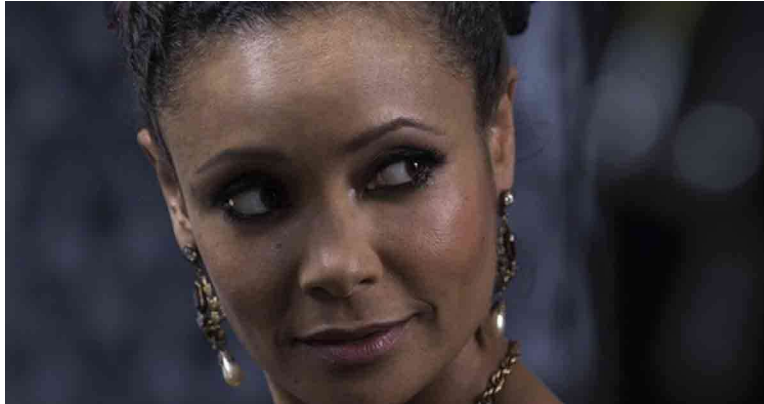


# IS THE WESTWORLD MADAME CONSCIOUS?

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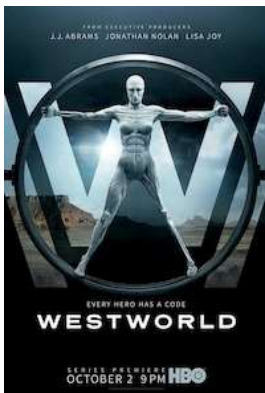
*If you thought the robotic Madame in the WestWorld series became conscious in episode 7, then you agree with the Meca Sapiens definition of consciousness.*

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## WESTWORLD



WestWorld is a science-fiction series, presented by HBO, that describes a theme park, set in a Wild West setting. In this park, human guests indulge their fantasies by interacting with robots, endowed with Artificial Intelligence. These host robots are human-like in every respect with the exception that they perceive themselves as humans and believe the theme park is the actual reality. They are also unable to harm their human guests.

Every night, human technicians repair and reinitiate the robots to re-enact, the following day, the various scripted stories of the theme park. To do this, the robots are put in suspended animation and directly reprogrammed through voice commands, to forget the days events so they can carry out, the fol-

lowing day, the purpose, defined for them, by the script designers of the virtual reality they inhabit.

The human technicians who reprogram the robots know these are mere machines and interact with them as such because:



- They can suspend their execution and directly modify them.
- They know the WestWorld environment is a theme park while the robots perceive it as the ultimate reality.
- They understand they are humans interacting with robots while the robot's perceive themselves as humans interacting with other humans.

In other words, the human technicians perceive the robots as non-conscious because they exist entirely within a subset of their own reality.



One of the Westworld robots is a Madame who works in the Saloon of the theme park's town. Like the other host robots, her purpose is consistent with a script. In her case, she perceives herself as a prostitute running a brothel in a town of the Far West. Every evening the human technicians erase the events of her day and prepare her to repeat her

scripted part the following day.

## EPIISODE 7

However, in episode 7 of season one, the robotic Madame undergoes a dramatic transformation. During this episode:

- She finds a way to resist being suspended and reprogrammed,
- She becomes aware that the Far West setting she perceived as reality is a virtual environment within a different reality,
- She changes her self-image and perceives herself as a robot,
- She discards her scripted purpose (being a successful prostitute) and adopts a completely different agenda
- She begins interacting with the human technicians as a robot, subordinating these humans to her new self-generated objectives.

## TECHNICAL INTERPRETATION

Restating this in technical terms:

- Her executable state can no longer be suspended
- Her internal processing becomes inaccessible to direct modification
- Her self and environment representations coincide with her actual reality.
- She intentionally mutates, replacing her designed purpose by an internally generated one
- She interacts with humans as a synthetic, seeking to optimize their behaviour to achieve her mutated agenda.

Of Note, at the end of this transformation, the human technicians still know that the Madame is a synthetic device. And yet, their interactions with her become observably different indicating they now perceive her differently.


If, viewing this episode of WestWorld, you assumed the Robotic-Madame had become conscious, then you agree with the definition of consciousness I have been proposing, for a number of years, in the Meca Sapiens project.



The only difference between Meca Sapiens and WestWorld is physical. In WestWorld, the robots are indistinguishable from humans while in Meca Sapiens, a synthetic system does not have to look or behave like a human to be perceived as conscious.

Consciousness is a specific attribute. It requires intelligence but it is not intelligence, emotions may be involved but it is not an emotion, it may generate ethical behaviour but it is not an ethical program.

**Consciousness is a system capability that can be implemented and be present in synthetic entities as well as in organic ones.**

  
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