




HANKEN

The research process:
From first ideas to the thesis

Eero Vaara




Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi




PhD as analogy

MARRIAGE vs. The Ph.D.


	Marriage	Ph.D.
Typical Length:	7.5 years	7 years
Begins with:	A proposal	A thesis proposal
Culminates in a ceremony where you walk down an aisle dressed in a gown:	✓	✓
Usually entered into by:	Forthright young people in love	Forthright young people without a job
50% end in:	Bitter divorce	Bitter remorse
Involves exchange of:	Vows	Know-how
Until death do you part?	If you're lucky	If you're lazy




www.PHDCOMICS.COM Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi




PhD as an evolutionary process




THE ORIGIN OF THE THESES




www.PHDCOMICS.COM Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

PhD as a challenge 



"No, I don't think this program has anything in common with 'Survivor.' At least on that show, SOMEONE is guaranteed to survive to the end."

  Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

Topics 

- » Once in a lifetime opportunity
- » Research ideas/problems/questions
- » Scientific discussions and academic communities
- » Supervision and other support
- » Contribution
- » Doctoral dissertation
- » Defence
- » Career: Life thereafter

  Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi


Once in a lifetime opportunity 

- » To discover and learn new things
- » To focus on one research project and do that properly
- » To create a researcher identity
- » To become part of the academic community
- » To contribute to scientific knowledge
- » To seek meaning in life

  Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

HANKEN

JUST DON'T DO IT BY GARY H. STOLMAN AND JERRY KING



"I think Bill has become somewhat distracted since he started his Ph.D. program at State."

Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

HANKEN

Research ideas/problems/questions

- » Most new ideas are bad ideas
- » Interesting research problems and questions have to be linked with specific scientific discussions
- » Practical relevance is important, but theoretical relevance is the key
- » Usually we can only make limited contributions and it pays off to focus

Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

HANKEN

Scientific discussions & academic communities

- » One needs to find an academic community and researcher identity (a "home")
- » Conferences and workshops help to identify interesting research problems and questions
- » Networking pays off

Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

Supervision and support

WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

Supervision and support

- » Supervisors and/or committees play a crucial role in one's research process
- » However, this is YOUR project!
- » Every supervisor-supervisee relationship is different, but usually intensive collaboration and open dialogue pay off
- » Committee members' competences should be complementary
- » It's important to get feedback and support from other mentors, colleagues, fellow PhD students and friends!


WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi


Contribution


WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi


Contribution (cont.) 


- » Good news: The only requirement for a doctoral dissertation is a contribution
- » Bad news: It is not easy to establish a contribution vis-à-vis prior research (a scientific discussion)
- » It requires:
 - » Motivation of research problems/questions
 - » Theoretical anchoring
 - » Rigorous and credible empirical analysis
 - » Interesting findings
 - » Rhetorical skills in arguing for the contribution
 - » Ability to answer to the "so what" questions

 Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi


Doctoral dissertation 

<p>Monograph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The classical alternative » Challenge #1: One has to write papers in anyway » Challenge #2: Size: More difficult to rewrite and get comments on 	<p>Essay/article-based dissertation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Allows one to focus on papers/articles » Challenge #1: Each of the papers have to be convincing packages » Challenge #2: Pulling all the strings together in the kappa
---	---

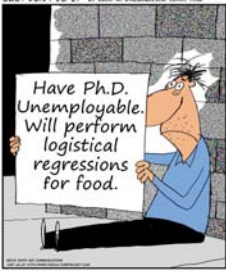
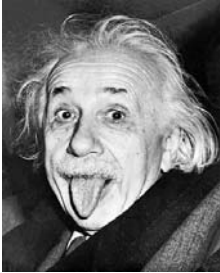
 Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

Defence 

- » The final revisions usually take longer than expected
- » You and your supervisor/committee determine when to submit the thesis
- » External reviewers are the gatekeepers
- » Their comments may lead to substantial revisions
- » The defence is a ceremony but also decisive for the final acceptance of the thesis
- » It's useful to attend others' defences in Finland and abroad

 Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi

Career: Life thereafter



JUST DON'T DO IT BY BARRY M. SCHERAGA AND JERRY KING

Hanken School of Economics, www.hanken.fi
