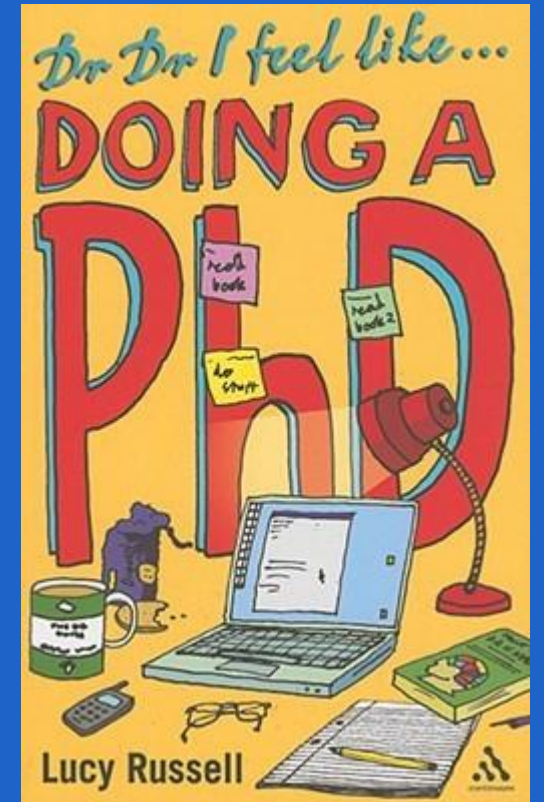
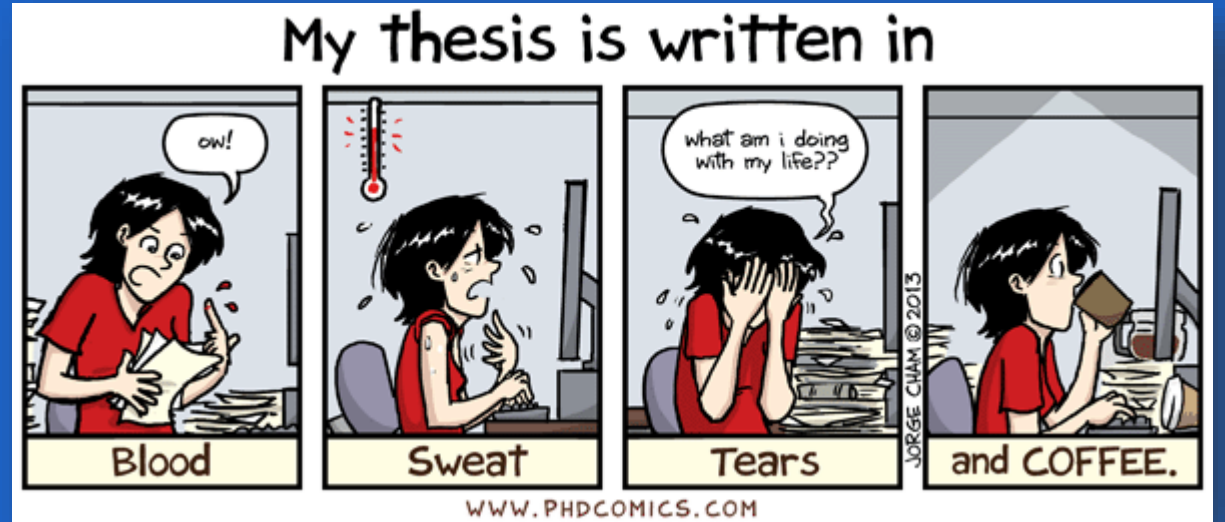




**GHENT
UNIVERSITY**

DOING A PHD





DOING A PHD?

A photograph of a desk with a laptop, a black mug with the word "tea" on it, and several cookies. A semi-transparent box is overlaid on the image.

PCDN Career Series

TO PHD
OR NOT
TO PHD

Don't apply until you have read this

WHY DO A PHD?

1. Because you're good at doing research
2. Because you've been asked
3. Because scientific research is important and relevant
4. Because it's a good start for a professional career
5. ...

SOURCES OF FUNDING: DOCTORAL GRANTS

- The funding body selects
- Most common channels:
 - FWO – deadline end of January, starting Oct 1 (EU-nationals apply 2x, max. 31 yrs, else up to 5 yrs after Ma-degree, max. 3 years in a paid research position)
 - BOF – deadline end of April, starting Oct 1 (no restriction re: nationality or age, “excellent study results”)
- Other channels:
 - IWT – Baekeland, FWO-SBO-grant, etc.
 - “PhD abroad” – exchange organisations, e.g. ESRC, Fulbright, etc.
 - “PhD abroad” – university-based scholarships
- <http://www.fwo.be/nl/mandaten-financiering/predocorale-mandaten/>
- <https://www.ugent.be/nl/onderzoek/financiering/bof/doc/overzicht.htm>

SOURCES OF FUNDING: FUNDED PROJECTS

- Principal Investigator(s) recruit(s) and select(s)
- Projects with a single PhD
 - FWO 4-year project
- Projects with a number of doctoral projects
 - BOF GOA
 - SBO (FWO)
 - Odysseus (FWO)
 - European Research Council
 - HORIZON 2020 (7th Framework, EU)
 - ...

SOURCES OF FUNDING: OTHER

“Assistant”

- 6 years in which to complete a PhD
- Position = 50% research

Self-funded doctoral student

WHAT IS A PHD?

AN ATTEMPTED DEFINITION

- A piece of innovative research
 - Conceptually, theoretically and methodologically sound
 - Findings entail a “thesis”, a claim to knowledge
 - It is well-written
-
- Scientific world: diversity in theory, method, etc.
 - Hence, a PhD is a piece of research that has to be defended

MODELS FOR DOING A PHD

- There is no single model
- Typically, the result is
 - a monograph
 - a collection of articles
- Expect to publish!
 - Required before you submit
 - Individual publications and/or publications which are co-authored with other PhD students/advisor(s)
 - Develop a strategy
 - Plan carefully and sensibly

WHAT IS GOING TO BE MY TOPIC?

- Own choice? Advisor's choice? Project's choice?
 - Negotiated
 - Defined in a project
 - Functional to career priorities
 - ...
- Is between you and your advisor(s)
- Approved by the Faculty Board
- From “a working title” to “the title as submitted” (FOCUS)

HOW IMPORTANT IS MY PHD?

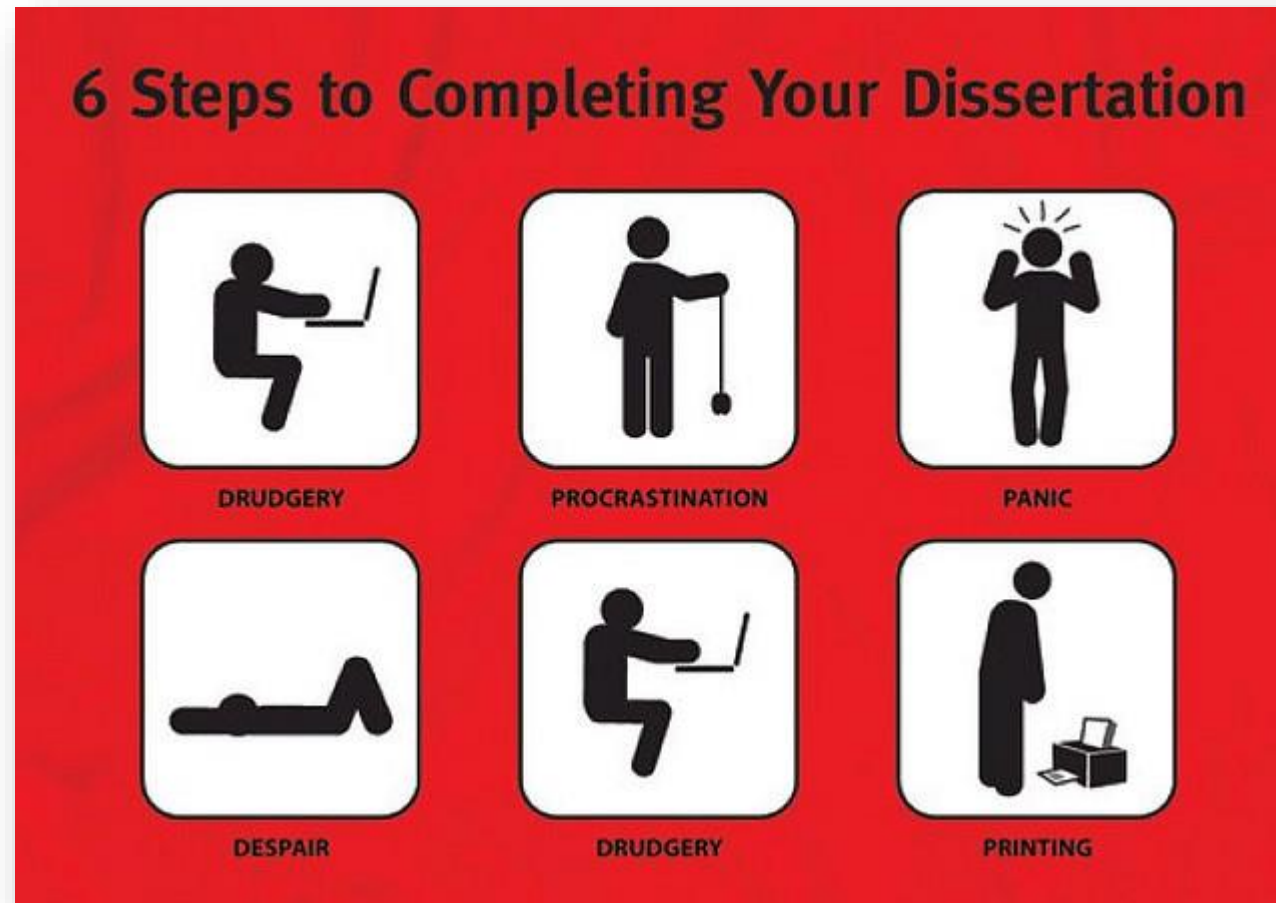
- Specialist expertise in a specific area
 - Personal satisfaction and gratification
 - Helps qualify for other positions
 - Development of skills
- From “a lifetime’s achievement” to “a stage in a my career and professional development”
- With hindsight
 - A formative experience
 - A wonderful time when I was young(er)
 - Once a “Dr”, always a “Dr”
 - A nice group of friends to return to

SUPERVISION AND ADVICE

- One or more advisors (individual, team)
- DBC – “doctoraatsbegeleidingscommissie”
 - Additional expertise
 - Annual report on progress
 - Balance between research, teaching, etc.
- Doctoral School (in our case: “Arts, Humanities & Law”)
 - Specialist courses and transferable skills
 - “Doctoral training programme”
- Research stay abroad (= absolutely to be recommended)
- Ethical clearance

STAGES IN THE PHD PROCESS

- Different ways of thinking/talking about this



STAGES

1. A historian's response
2. A linguist's response
3. A literary scholar's response
4. An anthropologist's response
5. An artist's response
6. ...

- CHECK OUT THE POSTERS
- TALK TO A DOCTORAL STUDENT

PHD PROGRAMMES IN ARTS & PHILOSOPHY

1. African Languages & Cultures
2. Archaeology
3. American Studies
4. Art Sciences
5. Arts (Audiovisual Arts, Drama, Music, Visual Arts)
6. Comparative Science of Culture
7. East European Languages & Cultures
8. Gender & Diversity Studies
9. History
10. Linguistics
11. Linguistics and Literature
12. Literary Studies
13. Moral Sciences
14. Oriental Languages & Cultures
15. Philosophy
16. Translation Sciences

Joint PhD

Interdisciplinary PhD

SUBMITTING AND DEFENDING

- Jury, international, 3 to 5 specialists
 - Advisors advise // examiners examine
 - Chair + reporter(s)
- 1st meeting of the committee
 - Reports and discussion
 - Q: “Admit to the defence?”
- 2nd meeting = the VIVA
 - Public defence: presentation + formal Q/A
 - Q: “Award the degree?”

THE VIVA

- 2 hours
- Presentation by candidate
- Comments and questions by the jury members
- ...
- Awarding of degree
- Laudatio
- Reception
- ...
- A holiday at last
- The next step?



LIFE AFTER THE PHD?

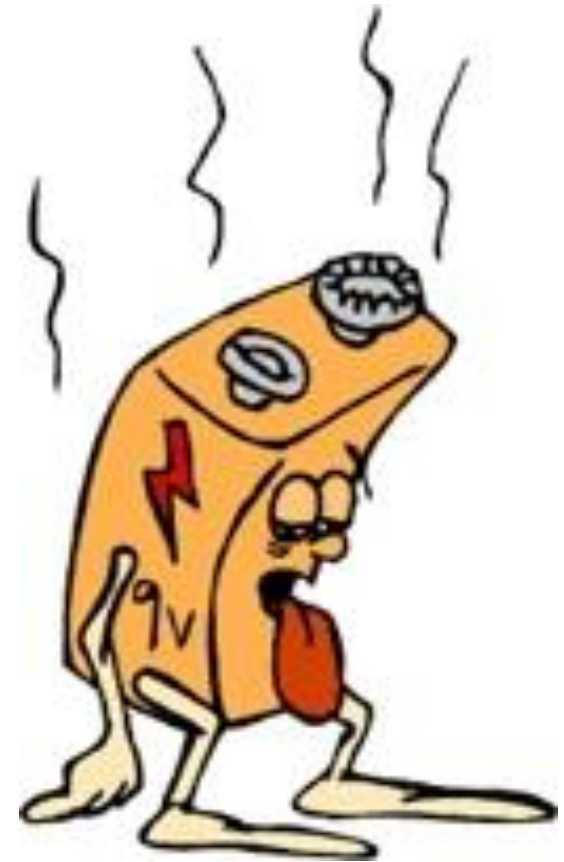
- Postdoctoral position (FWO, BOF, “doctor-assistent”)
DOCTORAL STUDENT → POSTDOC → PROFESSOR
- Other career opportunities?
- <https://www.ugent.be/doctorschools/en/careersupport>



WELL-BEING – AN ABSOLUTE PRIORITY

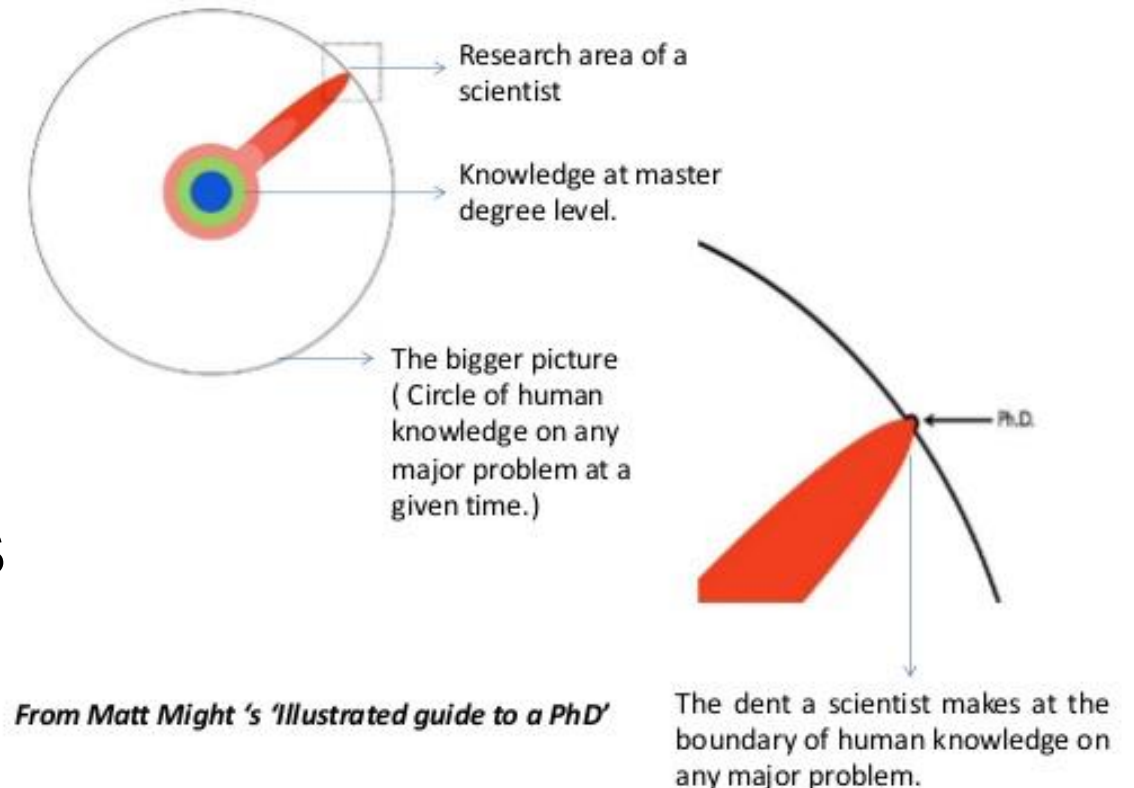
“No one warns us about how difficult doing a PhD can be, not only from an academic point of view, but from the personal pressure it conveys. Add this to a variable dose of daily physical discomfort and fatigue and it becomes unbearable at some point”

– Carolina Lara



TIME OF YOUR LIFE?

- Considerable freedom to explore a particular interest in-depth
- Moving the boundaries of knowledge
- Enjoyment that comes from being part of a critical mass
- International exchange
- Etc.



From Matt Might's 'Illustrated guide to a PhD'

12-02-2015

Ignition Program in Entrepreneurship,
Guwahati University, India

USEFUL REFERENCES

- <https://www.ugent.be/lw/nl/onderzoek/doctoreren/doctoreren.htm>
 - <https://www.ugent.be/lw/en/research/doctoraldegree/doctoreren.htm>
-
- TALK TO A DOCTORAL STUDENT
 - TALK TO A POTENTIAL ADVISOR
 - CHECK OUT THE POSTERS
 - INFORMATION SESSION, Friday 1 December, 11:30, Aud. 2, Franz Cumont

STEF SLEMBROUCK (PhD, Lancaster, 1992)

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