

# Rationalists of East Tennessee Newsletter

June 2014  
Edited by Carl Ledendecker

## First Sunday Meeting

**June 1, 2014**

**10:30 - 12:30**

**Pellissippi State Community College, Goins Building, Cafeteria Annex**

**American Freethought**

**by Roderick Bradford and The Council for Secular Humanism**

A four-part miniseries probing American freethought, atheist and humanist heritage from the American Revolution to the 1930 era.

We will probably only be able to view and discuss the first two parts at this meeting.

1. Founding of the Nation
2. Abolition movement - seeds of the rights of women and freethought movements.

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## The RET Skeptic Book Club

**The Anatomy of Violence: : “The Biological Roots of Crime” by Adrian Raine**

**June 8 , 2014**

**4:00 – 6:00 p.m.**

**Barnes and Noble Booksellers, 8029 Kingston Pike.**

Why do some kids from good environments become mass murderers? Is there actually such a thing as a natural born killer? And, if so, what can we do to identify and treat those born with a predisposition to criminal behavior? For more than three decades Adrian Raine has sought answers to these questions through his pioneering research on the biological basis for violence. In this book, he presents the growing body of evidence that shows how genetics and environmental influences can conspire to create a criminal brain, and how something as seemingly innocent as a low resting heart rate can give rise to a violent personality. Bristling with ingenious experiments, surprising data, and shocking case studies, this is also a clear-eyed inquiry into the thorny ethical issues this science raises about prevention and punishment. Passionate, courageous, and at times controversial, *The Anatomy of Violence* is a ground-breaking work that will challenge your core human values and perspectives on violence (Amazon Review).

## **RET Third Sunday Meeting**

**June 15 , 2014**

**10:30 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

**Pellissippi State Community College, Goins Building, Cafeteria Annex**

### **“The Wisdom of Psychopaths: What Saints, Spies, and Serial Killers Can Teach Us About Success” ”**

This will be a DVD presentation by Dr. Dr. Kevin Dutton from the Skeptics Society Distinguished Lecture Series. University of Oxford research psychologist Dr. Kevin Dutton reveals that there is a scale of “madness” along which we all sit. Incorporating the latest advances in brain scanning and neuroscience, Dutton demonstrates that the brilliant neurosurgeon who lacks empathy has more in common with a Ted Bundy who kills for pleasure than we may wish to admit, and that a mugger in a dimly lit parking lot may well, in fact, have the same nerveless poise as a titan of industry. Dutton argues that there are “functional psychopaths” among us—different from their murderous counterparts—who use their detached, unflinching, and charismatic personalities to succeed in mainstream society, and that shockingly, in some fields, the more “psychopathic” people are, the more likely they are to succeed. Dutton deconstructs this often misunderstood diagnosis through bold on-the-ground reporting and original scientific research as he mingles with the criminally insane in a high-security ward, shares a drink with one of the world’s most successful con artists, and undergoes transcranial magnetic stimulation to discover firsthand exactly how it feels to see through the eyes of a psychopath.

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### **Solstice Party Pot Luck**

**June 21 5:00 PM until dark-thirty**

The annual RET Solstice Party will be held at the home of Carl & Aleta Ledendecker,  
2123 Stonybrook Road, Louisville, TN 37777

Come and enjoy good company, games (Bocci, Badminton, Swimming, Croquet)

Kid Friendly

Contact Aleta Ledendecker, [aletaledendecker@earthlink.net](mailto:aletaledendecker@earthlink.net)

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## RET Reflections Meeting

**June 22, 2014**

**Potluck Lunch**

### Topic TBA

There will be reflections meetings as follows: June 22, July 27, September 28, October 26<sup>th</sup>.

### Game Day for ALL members

**June 29, 12:00 to 4:00, at the community room at EarthFare, Turkey Creek Shopping Center**  
(near Lovell Road, on north side of Parkside Road).

Bring a game you would like to play or play one of ours.

It's buy-your-own drink, snack, lunch, desert, or some groceries at EarthFare as we get the room free and no outside food is allowed to be brought in.

Be ready for hours of laughter and fun.

Lunch Bunch is June 11 at Tomato Head West, Kingston Pike in the Gallery Shopping Center at 11:15. This is a good way to get to know members better and, if you are new, learn about RET.

Please call or text Pauline at 865-437-9966 or email her at [hpauline0719@yahoo.com](mailto:hpauline0719@yahoo.com) so she can call in the number attending to the restaurant. As you may know, it gets crowded very quickly.

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### Camp Quest Seeks Your Support

Every year, without fail, the young free-thinking campers tell heartwarming stories about the importance of Camp Quest of the Smoky Mountains. RETers would be deeply moved by their campfire testimonies at the end of camp where they explain how safe and accepted they feel and how they are so grateful for a place where can speak their mind. They consider the group their family.

Our camp has grown over the decade and fills up quickly. Yet each year CQSM saves a few spots and pays the registration fees for kids whose families have no way to pay the camper fee.

**Right now, Camp Quest of the Smoky Mountains is seeking to raise \$300 to cover the cost of the remainder of our camperships we provide to low-income campers.**

As a fellow rationalist who is passionate about RET's mission, I strongly encourage RET members to make a contribution to CQSM. Your help directly impacts kids by providing a secular and safe camp environment that embraces critical thinking and healthy skepticism.

We have a website that will take you less than a minute to make your donation. Please be one of the RETers who helps us meet our goal.

<https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/camp-quest-smoky-mountains-campership-fund>

Thank you everyone!

Sincerely,

Dave Buck, PhD

President, Board of Directors, Camp Quest Smoky Mountains

<http://www.cqsmokymountains.org/>

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## **Social Activities Update**

by Pauline Hamilton

The evening was so much fun at Sharron and Phil's Movie ("Inequality for All") and pizza night, that some people stayed even after the discussion to watch Bill Maher with them. Approximately 16 people attended. Thank you so much Kings for your hosting it. You entertained us royally.

Olympic medals are due the Tokays for 3 weeks of work that went into preparing the Backyard Olympics for 38+ (6 children enhanced the gathering) people on Memorial Day.

It started at 3 p.m. with javelin throwing (straws), shot putting (nerf balls), tricycle races, midget watermelon seed spitting, and many more games followed by an abundant pot luck.

Our triathlon winners were Dale, Michael and Patrick, and you should have seen Lee give it his all on the tricycle. We had loads of cheering, hollering and laughs.

Six hours later, a good crowd was still there enjoying the nice weather, the good conversation, the great camaraderie and even a lively game of croquet.

Please continue to thank these people for generously having us in their homes and, for those of you who weren't there, we missed you and hope to see you at our next events.

## The Secular Coalition for America

The Secular Coalition for America is prepared to support initiatives that fit the mission of the Secular Community Initiative and which adhere to the guidelines of the Local Secular Community Charter. If your group is interested in receiving support or would like more information, please contact Sarah Levin, the Secular Coalition's Secular Community Coordinator ([sarah@secular.org](mailto:sarah@secular.org)).

### Wrap Up & Sign Up

- Like and Share the Facebook page – Secular Coalition for Tennessee
- Sign up for the state site [here](#).
- [Sign up](#) on our website to receive info and updates for the state
- [Sign up](#) for National alerts and updates
- Email [Diana@secular.org](mailto:Diana@secular.org) if you are interested in leadership or volunteerism.
- Contact Information (state-church/secular news and events) Secular Coalition for America offices - (202) 299-1091.

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## Secular Activism announces online courses

**From: Sean Faircloth, Richard Carrier, Greta Christina, and more** [partner@secularactivism.org](mailto:partner@secularactivism.org)

Our online courses during June about secularism, free will, and diversity have been announced at [secularactivism.org](http://secularactivism.org). More courses on God's existence and morality without God are also announced there, led by Dan Fincke and John Shook.

Visit [secularactivism.org](http://secularactivism.org) to register now for June's online courses:

The Science and Philosophy of Free Will – with Richard Carrier  
<http://secularactivism.org/?p=380>

Sexual and Gender Diversity – Julia Hemphill with Greta Christina  
<http://secularactivism.org/?p=372>

Sean Faircloth on Defending Secular Government: Strategies for Success  
<http://secularactivism.org/?p=366>

God's Not Dead? How an Unscripted Philosopher can Disprove God

<http://secularactivism.org/?p=364>

- by Dan Fincke

The Founding Fathers and Religion – Myron Jackson with Sean

Faircloth <http://secularactivism.org/?p=362>

Does Morality Need God? A Christian (Dr. Baggett) and an Atheist (Dr. Shook) Debate <http://secularactivism.org/?p=358>

Members can take accessible and affordable courses, and help one of their leaders take one course for free. When thirty members sign up for our email list, your organization receives a certificate for a free course registration, good for any course during the rest of the year.

Only \$59 for a one month course, accessible 24/7 when you can participate at any time of day. PSA offers three to six courses a month, so watch for announcements. When you join the email list, give your organization's name when asked how you heard about secularactivism.org.

We also welcome suggestions for future courses, so tell us about your organization's interests. You can contact PSA president John Shook directly at [jshook@secularactivism.org](mailto:jshook@secularactivism.org)

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## Dues

**Dues are \$35 for most individuals but students & low-income persons may join at a reduced rate of \$15.**

Dues and donations can be sent to “RET, P.O. Box 51634, Knoxville, TN 37950”, or via Pay Pal through the link at [www.rationalists.org](http://www.rationalists.org). Direct payment can also be made to RET treasurer, Eliot Specht

## Reimbursement

Remember that you can ask for reimbursement for food, supplies, etc. that you provide for RET.

**FEEL FREE to Send me information or articles by you.**

Anyone who has something to submit for publication in the RET Newsletter please e-mail it to [ledendecker@earthlink.net](mailto:ledendecker@earthlink.net). The decision to include the submission is at the discretion of the current editor (me) but I am not all that picky.