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RET News November 2016 CE



## Rationalists of East Tennessee Newsletter

November 2016

### First Sunday Meeting

**November 6 Sunday 10:30 - 12:30**

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

Citizen Advocacy

Clayton Davis, chair of the Secular Coalition for Tennessee will be speaking on Citizen Advocacy.

The Secular Coalition for America is a 501(c)(4) nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to amplifying the diverse and growing voice of the nontheistic community in the United States. Our 19 voting coalition **member organizations** are established 501(c)(3) nonprofits who serve atheists, agnostics, humanists, freethinkers and other nontheistic Americans.

Our mission is to increase the visibility of and respect for nontheistic viewpoints in the United States, and to protect and strengthen the secular character of our government as the best guarantee of freedom for all.

The Secular Coalition has a major campaign, Put Kids First, which is aiming to repeal or prohibit non-medical vaccine exemptions in all 50 states. In Tennessee, we are working to build an association of medical professionals and citizen activists who will call on the General Assembly to make this happen. This year, we also expect to see a large number of religiously motivated, discriminatory bills introduced, just like the anti-LGBT counseling bill and the "make the Bible the state book" bill. We'll be discussing how you, as a citizen lobbyist, can address these grievances by appealing directly to your elected officials.

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### The RET Skeptic Book Club

**November 13 Sunday 2:00 – 4:00 pm**

**Location: Books-A-Million at 8513 Kingston Pike, Knoxville.**

The book for the November meeting is **"The Invention of the Jewish People"** by Shlomo Sand.

A historical tour de force, *The Invention of the Jewish People* offers a groundbreaking account of Jewish and Israeli history. Exploding the myth that there was a forced Jewish exile in the first century at the hand of the Romans, Israeli historian Shlomo Sand argues that most modern Jews descend from converts, whose native lands were scattered across the Middle East and Eastern Europe. In this iconoclastic work, which spent nineteen weeks on the Israeli bestseller list and won the coveted Aujourd'hui Award in France, Sand provides the intellectual foundations for a new vision of Israel's future. (344 pages)

provides the intellectual foundations for a new vision of Israel's future. (577 pages).

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### **RET Third Sunday Meeting**

**November 20 Sunday 10:30 a.m.**

**Pellissippi State Community College, Goins Auditorium**

RET member Joel Shor will present a talk titled "Energy Storage, the Under-Rated Factor of the Future"

[Get Directions](#)

NOTE: After the meeting you are invited to Steve and Carol Tokay's house for lunch. As an added bonus you can meet or catch up with their family visiting from California. This will be a Pot Luck Optional event. Bring food if you want to. See address below.

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### **RET Reflections Meeting**

**November 27 Sunday 2:00 p.m.**

**At Steve and Carol Tokay's** 8905 Garrison Drive, Knoxville TN 37913-2416 (865) 691-6816

Discussion and Potluck

Topic: Indigenous people's rights and treaties.

Come discuss past and current events related to Native American situation past and present.

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## **RET Skeptics Book Club - New Books List**

1. **November 13, 2016: The Invention of the Jewish People** by Shlomo Sand.
2. **December 11, 2016: Don't Sleep, There are Snakes: Life and Language in the Amazonian Jungle**
3. **January 8, 2017: Islam and the Future of Tolerance: A Dialogue**
4. **February 12, 2017: The Utility Of Force: The Art Of War In The Modern World** by Rupert Smith.
5. **March 12, 2017: White Trash: the 400 year Untold History of Class in America** by Nancy Isenberg.
6. **April 9, 2017: BEING MORTAL: Medicine and What Matters in the End** by Atul Gawande.
7. **May 14, 2017: The Serengeti Rules: The Quest to Discover How Life Works and Why It Matters** by Sean B. Carroll.
8. **June 11, 2017: All the Single Ladies: Unmarried Women and the Rise of an Independent Nation** by Rebecca Traister.
9. **July 9, 2017: Makers and Takers: The Rise of Finance and the Fall of American Business** by Rana Foroohar .

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### Other Activities in the area

#### East Tennessee Freedom From Religion Foundation Chapter

Meets on the 3rd Wednesdays of each month      November 16, 7:00 PM      Earth Fare Turkey Creel

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### RET/ASK Freethought Forum TV

**Tuesdays 5:00 – 6:00 pm**

**Note change: Due to Knoxville Beer Board Meeting changes there will be no FFTV on varying Tuesday once a month.**

Freethought Forum TV is looking for people to be on the show. Contact Larry Rhodes or Lee Erickson if you are interested.

Knoxville: Comcast Channel 12 Charter Channel 6 Free streaming on [ctvknox.org](http://ctvknox.org).

Right after the show a co-host of the program holds The Atheist Society of Knoxville Meet-up at Barley's on Jackson Avenue in Knoxville's Old City. Volunteer hosts and suggestions for topics would be welcome for all of these programs. Contact Larry Rh at [larryr@usit.net](mailto:larryr@usit.net) or Lee Erickson at [forresterickson@comcast.net](mailto:forresterickson@comcast.net).

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### Sunday Assembly Knoxville Live Better, Help Often, Wonder More

**November 27 - Food**

Location: The International at 940 Blackstock Ave., Knoxville, TN      Time: 10:30 AM

For other SA activities go to <http://knoxville-tn.sundayassembly.com> and click on "Calendar."

Email: [saknoxville@gmail.com](mailto:saknoxville@gmail.com) Meetup: <http://www.meetup.com/Sunday-Assembly-Knoxville/>

Website: <http://knoxville-tn.sundayassembly.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Sunday-Assembly-Knoxville/595906073848559>

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### Future Activities

#### American Humanist Association 76th Annual Conference

Charleston, South Carolina      June 8-11, 2017

[conference.americanhumanist.org](http://conference.americanhumanist.org)

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### Help Needed:

Please contact us at [info@rationalists.org](mailto:info@rationalists.org).

**Willing to serve on the board? Please join in keeping RET active and relevant.**

Anyone who has fundraising and/or PR experience and is willing to help RET?

Anyone willing to give secular invocations at public government meetings?

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### Member News:

We have two new Board Members who are replacing two who had to resign for work and personal reasons.

Welcome Shawnee Casteel and Ryvyr Mutsu!

Elections are coming up before you know it. (I mean RET elections.) You too can be on the Board. Volunteer to be elected and let RET move forward.

(Please contact me at [ledendecker@att.net](mailto:ledendecker@att.net) if you have any relevant news about RET members that they agree to share.)

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## Some Words about Reality

“The basic stuff of reality is a quantum wave function, or a collection of particles and forces—whatever the fundamental stuff turns out to be. Everything else is an overlay, a vocabulary created by us for particular purposes.”

“... if a particular way of talking involves concepts that are useful and fit the world quite accurately, it's fair to refer to concepts as “real.” But we can't forget that there is a single world underlying it all, and there's no sense in which the underlying world is socially constructed. It simply is, and we take on the task of discovering it and inventing vocabulary with which to describe it.”

Excerpt From: Sean Carroll. “The Big Picture.” iBooks

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