Political News and Public Policy: Making America Informed Again
March 8, 2018
2:30 – 4:00 p.m.
Greenspun Hall Auditorium, UNLV Campus
This event is free and open to the public

*Brookings Mountain West and the Journalism Department, Greenspun College of Urban Affairs, UNLV are pleased to co-sponsor this event.*

This event features a panel discussion with outstanding political journalists and public policy experts to explore the challenges and opportunities in writing about politics and public policy in the current political climate. The speakers will discuss editing and writing on politics and public policy. In addition, the speakers will recommend the specific skills necessary to research and write on politics and public policy, how they recruit contributors to their publications, and the future of journalism and politics.

Our panelists will respond to a brief set of questions posed by the moderator, and audience members will be able to pose questions to the speakers.

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**Moderators**

**Michael L. Bruner, Ph.D.** is Professor and Director of the Department of Communication Studies in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs. An award-winning author of numerous books and articles dealing with public persuasion and political history, Dr. Bruner regularly teaches courses in argumentation, theories and methods of public persuasion, and propaganda studies. His most recent book, *Repressive Regimes, Aesthetic States, and Arts of Resistance*, focuses on effective forms of resistance in different types of political regimes, and his forthcoming book, *The Rhetorical Unconscious*, is an investigation of processes of unintentional persuasion.

**William E. Brown, Jr.** serves as UNLV Director of Brookings Mountain West. He 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. Brown received his undergraduate degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst in 1978 and his graduate degree from the University of Michigan in 1981. He 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.
Speakers

John Hudak, Brookings Institution. Deputy Director of the Center for Effective Public Management and a senior fellow in Governance Studies.

**Fixgov.com**: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/

Mission: Focused on new ideas to make government work, FixGov is a blog that identifies and aims to solve the nation’s most pressing political and governance challenges. The solutions offered here are sensible and realistic.

Jon Ralston, Editor, The Nevada Independent.

**The Nevada Independent**: https://thenevadaindependent.com/

Mission: To change the face of journalism in Nevada and establish new paradigms for nonprofit, community-supported news organizations.

Richard Reeves, Brookings Institution. Senior Fellow, Economic Studies and Co-Director, Center on Children and Families

**Social Mobility Memos**: https://www.brookings.edu/blog/social-mobility-memos/

Mission: Brookings scholars and occasional guests post regular short pieces on the challenges of promoting greater social mobility and opportunity.

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Biographical Notes

John Hudak, Ph.D. is deputy director of the Center for Effective Public Management and a senior fellow in Governance Studies. His research examines questions of presidential power in the contexts of administration, personnel, and public policy. Additionally, he focuses on campaigns and elections, legislative-executive interaction, and state and federal marijuana policy. John’s 2016 book, *Marijuana: A Short History*, offers a unique, up-to-date profile of how cannabis emerged from the shadows of counterculture and illegality to become a serious, even mainstream, public policy issue and source of legal revenue for both businesses and governments. His 2014 *Presidential Pork: White House Influence over the Distribution of Federal Grants* demonstrates that pork-barrel politics occurs beyond the halls of Congress. Presidents capitalize on their discretionary funding authority to target federal dollars to swing states in advance of presidential elections. This research explores the balance between political control and bureaucratic expertise in the delivery of public policy. He holds a B.A. in political science and economics from the University of Connecticut and an M.A. and Ph.D. in political science from Vanderbilt University.

Jon Ralston has been covering politics in Nevada for 30 years. His blog, Ralston Reports, was founded in 2012 and now lives on The Nevada Independent website. He wrote for the Las Vegas Review-Journal for 15 years, the last seven as a freelance columnist. In 1999, Greenspun Media Group purchased his political newsletter, The Ralston Report, and hired him as
a columnist for the Las Vegas Sun where his byline appeared until September 2012. He was also a columnist for the Reno Gazette-Journal from January 2015 until November 2016, when he left to start The Indy. Over the years, Jon has hosted several TV programs, including “Ralston Live” on Vegas PBS and “Ralston Reports” on KSNV News 3. He also writes and publishes a Nevada-centric email newsletter called “Flash” that frames the political agenda for the day, breaks news, and offers analysis and snark. Jon is a contributing editor at Politico Magazine, and in 2012, Politico named him one of the Top 50 “Politicos to Watch.” Jon frequently appears on MSNBC, FOX News, and PBS, and he has also appeared on NBC’s long-running “Meet the Press.” Jon is originally from Buffalo, N.Y. He has a B.A. in English from Cornell University and a M.A. in journalism from University of Michigan.


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.

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