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Designing for Collaborative Robotics

Robotics are used heavily in very specific fields often hidden and out of sight of the everyday user. As the Jeff Faneuff in this chapter from *Designing for Emerging Technologies* outlines, just like the exponential ubiquity of screens from the 1970s to the present day, robots will follow a similar evolution and in 40 days will become a habitual part of the everyday. An interesting part of this chapter deals with notions of humanness and our constant obsession to formulate robots in the likeness of humans. This is especially pertinent when thinking of robots in popular culture--thinking back on films like *A.I.*, *Terminator* etc. These current developments of human like robots often end up falling victim to the 'uncanny valley'. This is where robots begin to look so much like humans but not quite enough to convince or fool their real-life counterparts that the end result is something creepy and non approachable.

It is important to not necessarily remain focused on this sort of humanoid robotic entity as being the focal point to our interaction with robotics. We will see advanced robotic components integrated into products and technologies we use of a daily basis which will ultimately re-form how we interact with our surroundings completely. This is where the focus of robotics must lie--the idea of focusing on a human centric design model where the interaction with the robotic entity is held to the forefront of the design. It is important to bring designers into play early in the development of robotics so that this vital interaction model and UX design is present from the start and can be developed alongside the technology. It is interesting to think of robots that will be and are currently working out of the public eye. Robots in factories for example assembling products are able to work without limits on schedule or precision and are out of sight from most users. But for those robots designed to work with humans directly it ultimately is about how and why humans interface with these robotic entities that matters most. Robots have the potential to "Robots can work tirelessly at well-defined repetitive tasks, apply brute strength, provide a steady hand, and perform tasks with submillimeter accuracy". Consequently, robotic development should be focused not on imitating humans -- but creating robotic systems that are capable of completing tasks which humans are incapable of -- or tasks that humans are not fit for.