



**Tom Bochynek**  
FIT, Caulfield Campus

PhD Candidate, 1.5 years



# The Hitchhikers Guide to a PhD

Tips and Tricks for Success  
(and Sanity)



# The Hitchhikers Guide to a PhD

How to get through the first year

Your supervisor(s) and you

Skills to pick up

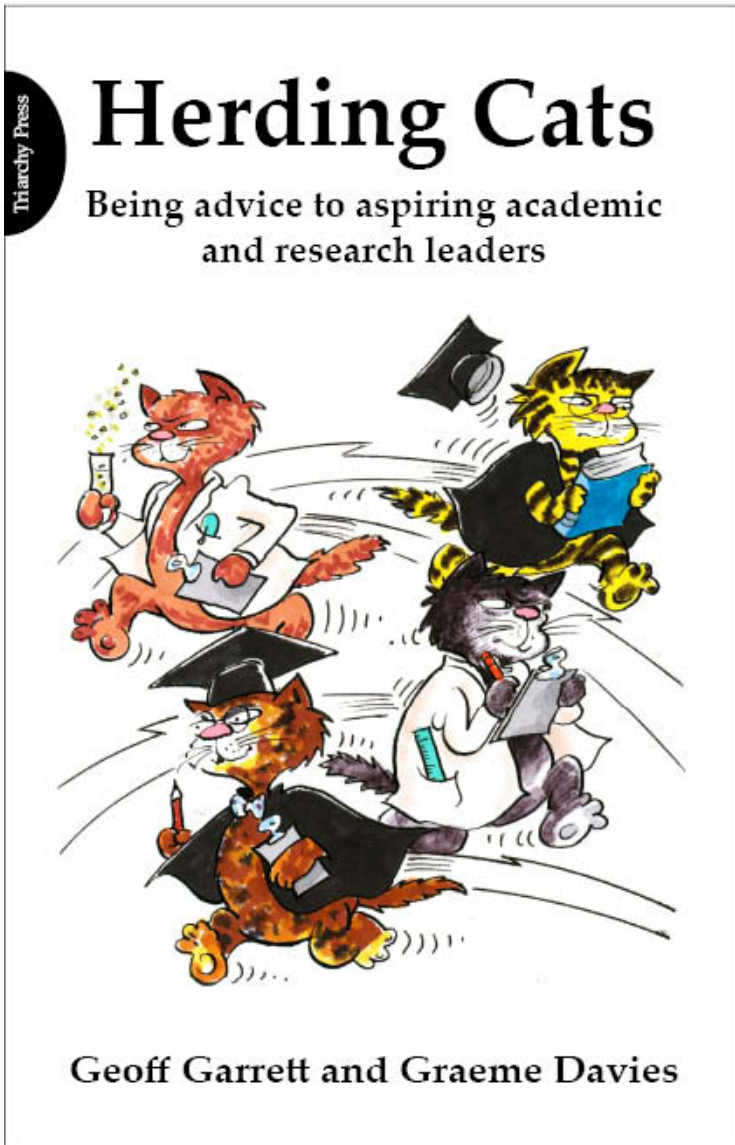
The bigger picture

Stress

# The first year

- Develop your research question  
(and write it down!)
- Plot out course of PhD
- Coursework
- Confirmation

# Supervisor(s)



VS.



# Supervisor(s)

Aim for weekly meetings in the first year

Go into meeting with a report

Come out of the meeting with a short term plan

Take notes during and after the meeting!

# Skills

- **Thinking**

WHY are you doing x?

Tip: Write it down for your grandmother!

- **Writing**

Your second most important skill!

Tell a story!

- **Speaking**

Every presentation is a chance! Take it!

# Writing

Annotated Bibliography

Research Diary & Meeting notes

Ongoing Thesis writing

Ongoing research topic rewriting

might be insufficient, but will reread with as contrast to howards low estimate on numbers are based.

## **09-03-2015**

meeting with martin, talk about cost benefit analysis. at this point we will skip looking at benefits from an energetic point of view. instead use "theoretical productivity" benefit, and consider costs to be a reduction in these benefits through reduction of workforce.

this requires estimate of a total workforce  $N$ , and of a portion of it that is at any time engaged in clearing and hence unavailable to forage. this we compare to a hypothetical colony which uses 100% of its workforce for foraging.

## **04-03-2015**

meeting with bernd and martin. talked about the direction of the phd topic. and how

Write it down, don't write it nice!



## \* PhD Model Canvas

Authors

17.2.2015  
Iteration #

<b>2- Key audience</b> 😊 Who are our key audiences? What are our journal targets? Which papers can be accepted in the target journals?	<b>1- Hypothesis</b> ✨ What is our hypothesis? What problems are we helping to solve? Which audiences need are we satisfying? What value do we provide?	<b>5- Results</b> 📄 What are the most important findings? What are the ways to present results?	<b>6- Discussion</b> ⚡ Why or why not is possible to reach our goals? What others tell about results? Who are agreeing with our findings? Who are disagreeing with our findings?
<b>4- Method</b> ▮ What research methods are we using? What are the steps we should follow? What type of materials we should use?		<b>3- Background</b> 📖 Why this problem is important? What other did to solve the problem? What are the key relevant studies?	
<p>* This is a management chart that allows PhD students describe and design their PhD proposal when starting their research journey and continue updating their direction and goals during 3-4 years of reach.</p>		<b>7- Conclusion</b> 📄 What are our significant contributions to the field? What other issues might be revealing during our study? What are our recommendations to improve this study in future?	

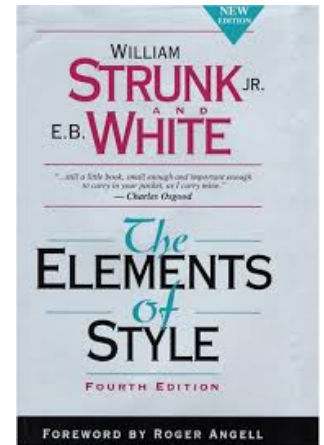
# Resources

## Writing

Strunk and White – The Elements of Style

George D. Gopen – The Sense of Structure

<https://mlafeldt.github.io/blog/write-every-day/>



## Workshops

Workshops, Bootcamps, Summer Schools, Library courses: take your emails seriously!

## HDR Student Committee

Practise your presentations, learn from others...



# The bigger picture

Be proactive!

Go to conferences

Visit other labs

Invite speakers

PR! (Webpage, Twitter, LinkedIn, newspaper, ...)

Information Technology

Research Industry and partnerships Staff Alumni community

Archive > 2014

a trail?

Tom Bochynek could not have chosen a more fitting spot to ask what lessons nature may hold for the transfer of human cargo and information. As four percent of global seafaring

Tom Bochynek para pregunt

returned from research he

ian Tropical Research

ind in the Panama Canal.

ve behaviour of ants, and

structure construction.

an metropolises in the number

etworks not unlike the roads

from all underlying debris,

an attempt to increase the

arvest site towards the nest,

fungus.

nans - consumes time and

d against the benefits of an

ineers have access to large

optimisation of traffic and

entralised planning staff to

ch they build their trails. All

making, a process in which

lly available information to

understand the mechanisms

ange information, and how

rd efficient trail-system. He is

h/NICTA Optimisation

sh IT Professor Bernd Meyer

artin Burd.

Tom Bochynek at the research site of the Panama Canal's Barro Colorado Island.

**Stress**



# Stress

happens to everyone!

## Solution?

- Don't be afraid to ask for help  
(Supervisor, HDR Student Committee, mentors, Monash counselling ...)
- Know when to take a break (and when not to!)
- Prevent stress:



# Stress

## A healthy mind in a healthy body

- Hobbies
- Sport
- Social interaction



➔ <http://mpa.monash.edu/>

# Feedback

Thoughts and complaints about the PhD program:

[fit-hdrCstudentrep@monash.edu](mailto:fit-hdrCstudentrep@monash.edu)

Questions/Direction:

[Thomas.Bochynek@monash.edu](mailto:Thomas.Bochynek@monash.edu)

Full talk: