

How to be a Terrible Graduate Student

- Come to graduate school only because it allows you to postpone your entry to the real world.
- Assume that your advisor acts solely in their own best interests, and never in yours.
- Assume that your advisor (being more than 34 years old) doesn't understand current research, and is not (and never was) as smart as you are.
- Never come to a meeting with your advisor prepared with an agenda of things you want to talk about, and never take notes during the discussion. (After all, little that your advisor says matters, and anyway, if it were important you'd remember it.)
- Never take notes when you read a paper or book, or record any of your ideas in a research diary. (After all, if it were important, you'd remember it.) Corollary: It is not necessary to keep complete bibliographic citations for anything that you read.
- Expect your advisor to give you a thesis topic and tell you exactly how to carry out the work, step by step. Corollary: If your thesis is not going well, it's your advisor's fault, not yours.
- Regard any ideas that your advisor gives you for your thesis as your own exclusive property, and present them to the world as if you alone thought of them.
- Frequently cancel meetings with your advisor, giving little notice (or none at all), whenever there is the slightest excuse to do so.
- Assume that you can write up the final thesis in a month or two.
- Don't bother checking any of your results or proofreading anything you write; that's your advisor's job.
- Regard your graduate education as a 9-to-5 Monday-to-Friday job.
- Give the draft of your thesis to your advisor on a Friday, so that they can read it over the weekend and give you feedback on Monday.