

Androids might soon become science fact

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New Zealand and European scientists say it's time to send R2-D2 back to science fiction land -- and get ready to greet androids that think and act like humans.

The researcher told the Wellington Dominion Post that until now humanoid robots have been confined to movies and science fiction novels. But they say the real thing could be just around the corner.

Computer science expert Richard Green of the University of Canterbury says he is trying to teach an animatronic chimpanzee to learn and mimic human facial expressions.

At the University of Sunderland in England, the Dominion Post says scientists are developing a robot able to understand and react to simple phrases, while other scientists in Europe are working on robots able to learn for themselves, rather than being programmed.

Although opinion about robots is divided, most scientists agree robots able to interact with humans may not be too far in our future.

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