

## **"Memes and Tremes: From biology to the future of Artificial Intelligence"**

For: Christ Guest  
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**Susan Blackmore 2018**

### **Abstract**

Universal Darwinism is the principle that when any kind of information is copied with variation and selection an evolutionary process inevitably begins. Genes are Earth's best-known replicator, giving rise to biological evolution, but there may be others. Dawkins coined the term 'meme' to apply to a second replicator that emerged when our ancestors became capable of imitation. Their memes – the sounds, actions and ways of doing things that they copied - spread and evolved, competing to use human bodies and brains, and creating human culture in the process. We became meme machines. Memetics differs from other theories of cultural evolution in being based on two selfish replicators not one and, arguably, can better understand our fast-changing culture. Could a third replicator emerge from the culture created by the second? I believe that this is already happening. Digital information is now being copied, varied and selected ever faster by the silicon-based technology that we have provided for it. I will end with speculation that this means that a third replicator, tremes, is already emerging, is evolving new types of intelligence, and we need to consider how our own role is inevitably changing.