

Borenstein and Pearson: Robot Caregivers: Harbingers of expanded freedom for all?

1. This article is an excellent source of references to related work in the area of robotics and caregiving, especially in the case of the elderly. It describes a capabilities approach to analyzing the significance and success of a technological intervention at the sociological and personal level. Suppose that you embraced the capabilities approach, and you wanted to re-invent Asimov's 3 laws of robotics, not from a harms point of view but, rather, from a capabilities point of view. Draft 3 new laws on this basis. Explain and justify your draft.

2. Evaluate the gap between discussions of autonomous caregiving robots and the state of the art. I want you to do research on at least 2 existing companies or projects dedicated to this type of technology, and based on that research, develop your estimate for when the first caregiving robots will be available for use by private citizens. Identify the companies or products you have evaluated and summarize their current status as you can best determine. What major *robot capabilities* remain to be realized for these systems to be truly effective?