

Point

Counterpoint

Blasphemer says: God is dead, we're all next

So we are all going to die. It's inevitable. Look at all the crazy stuff happening with Iraq.

I'm writing this on Tuesday, by the time you get it on Thursday, World War 3 will have already started. It's all about whose man enough to pull the trigger first, Saddam or Clinton.

In this age of ever-present global annihilation you have got to sort of wonder what is going to happen after your ticket gets punched.

Is it going to be the wine and cheese of heaven or the fire and brimstone of hell, are we going to come back as somebody else, or is our consciousness going to remain with our body as it gets burned or stuck in the ground.

What if the Christians are wrong? It could be pretty damn embarrassing if the Vikings were right and we end up in Valhalla. What fun would that be if you don't like to fight and have sex?

I mean everybody has got to wonder about this. Death is the one thing that everybody has in common.

I don't consider myself to be a very religious person. That might be why I'm so concerned about one word. This the word that literally keeps me up at night in a state of blinding panic. If you even think about too long, and I mean really think about it, you are paralyzed with fear.

That one word is

Chuck Buckley

A&E Editor

bucka5a0@numen.elon.edu



oblivion.

When you die there is no heaven, Happy Hunting Grounds or Nirvana, there is nothing. No consciousness, no memories, no feelings, not a blessed thing. You would cease to be. It's almost impossible to comprehend that everything that you do on this Earth, every thought you have will have no meaning as soon as your heart beats for the last time.

The only good thing is when you do die you won't even know regret at passing away and the end

of you existence.

I would love to go to hell. I think it would be terrific. I'm sure that heaven would be better, but if going to hell means that I get to continue existing instead of just not being, the someone sign me up.

Whatever hardship I must endure in hell, be it being torn limb from limb by rusty machines or listen to the comedy stylings of Norm MacDonald, I would prefer hell over oblivion because if I have my awareness of self than anything is bearable. I don't care how much I go through as long as I have my own thoughts.

Reincarnation is just as bad as oblivion in my opinion. If the soul is eternal and when you do die it comes back as another person, what happens to the memories that you once had? Yes, the stuff that made you is still around, but the thoughts and memories aren't yours, they belong to Utate the conqueror of Space.

I think that death should be

banned so we don't have to worry about all this stuff. Unfortunately the government is so backwards right now we'll never get the death amendment passed before the turn of the century.

I can't believe that a book of stories is the ultimate truth to the universe. There are a lot of other religions out there that were around long before the New Testament or even the Old one for that matter. But I guess that's why they call it faith.

A comic, I think Dave Atell, said that the reason people like me are losing their faith is because God isn't talking to people like he did in the old days.

It's true. God is not coming down and telling people to build arcs anymore, and even if he did we would think that they were crazy.

But it all comes back to the death issue, doesn't it. We are never going to know the truth until we die. Even then we might just disappear. It's just so hopeless. It gets in the way of my life. It's so terrifying. Not to say that I can't function, but there are times when I just have got

to sit down.

People are going to tell me that I should try and find God so I can deal with my questions. The Bible is full of God's wisdom. The Bible is full of life lessons that can help you be happy.

Bull. The Bible is full of man's interpretation of God's wisdom, and as for the life lessons, I can glean all I need from the movies - Do unto others as you would have them do unto you, money doesn't buy you happiness and when you go back in time, don't step on anything. See. I don't need religion.

I can't buy into religion because I know that it's not certain. As strong as your convictions are, how can you prove it. There is no way. You've got the Torah, the Bible, the Koran, I've got the "Adventures of Baron Munchausen." Books, all books.

Faith is like a fuzzy blanket, it keeps you warm and makes you forget about the cold, but someone like me who questions his faith, can never forget about the cold. It's not easy for me to close my eyes and believe in God anymore.

Are you alive? The answer may be unexpected

Are you alive? Make sure. Check your pulse.

Yes, you're physically here on earth. There's no question about that.

Being really alive though is more than just your run-of-the-mill... (we interrupt this program to find the correct word. This was only a test. Now back to your regularly scheduled column).

Life, even breathing, is taken for granted, plain and simple. If being really alive was just about existence on the planet, there would be no challenge, no risk, no life.

No, don't stop reading simply because it's getting too deep for you. Read on - you never know what might happen.

Think about it. Ouch, that hurts. We're not just here to walk back and forth across the sidewalks of the world. We are all here for a reason.

If you're looking for a purpose in life, look in the mirror. No, don't do that, it might be scary. Well, do it anyway.

What I mean by that is you gotta check yourself before you wreck yourself. In layman's terms, that could mean know who you are before you mess yourself up.

After that, tell me you're alive. Don't

Jason Dennis

Pendulum Reporter

dennj4a0@numen.elon.edu



worry, I'm getting to my point eventually. That will actually be in next week's column.

To me, being alive means living life to its fullest. It's making a difference where you're at in the world. It's standing up for what you believe in.

I believe in God. There is no way I would be alive without God. That doesn't even break the surface of what He does for me, though. God doesn't just give me gifts and life, but stands as my purpose.

I go through the motions of life

and surely enjoy my time here, but also know there is something much larger than that.

If you're trying to figure out what that is, it's God. No joke.

Yes, Jesus Christ died on the cross for us, but he is still alive within us.

He also gives us free will, the choice to choose whether we believe in Him or not. Many people disagree with what I believe, but that doesn't

mean I'm going to back down from it.

We all make choices in life, paths to follow. Speaking of roads, don't you hate it when you try to take a shortcut and it actually takes you longer to get there anyway?

Being alive is based on those decisions. Whether you turn right, turn left, go straight, or stop completely, life is going to change as you know it.

Back to the original question:

Are you alive?

I asked that to our Opinions Editor, the goddess of opinion, and her response was yes, after checking her pulse of course. She also added that her spirit was currently tucked in bed with a warm cup of joe.

Hot coffee is nice and all, especially since I have an 8 a.m. class tomorrow, but I'll get back to my deep thoughts.

For those who like the obvious pointed out to them, we are all physically alive with a mind, body, heart and soul.

I believe that if our soul is in union with God, we are spiritually alive. Again, being alive is more than we see on the outside.

It's just like the real you. Do a lot of people know who that is? In that case, do you know?

There I go, making you think again. Maybe being alive is just running around, keeping ourselves occupied in whatever way we can.

Screw that. Be bold. Be different. Be real.

Life is about meaning. For me, God is my meaning. God is love. And from then there is "Love in action," also known as one of those feel-good themes for Habitat for Humanity.

We cannot just feel love or feel alive, but we need to act out love and act out being alive.

If you are sitting in your room right now or wherever you are and reading this column, get out of your padded seat right now. Go do some thing for somebody.

Surprise the heck out of another person and even yourself with a random act of kindness. We only have a short time on this earth, so do what you can now.

As the Declaration of Independence tells us, every one has the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Do whatever you need to do to be truly free and happy. For me, God is the only way to true freedom and happiness. He is what makes me alive.

What makes you alive?