

“Gotta come from somewhere”

Hey, my name is Wallace Darwin and this is my first shot at a video blog entry.

I am sitting out here on Ocean Parkway on a park bench, which is something I like to do a lot. It is pretty cold outside as you can tell, maybe from what I am wearing or from the fact that there's still no leaves on the trees. And eh, it's cold but I don't care, I would rather be outside. I really hate to be inside. I work outside most of the time, I try to spend as much time outside as I can. And it is exciting, the Spring is coming, it's eventually gonna have to come, won't it? And I am excited because I just like to spend as much time outside as I can and when the weather gets warmer that's what I am gonna to do.

So I have been taking this course down at the Ryder library, it's a course offered by this guy named Theo Carroll, older guy, smart guy, volunteer I think and he came up with this course in video blogging. I decided I would like check it out. Theo's got a fancy name for it, he calls it — what does he call it? — he calls it “Web Logging and Biographical Media”. For whatever reason, the course was interesting to me. I mean I check out the library every once in awhile but I never really like took a course or anything like that. And it's a little weird for me to be taking a course like this because pretty much you could say that I never made anything. I mean I've made things at home all the time, and my job at work is to make things work but I guess I never really made anything for me, or maybe more importantly by me. So Theo's course kind of inspired me. I think I can do this. I think I can make a video blog, that is why I am out here, trying to figure out what I can make this blog about.

I think I am bored with my life: I know it too well. I've got all these thoughts in my head and no place to put them. And when I actually tell other people what I've been thinking about — like my friends, guys at work, even my mom — they pretty much all have the same thing to say, which is “Wallace, you think too much”. Well that's fine for them, but that leaves me with all these thoughts and no place to put them. I guess my idea is that if I put them up on the web, my ideas, put them up on the web, even if nobody ever sees them, at least they'll have a home.

So I have been learning a lot from Theo's course. How to shoot a video, how to edit a video, how to put that video up on the web, and I've always been good with technical things so this was all stuff that I could figure out pretty easily. Once I saw how it was done, I got it done. And Theo did a great job of laying it out, but I could have probably figured it out myself. So thank you Theo, but ... um ... the technical part's not the big part. And Theo has this interesting thing that he says about that. Theo says “the technical part of the blog, that's the easy part”. Most people get tripped up like *uhhh, I*

*don't know how to put it up on the web and I don't know how to shoot a video* and all this stuff. But really, the hard part of a blog according to Theo is figuring out what your blog's going to be about. "Your blog needs to be about something." And all the other people in this class, they seem to have a good idea about what their blog is going to be about. There's like the self-promoters — local businessmen, wannabe actresses, even a couple of weird dudes that still think that hip-hop's going to be their ticket out (ptshh!) — and then there's like the enthusiasts, like people who are really into one thing like there's this one guy who's doing his blog on basketball. This other woman is super into high-heeled shoes so she's got this high-heeled-shoe video blog that she is working on. And there's even this older lady and I have got to give her credit — older lady working out all these technical things — and she's going to be doing a blog about her knitting. So it's like a yarn a day. And so all these people have a focus which I do not have. And... umm ... you know so I gotta figure out what I am going to focus it on. I know one thing for sure, it's not going to be about me because I don't really like being the center of attention. So it's going to be about something else.

I'm thinking, why can't my blog be about everything? Okay, Theo, I'll throw you some specificity if that's what you want: I want my blog to be about everything that's alive. That's what my blog will be about: life. And I know that sounds like pretty much everything, but if you think about it, most of the stuff around us is not alive. Alright around here is kind of a bad location because if it is not alive right here, it is probably made by people, shaped by people. But if you go to the outskirts of the city, you see the ocean, the sand, even the air, it might contain living things but it sure is not alive.

Which brings up a pretty interesting question: *what makes things alive?* If this blog's going to be about everything that's alive, I better have some sense of what that means. And I do have, but it's complicated. These trees around me, they're alive but they look pretty dead right now. The people behind me, they're no longer living but were alive once. Seems like there are so many different kinds of living things, there's like no way that I could just describe them with just one description of what's alive, what's not alive. I think you just know it when you see it. Living things are just different from things that aren't alive. But I guess I do not know how. And I'm going to have to figure that out if I'm going to do a blog about living things.

And then there's the next question, which is: *where does life come from?* That's the big one, right? I guess how big it is depends on who you ask. My mom, she spends almost all her time down at St. Athanasius, and they got the easy answer. "Wallace, God made the earth in six days, end of story." That's Lynn's take. But that answer just seems too easy to me. Like something you would tell a three-year-old when they're asking *why, why, why, why* all day long and you just want to shut them up, you say *God did it*. And what are we supposed to do with this answer? I mean, God's all around us but we really can't see 'em. God will answer our prayers but we really can't talk to God. I mean if God made the whole world and all the living things in it, who made God? Lynn would kill me for that one. It's a good thing Lynn spends no time on the internet, huh?

The way I think about it is this: it's crazy that anything exists at all. I mean think about it: there's stuff like all the way from the earth all the way out into space, and it just exists. And no one can tell you why it exists. When you follow it all the way down the path, it's just there. And I think maybe that's why I don't find non-living things all that interesting, because to some extent it's just like an article of faith, you have to accept that things exist. But once you accept that things exist, what about living things? Because living things are like a whole other layer on top of non-living things. I mean, it is weird that a rock exists, but it's even weirder that I am here talking to you now, and that you can understand me in some other place and some other time. I mean, heck, you might be listening to this so late that I might not even be alive anymore but you can still listen to this because you're alive. And that's... that's weird.

Life just existing is a hard thing to wrap your head around, so I guess I could see why some folks would be more comfortable with like an all-powerful being making it all and taking care of it all for us, but I figure there's got to be better explanation for why living things exist. I guess that's what this blog is going to be about.