What is this little talk about?

Doing academic work
I. The incomplete apprenticeship model
II. General principles
III. Concrete ideas
IV. Really concrete examples
Apprenticeship

• Bad interpretation: the production of clones
• Good interpretation:
  – emulation
  – modification
  – rejection
  …of styles of doing work

Some Principles

• Be curious and open to new ideas.
Some Principles

• Be active in creating your own workflow.
• You can control your own work environment.
• Expect to solve your own problems.
• Live it or leave it.

Stuff that is slightly more concrete than Principles

• “A writer is one who writes.”
• Write every day, a little at least.
Stuff that is slightly more concrete than Principles

• Journal = RAM
• …but scholarly work requires a searchable long-term storage.

Stuff that is slightly more concrete than Principles

• Corollary: Writing must occur…
  – during the reading or data collection or design;
  – during the analysis.
• So: don’t wait to write.
Stuff that is slightly more concrete than Principles

• Corollary: Document your work:
  – …comment your code, and
  – …take “meta-notes.”

Stuff that is slightly more concrete than Principles

• Corollary: How to read?
  – Balance analyticity…
  – and emotion.
• So: Tell a story you care to tell.
  – Derivative dissertations destroy
Stories from Our Lives

• The Idea
  – What does it mean to be avant-garde?
  – Perils of strategy: The Hog Cycle
  – Size and scope

Stories from Our Lives

• What do we do?
  – Ideal writing day?
  – Using a timer or clock.
  – Restricting distractions.
  – Ergonomy matters.