

The Divide

[Transcript]

Text on screen: 35 years ago an economic experiment in the US & UK was supposed to provide a better life for all. Today, in both countries, inequality is at its highest level since 1928.

Alden: I'm an only child. Had a great childhood. I have two amazing parents that gave me everything I needed.

Leah: I thought I could fly when I was young. (laughs) I mean we were poor, but there was so much love that we didn't really notice.

Darren: We grew up in an environment where you never really knew what was going to happen and that creates a lot of uncertainty.

Rochelle: Compared to previous generations, we might be a bit skint. We might not be able to afford the best pair of shoes, but we're not living in poverty.

Jen: We make plenty of money, like we make plenty of money. It's not like we won the lottery and moved into a big fancy neighborhood.

Janet: My integrity is what I have. You know, a long time ago, people's word and integrity meant a lot.

Keith: I grew up happy in the Appalachian Mountains. We had good Christmases. We had love. I was normal. But now? (sighs) What the hell am I now? (on telephone) Can you hear me?

Title: The Divide

Barack Obama: No challenge is more urgent. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while a growing number barely get by. Or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot and everyone does their fair share and everyone plays by the same set of rules.

(clapping)

Text on screen: Chicago 1981

Ronald Reagan: These United States are confronted with an economic affliction of great proportions. It is time to reawaken this industrial giant to get government back within its means and to lighten our punitive tax burdens. On these principles there will be no compromise.

(clapping)

Text on screen: UK 1979

Reporter: (to workers) Can you tell us what's happening? Are you going back to work or not?

Reporter: All-out war by the council workers. Another industrial dispute, this time the lorry drivers has led to some panic buying in the shops and markets.

Sir Alan Budd: It felt that whatever the government tried to do, it wasn't necessarily making things better. It might be making things worse. I did think that the free market would produce the resources that could make everybody better off.

Ha-Joon Chang: The argument was that, if you did these things, you will get rid of unemployment. There would be more investment. There would be more income that will trickle down.

Investor: For a hundred thousand Taiwan...

Richard Berman: Without big rewards, people like me are not going to work 15 to 20 hours a day in order to get rich.

Text on screen: New York City 2014

Alden: This is bad.

In graduate school, my doctoral years, I was told psychologists five to 10 years into practicing on average were making \$100,000 a year. And I was like, that sounds awful. That was kind of like my incentive to be the top 1%. I'm not in the top 1% in terms of the world. It's maybe in just psychology world.

I choose this. I choose to drive. I could take a train directly into the city. I just feel like that's one extra time that I could get sick, being in an enclosed area with lots of strange, you know, in the public. I can't afford to be sick at this point of my career. Every day counts while I'm trying to save for this house.

I've got 10 minutes to make it to work with coffee in hand. Get my coffee with espresso shot in it, my red eye. And I walk directly to my office. Usually here five minutes to 11. And turn on the lights here, sit down, and I go bang bang bang, one session after the next. It's non-stop. It's not like I leave. I can't leave this little box of an office. I don't have anyone to talk to. I never need to leave the building other than to get lunch, which I pray to do every once in a while, to get to sit alone at a counter at a diner across the street. And that to me, reading the New York Post, is heaven.

Text on screen: Richmond, Virginia

Leah: Good morning, Miss Dorothy.

Dorothy: Good morning.

Leah: We're rolling again.

Dorothy: Yes, ma'am.

Leah: To the chicken we go!

Leah: (to customers) There you go. / Mashed potato balls? Here you go, sugar. (to kitchen) Chicken fried hot wings. I need hot wings, please.

My day starts on Sunday and doesn't end until the following Friday because once Monday hit I'm up every day, every day just like this. It's a constant battle. Everything creates a little bit of stress.

I'm gonna tell y'all one more time. Don't come in that door no more. Shut the door! (sighs)

When I get in real stress mode, I might smoke about four, five cigarettes, I don't know. But you can't drink on your job. (laughs) 'Cause if that was the case, I'd have a flask at work.

(to customer) We have potato wedges or green beans or sweet loose corn or macaroni and cheese.

Customer: Okay, there's something you said...

Leah: (to customer) Sweet loose corn, macaroni and cheese, potato wedges or green beans.

Customer: Okay...

Leah: Argh! Look! Can you make up your mind what you want? I'm trying to help you, you know. I'm on this end and now help me, please. We doing okay? I know it was a little slight interruption, and I know you bleep them out if you can. (laughs)

Text on screen: 1982

Reporter: In Sunderland, over one in four men are unemployed. A further 600 sackings were announced last week.

Richard Wilkinson: Income differences started widening rapidly from the mid-eighties onwards. The weaker trade unions are the more inequality there is. It's a very striking relationship.

Margaret Thatcher: Today's unemployed are the victims of yesterday's mistakes. But that's the past. The government's getting inflation down, interest rates down, reforming trade union law, cutting regulations, and removing restrictions.

(clapping)

Alan Budd: The balance of power between employers and employees shifted in favor of employers. I think that happened, and I think it was a deliberate result of policy.

Text on screen: Tyneside UK

Rochelle: He'll be in bed when I go to work in the morning. Then he'll probably be in bed when I come home from work at night. And if he's not, I'll not be. If he's up, I'll be going straight to bed anyway.

Javi, I've got to go, darling. Have a nice time.

It's a shame for the kids. They might still be in bed when I go to work. And then when I come home, they're back to bed. I know it just bores the life out of them 'cause they can't do much.

Within the home care sector, zero hours is just the way it works. You just don't know what might happen from week to week, day to day.

Porridge, John. Don't eat it just yet. Let it cool down.

John: Thank you.

Rochelle: You're alright now.

John's Wife: Have you had your tablet?

John: Yeah.

Rochelle: If somebody dies or somebody goes into hospital, it's awful. But you're thinking of yourself because you're going to lose a lot of hours if you don't get something to fill that gap.

Anything else I can do for you while I'm here?

John: No, that's fine. Thanks again.

John's Wife: Thanks very much.

John: We'll see you tomorrow?

Rochelle: Yeah. I'm probably going to be a bit late tomorrow. Mind, it's Saturday.

John's Wife: It's alright. We'll be here.

Rochelle: The way services are commissioned out, people are seen as units for sale, sold to the lowest bidder. Half an hour to get somebody up, get them washed, get them dressed, give them their meds, and have a meaningful conversation. It doesn't work.

Filmmaker: How long have you got for this one?

Rochelle: I'm going to be 20, 25 minutes in here.

People look on you, "oh, is that all you do?" No, no. It's not all I do. I'm not just a carer. I'm a carer.

Text on screen: Baker, Louisiana

Singing: Blues, stay away from me / Blues, why don't you let me be? / Don't know why you keep on haunting me / Love was never meant for me

Janet: We had went to where my husband was from, and we had decided we were, you know, gonna have our own business and everything, and that was, you know, where we started. So we bought a video store. And when Walmart got in the video business, it really just killed it for the mom and pop stores, you know. We didn't have the volume of a what Walmart would have, so after five years we ended up closing it.

I was in the Walmart one day, and they had a sign they were hiring. And I thought, well you know, I'll go put an application in. And when they called, I was really surprised, and I was even more surprised how good of a company it was to work for.

Any extra effort you put forth, they appreciated it. The managers would just come in and say, “I saw what you did and hey, you know, thank you.” Until the changes came.

The focus of the company went to cutting operational expenses. Less people to do the work yet the same amount of work.

Filmmaker: Do you have to get to work soon?

Janet: Oh, I don’t know what the time is. Oh, two o’clock, and I think I go at four today. No, at three-thirty. Today’s the fourth. You see, every day you’re like, what time do I go to work? Don’t you think that is just nerve-racking? And I’m not the only one. I’ve talked to people across the country, and they do the same thing, you know. They’re just like, what time we all go to work tomorrow? You would not believe how much stress that puts in your life.

Bill Clinton: We are living through a moment of absolutely astonishing transformation. All of you know that the information and technology explosion will offer to you and to the young people of the future more opportunities and challenges than any generations of Americans has ever seen.

Reporter: It’s the stock market boom not seen since the heady years of the 1980s. The Dow Jones index up by almost a quarter in just 12 months with record profits and million dollar bonuses appearing in paychecks once again.

Robert Frank: What’s really changed is that if you were once the CEO of a company, your company served a local market. Now most markets that are important are global in scope. If you’re the CEO of Apple computer, and you make the company 3% more efficient than it would have been, you’ve added \$1.2 billion to the company’s bottom line. Your economic value has just grown explosively.

Steve Jobs: We’re really pleased to report this quarter we earned \$106 million.

Reporter: Bill Gates of Microsoft is now worth \$29 billion, up \$10 billion. Gordon Moore of Intel computers \$6.7 billion, up \$3 billion. And Bill Hewlett of Hewlett Packard a personal fortune of \$4 billion, up a billion all in just six months.

Alan Budd: If you end up at the top of this process, then you do have a justification of what’s happening to you. The market is an efficient way of allocating resources. It’s allocated a lot of resources to me and that must mean an efficient result. It must show that I’m hard working and clever and, in quotes, deserve what I’m getting.

Richard Berman: Very few people have the mental resources, the energy. I mean, look at me, here I am. I’m creating an African art collection, I’m creating companies. My youngest child is three, I’m 70 years old. I have four children, 13 and below. So what does that say about me? I mean, I’m out there creating.

Paul Piff: There are a lot of things that perpetuate inequality. Economic systems, governments, policy. One of the things I would argue is also psychology. How people think, the kinds of things

that they value. Inequality is rising, but people aren't aware of what they're doing to contribute to that.

Text on screen: Sacramento, California

Jen: Most of the gated communities are either on a golf course or are golf course adjacent. Some of the amenities are really great, really great. But for some people, it really is about living behind a gate. Well, I live behind a gate, and you do not live behind a gate, and look at how much better it is that I live behind a gate.

We didn't buy this house to one-up our friends who didn't buy a house behind a gate, but we had a lot of friends that really thought we did. We had friends that were like, "no, we won't come and visit, we won't come and see you, we won't." Kind of that "you moved over there, we moved over here." It's really sad, it's really sad.

In general, everyone pretty much keeps to themselves.

Do you want the bananas for your hamburger sandwich?

Jen's Son: No, don't.

Jen: We don't know anything about our neighbors, like nothing.

I found another hamburger.

One of the things that, for a couple of our neighbors has really bent them out of shape, is that we haven't hired a gardener. So this neighbor comes out and stares at me visibly pregnant raking leaves, is just staring and he yells from across the street, "you know, only poor people rake their own leaves."

Sima: How excited are you to...

Alden: Take that Jaguar. (laughs)

Sima: Be nice. How excited are you to see the house?

Alden: I'm very excited. I think this community is going to be, like, more young people that are like us, so it's like I'm going to meet a whole new crew of young dads who are gonna wanna play football and softball with me and tennis and stuff.

Sima: And I feel like this is the best community that we could ever have wanted. It has everything. It has the great school district. I mean, I think we really lucked out.

Alden: Greg was even talking to someone the other day, and he was like, "it's like a place where there's tennis courts, there's a pool, there's a guard gate, there's a lot of young people." And then he goes, "oh, must be Boulder Ridge." And Greg goes, "yeah, that's it." So it's like well known. This is like a diamond in the rough place. This is like the best place in Westchester.

Sima: That's amazing.

Alden: Yeah. Everyone bases where they live around schools. We're going to be sending our girls to a school in Ardsley, one of the top school districts in the nation. And it's going to be a great quality of life, great environment, with great future families to meet, and I think it's going to be funny because I'll end up finding a lot of Wall Street characters living there.

Real Estate Agent: Hello, Alden.

Alden: Hi, how are you?

Agent: Good, how are you?

Alden: Thank you. Good to see you again.

Agent: Good to see you.

Sima: Hi, Vivian.

Agent: Hello, Sima.

Rich Benjamin: I've met, in these gated communities, people who just say, you know, "Rich, I just want my kids to attend safe schools, I just want my property values to stay stable. I just want the beautiful amenities of life, private parks, private bike paths, private lakes." And so they're not so aware of the way privilege works on their behalf.

Alden: What are we going to see first?

Agent: Okay, so we're now in Boulder Ridge. It's a large community with hundreds of homes. It has a gatekeeper 24 hours a day so nobody can enter here without it being known who they are. That means it's crime-free.

Alden: That's great. It'll make me feel safe when I go on my speeches out of town to know that Sima and the girls are protected.

Agent: Exactly.

Alden: Nice cars here. (laughs)

Agent: I think this is the perfect place for you.

Jen: Once you reach a certain tax bracket, there's this expectation that you will just, kind of, keep up whatever the appearance of the tax bracket is. Cars are a big deal. Most people drive a Mercedes or a BMW. Or if they do drive an American car, it is the newest possible version of whatever. We drive BMWs. It's not that we have decided to drive 1988 Hyundai. I'm very happy with the fact that my car just rolled two hundred thousand miles. It means I've taken care of something I paid a lot of money for. That's not what you do here. You buy something, you use it for like six weeks, and then you get rid of it, and buy the newest version of whatever the "it" thing is.

Sima: People have always been kind of obsessed with wanting things, the car they drive, the clothes they wear. The same way you want to leave your house looking good because people judge you on what you look like or what you're wearing.

Alden: In this industry, when you're working with high profile executives, athletes, and entertainers, they expect a certain presentation style. So I have to keep up a certain image in their eyes so that they respect me and value my opinion. I definitely let my wife help me sometimes with the styles, brand names, and stuff like that. But she seems to be very good at getting me dressed for success. But I'm a big believer in that. If you dress well every day, you actually feel like you're more powerful, and you feel like you're more successful. And sometimes you can like dress your way to success in essence. I've seen people get out of depression just by just looking good.

Filmmaker: If you look like the guy that's got it all you become the guy that's got it all.

Alden: Fake it ‘til you make it.

Neighbor: Hi, Gary.

Jen: Primary mode of transportation when you’re in the neighborhood is a golf cart. Everyone gets to, kind of, show off their golf cart. And there will be golf carts with off-road wheels, and there will be golf carts with lift kits, and there will be golf carts with kits that you plug onto the front of it to make it look like a Mercedes. People will dump \$10, \$20 thousand into a golf cart.

Richard Berman: Most Americans are fair-minded, and they won’t say, “I’m going to a gated community to flee brown people.” Most people don’t think like that. They’re simply saying that the perceived sense of safety, the higher property values, that’s why I’m moving to these communities. It has nothing to do with race. And so there’s a divide, and that’s how you segregate a community. Those who aren’t perceived to fit in are not accepted. People who did not golf, people who did not go to a certain church, those types of people often felt excluded.

Jen: No, we’re not gonna go... No, hey, hands, thank you. I appreciate this very good listening.

When Max was little, where we lived before, there was a park at the end of the street. The kids would all play together. Everyone had a good time together and all of this. You know, that’s not the way it is here.

Okay, up onto the curb. Okay. There you go.

We, at least, ethnically look like the vast majority of our neighborhood. And I still have not come to terms with the fact that my kids are perceived as the different ones.

Not too near the swings. I don’t need you to get kicked in the head today.

I have perfectly normal-looking, blond-head, blue-eyed, nice kids. And this girl ran in fear screaming from Max at the playground, just ran and she kept screaming at him how horrifying he was. Her mom was like, “yep, it’s okay, honey, I know.” Something is wrong with this dynamic if my totally normal kid cannot make a friend at the playground. There has been more than one day that I’ve called Ryan just in tears. “I can’t take my kid to the park.”

Text on screen: 2001

Reporter: New York is booming with conspicuous consumption very much back in fashion. The luxury car dealerships can hardly remember a time like it.

Interviewer: Do you believe that an individual can earn too much money?

Tony Blair: What? You mean that we should, sort of, cap someone’s income? Not really, no. Why? What’s the point?

Robert Frank: What we know has happened is that people at the top of the income ladder have

gotten all the income gains that have occurred during the last 30 years. People in the middle of the income distribution, they have run down their savings, they've run up much more debt. Every conceivable margin you can work just to hold your place in the queue.

Ad: You can borrow up to 1,000 pounds for up to 31 days. It's the perfect way to help manage your short term cash flow.

Reporter: Government figures released today show a record number of people are insolvent.

Rochelle: If you don't pay or contact us with seven days, our collections team may arrange for an agent to contact you and visit your home. The letter's dated the 1st, and it's the 9th today.

Rochelle's Friend: And when's it? Let's have a look.

Rochelle: Within seven days.

Rochelle's Friend: Best get on the phone to them. Is that how much you owe?

Rochelle: Yeah.

My catalogue bill is between three and a half, four thousand pound. But then I use that for stuff that, you know, when the kids need new coats, new shoes. I've got no money left. I've gotta get it from somewhere.

Bye. Right. I'll see you later. Bye. Say "bye bye." No.

Everything's so much more expensive. And Luci now, she wants a computer, and you feel as if you have to do those things for them because their friends are getting them and they're gonna look like the odd one out if they don't get them.

Can I have a cuddle too?

You've gotta cut back. The school are always on the phone when I've missed the dinner money payments. That happens quite a lot.

Night, darling.

Cathy O'Neil: People went from pretty simple financial lives pre-1980 to the point now where people are just totally submerged in their financial accounts. And they're all in debt.

Alexis Goldstein: Debt to us might seem, "oh, you know, I need this loan to go to school" or "I need this loan to buy a house." But to Wall Street, it's just a product that they can buy and sell and package. And so it's just another way for them to get as much profit as they want, and they treat it as such, and they treat it like a game.

Leah: Hello? I'm at work right now. Can I call you later? But I did make the payment on the 3rd. Alright. 5-5-4. Thank you, ma'am. Alright. You have a blessed day. Bye bye.

Leah's Son: People been giving y'all dollars all weekend, man.

Leah: I owe a couple of debt companies now, and the only thing I can do is they gotta wait in line. I had to pay two weeks, then pay half of the rent, and pay the late fee on that, and just juggle. I gladly pay you Tuesday for a cheeseburger today. (laughs) You know, but that's the way it is.

Ad: There once was a fella. His pals called him Joe, who said of his bills, "there's too much we owe. We just need a loan that will last 'til payday," so they logged on to DollarsDirect.ca. DollarsDirect.ca is fast and convenient. Just be 18 years or older, have regular employment and direct deposit. DollarsDirect.ca. Apply and get cash the same day.

Text on screen: 2002

George W. Bush: One of the things that I'm going to talk about a little bit today is how to create a more secure America by achieving the goal of five and a half million new minority home owners. We certainly don't want there to be fine print preventing people from owning their home.

Alexis Goldstein: Once Wall Street figured out that they could create these mortgage products, they were like, "wow, this is the deal of the century. We need to make more of these."

Jen's Husband: The house is always the big one. It's the way that the economy is set up. You buy a house, the housing values tend to go up, and so it's a major component of your retirement. So losing your house, you find yourself in a position where, instead of being able to retire, you're just going to have to continue working. You know, when you go to buy a house, you're really making a bet worth hundreds of thousands of dollars that this place is going to hold its value and everything is going to work out.

Jen: Houses that fall really drastically behind the trend have a really hard time selling. And when they do sell, they sell for less. I think it would be more pressure if we were actually looking to sell our house today. We just try to, kind of, keep up and make sure we don't fall really far behind

Real Estate Agent: Good afternoon.

Jen: Hi.

Agent: Hi. I'm Karen Hobert.

Jen: Hi. I'm Jen.

Agent: I'm the owner Rancho Murieta Real Estate. It's a pleasure. Glad you made it. This is listed at \$429,900. And it's on .25 of an acre, quarter-acre lot. And they've done so many upgrades it's basically a brand new home. But it was originally built in 1981. What I like about it, watch your step, is they've done all the new laminate flooring. They did not do the windows, so we have single pane windows, dual pane windows just in this room. But they put in an entire new heating and air conditioning system that was \$12,000. Now I have to show you how fantastic these cabinets are. They're full extension cabinets. All wood and they self-close.

Jen: With the damper.

Agent: Hook up for gas. This one does have propane.

Jen's Husband: It's copper line. Interesting.

Agent: And all the houses have a different character and a different style, especially that one.

Jen's Husband: That's a nice looking house.

Agent: Ain't that one pretty, the Mediterranean?

Jen's Husband: Yeah, it's just got a nice style to it.

Agent: So this is absolutely one of the best streets in Rancho Murieta. It's completely quiet. You'll never really see anybody going by but the people that live here. And the most expensive homes in the neighborhood are down the street and on the lake. Come on in. Let's see what you think.

Jen: That first house has, hands down, has the highest per square footage.

Jen's Husband: Yeah, I don't feel like you're getting a lot for that.

Jen: Exactly. By significant margins. But I feel like, at least if you look in comparison to where our home is at, I feel like we're fine, if we did find ourselves in a position where we needed to list the house, we are still just fine.

Jen's Husband: Yeah.

Alden: More days than not, my first patient will probably be at 11 o'clock, which means that I would get up around 8, get my workout gear on, and go for a run. I'd go running for about 45 minutes to an hour. Loving running outside. I know I push myself, but there's really no option other than pushing myself, you know. Your backs against the wall when you have to make a mortgage payment.

Sima: He just had back surgery, and he literally worked the next day, didn't skip a beat. Had surgery Wednesday, worked Thursday, Friday, went into the office on Monday. He had a sick day. He couldn't go into the office and make money, so it's important obviously that he stays healthy for himself, for our family, and for his clients.

Richard Wilkinson: The government had been collecting data that showed there'd been this huge class differences in life expectancy, and people didn't really believe the data. Even people working in important positions in the health service didn't know if the death rates were highest at the top or at the bottom.

Text on screen: Pollok South Glasgow

Darren: (rapping) From cocaine to ketamine to capitalistic principle. I tried to put my smile back on his face but I couldn't get it so I say a tearful goodbye to all but one of my principles and start conversing with the flow that led me to this slippery road. I wasn't always this way. I guess it started on the day they called the cuttings on her casket and she flew away and left me here grounded cuddling on the truest pain my biggest ambition in life trying to get through a day.

My mom was 36 when she died. If I keep drinking, that's me. Imagine that, being dead at 36, fuck's sake. All of the things that I need to do to try and lengthen my life, which was already cut short because I was born in Pollok. If I make it to 70, I'll be lucky. And that's if I eat salad every day.

Richard Wilkinson: Now, of course, because of a growing body of research, people know that unemployment and poverty have health consequences. Instead of the former idea that it was business man's stress that led to the worst health problems.

Leah: A lot of health problems. Everything from high blood pressure to AIDS to hepatitis. All

different kinds of diseases around here. Any day above ground is a good day. That's what I've been told. Actually, that's what I know. You know, if you can live to see it. My daughter's father passed on the 23rd of last year, so that kind of hurt me a little bit. Back to being a single mother. He died of liver cancer. Yeah, it was really sad. It's a good thing. I know he's in a better place. He suffered for a while, quite some time.

Filmmaker: You must miss him.

Leah: Yeah, I do. We was together for 14 years. Long time.

Michael Marmot: In Glasgow, men living in the poorest part have a life expectancy of 54. In India, three-quarters of the population live on \$2 a day or less. No one in Glasgow lives on \$2 a day or less, and yet men in the poorest part of Glasgow have life expectancy that's eight years shorter than the average in India. And I thought, that's it. That's going to explain it. Being relatively disadvantaged has profound consequences, which determine high rates of suicide, violent deaths, alcohol, heart disease.

Darren: So this is where I had my first drink outdoors. It was Friday night, we came down. What was it? It was a bottle of Old Westminster. And it was funny 'cause, like, I ended up developing a taste for a certain brand of fortified wine. But I just remember thinking, this is disgusting. Why would anybody want to do this?

I wish I could become addicted to going to the gym, you know, and become addicted to fruit. I'm addicted to fruit, you know, phoning my sponsor, "man, I went mad on those bananas earlier on. My potassium is off the chain!"

Alcohol gave me what I thought was confidence. So it's that core belief that you're worth something that I am missing. It's a painkiller for your spirit really.

Leah: Everybody's trying to escape in their own way. Youth are trying to escape by doing different things like marijuana, stuff like that. Middle aged people probably drink or do something to escape. Older people probably just don't care 'cause they old. They don't have to deal with that. But everybody's trying to escape something.

Filmmaker: What do you use to escape?

Leah: I use my beer, my cigarettes. You can give me a little beer every now and again, and that's about the size of it. Look, give me a good movie and go to bed.

Filmmaker: Do you have a go-to when you've had a tough day?

Leah: Well, actually ice cream. I like ice cream. Sometimes I'll sit with a pint of that and eat until I can't eat no more, until I'm stuffed. I think you look good with a little meat on your bones, means you're eating good at home.

Janet: I feel very anxious all the time. And the nervousness is just, even the customers say I don't smile anymore. For example, a man yesterday, he told me, he said, "you look like you need to calm down." And I'm like, "I can't, you know. He was like, "you're going to have a heart attack." And I'm like, "I know!"

I used to work and I would leave, and I would go jogging at the gym and all this kind of stuff and everything. And I got to where instead I would rather come home and sit down and eat instead,

you know.

I was walking out, and I was like, “man, it’s been rough” ‘cause we’re so short-handed. I was like, “I’m just going to go and sit in my vehicle and eat some chips until I calm down.” But, you know, that’s the wrong thing to do.

Noam Chomsky: If you take an economics course, you’re taught that markets are based on informed consumers making rational judgments. I suppose you turn on the television set and take a look at the ads. I mean, are they trying to create informed consumers making rational choices? On the contrary. They are trying to create uninformed consumers that will react irrationally. And it’s a huge industry, one of the biggest industries in the country.

Ad: (singing) I am hungry. I am incorrigible. I am man. (Narrator) The Texas Double Whopper. Eat like a man, man.

News Interview: People around here are kind of big. Yeah, healthy. That’s what I like to say. Pleasantly plump.

Leah: Oh, I can’t wait ‘til Thanksgiving. Just seeing that turkey ‘cause I got a ham and a turkey.

If you’re really full, don’t worry about it.

Leah’s Daughter: Are you tired?

Leah: Yes, I am.

After I had my daughter, I had congestive heart failure, and I actually literally died, and it took me two weeks to come out of the coma. I’m just lucky that my heart still is beating long enough to do what it need to do, you know, but that’s just making it weaker.

Filmmaker: When did you start getting high blood pressure?

Leah: In 2004.

Can y’all shut up? Shut up and shut the door. Shut all the noise up. Everything need to be shut. Everybody need to be sitting down and being quiet. Period. Okay, back to me. (laughs)

Sima: It just makes me sleep easy at night knowing, if I’m home by myself with my kids, that there’s somebody watching over us.

Answering Machine: Message skipped. Next message. Message skipped. Next message.

Sima: Just called to say, “I love you, Daddy.”

Kids: I love you.

Sima: Say goodnight.

Kids: Goodnight. Sweet dreams.

Sima: Sweet dreams. Do you want to say goodnight to Daddy?

Kids: Sweet dreams.

Sima: I love you, babe.

I would love to see more of Alden. I always say I wish I had a husband that worked a 9 to 5 job. You know, where we were able to come home together at night and take care of the kids together, but I know that's not reality, and I know he's providing a lifestyle for us that, without him working this hard, we couldn't have.

Robert Frank: We know that financial distress is one of the main factors that sends people to see marriage counsellors. In the areas that saw the biggest increases in inequality, we saw the biggest increase in divorce rates. People in the middle are trying to make ends meet, and in the process experiencing an enormous amount of additional stress in their lives.

Sima: (reading to kids) It's time for bed, little calf. Little calf, what happened today that made you laugh?

Alright, give Mommy a kiss.

After a week, I'm exhausted. I work all day, and then I come to two kids to feed and bathe and read to and, kind of, make up for all the hours that I wasn't home during the day.

I love you. Night, night.

Alden: It's awful. I feel tremendous guilt. Not being able to see the girls, to put them to bed. And it's very frustrating when the girls are more used to her than me.

Sima: Hi.

Alden: Hey.

Sima: How are you?

Alden: I'm exhausted.

Sima: How was your day?

Alden: It was alright. It was fine. Can't complain. Oh, god. How are you?

Sima: I'm good.

Leah: Hey, honey.

Yeah, this is our 'Gotcha' paper for all the criminals in the neighborhood. So page for page, it'll tell you who's been arrested and what they did.

Sometimes I'll be looking in here for my sons' little friends because I don't want to be harboring a fugitive while I am in there cooking. (laughs) That's just from people stressing out because the economy is so jacked up over here. And that's why we end up with situations like these people for different felonies and assaults because they mad and frustrated, can't get a job. Breaking and entering, trying to get into people's houses. Pure rage against another person, wanting what somebody else has. They all just find anything to take their frustrations out on 'cause they ain't got too much else to do.

Kate Pickett: Psychologists and sociologists who have worked with violent criminals consistently say that lack of respect is the trigger for acts of violence and aggression. All that's left of people

is the maintenance of their self-respect, and so if that's threatened in some way then you see these violent and aggressive reactions.

Janet: Police say two teenage boys and a 15-year-old girl died after a gunfight at a birthday party in a privately owned club. This is not unusual. They've had a lot of people killed in this little town in the past few years. High school students killing each other, you know. You never know when you're going to be robbed. I would love to walk to work or ride a bike to work. It's only like two miles down the road. But I'm too scared to ride a bike or walk home at midnight. I always worry about walking into that parking lot. Always. So with half the lights out right now, you know, it's a very dangerous place.

Police Officer: You got 116 homicides last year. Three times the number of people that are in this church.

Reporter: Police in communities are trying to address an epidemic of violent crime, much of it rooted in drugs.

Police Officer: Street sweeper shotgun. Twelve 12 gauge rounds in this drum magazine. No sights because it's not designed to need any sights.

Leah's Daughter: I'm sick of this. I'm sick of it, and I'm stressed out. All this shit is just devastating. Look at it. And look at me.

Leah: Yeah, you. Keep them 'round your neck, please. I don't trust nothing no more. You know, after the store closed, after it gets dark around here, I am in. I don't care what's out there. I'm good.

Reporter: This war on crime is being waged at every level. Those who can afford it are getting out of the way. Retreating to gated walls that are safe, where they can watch the new Republican battle for the survival of America.

Man in car: Mr. Hawk, we're here to visit the Grovhougs. G-R-O-V-H-O-U-G. Steve Booth.

Security Guard: There we go. You having a good night so far?

Man in car: So far I had a good day.

Security Guard: Well, alright.

Man in car: Thank you, sir.

Security Guard: No, you're welcome.

Guard #1: Apparently the neighbors saw it and called us. Apparently one of his chickens got mauled, and another one got nipped at and chased around. He was able to get mediated with him, got him calmed down. The coyote sighting, yeah. Did they give you any information about that?

Guard #2: Not much. Just that it was crossing the road right up on the North side.

Guard #1: Did it sound like it was that big one?

Guard #2: Sounded like it was that big one, yeah.

Guard #1: He's been hanging around for a few months now, I think, hasn't he?

Guard #2: I believe so.

Guard #1: And then the Bass Lake pump house. Somebody tossed some rocks into the windows up there.

Guard #2: Oh, okay. Yeah, that's a new one. And there's that other loose dog that we're talking about.

Guard #1: Okay, think that'll square that away. Looks like everything is noted on the cards properly, so that sounds good. I'll grab a cup of coffee and let you stretch your feet out a little bit. Then we'll continue.

Guard #2: That sounds like a plan. Just made some fresh stuff for you.

Text on screen: 1996

Bill Clinton: Violent crime and the fear it provokes are crippling our society, limiting personal freedom, and fraying the ties that bind us. Those who commit repeated violent crimes should be told, "when you commit a third violent crime, you will be put away and put away for good. Three strikes and you are out."

(clapping)

Keith: I get caught with a gram of dope. 1.5 grams. I wasn't hurting anybody but myself. I wasn't selling it. I didn't give it to kids or anything like that. And I go to court. They weren't trying to hear anything. They used that three strikes law against me. They gave me a 25-year sentence.

I've been in a box, just a little bit bigger than this, for the last 17 years. And to be locked up and treated as I've been treated here, there's not a man alive that wouldn't feel the same way as I do now.

They've created a ball of hate in me. Yeah, I'm in the penitentiary, but you know something? I've never been caught with anything. I've got to get butt naked in front of females and these officers, and I gotta bend over and show them my asshole. Yeah, humiliating. It's beyond that. I had all of my mouth. I had those kicked out on the Robertson unit. I was beaten almost to death. They broke eight ribs. They dislocated my arms, my legs. They broke my jaw. They kicked out my grill. They broke my ocular bone, my nose.

But you know something? The first time that I did get my head ripped off, three days later it didn't hurt as bad. And then I became a monster.

I hate people. And do you know how sad that is to say?

You know, I've been treated so bad back here that yes, I could. I could actually. Now. I could kill a man. I really could. I could kill one of these laws. And isn't that sad? That's sad because I was raised better than that.

And what am I going to do now, Ms. Round? When I get out, what am I going to do? Get me a job at McDonalds? I'll be 54 years old. Came down when I was 26. I was in college. I was taking a voc-tech. What am I going to do now? Because what you were before you come to the penitentiary is not what you're going to be when you are released.

Anthony Appiah: This is a country that began with the language of liberty. And yet we have more people in prison per capita than anybody in the world. There's no doubt that being rich makes it much less likely that you'll be incarcerated. Even if you've done something terrible.

Text on screen: 2007

Auctioneer: It's got a badge on it. 4 ounces of solid silver, and 2.2 carats of diamonds.

Spokesmen: This is the richest year ever in human history. / The rich are getting richer. There is evidence on our list. / These are creators. They're not Plutocrats. These are doers making things happen. When they do well, we all do well.

Noam Chomsky: There's a religion that says everyone will benefit. That's almost nothing to do with the real world. So it completely fails in the real world. Fails is the wrong word. It's not a failure for the fraction of 1% of the population that's accumulating wealth beyond the dreams of average.

Robert Frank: The influence of money in politics has risen dramatically in recent decades. The people at the top have more money. What they've been doing is giving bigger contributions to politicians, and in return asking for lower tax rates on themselves and less stringent regulations on their companies.

Text on screen: Walmart 2005

Walmart Video: From humble beginnings in small town Arkansas to the world's leading retailer, Walmart has come a long way since 1962. No one except for maybe Sam, who never lost sight of his original idea, could have predicted the company's remarkable growth.

Anthony Appiah: Walmart's an interesting case because Walmart has produced a large number of hereditary billionaires. And they are no doubt highly respected in the communities in which they live, and no doubt they do respectable things. They fund museums, they give money to hospitals, and I'm sure they do all that stuff.

And yet, you know in many communities, people who work at Walmart are getting a wage but also getting food stamps. So the public is paying for Walmart's labor.

Janet: For fiscal year ending 2012, Walmart had gross sales of \$446 billion. And then the net sales were \$16.7, but almost \$17 billion net profit. I have no problem when it comes to making a profit. Like I said, I had my own business. But when you're making a profit at the expense of your people who are doing the work, and they're on food stamps, it's a moral issue. If you're making a decision that, "alright, we're gonna cut hours so we can keep profit up," you know what you're doing.

Paul Piff: We've been finding that wealthier individuals are more likely to perceive the pursuit of self-interest, as opposed to collective interest, as being moral and favorable. We're even observing this moralization of greed, this "greed is good" mentality.

Cathy O’Neil: This culture absolutely selects for psychopathic thinkers, people who literally have no empathy whatsoever. Because once you have successfully cleaved off ethical considerations, you’re incredibly efficient.

Alexis Goldstein: I think there’s nothing wrong with aspiring to be comfortable. I don’t even know that there’s anything wrong with aspiring to be rich. But the aspiration of Wall Street is to have “fuck you” money. And “fuck you” money is the amount of money so vast that you could pick up the phone or say “fuck you” to whoever you wanted without repercussion.

Noam Chomsky: One of the necessary illusions for the general public is that we live in a capitalist economy, but the rich don’t believe that for a minute. They insist on a powerful state to protect them from market discipline. So if Goldman Sachs makes a risky transaction, they’re basically protected. If it crashes, they can run to the nanny state with their cap in hand and get bailed out.

Text on screen: 2008

George W. Bush: Good morning. This is a pivotal moment for America’s economy. Problems that originated in the credit markets and first showed up in the area of sub-prime mortgages have spread throughout our financial system.

Reporter: It’s been a dismal week on Wall Street. In the last five trading days, the Dow Jones has lost 1400 points alone. Yesterday the Dow closed down 500. Investors agree that this is a crucial week to see whether or not the government can step in and heal this economy.

George W. Bush: I’m a strong believer in free enterprise. Under normal circumstances, I believe companies that make bad decisions should be allowed to go out of business. But these are not normal circumstances.

Kent Conrad: You know, the president has said over and over, “it’s the people’s money.” He’s right about that. It is the people’s money. But now, it’s the people’s debt.

Richard Fuld: This is a pain that will stay with me for the rest of my life.

Henry Waxman: But you get to keep \$480 million. I have a very basic question for you. Is this fair?

Max Hastings: The spectacle of these bankers who have contributed hugely to bringing the Western economies to their knees and yet are still going on paying themselves money beyond the dreams of average, in most people’s eyes, and they really think they’re worth it. Sometimes I meet them socially, and they say, “Max, when will you understand? This is how capitalism works.” I say, “this is not how capitalism works. This is how capitalism goes hopelessly disastrously wrong.”

Alden: I’m the best person to speak on behalf of the Wall Street community because I sit across from them. You know, I see the humanity of people on Wall Street, working harder now than ever before, not knowing whether they can ever move up the ladder and when will this rat race end for them.

Speaker: Dr. Alden Cass is a clinical psychologist, and probably more than anything else is known for helping people manage uncertainty and maintain optimal motivation and performance in times of uncertainty. Alden.

Alden: Alright, thanks.

(clapping)

It's become a mission for me to help people out during this rough time because I feel like, in my practice as a psychologist, my clients are looking to me for answers. My dissertation is the first study in the United States conducted in the last 50 years. It was called "Casualties of Wall Street: An Assessment of the Walking Wounded." And my findings showed that we are currently in a crisis of connectivity.

George W. Bush: We should not bail out those who made the reckless decision to buy a home they knew they could never afford.

Alexis Goldstein: That word came up a lot. Oh, greedy homeowners. This is just about poor people who bought TVs on their second mortgages, and it's their fault and they were greedy. That's the mentality, blame the victim.

Janet: I kept using my credit cards to live, and then I finally got those where I was maxed out. And I'm at the end and fixing to be moving. I've got to go very soon, within the next few weeks. You know, I mean, this is it.

Paul Piff: There's a lot of data suggesting that social mobility is an all-time low. People, despite their hard work, aren't achieving the American Dream. So who is it that achieves wealth? It's often those individuals that are born into wealth in the first place.

Alden: I actually feel like I'm blessed with having everything I need. Could not be luckier. Could not ask for anything more.

Keith: At 15 years old, I left Big Stone Gap, Virginia, and I hitchhiked across this entire continent to Southern California, and I had a good time. I was young, heterosexual. Hey, life was good! I was thinking about going to Hollywood, being the next Tom Cruise or somebody. You know, I mean, but it didn't happen like that.

Leah: My mom had heart and lung infection, and she died in '89, and it crushed me. It crushed me. I went into a spiral of doing wrong, spiral of doing things to get by. And it took me down a long road that I didn't want to travel, but I did. I was hanging out with the wrong people, doing the wrong things, trying to make money, trying to survive pretty much. I went to jail for about a year, and I came out and still couldn't get it straight. Then I had kids, and at that time I couldn't have them with me because I was so wiped out. But after my congestive heart failure, I woke up. It was the wake-up call that I needed. It was a sorely needed wake-up call, and I did that. So I've been off to the races ever since. (laughs)

Jen: We just don't feel that mainstream school is a great place for kids who are even slightly above the curve. So we'll probably home school. If they're not staying on track, meeting the milestones, meeting the goals that they need to meet, it's going to impact long term what their outcome looks like.

Text on screen: 2012

Barack Obama: No challenge is more urgent. No debate is more important. We can either settle for a country where a shrinking number of people do really well while a growing number of Americans barely get by. Or we can restore an economy where everyone gets a fair shot, and everyone does their fair share, and everyone plays by the same set of rules.

Paul Piff: It's not the case that inequality is attributable to bad apples, but rather that the barrel is bad. The barrel is what's contaminating the apples. It's the institutions that prioritize getting ahead above all else. That it's okay to break the law if that means that you're going to make more profit for the company with no attention to what the consequences are for the system as a whole.

Alan Budd: What I object to is the feeling that there is some mechanism out there about which you can do nothing at all. It's not true, simply not true. If humans want to change this, they can change it.

Workers: We demand a raise! We demand a raise! / What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Right now!

Leah: My name is Leah Taylor, and I'm here today to have a voice for my fellow workers and everybody that's struggling in the fast food industry.

Jon Snow: Rochelle Monte, what would you like to say to the boss of Allied Health, for whom you work?

Rochelle: I don't blame any one particular company. The truth is unless the government actually acknowledge the importance of the home care sector within this country, people are going to continue to be failed. These problems are deep rooted within the system, and it's the system that needs to change.

Janet: My name is Janet Sparks, and I am a Walmart Associate at store #1102. When I think about the fact that our CEO Mike Duke made over \$20 million last year, more than 1000 times the average Walmart associate, with all due respect, I have to say, I don't think that's right.

(clapping)

Protesters: We are the 99%!

Alan Budd: I wish we'd never got into this state. I wish we'd never had these extraordinarily high rewards. I didn't realize that that was going to happen. Maybe others always knew perfectly well that this would be the result of it. But I think that that is unfortunate, and I regret it.

Alexis Goldstein: I think you always have it in the back of your mind that you know you're not part of something good. But I didn't have a clear sense that I was doing something actively harmful. And then when the financial crisis hit, I started to feel really uncomfortable, and I asked my boss, "will the public ever forgive us for this?" Meaning the bailout. And he basically said to me, "well, here's the thing. The public always forgets. The public forgot after the savings and loan crisis. The public forgot after long term capital management blew up. The public always forgets. And the public will forget again, and we will move on, and it'll go back to normal. So don't worry about it."

Text on screen: In Britain, the 1,000 richest people own more wealth than the poorest 40% of the population.

In the U.S., the top 0.1% owns roughly the same wealth as that owned by the bottom 90% of the population.

To find out more about fighting inequality, visit www.thedividedocumentary.com

End Credits

Darren: I've been sober for coming up for 11 months. That's the longest I've ever been away from a drink. And I've learned my margin for error is very small. I mean, if I pick up a drink, I'm right back to square one.

Jen: There is a push to have a secondary gate to keep these 10 to 20 homes completely separate from the rest of the homes that are already completely separate. I think it's a status thing more than a fear thing. There's already a guy at the gate, half of them with a gun.

Alden: And to be honest, I'd rather live in Florida. One of my next motivating factors is going to be the fact that I do want to eventually move to Florida and have a second home there.

Janet: I won't have any regrets. I might be living under a bridge next week, but at least I tried.

Leah: If I could be a millionaire or anything like that, I would buy one big house that's got about 50 bedrooms. You know, I'd have all my family with me. I would love that. I would love that.

Rochelle: I wish I didn't have to work so much. I wish I could see the kids a bit more. I wish Pietro and I could go out for dinner at night. I don't want much out of life. I just wish it was a bit easier.

Keith: Most likely I'll end up back here. But it won't be because I walked into a school and shot up a whole bunch of children or raped somebody or anything like that. It'll be because I probably got caught stealing a loaf of bread, and I'll get a life sentence for it.

[END]