



# Seven Rules for Social Research

*Glenn Firebaugh*

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## **Seven Rules for Social Research** Glenn Firebaugh

*Seven Rules for Social Research* teaches social scientists how to get the most out of their technical skills and tools, providing a resource that fully describes the strategies and concepts no researcher or student of human behavior can do without.

Glenn Firebaugh provides indispensable practical guidance for anyone doing research in the social and health sciences today, whether they are undergraduate or graduate students embarking on their first major research projects or seasoned professionals seeking to incorporate new methods into their research. The rules are the basis for discussions of a broad range of issues, from choosing a research question to inferring causal relationships, and are illustrated with applications and case studies from sociology, economics, political science, and related fields. Though geared toward quantitative methods, the rules also work for qualitative research.

*Seven Rules for Social Research* is ideal for students and researchers who want to take their technical skills to new levels of precision and insight, and for instructors who want a textbook for a second methods course.

### The Seven Rules

1. There should be the possibility of surprise in social research
2. Look for differences that make a difference, and report them.
3. Build reality checks into your research.
4. Replicate where possible.
5. Compare like with like.
6. Use panel data to study individual change and repeated cross-section data to study social change.
7. Let method be the servant, not the master.

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