

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a modern building's exterior. The image features a complex arrangement of light-colored wooden slats and dark metal pipes, creating a geometric pattern that frames a central area of a cloudy sky. The perspective draws the eye towards the top of the frame.

How to Interview

Paul Saulnier

Overview

- What is an interview?
- Benefits
- Why do it?
- Types
- Guidelines
- Limitations
- Class Exercise



Background

- An interview is a situation where a person, referred to as the interviewer, reads questions to a respondent, and then typically records the answers.



Use in Usability



Benefits of Interviews

Flexible

- Explain difficult questions in depth, rephrase

Free-form

- Deviate from script opportunistically
- Responses can enhance studies/presentations

Immediate results

- No response or coding delays

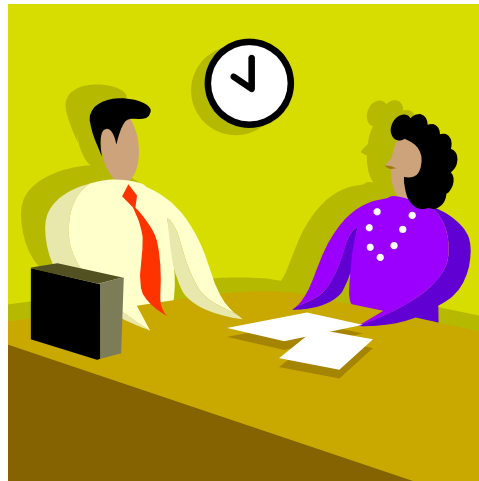
Comparison to Surveys

- Closely related
- Qualitative results for smaller numbers of people
- Questions can be rephrased, unlike surveys, which likely increases valid response rate



Why Interview

- Provide insight into opinions of users
- Study usability by simply asking users
- Well suited when you are not sure what to look for



Types of Interviews

- Structured – predetermined questions
 - Semi-structured



Types of Interviews

- Flexible – No set order of questions
 - Prompted



Types of Interviews

- Card sorting – use cards to form responses
- Twenty questions – yes or no answers



Critical Incidents

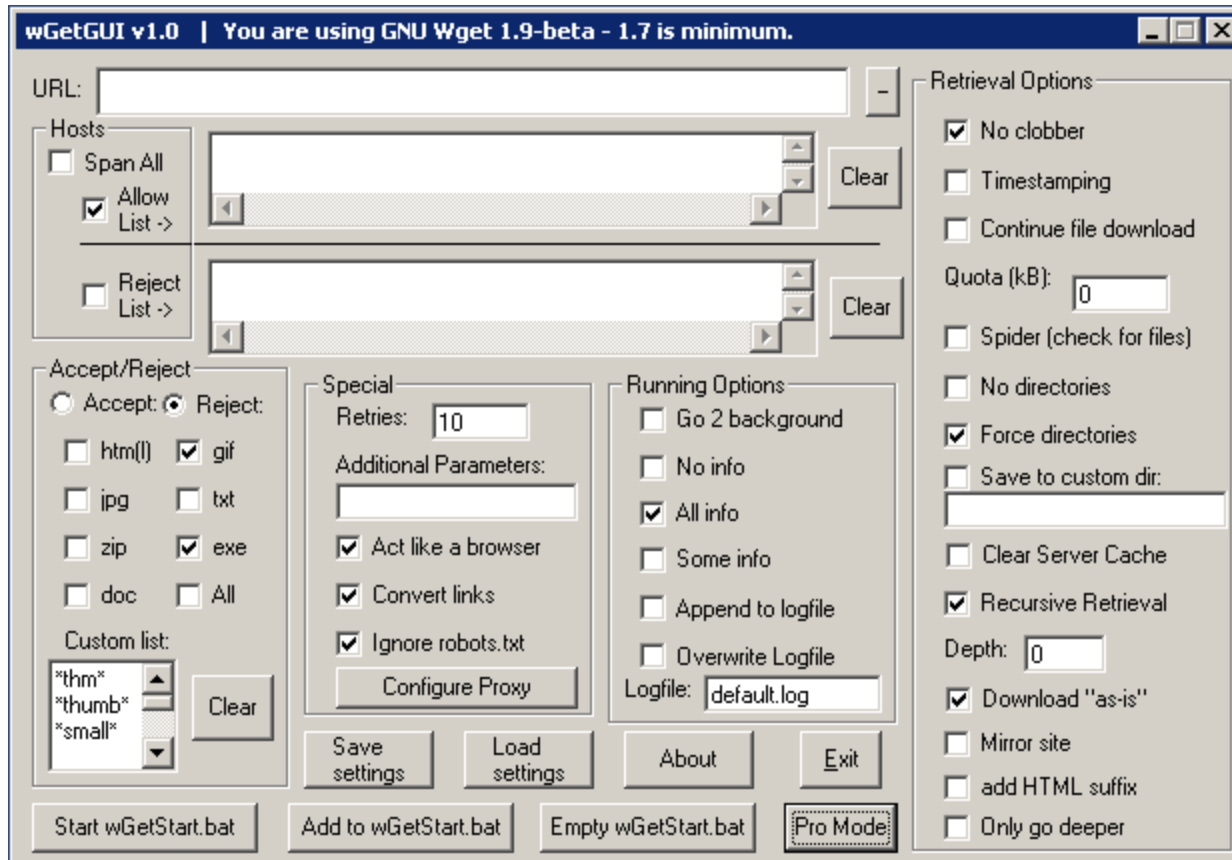
- Times when system performs very good or very bad
- Especially useful to avoid the bad, reinforce the good



Guidelines for Interviewing



My Awesome Program



Questions should be open ended
and neutral

Create a fun, threatening

Of course I
read the
manual!



Interview should stay neutral and



On time today, maybe not tomorrow?

Interviewer should not explain why
the system behaved in a certain
way, even if there are lots of
complaints



Avoid seeming like “big brother”
when using logged data in follow-
up interviews



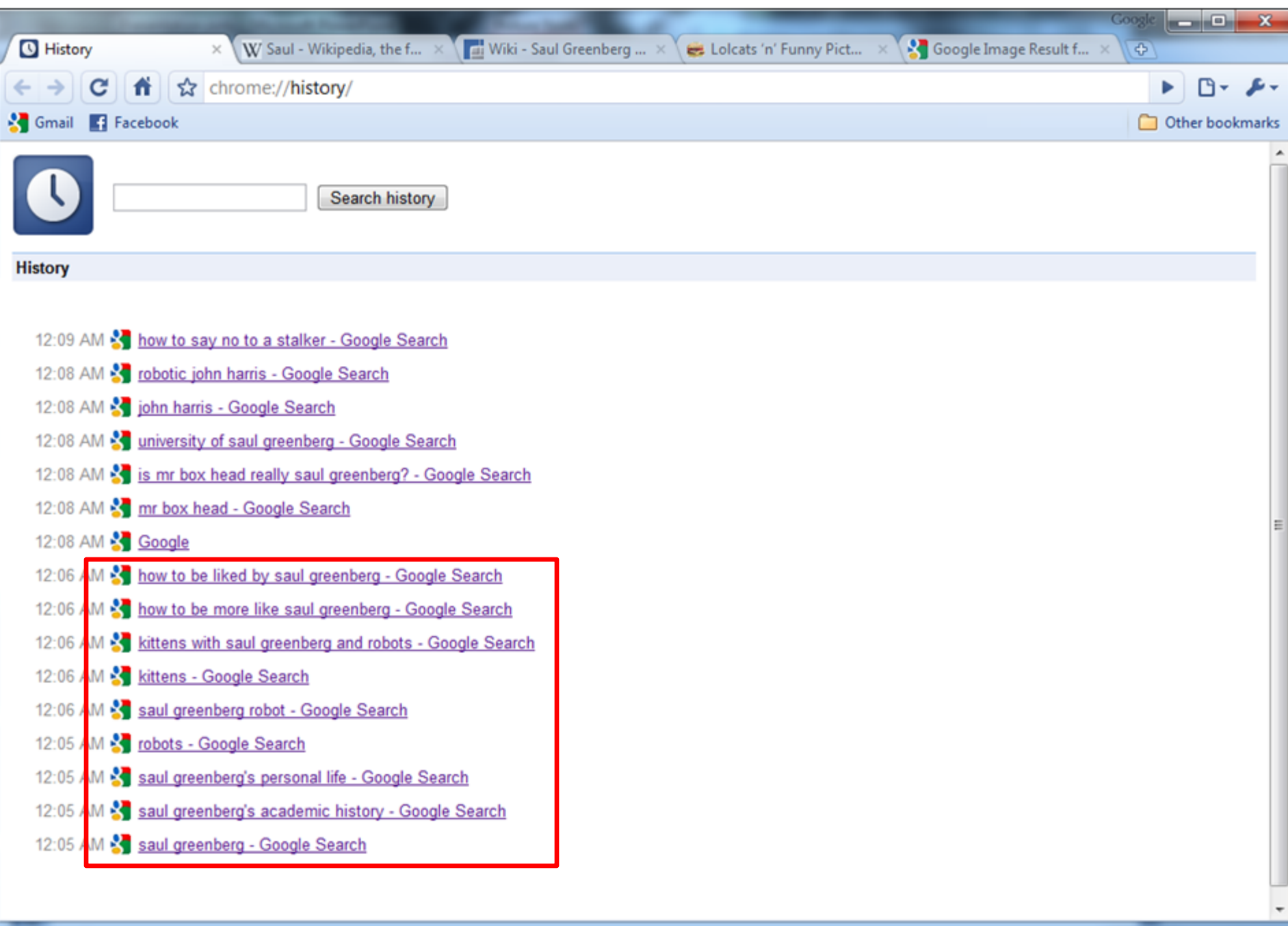
Case Study:
The Academic Life
of a Graduate Student

Participant: John Harris



























History

- 12:09 AM  [how to say no to a stalker - Google Search](#)
- 12:08 AM  [robotic john harris - Google Search](#)
- 12:08 AM  [john harris - Google Search](#)
- 12:08 AM  [university of saul greenberg - Google Search](#)
- 12:08 AM  [is mr box head really saul greenberg? - Google Search](#)
- 12:08 AM  [mr box head - Google Search](#)
- 12:08 AM  [Google](#)
- 12:06 AM  [how to be liked by saul greenberg - Google Search](#)
- 12:06 AM  [how to be more like saul greenberg - Google Search](#)
- 12:06 AM  [kittens with saul greenberg and robots - Google Search](#)
- 12:06 AM  [kittens - Google Search](#)
- 12:06 AM  [saul greenberg robot - Google Search](#)
- 12:05 AM  [robots - Google Search](#)
- 12:05 AM  [saul greenberg's personal life - Google Search](#)
- 12:05 AM  [saul greenberg's academic history - Google Search](#)
- 12:05 AM  [saul greenberg - Google Search](#)

Extreme example?

Yes

Limitations of Interviews

- Indirect methods study user's opinion, not interface itself



Limitations of Interviews

- Data should take precedence over what people think or say they can do



I don't even
know how to
speed!



Class Exercise



Thank you