

THE SPIRIT LEVEL: WHY MORE EQUAL SOCIETIES ALMOST ALWAYS DO BETTER

Presented by Professor Richard Wilkinson

**Emeritus Professor of Social Epidemiology
University of Nottingham**

6.00 – 7.00pm, Wednesday 26 August, 2009

Sunderland Theatre

Corner Grattan St and Royal Parade

Medical Building

The University of Melbourne, Parkville

Everyone knows that the poor in rich societies are more likely to have shorter, less healthy lives, to do less well at school and to end up on the wrong side of the law. *The Spirit Level* goes further than this, to demonstrate for the first time that a whole range of social problems – from poor health to educational failure, from mental illness to obesity, from drug addiction to violence, from teenage births to the weakening of community life – share one overwhelming feature: they are all several times more common in more unequal societies. The evidence that bigger income differences create more problems is conclusive. And rather than affecting just the poor, inequality reduces the quality of life for everyone in less equal societies.

This ground breaking work, based on 30 years research by two of the UK's leading social epidemiologists, provides a powerful and fascinating new perspective on the social failings of rich societies. In light of their findings government policy will need serious rethinking.

Please note, this is a free public lecture (no RSVP required).



Richard Wilkinson is Emeritus Professor of Social Epidemiology at the University of Nottingham and honorary professor at University College London and at the University of York.

Over more than 30 years Richard Wilkinson has played a formative role in research and public awareness of health inequalities and the social determinants of health both in the UK and internationally. Richard's work has also had a major impact on public policy development and implementation. His single authored books include *Poverty and Progress: an ecological model of economic development* (1973), *Unhealthy Societies* (1996), *Mind the Gap* (2000), *The Impact of Inequality: how to make sick societies healthier* (Routledge 2005).

His most recent book, written with Kate Pickett, is: *The Spirit Level: why more equal societies almost always do better* (Penguin in 2009).

For information contact The McCaughey Centre on (03) 8344 9101.