Hosted by the International Inequalities Institute
The Equality Effect: improving life for everyone

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Hashtag for Twitter users: #LSEDorling
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‘Income inequality is the defining challenge of our time’ (2013)
Barack Obama, then US President

‘Divide the pie correctly’ (2014)
Xi Jinping, China’s Paramount Leader

‘Working for a just distribution of the fruits of the earth... is a commandment’ (2015)
Pope Francis

‘Inequality is sexist’ (2016)
Christine Lagarde, head of the International Monetary Fund

‘Rising inequality threatens the world economy’ (2017)
700 experts at the World Economic Forum in Davos

When world leaders of all persuasions make such stark, unambiguous statements, you would be forgiven for thinking we live in a world in which greater equality is being given the highest priority.

Unfortunately the rhetoric and the reality often do not match up.

The Equality Effect delivers the overwhelming evidence behind these pronouncements, including groundbreaking new research on the correlation between equality and environmental progress.

Backed by statistics throughout and with a sprinkling of witty illustrations, Danny Dorling demonstrates where greater equality is currently to be found, and how we can set the equality effect in motion everywhere.
The Equality Effect: improving life for everyone (including the rich)
Inequality is falling in most countries (OECD income Gini measure by 2014 - latest)
We may be seeing a change in sentiment
The quintile income ratio: note UK/USA (richest countries worldwide, UNDP 2004-2013)

A mixed picture, but the overall falls are greater than the rises
We are slowly becoming more aware of the absurdity of growing inequality.
The quintile income ratio: (poorest countries worldwide, UNDP 2004-2013)

Change since 2004

- **2005-2013 ratio**
- **Decreased from 2004**
- **Increased from 2004**
- **No change**
Milanovic’s elephant is a story that is mostly about rising equality.
Are we at the turn?
The take of the best-off 1% in France and the UK, 1918-2010

The best-off 1% in Germany and Japan, 1900-2010

Years of consecutive data connected by a line. Where no data is shown it is missing for that year.
Social mobility is higher in more equal countries

The take of the best-off 1% in Canada and the US, 1913-2014

Social mobility

Income inequality


Note: This figure has been redrawn from one appearing on the Equality Trust website which was first drawn by Kate Pickett and Richard Wilkinson in 2009 and which has now been redrawn using the most recent data, showing an even closer relationship between the two variables than seen before.
Senses of unfairness are rising
Economic inequality and the mathematics ability of young adults up to age 24, 2012

High inequality makes us more stupid – we become too frightened to learn well
Healthy behaviour and economic inequality: walking and cycling 2006-10

We become too individualistic to be able to organize ourselves well
Economic inequality and meat consumption (excluding fish), 2011

But how all pervasive is the effect?

Meat Consumption (kg per capita per year)

Decile Group 10 to Decile Group 1 ratio

A value of 82 means ≈ eating approx. one beef steak a day every day all year

Related to:
- Advertising
- Stress
- Obesity
- Exercise
- Knowledge
Our attitudes and selves are altered – we behave in more selfish ways.
Economic inequality and waste production (domestic), 2009-2013

Some waste twice as much as others

But they also measure waste better in a few more equitable countries.

And all these measures are being improved.
Global income deciles and associated carbon dioxide emissions, 2015

It is not just aggregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World population arranged by income (deciles)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richest 10%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
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<td>11%</td>
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<td>Poorest 50%</td>
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Riches

Poorest

Poorest 50% responsible for only around 10% of total lifestyle consumption emissions

Oxfam: ‘We consider that the average emissions of a person in the poorest half of the global population are just 1.57 tCO₂ – that equals 11 times less than the average footprint of someone in the richest 10%. The average emissions of someone in the poorest 10% of the global population is 10 times less than that of someone in the richest 10%.’
It alters our capacity to care, it changes how we vote (far right)
Total fertility and income inequality in the year 2000, by continent and country

It affects our reproduction

Note: According to the United Nations’ Economic Commission for Latin America, the decile ratio (that is, the total income for the top 10 percent of wage earners divided by the bottom 10 percent) in Latin America was 45 to 1, whilst that of Cuba was only 4 to 1. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Cuba)

Source: Data is from UNDP report 2004 and worldmapper using table 14 of the UNDP report. Income inequality is the ratio of the income of the richest tenth to the poorest tenth and is drawn on a log scale as the horizontal axis of each graph. The vertical axis of each is average lifetime number of live births per woman.
We acclimatize to inequality
We stop being surprised by hardship

Reasons families find themselves homeless in England, 1998-2015

Source: K Webb, Bringing homelessness to the forefront of the political agenda in England, London, Shelter, 7 October, 2016, nin.tl/katewebb
We let others dominate us
We internalize some effects
This becomes normal
There are many ways out
And ways that have already been taken.
We prioritize bad news

• The Brexit vote and Donald Trump’s victory, over Canada, Austria, The Netherlands, and France.
• Any rise in far-right voting is big news. The falls that happen all the time in that vote usually only receive a footnote after the big event... but so far it is the UK and USA that are odd, and possibly Poland and Hungary.
The rise and fall in nuclear weapons held worldwide, 1945-2015

We can forget what is possible

Source: http://thebulletin.org/nuclear-notebook-multimedia
‘False’ headlines do not help: “Boomtime for billionaires as mega-rich shrug off Brexit anxieties”

Combined wealth of the Sunday Times rich list on May 7th 2017: £658bn, or 14% up in a year.

However the pounds was worth 18% less in April 2017 as compared to a year earlier, in dollars.

So are the rich really getting richer?

.. Ignoring the good news may help the turn occur (see bankers’ pays reports this year...)
We are at a peak of wealth inequality and seeing falling income inequalities.
The alternative is far more attractive
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