

Charles Booth and Poverty in London

Keyword: Poverty = having little or no money or possessions

In 1885 Charles Booth became angry about the claim that 25% of the population of London lived in terrible poverty. Booth decided to investigate the amount of poverty in the East End of the city and recruited a team of researchers that included his cousin, Beatrice Potter. The result of Booth's investigations, a book called 'Labour and Life of the People', was published in 1889. Booth's book revealed that the situation was even worse than previously thought. Booth's research suggested that 35% rather than 25% were living in poverty.

Booth now decided to expand his research to cover the rest of London. He spent his evenings and weekends working and he and his small team of researchers made at least two visits to every street in the city. Over a twelve year period (1891 to 1903) Booth published 17 volumes of 'Life and Labour of the People of London'. In these books Booth argued that the government should take responsibility for those living in poverty. One of the ideas that Booth had was to introduce Old Age Pensions to help the elderly get out of poverty.

Fulham has always had a reputation for women's drink but it is not growing worse. He has known of cases of wives of small clerks putting down spirits as groceries but they are not frequent. Men's drunkenness is slightly decreasing.

There are quite enough licences to supply Fulham's wants. He will be glad to see no new ones granted even when all the vacant land is built over.

As a whole he said 'Fulham goes out to work & Battersea comes in'.

Gambling is on the increase, both street & clubs. The foreigners attracted by the Earls Court Exhibition have encouraged clubs & club gaming.

He has only known 3 cases of children being drunk at or under 14 years of age in his 26 years service.

The Duke's Head at the corner of High St. Fulham was sold the other day for over £20,000 & the lowest priced full house at being £15,000 by the Old Race at

Fulham has always had a reputation for women's drinking but it is not growing worse. He (the Police inspector) has known of cases of wives ... putting down spirits (gin, vodka etc) as groceries but they are not frequent. Men's drunkenness is slightly decreasing.

There are quite enough (pub) licences to supply Fulham's wants, the police are glad to see no new ones granted even when the recent land is built over. As a whole he said 'Fulham goes out to work and Battersea comes in'.

Gambling is on the increase both in streets and clubs. The foreigners attracted by the Earls Court exhibition here encouraged clubs and club gaming.

He has only known 3 cases of children being drunk at or under 14 years of age in his 26 years service.

The Duke's Head (pub) at the corner of High Street and Fulham Palace Road was sold the other day for over £20,000.

Task - read the paragraphs about Charles Booth and Poverty in London

Copy out the following paragraph filling in the gaps as you go along

Charles _____ was interested in finding out about people living in _____ in London. He had been told that _____% of people were poor but he did not believe this. He recruited a team of _____ to visit the _____ End of London and the found that _____% of people were living in _____. Booth wrote a book called _____ and _____ of the _____. Over a _____ year period Booth and his team visited every street in the city _____ times. He published _____ volumes of the book.

Task - read the entry from Booths book about Fulham

1. Write down 3 examples of the problems that Booth found in Fulham
2. Choose what you think was the most important reason and give a reason why you made that choice.
3. Write a short report about Fulham in 2004 in which you explain some of the problems that are happening today in our area. You might want to include some of the following: graffiti, violence (guns, knives), theft.

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