



THE NEWSLETTER OF
The HUMANIST ASSOCIATION
 of CONNECTICUT



AHA Chapter

October 2017

UU Humanists Local Group

An Openly Secular Politician!

Please join us on Monday, October 16, at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

This month, our guest speaker will be State Representative Josh Elliott. Josh is one of the few openly secular politicians in the United States. Here is his official biography:

“Josh Elliott is serving his first term as State Representative in the Connecticut General Assembly for the 88th District, in Hamden.

“Josh grew up in Connecticut and attended high school in Hamden. After graduating from Ithaca College with a B.A. in sociology, he went on to obtain his J.D. at Quinnipiac School of Law.

“Josh has long been involved in local and state community efforts. Since 1995, he has volunteered his time for Guiding Eyes for the Blind and from 2015 to 2016, he was an organizer for the Bernie Sanders presidential campaign.

“With his mom, he operates two family-run natural food stores, Thyme & Season in Hamden and The Common Bond Market in Shelton.

“Elliott is currently serving as Vice Chair of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and is also on the Energy and Technology Committee, the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee and the Committee on Children.”

The evening will start at 7:00 p.m. with conversation and refreshments. Josh will begin his presentation after brief announcements at 7:30 p.m. There will be plenty of time for questions. Come with a friend!

Calendar of Events

Unless otherwise noted, all programs are held at USNH, 700 Hartford Turnpike, Hamden, CT. RSVP for dinners at meetup.com/cthumanist.

OCTOBER 2017

Mon., 2	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m
Sat., 7	Explorations: Humane Executions	2:30 p.m
Mon., 16	Monthly Meeting	7:00 p.m
	Main program: Josh Elliott, State Representative in the Connecticut General Assembly for the 88th District, in Hamden.	7:30 p.m
Sat., 21	Book Discussion: “American War: A Novel” by Omar El Akkad	2:00 p.m to 4:00 p.m
Sun., 22	Board meeting	2:00 p.m
Mon., 23	Dinner Discussion at the Wood-n-Tap, 2100 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT. (203) 248-9663. Topic: Mass Shootings and Perceived Risk	7:00 p.m

NOVEMBER 2017

Sat., 4	Explorations: Inside Arizona’s Prisons	2:30 p.m
Mon., 6	Social Dinner at Turkish Kebab House, 1157 Campbell Ave., West Haven. (203) 933-0002	7:00 p.m
Sat., 18	Book Discussion: “Evicted: Poverty and Property in the American City” by Matthew Desmond	2:00 p.m to 4:00 p.m
Mon., 20	Monthly Meeting	7:00 p.m
	Main program: Kathleen Green, executive director of Yale Humanist Community: “Humanity Coalition”	7:30 p.m
Sun., 26	Board meeting	2:00 p.m
Mon., 27	Dinner Discussion at the Wood-n-Tap, 2100 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT. (203) 248-9663. Topic TBA	7:00 p.m

www.cthumanist.org

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Explorations: A Brit’s Experience in Sheriff Joe’s Prison

British national Shaun Attwood spent from May 2002 to December 2007 in Arizona’s prison system. In 2004 his family started his blog, *Jon’s Jail Journal*, from stories he sent home specifically to let the outside world know what was really going on inside Joe Arpaio’s prisons. If you want to read it, you can start at the beginning here: <http://jonsjailjournal.blogspot.com/2004/03/>. Today he’s a speaker, author and activist. We’ll show a video of the talk he gives to schoolchildren about his experiences. Join us for this enlightening presentation at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 4, at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

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The editor would like to thank everyone who contributed to this issue.

October 20 is Openly Secular Day!

<https://secularvaluesvoter.org>
<https://ing.org/kyn-campaign>

Book Discussion: "American War: A Novel"

Our book for October is "American War: A Novel" by Omar El Akkad. Join us for the discussion at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 21, at 700 Hartford Turnpike in Hamden.

From Amazon:

"An audacious and powerful debut novel: a second American Civil War, a devastating plague, and one family caught deep in the middle—a story that asks what might happen if America were to turn its most devastating policies and deadly weapons upon itself.

"Sarat Chestnut, born in Louisiana, is only six when the Second American Civil War breaks out in 2074. But even she knows that oil is outlawed, that Louisiana is half underwater, and that unmanned drones fill the sky...

"Powerful ... As haunting a postapocalyptic universe as Cormac McCarthy [created] in 'The Road,' and as devastating a look as the fallout that national events have on an American family as Philip Roth did in 'The Plot Against America.'" – Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

Our book for November will be "Evicted: Poverty and Property in the American City" by sociologist Matthew Desmond.

Dinner and Discussion: Mass Shootings & Perceived Risk

There has been another mass shooting. It seems like more of the same: same arguments, entrenched opinions, everybody shouting and pointing fingers and nobody really thinking about the issues. Here are people who have actually changed their minds about gun control, one in each direction. One is a statistician who used to be pro-gun control: <http://tinyurl.com/y9euh6s7>. The other is a journalist who has found the data so compelling he's now in favor of gun control: <http://tinyurl.com/y7lx19c9>. There's a question as to which events should qualify to be considered a mass shooting, as the last point in this article points out: <http://tinyurl.com/ybu7orsg>. People are afraid of mass shootings like the one in Las Vegas, or Sandy Hook, or Aurora, or Virginia Tech. But the majority of people who die by gun in America are suicides, as this graphic drives home quite eloquently: <http://tinyurl.com/zq8cc25>. Suicide is in tenth place for leading cause of death in the U.S.: <http://tinyurl.com/y9ngmm4v>. Look closely at this list of injury deaths, poisoning deaths, motor vehicle traffic deaths and firearm deaths: <http://tinyurl.com/yb8l7q5y>. Do you rate their seriousness in the same order of their magnitude? Do you think we're all upset and angry over the right things? Can you justify our collective outrage (or lack thereof) with the data?

This discussion will take place over dinner at the Wood-n-Tap, 2100 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 23. Please read as many of the referenced articles as you can. Because we need to make sure we can all sit together, please RSVP to development@cthumanist.org or at meetup.com/cthumanist.

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