Team 1

Katie H., Zaid A., Rubina S., Zoe A.

Designing for Serendipity

CS 147



Team Members



Rubina Shrestha
Coterm in CS-HCI



Katie Heffernan
Coterm in CS-HCI



Zoe Atkin
Undergrad in SymSys



Zaid Akhtar
Coterm in CS-HCI

Domain

Previous domain: learn the reading habits of readers

Focused domain: Helping readers with limited free time build in-person connections around shared reading

Sophia

Sophia, a 26 year old woman working in retail

We conducted an in-person interview at Town & Country!



Image: Pinterest

Insights

- Reading is a core part of identity, not just a hobby.
- Time is the main barrier for her to find her community of readers.
- She prefers in-person over online connections.
- Finding people through an algorithm feels inorganic to her.





Initial POV - Sophia

We met Sophia**,** a 26 year old old woman working in retail who is passionate about reading.

We were surprised to hear that she said she wouldn't marry her fiance if he didn't read.

We wonder if she needs the people closest in her life to be readers.

It would be game changing to help her find more readers to connect with.





Revised POV - Sophia

We met Sophia, a 26 year old old woman working in retail who is passionate about reading.

We were surprised to hear that she said she couldn't marry her fiancé if he didn't read, even though she also said reading isn't a "make or break" thing

We wonder if reading is a **core part of her identity,** one that she needs to share with the people in her life

It would be game changing to create more opportunities for readers to connect with other readers who share their reading habits





Julie

Julie, a data analyst who spends her weekends writing a children's book and reading books from little free libraries

We conducted a Zoom interview with her!



Image: Pinterest

Insights

- Reading is how she finds people who see the world like she does.
- Recommending a book is her way of knowing someone.
- Finding readers who share her taste in books is hard and isolating.





Initial POV - Julie

We met Julie, a data analyst who spends her weekends writing a children's book and reading books from little free libraries.

We were surprised to notice that she enjoys reading annotations in the margins of books.

We wonder if this means she wants to connect with other readers

It would be game-changing to find a way to let her feel seen by sharing her annotations and reading the annotations of readers she does not know.





Revised POV - Julie

We met Julie, a data analyst who spends her weekends writing a children's book and reading books from little free libraries.

We were surprised to notice that she likes buying used books that have annotations in the margins, but feels that giving her own annotated books to a friend would make her feel too exposed.

We wonder if this means she wants her inner thoughts about reading to be seen, and she wants to know others' thoughts, but not with people she knows well.

It would be game-changing to find a way to let her feel seen by sharing her annotations and reading the annotations of readers she does not know.





POV #1 HMWs

We met Sophia, a 26 year old woman working in retail
We were surprised to hear that she said she couldn't marry her fiancé if he didn't read, even though she also said reading isn't a "make or break" thing and that people who don't read aren't bad people.
We wonder if reading is a core part of her identity, one that she needs to share with the people in her life
I**t would be game changing to** create more opportunities for readers to connect with other individuals who also prioritize consuming media through reading.

How Might We →

- HMW create more spaces where readers can interact with other readers with similar values?
- HMW help readers find others who share their reading habits without having to search for them?
- HMW help readers feel understood by the people closest to them?
- HMW give readers a way to share what they're reading with the people in their lives?
- HMW turn the personal record of what someone has read into a way to start conversations with others?
- HMW help readers discover people who read the same way?
- HMW foster romantic relationships amongst readers?
- HMW help readers express reading as a part of their identify rather than just a hobby
- HWM help a reader quickly know if someone shared their reading habits?
- HMW help readers share their reading lives with people in their lives who don't read

POV #2 HMWs

We met Julie, a data analyst who spends her weekends writing a children's book and reading books from little free libraries.
We were surprised to notice that she likes buying used books with annotations in the margins, but feels that giving her own annotated books to a friend would be too exposing.
We wonder if this means she wants to share her thoughts about reading and wants to see other's thoughts, but not with people she knows.
It would be game changing to find a way to let her feel seen by sharing her annotations and reading the annotations of readers she does not know.



How Might We →

- HMW connect strangers reading the same book?
- HMW facilitate book sharing for book annotators?
- HMW facilitate annotations on books?
- HMW connect local readers and local bookstores?
- HMW encourage people to read outside of their favorite genre?
- HMW remove the pressure of a book club but still encourage genuine connections?
- HMW make people more comfortable sharing their thoughts while reading with friends?
- HMW connect readers to share books and thoughts on books?
- HWM encourage people to maintain their connections once an initial connection has been formed through shared interests?
- HMW encourage people to explore more spaces where books are available in their area?
- HMW encourage conversations about books without the pressure of bookclub?
- HMW encourage more people to use free little libraries?



Top 3 HMWs

We met Sophia, a 26 year old woman working in retail. **We were surprised** to hear that she said she couldn't marry her fiancé if he didn't read, even though she also said reading isn't a "make or break" thing and that people who don't read aren't bad people. **We wonder if** reading is a core part of her identity, one that she needs to share with the people in her life. **It would be game changing to** create more opportunities for readers to connect with other individuals who also prioritize consuming media through reading.

We met Julie, a data analyst who spends her weekends writing a children's book and reading books from little free libraries. **We were surprised** to notice that she likes buying used books with annotations in the margins, but feels that giving her own annotated books to a friend would be too exposing. **We wonder if** this means she wants to share her thoughts about reading and wants to see other's thoughts, but not with people she knows. **It would be game changing to** find a way to let her feel seen by sharing her annotations and reading the annotations of readers she does not know.

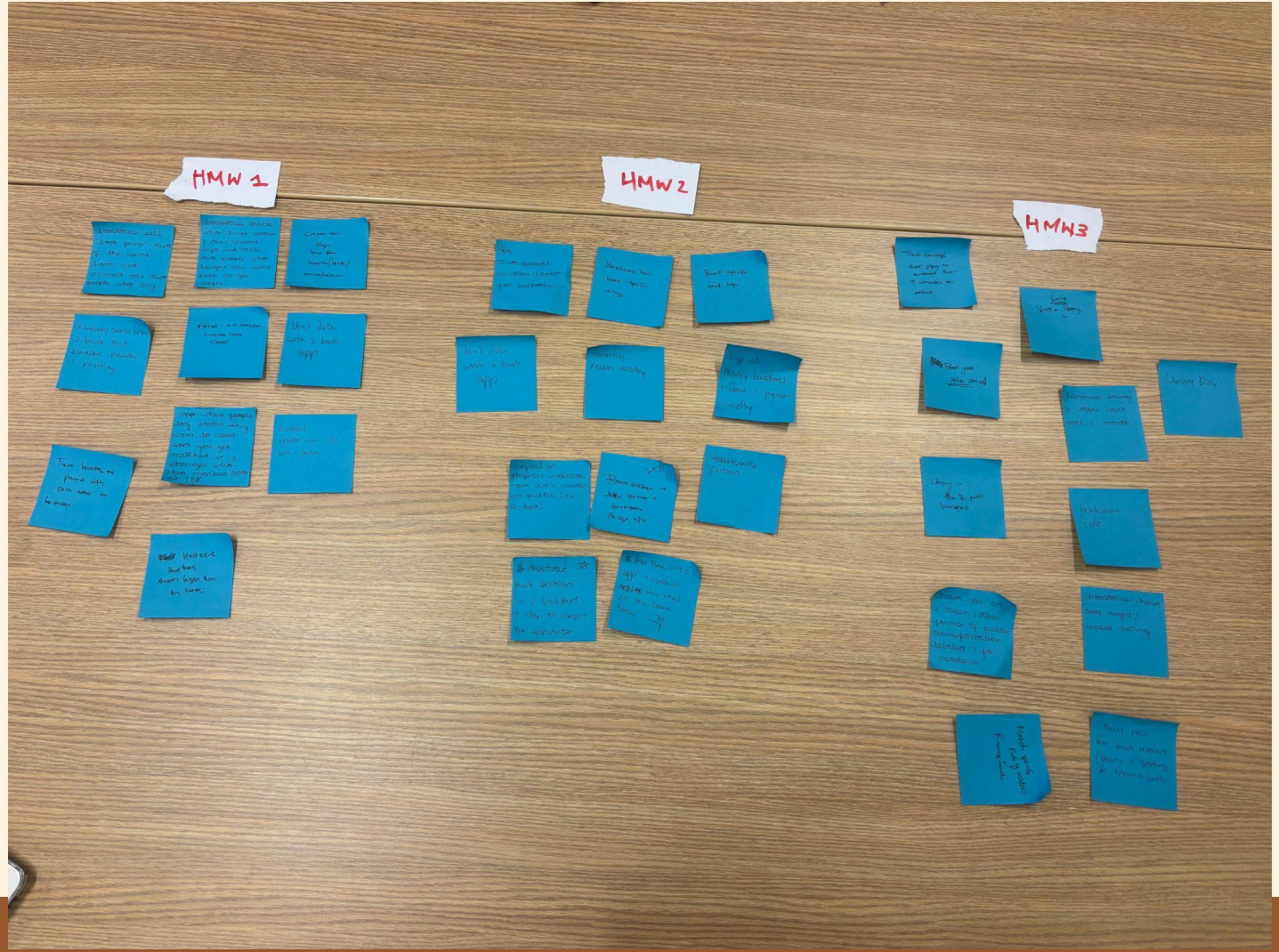


HMW help readers find others who share their reading habits without having to search for them?

HMW connect strangers reading the same book?

HMW encourage people to explore spaces where books are available in their area?




HMW 1
HMW 2
HMW 3

Solutions

- Users enter their free time blocks and they are paired with another reader who is free at the same time so they can read together.
- Bookstores have an annotated book section and a way to contact the annotator.
- People record the books they want to read and users are matched with a stranger who has also bookmarked one of the same books.





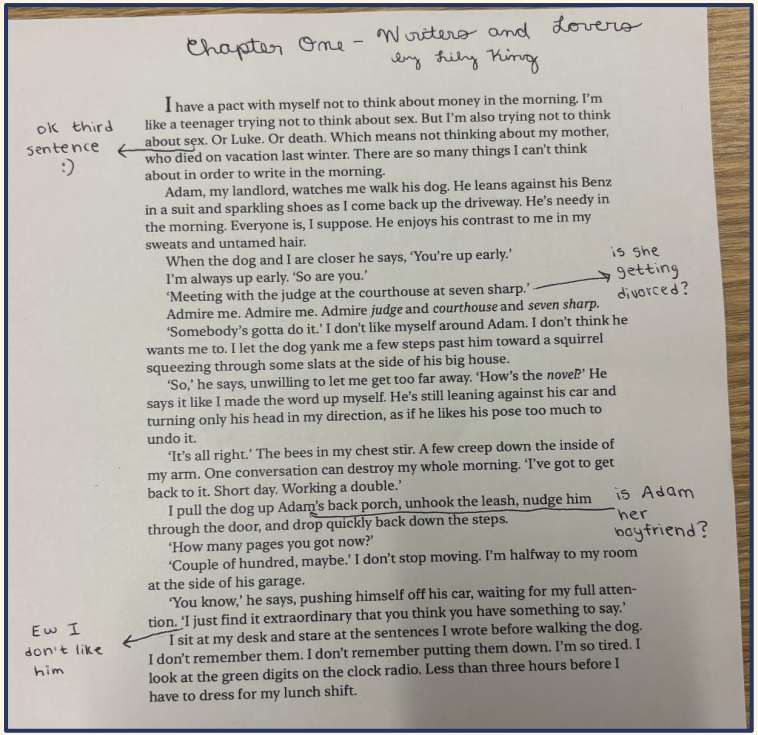
Assumption: People would read annotations left in a book

Prototype

- We annotated the first page of a book and asked people to read

Results

- **Recruited John and Henry**, random strangers who happened to be at CoDA
- **Didn't work (at first):** John skipped the annotations. He seemed to feel pressure to read fast and understand the text.
- **Iteration:** We instead asked them to show us how they'd begin
- **Worked:** Henry noticed the annotations straight away and said they gave useful context
- **Valid?** Mixed. Both said they'd read an annotated book, and Henry said he would like to meet the annotator



Assumption: People want to read together

Prototype

- A paper timetable for marking free time
- Claudia filled in her availability
- We "matched" her with people free at the same times and asked if she'd meet up to read

Results

- **Recruited Claudia**, a random stranger who happened to be at CoDA
- **Worked:** she said yes, even though she usually reads alone.
- **Valid?** Supported, on the condition that the stranger was "vetted."



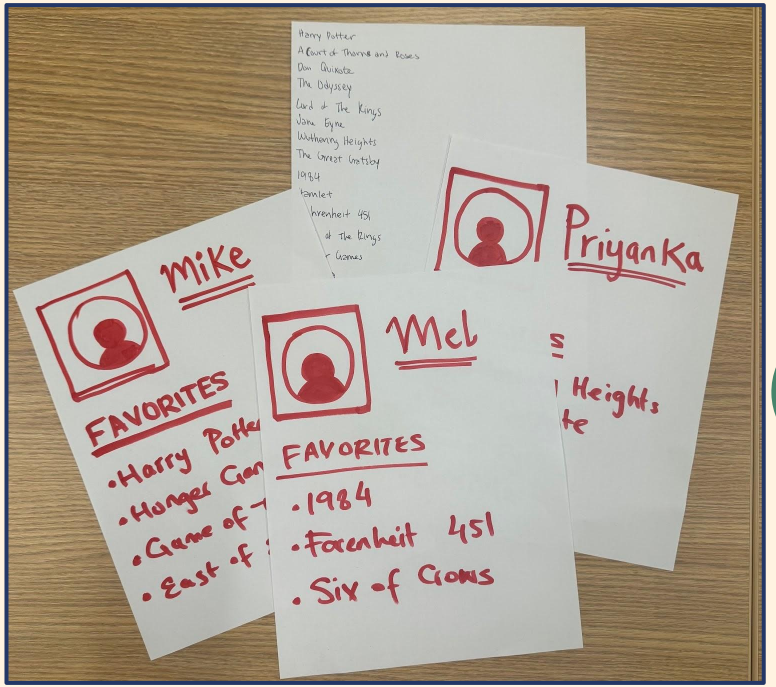
Assumption: Would readers meet a stranger over a book?

Prototype

- A checklist of popular books and fake reader profiles
- Person selected books he's read / TBR
- We "matched" him to the profiles that shared a book and asked if he'd meet them

Results

- **Recruited** Adam a random stranger who happened to be at CoDA
- **Worked:** he said yes to meeting all three profiles
- **Valid?** Supported so far.



What's Next!

Selected Solution

We are moving forward with a **combination of two solutions** → users input their free time blocks and the books on their TBR list and they are paired with a stranger nearby who book match and same free times → promotes connections through common interests!

Inclusion/ Exclusion

Includes:

- Shy or socially anxious people
- Niche readers
- People with odd schedules

Excludes:

- People in rural areas
- People who feel unsafe meeting strangers
- People with little free time

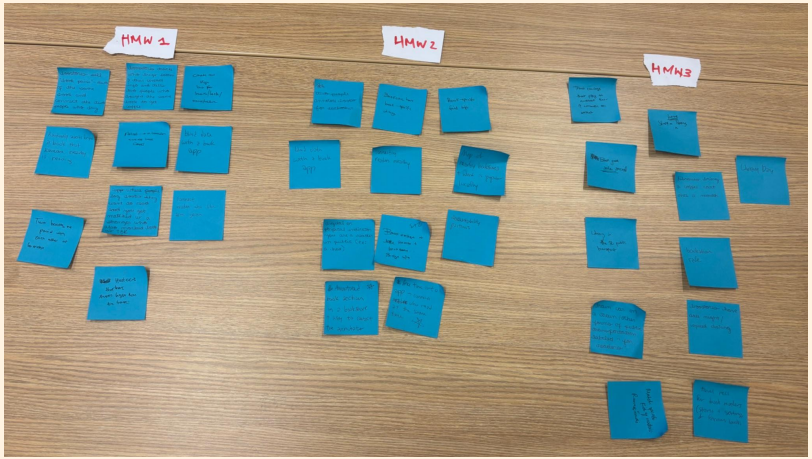
Ethical Implications

- Privacy of sensitive data → expose data
- Safety and duty of care → harassment risks
- Informed consent → how much info can users see?
- Emotional harm → no matches / no-shows





Appendix



Brainstorming solutions for our POVs

Empathy maps:

- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NtMXtx2XHfD8xqR54XMb1fxtoVIdnIhH/view?usp=sharing
- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kmKojnLF_rVttfgxP2_i94aGMKTe5gL2/view?usp=sharing

Thank you!
Any Questions?



