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# Editorial

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What will robots be like ten, twenty and more years from now? What will they be able to accomplish? How will human–robot relationships have advanced? What place in society will be occupied by robots? These are just some of the questions which will be debated in the pages of this new publication – the *Journal of Future Robot Life*.

Computer science and artificial intelligence (AI) have had a huge impact on society, an impact that will only increase with further advances in hardware and software technologies. Robots are the most remarkable product of these developments in computing and AI, many of them being designed in a humanlike form and endowed with humanlike capabilities: talking, hearing, seeing, moving and performing complex tasks such as dancing, conducting an orchestra, rescuing victims at disaster sites, playing musical instruments, and beating a world champion at chess.

As robots become more humanlike in their appearance and their capabilities, and as they come to be regarded more and more as our companions and assistants in all aspects of daily life, different questions beg to be answered. We need to contemplate what life will be like when robots can imitate human behavior sufficiently to be regarded, in some sense, as our equals. And when we humans have adapted our ways of life in order to interact fully with robots as alternative people, and to benefit fully from our relationships with them, such questions on the future of human–robot interactions and human–robot relationships are the *raison d'etre* of this journal. What civil rights and legal rights should robots be granted? What are the ethics of humankind's interactions with robots? Will robots have empathy? Will their personalities and emotions mimic our own? Will robots be programmed with social intelligence, or can they acquire it through a learning process? Will robots be alive in any humanlike sense, and if so, how?

The *Journal of Future Robot Life* will attempt to answer these questions and many more. The topics which we group under the umbrella phrase "future robot life" are many and varied, and the list will doubtless expand with time. We shall start with the following:

Animal–robot interfaces
Are robots alive?
Biological behaviors
Companion robots
Evolutionary robots
Human–robot reproduction
Human–robot interfaces
Implanted cyborg technologies
Laws relating to robots

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Nanorobots in medicine
Plant–robot interfaces
Robot emotions
Robot ethics
Robot personalities
Robot reproduction
Robot rights
Robot–human parents
Robots as doctors
Robots as economists
Robots as lovers
Robots as politicians
Robots as psychiatrists/therapists
Robots as spouses
Robots as teachers
Robots in Entertainment
Robots in government
Robots on the battlefield
Social intelligence in robots
Swarm robot behavior.

Unpredicted (this first edition has been planned for more than a year), the first issue of our journal comes out during the crisis of the China virus pandemic. It is a terrible tragedy for the world, with (at the time of writing) more than 1 million people sick or dying or dead. However, in this dark cloud we see some silver linings. Some of the things which we predicted would happen in 2050 are happening now in 2020. Now people are realizing they can work, learn, and play using computers. It is not much of a step to work, learn, and play with robots. So in fact this journal and its excellent papers are highly relevant for the current moment in time. And what these papers predict is not so far-fetched anymore. The world in crisis will change us forever, but some things for the better.

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