CS 147 - Augmented Humans Studio
Assignment 2: POVs and Experience Prototypes

## Team Name: Cradle
Peter H.  ||  Nik M.  ||  Jason P.  ||  Will Y.

## Problem Domain
We are working in the domain of **Idea Management.** This week, we narrowed our searching to the specific audience of **Journalists.** We had discovered a real need for the management of complex ideas, and wanted to explore this further within the practical subdomain of journalism.

## Initial POV
We met Mark, who works on HCI research about understanding creative decisions. We were surprised to learn that he writes ideas down during the day and processes them en masse at night. It would be game-changing if we could find optimal times during the day to fully flesh them out.

## Additional Needfinding Results

### Heather
Heather Won Tesoriero is an Emmy-winning producer, former reporter at *The Wall Street Journal*, and author. Heather says that the best way for journalists to generate lots of ideas is to have a beat rather than simply relying on general assignments. She tells a story of diving deep into the world of counterfeit drugs and interviewing people who are intimately involved with the industry.
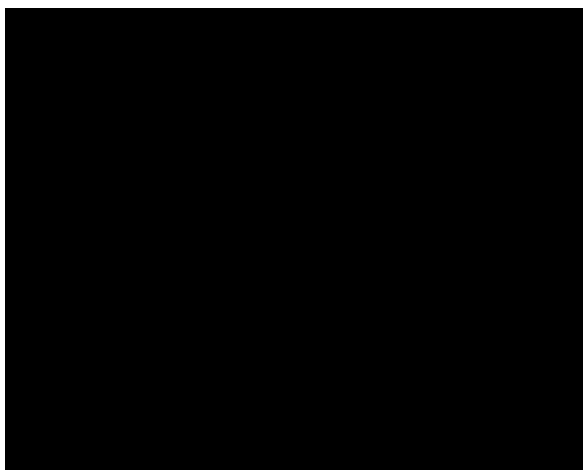
### River
River is a sophomore at MIT who writes in science journals and pop magazines and performs in jazz combos. He got the inspiration to write a story about canoes because he built one with his dad. Inspiration like this was often lost for River, however, due to his lack of organization.

**Dieter**

Dieter is a sports journalist at Mercury News. He told us about how he looks for key statistics to drive his articles instead of quotes and character analyses. He also told us about the relevance of the emotional aspects of journalism, especially given the "tribal" nature of sports.





**Julia**

Julia is the Managing Editor of News at the Daily. She specializes in covering campus news and news relating to Stanford. We learned about the breakneck pace of news reporting on campus, such as the recent Stanford College Republicans case in which her immediate response was referenced by Fox News.

**Elena**

Elena is a staffer at The Daily and specializes in covering political events. She told us how she chooses which events to cover for The Daily based on her interests, but experienced writers have to cover more articles. She believes this is more a problem with student journalism groups rather than the trend across the industry.
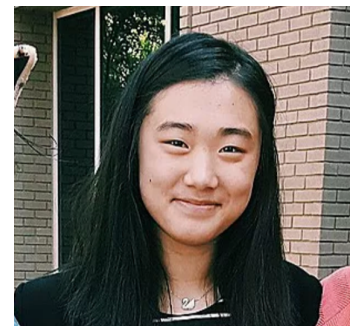


**Revised POVs**

We met Heather, an experienced journalist and book writer. We were surprised to hear that she wanted more structure when dealing with longer-term projects. It would be game-changing to provide a default template for capturing every piece of information.

Our five favorite HMWs for this POV:

- **HMW keep all the information for one story in a unified place?**
- **HMW augment the creative process of writers using technology?**
- HMW break down longer term journalism projects into short term chunks?

- HMW allow journalists to more effectively collaborate on brainstorming for similar stories or projects?
- HMW better facilitate the process of journalists finding sources for a story?

We met Eddy, a goal oriented researcher. We were surprised to hear that he had trouble managing leads for research projects, yet refused to rely on technical solutions (such as note-taking apps) to manage them. It would be game-changing to offer the benefits of organization that technology brings, while ensuring that the user always feels in control of their own thought process.

Our five favorite HMWs for this POV:
- **HMW help people take advantage of pen-and-paper methods, possibly with technology?**
- HMW build trust in technology we can use in our day to day lives?
- HMW redesign the system of organization for journalists?
- HMW develop probing questions that will help guide him in the right direction, without overwhelming his thought process?
- HMW balance a low barrier to entry versus high productivity?

We met Bill, who has decades of experience consulting companies about innovation and technological foresight. We were surprised to learn that companies often forget about projects that they've delegated teams to work on. It would be game-changing if he could use a different approach to keep track of his projects.

Our five favorite HMWs for this POV:
- HMW help Bill define goals he can use to stay on top of his ideas?
- HMW help teams follow through with the pieces they are working on?
- HMW help team leaders decide how to distribute work to their staffers?
- HMW sync team progress notes along with the work they are developing?
- HMW determine when it's time to give up on a story?

**Three best HMWs, and the solutions they led to:**

**HMW keep all the information for one story in a unified place?**
This came from Heather's POV. She told us that every piece of information she captured had some key attributes that she recorded; the subsequent need for organization was constant across stories and contexts. This led us to many potential solutions involving generalizing the process of creation and organization, and we ultimately decided on the solution:
**Solution #1: Create a template for journalists to follow in the craft of any story.**

**HMW augment the creative process of writers using technology?**

This HMW was developed from Heather's POV. One subject that came up in several rounds of brainstorming was the idea of balancing structure with creativity. Thus, many of the solutions that we came up with were optimizations of the creative process. Our favorite of these was:

**Solution #2: Encourage journalists to process their story ideas sequentially.**

**HMW help people take advantage of pen-and-paper methods, possibly with technology?**
Our final HMW came from Eddy's POV. We were fascinated by his aversion to involving tech in his everyday life, and one of the most difficult things to grasp for us was how he claimed that even so much as writing down his ideas was giving up too much control. This insight led us to the solution to:

**Solution #3: Make idea recording quick and fit within existing technological structures.**

**Prototype #1: A template for any story**
   a) <u>Assumption</u>: Both Heather and Julia mentioned that knowing who to ask about particular topics was a critical step of journalism. Hence, we assumed that a bottleneck in the story-creation process is "who do I reach out to for this particular story?"
   b) <u>What we made</u>: We read headlines of selectively-chosen Daily articles and tasked two Daily journalists with answering "who should I talk to next?"

# The Stanford Daily

# Nowhere for a musician to call home

by Elizabeth Lindqwister  —  October 24, 2017   💬 0

**184**
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It's a casual Thursday afternoon, and I'm trudging up the stairs of Braun Music Center in search of a place to practice piano. My backpack is made ridiculously heavy by the dozen or so music books filled with Brahms and Beethoven and Bach — the daily journey to the practice corner is just as much a struggle as it is an anticipatory trek to the pianos within.

*A sample headline presented to participants.*

c) <u>How we tested it</u>: We tested how quickly they could generate three names of potential sources for every sample lead.
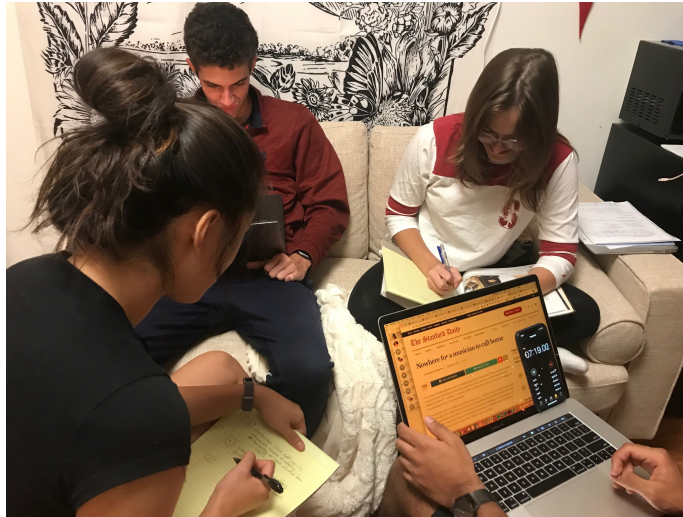


    i) <u>What worked</u>: One of the more experienced journalists said "We should make new staffers do this," which implies it's a key step in the story-creation process.

    ii) <u>What didn't work</u>: On over 80% of the sample leads, three names were generated in 45 seconds. They also wanted more specifics from us; a lead wasn't enough to always know who would be relevant.

    iii) <u>What we learned</u>: Journalists are trained early in source selection. They also have point people for every topic. It was easy for them to come up with a lot of potential sources.
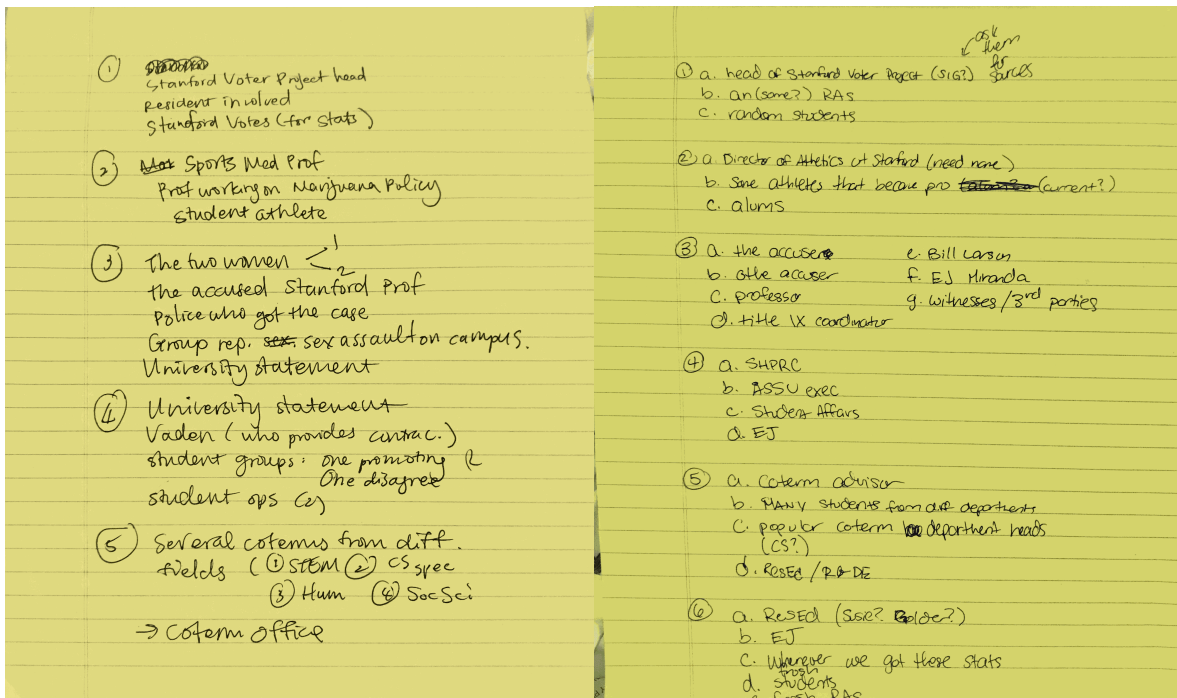
d)
   i)   <u>Was the assumption valid</u>? No. Almost all the time, the journalists could come up with sources to talk to. It seems like identifying initial sources isn't a problem.
   ii)  <u>New assumptions</u>: Rather, a common bottleneck seemed to be eliciting more information from the presented leads. Hence, we hypothesize that such a template may be better designed to elicit further information regarding leads.

**Prototype #2: Sequential processing of story ideas**
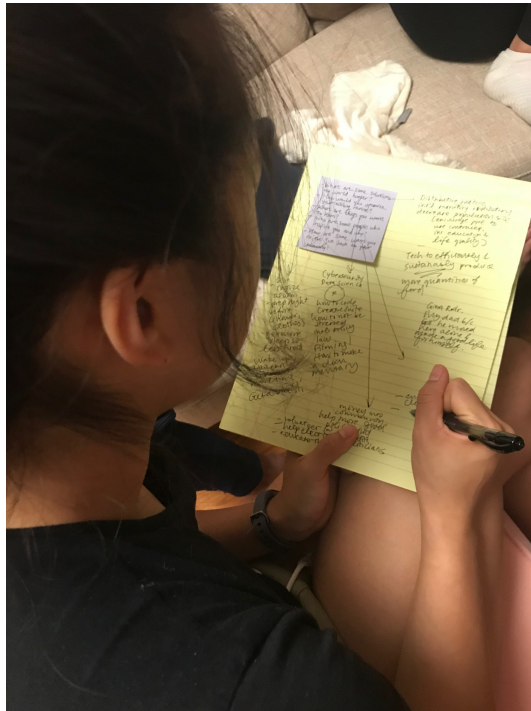


a)  <u>Assumption</u>: We gleaned that it was often difficult for journalists to juggle multiple pieces at once, even leading some pieces to be dropped. Hence, we assume that journalists brainstorm better when they are thinking about topics one at a time.
b)  <u>What we made</u>: On Post-It notes, we generated a variety of open-ended questions that could generate a wide array of answers.

> Examples of open-ended experimental questions:
> ➢ *What are some solutions to world hunger?* (2 minutes)
> ➢ *How would you optimize your morning routine?* (2 minutes)
> ➢ *What are things you want to learn?* (2 minutes)
> ➢ *Who are some people who inspire you and why?* (2 minutes)
> ➢ *How are some ways you might give back to your community?* (2 minutes)

c)  <u>How we tested it</u>: We gave one participant ('parallelized') all five questions at once (10 minutes total) and the other participant ('sequential') five questions, but one every two minutes, and asked both participants to answer the questions presented to them.

d)
    i) <u>What worked</u>: The sequential participant was more enthusiastic about the experiment (observed from reactions and body language). Meanwhile, the parallelized participant became annoyed and frustrated halfway through the trial.
    ii) <u>What didn't work</u>: The sequential participant expressed moderate frustration when she ran out of ideas on one of the prompts.
    iii) <u>What we learned</u>: In general, the sequential generation of ideas created less frustration and more ideas.
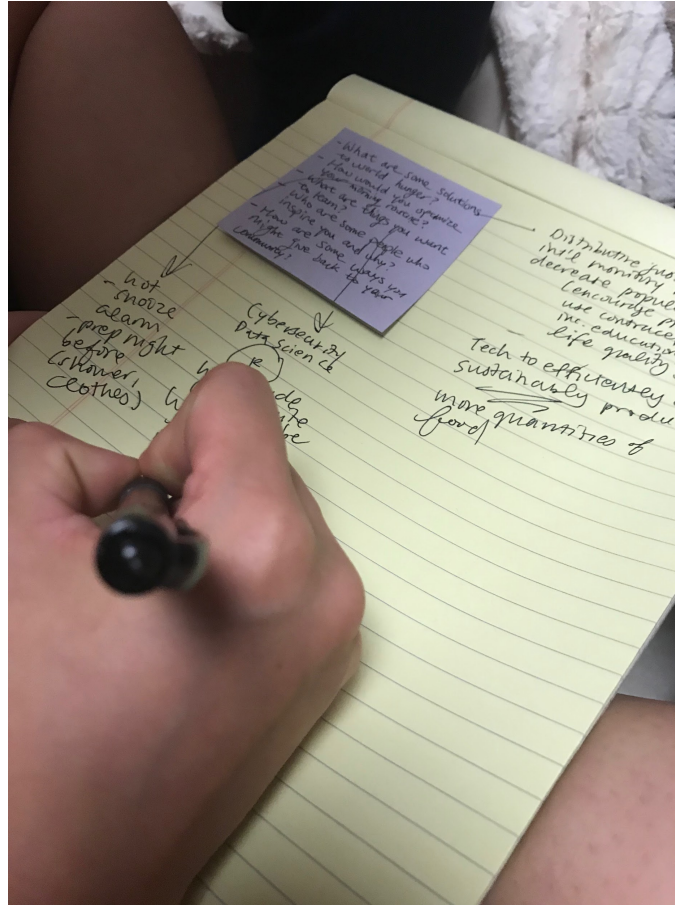


e)
    i) <u>Was the assumption valid</u>? Yes. The sequential participant generated 20% more ideas and was visibly less frustrated.
    ii) <u>New assumptions</u>: Journalists should pick one story to focus on for a while before switching to working on a different topic.
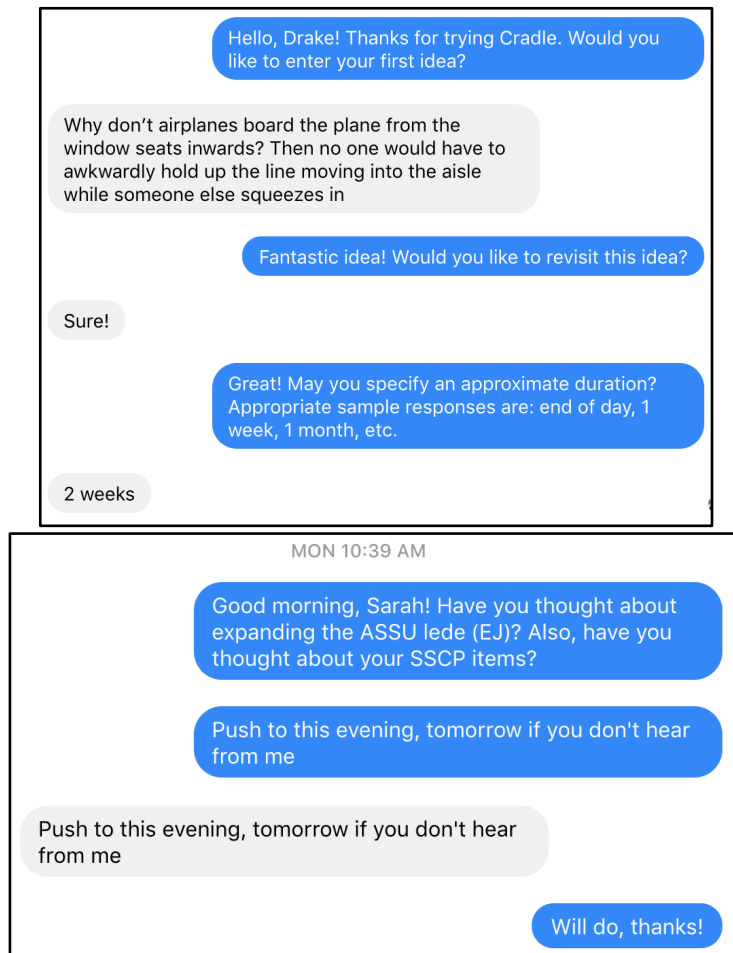
**Prototype #3: Messenger "Chatbot"**
  a) <u>Assumption</u>: Journalists want to record leads without giving up control of their agency.

b) <u>What we made</u>: We made a Facebook Messenger account so journalists could message it their thoughts.

c) <u>How we tested it</u>: We let a few journalists (and interviewees from the needfinding stage) send it ideas over the course of a few days.

d)

   i) <u>What worked</u>: People said they liked talking to the account and using a colloquial tone. Messenger is also easily accessible, which everyone liked. (We originally did this on paper, but realized that Messenger provided a preexisting, easy-to-use tool we could utilize.)

   ii) <u>What didn't work</u>: Some people complained that sending messages made them feel like they had to polish their ideas too much, which is a problem because it discourages them from inputting all their ideas.

   iii) <u>What we learned</u>: Using preexisting structures makes it much easier to incorporate a new habit in people's lives. The "chatbot"'s messages are right there with all of the user's friends' messages.

e)

   i) <u>Was the assumption valid</u>? Yes. The journalists used it repeatedly over multiple days, often entering multiple ideas at once.

ii)    <u>New assumptions</u>: Journalists often get multiple insights at once.



> Hello, Drake! Thanks for trying Cradle. Would you like to enter your first idea?
>
> Why don't airplanes board the plane from the window seats inwards? Then no one would have to awkwardly hold up the line moving into the aisle while someone else squeezes in
>
> Fantastic idea! Would you like to revisit this idea?
>
> Sure!
>
> Great! May you specify an approximate duration? Appropriate sample responses are: end of day, 1 week, 1 month, etc.
>
> 2 weeks



> MON 10:39 AM
>
> Good morning, Sarah! Have you thought about expanding the ASSU lede (EJ)? Also, have you thought about your SSCP items?
>
> Push to this evening, tomorrow if you don't hear from me
>
> Push to this evening, tomorrow if you don't hear from me
>
> Will do, thanks!

**Most successful prototype**

We believe Prototype #2 was the most successful. We noticed a stark distinction between the user who processed ideas sequentially and the user who processed ideas in parallel. The difference in sheer quantity outputted and (perhaps more importantly) their emotional reactions suggests strongly that there may be something worth exploring further. We want to help journalists build on the ideas they capture during the day and this sort of forced sequential processing may be a good start for that.

*Sequential versus parallelized participants. Notice the different in flow of ideas during generation.*