Exercises

# Chapter 26: Surviving an oral examination

## Exercise 1: Get to know your examiners through their own works

To find out about your examiners’ own published work, read at least one book or journal article by each of them. As you read, make notes about the following points:

1. What model of social research (see Chapter 7) is being used? How far does it differ from or complement your own? What useful lessons can you learn from these differences or similarities?

2. Are there any theoretical developments, methodological innovations or substantive findings that relate to your own work? If so, how can you bring these out in the oral? If not, how can you demonstrate respect for the examiners’ approach while standing up for your own?

3. Examine the writing style in this material. How different is it from your own? What can you learn from these differences (or similarities)? For example, do these simply reflect the differing demands of (say) a scholarly journal and a research dissertation, or are there basic differences of temperament and outlook?

## Exercise 2: Conduct a mock oral examination

When you have completed your revision, ask your supervisor or a couple of your fellow students who are familiar with your research to give you a mock oral examination. Following Table 26.2 in the book and using your prepared list of points that you want to get across, try out your skills in answering their questions.