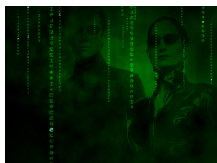


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By: Lucian Dorneanu, Science Editor



The Matrix could be more than fictional

[US Department of Defense Is Building the Matrix!](#)

An alternate reality with billions of individual "nodes" to reflect every man, woman and child

Everyone who watched the Matrix trilogy was at least impressed by the complex virtual reality developed by sentient robots, if not by the many philosophical elements. The concept of artificial intelligence overthrowing or enslaving mankind had previously been touched on by hundreds of science fiction stories, but this trilogy was a truly meaningful depiction of the idea. It seems that the US Department of Defense is trying to build such a matrix, an alternate reality holding a complex matrix with billions of individual "nodes" to reflect every man, woman and child in the real world. said Mark Beard, who wrote an [article](#) on the subject in "The Register." Called the Sentient World Simulation (SWS), it will be a "synthetic mirror of the real world with automated continuous calibration with respect to current real-world information", according to a concept paper for the project. I am no conspiracy theory adept myself, but this idea is kind of scary. No, they won't kidnap people and place them into the virtual reality to harness their electrical impulses, but the main purpose sounds kind of fishy too. "SWS provides an environment for testing Psychological Operations (PSYOP)," the paper reads, so that military leaders can "develop and test multiple courses of action to anticipate and shape behaviors of adversaries, neutrals, and partners". "The applications don't stop here, as this virtual copy of our planet will also include replicas of financial institutions, utilities, media outlets and street corner shops. All these will be used to test various theories regarding economics and human psychology, to predict how individuals and mobs will respond to various stressors," Beard said. "The idea is to generate alternative futures with outcomes based on interactions between multiple sides," said Purdue University professor Alok Chaturvedi, co-author of the SWS concept paper. For now, Purdue's labs for Synthetic Environment for Analysis and Simulations, or SEAS - the platform underlying SWS say the applications are used by corporations like pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly and defense contractor Lockheed Martin to visualize the nodes and scenarios in text boxes and graphs, or as icons set against geographical maps. There's one thing that makes me think the US government is really involved in this "Matrix" and that is the fact that Chaturvedi has received millions of dollars in grants from the military and the National Science Foundation to develop SEAS. I'm sure that I'm only being paranoid and that the US government will only use the further development of this alternate reality to protect people from threats, as a responsible government working for the benefit of all its citizens...