

Acknowledgements

They say that life's all about the journey, and at the start of this journey I was working as an engineer at Hewlett-Packard. After deciding I didn't have enough expertise in any one area to really drive the field in which I was working, I headed off to graduate school. After five years at Caltech, it's definitely about the journey just as much as it is the goal. On paper, you're a doctor the day you graduate from the Ph.D. program. In reality, it happens somewhere along the way. As painful and stressful as the whole process was, it's definitely made me a better person. Not only because of the additional mountain of knowledge I've digested, but because of the people I've met along the way. Without the help of a great many people, I would not have written this thesis.

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