



IDENTITY IN THE METaverse

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

00:00:00,300 --> 00:00:01,890

- There are three themes

2

00:00:01,890 --> 00:00:03,528

that persistently thread through

3

00:00:03,528 --> 00:00:04,917

any considerations

4

00:00:04,917 --> 00:00:07,830

of human interactions in the Metaverse.

5

00:00:07,830 --> 00:00:08,940

and these three themes

6

00:00:08,940 --> 00:00:11,490

are identity, sociality, and ethics.

7

00:00:11,490 --> 00:00:12,990

Today, I'm going to be speaking to you

8

00:00:12,990 --> 00:00:14,970

about identity in virtual worlds.

9

00:00:14,970 --> 00:00:16,710

While VR is an important

10

00:00:16,710 --> 00:00:18,660

building block of the Metaverse,

11

00:00:18,660 --> 00:00:21,190

The Metaverse is not just about VR.

12

00:00:21,190 --> 00:00:23,730

Virtual worlds offer many new degrees

13

00:00:23,730 --> 00:00:26,400

of freedom in how the self is represented.

14

00:00:26,400 --> 00:00:27,552

In a "selfie generation"

15

00:00:27,552 --> 00:00:29,400

where image is everything

16

00:00:29,400 --> 00:00:31,102

and profiles are central,

17

00:00:31,102 --> 00:00:33,450

are we able to define ourselves

18

00:00:33,450 --> 00:00:35,730

beyond our physical appearance?

19

00:00:35,730 --> 00:00:37,530 Arguably,

in virtual worlds

20

00:00:37,530 --> 00:00:39,682

that closely mirror human relationships

21

00:00:39,682 --> 00:00:41,250

in the physical world,

22

00:00:41,250 --> 00:00:43,350

for example, a workplace,

23
00:00:43,350 --> 00:00:45,570
users choose a virtual representation

24
00:00:45,570 --> 00:00:46,712
of themselves that's closer

25
00:00:46,712 --> 00:00:48,930
to how they look in real life.

26
00:00:48,930 --> 00:00:50,163
Not all virtual worlds

27
00:00:50,163 --> 00:00:52,110
offer the same affordances

28
00:00:52,110 --> 00:00:53,910
in which we can express ourselves.

29
00:00:53,910 --> 00:00:55,620
Identity researchers believe

30
00:00:55,620 --> 00:00:56,850
that the most important

31
00:00:56,850 --> 00:00:59,610
aspect of our identity is the core self

32
00:00:59,610 --> 00:01:01,710
which remains constant over time.

33
00:01:01,710 --> 00:01:03,000
The unique "I."

34
00:01:03,000 --> 00:01:05,490
While there is a stable
part of our identity,

35
00:01:05,490 --> 00:01:07,299
there's also the changing self,

36
00:01:07,299 --> 00:01:08,619
which may change because

37
00:01:08,619 --> 00:01:11,220
of our changing social connotations,

38
00:01:11,220 --> 00:01:12,960
our changing dispositions,

39
00:01:12,960 --> 00:01:14,850
and our changing beliefs in general.

40
00:01:14,850 --> 00:01:16,649
The multiple selves could coexist,

41
00:01:16,649 --> 00:01:19,221
but some are more salient than others

42
00:01:19,221 --> 00:01:20,790
at any given time.

43
00:01:20,790 --> 00:01:21,623
In this case,

44
00:01:21,623 --> 00:01:23,280
Sabrina the Gates scholar,

45
00:01:23,280 --> 00:01:24,210
was at some point

46
00:01:24,210 --> 00:01:25,830
Sabrina the psychologist,

47
00:01:25,830 --> 00:01:27,163
and is now Sabrina,



48
00:01:27,163 --> 00:01:29,340
a Human Sciences Studio researcher

49
00:01:29,340 --> 00:01:30,300
in Accenture.

50
00:01:30,300 --> 00:01:33,570
Sabrina who is currently
a mum to a toddler

51
00:01:33,570 --> 00:01:36,420
shares the same core self as Sabrina,

52
00:01:36,420 --> 00:01:37,876
the child who fled Indonesia

53
00:01:37,876 --> 00:01:40,803
in a 1998 racial riots.

54
00:01:41,700 --> 00:01:44,319
But what if some features of my identity

55
00:01:44,319 --> 00:01:46,450
have not been expressed before,

56
00:01:46,450 --> 00:01:49,230
given the limitations
of the physical world

57
00:01:49,230 --> 00:01:50,261
that we live in?

58
00:01:50,261 --> 00:01:52,800
Suppose the song of my life

59
00:01:52,800 --> 00:01:54,450
is played on an instrument

60
00:01:54,450 --> 00:01:56,400
that hasn't been invented yet.

61
00:01:56,400 --> 00:01:58,260
Indeed, the human personality

62
00:01:58,260 --> 00:02:00,530
is multifaceted and complex.

63
00:02:00,530 --> 00:02:03,660
We choose to display parts of our identity

64
00:02:03,660 --> 00:02:05,700
through creative expressions

65
00:02:05,700 --> 00:02:07,320
and social interactions.

66
00:02:07,320 --> 00:02:10,590
This is the core defining
feature of being human.

67
00:02:10,590 --> 00:02:12,363
What does it mean for my sense of self

68
00:02:12,363 --> 00:02:15,000
if I can be anything I like?

69
00:02:15,000 --> 00:02:16,260
Is this aspirational

70
00:02:16,260 --> 00:02:17,872
representation of my self

71
00:02:17,872 --> 00:02:20,730
less authentic than how I dress



72
00:02:20,730 --> 00:02:22,260
when I meet you for coffee?

73
00:02:22,260 --> 00:02:25,219
Or in fact this embodiment
of my hidden identity

74
00:02:25,219 --> 00:02:29,100
helping me be and feel more "me."

75
00:02:29,100 --> 00:02:30,060
And what does it mean

76
00:02:30,060 --> 00:02:32,220
for my interactions with other people?

77
00:02:32,220 --> 00:02:34,260
Whether I can be a dragon

78
00:02:34,260 --> 00:02:35,841
in my workplace Metaverse,

79
00:02:35,841 --> 00:02:38,130
remains a question for HR.

80
00:02:38,130 --> 00:02:40,881
But is there a way to
claim unique ownership

81
00:02:40,881 --> 00:02:42,990
of my embodied self?

82
00:02:42,990 --> 00:02:43,971
Perhaps we should consider

83
00:02:43,971 --> 00:02:46,500
that anonymity and pseudonymity

84
00:02:46,500 --> 00:02:47,580
can provide a sense

85
00:02:47,580 --> 00:02:50,100
of psychological safety in virtual worlds.

86
00:02:50,100 --> 00:02:51,540
But if I'm anonymous,

87
00:02:51,540 --> 00:02:53,940
I can't flex that NFT ownership.

88
00:02:53,940 --> 00:02:58,863
So what makes me "me" in the Metaverse?

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