

This is a revised version of the slides Charlie Kemp presented at the following workshop.

<https://a3de-hri.github.io/>

Assistive Applications, Accessibility, and Disability Ethics (A3DE)

HRI 2024 Workshop
Friday, March 15, 2024
Boulder, CO

1pm - 1:45pm MT

Keynote Speaker: Charlie Kemp

“Together, We Can Get There: An Open Community Approach to Accessible Home Robots”
45 minute talk with questions held for a subsequent panel session

Speaker Bio

Dr. Charlie Kemp is a cofounder and the chief technology officer (CTO) of Hello Robot Inc., which is working toward a future where mobile manipulators enhance life for everyone. Hello Robot sells Stretch, a compact, lightweight, and capable mobile manipulator that is empowering a growing community of innovators to create a better future. Prior to joining Hello Robot full time in September of 2023, Dr. Kemp was a tenured faculty member at Georgia Tech where beginning in 2006 his research focused on enabling intelligent mobile manipulators to assist older adults and people with disabilities. He sees Hello Robot as the next step in this long-term mission.

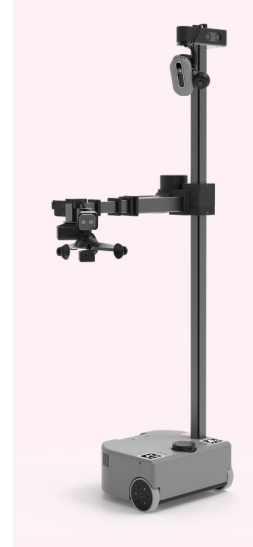
Together, We Can Get There

An [Open Community Approach](#) to [Accessible](#) Home Robots



Charlie Kemp, PhD

Cofounder & Chief Technology Officer



Stretch 3
robot

hello robot[®]

Professional Timeline

1997-2005 : Earned degrees at MIT



2006 : Joined Georgia Tech



2017 : Co-founded Hello Robot

2023 : Joined Hello Robot full-time



Professional Timeline

1997-2005 : Earned degrees at MIT



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2017 : Co-founded Hello Robot

2023 : Joined Hello Robot full-time
relinquished tenure & closed my lab

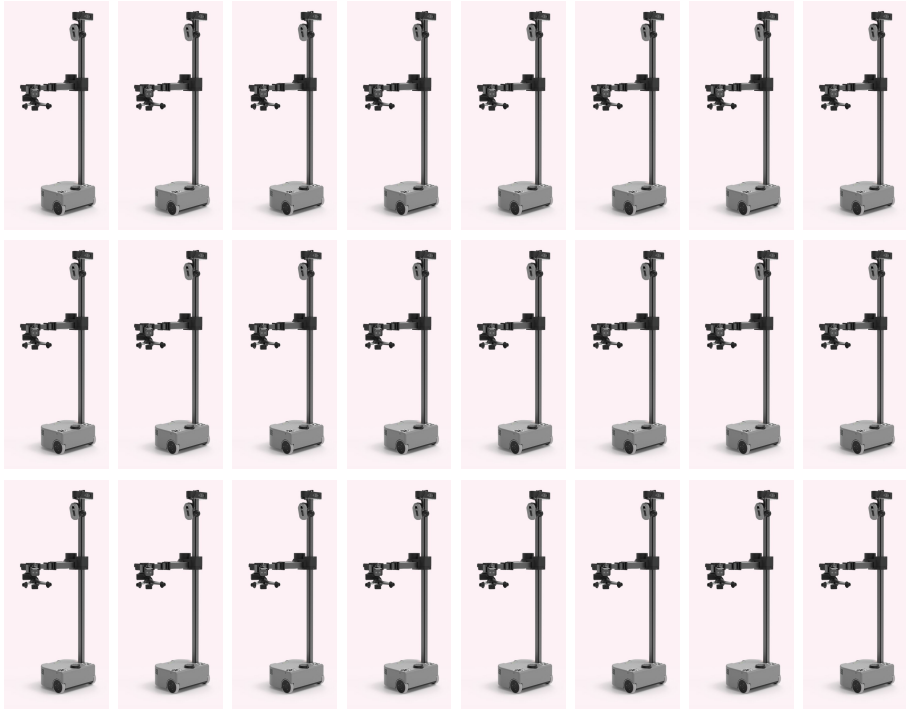
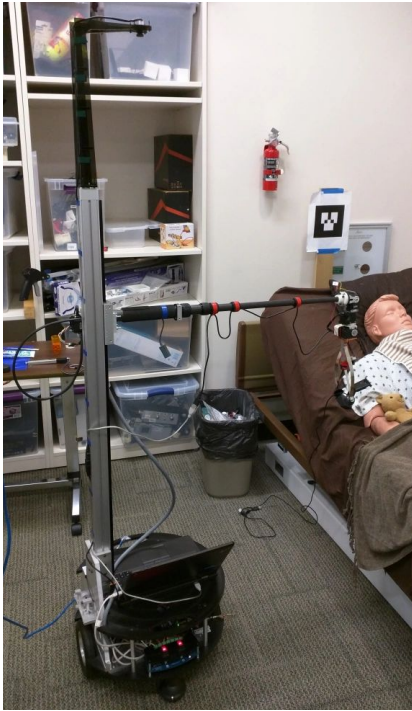


Why give up tenure? To make this a reality



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

A Company can Produce and Support Many Robots



Many Robots can Support an Open Research Community



The Open Research Community Using Stretch

An Open Research Community can Change the World



Photo by Peter Adams

Together, We Can Get There

An [Open Community Approach](#) to [Accessible](#) Home Robots

- The assistive origins of Stretch
- The design of Stretch
- Hello Robot's [open community approach](#)
- The Robots for Humanity project

hello robot[®]



Commercially Available Assistive Robots

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



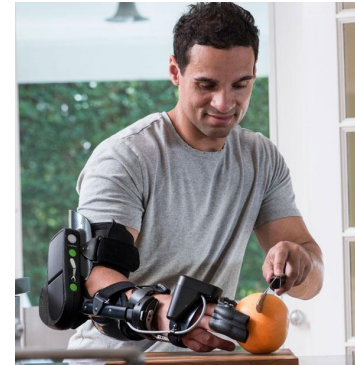
[JACO](#) by Kinova



[Obi](#) by Obi



[Ability Hand](#) by Psyonic



[Myomo](#) by Myomo Inc.

Advantages of Mobile Manipulators

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

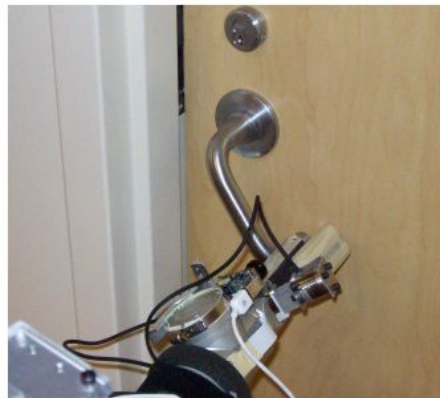
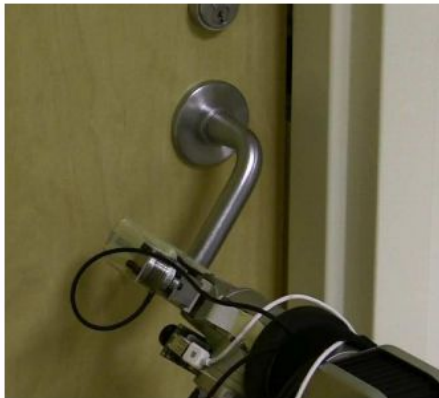


Stretch's Ancestor

EL-E from 2008

- Statically stable
- Small footprint
- 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.



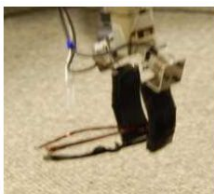
1) TV remote



2) Pill



3) Pill bottle



4) Glasses



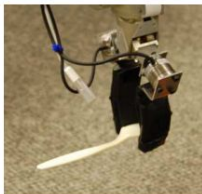
5) Cordless phone



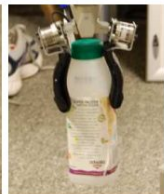
6) Toothbrush



7) Plastic fork



8) Plastic spoon



9) Bottle



10) Toothpaste



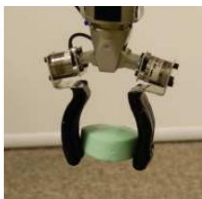
11) Cup



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



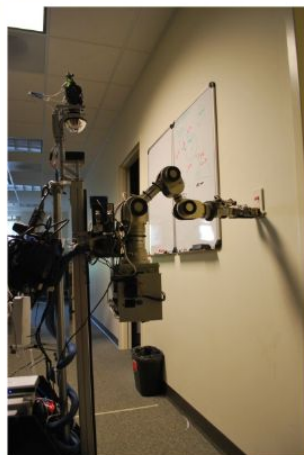
24) Pencil

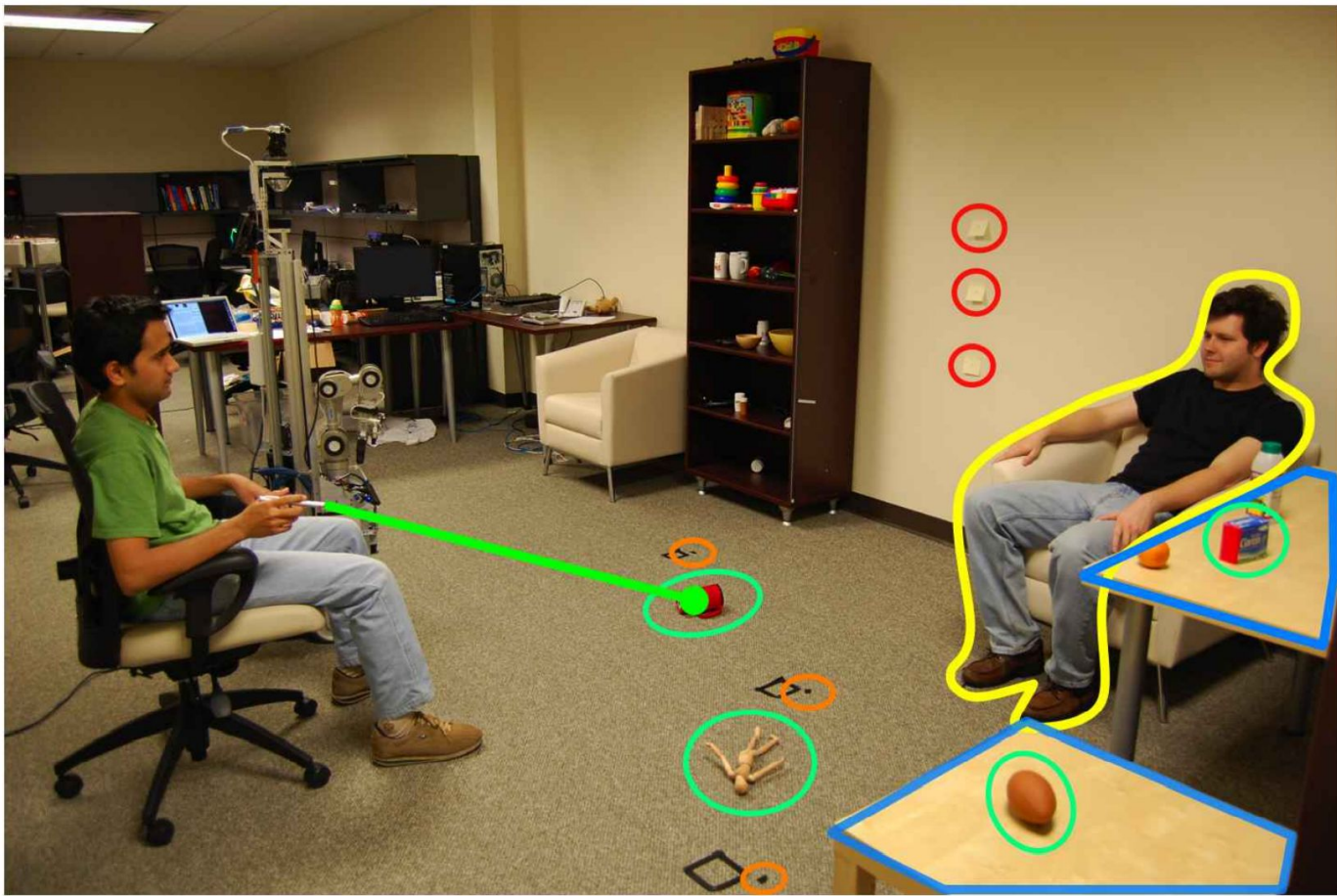


25) Medicine box

[EL-E: An Assistive Mobile Manipulator that Autonomously Fetches Objects from Flat Surfaces,](#)

Advait Jain and Charles C. Kemp, Autonomous Robots, 2010





[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.



Norma was an advocate for my lab's research to create assistive robots to benefit people with ALS. She was a visionary who saw the future potential. She encouraged us and enthusiastically tested and demonstrated our research systems. She was a remarkable person whom I think of often. I am deeply grateful for her contributions.

Norma Margeson

“She was a talented and award winning artist, and continued to study and paint all of her life. To use her words, *“I try to capture a part of God's beautiful creation on canvas.”* She contributed time and talent to ALS research. Two of her paintings are on display at the MDA art museum in Arizona. She was recently on ABC's Good Morning America, demonstrating a new robot being developed through Emory University by Georgia Tech.”

— Excerpt from her [obituary](#) that originally appeared in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution on May 26, 2009

In 2010, Willow Garage Began Shipping Many Robots



Images from
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/willowgarage/4648144203/>
<https://www.roboticstoday.com/institutions/willow-garage>



The PR2 Research Community Changed the World

The logo for the Robot Operating System (ROS) features a 3x3 grid of nine dark blue circles on the left, followed by the letters "ROS" in a large, bold, dark blue sans-serif font.

[“Robot Operating System \(ROS or ros\)”](#)

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

Photo taken on June 16, 2011 at Willow Garage during the second Robots for Humanity workshop. Image from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/willowgarage/5941309642>.

Henry Evans & Jane Evans

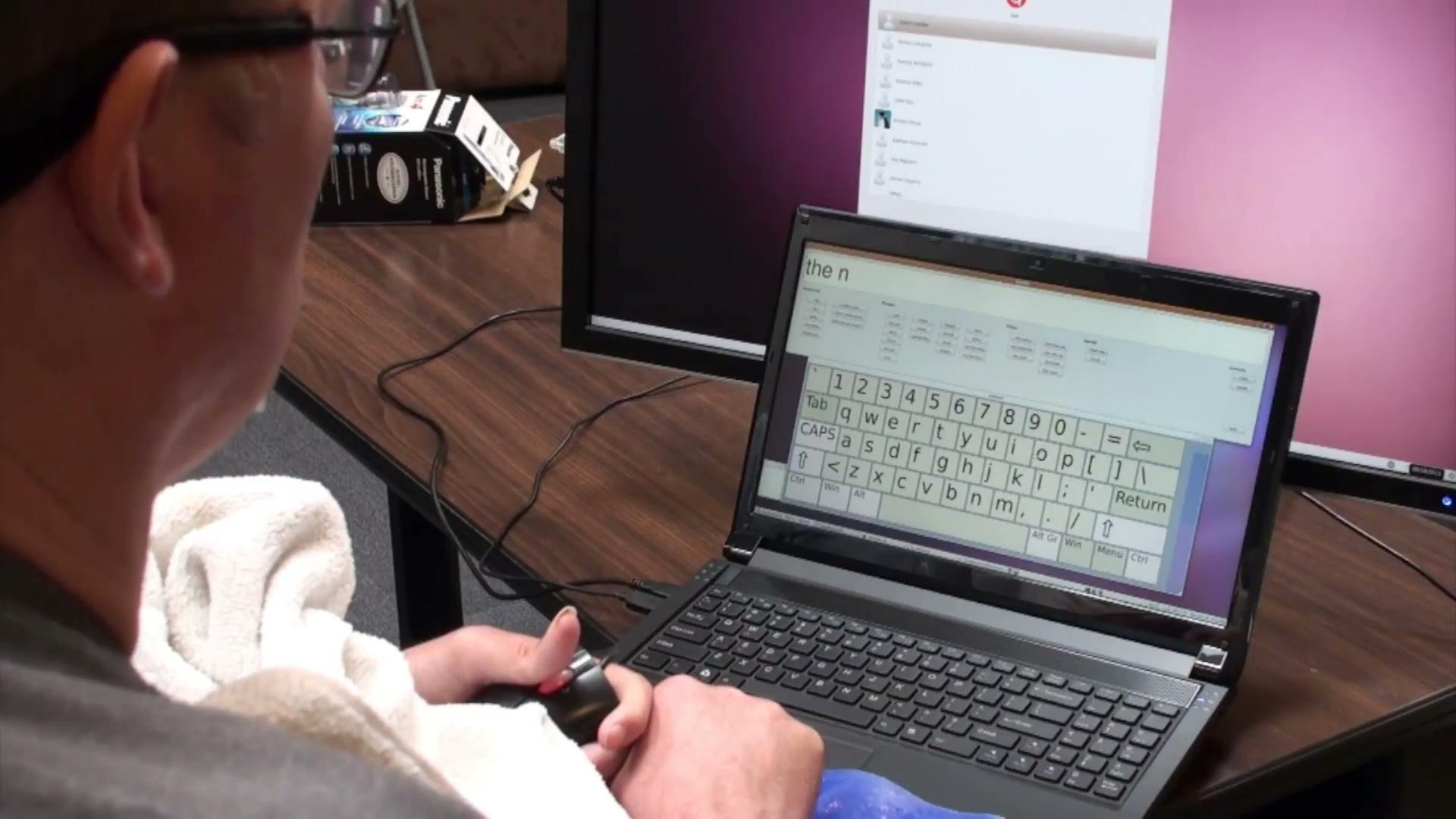


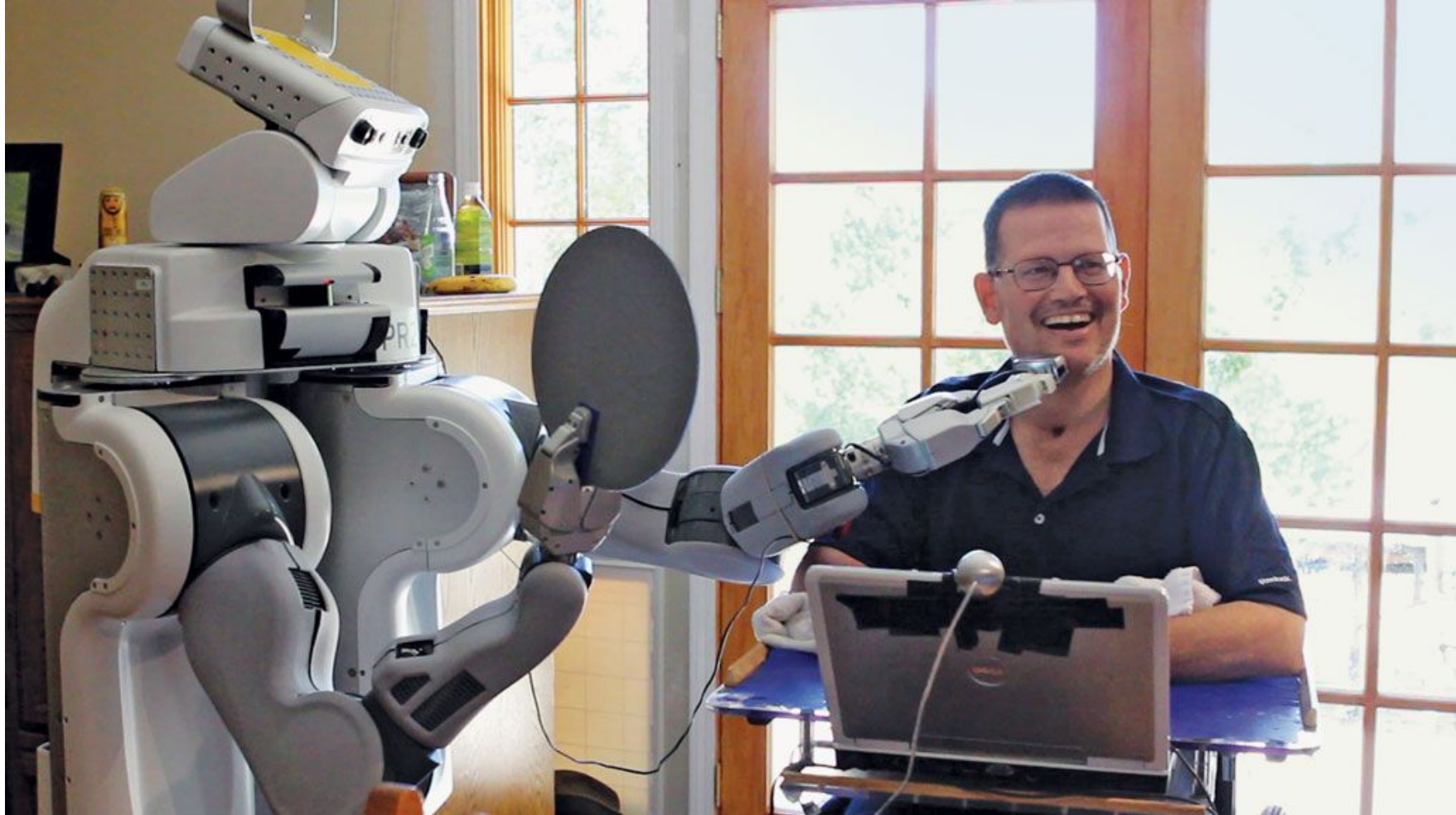
I am deeply grateful for my collaboration and friendship with Henry Evans and Jane Evans. Henry saw me demonstrating research from my lab with a PR2 robot for Ali Velshi on CNN on October 15, 2010. Henry was excited about the potential for the technology and reached out to Willow Garage and me. Steve Cousins, the CEO of Willow Garage, hosted the first [Robots for Humanity](#) workshop on March 21 & 22, 2011 at Willow Garage in Menlo Park, CA. I've been collaborating with Henry and Jane ever since. They are truly remarkable. They've made important contributions to research. They've also enriched my life through their friendship. I've written the following brief descriptions to help you get to know them a little.

Henry is humorous, playful, inventive, romantic, relentless, outgoing, fearless, and a test pilot for home robots with the potential to enhance life.

Jane is adventurous, insightful, creative, steadfast, driven, welcoming, caring, supportive, and an advocate for people with disabilities and their care partners.

They are explorers, innovators, influencers, and pioneers in home robotics who are working hard to make the world better.

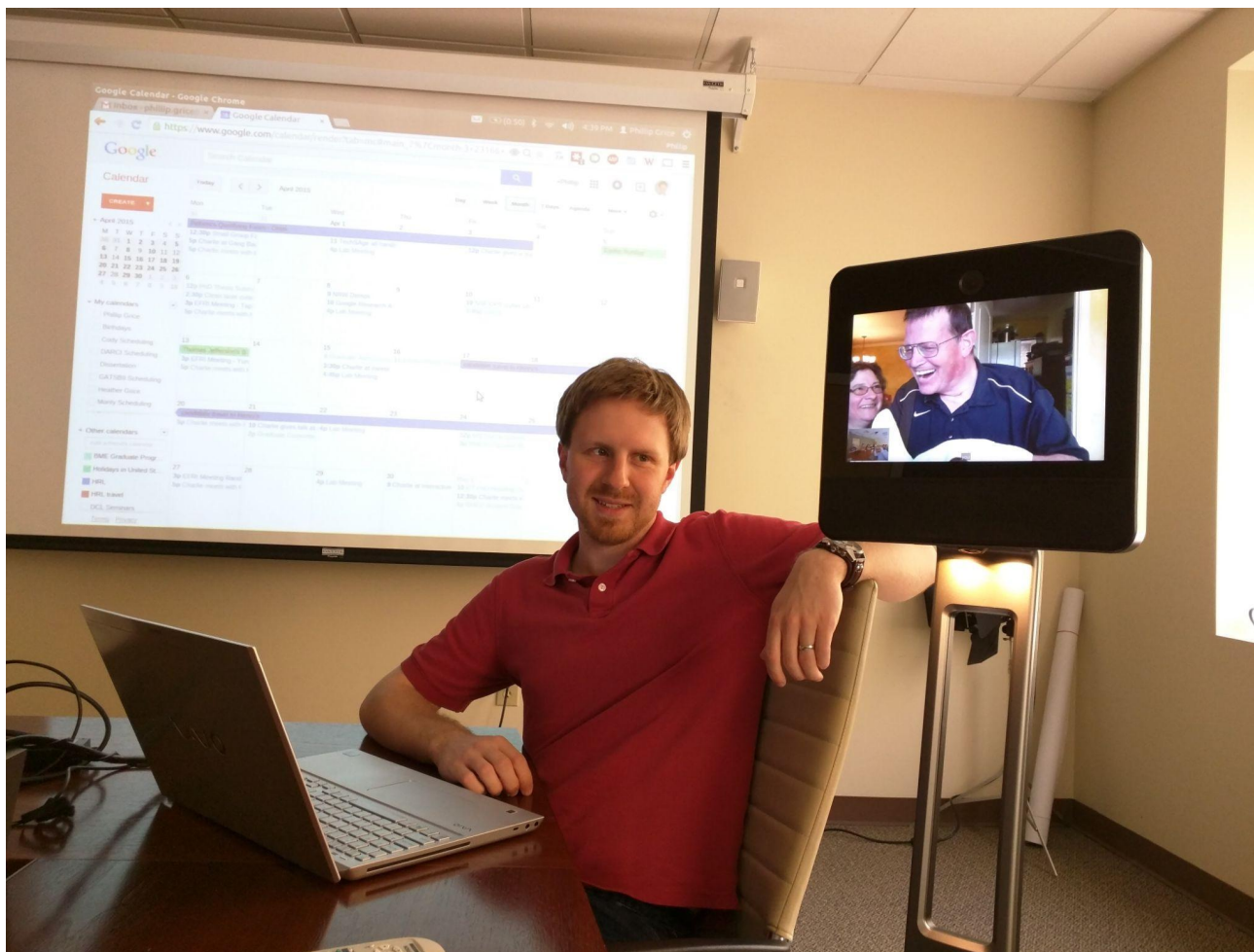




[Assistive Mobile Manipulation for Self-Care Tasks Around the Head](#), Kelsey Hawkins, Phillip M. Grice, Tiffany L. Chen, Chih-Hung King, and Charles C. Kemp, 2014 IEEE Symposium on Computational Intelligence in Robotic Rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies, 2014.



[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.



Main Menu

Look Spine

Left Hand Right Hand

Drive

Controls

Zoom In

Zoom Out



4x

Main Menu

Look Spine

Left Hand Right Hand

Drive

Controls

Zoom In

Zoom Out



4x


Main Menu

Look Spine

Left Hand Right Hand

Drive

Controls

Zoom In 

Zoom Out



4x

Main Menu

Look Spine

Left Hand Right Hand

Drive

Controls

Zoom In

Zoom Out



4x

Main Menu

Look Spine

Left Hand Right Hand

Drive

Controls

Tuck Arms

Re-zero Bumper

Click on video to drive.



4x

Turn Left

Turn Right

Main Menu

Look Spine

Left Hand Right Hand

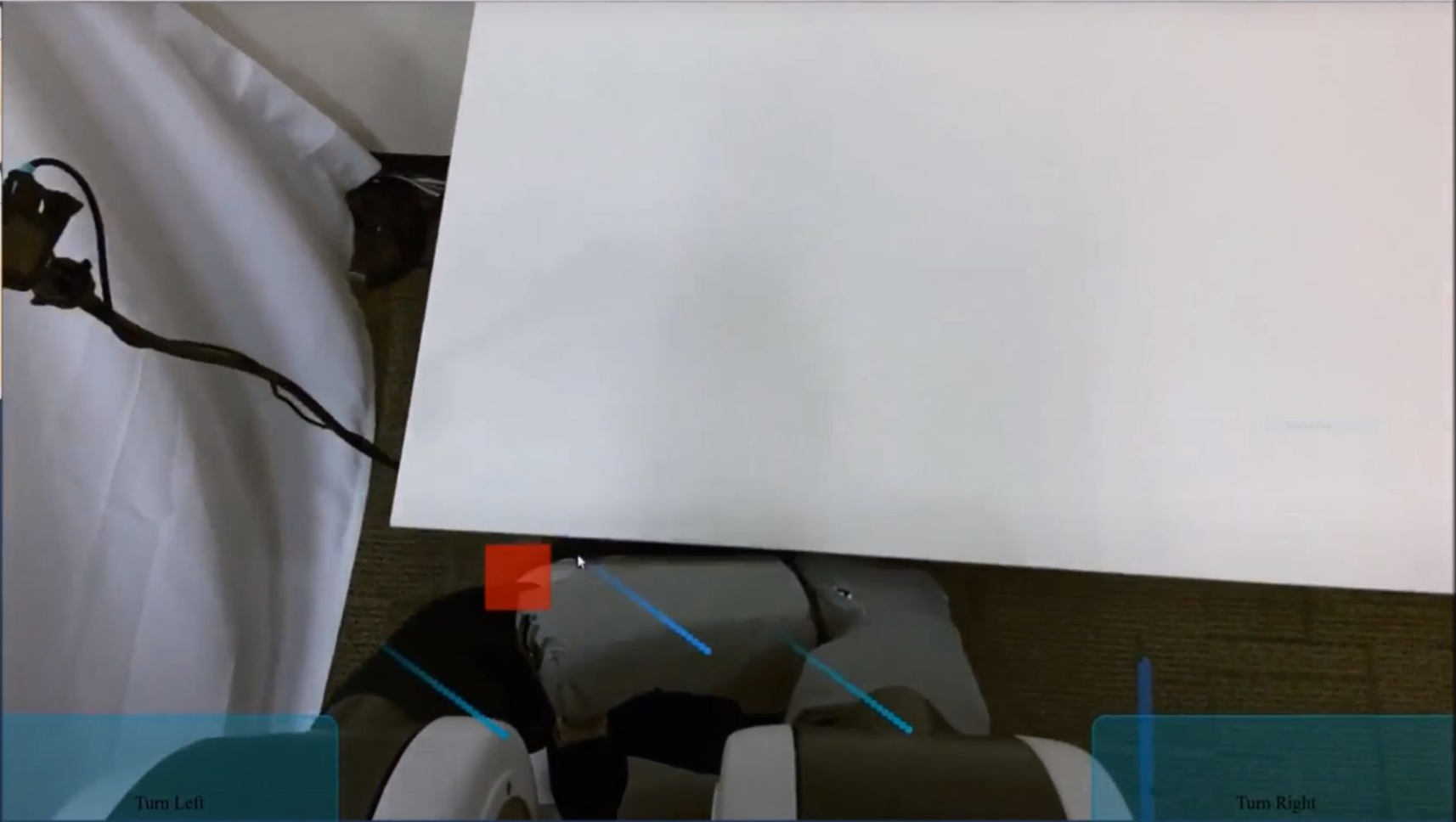
Drive

Controls

Tuck Arms

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Click on video to drive.



4x

Turn Left

Turn Right

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

• **Main Menu**

Look Spine

Left Hand **Right Hand**

Drive

• **Controls**

Step Size

XS S **M** L

Position/Rotation

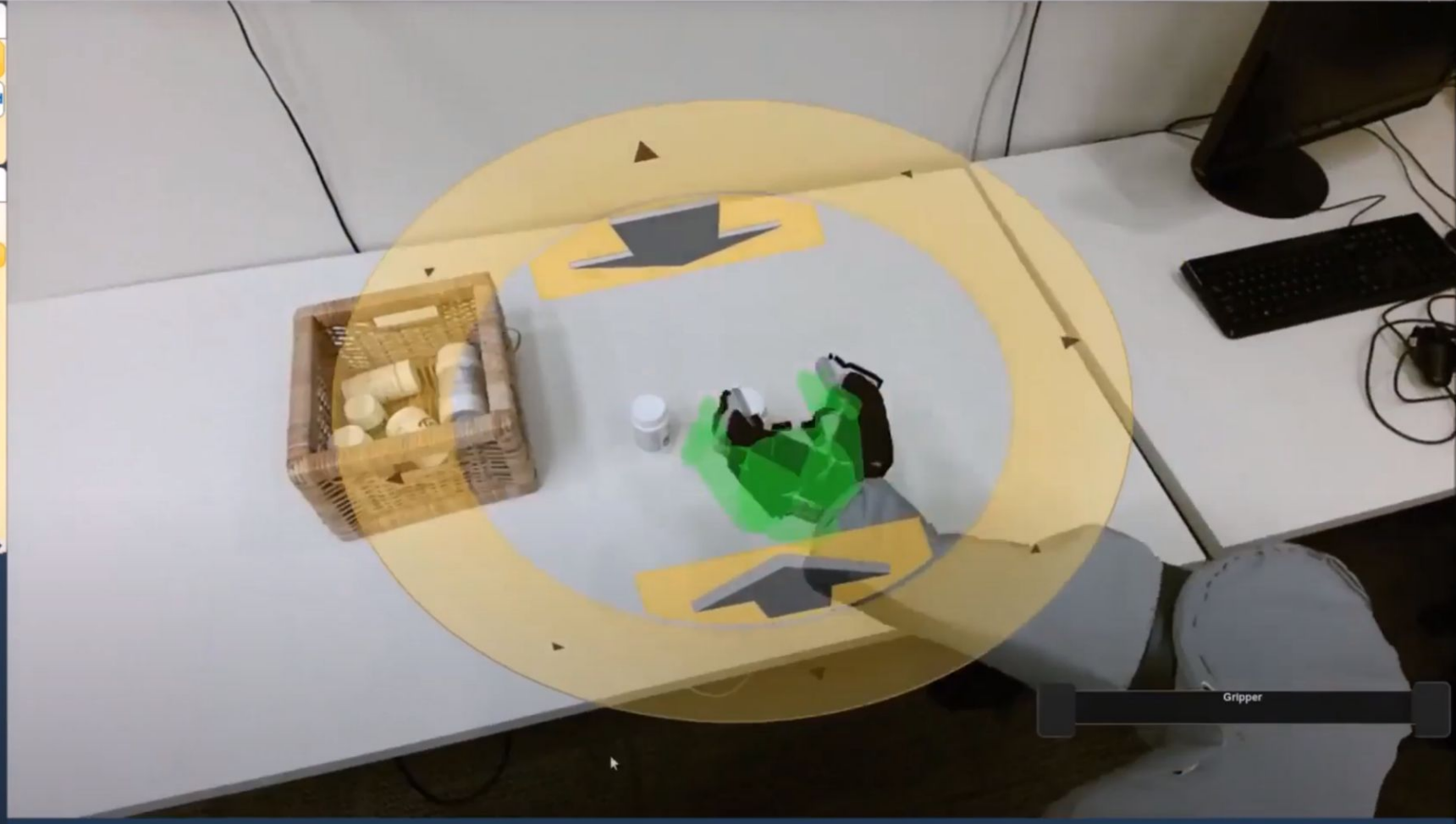
Hand Wrist
Position Rotation

3D Peek

Move Aside

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Re-zero Skin



Gripper

4x

Main Menu

Look Spine

Left Hand **Right Hand**

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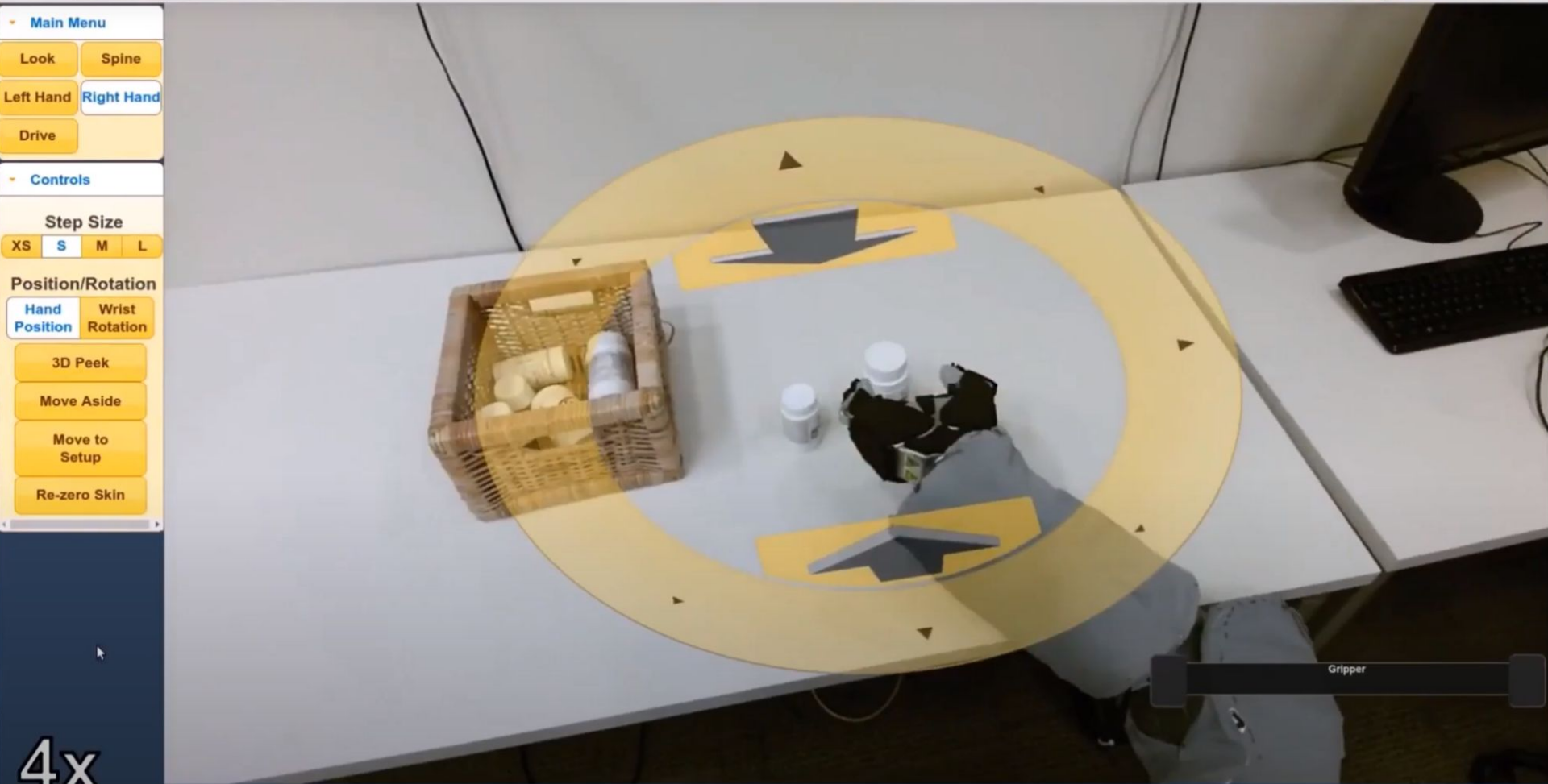
Move Aside

Move to Setup

Re-zero Skin



4x



- 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

Main Menu

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Left Hand **Right Hand**

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Controls

Step Size

XS **S** M L

Position/Rotation

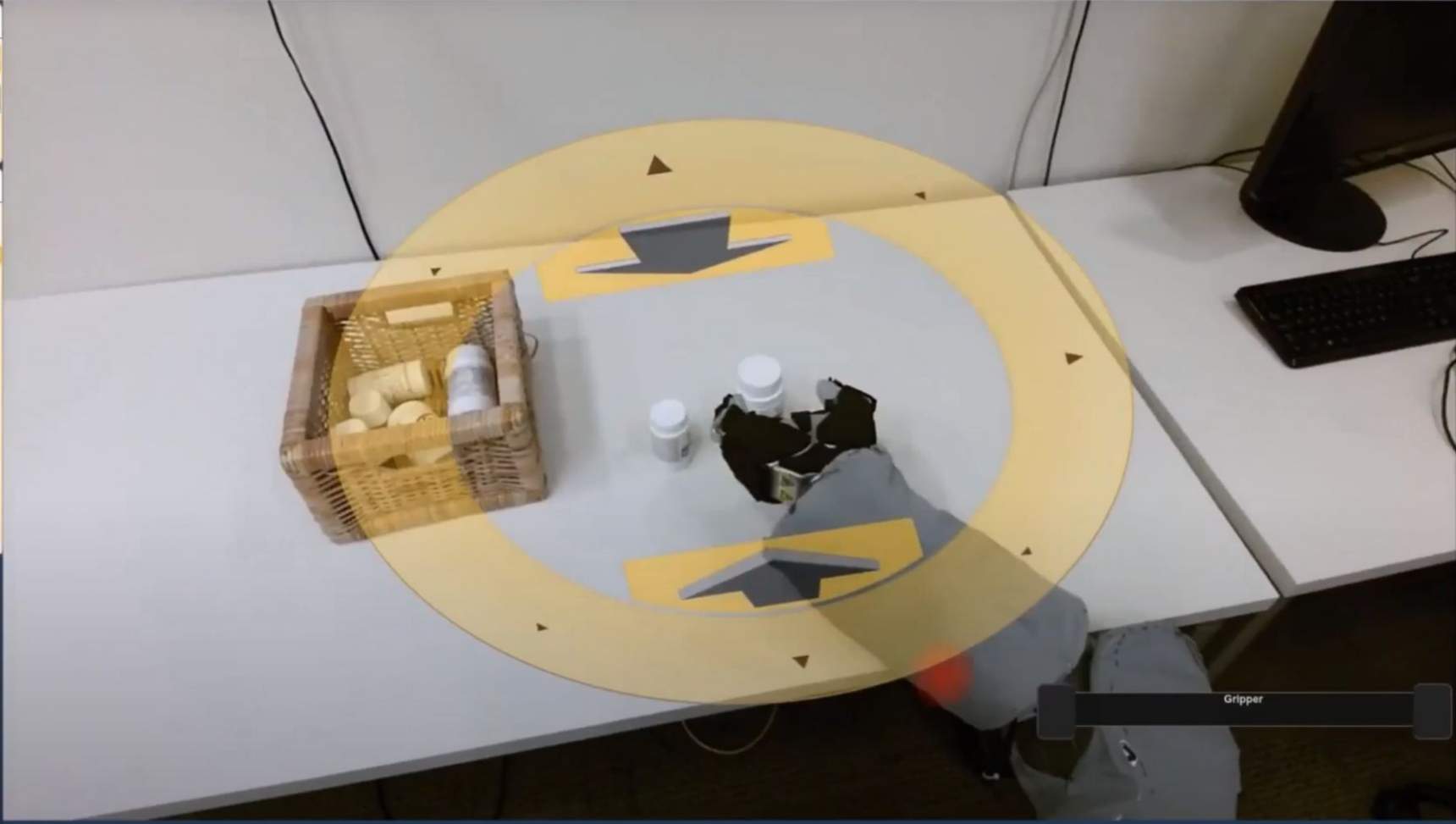
Hand Wrist
Position Rotation

3D Peek

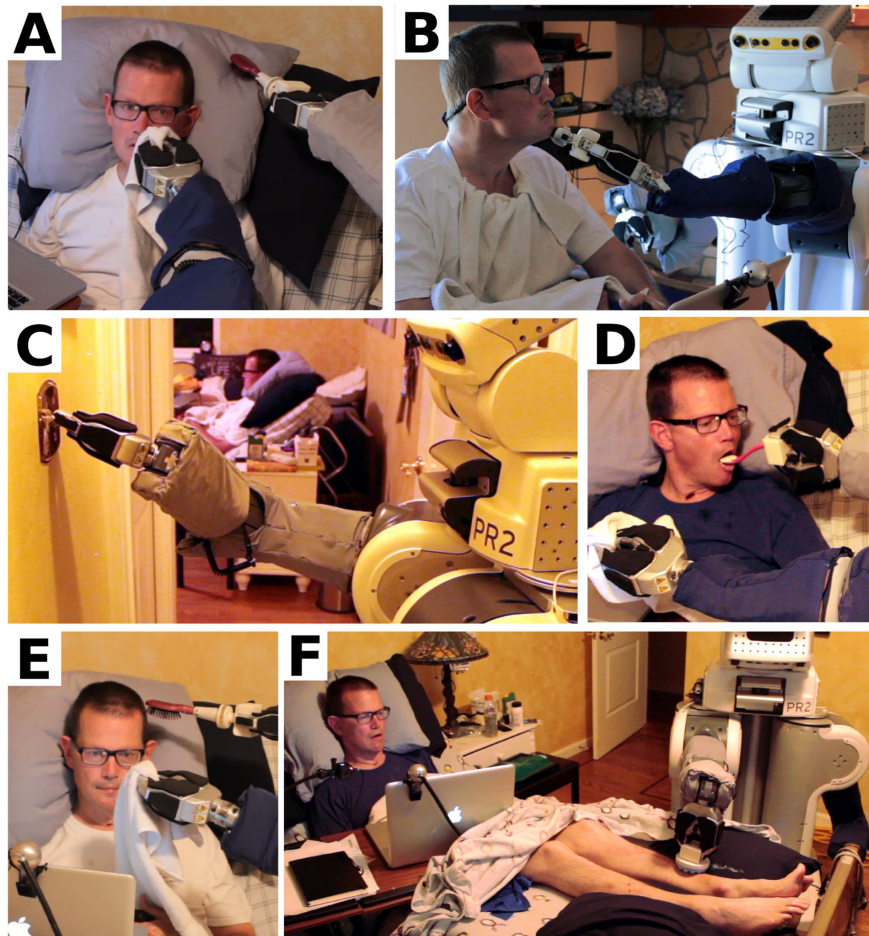
Move Aside

Move to Setup

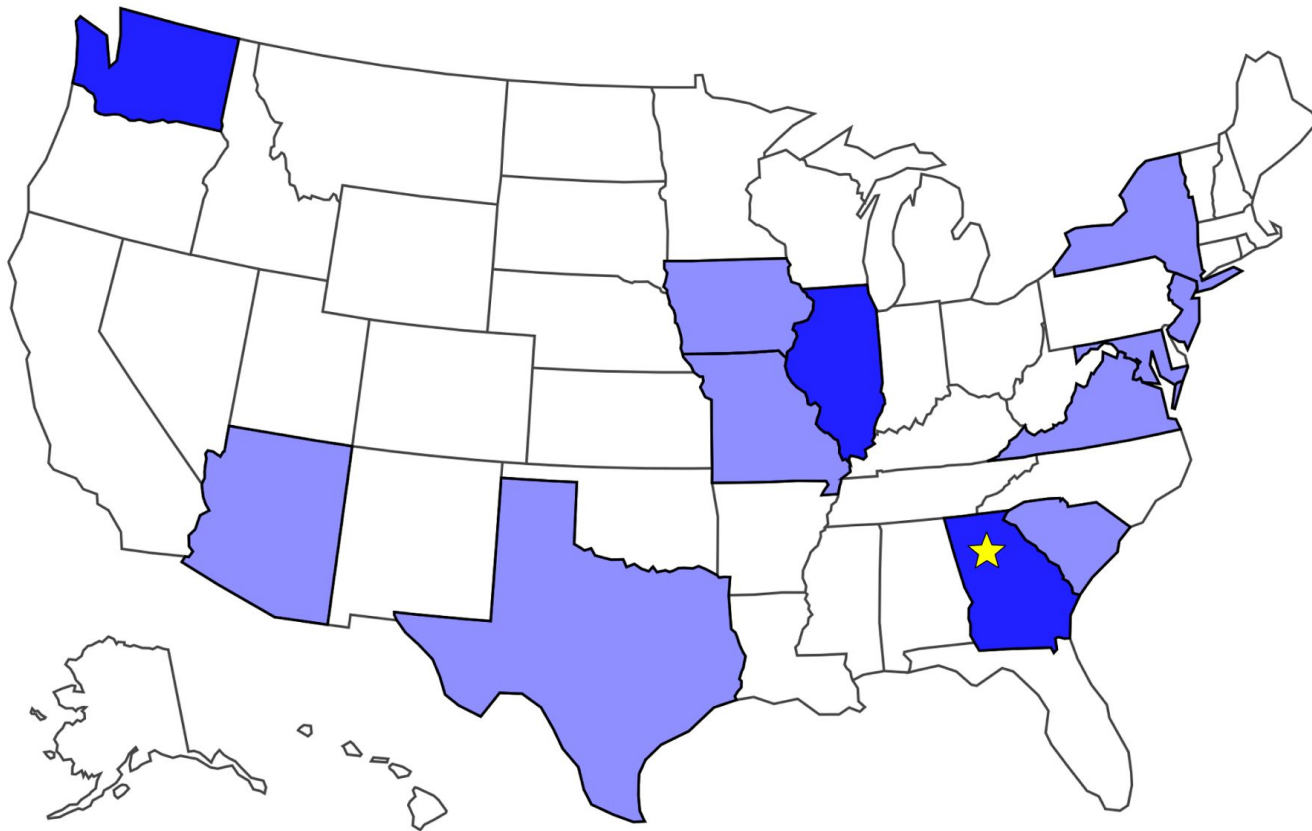
Re-zero Skin

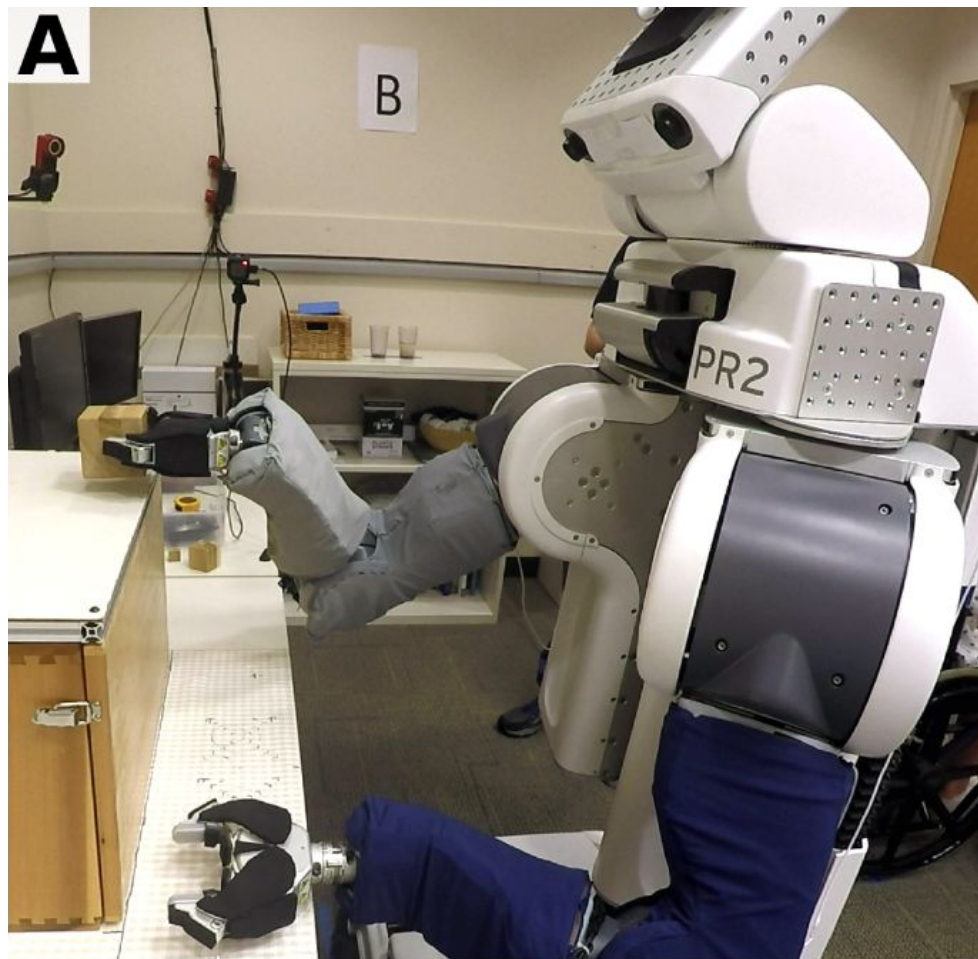


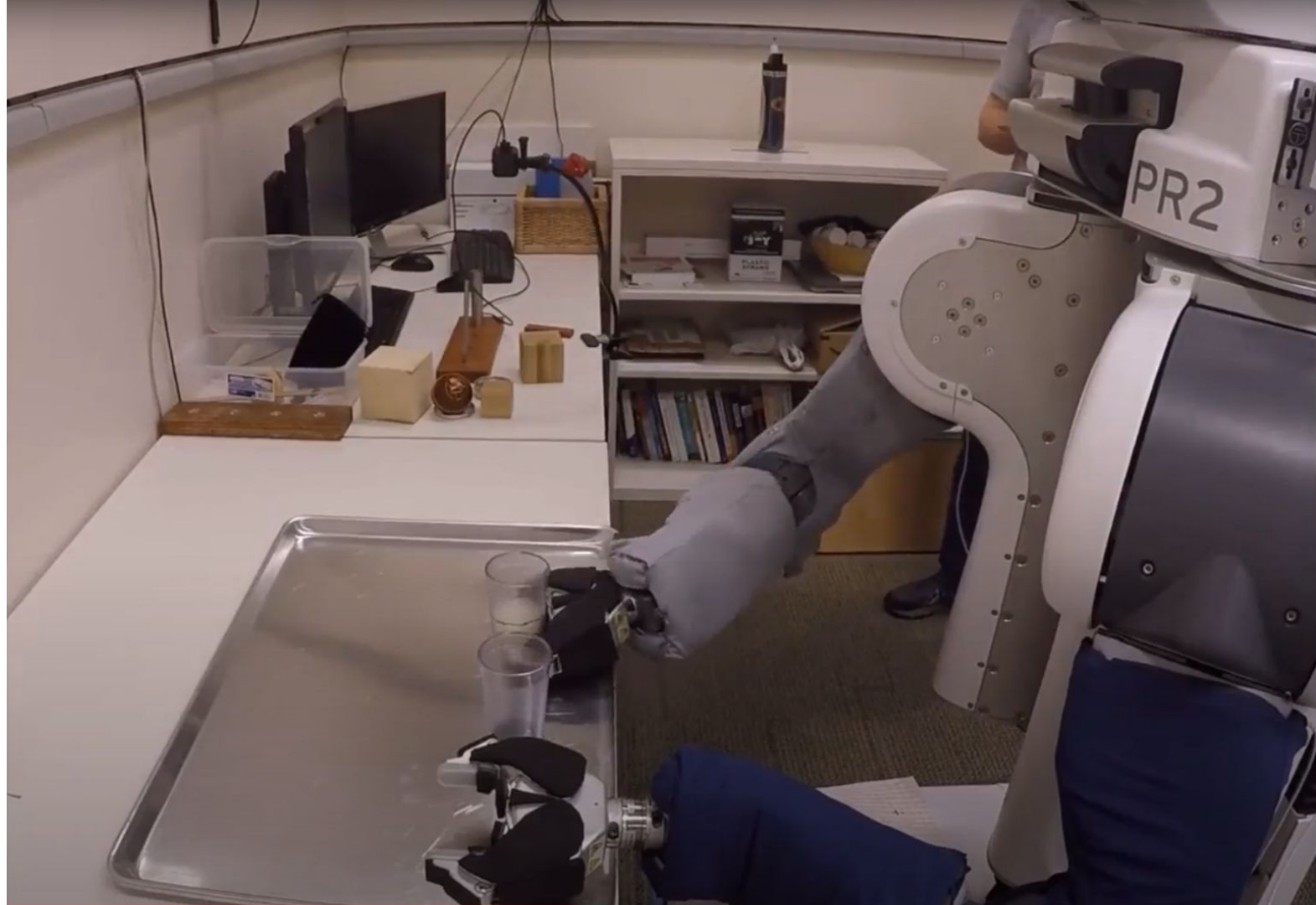
4x

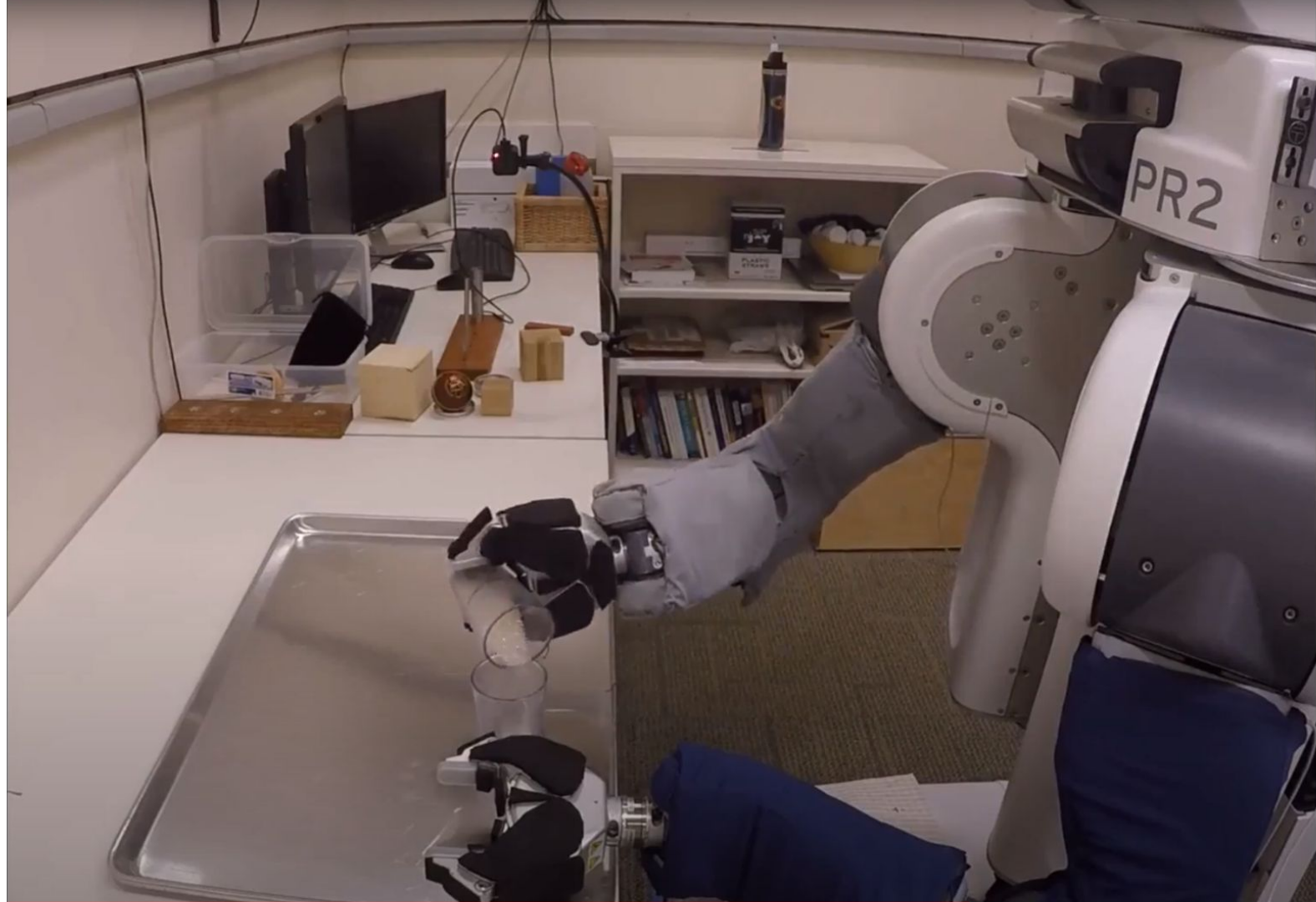


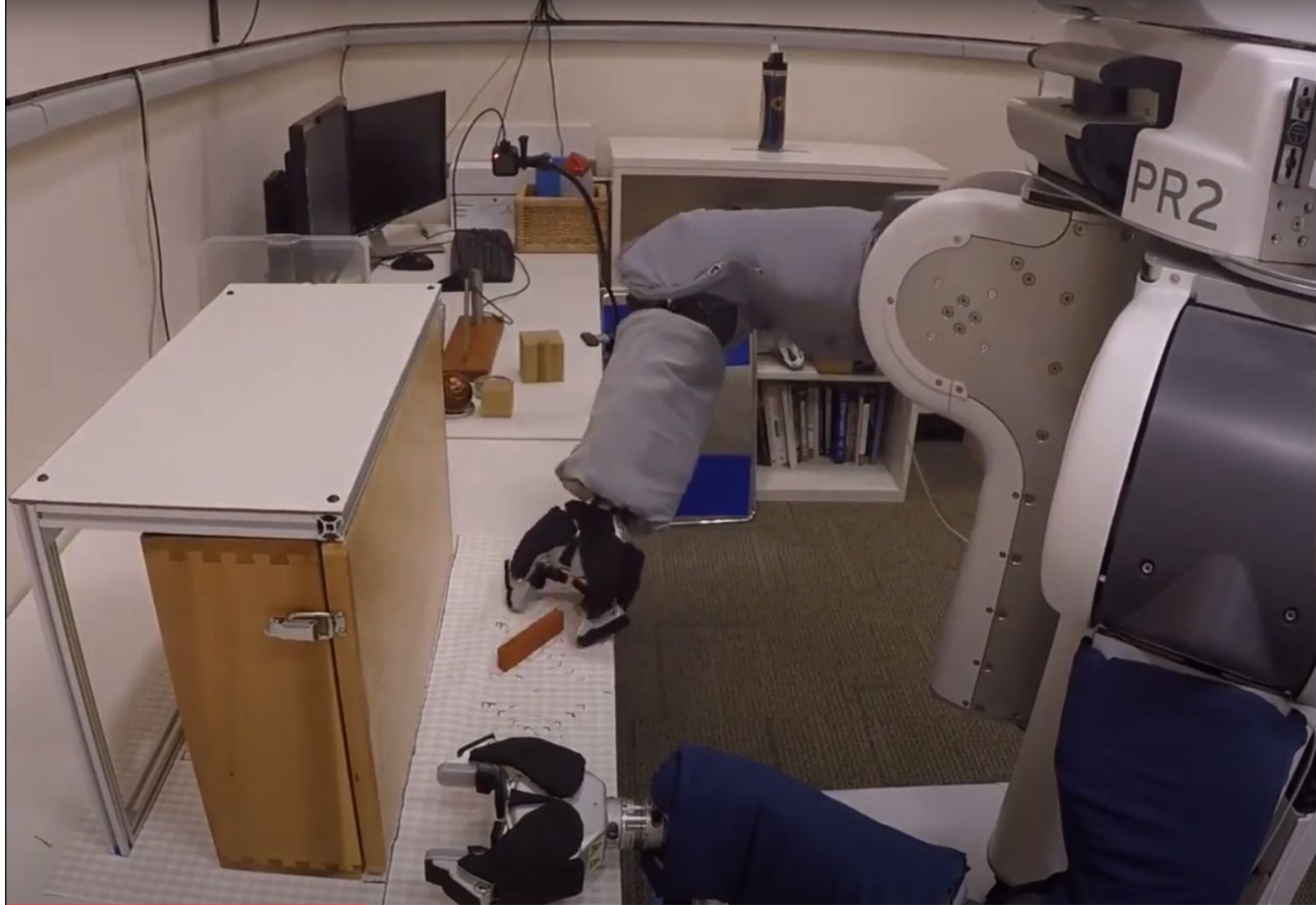
15 Participants

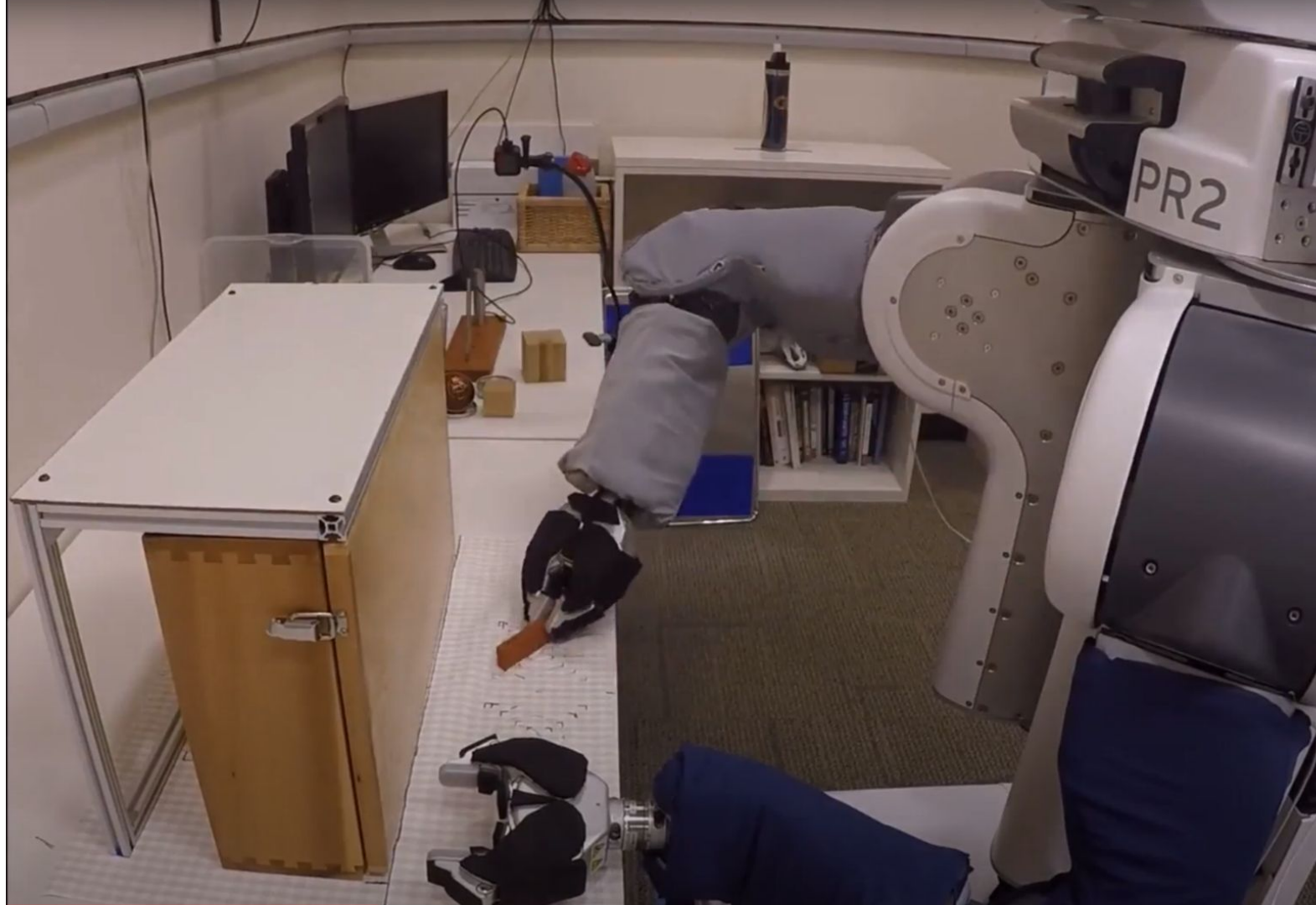




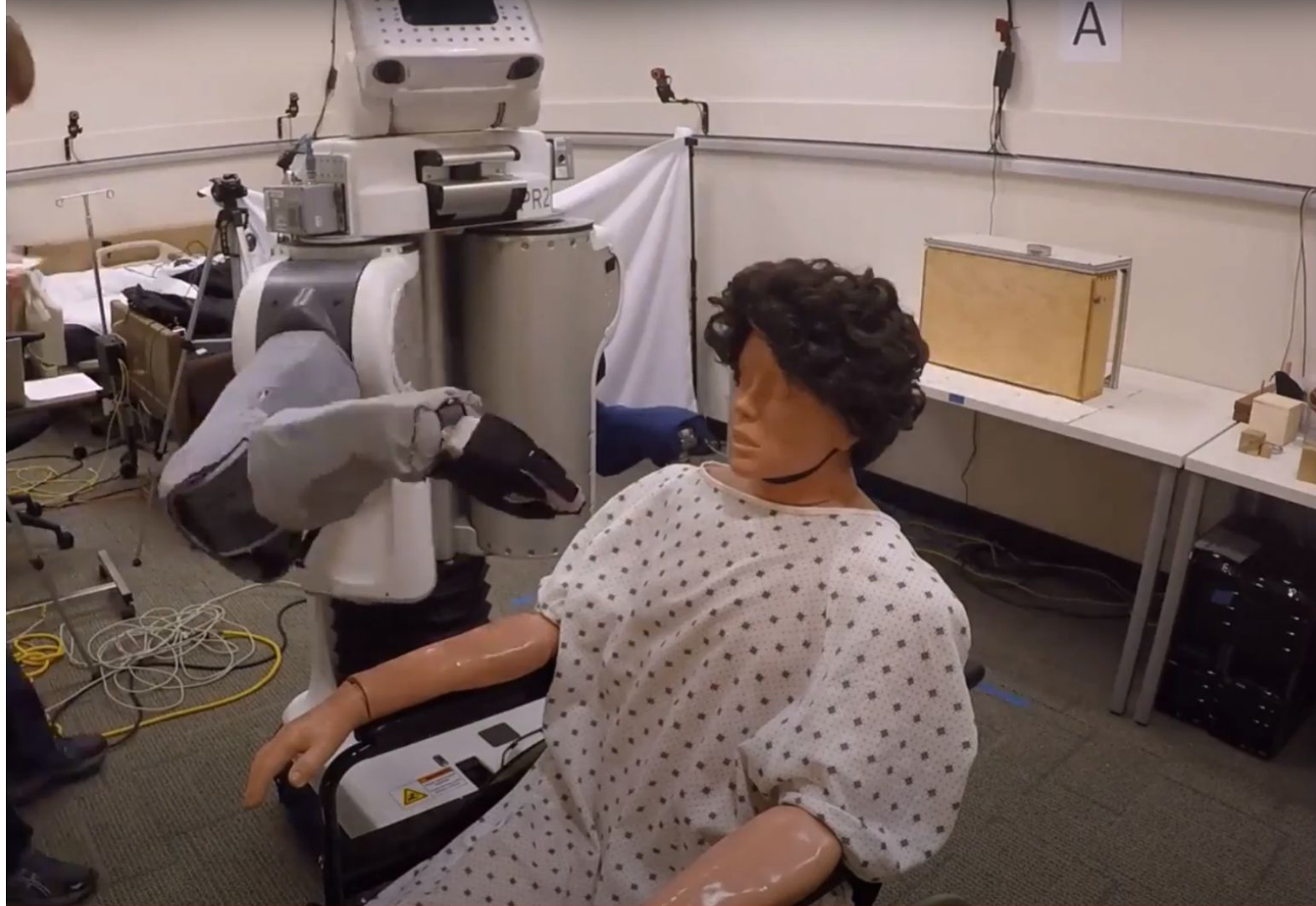


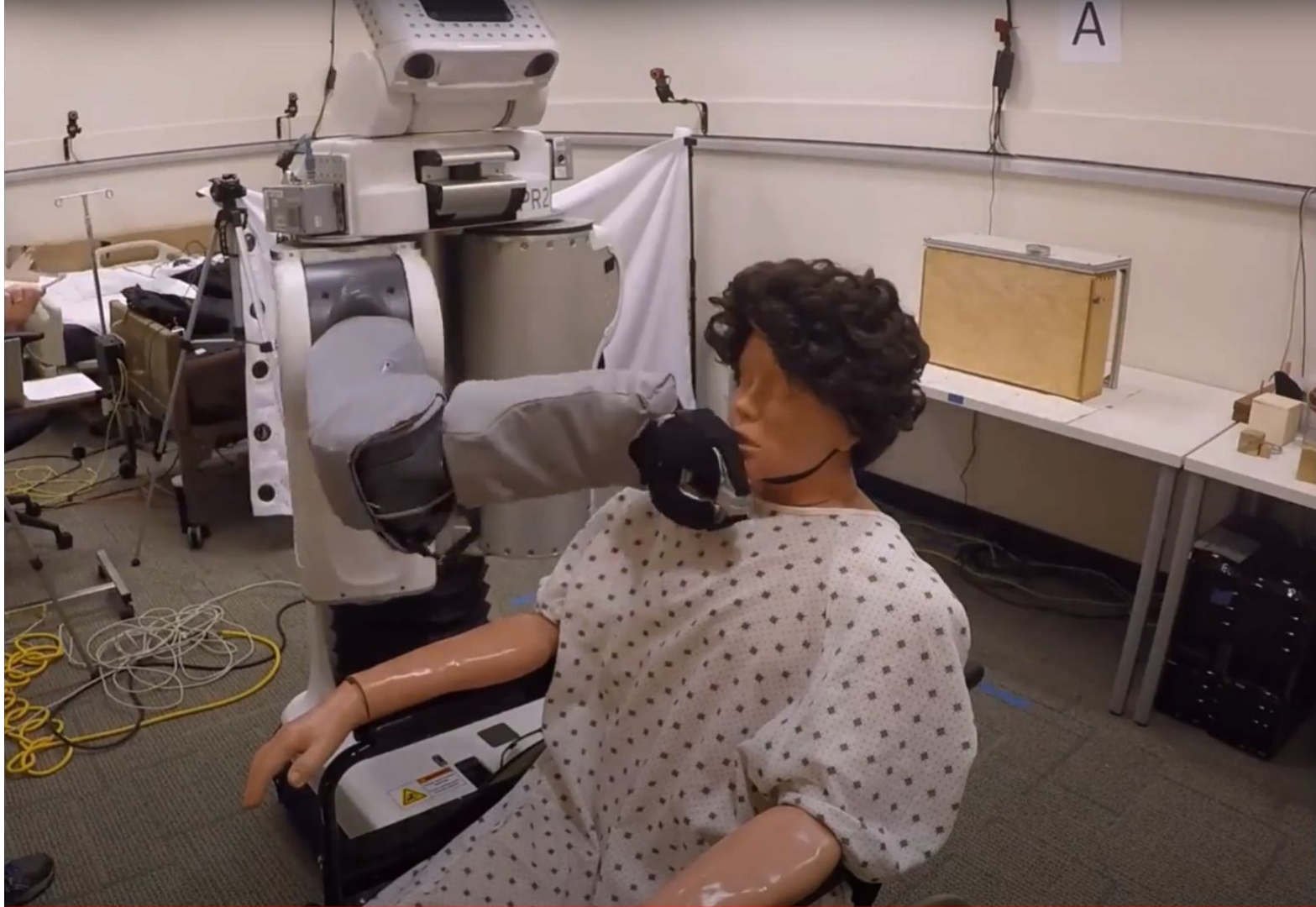












Causes of Motor Impairment

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)

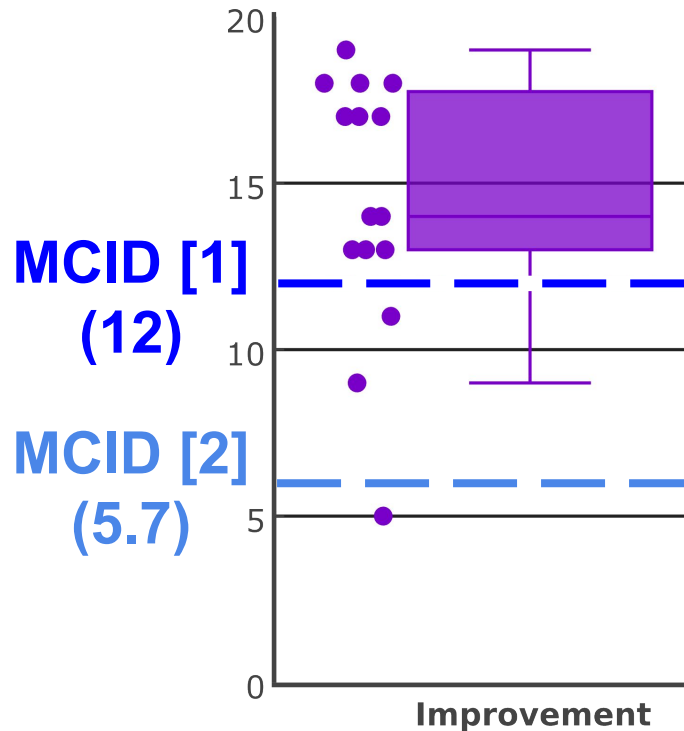
2 – Standard mouse

1 – Eye-gaze (Tobii)

1 – Touchpad w/Stylus held in mouth

1 – Speech (Dragon MouseGrid)

Improvement Exceeded Conservative Minimal Clinically Important Difference (MCID)



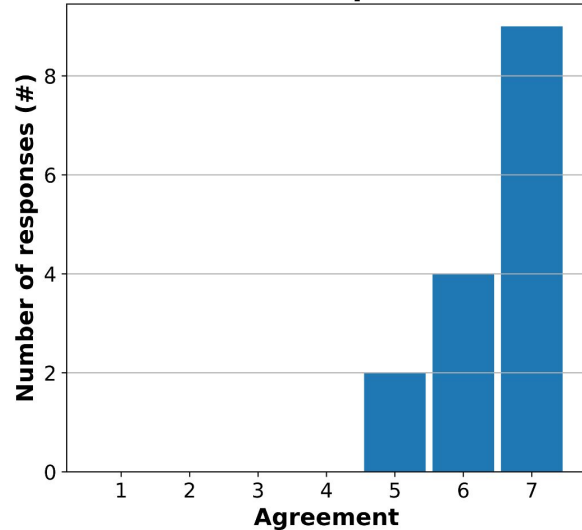
[1] C. E. Lang, D. F. Edwards, R. L. Birkenmeier, and A. W. Dromerick, "Estimating minimal clinically important differences of upper-extremity measures early after stroke," Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation, vol. 89, no. 9, pp. 1693–1700, 2008.

[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: $W=96$, $p=.021$

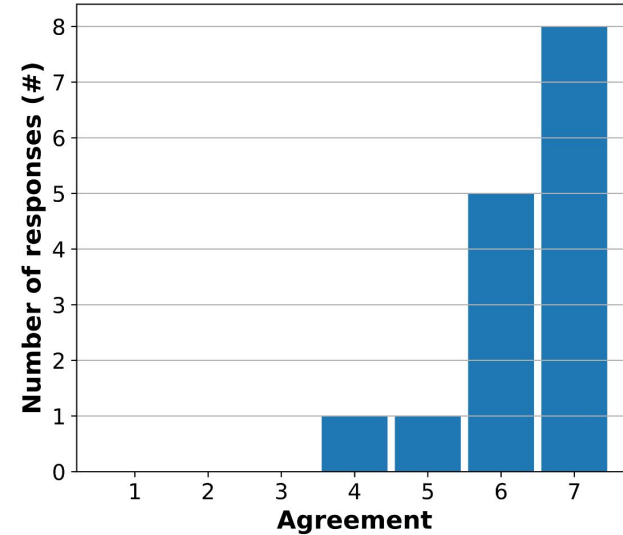
Perceived Usefulness

Usefulness - Manipulation Tasks



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

Usefulness - Self Care Tasks



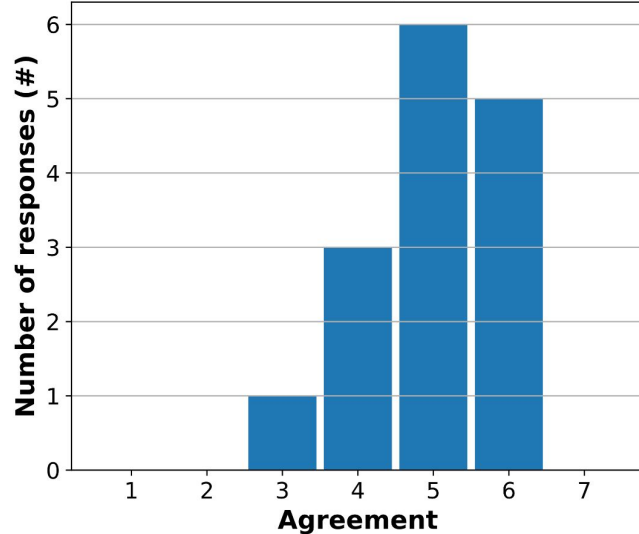
Wilcoxon signed-rank test vs neutral:
W=105, p=.000402

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

- 5: Somewhat Agree
- 6: Agree
- 7: Strongly Agree

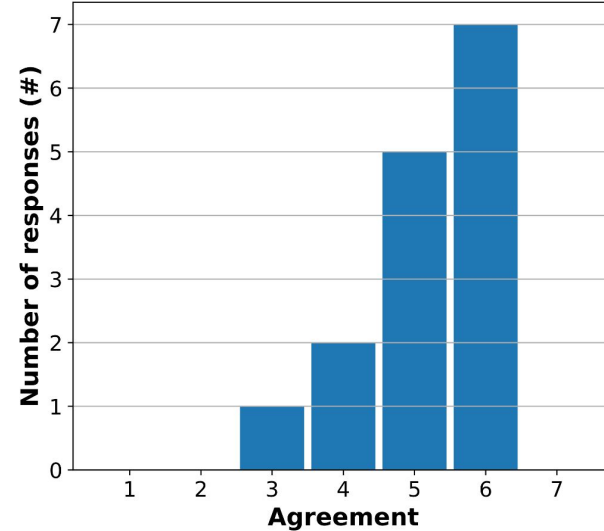
Perceived Ease of Use

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**

The Robot



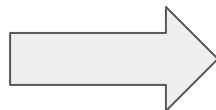
- Willow Garage shut down in 2014
- PR2 was impractical
 - 227 kg (~500 lb)
 - 67 cm wide (~2.2 ft)
 - \$400,000

The Core Design Problem

Smaller

Lighter Weight

Lower Cost



Shorter Reach

Lower Force

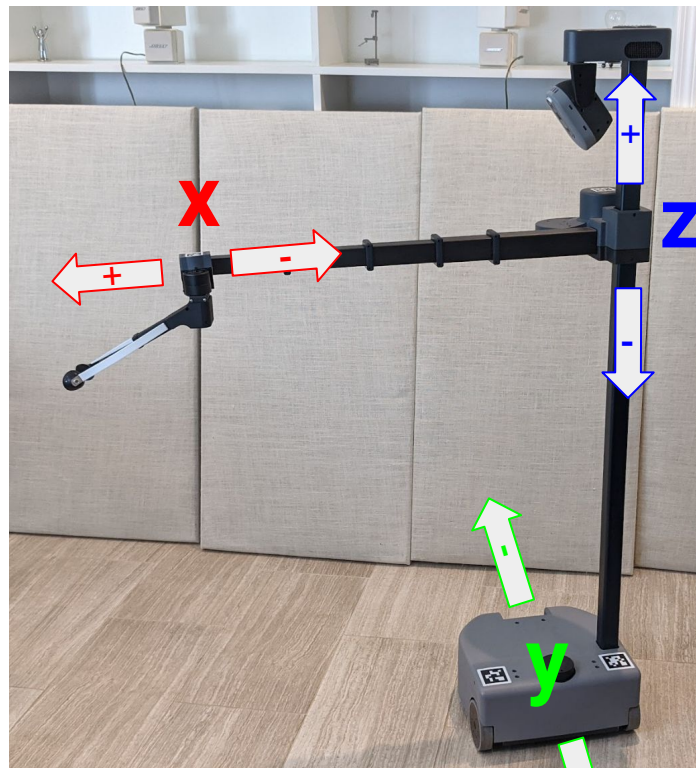
Less Dexterity



The Design 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, IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA), 2022. [[4-min video presentation](#)]

Manipulation Depends on the Mobile Base

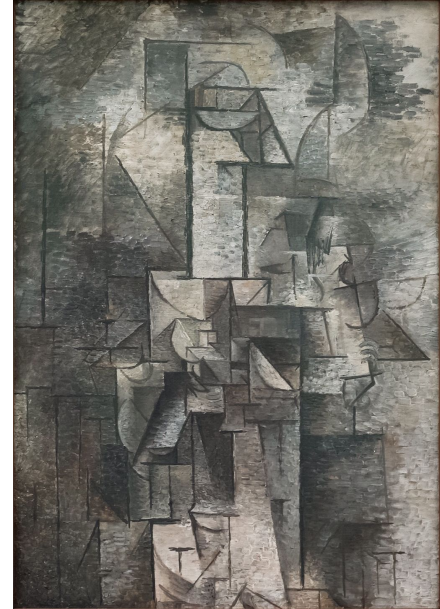


Cartesian Manipulation Mode

Robotic Cubism

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

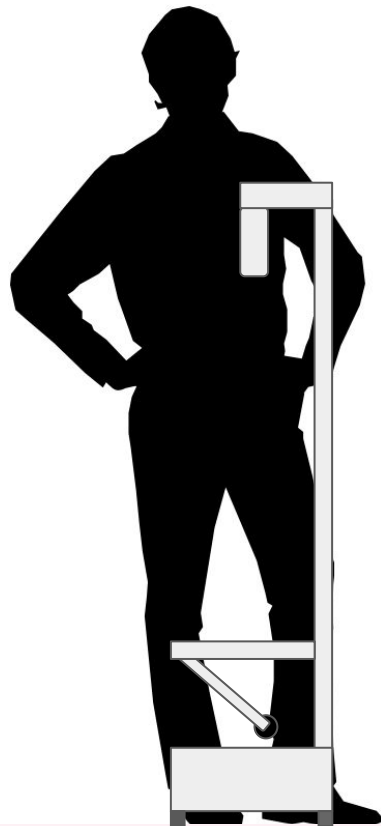
[La Femme au Violon - Pablo Picasso, 1911](#)



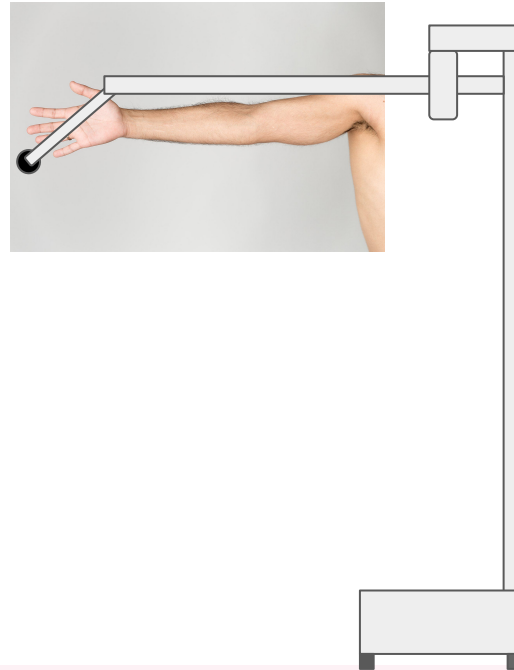
“In Cubist artwork, objects are analyzed, broken up and reassembled in an abstracted form”

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

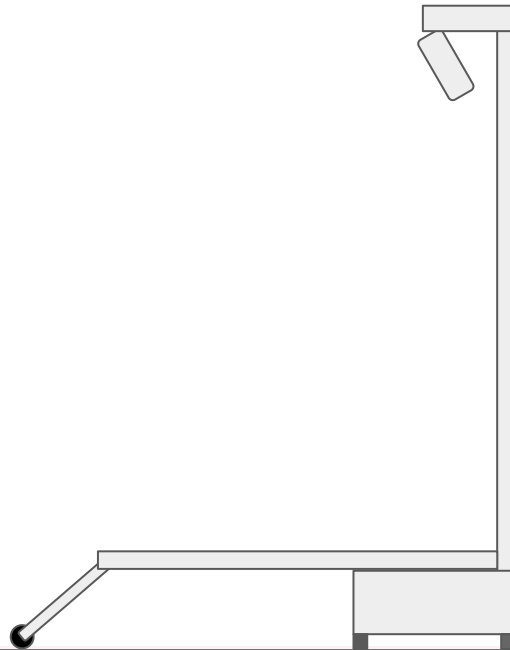
< 50th Percentile Hip Width



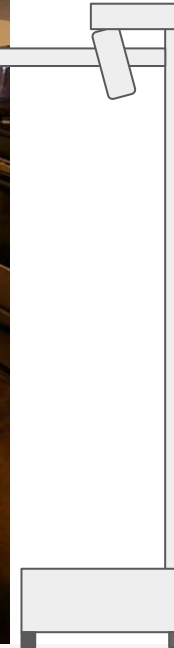
50th Percentile Arm Length



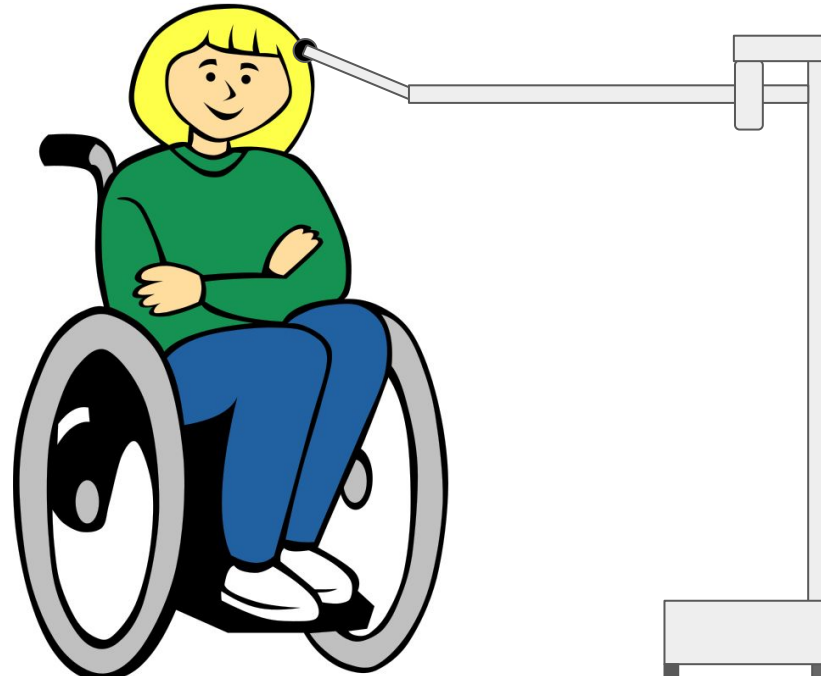
Reaches the Floor



Reaches 36" Countertops



Reaches Above 95th Percentile Eye Height for Wheelchair Users (1.33 m)

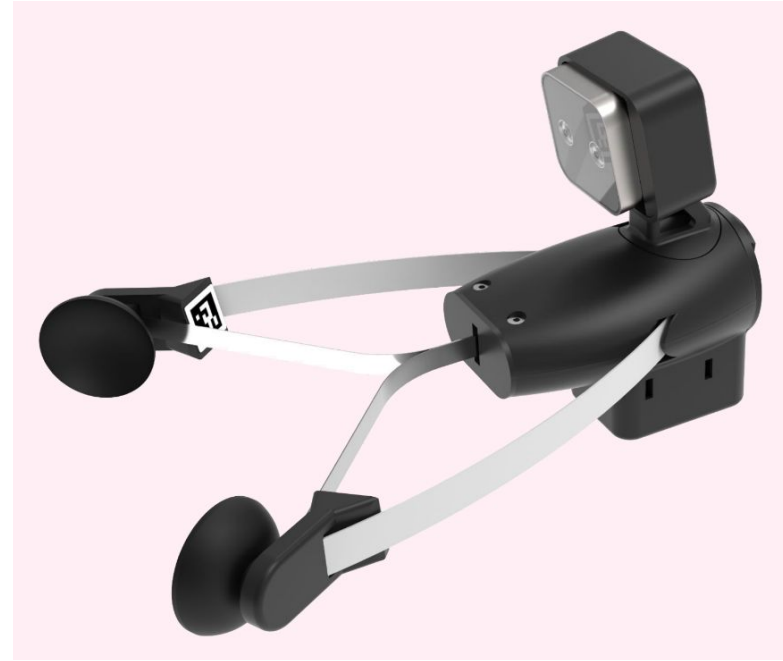


Edward Steinfeld, Jordana Maisel, and Dave Feathers. [Standards and anthropometry for wheeled mobility](#). Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access, School of Architecture and Planning, University at Buffalo, July, 2005.

Image: <https://openclipart.org/detail/510/girl-in-wheelchair>

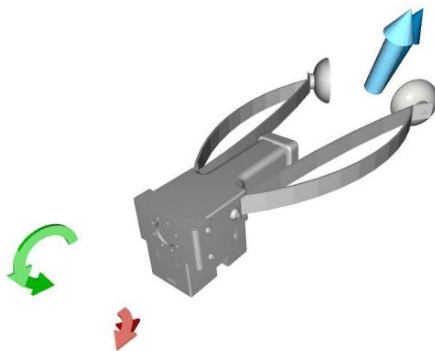
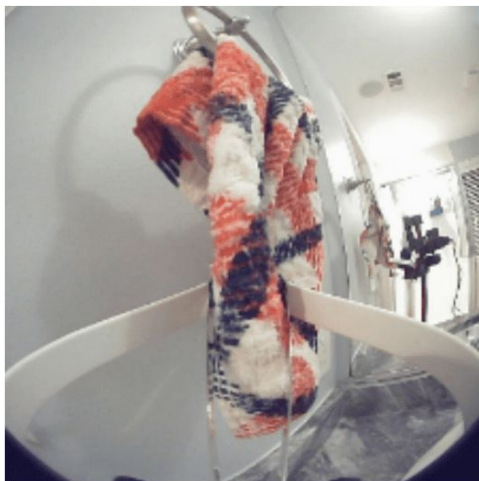
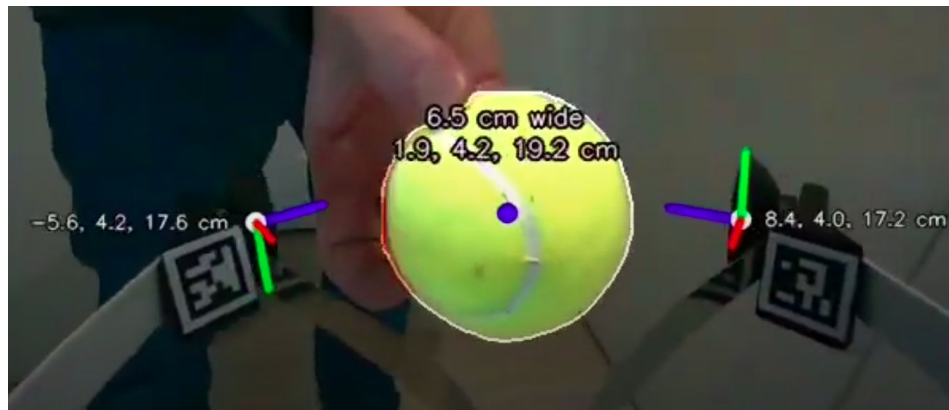
Soft Gripper

- Core design tested in 1000s of homes
 - Initially selected based on Amazon reviews
 - Used by staff at Disney World!
- Reduces consequences of unintended contact



Soft Gripper

- 6 DOF pose for each fingertip
- Compliance enables visual estimation of forces, torques, and contact pressure.

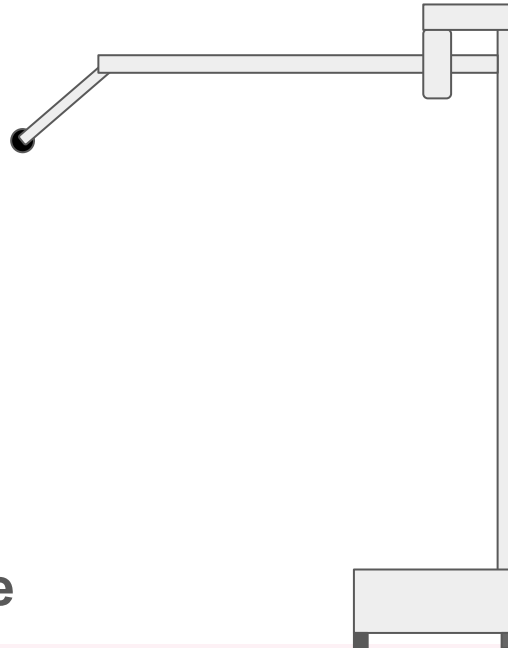


Force/Torque Sensing for Soft Grippers using an External Camera, Jeremy A. Collins, Patrick Grady, Charles C. Kemp, IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation (ICRA), 2023.

Visual Contact Pressure Estimation for Grippers in the Wild, Jeremy A. Collins, Cody Houff, Patrick Grady, Charles C. Kemp, Accepted to IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS), 2023.

Low Center of Mass

lightweight arm



heavy mobile base

24.5 kg (54 lb)



Easy to Transport to Real Homes

three robots in a hatchback

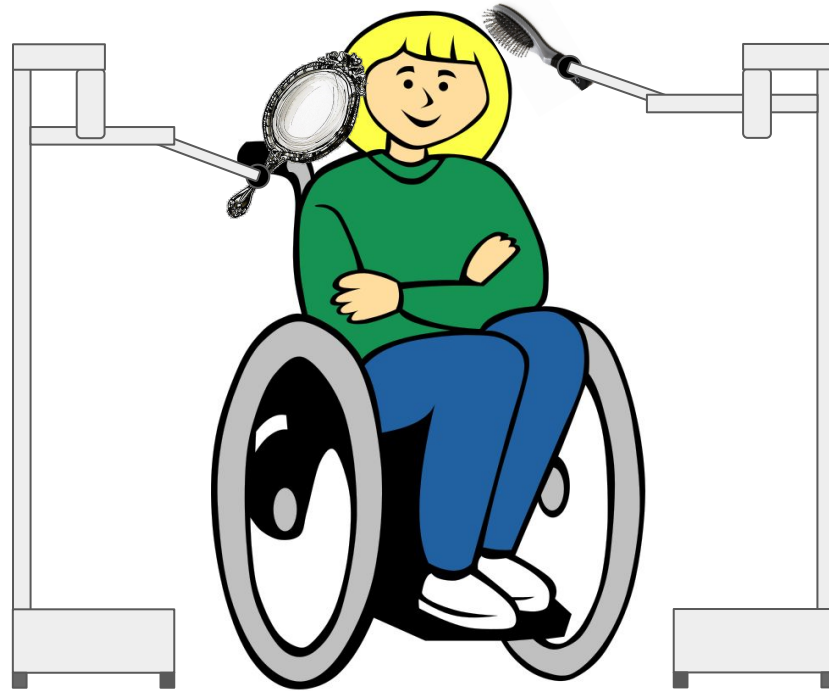




Teleoperated
4x Speedup

Two Robots with a Person Between Them?

this might be more effective than a humanoid form

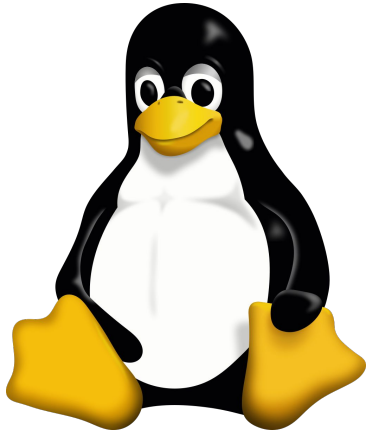


Images from

<https://pencilart.org/detail/510/girl-in-wheelchair>
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/aa/Hairbrush_with_metal_bristles.jpg
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/51/Hand_mirror.jpg

Hello Robot's Open Community Approach

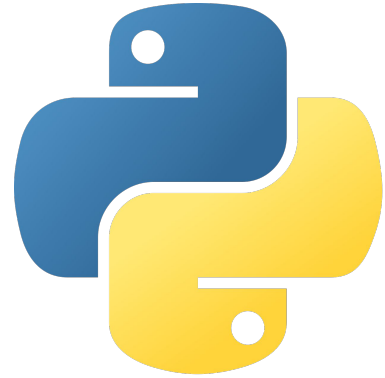
A Few of My Favorite Things from Open Communities



[Linux](#)

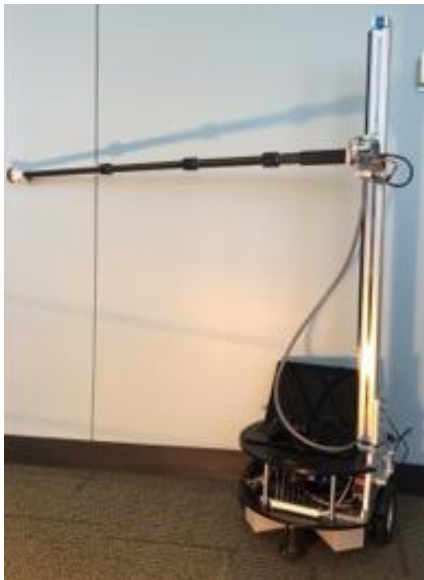


[Wikipedia](#)



[Python](#)

Georgia Tech's Prototype
March 2017



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



2016

2017

2018

2019

2020





July 2020

**3 years
8 versions
tested in my home**

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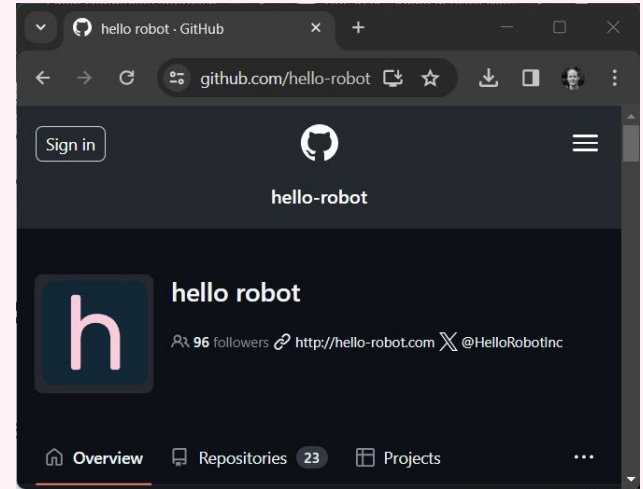
An Open Platform

Open source code from the firmware up
github.com/hello-robot

Open hardware accessories
github.com/hello-robot/stretch_tool_share

Open forum
forum.hello-robot.com

The core robot hardware is proprietary



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The Iterations Continue with the Community



Stretch RE1
2020



Stretch 2
2022



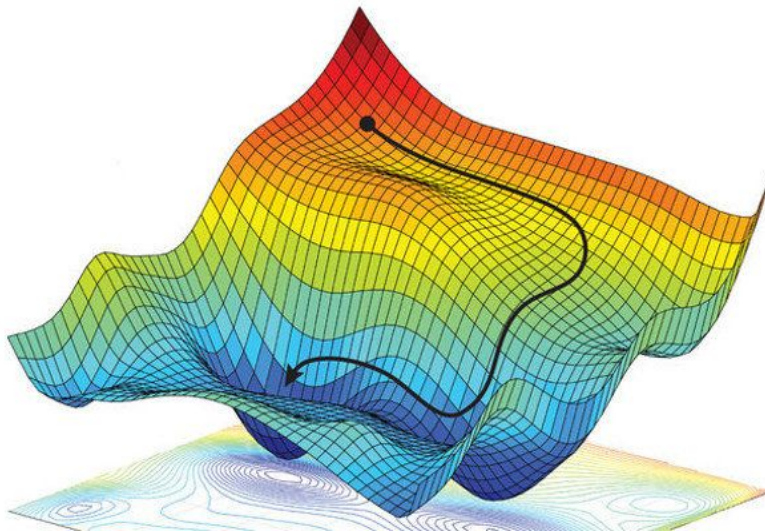
Stretch 3
2024

Today's Open Community



Analogous to Gradient Descent

Hello Robot iteratively improves Stretch based on feedback from the open community. Software steps happen more frequently than hardware steps.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stochastic_gradient_descent

Robots for Humanity

from Henry & Jane Evans, UIUC, UW, Hello Robot and others!

<https://spectrum.ieee.org/stretch-assistive-robot>



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.



Maru Cabrera
Assistant Professor
UMass Lowell



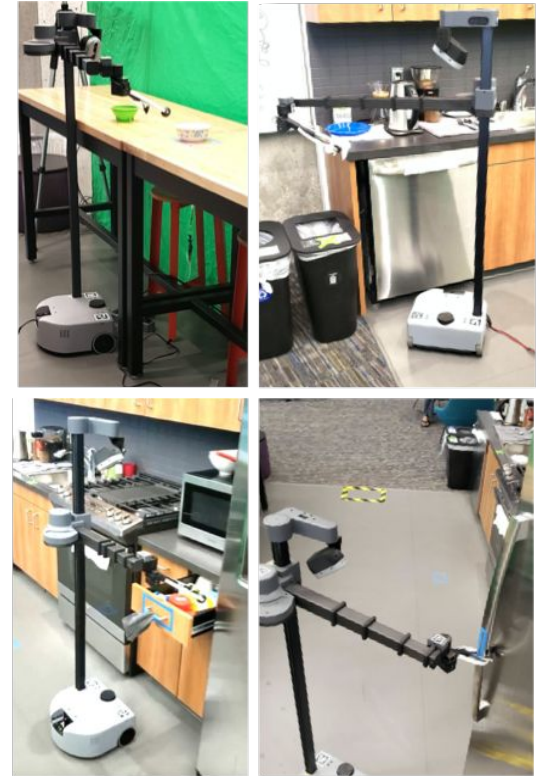
Tapo Bhattacharjee
Assistant Professor
Cornell University



Kavi Dey
Research Intern
Seattle Academy



Maya Cakmak
Associate Professor
University of Washington



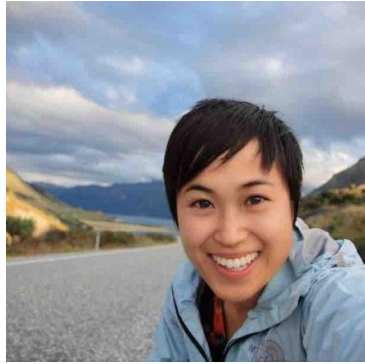
[UW's initial open source web interface](#), which significantly improved [Hello Robot's original version](#).

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The Power of a Community with an Open Platform



[Henry & Jane Evans](#)
Robots for Humanity
leads



[Dr. Vy Nguyen](#)
Hello Robot lead



[Prof. Wendy Rogers](#)
UIUC lead



[Prof. Maya Cakmak](#)
UW lead



[Vinitha Ranganeni](#)
Web Teleop lead









Home Robots Can Enhance Life in Unexpected Ways



Photo by Peter Adams

This Approach Benefits Everyone

Stretch 3[®]

The world's only lightweight,
capable, developer-friendly
mobile manipulator

Greater dexterity

Enhanced support for Embodied AI

Ready for researchers, educators, and explorers

Now with standard gripper camera,
second head camera, and dexterous wrist!

AVAILABLE NOW
FOR \$24,950



The Washington Post

"The robot was doing far more for (him) than taking care of his body. It was also feeding his soul."

The Seattle Times

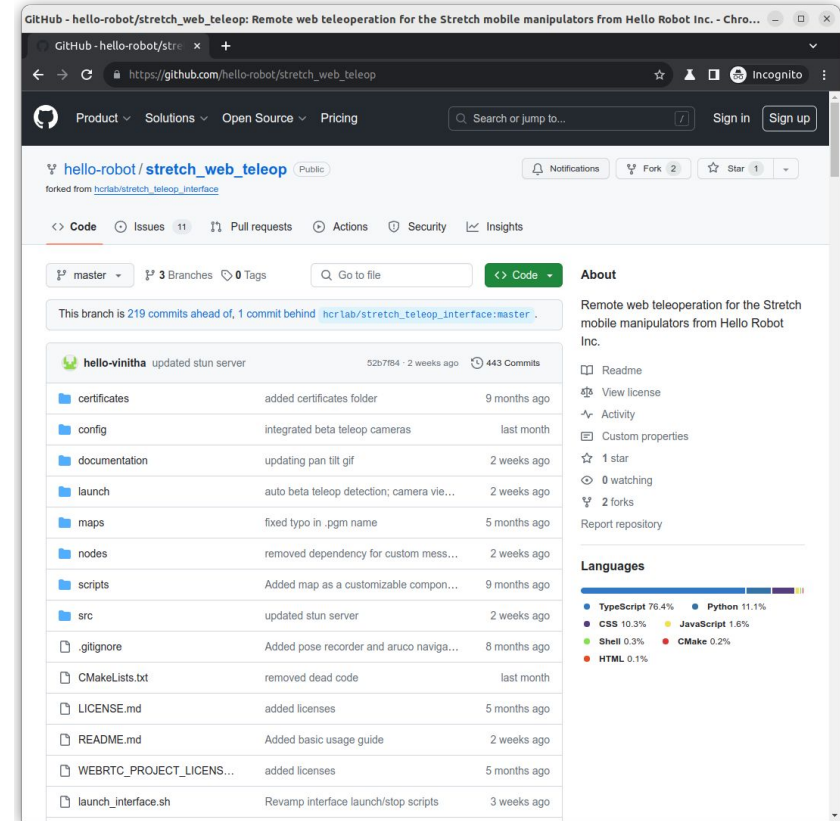
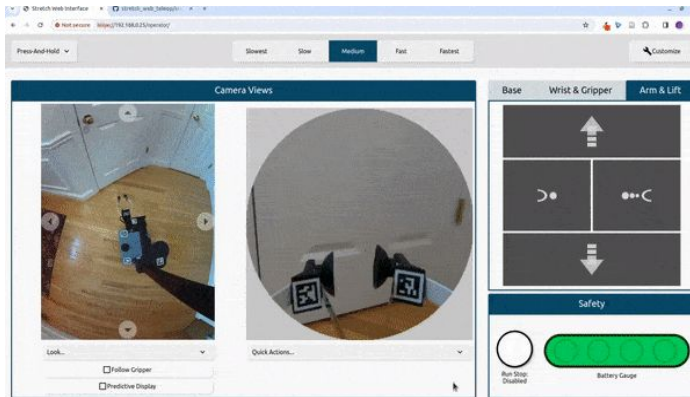
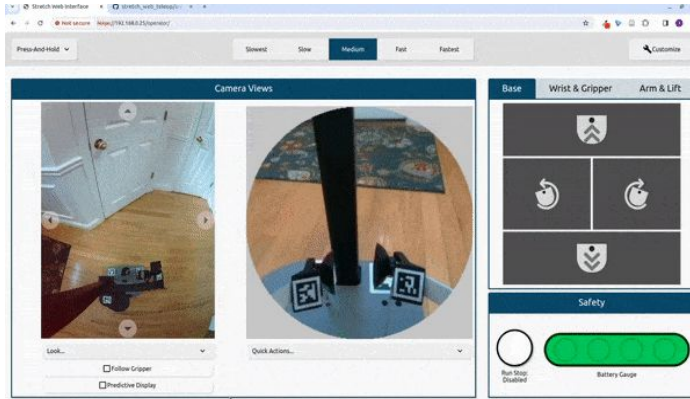
"Astounding in its potential."

IEEE Spectrum

"Beautifully simple, clever robot design."

Stretch 3 Comes with an Open Source Accessible Web Interface Pre-installed and Tested

[Web Teleop](#) development was led by [Vinitha Ranganeni](#) and [Prof. Maya Cakmak](#) in collaboration with the [Robots for Humanity](#) project



https://github.com/hello-robot/stretch_web_teleop




Remote Teleop (4x)

HRI 2024 Awards for Work with Stretch!



Independence in the Home: A Wearable Interface for a Person with Quadriplegia to Teleoperate a Mobile Manipulator

- Papers

 [Akhil Padmanabha](#), [Janavi Gupta](#), [Chen Chen](#), [Jehan Yang](#), [Vy Nguyen](#), [Douglas Weber](#), [Carmel Majidi](#), [Zackory Erickson](#)



Robots for Humanity: In-Home Deployment of Stretch RE2

- Posters

 [Vinita Ranganeni](#), [Vy Nguyen](#), [Henry Evans](#), [Jane Evans](#), [Julian Mehu](#), [Samuel Olatunji](#), [Wendy Rogers](#), [Aaron Edsinger](#), [Charles Kemp](#), [Maya Cakmak](#)



Using 3D Mice to Control Robot Manipulators

- Posters

 [Varad Dhat](#), [Nick Walker](#), [Maya Cakmak](#)

Together, We Can Get There

An [Open Community Approach](#) to [Accessible](#) Home Robots

- The assistive origins of Stretch
- The design of Stretch
- Hello Robot's [open community approach](#)
- The Robots for Humanity project

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Together, We Can Get There

An [Open Community Approach](#) to [Accessible](#) Home Robots

This talk illustrates the benefits of

- Iteration
- An open community
- A diverse community
- Working with people with disabilities from the start

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