

# **IN4MATX 231:**

# **User Interface Design & Evaluation**

**Class 5:**

**Other needfinding methods**

Daniel Epstein

# Today's goals

**By the end of today, you should be able to...**

- Provide examples of needfinding design activities and apply them

# Focus groups

- Moderated conversation among peers
- Benefits over interview:
  - Easier to build consensus or surface diverging opinions
  - Might increase sample size or voices you hear from
  - Collaborative design activities possible
- Drawbacks:
  - Social dynamics may interfere; may not hear from all stakeholders
  - Not as rich data

# Diary studies

- Give participants a diary and ask them to record data about themselves
  - Usually structured: maybe with a form, maybe with description
  - Physical and visual design of that structure are crucial
- Provides bursts of information around the logging activity
  - Not as rich as observation ([why?](#))
  - Must be brief recordings ([why?](#))

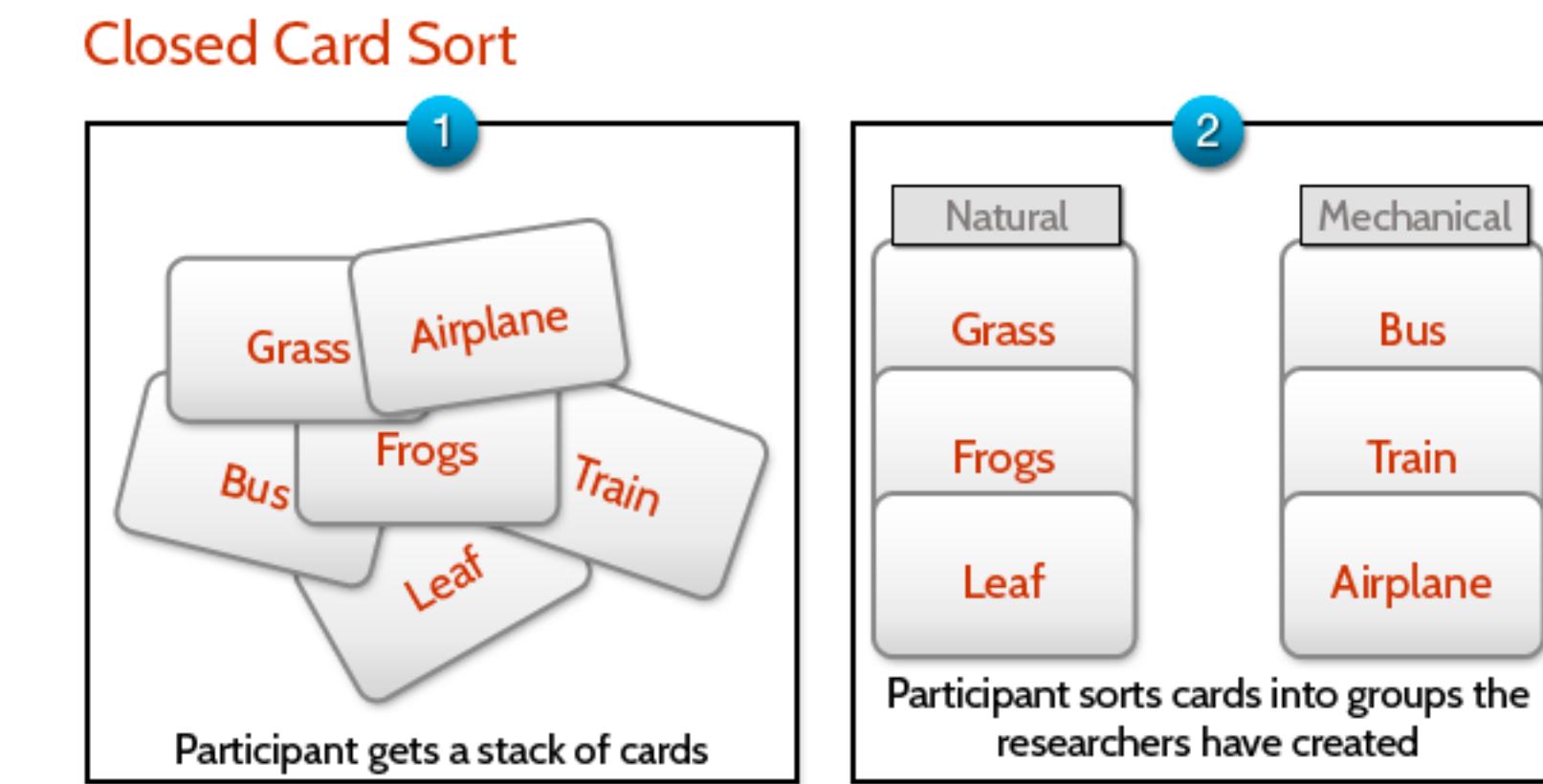
# Cultural probes (design probe)

- The inclusion of an artifact to think about or interact with
  - Using a diary to record thoughts and experiences
  - Perhaps as a precursor to an interview
- Sometimes a needfinding tool, sometimes an evaluative method



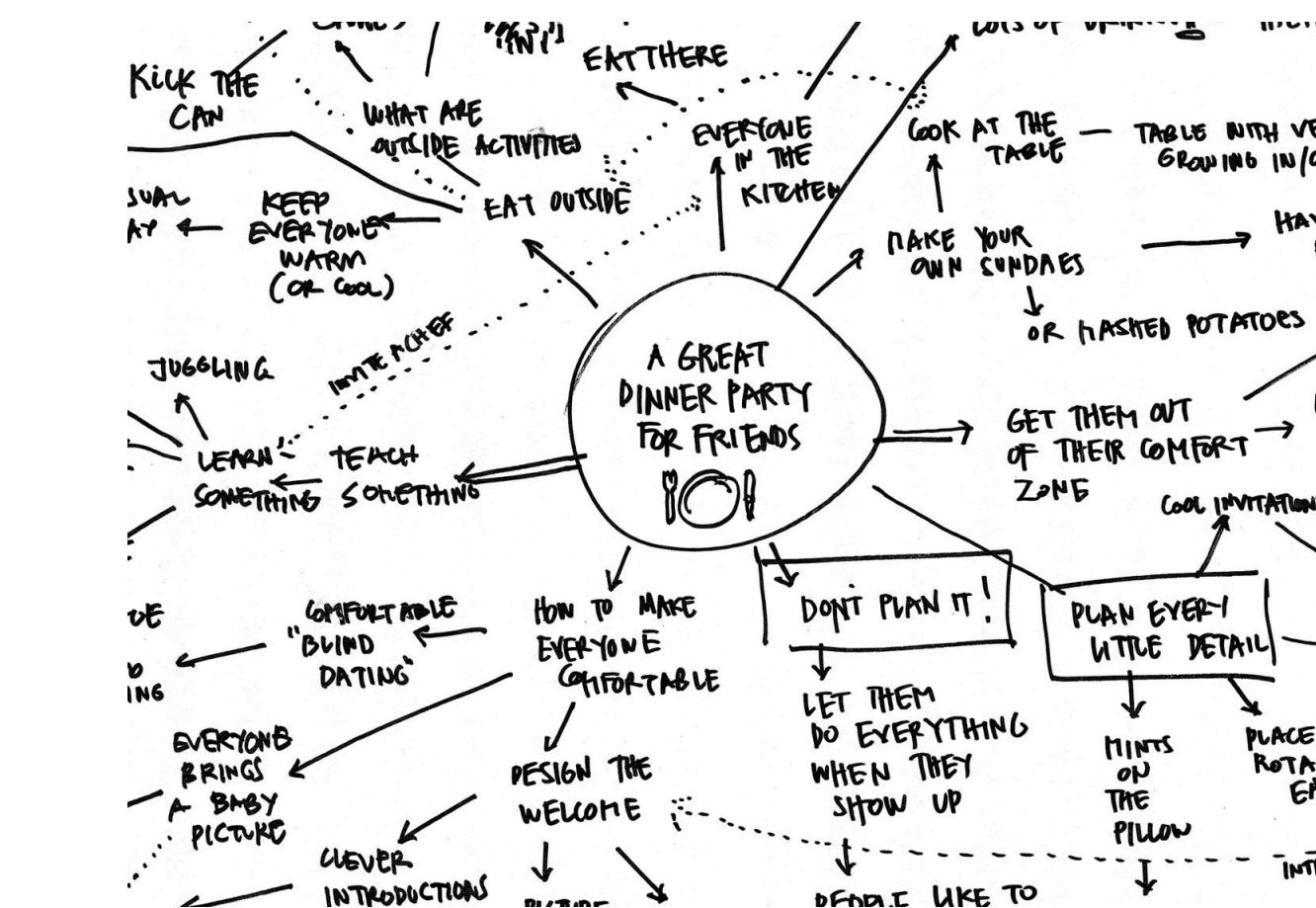
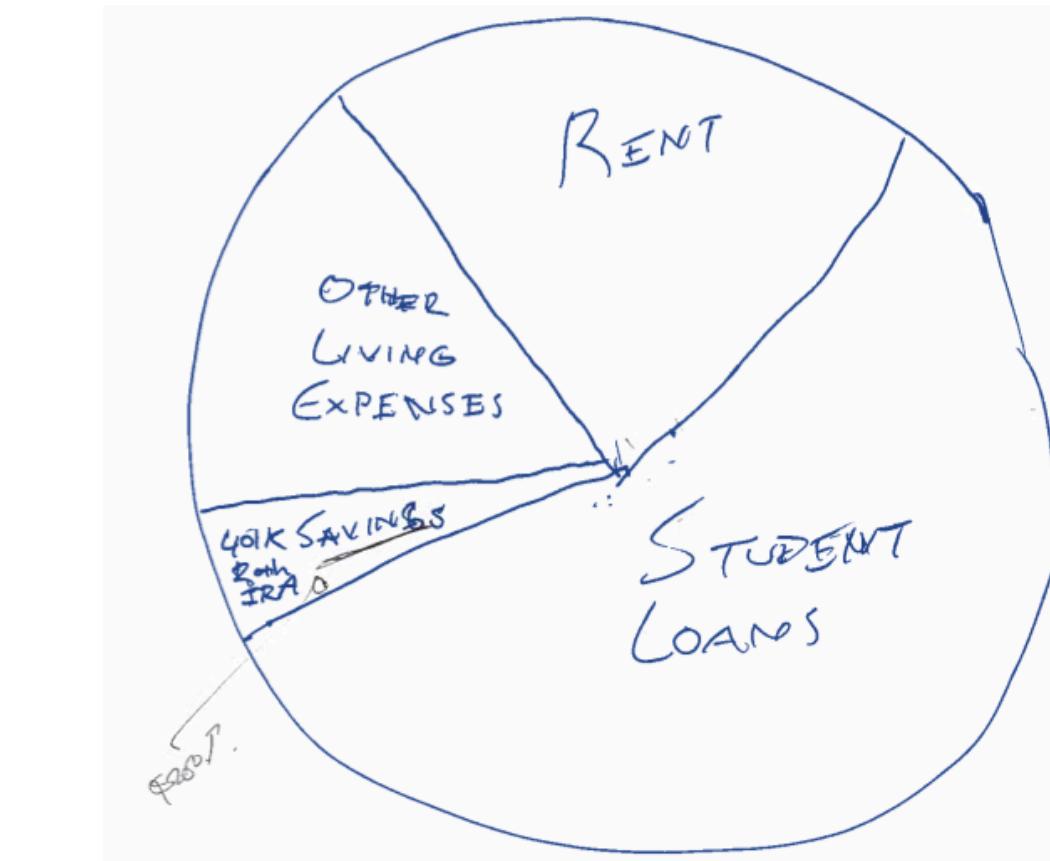
# Card sorting and clustering

- Design activities used to cluster or organize thoughts
- Can be used in a variety of ways
  - To understand people's priorities or values
  - To form information hierarchies
  - To evaluate people's impressions of design ideas or prototypes



# Sketching and mapping

- Design activity to understand participant's mental models, circumstances, or design ideas
- Can surface attitudes, motivations, and challenges
- Can debunk prior notions about people's priorities or interests



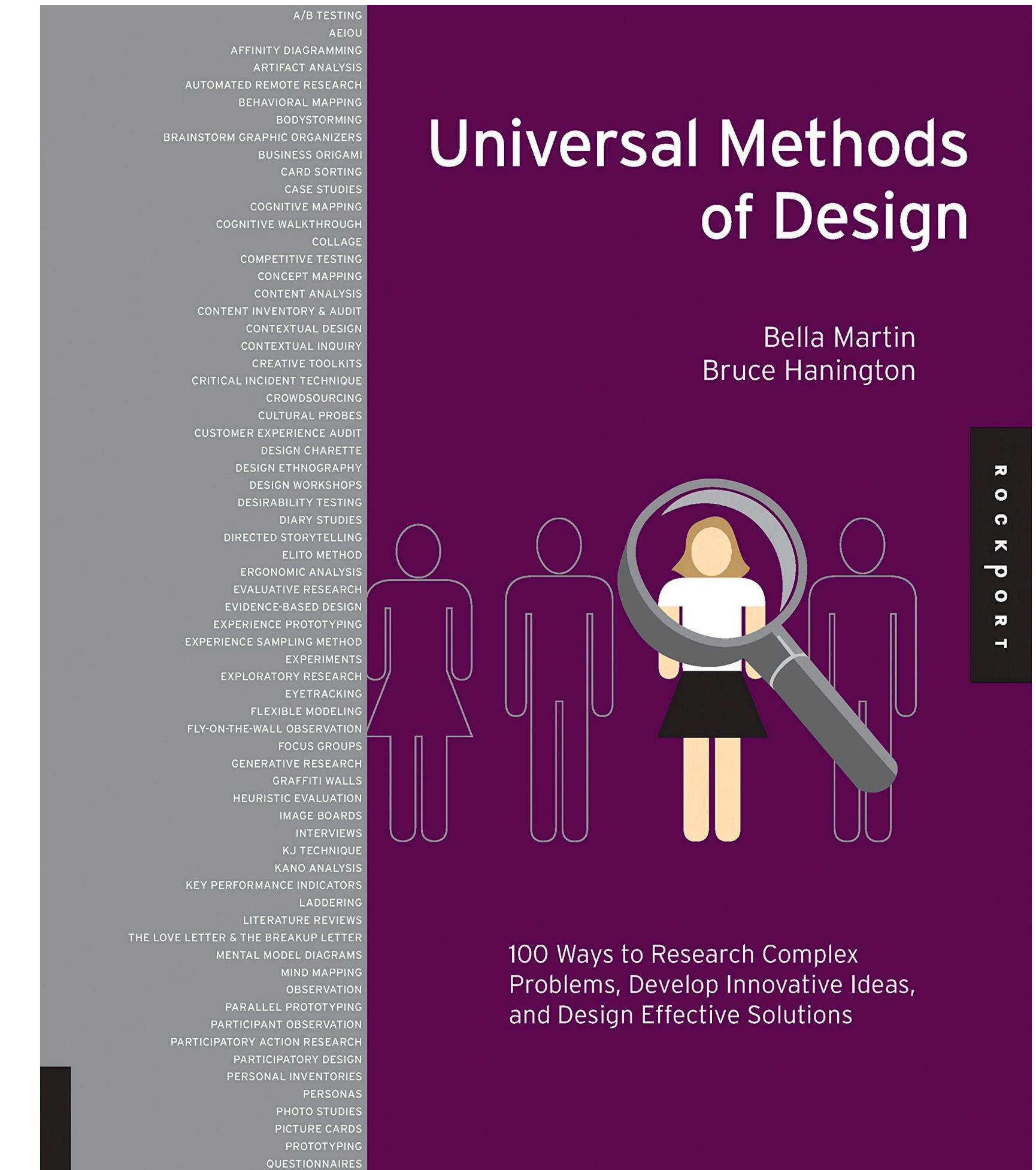
# Other needfinding methods



- What method did you read about?
- When might you think about applying that method? With whom?

# Other methods

- There are infinite different ways of approaching needfinding
  - The tried and true ones are often sufficient, but different populations, environments, etc. may suggest new methods
  - Children do better with design activities than surveys, for example



100 Ways to Research Complex Problems, Develop Innovative Ideas, and Design Effective Solutions

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