

To the Editor:

In "Free-Market Socialism" (column, Jan. 24), David Brooks criticizes both parties for choosing the wrong paths to address new economic challenges. But his critique of Democrats as shifting "their emphasis from lifting up the poor to pounding down the rich" is simplified and wrong.

Democrats in the House are fighting for the very initiatives Mr. Brooks demands, including early childhood education. The problem is, Where do we get the resources for such investments in a fiscally responsible way?

Democrats say that people who did exceptionally well over the last few years and are now paying historically low effective tax rates should pay a little more. Republicans in the House have said raising revenues from the rich to rebuild the middle class is off the table.

This isn't a matter of "pounding down the rich"; it is a matter of common sense: how does society pay for the very investments that Mr. Brooks seeks to strengthen society?

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Washington, Jan. 24, 2012