

Goodreads Redesign | Interview Notes

Interview #1

Interviewer(s)	Ashneet Rathore
Interviewee	Interviewee 1
1. Can you give a brief introduction about yourself? (Name, age, major/occupation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 21 years old- 4th year student at UCI- Majors: Social Policy & Public Service, African American Studies
2. What types/genres of books do you typically read?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Thrillers, mysteries- Magical realism
3. How many books on average do you read in a month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 6-8 books
4. How frequently do you use Goodreads in a typical week or month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Daily
5. Do you read for fun, educational purposes, or other reasons? If there are other reasons, please elaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Evenly split between for fun and for education- For class assignments, reading is required
6. What initially drove you to use Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Started using in 2019 summer- Wanted a place to catalog all the books she's read
7. What has your most recent experience with Goodreads been like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Good: Gave a book a 5 star rating and wrote a review
8. Compared to when you first started using the platform, has your experience changed? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- It has changed, as she's gotten older- Looks for reviews more<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Likes the option of marking a review as having spoilers- Scans the books on the app while she's at the bookstore, didn't previously do that- Much more avid reader, which

	<p>makes her want the half star rating option (the scale is only 1 to 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Now that she re-reads books more, she wants an option on Goodreads that allows her to mark that she re-read a book x amount of times
9. How do you feel when you're on the web app?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good, fun b/c she has a lot of friends on there so she likes seeing what they're reading and commenting (vice versa) - Annoyances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Doesn't like the suggestions on the app because they're broad and usually have the most recently released book 2. At night, the bright light hurts her eyes, and she wishes there was a dark mode <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NOTE: Goodreads DOES have a dark mode, but interviewee didn't know this 3. Notifications are wonky <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Doesn't see friend requests until way later 4. Hard to add a friend on Goodreads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cannot search profiles using the search feature b/c that's just for books/authors - "Every time I've tried adding a friend, both parties have been confused" 5. The groups feature is confusing and she doesn't know how it works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confused on how to join a group - Confused on how to talk to each other in the group
10. What features do you use the most on Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading challenge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "I enjoy the freedom I have with choosing the amount of books to set as a goal. And I like that I can change the

	<p>goal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likes that it shows how many more books she has to read to be on track with her goal - Reviewing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Giving the stars - Writing her reviews - Like other people's reviews
11. What kind of information are you looking for when you find a book?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plot (synopsis) - Genre - Mostly to look at the rating/reviews of the book by the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Won't read books that are under 3 stars - Trusts the rating given by the community more so than a friend - Rating helps her decision making when buying books
12. What's your experience with using Goodreads socially? a. Did you find a majority of your Goodreads friends through the web app or did you already know them personally beforehand?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "When topics of reading pop up in social events like clubs and cohorts, I exchange Goodreads profiles with people to stay in contact with each other" - Goodreads tracks everything a user does and posts it as status updates for friends to see, so she interacts with her friends using that feature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likes her friend's review - Writes a short comment - Doesn't actually text on the app about the book with her friends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describes app as archaic - Wants to see a public reddit-like comment section where her friend and her can discuss the book - If people do message her, there's no notification that captures attention

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Had an experience of a user messaging her on the app about a book's festival that she was inviting interviewee to, but she didn't see until 2 months later <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Isn't familiar with the messaging feature/ doesn't even know where she would find that feature on the app - Majority, she already knew them in person (doesn't make friends on the app itself)
13. Do you find the platform useful for specifically discovering new books you haven't heard of before? a. Do you think the Discover page is geared towards your interests?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No it's not useful for that aspect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses the app scanner b/c she already has the book in hand - Discover page seems to have outdated book lists, and she hardly ever finds books that match her tastes - Thinks the section titled "Books Readers Also Liked" under a specific book's page is 50% helpful b/c they're the same genre/themes - "Goodreads DOES NOT facilitate the discovery of new books" - Book lists generated by Goodreads have very old books and are outdated/long
14. Why do you continue to use Goodreads? If you don't, what made you stop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She's an avid reader and likes to remember what she reads, what month/year she read, what she thought about it - Uses it for the cataloging feature - Part of her daily rotation of apps, like Instagram and TikTok
15. Do you have an alternative website/other ways you use to track books other than Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note: In the interview, interviewee mentions LitCharts. She later told me she meant to say Storygraph. Here are a few features she likes in

<p>a. Are there any features you use from there?</p>	<p>Storygraph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Genres are better split - Recommendations are better - Half-star ratings are allowed - But, there's no community aspect on Storygraph
<p>16. Is there anything else you want to disclose about your experience with Goodreads?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extra question: Do you have any issues with accessibility on Goodreads? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cannot save a draft when writing a book review - Font size is very small, especially when it comes to the synopsis - Usability issue: The search feature looks for an exact match <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EX: If she searches up 'The Harry Potter series', books from the series won't pop up - Has to search up the exact title on Google first and then search it up on Goodreads - A feature that is available on the site, but not on the app, is looking at your stats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stats, such as how many books she's read in a month - Wants this feature on the app

Interview #2

Interviewer(s)	Ananya Kashyap
Interviewee	Interviewee 2
<p>1. Can you give a brief introduction about yourself? (Name, age, major/occupation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 23-year-old Master of Science in Human Biology student at LMU - Study designer at Aza Divine in Germany.

2. What types/genres of books do you typically read?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fave rn is fantasy, both new adult and young adult. - Psychological thrillers and mysteries (whodunnits especially) - Light romance
3. How many books on average do you read in a month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reads 6-7 books a month
4. How frequently do you use Goodreads in a typical week or month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 6-7 times a month
5. Do you read for fun, educational purposes, or other reasons? If there are other reasons, please elaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experienced reader. Reads only for pleasure
6. What initially drove you to use Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Googled herself and found her own book on Goodreads :D <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you published a book on Amazon, it appears on Goodreads - “A good way to keep track of what I’m reading”, and also reviews on her own book
7. What has your most recent experience with Goodreads been like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “The reviews are funny and genuinely fun to read” - Really good, she really enjoys that she can keep track of what she’s read and wants to read - “There’s so much media – it’s like a Pokedex to keep track of what’s out there and what I want to read” - Sometimes takes her out of a reading slump when she looks at her To Be Read (TBR) - Says it’s a good app to have
8. Compared to when you first started using the platform, has your experience changed? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No, hasn’t changed - UX has been the same for a very long time

9. How do you feel when you're on the web app?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relieved that there's so much to read and see some options for a quick read when she needs it - Pride to see what you have read so far and look at your reading history
10. What features do you use the most on Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shelves: Have Read, and To Be Read
11. What kind of information are you looking for when you find a book?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An actual blurb, not just reviews - "But some reviews help to get a vibe of the book in addition to the blurb, so it helps me to decide whether I want to read it or not"
12. What's your experience with using Goodreads socially? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Did you find a majority of your Goodreads friends through the web app or did you already know them personally beforehand? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Careful about privacy and social media, so she doesn't have any friends - Doesn't want people to see what she's reading, also careful about people on social media a sense of stranger danger
13. Do you find the platform useful specifically for discovering new books you haven't heard of before? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you think the Discover page is geared towards your interests? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not use it for that, she goes to Goodreads knowing exactly what she wants to search - Follows authors on Goodreads because she knows who her favorite authors are. Gets notified when they are about to release a new book. - Can be useful for new users though because it has pages where it shows what's trending
14. Why do you continue to use Goodreads? If you don't, what made you stop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good to track - Easy to use <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different ways to search (by title, author) — easy search + exposure to other titles - Kindle/Amazon integration is nice, as an author

<p>15. Do you have an alternative website/other ways you use to track books other than Goodreads?</p> <p>a. Are there any features you use from there?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stopped using it AS MUCH because she got a physical book journal, so she has been doing that instead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a place for you to summarize + give your thoughts when you add a book to the journal - "It's hard finding decent books on the app. I have to physically go to a bookstore to find something I like and see what they have there" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Usually decides what to read next this way
<p>16. Is there anything else you want to disclose about your experience with Goodreads?</p>	<p>[added onto some other questions]</p>

Interview #3

Interviewer(s)	Ananya Kashyap Angela Wang
Interviewee	Interviewee 3
1. Can you give a brief introduction about yourself? (Name, age, major/occupation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21 yrs old - Student at UW - Works part-time at an eye doctor's office
2. What types/genres of books do you typically read?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mostly fiction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Broad preferences within fiction - Thrillers - classics - Some non-fiction
3. How many books on average do you read in a month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 books
4. How frequently do you use Goodreads in a typical week or month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not frequent on a week/month basis - If she's reading a book/started a

	new book, she marks it on Goodreads to track what she's reading
5. Do you read for fun, educational purposes, or other reasons? If there are other reasons, please elaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For fun
6. What initially drove you to use Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Within the reading community, it's THE app to use" - Uses the reviews because she feels that her "opinions usually align with the reviews on Goodreads" - The "Want to read" shelf is helpful
7. What has your most recent experience with Goodreads been like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally positive - Outdated app <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Freezes - UX is not great - "The community on Goodreads is good, and it's what keeps me on there" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loves reading reviews
8. Compared to when you first started using the platform, has your experience changed? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, when she first started using it she didn't know much about it - Not really, she likes to have it bc everything she wants to read is here - "Use it to see general thoughts and ideas on some book" - Likes it more now that she's more familiar with it
9. How do you feel when you're on the web app?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She likes using it but doesn't use it for extended periods - Useful for marking things down like
10. What features do you use the most on Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading shelves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Want to read, currently reading, completed -

11. What kind of information are you looking for when you find a book?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Normally look at the ratings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3.5+ generally acceptable - Reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nice that reviews that have spoilers are hidden
12. What's your experience with using Goodreads socially? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Did you find a majority of your Goodreads friends through the web app or did you already know them personally beforehand? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Doesn't follow many people on Goodreads, but it's nice to follow people you know to see what they're up to - Knew people beforehand
13. Do you find the platform useful for specifically discovering new books you haven't heard of before? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Do you think the Discover page is geared towards your interests? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Doesn't normally discover books on the app - Usually found through social media - Never really used the Discover page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She has seen the lists given by the app and it's pretty general
14. Why do you continue to use Goodreads? If you don't, what made you stop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Still uses it as steady since she started - Difficult to move because all of the data that's on there
15. Do you have an alternative website/other ways you use to track books other than Goodreads? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Are there any features you use from there? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does not use but has heard of Story Graph - Purchased by Amazon and they only really fund it enough to keep it afloat
16. Is there anything else you want to disclose about your experience with Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No

Interview #4

Interviewer(s)	Ananya Kashyap
Interviewee	Interviewee 4

1. Can you give a brief introduction about yourself? (Name, age, major/occupation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computer science at UCI - 21 years old
2. What types/genres of books do you typically read?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fiction - Fantasy - Epic series-type stories - mystery/thriller
3. How many books on average do you read in a month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 book
4. How frequently do you use Goodreads in a typical week or month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Now, very infrequently - Once every two months - When he used to read a lot, he used to use it twice a week - Used it to look for books - More info on a similar book - Recommending books
5. Do you read for fun, educational purposes, or other reasons? If there are other reasons, please elaborate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For fun - Few books here and there for educational purposes (biography)
6. What initially drove you to use Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 7th grade english teacher made everyone use it for the school year to track books read during the school year - Just kept using it
7. What has your most recent experience with Goodreads been like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good - Hasn't really changed in the last 10 years, the exact same as when he started using - Not amazing by any means - Recs symptom is decent - Reviews available
8. Compared to when you first started using the platform, has your experience changed? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It's the same - App hasn't changed - Hasn't used any other app, so nothing to compare it to

9. How do you feel when you're on the web app?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Easy - All necessary features are there, but none are “out of this world”
10. What features do you use the most on Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Track books <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shelves “want to read”, “read” - Likes looking at profile stats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of pages - Your reviews - Best feature is rec system <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Had pretty good luck with finding books he liked using this feature
11. What kind of information are you looking for when you find a book?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Usually, he looks at the genre first - Judges a book by its cover - Summary - Then reviews - This order specifically - No specific author preference
<p>12. What's your experience with using Goodreads socially?</p> <p>a. Did you find a majority of your Goodreads friends through the web app or did you already know them personally beforehand?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only added people for the 7th grade class (it was required) - “I never really cared for the social feature of Goodreads” - Wouldn't be particularly motivated to check the feed to see what other people are doing, just uses it for himself - Knew them before
<p>13. Do you find the platform useful for specifically discovering new books you haven't heard of before?</p> <p>a. Do you think the Discover page is geared towards your interests?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, his primary resource for discovering books - Uses it exclusively to discover new books - Library websites are not as well-tailored - Yes, rec page is functionally good, could be better aesthetically
14. Why do you continue to use Goodreads? If you don't, what made you stop?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Doesn't read as much anymore, but if he did, Goodreads is the go to

<p>15. Do you have an alternative website/other ways you use to track books other than Goodreads?</p> <p>a. Are there any features you use from there?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No, haven't tried any and haven't tried looking for any either
<p>16. Is there anything else you want to disclose about your experience with Goodreads?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Industry default, so it's why people are on there - There could be better ones, but "everyone just uses it", so he doesn't really know of any better apps.

Interview #5

Interviewer(s)	Sovit Nayak Ananya Kashyap
Interviewee	Interviewee 5
1. Can you give a brief introduction about yourself? (Name, age, major/occupation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3rd year law student at New England Law - 26 years
2. What types/genres of books do you typically read?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fantasy - Romance - Historical fiction - Some non-fiction, like memoirs - Buys a lot of physical books, but listens to a lot of books and reads mostly on kindle
3. How many books on average do you read in a month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3-4 books
4. How frequently do you use Goodreads in a typical week or month?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A lot - Goes on it just to scroll - Interacts a lot with her friends - Minimum once or twice a week
5. Do you read for fun, educational purposes, or other reasons? If	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reads for pleasure - Not usually for school curriculum - Some seminars she notes on

there are other reasons, please elaborate	goodreads
6. What initially drove you to use Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tracking after she got back into reading - Share with friends what she was reading - Yearly challenges - Goodreads is widely used only - Book influencers usually uses - Amazon Kindle is not as well connected
7. What has your most recent experience with Goodreads been like?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More negatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading challenges: "If you don't put it in "want to read" and then "read", it won't count" - She forgot to add that she was currently reading it and had to move it through the shelves manually just so she could count it towards the yearly goal - Should just ask the date - It was super glitchy - Recently re-read a book, changed the rating, but didn't add a review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erased her prev rating, but added old review to the new rating - RE-READ FEATURE IS NOT CLEAN - "When you try to see who else is reading a book, it doesn't let you see all of the people/click on it" (just glitchy)
8. Compared to when you first started using the platform, has your experience changed? If so, how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No change - "It's been the same for a while" - When she started using it, she was excited about the features. Now, it's grown familiar, so it just feels

	like it's lacking
9. How do you feel when you're on the web app?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laggy - Scared to touch the wrong thing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Author's note: unintuitive - Things don't load - Loads incorrectly - "Recommendations are okay at best" - The website itself has a completely different UX <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - She added herself to a giveaway and it posted it on other people's feed, but that wasn't visible on the mobile app, only on the website
10. What features do you use the most on Goodreads?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Friend's activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Threads are bad" - Replies are separate posts - Reading challenge - "Recommended book lists and giveaways are glitchy and hard to enter" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stopped using it because it became too annoying to deal with
11. What kind of information are you looking for when you find a book?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summary - Reviews - Friend's reviews and thoughts
12. What's your experience with using Goodreads socially? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Did you find a majority of your Goodreads friends through the web app or did you already know them personally beforehand? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are reviewers you can technically follow, but doesn't really add anyone - Always just people that she knows already that she's adding - Friend interaction is not good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Messaging is not good <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Really frustrating" - Groups are also hard to add yourself to

<p>13. Do you find the platform useful for specifically discovering new books you haven't heard of before?</p> <p>a. Do you think the Discover page is geared towards your interests?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hard to find new books on Goodreads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If series, next books are there - Suggestions are there, but they usually just show the top trending books <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Even if you've already read it
<p>14. Why do you continue to use Goodreads? If you don't, what made you stop?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goodreads is just popular amongst book influencers and book YouTube - Has the account so she still uses it
<p>15. Do you have an alternative website/other ways you use to track books other than Goodreads?</p> <p>a. Are there any features you use from there?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daily log - Monthly challenges - Analytics - App is more user-friendly - The social aspect is better <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book clubs - Discussion boards based on currently reading books
<p>16. Is there anything else you want to disclose about your experience with Goodreads?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Popular, but "considering it's owned by Amazon, its UX is pretty unacceptable" - Crashes so much - "The profile customization isn't very good"

Interview #6

Interviewer(s)	Sovit Nayak
Interviewee	Interviewee 6
<p>1. Can you give a brief introduction about yourself? (Name, age, major/occupation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21 years old - 4th year studying CSE + BIM at UCI
<p>2. What types/genres of books do you typically read?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mostly Sci-fi, nonfiction

3. How many books on average do you read in a month?	- 2 books
4. How frequently do you use Goodreads in a typical week or month?	- 1-2 times per 2 weeks
5. Do you read for fun, educational purposes, or other reasons? If there are other reasons, please elaborate	- Primarily for fun - Sometimes for educational insights.
6. What initially drove you to use Goodreads?	- To track my reading progress - Make a habit of reading - Find book recommendations
7. What has your most recent experience with Goodreads been like?	- "Helpful but a bit cluttered and slow to load"
8. Compared to when you first started using the platform, has your experience changed? If so, how?	- Platform seemed cool back then but now it feels outdated and slow
9. How do you feel when you're on the web app?	- The site works but then it needs a design refresh
10. What features do you use the most on Goodreads?	- Reviews - Search books - Rating books
11. What kind of information are you looking for when you find a book?	- Reviews, genre, and ratings
12. What's your experience with using Goodreads socially? a. Did you find a majority of your Goodreads friends through the web app or did you already know them personally beforehand?	- Minimal interaction - Doesn't use the app socially
13. Do you find the platform useful for specifically discovering new books you haven't heard of before?	- Pretty good and useful in terms of book finding

a. Do you think the Discover page is geared towards your interests?	
14. Why do you continue to use Goodreads? If you don't, what made you stop?	- Familiarity with platform
15. Do you have an alternative website/other ways you use to track books other than Goodreads? a. Are there any features you use from there?	- Kindle
16. Is there anything else you want to disclose about your experience with Goodreads?	- Needs a modern outlook - “Needs an UI change for sure”