

Assignment 2C: Design Research Check-In

We interviewed Rahul, a 2nd year Informatics student at the University of Washington. We found Rahul working on an assignment in the Informatics lab in Mary Gates and approached him for an interview, which he was kind enough to participate in. Rahul is an avid reader who is interested in creating stories as well as reading them.

Rahul explained how he often prefers to read before bed. His favorite genre is fiction, and he cited Lord of the Rings as being his favorite book series. He further explained that he would also read as a sort of time filler, particularly when he was bored. He finds new books to read by getting recommendations from friends or searching for things that interest him on the internet. Rahul said that because of his habit, he usually reads once a day, often over an hour in total. He said that it was largely because of his having built a habit of doing so right before bed. When telling us about the medium that he used when it came to reading, he described how he preferred paperback books, but that he has also found himself increasingly reading on his phone instead. Ironically, he also said his phone was also one of his greatest sources of distraction while reading. Rahul said that he primarily reads for enjoyment, but also liked to read in order to find inspirations for his own writing.

Overall, while the interview went smoothly for the most part and we were able to establish rapport, it was sometimes difficult to phrase questions in a way that did not seem leading. For example, we planned to ask Rahul what he did before and after a reading session, but upon hearing this question nothing initially came to mind until we asked him if he just read when he was going to bed. In future interviews, it might be helpful to alter the phrasing of this question slightly in order to jog the interviewee's memory faster by perhaps asking if they like to read before or after doing something. Based on our conversation with Rahul, it sounds like it would be a good idea to encourage people to read before or after an important milestone in their day, such as before bed or after lunch, in order to easily foster the habit of reading.

For the remaining participants, we will be interviewing them over the weekend, and through early next week. It is important to note that we altered our original research design by instead starting with a series of interviews, and using the diary study as an optional companion for a portion of our participants. Our reason for this alteration comes in that we intend to use the interviews to capture general information about a person's habits, their motivations, etc. The diary study on the other hand, will be targeted towards individuals that already have an existing habit. The intention here is to capture more information about what events happen around the reading itself, while also trying to not skew the results by making individuals feel like they should build up a habit solely for the sake of this research. That is why we are instead opting to target this only to those that feel that they already have a steady habit, though perhaps would like to find more time. We also plan to edit our current list of questions to reduce redundancy and poke more into the idea of whether or not people like to read before or after a particular event. We would also like to interview and gain some insight into the reading motivations of those who do not engage in daily reading, and figure out ways in which to make reading a more regular habit for them as well.