For those without perfect eyesight, these are the men above your heads in this room.
'W-e-ll,' replied the Rat, 'let me see. The squirrels are all right. AND the rabbits—some of 'em, but rabbits are a mixed lot. And then there's Badger, of course. He lives right in the heart of it; wouldn't live anywhere else, either, if you paid him to do it. Dear old Badger! Nobody interferes with HIM. They'd better not,' he added significantly.

'Why, who SHOULD interfere with him?' asked the Mole.

'Well, of course—there—are others,' explained the Rat in a hesitating sort of way.

'Weasels—and stoats—and foxes—and so on. They're all right in a way—I'm very good friends with them—pass the time of day when we meet, and all that—but they break out sometimes, there's no denying it, and then—well, you can't really trust them, and that's the fact.'

The Mole knew well that it is quite against animal-etiquette to dwell on possible trouble ahead, or even to allude to it; so he dropped the subject.
Why Geography matters now
(why it matters to me and to Oxford)

1) Geography: Is increasingly important for revealing inequalities, especially in wealth

2) Inequality: Has been rising in terms of health and wealth for a third of a century, but fastest in the last five years (since 2008)

3) Oxford: Is associated with the 1%, the ‘top cornflakes’, but widening inequalities are not in the interest of the vast majority of its students and staff (possibly over 99%)

Have you noticed your position has changed?
Income of the rich 1910-2009, UK

each line does not include the group above, but is the next richest group

- 1908 Wind in the Willows published
- 1934 the two Cutteslowe walls built in time for Christmas
- 1959 the walls were demolished
- 2008 crash, temporary dip?
Today our rising walls are invisible barriers. We don’t need deadly spikes to keep people out.

One of the two Cutteslow walls built to separate adults and children living in different types of housing in Oxford in 1934.
Same data, just another perspective

If there were no income inequality the red line would be at 10%, green at 1%....
I grew up in Oxford, some time after the Cutteslow wall had been torn down but before the motorway to London had been finished; and before it again became as divided a city as it is today.

This map from Olly O’Brien of CASA shows the hierarchy is much the same, but the gaps are now far wider between areas.
Your postcode tells us more and more

When I was growing up in Oxford I used the same underpass to get to school each day.

Years later I saw someone had drawn graffiti on its walls to indicate which entrance and exit lead to what rank of estate.

"good puppies this way - bad puppies that way" were the precise words used.

*Me and my brothers sometime in the 1980s
I am the shy one hiding at the back...*
You cannot easily escape your geography; mine was varied.

But it was not as varied as it is today around the same roundabout:
1) Schools
2) Jobs
3) Incomes
4) House prices
5) and mortality.

Like the UK as a whole, Oxford was more equal.
In Olden Times (80s)

Oxford has always had wide inequalities but around 1991 and before that in the 1980s they were lower than we see today.

Look at how low average equity was in housing 25 to 30 years ago (this is of residents, not landlords).


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Average positive housing equity (£). And Standardized Mortality Ratio (SMR), 100 is national average rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blackbird Leys</td>
<td>-1125</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>18901</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>18975</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Farm</td>
<td>20825</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headington</td>
<td>22403</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>23050</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Cowley</td>
<td>29125</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>29177</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St.Clement’s</td>
<td>29210</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marston</td>
<td>32557</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarry</td>
<td>39045</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iffley</td>
<td>39740</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherwell</td>
<td>41130</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolvercote</td>
<td>65085</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Housing wealth is the total housing wealth for the ward divided by the number of properties in the ward. The figure is negative for Blackbird Leys because of negative equity in 1991.
You can draw places as faces, then colour them in by how areas vote

I was born here, just to the west of the smile in the pink face. And moved to its right cheek!

The pink face looks older because it has smaller eyes. It relied on older industry when this was drawn using 1981 data.

These faces represent parliamentary constituencies. Their colour represents their political complexion and other facial features correspond to other attributes.
Broaden your horizons and what you thought was variety looks bland

The happy pink face was quite an unusual place, not many places near it were like it.

To the north, in the centre of Birmingham, life was more grim.

Where the faces stop smiling is where unemployment was high when I was at school.
Liverpool

Zoom out further and the picture was less rosy again

Birmingham Yardley

Oxford East
We are all partly products of our travels
In 1989 I moved to Newcastle to study and met the people I would later start a PhD with and draw images like this
Making the invisible visible

This map was drawn using data from 1981 and the election results of 1987.

It shows a picture of a divided country that is very reminiscent today. For 99% of the people income inequalities are again similar to what they were shortly after this time. So perhaps all those faces in the south would not be so happy today?
The colour triangle shows the colours for safe parliamentary seats and for marginal seats. The two faces show the extremes of facial features. Eye size shows the proportion of employed people in service industries, Nose size shows the percentage turnout of the electorate. Mouth shape shows the percentage unemployed. The fatness of the cheeks shows the mean housing price. This form of mapping works because things cluster.
Back in the early 1980s people were asked to take a step down, just as they were in 1931 and again as they are asked now.

In Leeds with Phil Rees and colleagues we calculated how many people in 2001 would have to move home if spatial polarization in Britain were to be reduced to the level in 1971. The answer was 3.4%. To get rid of it completely would take 13.3% moving home.

“Sacrifice” by James Francis Horrabin, Plebs Journal, 1931
In 2005 in Sheffield Bethan Thomas and I used the census to assign each neighbourhood a score based on life chances. We found that the middle was dropping out.

This graph shows how near to the UK average neighbourhoods are. If this was normally distributed, you would expect a bell-shaped curve. Instead you find a skewed distribution with the suggestion of twin peaks. An average neighbourhood is becoming less common.
We need less subtle images now

2014: The *85 richest* people in the world have the same wealth as the poorest half of all humanity (Oxfam).

As your zoom in the scale of inequality tends to decrease. Here is a summary for the UK where the 1% have half of all liquid wealth.

We have **not** been one of the world’s or Europe’s largest centres of *net* immigration.

These are images from Worldmapper. The size of each country is proportional to their total net *lifetime* migration. Because this is of net migration, none of the countries on the upper map appear on the lower map which are those with net emigration. Western Europe is purple, and this blob is the UK, dwarfed by the rest of Europe.

Source, worldmapper, 1945-2005

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"Your society’s broken, so who should we blame?"

Should we blame the rich, powerful people who caused it? No, let’s blame the people with no power and no money and these immigrants who don’t even have the vote. Yea, it must be their fucking fault.”

– Iain Banks


Iain Banks, writer, 1954-2013, final interview
We have turned into a country that is rapidly reverting back to its past. By now it is likely that more than a quarter of children in Britain live in families with a private landlord. But we are not becoming more European:

Countries as different as Switzerland and the Netherlands are continuing to reduce inequality, steadily and slowly over time.

Economic insecurity affects education

As economic inequality in the UK rose the countries which make it up began to slip down various international league tables.

Our young adults are now less numerate than their contemporaries in almost all other OECD nations.

This might explain why so few people appear to understand that only 1% of all can ever be in the 1%.

Numeracy levels might explain why it is possible to instigate tax and benefit changes that harm almost everyone but in most cases those beneath you by a little more than you.

However once wage cuts and stagnation are taken into account the 99% have equalized slightly.

Source: http://www.ifs.org.uk/comms/r81.pdf (Figure 3.17)
Who is most affected alters where is hit most by Tax (VAT) and multiple benefit changes

In 2013 the children’s commissioner explained what is happening in the UK due to the nature of cuts and austerity: “Families with children will lose more of their income than families without children. However, lone parents will lose the most out of everyone”.

Geographical comparisons show that those countries which reduced top rate taxes the most since 1960s have seen the 1% gain the most since 1960.

Currently the top 1% take 20% in the USA and near to 15% in the UK.

The global race is run in different ways in different places.

This graph shows how government policies rather than global market forces have changed the status quo in different countries since 1960.

Source: Figure 4 in: http://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1257/jep.27.3.3
Some Thankyous before turning to Oxford

I have written and contributed to many books, but, to be honest, have had an extraordinary amount of help to do so. Anyone who has received an email from me will probably appreciate the obvious need for that.

Tony Champion, Mike Coombes, David Fairbairn, Ludi Simpson and Rachel Woodward.
Thanks for helping with the spelling and showing me where to look

Dave Gordon,  Ron Johnston,  Dave Rossiter,  Rich Mitchell,  Jan Rigby,  Ben Wheeler
And the advanced maths and basic grammar that was beyond me...

...there is always someone who is better than you...

The whole world sized by the profits made from financial exports as measured in 2005. Along with the UK, Luxembourg and Switzerland completely dominate the picture.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/markeaston/2009/04/map_of_the_week_checks_and_the.html

And this is the world, then, by financial imports:
...the thinking

Ben Hennig, Dimitris Ballas, Bethan Thomas, George Davey Smith, and Mary Shaw
And the publishers
And my parents and brothers
So let’s turn to Oxford: stereotypes are often based on some truth: In producing statistics, a bit of lateral thinking can sometimes be quite revealing.
Stereotypes are often based on some truth

Acclaimed author, academic, and working class child, Marshall Berman said of his student days: “The experience of studying at Columbia, Oxford and Harvard was intellectually exciting but socially lonely. They all catered to the rich, to the current and wannabe ruling class, and I felt I didn’t fit in”

Marshall’s 1960s student cohort, in their forties by the 1980s, mostly got to join – if not the ruling class – then at least the top 10% of society by income, which then saw, and partly arranged for themselves to pull away from the rest. That is not happening now. Only the 1% is now pulling away and that group is too small for all but a minority of graduates to fit into.


The names of young women at Oxford, not compared to footballer’s wives and girlfriends, but to the norm.

Head Girls


CALL ME KATE
Adding up all the variant spellings, Katherine is the most popular female name at Oxford by far:

Kathryn Katherine

As it is, the first Katherine is at number 15.

So now we worry again about privilege, as we did in the 1930s

The most prestigious one hundred schools in Britain, 84% of them private, secure 30% of all Oxbridge places. The national debate on higher education is often accused of being dominated by interest in entry to these two universities, but to many in the 1% (the only people with the financial means to be able to afford to seriously influence their chance of a place in those few schools) such entry really matters.

Our increasingly unequal society is tilting the playing field

On any given day a fifth of children in Britain qualify for free school meals, but only one in a hundred of those children get to go to either Oxford or Cambridge University. Given that four private schools (and one highly selective state sixth form college) send more children than do 2000 other secondary schools to these two universities that statistic is hardly surprising. And it reflects not the schools, but the society we have become.


And in the end it is about money

Private education in the UK is much less about an alternative approach to education and far more about segregation and financially loading the dice.

99% of us have reason to worry

We are used to change being gradual, but sometimes you come to a point where the change is sudden, where it is possible to draw a line; the top 1% is such a point.

Income inequality has now reached a new maximum and for the first time in a century even those just below the richest 1% are beginning to suffer, to see their disposable income drop. When you exclude the top 1%, income inequality within the rest of the population, within the 99%, is now lower than at any time since Mrs Thatcher was in power.

Put in economist speak by the Institute for Fiscal Studies last year: “Over the past two decades ... inequality among the bottom 99% has fallen: the Gini coefficient for the bottom 99% was 5% lower in 2011–12, at 0.30, than in 1991”

Thanks to Mark Fransham for these maps.

To begin to bring this to an end take a look at how segregated the city of Oxford itself has become.

NS-SeC is what in the 1930s was called “Class”. The country and city was more equal when the University built more in concrete.
There is an acute housing shortage in Oxford and yet there are areas where up to 5% of all homes are second homes.

A small town retreat for people who have their main residence elsewhere.
Households in some parts of Oxford use twice as much electricity a year as in other areas.

These are average consumption rates for entire areas.

Consumption rates for individual households vary to a far greater extent.
Households in some parts of Oxford use as much as two and a half times more gas a year to heat their homes as in other areas.

It's not because the houses are bigger or more rooms in them are occupied.

It's because they can.
So what is to be done?

The elite is shrinking. It really is now only 1% of the population who are maintaining their very high standard of living. The majority of graduates, even from a university like Oxford, cannot expect to fit within that 1% even if they all wished to only do the kinds of jobs that pay so much. For the rest, for the majority of all our young people, either they should expect to see their standards of living fall in future, while a few continue to consume more and more, or they need to learn how to better control the richest people in our society. Don't control them and first they make the poorest poorer, and then gradually work upwards.
Increasing social exclusion began in places like Oxford in the 1960s (‘tipping out’). Then on a largest scale in Westminster borough in the 1980s and is now expanding.

The maps shows where in Oxford are people most likely to live who do not have 5 GCSE’s A-C or the equivalent for their day (often a school certificate).
GCSE’s now

Today’s school age children are much more than twice as likely to gain basic qualifications in some parts of the city as compared to others and this is just the state school divide. Now *four times* as many children go private in Oxford than nationally.
Our inequality experiment failed

Stefan Collini, the professor of 'English Literature and Intellectual History' at the University of Cambridge explained, when commenting on the latest international education statistics last year, that ‘….countries committed to high-quality comprehensives, such as Finland, yet again come out on top. A stratified and class-segregated school system is not the answer: it’s the problem.’ There is way too much hierarchy and stratification among UK schools. Across the European mainland children are far more used to almost all going to local state schools. That may be because almost every other European country is more economically equal than the UK.


Mortality inequality is large, but lower in Oxford than elsewhere, I suspect because many of the sick cannot afford to stay and people leave the orange areas on retirement. But there is absolutely no need for gaps of this size. They were nowhere near this in the 1980s.
But much has also got better in Oxford as compared to when I was a child. The National Front are largely gone (from here at least), the buses are out of Cornmarket and the city is one of the first to slowdown.

Today 12.5 million people live in areas where cars travel more slowly. Although nationally pedestrian deaths on the road are still rising, but Oxford is ahead.

Pedestrian deaths as a % of all road crash deaths

Thanks to Rod King and Ben Hennig for these slides
A population cartogram shows places with an area proportional to its population, in this case 20mph areas.

Bellow: All causes of death of 17 to 19 year olds, Britain (2006–07 deaths) Total 20 means having a default speed limit of 20mph in residential areas except for selected roads. The causes of death pie chart is for 17 to 19 year olds, but would look similar if it was from age 5 to age 25 years:
And some other things have got worse

Sitting in an area of housing shortage between London and Birmingham Oxford is still not big enough to get its own circle in this diagram. Which is partly why it has London housing prices. And partly why the roads outside are so full.

This is a chart about total equity, not total housing value, so it is about the relative wealth of these places as much as about the cost of housing.
Coming to Oxford has helped me finish off the next book with a little more anger than a Sheffield based academic might... Its on housing

The book begins:

“If people hoarded food on the basis that its value was sure to go up when others began to starve and would pay anything, we would stop their hoarding. But hoarding is now happening with shelter in the most unequal and affluent parts of the world. Increasingly it is the financing of housing that is our biggest problem: the mortgage or rent, the bills and the inequitable taxes.”
Its not just the homeless, the bedroom tax, and tenants losing their rights. The book ends:

“In January 2014 the Financial Times released an analysis showing that over the course of just the last five years the equity of mortgage holders in Britain had fallen by £169 billion while that of landlords had risen by a massive £245 billion. There is no surer sign of a housing crisis turning into a disaster than this” ... (the estate agent Savills used geographical mortgage data at postcode level to determine this).

Landlords' total equity has more than doubled from £384bn a decade ago to £818bn today. The total equity of homeowners with mortgages has dropped by £169bn because on average buyers now borrow more.

K. Allen (2014) Personal Communication on "cash buyers versus mortgages, the Savills analysis", January 16th, published as K. Allen, Home buyers left behind in Britain’s two-speed housing market, Financial Times, January 18th

Oxfam (2012) The Perfect Storm
“Mole knew well that it is quite against animal-etiquette to dwell on possible trouble ahead, or even to allude to it; so he dropped the subject”

But moles are the kinds of animals that like sticking their heads in the ground. **Conclusions:**

1) Geography: Is increasingly important for revealing often invisible inequalities.

2) Inequality: Has been rising in terms of health and wealth for a third of a century, but fastest in the last five years *(too early for published confirmation).*

3) Oxford: Is associated with the 1%, but the vast majority of its students cannot fit within such a small elite; most of its staff see the cost of living crisis most acutely through their housing costs. Those costs are increasingly tribute payments to the 1%.
In 1934 it may have been almost impossible to imagine how many walls could be pulled down in the next 25 years as equality rose.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/oxford/content/articles/2009/03/26/cutteslowe_feature.shtml

Schoolchildren walk through the newly broken down wall in Cutteslow in 1959. Picture courtesy of Jean Stubbs (one of the teachers in the picture).

http://www.eyes-and-ears.co.uk/pennine/details.asp?Title=The%20Cutteslowe%20Walls