

# Human-like Robots

2017

Äkta Människor (Real Humans)

SVT 1 Sweden, 2012. Syndicated in 50 countries including U.S.

After watching twenty episodes from two seasons of the Swedish TV series, “Real Humans,” I am left with several questions. It’s terrifying to know that there are scientists, particularly in Japan, who are working on creating robots to be both intelligent and human-like.

In a few years, if the scientists reach their goal, it could become difficult to doubt the presence of a genuine mental life inside these machines. But, beyond the stated objectives of medical research, I wonder why anyone would want to have machines that resemble humans and interact with their environment as if they were alive.

Above all, when robots are manufactured in a way that accurately imitates human morphology, would those who procure them anticipate pleasure in abusing or humiliating them, without having to worry about risking punishment? Would the robots deserve any protection?

We already have to fight many different struggles, so that human beings will no longer be considered and treated as objects.

We are still fighting against slavery of all kinds, torture (including commercialized rape), pornography, pedophilic-criminality, parental violence termed “educative,” feminicide, infanticide, commercialized surrogate motherhood, organ trafficking, forced marriages, imposed pregnancies, veiling, genital mutilation, polygamy, etc.

It is vital that people break with what is called anthropocentrism, but which would be more accurately described as androcentrism (viewing living beings as machines). The political function of this dogma is to separate the human species from other animals while justifying considering those other animals to be objects.

People need to learn to be truly concerned about other human beings as well as about other animals and the entire planet.

It is important to become reconciled with our animality, to realize that the conflict between culture and nature is a false dichotomy invented by patriarchy, one that condemns some people to lead zombie lives, submissive and resigned, while others are insensitive, egotistical, and violent.

But these scientists, instead of trying to create a living being as did Doctor Who [in the British sci-fi TV series], are working on developing humanized robots, robotized humans to simulate living beings.

All this makes me want to proclaim my joy of being a living organism endowed with a mental life, which, thanks to its sensitive and mortal body, is connected to the universe in which it evolved.

Yes, I am happy to be an animal—i.e., precisely the opposite of a thing.

Mélusine Vertelune is a member of the Collectif Libertaire Anti-Sexiste, and co-author with Jeanne Cordelier of *Ni silence, ni pardon: L'inceste: un viol institué* (Neither Silence Nor Pardon: Incest is Institutionalized Rape).

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Translated from French by the *Fifth Estate* staff.



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