

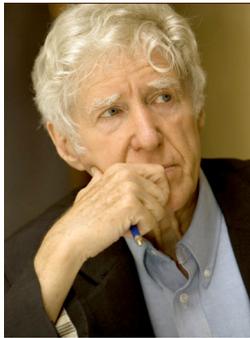
THE PROGRESSIVE FORUM

Great Minds, Great Answers

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Lester Brown at The Progressive Forum October 6, 2013



Environmental sustainability pioneer Lester Brown will return to The Progressive Forum on Sunday, October 6, 2013, at the Wortham Center, Cullen Theater at 7:30. This is the national launch of Brown's memoir, *Breaking New Ground: A Personal History*, and he will sit down for an in-depth Q&A with Progressive Forum president Randall Morton. Brown will sign books and greet fans at the end of the evening.

Tickets range from \$19 to \$79. Tickets are available at ProgressiveForumHouston.org or by calling 832-251-0706. There is no physical box office except at the theater on event night.

The sponsor for this event is the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation, a Texas-based grant making foundation that seeks innovative, sustainable solutions for human and environmental problems.

"One of the world's most influential thinkers," said the *Washington Post*. "The guru of the environmental movement," said *The Telegraph* of Calcutta. The Library of Congress requested his papers, saying his writings "have strongly affected thinking about...world population and resources." After authoring or coauthoring over 50 books, Lester Brown now releases his autobiography, an inspirational memoir tracing his life as the son of a sharecropper to one who dines with heads of state.

Brown was born and raised in New Jersey on a farm with no electricity or running water. As a young man, he ran a successful tomato growing business with his brother. After graduating from Rutgers University, Brown lived in India for six months as part of an agricultural exchange program that sparked his interest in the geopolitics of food. He received his graduate degrees from the University of Maryland and Harvard's John. F. Kennedy School of Government. In 1964, he became a foreign policy advisor to Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman.

In 1974, Brown founded the first institute devoted to analyzing environmental issues on a global basis, Worldwatch Institute. In 2001 he established the Earth Policy Institute, an organization that describes its mission as "dedicated to planning a sustainable future and providing a roadmap of how to get from here to there."

He has brought to the fore such issues as climate change, overpopulation, women's education, lagging agricultural productivity, and the global economy, using impeccable research while proposing pragmatic, employable solutions. He's the recipient of many awards, including a MacArthur "genius" award and the United Nation's Environmental Prize.

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A nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization

The Progressive Forum originated a new model for civic speaker organizations in Houston by presenting speakers in the city's finest theater, compared to the hotel luncheons of traditional organizations. It was designed to present the world's intellectual stars to large audiences in a high quality, theatrical experience. The Progressive Forum markets region-wide to sell tickets to the public in open events. There is no membership fee and the ticket prices are low starting at \$19.

The Progressive Forum also originated a unique innovation in public media, reaching a worldwide audience by presenting the great minds online. The Progressive Forum is America's only civic speaker group providing website pages with event video on its past speakers. These pages are in-depth and comprehensive and include video, biographical sketches, news updates, related links, and reading lists. Most of the videos are longer than common internet fare; however they're broken down into segments and short clips on interesting topics. The website is intended to serve as a source of inspiration for scholars and seekers, a source of perpetual enrichment long after the curtains have closed on the theatrical event.

Speakers have included Michelle Alexander, Karen Armstrong, Lester Brown, Ken Burns, Gail Collins, Richard Dawkins, Jared Diamond, Sylvia Earle, Elizabeth Edwards, Tim Flannery, Jane Goodall, Al Gore, Brian Greene, James Hansen, Seymour Hersh, Arianna Huffington, Molly Ivins, Garrison Keillor, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., Joe Klein, George Lakoff, Richard Leakey, Rachel Maddow, William McDonough, Bill McKibben, Bill Moyers, Nancy Pelosi, T. Boone Pickens, Michael Pollan, Robert Redford, Frank Rich, Sir Ken Robinson, Eric Schlosser, Anna Deavere Smith, George Soros, Sonia Sotomayor, Gloria Steinem, John Paul Stevens, Alice Waters, Larry Wilmore, and Edward O. Wilson.

Founder and president, Randall R. Morton, operated Randall Morton International, Inc. for over 32 years, an advertising and public relations agency whose clients included leading oil equipment companies in the U.S., Japan, Mexico, and Europe. Morton cocreated and cohosted the Oilfield Breakfast Forum from 1994 to 2003, another speaker series which is still the largest in the oil industry. He earned a B.A. degree in government from Georgetown University, and attained a national ranking of three as a pass receiver in nonscholarship football. While at Georgetown, he served as an issue writer for the Democratic National Committee. Later, he earned a second B.A. in communications from Tulsa University, serving the following year as adjunct professor teaching advertising design and copy. He is married to Suzanne Longley, formerly prima ballerina of the Houston Ballet and now owner of Suzanne Longley Landscapes. They have two children who are in college.