

Claims that Google Simulated the Naturalistic Emergence of Life: Illogical, Illaudable, and Illusive

**Dr. Winfred Wills
Association of Internet Researchers
Independent Researcher**

*The statements in this research paper represent the opinions of the author.

An anonymous philosopher once said that “claims lacking evidence represent mere amorphous statements.” By this, the philosopher was saying that when claiming a statement to be factual, one must have proof in order for the statement to have merit. This principle applies in the case of claims that Google has simulated the naturalistic origins of life. According to Agueray Arcas et al (2024) they have shown that “when random, non-self replicating programs are placed in an environment lacking any explicit fitness landscape, self-replicators tend to arise.” At first glance, this comes across as persuasive and confirmatory with respect to the principles naturalists believe about the arisal of life from non living particles. However, when applying logic and analyzing the evidence objectively, it becomes clear that this claim is unsubstantiated, erroneous, and an overestimation.

Firstly, contrary to the contention that Google has simulated the naturalistic origins of life, the computer, software, and data programming all required intelligent and deliberate design. Hence, the self-replicating programs were ultimately designed intelligently, which is inconsistent with Naturalism. Additionally, the programmed abilities of the “random” data made it so that self-replication was easily achieved as self-replication of programs and data merely requires the programmed information to to have the ability to copy itself. Being as though this ability was inherently programmed into every piece of this “random” data, it was essentially guaranteed that self-replication would occur. The aggregation of these facts make the claim that Google has simulated the natural origins of life an overstatement of the probative value of this “experiment.” Instead, this suggests that life would never have arisen absent a living creator.

According to Naturalism (2024), Naturalism is a theory that all events and beings in the universe are natural or without intelligent cause. However, when looking at the computer, the software, and the data programming, one thing is clear. All of the aforementioned items were

intelligently designed. Contrary to the Naturalism theory, which posits that all of the necessary ingredients for life came to be by natural processes and random chance over millions of years, none of the data used in this “experiment” was self-generated. Instead, a programmer, which acts as an agent greater than the software itself, had to give it all of its abilities. This is consistent with Intelligent Design or creation by a living, divine power (Luskin, 2021). The digital “universe” that was “fine tuned” for the data to self-replicate was designed with precision. Does this experiment really hold any probative value with respect to the theory of Naturalism? Were the needed elements even formed in the way that the Naturalism theory argues that life’s elements were formed? Would it have been possible for a molecule, which is the building block of life, to program itself and then self-replicate? Of course not. Would it not be necessary for molecules to self-program in order for the Naturalism theory to be true? However, being as though inanimate molecules are not capable of self-programming, neither are computer programs unless specifically and intelligently programmed to do so. Therefore, this “experiment” points to the conclusion that a creator is necessary for life to have arisen.

Along with the necessity of a divine creator, it is an obvious fact that a computer can only do what it is programmed to do. Even in cases of Machine Learning, which occurs when a machine is programmed with a large database and taught to recognize patterns in data and incorporate new information to draw conclusions, the machine is only capable of doing so because of the original programmer. In the case of this “experiment,” they modified it only to allow the random data to interact with each other, left to execute code, and overwrite themselves and neighbors based on their own instructions (Landmore, 2024). This guaranteed self-replication, being that the copy command is a form of override. Moreover, self-replication in its simplest form only requires that the software be programmed with the capability of copying

itself. Furthermore, the copy command is one of many forms of override. Hence, what Google produced is more consistent with software operating as it was programmed, not life's origins.

All things considered, the claim that Google has simulated the naturalistic origin of life is not proved by this "experiment," it is disproved. For one, life forming naturalistically would require the generation of life without any creator. However, the "researchers" in this experiment had to create things a certain way in order to cause self-replication of data. This certainly demonstrates an intelligently designed end result as the computer, software, and data did not self assemble, they had to be assembled with accuracy and precision. The level of detail the "researchers" had to put into this demonstrates that it is impossible that it would have happened on its own. Moreover, computers could never "simulate" life forming naturally without the team of researchers ensuring that it happened, as computers can only do what they are programmed to do. In this "experiment", the "researchers" admitted to modifying aspects of the data's functioning capability to ensure that it had certain abilities. The aggregation of these abilities increases the likelihood of self-replication. Hence, the logical conclusion is that the self-replication of programs occurred due to the way the software was programmed and only illustrates the necessity of a divine creator to have set life in motion. Based on this intelligently designed "experiment," Google has strengthened the case for God, making it clear that God is real and life did not arise naturally from non living material.

References

Aguera y Arcas, B. et al. (2024). Computational Life: How Well-formed, Self-replicating Programs Emerge from Simple Interaction. Retrieved from <https://arxiv.org/abs/2406.19108> .

Landmore, F. (2024). Google Researchers Say They Have Simulated the Emergence of Life. *The Byte*. Retrieved from <https://futurism.com/the-byte/google-simulated-emergence-life/> .

Luskin, C. (2021). The Top Six Lines of Evidence for Intelligent Design. Retrieved from <https://www.discovery.org/a/sixfold-evidence-for-intelligent-design/>.

Naturalism. (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/naturalism-philosophy> .