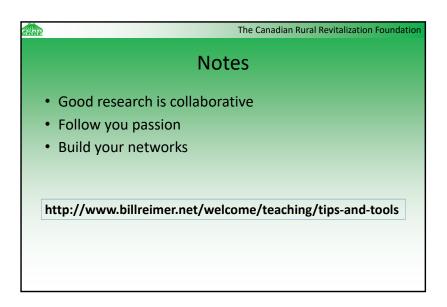


**Introductory Comments** 



- Good research is collaborative
  - •Including theses: don't be intimidated by request for "original thesis". You will discover your originality after much of your work is done.
- Follow your passion
  - •The legacy of "objective" research is necessary, but it does not apply when considering the topic or even key claims.
  - •The issue should drive the methodology not the other way around. Therefore, you should become familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of each type of approach, so that choice is possible.
  - •Objectivity is about research design: Have you designed it so that you can be **wrong**? The design must include the possibility of being wrong not just straw man, but the strongest competing views.
- Build your network
  - •Beyond your committee and beyond scholars.



## Strategies for research

- Ask a question as a question (with ?)
  - Core element of research: The answer is often a better question
    - E.g. (my research history) What is social capital?
    - · What are the various types of social capital?
    - · In what ways to people seek support?
    - · How effective are the various types of support?
- •Answer the question with as many answers as you can imagine.
  - Seek help collecting answers
  - •Be expansive, not critical
- •Organize the answers according to the most reasonable, strategic, competing, etc.
  - •These will serve as a basis for the research design (making sure you can be wrong)
- •Integrate appropriate comparisons in your design
  - •Make them explicit and strategic
  - •This is also the process during which research questions can be considered with respect to the objectives you feel are important (including political advocacy).
    - •Why is this question and its related answer important to you?
- Conduct the research
- Ask a better question