

Introducing Chris, David Greatorex outlined his disciplines indicating him to be a polymath capable of speaking on a number of fields. Lecturing at Sydney Uni in Dept of Comparative Religion, he recently returned from a study tour of Morocco examining religious and historical dimensions of the Western Mediterranean. He is President of the Sydney Uni Atheists Society, and his other fields include academic analysis of films including film history.

Yes, Chris’s subject was advised to you as “*Atheists Gone Mad – How Godlessness Has Gone Too Far*” – his last minute change being indicative of his capability above mentioned. (This summary is being written post Christmas, and having just completed a grammatical proof read of a close friend’s well researched large tome “*In Search of the Spiritual*”, also a Yule present, John Howard’s autobiographical “*Lazarus Rising*” – I’m feeling somewhat steeped in matters philosophical – and pretty much inadequate! Ed.)

Epicureanism stems from the philosophy of Epicurus, an Athenian atomic materialist 341 – 270BC who followed in the footsteps of Democritus. Little of his written works survives, the writings of Lucretius a Roman poet/philosopher 99 – 55BC, particularly “*De Rerum Natura*” (“*On the Nature of Things*”) in Latin, being the main source of our knowledge of Epicurean physics including atomism and psychology. The philosophy teaches that serene happiness is fortified by modest and easily obtainable pleasures. All that is needed is:-

*Nutritious food*

*Secure living environment*

*Company of good friends*

*An assuring wisdom that the nature of the Universe is design*

Epicureanism is surprisingly scientific, having gleaned revelations in physics as a means of ideological fortification against many disturbing notions of superstitions.

Chris’s analysis of films was evident in his showing of excerpts from “*Harold and Maude*” a 1971 movie of the special relationship between a 19 year old male and 79 year old lady which transcends the age gap, and a 1993 Australian film “*Bad Boy Bubba*” where a scientist explains to a previously abused and abusive Bubba in a power station “.Take responsibility for who you are!”

The philosophy includes elements such as to concern yourself with improving life for you and your fellow man, that genes are to propagate to maintain human existence, that personality changes depend on our varied roles – e.g:- parent, son, brother, Proboscis member, and various other lifestyle issues and strategies.

Jack Blackman’s vote of thanks conveyed appreciation of us all for Chris’s presentation, providing food for thought.

(This summary does not do proper justice to Chris’s delivery, so to those of you with access to the internet, googling both “*Epicurus*” and “*Lucretius*” will provide much more detail on the subject).