

Towards a Future with Inclusive Mobile Manipulators



Charlie Kemp, PhD
<https://charliekemp.com>



Associate Professor, Department of Biomedical Engineering



Co-founder & CTO, Hello Robot Inc.

hello robot™

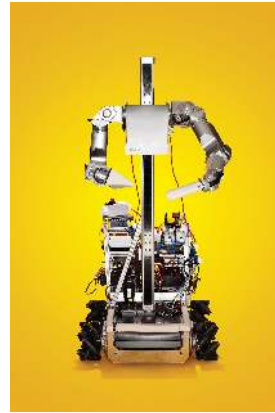
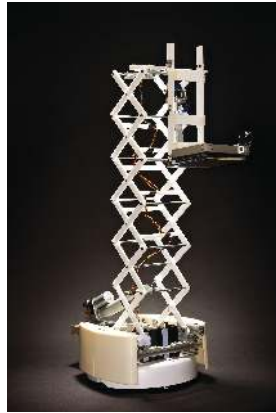
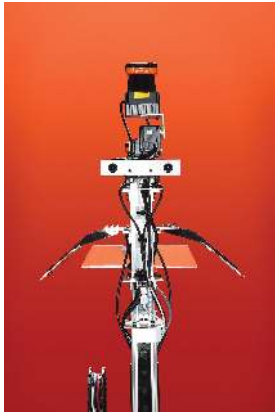
Charlie's Conflict of Interest Statement

Dr. Kemp is both an associate professor at Georgia Tech and the chief technology officer (CTO) of Hello Robot Inc. where he works part time. **He owns equity** in Hello Robot Inc. and is an inventor of Georgia Tech intellectual property (IP) licensed by Hello Robot Inc. Consequently, **he receives royalties** through Georgia Tech for sales made by Hello Robot Inc. He also benefits from increases in the value of Hello Robot Inc.

Summary: If Hello Robot does well, Charlie does well.

Mobile Manipulators

- Can assist people with disabilities
- Are becoming commercially viable
- Require research to realize their potential



Photos by
Josh Meister

Commercial Assistive Robots

- On your wheelchair
- On a table or desk
- On your body



JACO by Kinova



DynamicArm by Ottobock



My Spoon by SECOM



Myomo by Myomo Inc.

Advantages of Mobile Manipulators

- Operate independently from the user
- No don/doff
- Assist diverse users
- Potential for mass market product

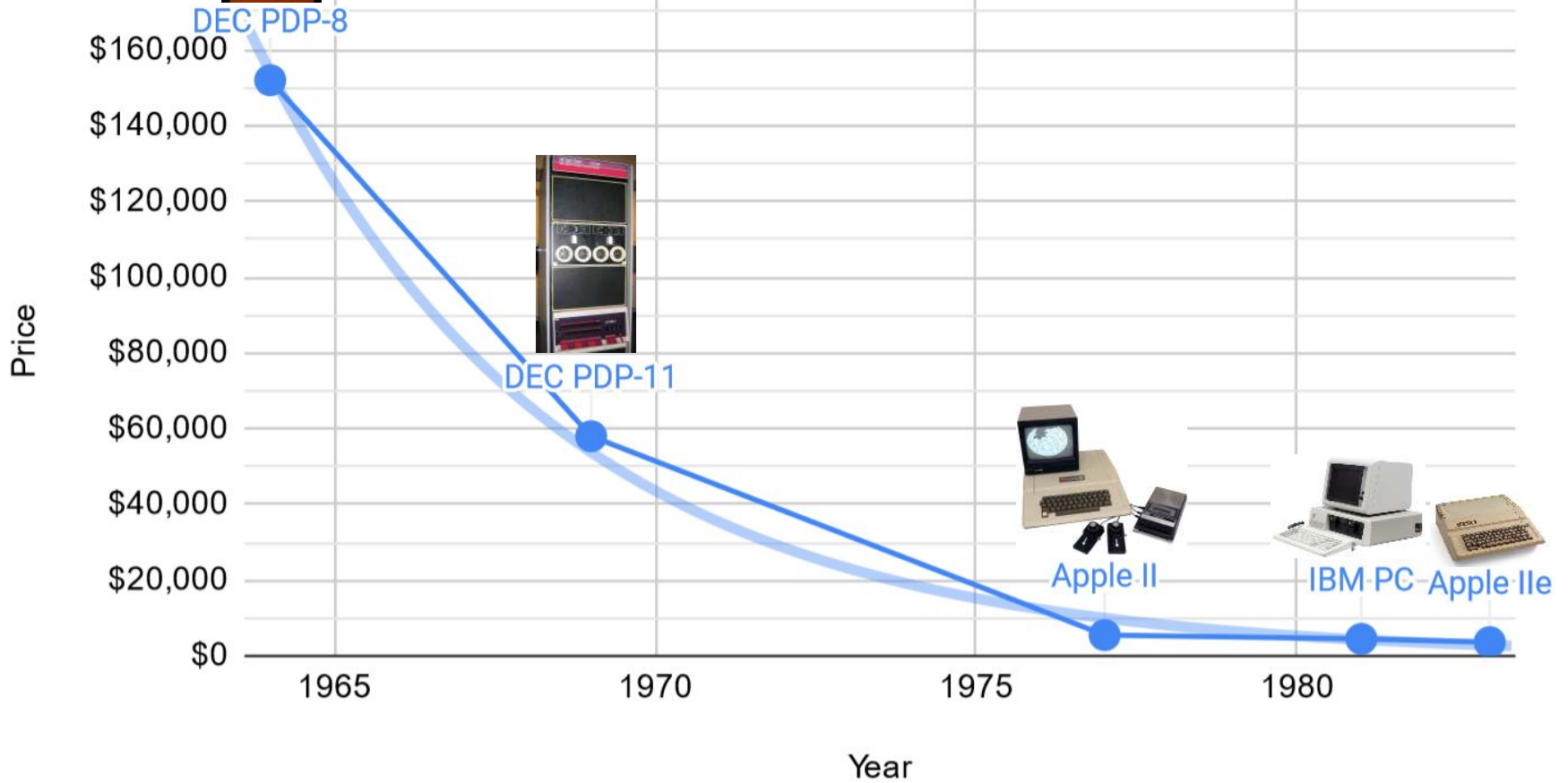


Prices for Emerging Technologies

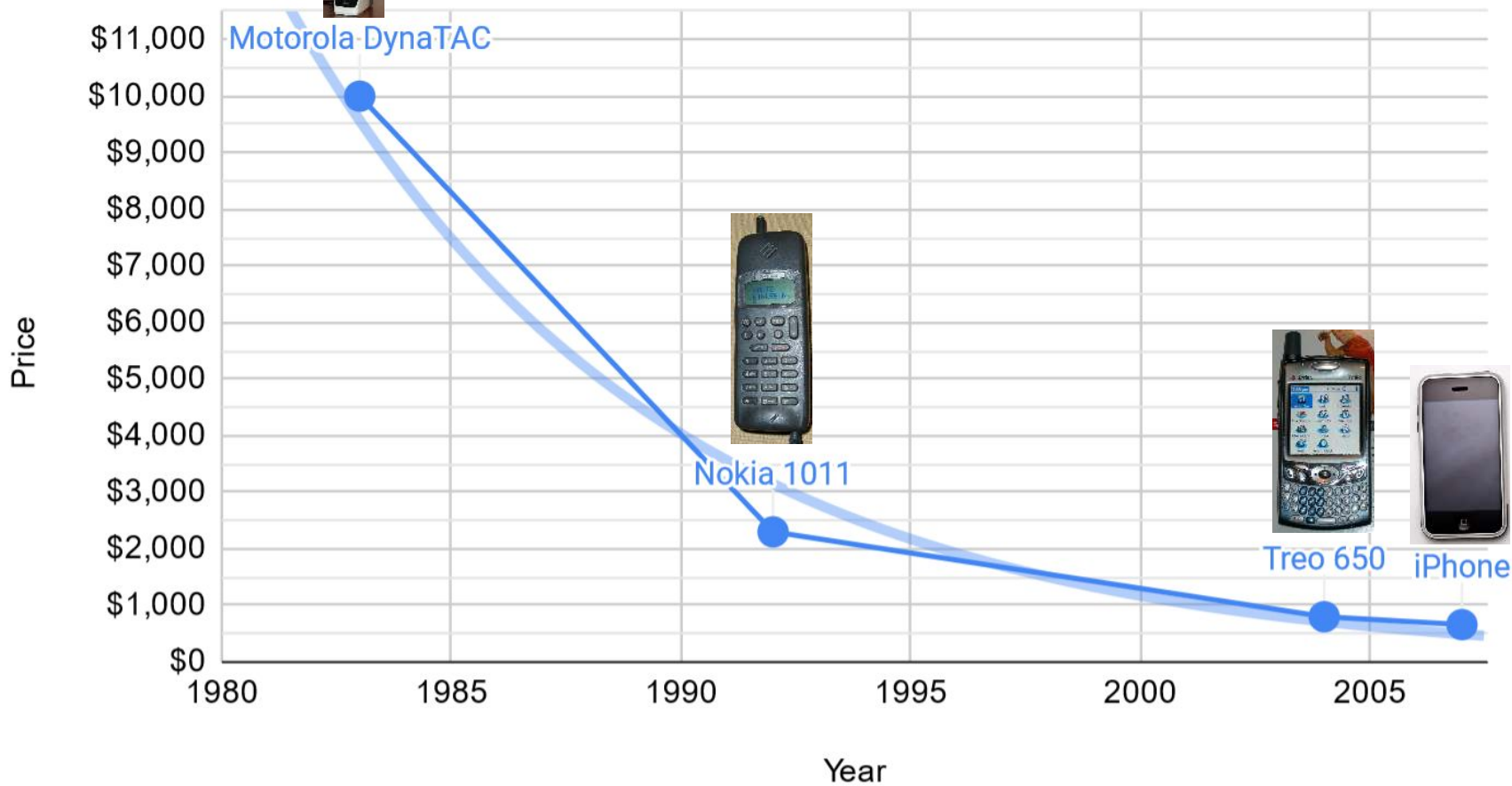
All prices inflation adjusted to 2020-2021 US dollars

[Google Spreadsheet Used to Generate Graphs](#)

Computers



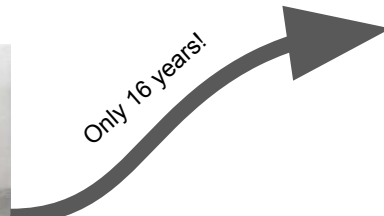
Mobile Phones



Not All Emerging Technologies Become Personal



1903, The Wright Flyer
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wright_Flyer



1919 - Today
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airliner>



1940, Jess Dixon's flying automobile
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flying_car



1947, Convair Model 118
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convair_Model_118



2018 - Today, Volocopter 2X
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volocopter_2X

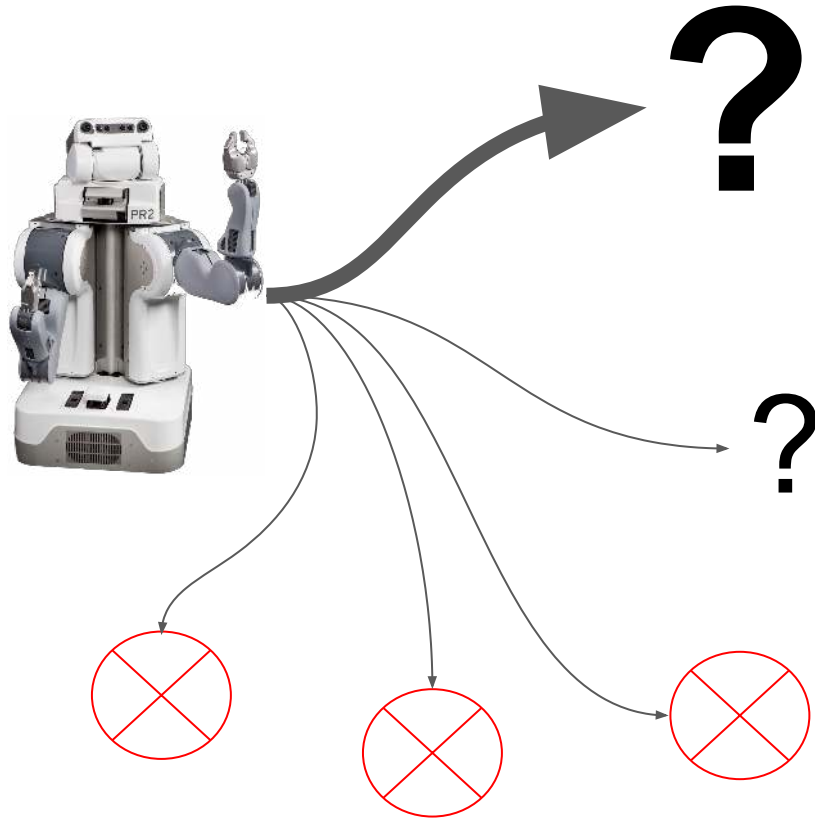


1973, AVE Mizar
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AVE_Mizar

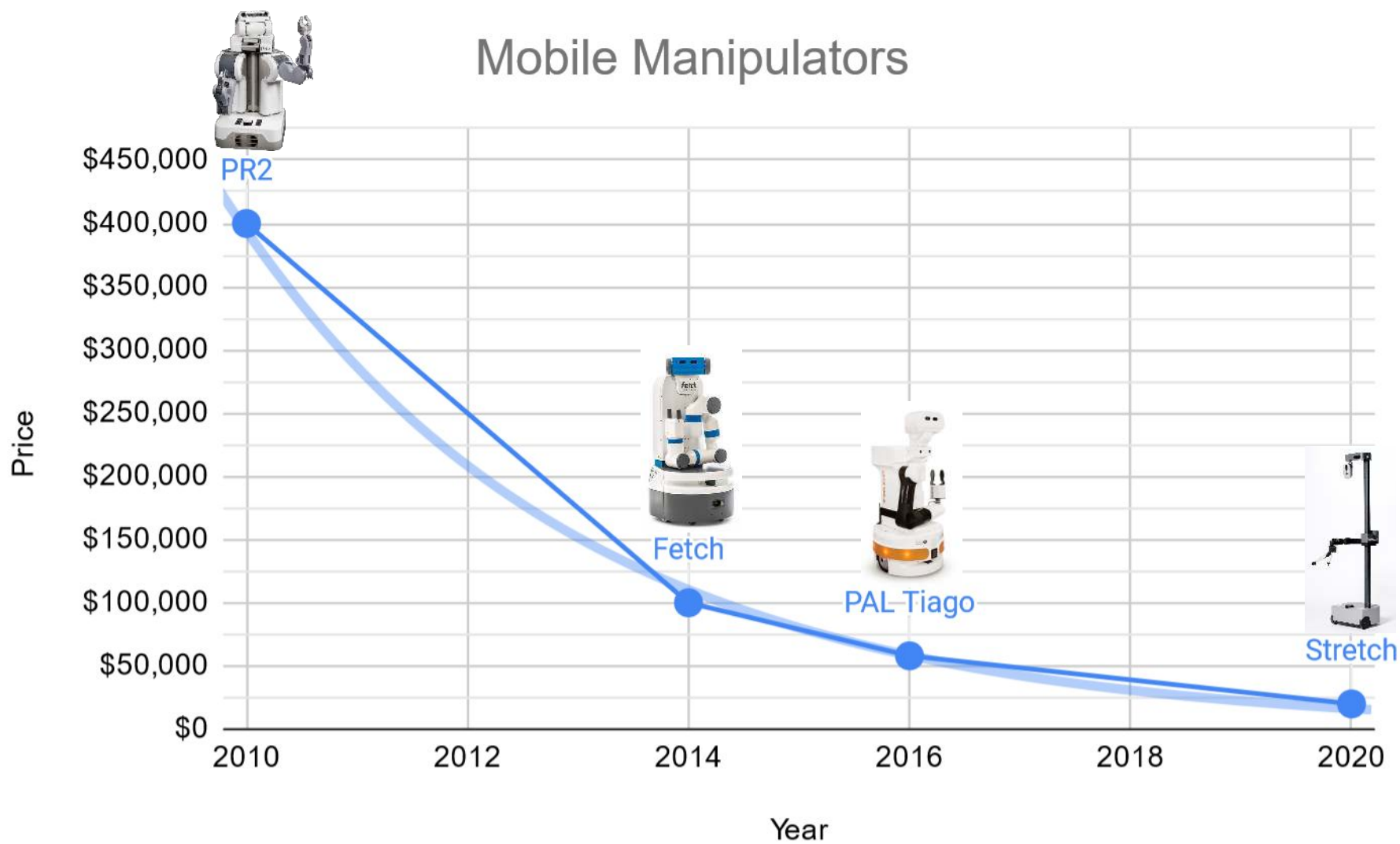


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flying_car
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Jetsons

Society has to Discover Where An Emerging Technology Fits In



Mobile Manipulators



Mobile Manipulators

- Versatile and complex emerging technology
- Opportunity to assist diverse people with disabilities
- Broad spectrum of research needed
- What happens in 10 years depends on today





The Story of Stretch

[The Design of Stretch: A Compact, Lightweight Mobile Manipulator for Indoor Human Environments](#),

Charles C. Kemp, Aaron Edsinger, Henry M. Clever and Blaine Matulevich, arXiv, 2021.

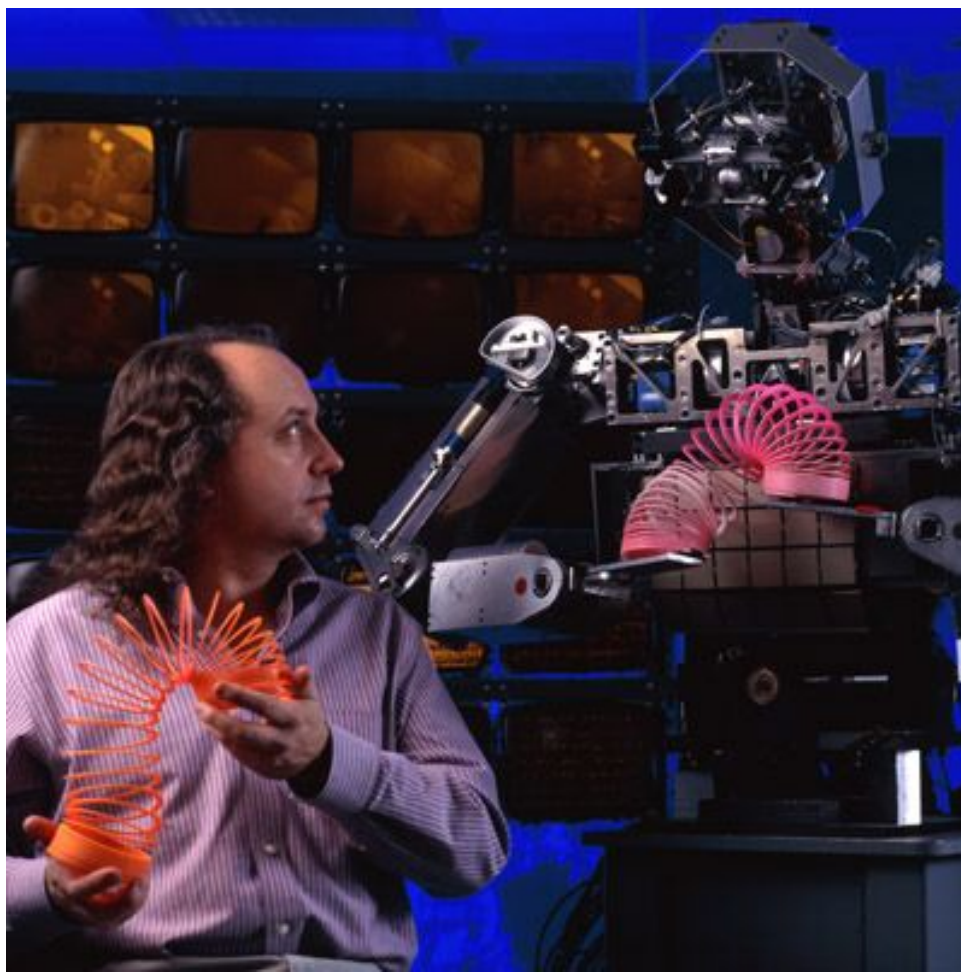


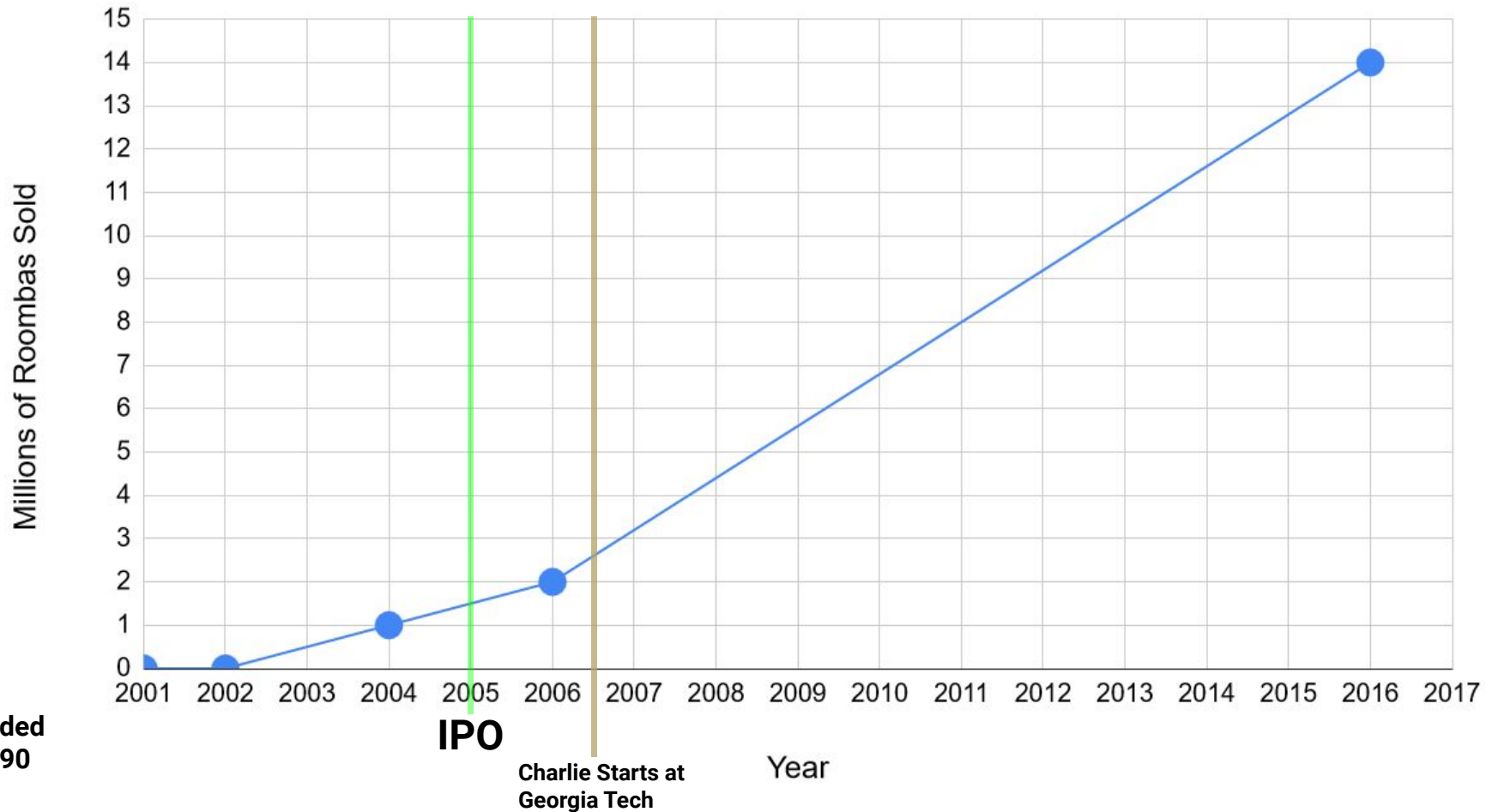
Photo Credit: Peter Menzel/Science Source
from <https://robots.ieee.org/robots/cog/>

Rodney A. Brooks, "[How To Build Complete Creatures Rather Than Isolated Cognitive Simulators](#)",
Architectures for Intelligence, K. VanLehn (ed), Erlbaum, Hillsdale, NJ, Fall 1989, pp. 225–239.



**The first Roomba from 2002.
Almost 20 years ago!**

Millions of Roombas Sold vs. Year



Bodies and Brains Working Together

- Body matched to ecological niche
 - Small footprint
 - Circular and flat
 - Giant contact sensor
 - Easy for people to pick up and move
- Brain matched to the body
 - Haptic sensing as primary modality
 - Change direction on contact
 - Wall following
 - Spiraling



“Viewed as a geometric figure, the ant’s path is irregular, complex, and hard to describe. But its complexity is really a complexity in the surface of the beach, not the complexity in the ant.”

Herbert Simon,
The Sciences of the Artificial, 1969



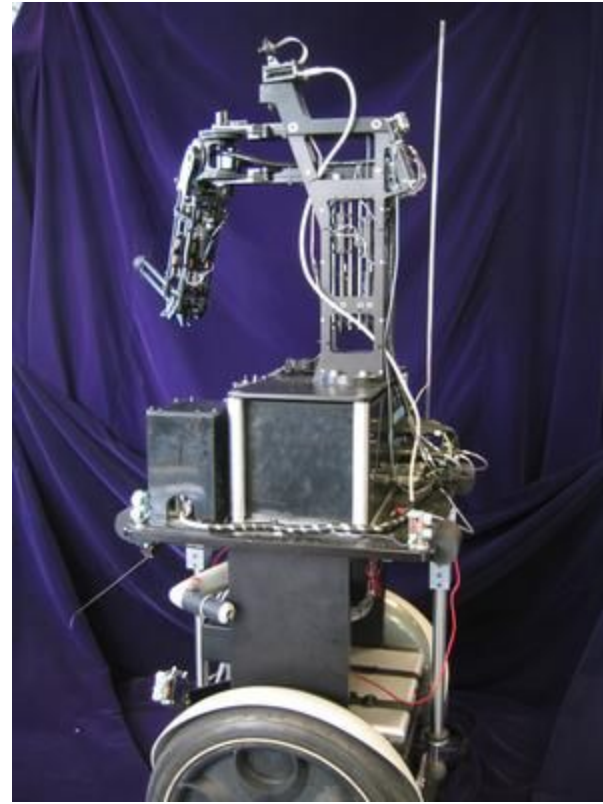
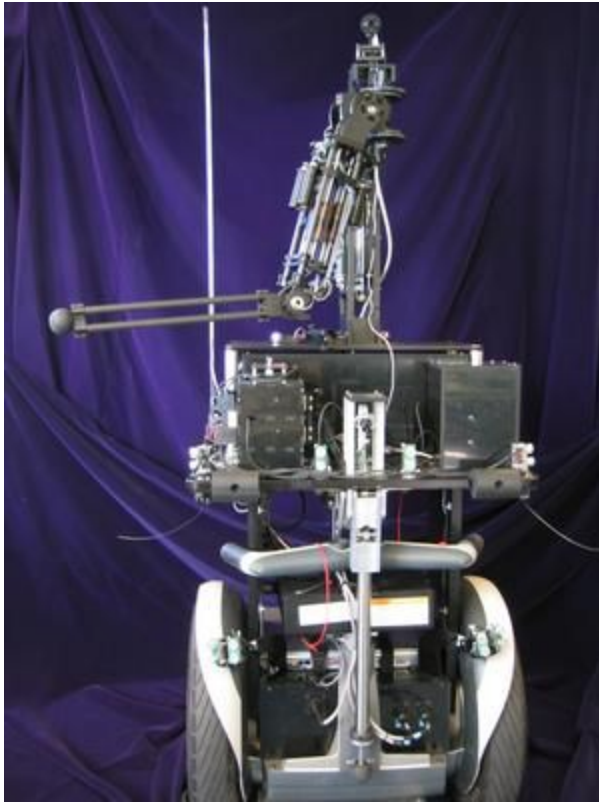
Photo Credit:
Andreas Dantz
Roomba, first attempt
Taken on April 14, 2013
[https://www.flickr.com/p
hotos/szene/864932680
7/in/pool-roomba/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/szene/8649326807/in/pool-roomba/)

What is the Roomba of mobile manipulation?

What body for **indoor** mobile manipulation in homes and workplaces?

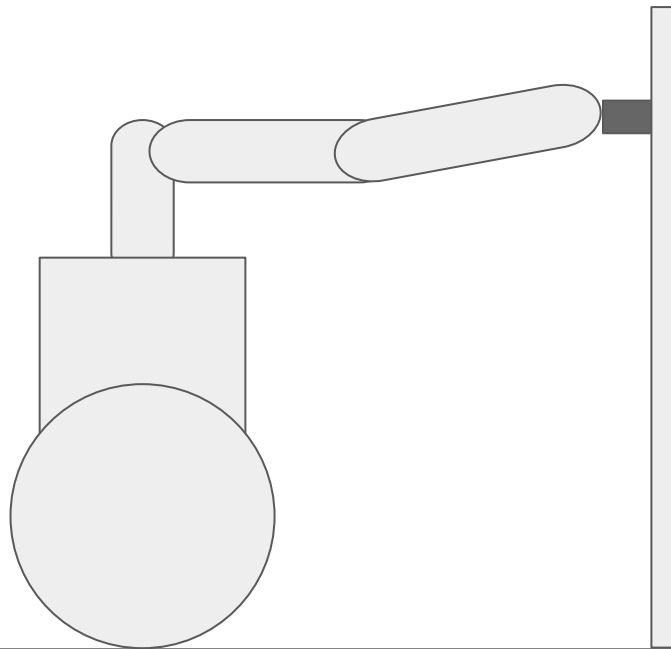
- Flat smooth surfaces
- Visible from human head height
- Reachable by human arms
- Children, older adults, and pets



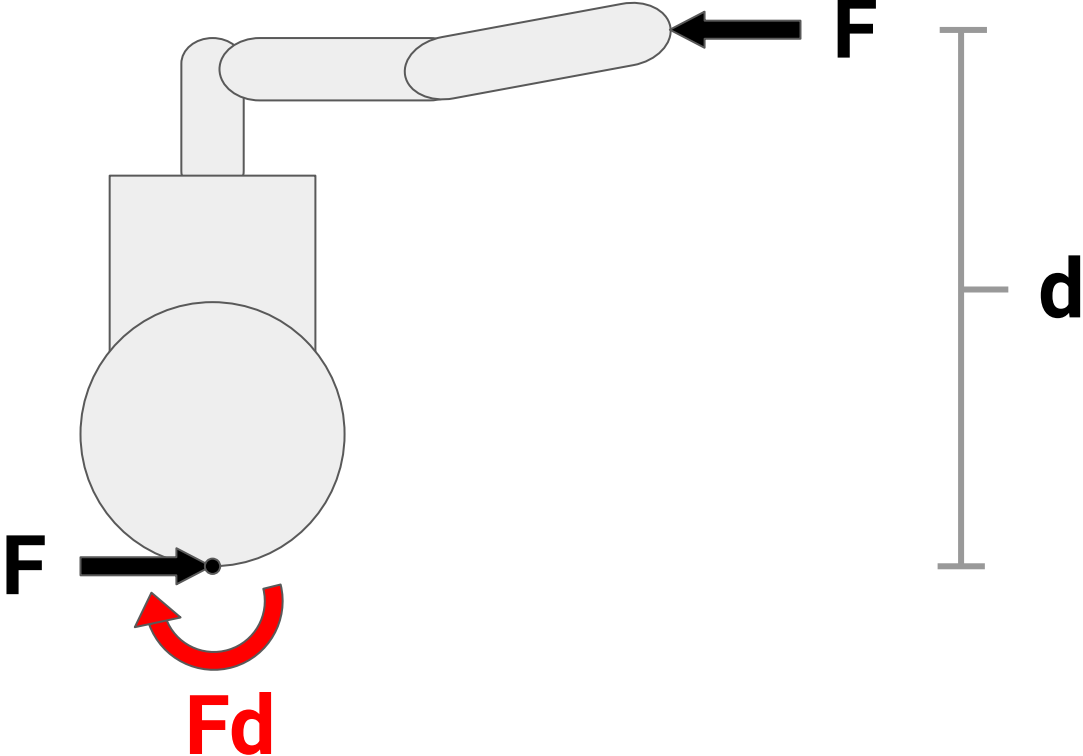


[Sensing and Manipulating Built-for-Human Environments](#), **Rodney A. Brooks**, Lijin Aryananda, **Aaron Edsinger**, Paul M. Fitzpatrick, **Charles C. Kemp**, Una-May O'Reilly, Eduardo Torres-Jara, Paulina Varshavskaya and Jeff Weber. International Journal of Humanoid Robotics, Vol 1, Number 1, pages 1-28, 2004.

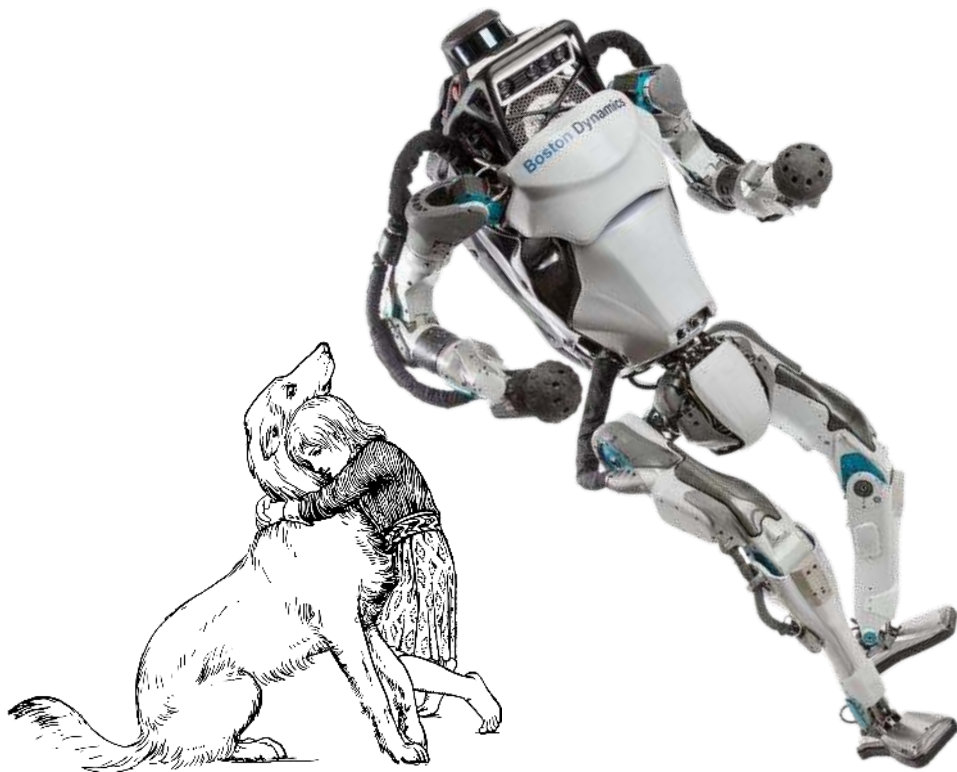
Momentary Problem when Balancing on Wheels



Momentary Problem when Balancing on Wheels



It Just Takes One Fall



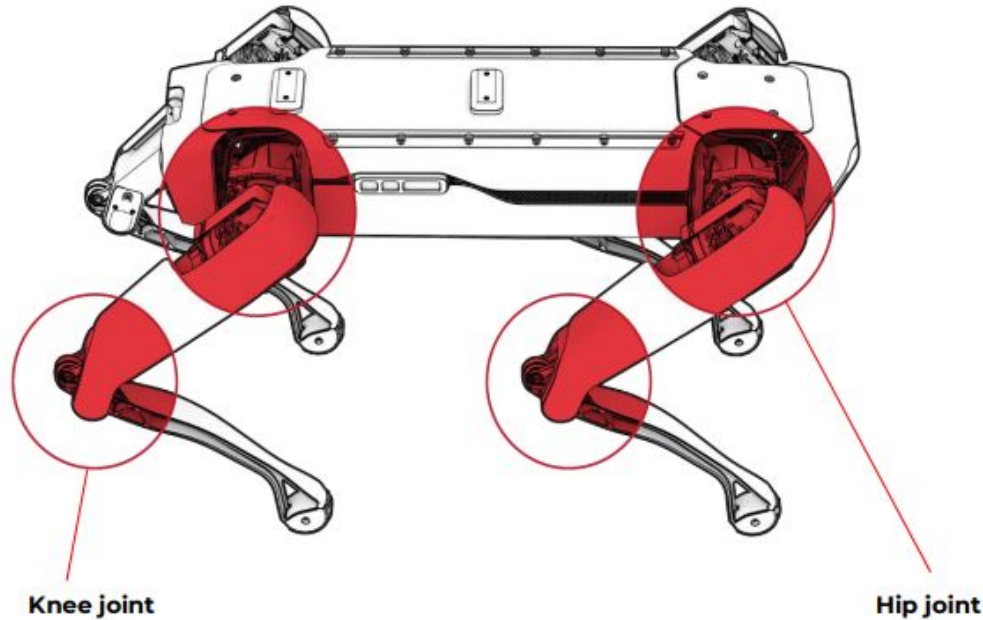


What about quadrupeds?



Pinch Points

Spot's joints can pinch fingers and other body parts and entangle loose clothing, long hair, and jewelry.



Dynamic Stability Risks

Spot will always try to keep balance. This may result in high-acceleration motion of the legs



Failure in locomotion could happen unexpectedly and could result in de-energization of the robot's actuators.

A failure event may cause loss of stability and potential hazards associated with a fall or tipping over.

Always keep a separation distance of 2 m

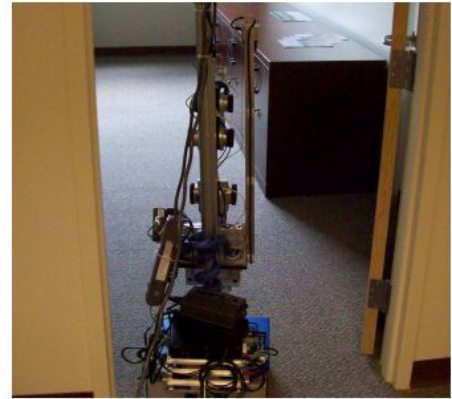
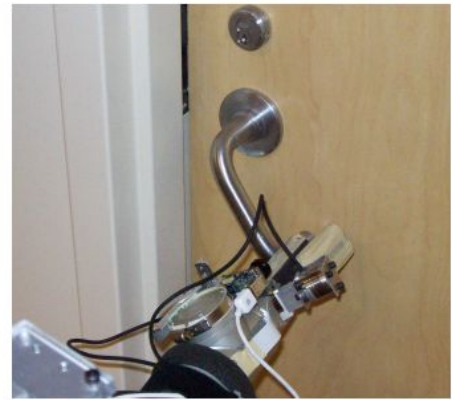
What is the Roomba of mobile manipulation?

Stretch's Ancestor

EL-E from 2008

- Statically stable
- Small footprint
- Lightweight
- Cameras high
- Reach flat surfaces





[Behaviors for Robust Door Opening and Doorway Traversal with a Force-Sensing Mobile Manipulator](#), Advait Jain and Charles C. Kemp, RSS Manipulation Workshop: Intelligence in Human Environments, 2008.



1) TV remote

2) Pill

3) Pill bottle

4) Glasses

5) Cordless phone

6) Toothbrush



7) Plastic fork

8) Plastic spoon

9) Bottle

10) Toothpaste

11) Cup

12) Plate



13) Bowl

14) Soap

15) Cellphone

16) Hand towel

17) Book

18) Dollar bill



19) Mail

20) Straw

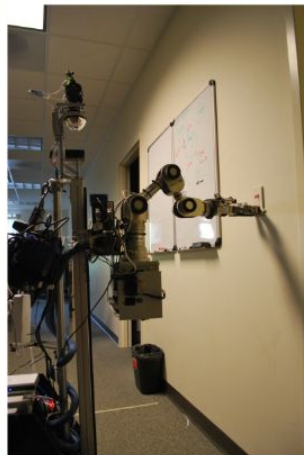
21) Keys

22) Table knife

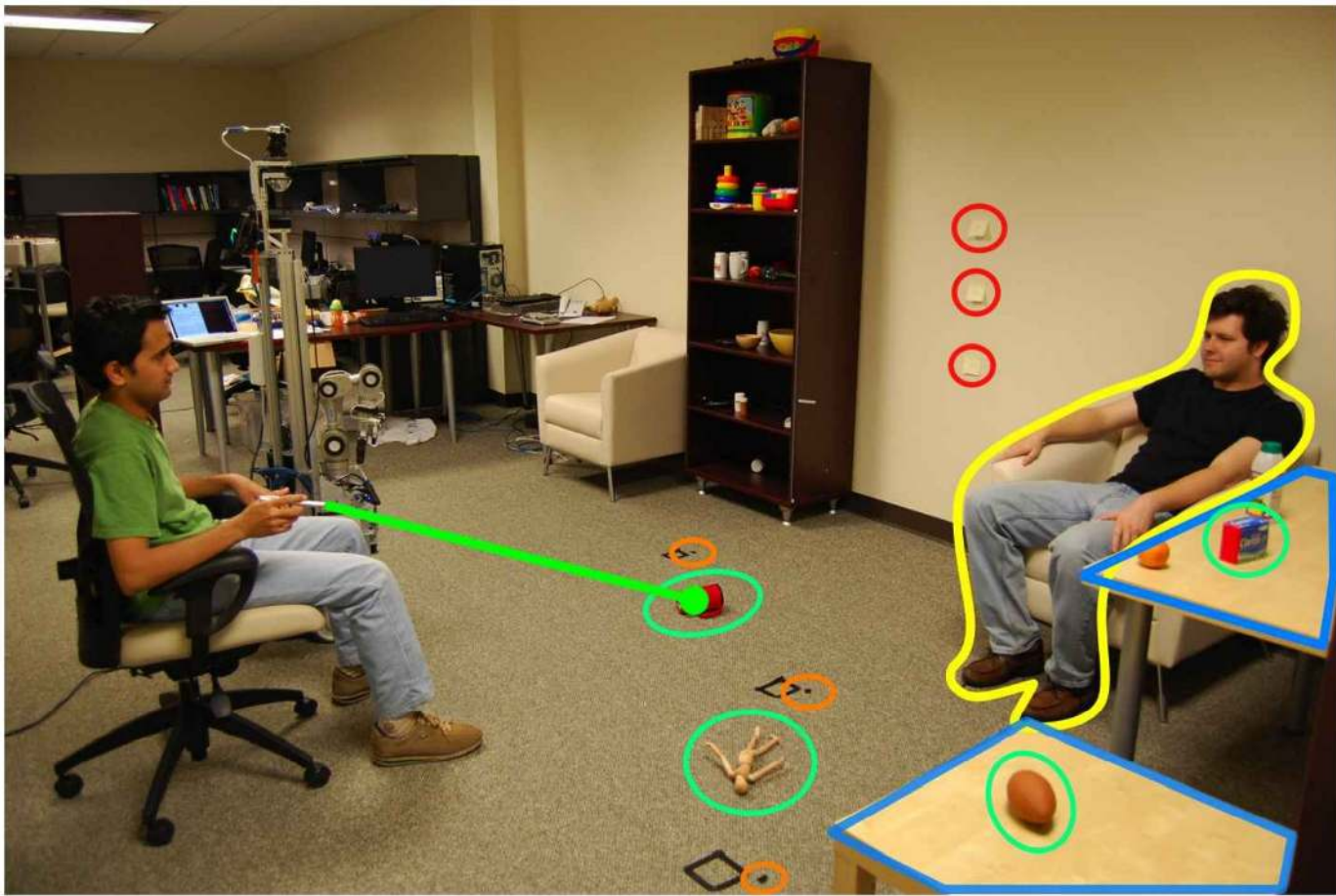
23) Slipper

24) Pencil

25) Medicine box



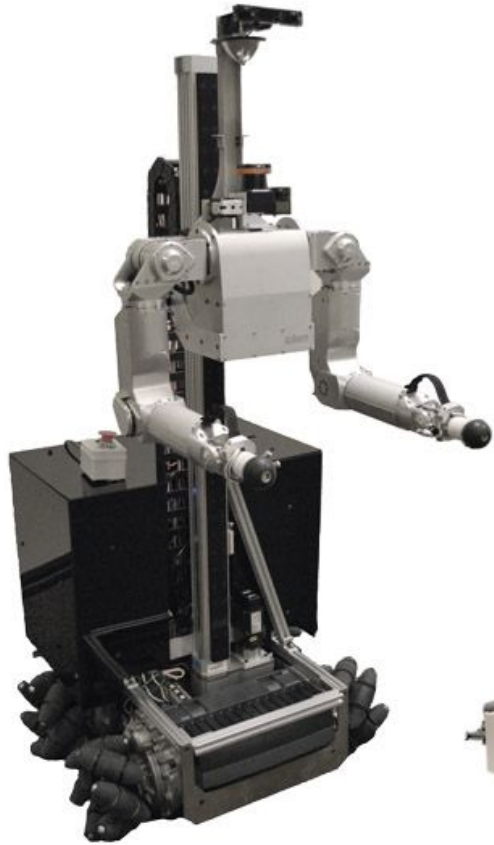
[PPS-Tags: Physical Perceptual and Semantic Tags for Autonomous Mobile Manipulation](#), Hai Nguyen, Travis Deyle, Matt Reynolds, and Charles C. Kemp, IROS 2009 workshop: Semantic Perception for Mobile Manipulation, 2009.



[A Clickable World: Behavior Selection Through Pointing and Context for Mobile Manipulation](#), Hai Nguyen, Advait Jain, Cressel Anderson, and Charles C. Kemp, IEEE/RJS International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS), 2008.



[Hand It Over or Set It Down: A User Study of Object Delivery with an Assistive Mobile Manipulator](#), Young Sang Choi, Tiffany L. Chen, Advait Jain, Cressel Anderson, Jonathan D. Glass, and Charles C. Kemp, IEEE International Symposium on Robot and Human Interactive Communication (RO-MAN), 2009.



In 2010 the World Changed





[Domestic robots for older adults: Attitudes, preferences, and potential](#), Cory-Ann Smarr, Tracy L. Mitzner, Jenay M. Beer, Akanksha Prakash, Tiffany L. Chen, Charles C. Kemp, and Wendy A. Rogers. *International Journal of Social Robotics*, 6(2):229–247, 2014.



Mobile Manipulators Can Provide Meaningful Assistance



research from the Healthcare Robotics Lab (healthcare-robotics.com) at Georgia Tech

Mobile Manipulators Can Provide Meaningful Assistance



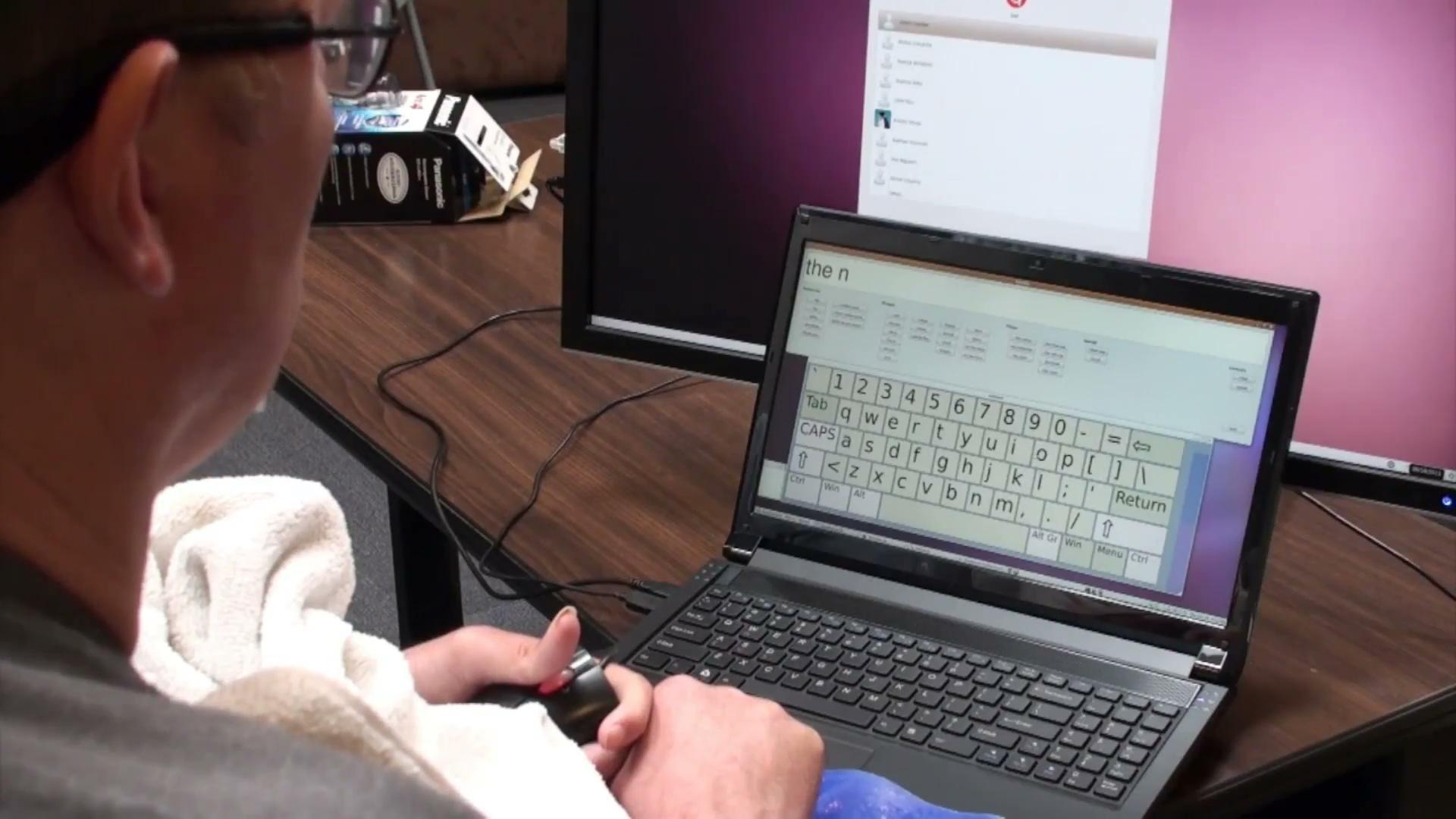
research from the Healthcare Robotics Lab (healthcare-robotics.com) at Georgia Tech

The Robots for Humanity Project



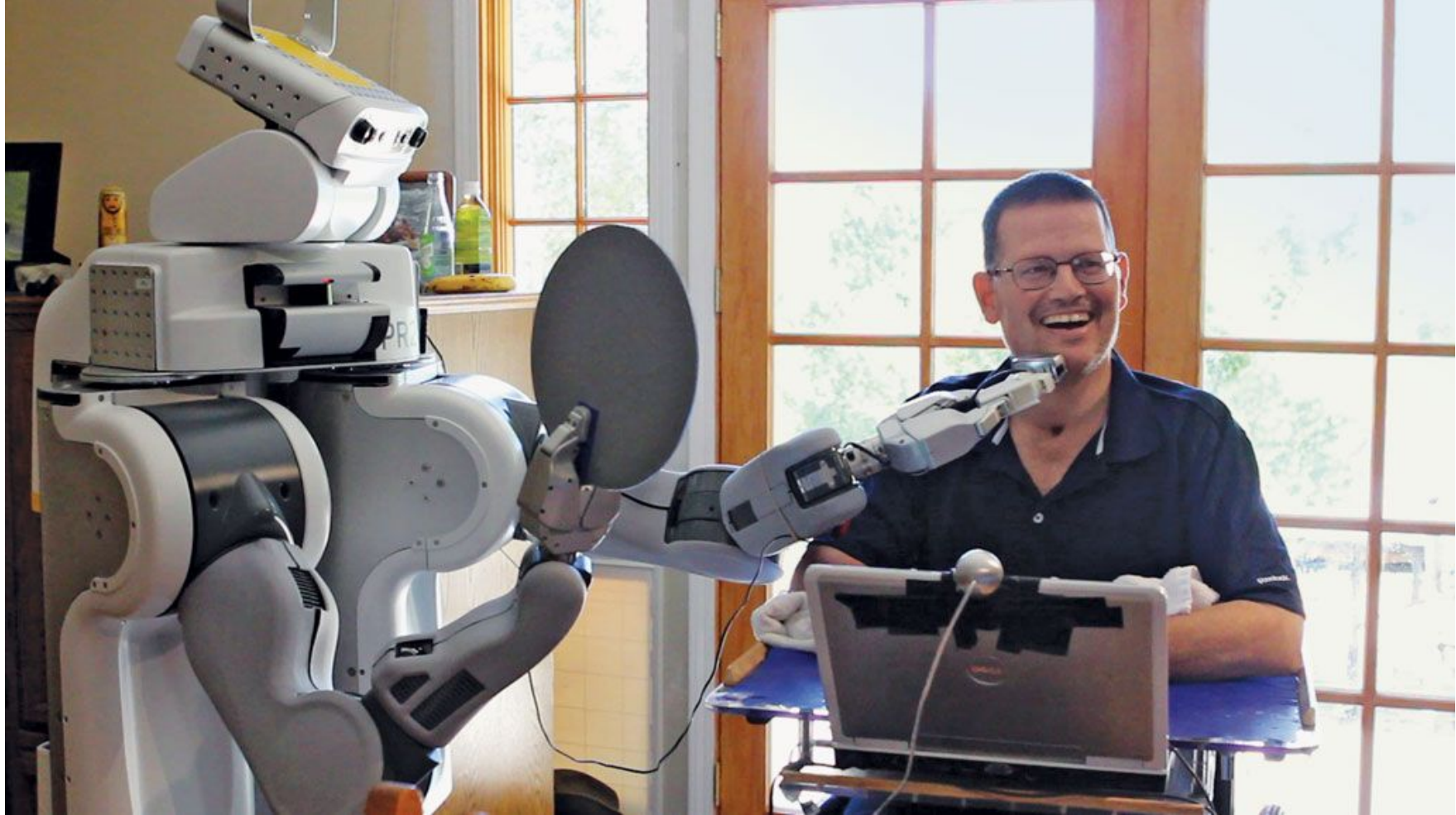
[Robots for humanity: using assistive robotics to empower people with disabilities](#), Tiffany L. Chen, Matei Ciocarlie, Steve Cousins, Phillip Grice, Kelsey Hawkins, Kaijen Hsiao, **Charles C. Kemp**, Chih-Hung King, Daniel A. Lazewatsky, Adam Leeper, Hai Nguyen, Andreas Paepcke, Caroline Pantofaru, William D. Smart, and Leila Takayama, IEEE Robotics & Automation Magazine, 2013





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Assistive Mobile Manipulation for Self-Care Tasks Around the Head, Kelsey Hawkins, Phillip M. Grice, Tiffany L. Chen, Chih-Hung King, and Charles C. Kemp, 2014 IEEE Symposium on Computational Intelligence in Robotic Rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies, 2014.



Assistive Mobile Manipulation for Self-Care Tasks Around the Head, Kelsey Hawkins, Phillip M. Grice, Tiffany L. Chen, Chih-Hung King, and Charles C. Kemp, 2014 IEEE Symposium on Computational Intelligence in Robotic Rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies, 2014.



In-home and remote use of robotic body surrogates by people with profound motor deficits, Phillip M. Grice and Charles C. Kemp, PLoS ONE 14(3), 2019.

Main Menu

- Look
- Spine
- Left Hand
- Right Hand
- Drive

Controls

- Step Size
- XS
 - S
 - M
 - L

- Position/Rotation
- Hand Position
 - Wrist Rotation

- 3D Peek
- Move Aside
- Move to Setup
- Re-zero Skin



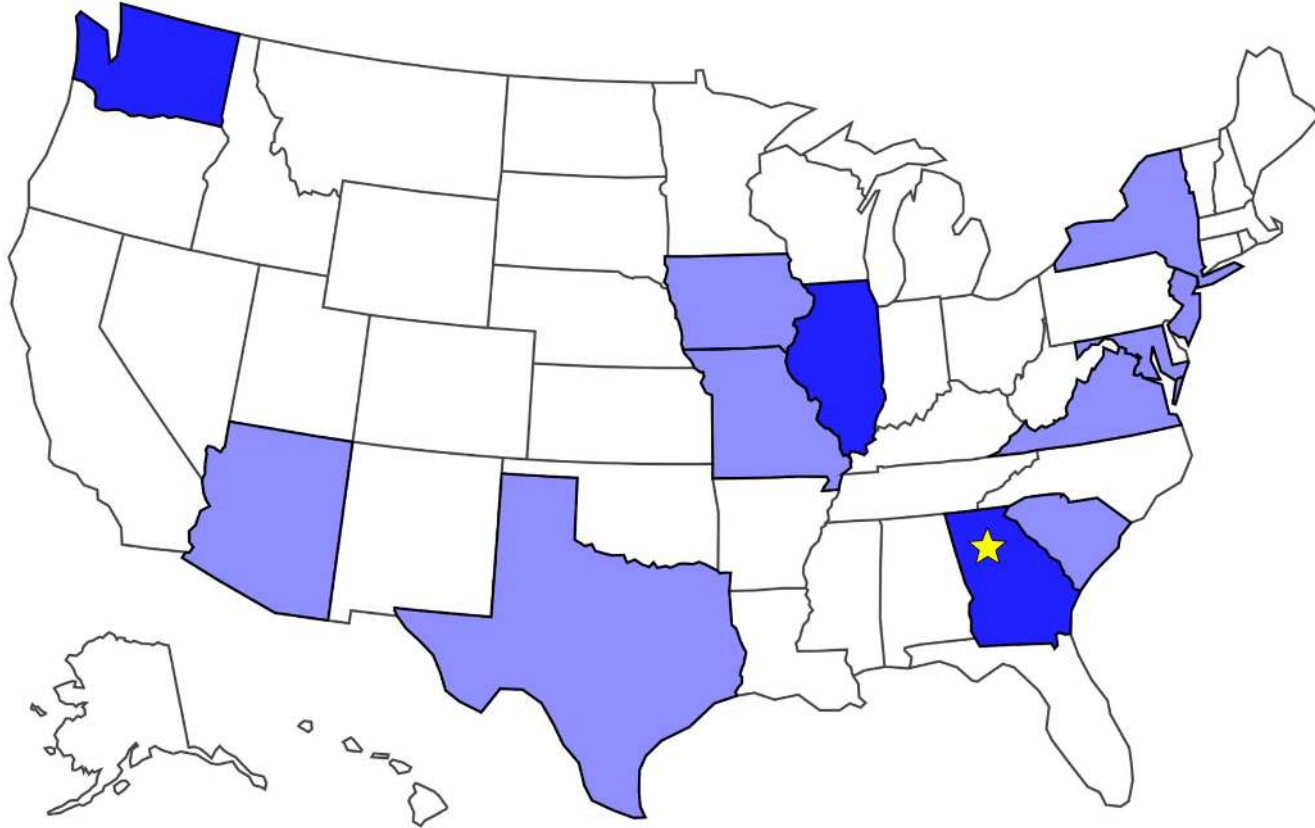
Gripper

4x

Realtime



15 Participants



Causes of Motor Impairment

6 Spinal Muscular Atrophy (SMA)

3 Muscular Dystrophy (Duchenne/Becker)

3 Spinal Cord Injury

1 Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS)

1 Arthrogryposis

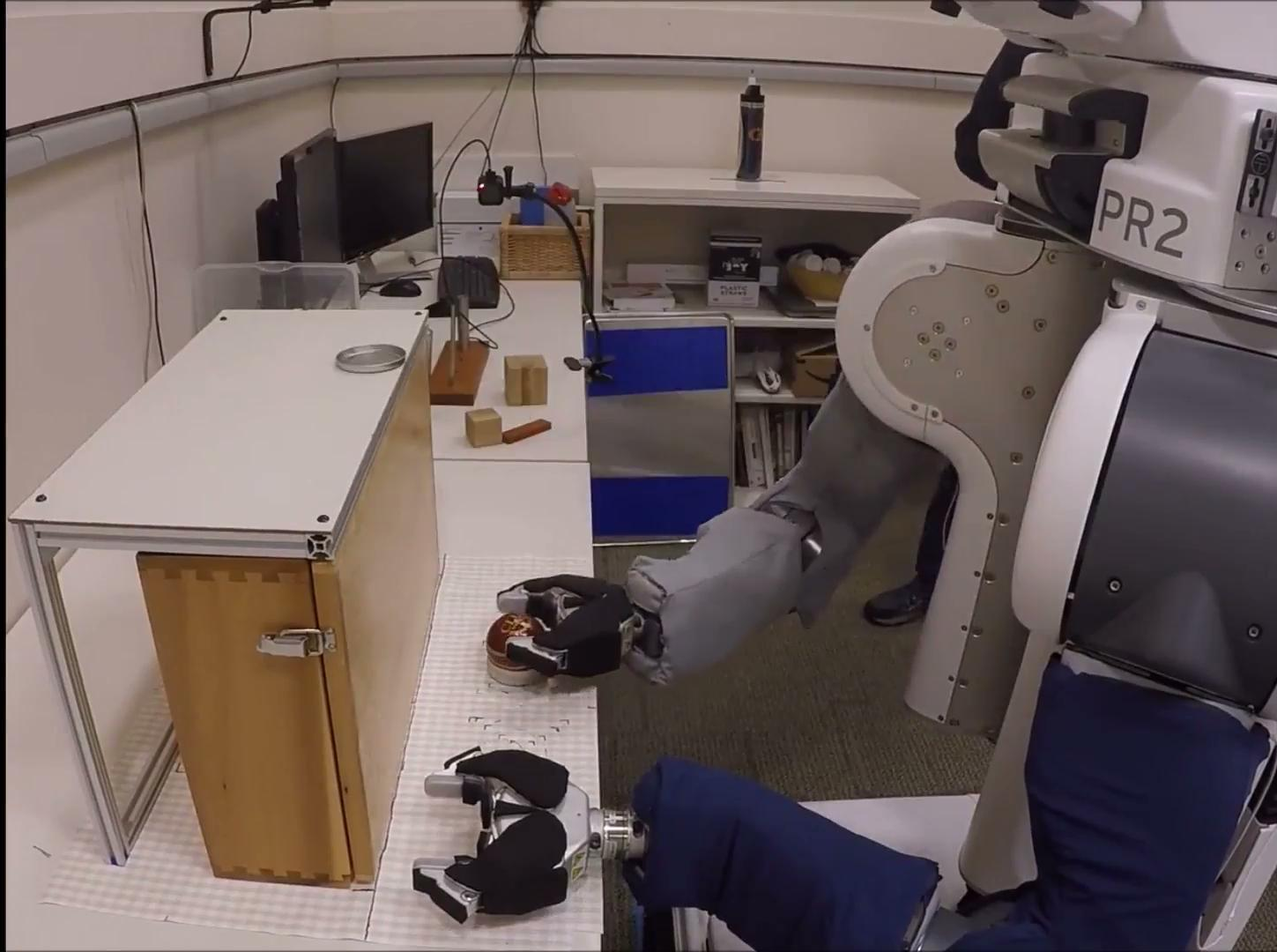
1 Dejerine-Sottas

ARAT Threshold: 9/57 with best arm

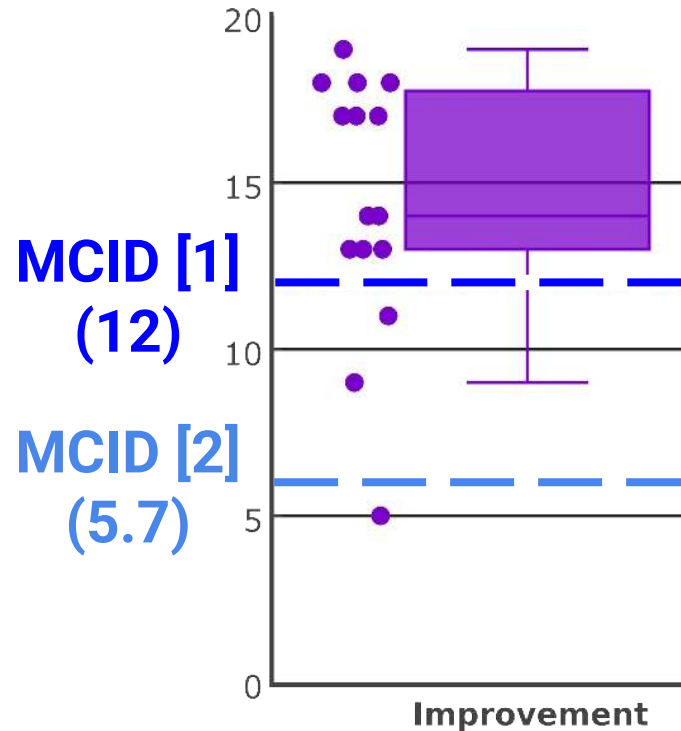
Computer Access Devices

- 4 – Trackball
- 3 – Touchpad
- 3 – Head-mouse (TrackerPro, 2x HeadMouse Extreme)
- 2 – Standard mouse
- 1 – Eye-gaze (Tobii)
- 1 – Touchpad w/Stylus held in mouth
- 1 – Speech (Dragon MouseGrid)

40x



Improvement Exceeded Conservative Minimal Clinically Important Difference (MCID)

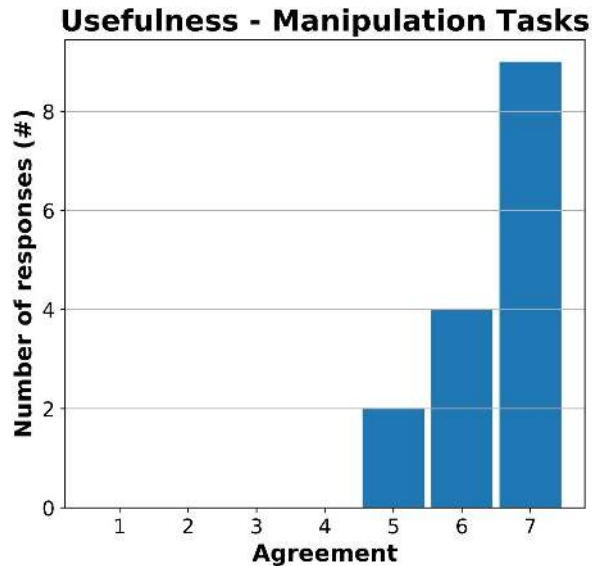


[1] C. E. Lang, D. F. Edwards, R. L. Birkenmeier, and A. W. Dromerick, "Estimating minimal clinically important differences of upper-extremity measures early after stroke," *Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation*, vol. 89, no. 9, pp. 1693–1700, 2008.

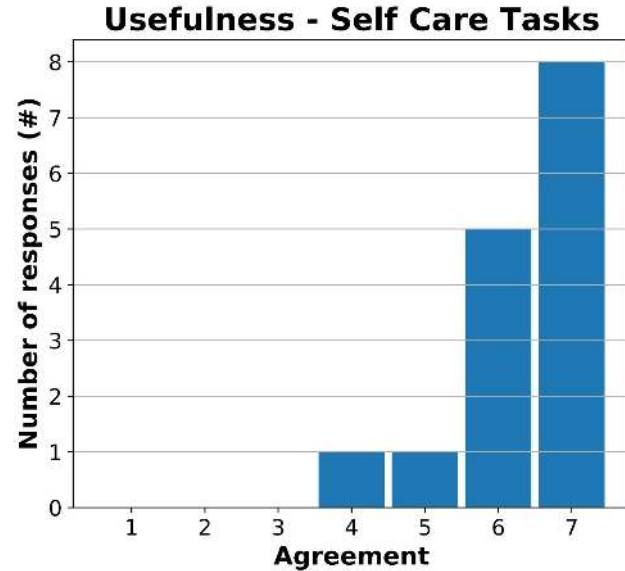
[2] J. H. Van der Lee, V. De Groot, H. Beckerman, R. C. Wagenaar, G. J. Lankhorst, and L. M. Bouter, "The intra- and interrater reliability of the action research arm test: A practical test of upper extremity function in patients with stroke," *Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation*, vol. 82, no. 1, pp. 14–19, 2001.

1-tailed Wilcoxon signed-rank test vs MCID: $W=96$, $p=.021$

Perceived Usefulness



Wilcoxon signed-rank test vs neutral:
W=120, p=.000258



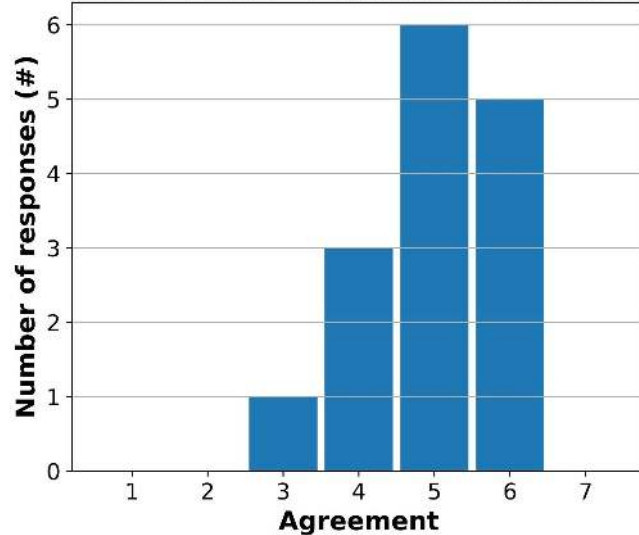
Wilcoxon signed-rank test vs neutral:
W=105, p=.000402

1: Strongly Disagree
2: Disagree
3: Somewhat Disagree
4: Neither Agree nor Disagree

5: Somewhat Agree
6: Agree
7: Strongly Agree

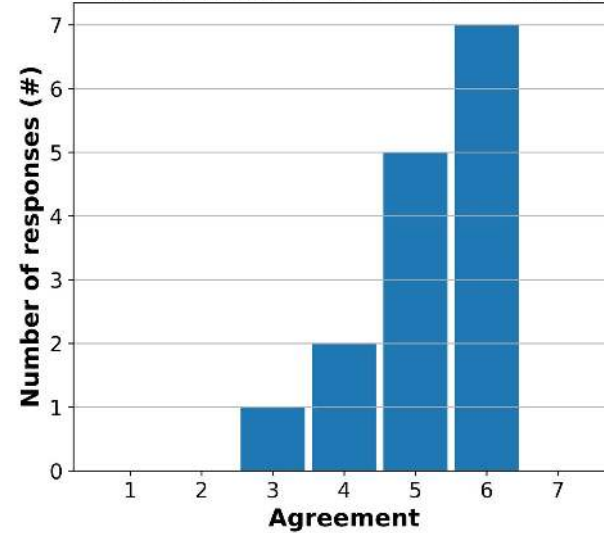
Perceived Ease of Use

Ease of Use - Manipulation Tasks



Wilcoxon signed-rank test vs neutral:
W=74, p=.00264

Ease of Use - Self Care Tasks



Wilcoxon signed-rank test vs neutral:
W=87.5, p=.00142

1: Strongly Disagree
2: Disagree
3: Somewhat Disagree
4: Neither Agree nor Disagree

5: Somewhat Agree
6: Agree
7: Strongly Agree

Limitations

- Slow operation
- Errors
- Depth perception

Limitations

- Slow operation
- Errors
- Depth perception
- **The robot**

Two Problems



- Willow Garage shut down in 2014
- PR2 was impractical
 - \$400,000
 - 227 kg (~500 lb)
 - 67 cm wide (~2.2 ft)



2002



2008



2010



2017



Fetch
Cost: ~\$100,000
Footprint Width: 51cm (20")
Weight: 113 kg (250 lb)



PAL Tiago
Cost: \$58,485 (base model)
Footprint Width: 54cm (21")
Weight: 70 kg (154 lb)

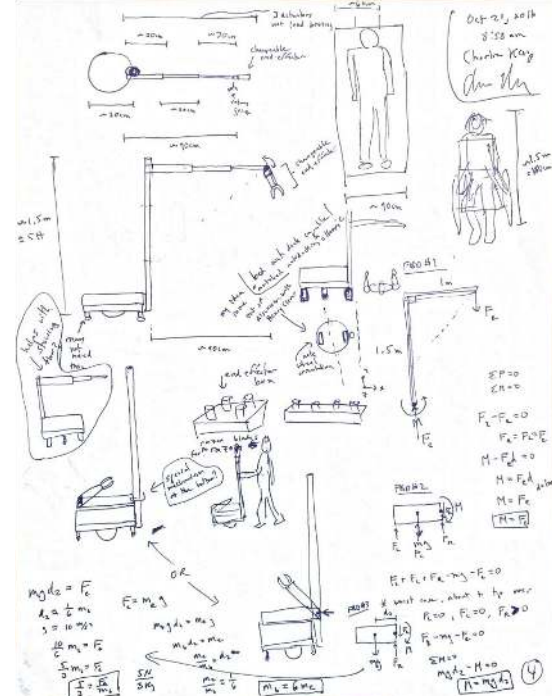


Toyota HSR
Cost: not commercially available
Footprint Width: 43cm (17")
Weight: 37 kg (82 lb)

Frustration Leads to Invention

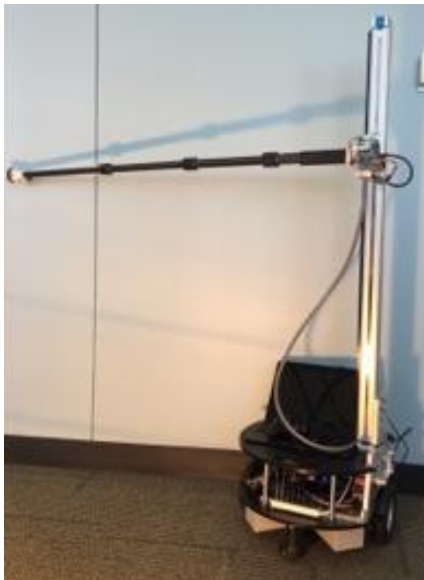
Minimize the actuator requirements while maximizing the capabilities.

- **affordable**
- compact
- lightweight
- humancentric
- capable



My Initial Georgia Tech Notes
October 2016

Georgia Tech's Prototype
March 2017



Hello Robot's Product - A Robot for Research
July 2020



2016	2017		2018	2019	2020
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Founding Team



Aaron Edsinger, Founder & CEO

- Founder Meka Robotics and Redwood Robotics
- Former Director of Robotics, Google
- PhD MIT CSAIL
- Built Meka and Redwood Robotics and sold to Google
- World expert on design for robot manipulation



Charlie Kemp, Founder & CTO

- Associate Professor, Georgia Tech
- Founder & Director of the Healthcare Robotics Lab
- PhD MIT CSAIL
- World expert on assistive mobile manipulation

Hello Robot's Founding Advisors

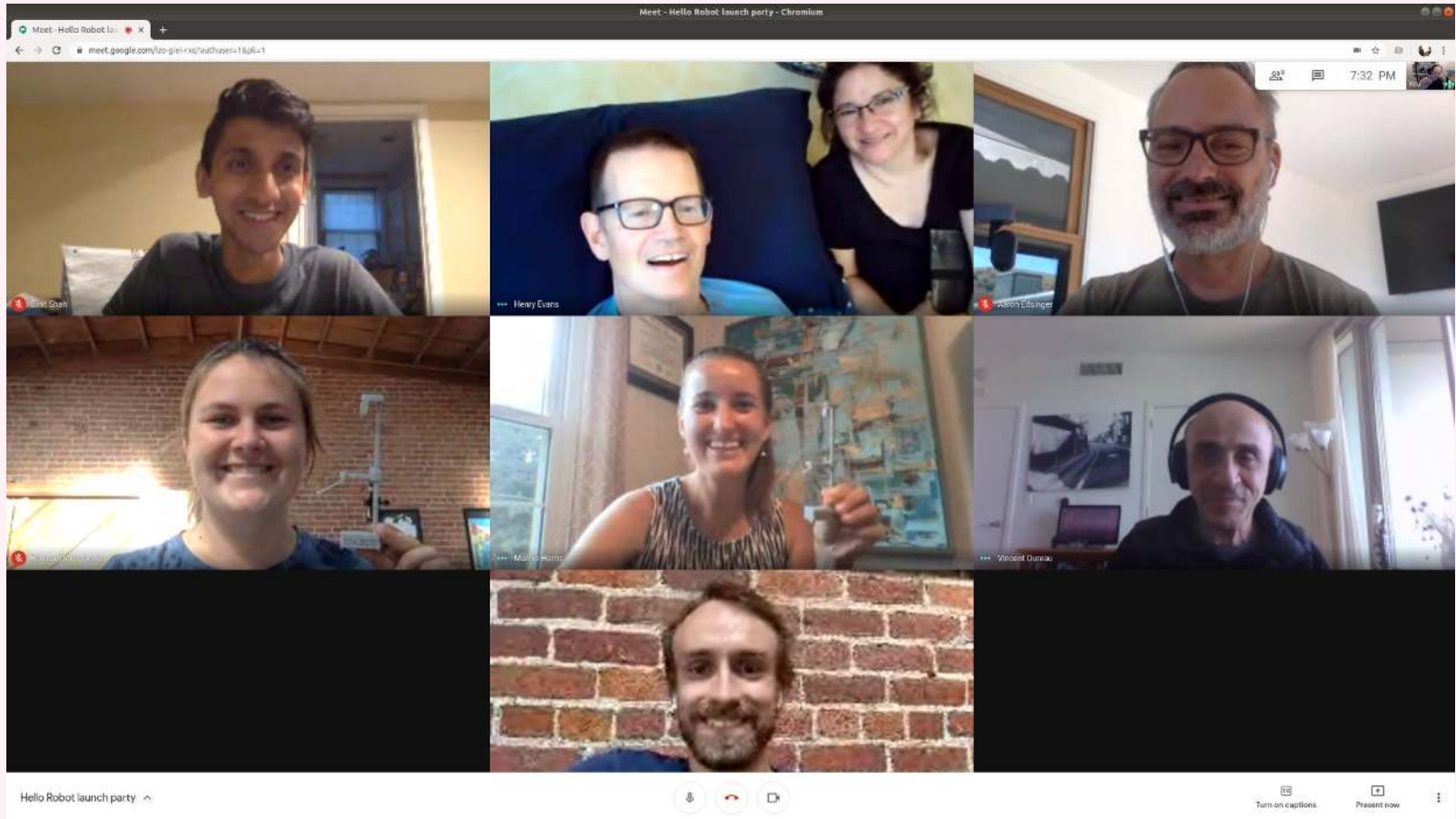


Henry & Jane Evans



Vincent Dureau

Launch Party, July 2020





July 2020

**3 years
8 versions
tested in Charlie's home**

hello robot™

Two Modes of Operation



Manipulation Mode
(Cartesian Manipulator)

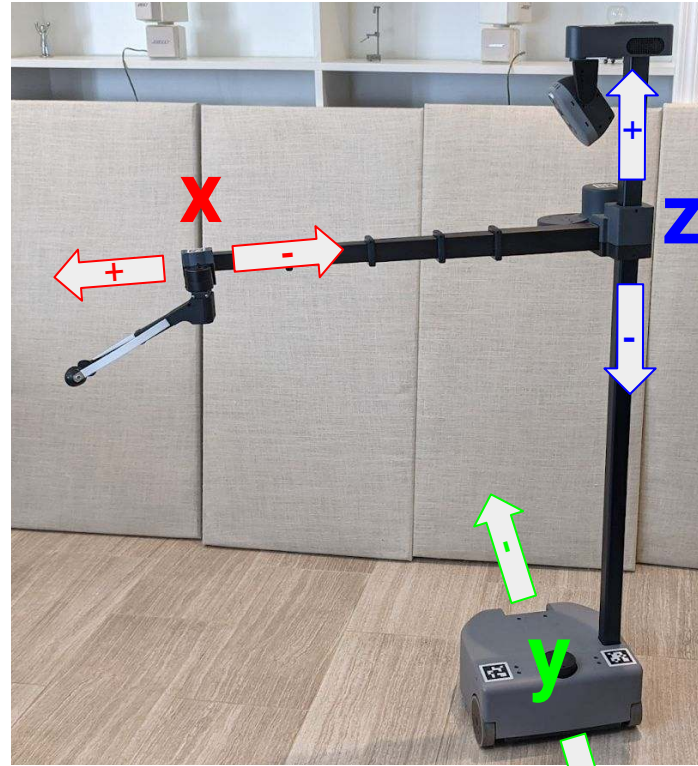


Navigation Mode
(Differential Drive Mobile Robot)



**Arm & Tool Stow
into the Footprint**

Manipulation Depends on the Mobile Base



Manipulation Mode
(Cartesian Manipulator)

Robotic Cubism

- Dimensions matched to human environments
- The human form deconstructed and reassembled

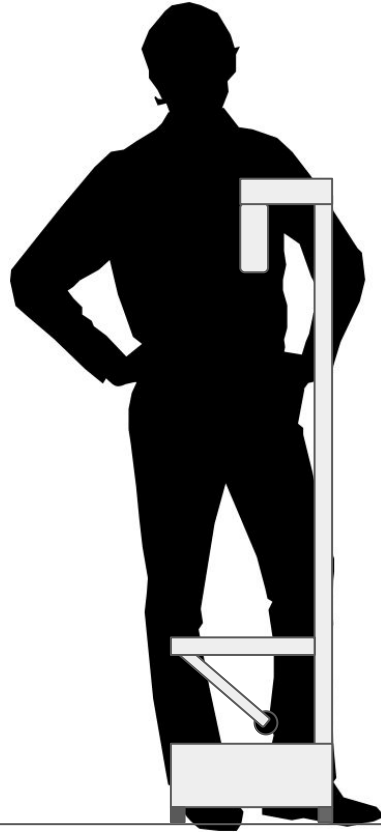
[La Femme au Violon - Pablo Picasso. 1911](#)



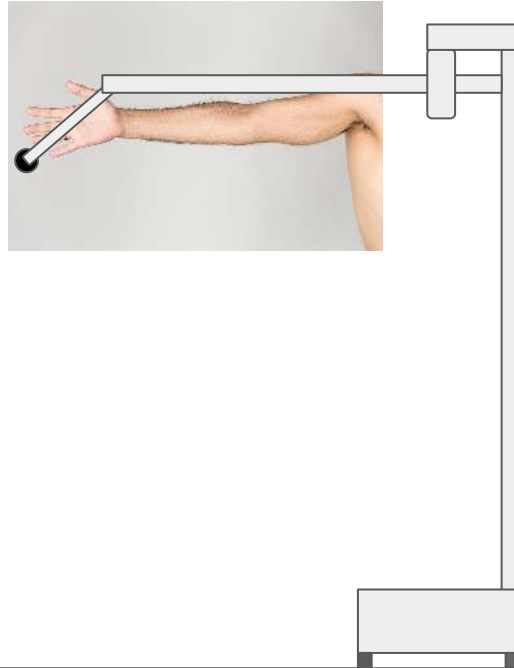
“In Cubist artwork, objects are analyzed, broken up and reassembled in an abstracted form”

- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cubism>

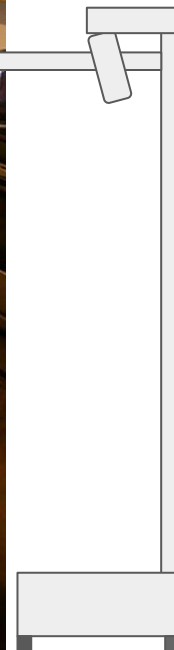
< 50th Percentile Hip Width



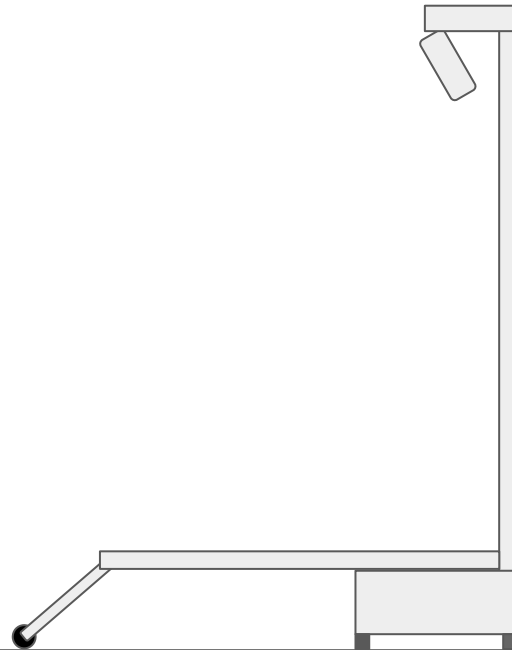
50th Percentile Arm Length



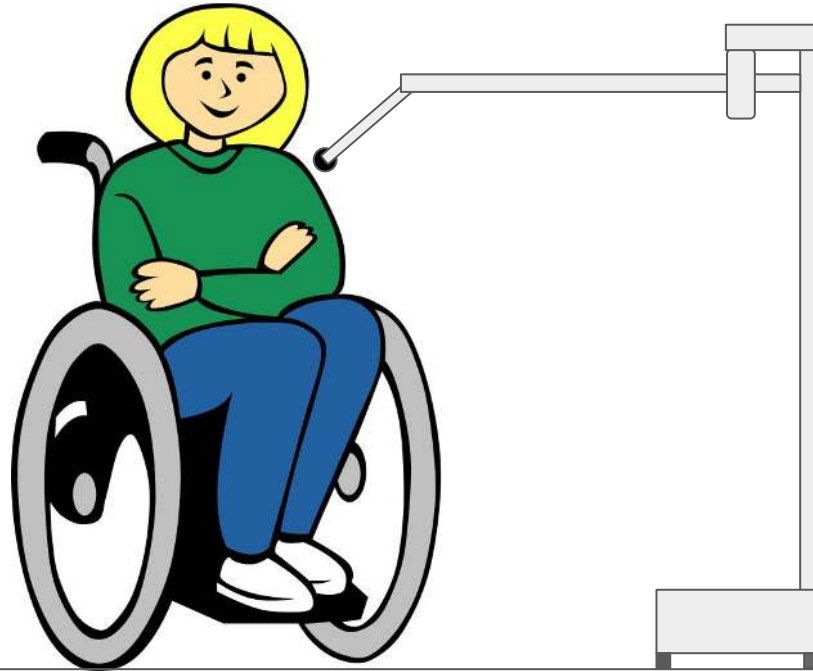
Reaches 36" Countertops



Reaches the Floor



95th Percentile Shoulder Height for Wheelchair Users



23 kg (51 lb)



hello robot™



Image from <https://sites.gatech.edu/robotic-caregivers/> .





A Capable Robot

<https://www.youtube.com/c/HelloRobot/videos>

Teleoperated Home Examples



<https://www.youtube.com/c/HelloRobot/videos>

Teleoperated Workplace Examples



Shelf Picking



Inspection with a Camera

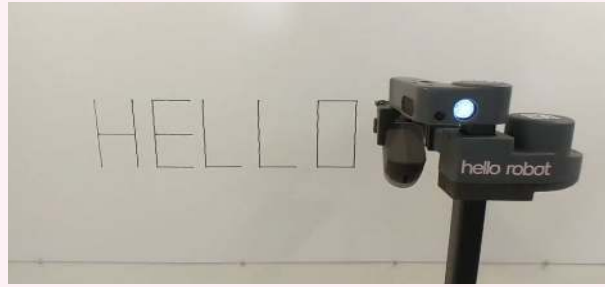
<https://www.youtube.com/c/HelloRobot/videos>

Teleoperated Examples with the Dexterous Wrist



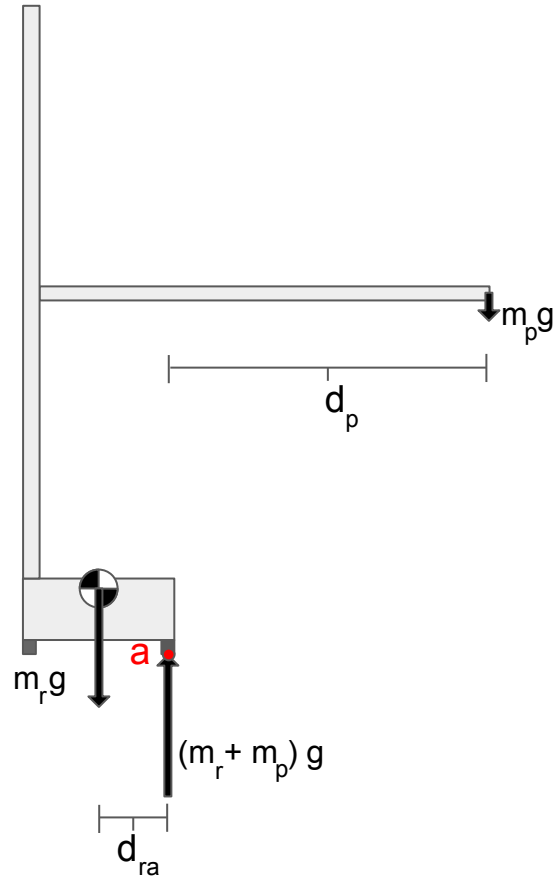
<https://www.youtube.com/c/HelloRobot/videos>

Autonomous Examples

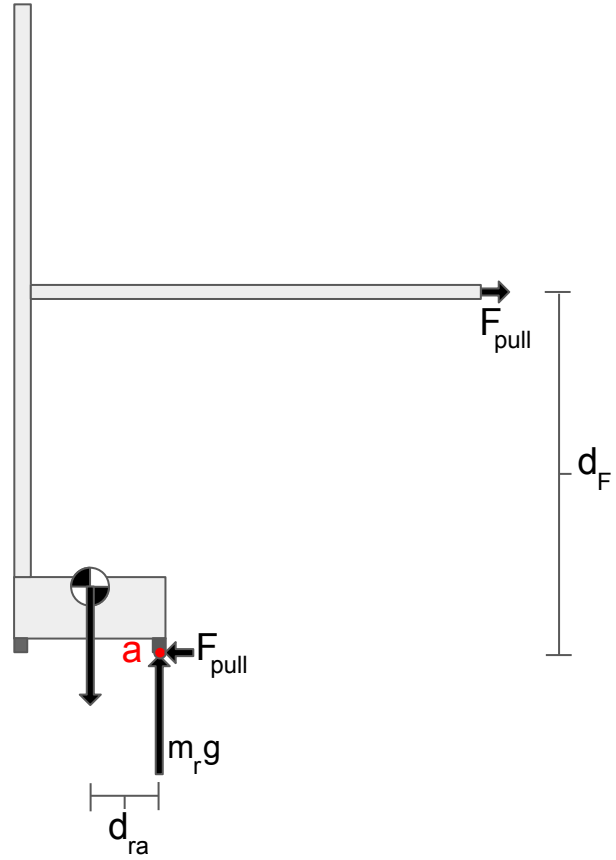


<https://forum.hello-robot.com/t/autonomy-video-details>

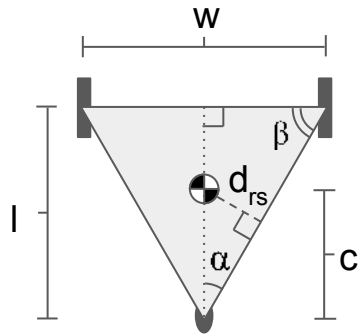
Tipping from Payload



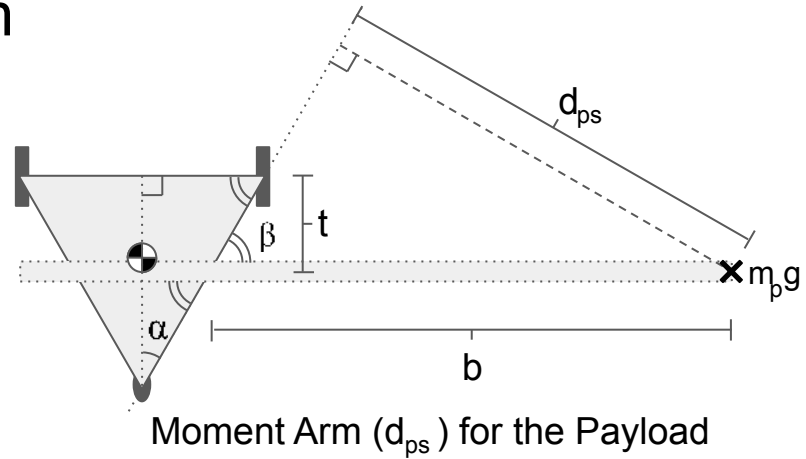
Tipping from Pulling



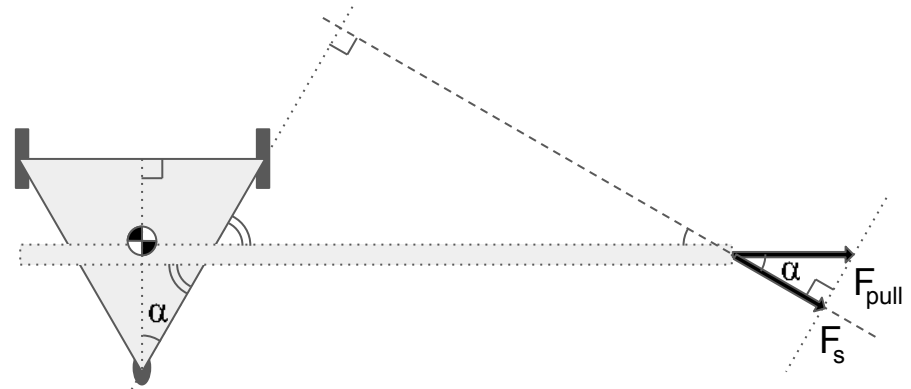
Triangular Support Polygon



Moment Arm (d_{rs}) for the Robot's Center of Mass



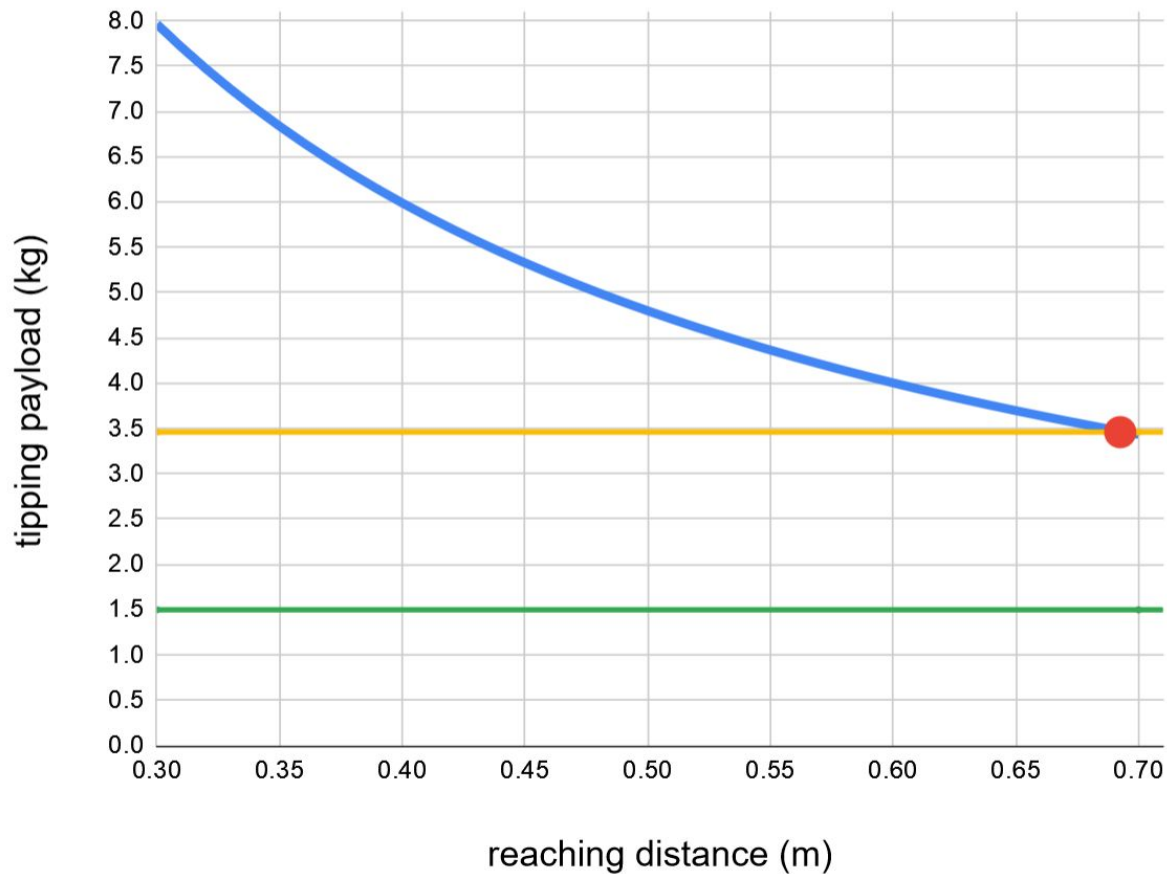
Moment Arm (d_{ps}) for the Payload



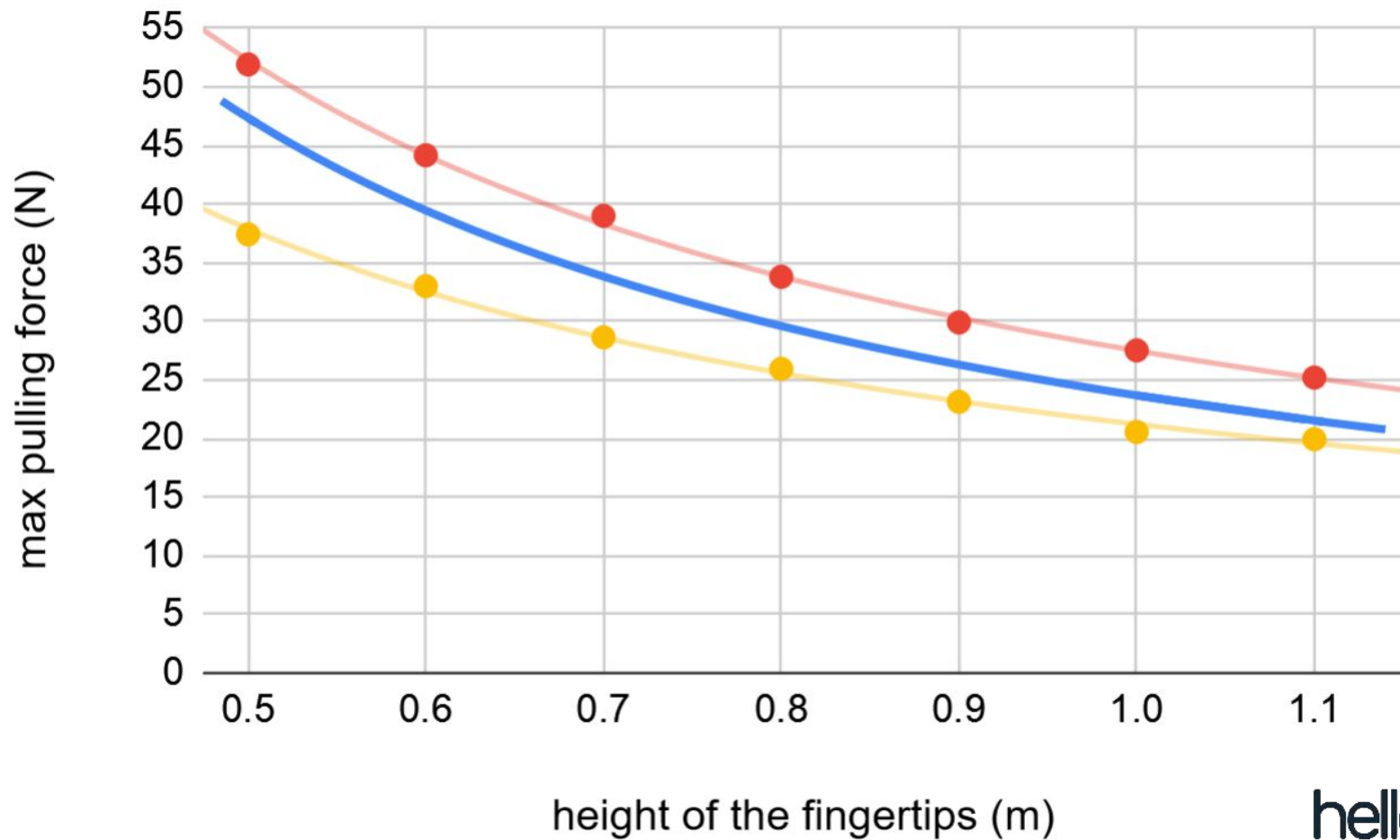
Tipping Component (F_s) of the Pulling Force

Maximum Payload with Gripper

— Modeled ● Measured — No Safety Margin — Specification (no gripper)



— model predictions ● arm fully retracted ● arm fully extended



Moving Forward as a Community

Successful Launch in July 2020

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Automaton | Robotics | Home Robots

14 Jul 2020 | 4:01 GMT

Ex-Googler's Startup Comes Out of Stealth With Beautifully Simple, Clever Robot Design

Hello Robot's Stretch wants to reinvent how mobile manipulators perform tasks in home environments

By Evan Ackerman and Eric Guizzo





Photo: Hello Robot

Hello Robot, founded by former Google robotics director Aaron Edsinger and Georgia Tech professor Charlie Kemp, is introducing Stretch, a mobile manipulator that weighs only 23 kg and costs less than \$20,000.

SVR Silicon Valley Robotics supporting the innovation and commerce



Hello Robot wins Innovation Award in SVR 'Good Robot' Industry Awards

Posted on [December 14, 2020](#) by [Andra Keay](#)



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01:30

Research robot helps with housework and other news

hello robot™

Transparency & Openness

Simple Pricing

hello-robot.com

Open Source & Open Development

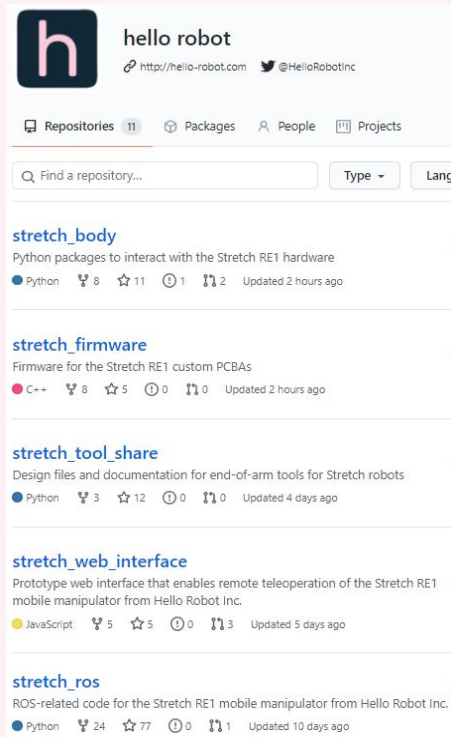
github.com/hello-robot

Open Hardware Accessories

github.com/hello-robot/stretch_tool_share

Open Forum

forum.hello-robot.com



The screenshot shows the GitHub profile for 'hello robot'. The profile includes a bio, website, and social media links. Below the profile are several repositories listed with their descriptions, languages, and statistics.

Repository Name	Description	Language	Forks	Stars	Issues	Open PRs	Updated
stretch_body	Python packages to interact with the Stretch RE1 hardware	Python	8	11	1	2	Updated 2 hours ago
stretch_firmware	Firmware for the Stretch RE1 custom PCBAs	C++	8	5	0	0	Updated 2 hours ago
stretch_tool_share	Design files and documentation for end-of-arm tools for Stretch robots	Python	3	12	0	0	Updated 4 days ago
stretch_web_interface	Prototype web interface that enables remote teleoperation of the Stretch RE1 mobile manipulator from Hello Robot Inc.	JavaScript	5	5	0	3	Updated 5 days ago
stretch_ros	ROS-related code for the Stretch RE1 mobile manipulator from Hello Robot Inc.	Python	24	77	0	1	Updated 10 days ago



Cornell University



umbrella research



A Win for Inclusive Design



8X Teleoperator

Assistive Robotics at the University of Washington

21 people, including 3 people with disabilities, remotely operated Stretch

Cabrera, Maria E., Tapomayukh Bhattacharjee, Kavi Dey, and Maya Cakmak. "[An Exploration of Accessible Remote Tele-operation for Assistive Mobile Manipulators in the Home.](#)" In *2021 30th IEEE International Conference on Robot & Human Interactive Communication (RO-MAN)*, pp. 1202-1209. IEEE, 2021.



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Cornell University



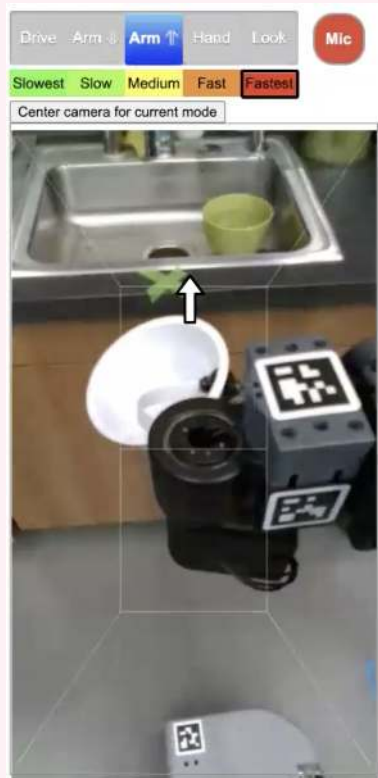
Kavi Dey

Research Intern
Seattle Academy



Maya Cakmak

Associate Professor
University of Washington



[UW's open source web interface](#), which significantly improved [Hello Robot's original version](#).

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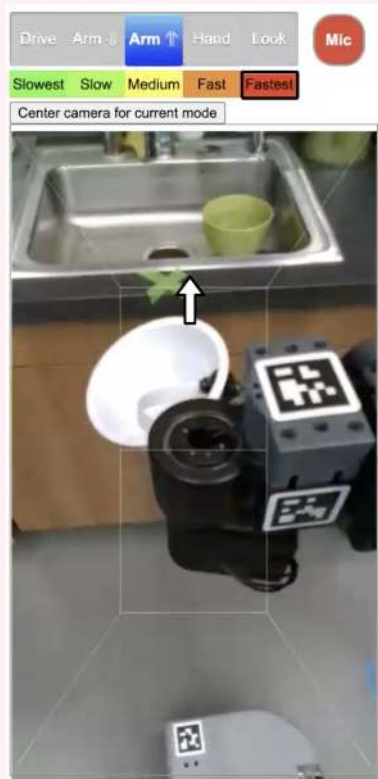
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hello robot™

Occupational Therapy Doctoral Project



Vy Nguyen



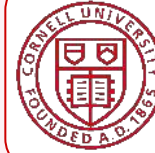
Henry & Jane Evans



Maya Cakmak



Kavi Dey



Tapo Bhattacharjee



UNIVERSITY OF
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Harshal Mahajan Travis Kadylak Wendy Rogers Megan Bayles



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Elliston Franks



Charlie Kemp



Blaine Matulevich



Binit Shah

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Stretch Provides Meaningful Assistance



<https://forum.hello-robot.com/t/summer-research-on-in-home-use-by-henry-evans>

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AI-CARING : New NSF AI Institute



- Hello Robot is an official industry partner
- Participating Institutions with Stretch
 - Umass Lowell
 - CMU
 - Georgia Tech
- Already an affiliated class at Georgia Tech
 - [Robotic Caregivers: From Dreams to Reality](#)
 - Project-based class using 3 Stretch robots
 - Taught by Prof. Kemp [using open materials](#)
- New classes related to AI-CARING
 - This class at Umass Lowell!
 - New class at CMU (spring 2022)
 - [Robotic Caregivers and Intelligent Physical Collaboration](#)
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Questions, Answers and Discussion