

TECHNOLOGY IN OUR LIVES

The Future Of Robots

(NAPSA)—Imagine a world where robots do our cleaning, care for our health and even serve as our friends. If you think this sounds like something out of a sci-fi movie, you may be surprised to learn that these robots already exist and are an integral part of many people's lives.



Will Smith's hunt for a killer draws the attention of one very special robot, Sonny.

Today, robots are used for a variety of purposes across America. Robots assist with medical rehabilitation, vacuum rooms by themselves, and patrol and secure people's homes. Some folks even keep them as pets.

While it may sound futuristic, the use of robots in society is actually nothing new. For years, companies have used robots in industrial settings (picture those huge robotic arms that perform tasks such as welding cars and painting refrigerators).

When most people think of robots, however, images from movies such as "I, Robot" may come to mind. The movie highlights a world in which robots and humans interact freely. In it, Will Smith plays a robophobic police officer who suspects a robot in the murder of his friend.

The "I, Robot" DVD special bonus features—including a featurette and audio commentary—offer insight into the making of the film, and raise questions about the mechanization of mod-

ern society. But the philosophy behind dependence on robots changes with who you ask.

Dan Kara of Robotics Trends says new types of intelligent, semi- or fully autonomous mobile robots will play an important role in society.

He says that not only will they be used in virtually any industrial sector where work requires a high level of concentration, but that they'll assist doctors, help with data acquisition and actually become a part of our bodies, serving as prosthetic devices.

So should we be concerned with some sort of "I, Robot" nightmare scenario occurring in our lifetime? Absolutely not, say experts. Instead, they recommend efforts be focused on ways to further improve existing robotic technology, all in an effort to make robots—and the services they provide—compute for more people.

For more information on "I, Robot," visit www.IRobotDVD.com.