong, she's wrong. And I just thought, well, that's very interesting, that you cannot imagine that and to me that's a real diminishment of the intellectual complexity of working-class people in Victorian England.
- 9 Pamela Walker, thank you very much for talking to me, thank you. Pamela Walker's book is called: *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down*, and it's published by the University of California Press. Let's now turn to some of the questions about poverty prompted by that discussion on the Salvation Army. I mean we may find it difficult nowadays to subscribe to the idea the poor can only improve their lives by an act of religious conversion, but but how many of us might rather more readily go along with the notion that poverty will never be eradicated by the welfare state, with mere allocation of government money, it also requires a positive individual effort, a proper sense of commitment if you like, or a reasonable amount of ambition or a certain degree of personal responsibility, all that from the poor themselves.
- 10 I'm now joined by Dr Graham Bowpitt, who's senior lecturer in social policy, in the department of social sciences at Nottingham Trent University, and by Julian LeGrand, who's Richard Titmuss Professor of social policy at the LSE.
- Graham, ehm I was talking there about the moral component in the Salvation Army's approach to poverty. Now you you've studied the 19th century – how much did the Salvation, how much did the Salvation's Army's attitude to poverty, how much was it shared by other organisations?
- Oh, eh they were the finest example of a substantial tradition in eh voluntary philanthropy that that went back right through the 19th century. Eh I mean it has been estimated something like three-quarters of all philanthropy was evangelical in its eh motivation and impulse, ehm so they were if you like a culmination of that kind of tradition.
- 11 I read in your work about the Charitable Organisation Society, which was established I think round about 1869.
- Yes.
- Tell me a little bit about that, because this brought charities together, to try to work out ways in which the poor might be helped.
- Well, that's what it tried to do, but failed miserably. The Charity Organisation Society believed that everyone had it within themselves to to have the eh the capacity to overcome adversity by sheer moral fortitude, and therefore they were very much to blame if they didn't tap into that. Ehm now the evangelical churches didn't believe that, they believed that that ehm a person could only come out of their eh their their state of of moral eh eh degeneracy by the intervention of Jesus Christ and and that was the the fundamental difference.