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Las Vegas and the Middle Class

Brookings Mountain West

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LAS VEGAS AND THE MIDDLE CLASS

Friday, November 9, 2018 | 10:00 - 11:30am
Greenspun Hall Auditorium



Photo Credit: Aaron Mayes | Single family home development below Lone Mountain, Las Vegas, Nevada. UNLV University Libraries Photographs of the Development of Las Vegas Valley, Nevada.

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LAS VEGAS AND THE MIDDLE CLASS

Friday, November 9, 2018 | 10:00 – 11:30 am

Greenspun Hall Auditorium, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Brookings Mountain West is pleased to launch “Las Vegas and the Middle Class,” a major project exploring public policy initiatives designed to improve the quality of life of the middle class in Las Vegas, and to increase the number of people rising to join its ranks. Through independent, non-partisan analysis and policy development, we seek to advance public understanding of the challenges facing the middle class in Las Vegas, and barriers to upward mobility.

In collaboration with visiting scholars from the Brookings Institution - including Richard Reeves, Camille Busette, and others – experts at Brookings Mountain West, The Lincy Institute, and faculty across the UNLV campus will collaborate to explore public policy questions critical to Las Vegas and the region. As part of the Brookings Institution’s *Future Of The Middle Class Initiative*, this project will combine the expertise of this nationally-focused project with a local-focus on the Las Vegas metropolitan region.

The initial launch of “Las Vegas and the Middle Class” will feature a series of presentations that explore the definition of the middle class, envision the future of the middle class in American society, examine Las Vegas as a model for understanding issues critical to the growth of the middle class, and evaluate the role of higher education in expanding social and economic mobility for the middle class. Following the presentations, a panel discussion will allow the speakers to reflect upon the current state and future of the middle class in Las Vegas and the nation.

AGENDA

10:00 – 10:05 AM

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

William E. Brown, Jr.
UNLV Director, Brookings Mountain West

10:05 – 10:25AM

WHY STUDY THE MIDDLE CLASS IN LAS VEGAS?: DENSITY, DIVERSITY, AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Robert E. Lang, Ph.D.
*Professor of Urban Affairs, UNLV
Executive Director, Brookings Mountain West & The Lincy Institute*

10:25 – 10:45 AM

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL AND NETWORKS IN LAS VEGAS?

Camille Busette, Ph.D.
*Brookings Senior Fellow – Economic Studies, Governance Studies, Metropolitan Policy Program
Director, Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion Initiative*

10:45 – 11:10 AM

HOW DOES HIGHER EDUCATION CREATE SOCIAL MOBILITY FOR LAS VEGAS’S MIDDLE CLASS?

Richard V. Reeves, Ph.D.
*Brookings Senior Fellow - Economic Studies
Director, Future of the Middle Class Initiative
Co-Director, Center on Children and Families*

11:10 – 11:30 AM

RESEARCHERS’ ROUNDTABLE AND AUDIENCE Q&A

MODERATOR
William E. Brown, Jr.

PANELISTS
Robert E. Lang, Ph.D.
Camille Busette, Ph.D.
Richard V. Reeves, Ph.D.

11:30 AM

CLOSING REMARKS

Robert E. Lang, Ph.D.



Photo Credit: Aaron Mayes | Anthem Hills Park detention basin with the Las Vegas Strip, looking north, Henderson, NV. UNLV University Libraries Photographs of the Development of Las Vegas Valley, Nevada.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

William E. Brown, Jr. received his undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in 1978 and his graduate degree from the University of Michigan in 1981. Bill has held appointments as an academic research librarian, faculty member, and administrator at Yale University, the University of Miami, and the University of California, Berkeley, before joining UNLV in 2005. As UNLV Director of Brookings Mountain West Bill coordinates the programs, lectures, and activities of Brookings Mountain West in Southern Nevada, including the Brookings Public Policy Minor at UNLV. He has published a diverse array of scholarly works in American history, literature, politics, and related fields.

Camille Busette is director of the Brookings Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion Initiative and a senior fellow in Governance Studies, with affiliated appointments in Economic Studies and Metropolitan Policy. Camille has dedicated her career to expanding financial opportunities for low-income populations. She came to Brookings from the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), where she served as the organization's lead financial sector specialist. Previously, she worked with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), a U.S. Government financial services regulator, where she served as the agency's inaugural head of the Office of Financial Education. Prior to her tenure at the CFPB, Camille held executive positions in the private

and NGO sector. She previously served as a Senior Economics Policy Fellow at the Center for American Progress, a Washington D.C. based think tank, where she focused on financial opportunities for low income populations. Prior to that, Camille was the Vice President of EARN, a leading provider of micro savings services to low income families in the U.S. Camille has also advised the Bank of Jamaica on inclusive mobile banking regulation. Her private sector experience includes her roles as the Deputy Director of Government Relations for PayPal where she managed PayPal's regulatory advocacy globally, the Head of the Consumer Data Privacy function at Intuit, and the Director of the Consumer and Market Research division at NextCard. Camille has previously lived in France and in Hungary. Camille holds a B.A. in political science from the University of California, Berkeley and acquired both her M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from the University of Chicago. She is a former Ford Foundation post-doctoral Research Fellow.

Robert Lang is a Professor of Public Policy in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs and serves as the Executive Director of both The Lincy Institute and Brookings Mountain West at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He is also a resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. Lang holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from Rutgers University. Prior to his current position, Lang was a Professor

NOTE: ALL IDEAS EXPRESSED AT THIS RESEARCH FORUM REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF THE SPEAKERS AND ARE NOT THE OFFICIAL VIEWS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE INSTITUTIONS.

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and Chair in Urban Planning at Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies in Alexandria and Blacksburg, VA. He was also a Senior Director of Urban and Metropolitan Research at Fannie Mae in Washington, D.C. before teaching at Virginia Tech. Lang began his career as a Research Associate at the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ. Lang is an internationally recognized authority on urban growth, economic development and population dynamics, including the interplay between politics and growth in America's metropolitan areas. His research has been featured in numerous print media outlets, including USA Today, The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, and US News and World Report and he has appeared an expert commentator on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, CBS News, ABC News and National Public Radio. Lang has authored dozens of opinion editorial pieces that have run in newspapers and periodicals nationally. He also twice served as Editor for the academic journal Housing Policy Debate, which is published by Routledge in the United Kingdom. Lang's research specialties include real estate, demographic and spatial analysis, economic development, transportation and infrastructure, and metropolitan policy. He has authored over 220 academic and professional publications and has coined several new urban planning terminologies such as the "Sun Corridor," "Boomburbs," and "Edgeless Cities." His book, Megapolitan America, details the rise of large-scale "Megapolitan Areas" across the U.S. Lang has served as a Fulbright Fellow in Urban Geography at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, France, an Academic Fellow at the Urban Land Institute in Washington, D.C., and a Planning Fellow at the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy in Cambridge, MA

Richard V. Reeves is a senior fellow in Economic Studies, Director of the Future of the Middle Class Initiative and co-director of the Center on Children and Families. His research focuses on the middle class, inequality and social mobility. Richard's publications for Brookings include his latest book *Dream Hoarders: How the American Upper Middle Class Is Leaving Everyone Else in the Dust, Why That Is a Problem, and What to Do about It* (2017), *Time for justice: Tackling race inequalities in health and housing* (2017), *Ulysses goes to Washington: Political myopia and policy commitment devices* (2015), *Saving Horatio Alger: Equality, Opportunity, and the American Dream* (2014), *Character and Opportunity* (2014), and *The Parenting Gap* (2014). He is also a contributor to *The Atlantic*, *National Affairs*, *Democracy Journal*, the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. Richard is also the author of *John Stuart Mill – Victorian Firebrand*, an intellectual biography of the British liberal philosopher and politician. In September 2017, *Politico* magazine named Richard one of the top 50 thinkers in the U.S. for his work on class and inequality. He is a member of the Government of Canada's Ministerial Advisory Committee on Poverty, and also teaches at the McCourt School of Public Policy at Georgetown University. Richard's previous roles include: director of Demos, the London-based political think-tank; director of futures at the Work Foundation; principal policy advisor to the Minister for Welfare Reform; social affairs editor of the *The Observer*; research fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research; economics correspondent for *The Guardian*; and a researcher at the Institute of Psychiatry, University of London. He is also a former European Business Speaker of the Year. Richard has a BA from Oxford University and a PhD from Warwick University.



Photo Credit: Aaron Mayes | Vegetation growing in the Clark County Wetlands Park with the Las Vegas Strip in the background.
UNLV University Libraries Photographs of the Development of Las Vegas Valley, Nevada.

ABOUT BROOKINGS MOUNTAIN WEST

Brookings Mountain West is a partnership between UNLV and the prestigious Washington, D.C.-based Brookings Institution. The purpose of Brookings Mountain West is to bring the Brookings tradition of high-quality, independent, and impactful research to the issues facing the dynamic and fast-growing Intermountain West region. Building upon work at Brookings and UNLV, our community engagement and research initiatives focus on helping metropolitan areas like Las Vegas grow in robust, inclusive, and sustainable ways. Brookings Mountain West provides a platform to bring ideas and expertise together to enhance public policy discussions at the local, state, and regional level.

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