

5

EVALUATION, DEMOCRACY, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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Educational research [and evaluation] can never be value-free. To the extent it approaches value-freedom in its self-perception, it is to that extent dangerous ... [and] in fact ... useless ... [Moreover] I take it as a given that democratic values are prominent among those that educational research [and evaluation] ought to incorporate, a premise not likely to be challenged in the abstract (Howe, 2003, pp. 133–134).

From almost the beginning of the contemporary history of program evaluation, there have been theorists and practitioners who anchor their work in an intentional commitment to democratic social justice, equality, or empowerment. These evaluators reject the very possibility of value neutrality in evaluation and instead fully embrace the intertwining of values with evaluative practice. Moreover, these evaluators go beyond a value-relative stance, which acknowledges and engages the plurality of values that inhabit evaluation contexts, to a value-committed

stance, through which evaluation purposefully advances particular values (Schwandt, 1997). The most defensible values to promote, in the reasoning of these evaluators, are those intrinsic to political democratic ideals, namely, social justice, equality, empowerment, and emancipation.

The rationales offered by the theorists in this evaluative tradition for their value-committed stances are complex. They rest on both epistemological arguments regarding the nature and purpose of social knowledge and political arguments regarding the location and purpose of evaluation in society. And they rest on varied conceptualizations of democracy, equality, and justice. Moreover, these arguments are less about particular evaluation designs and methods than they are about evaluative processes and evaluator roles, stances, and commitments. That is, these theories about democratically oriented evaluation do not emphasize prescriptions

about the technical aspects of evaluation practice. Rather, these theories focus on (1) the macro positioning of evaluation in society, specifically addressing issues related to which purposes and whose interests evaluation should serve, and (2) the micro character of evaluation practice, in particular the relationships evaluators establish with others in a given context and the processes and interactions that enact these relationships. Clearly, these emphases spill over into more technical issues of establishing priority evaluation questions, criteria for judging quality, utilization, and reporting procedures, as well as evaluation design and methods. But, as will be illustrated throughout this chapter, democratically oriented evaluators' ideas about the technical facets of evaluation practice are most importantly rooted in their understandings of evaluation's location in society and the evaluator's location in the study at hand.

Using this heuristic framework of the macro politics and the micro relationships of evaluation, this chapter first presents the historically influential theories of Barry MacDonald and Ernest House, then important facets of additional theories that have shaped the landscape of democratically oriented evaluation, and finally contemporary developments that continue the tradition. For each theorist or group of theorists, the discussion includes key concepts and rationales – both epistemological and political – as well as key implications for evaluation practice. Examples and critiques of these approaches are interspersed throughout the chapter, with a concluding summary critique. And although the discussion takes place almost exclusively in the public sector, involving evaluations of publicly funded programs, democratically oriented evaluative theory is certainly relevant to the non-profit, civil sectors and even in some cases to private enterprise as well.¹

Historical Legacies in Democratically Oriented Evaluation

Democratically oriented traditions in evaluation have their genesis in Barry MacDonald's original formulation of "democratic evaluation" for the field of education in England (MacDonald, 1976) and Ernest House's long-standing commitment to social justice for evaluation in the US (House, 1980, 1993; House & Howe, 1999).

Barry MacDonald's "Democratic Evaluation"

MacDonald offered a "political classification of evaluation studies" as a way of helping evaluators choose their "allegiances and priorities," because evaluators inevitably confront "the distribution and exercise of power" in their work (MacDonald, 1976, p. 125). Evaluation is inherently a political activity with potential political influence. "Evaluators not only live in the real world of educational politics; they actually influence its changing power relationships" (MacDonald, 1976, p. 132).

MacDonald's political classification had three types. First, *bureaucratic* evaluation is an unconditional service to government agencies already empowered to allocate educational resources and determine policy directions. The bureaucratic evaluator's role is one of management consultant, and his/her work is neither independent nor available for public scrutiny. Bureaucratic evaluation clients retain control over the products of this work. Second, *autocratic* evaluation is a conditional service to the same governmental agencies. The autocratic evaluator retains independence as an outside expert adviser and thus retains ownership of the evaluation products. His/her work is validated by the scientific research community and thus, when valid, serves to defend existing policy directions.

In contrast, the *democratic* evaluator recognizes value pluralism in service of the public right to know. In democratic evaluation, the methods and results must be presented in ways accessible to multiple non-specialist audiences, in a report that aspires to “best seller” status. Moreover, all participants in the evaluation are guaranteed control over the release and form of the information they provide. In short, the democratic evaluator serves the public interest in education, in addition to the established interests of policy-makers and experts.

Rationale

MacDonald's turn to a democratically oriented approach to evaluation arose from his concerns about “Who controls the pursuit of new knowledge, and who has access to it?” (MacDonald & Walker, 1977, p. 185). He sought primarily to democratize knowledge in evaluation – to broaden the evaluation questions addressed and thus the interests served beyond established decision-makers and experts to include the citizenry at large, and also to disseminate evaluation findings equally broadly so as to engage the public in informed discussion of key policy issues and directions – thus positioning evaluation in service of an informed citizenry.² MacDonald also envisioned evaluation as an opportunity for policy critique, rather than an activity constrained by the boundaries of a particular program (which is an enactment of a policy) with the assumptions and values of the policy left unexamined. Evaluation can serve as a “disinterested source of information about the origins, processes, and effects of social action ... challenging monopolies of various kinds – of problem definition, of issue formulation, of data control, of information utilization. We are not just in the business of helping some people to make educational choices within their

present responsibilities and opportunities. We are also in the business of helping all our peoples to choose between alternative societies” (MacDonald, 1978, p. 12). With this collective and pluralistic vision of evaluation in democratic service for policy-makers, experts, and the public alike, accountability also becomes mutual and collective (Ryan, 2004).

Major Implications for Practice

MacDonald's political turn to democratic values in evaluation was accompanied by a methodological turn to the case study for educational evaluation.³ Case studies can render portrayals of educational programs “more knowable to the non-research community [and] more accessible to diverse patterns of meaning, significance and worth through which people ordinarily evaluate social life” (MacDonald, 1977, p. 50). Case studies take “the experience of the programme participants as the central focus of investigation [and they] convey images of educational activity which both preserve and illuminate its complexity” (MacDonald, 1977, p. 51). Within MacDonald's democratic evaluation, the case study method focuses on practice and on practitioners' own language and understandings of or theories about the program (Simons, 1987), and further serves to encourage critical self-reflection about the quality of program implementation and its connections to policy intent.

In conjunction with the case study method, MacDonald's democratic evaluation requires that evaluators themselves act democratically, primarily in reference to control over, access to, and release of evaluative information. This is because the personalized information generated in case study evaluations (in contrast to the anonymous information generated in other evaluation approaches) can be importantly consequential for case study participants.

Principles of fairness, relevance, and accuracy guide all negotiations between evaluators and study participants regarding the content and dissemination of all evaluation reports.

An Example of MacDonald's Democratic Evaluation

Robin McTaggart, an active member of the CARE-CIRCE network and a renowned proponent of action research, offers a thoughtful critique of the promise and peril of MacDonald's democratic evaluation through reflections on a case example (McTaggart, 1991). The program evaluated was an Australian Language Curriculum Project, which sought to provide specialized instruction for students with identified weaknesses in language skills. The evaluation was self-consciously democratic in the MacDonald tradition, focusing thus on processes related to information control. In fact a written set of *Principles of Procedure* – designed to make “an externally commissioned evaluation as democratic as possible by giving participants considerable control over the interpretation and release of information” (McTaggart, 1991, p. 10) – was shared with all evaluation participants and used to guide the evaluators' actions and decisions regarding information release and especially reporting.⁴

The troublesome incident in this case example involved a male school principal and the female language teacher (hired specifically for the program and thus not on a tenure track) in one of the program sites. When interviewed, the principal offered glowing support for the program but was not aware of any of the program's operational details, encouraging the evaluation team to consult the teacher directly involved. When the language teacher was interviewed, she offered significant criticism of the program primarily with reference to its organization and management. For example, the students who showed up for the program were

not the kinds of students the program was intended to serve, nor did they come from the schools designated as participants in the program. As per the *Principles of Procedure*, both the principal and the teacher reviewed their interview records and agreed that the data, with minor corrections, could be included in the evaluation report. Yet, as the draft report was circulating again for approval and release, the teacher recanted and withdrew much of her interview data from the evaluation, notably the data critical of the language program. When telephoned, the teacher said that the principal had asked her to change her interview data so that the data were not critical of the program's organization and management (because this would reflect badly on the principal). The principal even hinted that the teacher's job could be at stake. This then created a dilemma for MacDonald's democratic evaluation: “Should the public's ‘right to know’ take precedence over the individuals' rights to ‘own the facts about their own lives’” (McTaggart, 1991, p. 15) and to decide for themselves what risks to incur? And, “however democratic the *Principles of Procedure* may have seemed to be, they still gave the evaluators considerable control” (p. 20).

Critique

MacDonald's democratic evaluation supports a *representative* form of democracy in that the power of elected officials and their appointees to make decisions is engaged, but not challenged. (The concluding section of this chapter offers further discussion of different forms of democracy.) Moreover, within the spaces of the evaluation itself, McTaggart's *Principles of Procedure* did actively seek and value the teacher's views about the program, but did not adequately safeguard other rights of the teacher against the established power of the principal. Nor were any evaluation participants actually empowered to speak for themselves,

as the evaluator, in the role of “information broker,” retained authorship of the final report. MacDonald’s approach to democratic evaluation thus serves primarily to “give voice” to and thereby legitimize the perspectives and experiences of multiple stakeholders. It endeavors to provide and protect spaces within evaluation for multiple accounts of program value, but is inherently limited in its ability to guarantee either provision or protection of stakeholder voice, as power remains with the evaluator who is positioned in service to the established representative government.

Ernest House’s Deliberative Democratic Evaluation, with Kenneth Howe

For almost as long as Barry MacDonald, Ernest House has championed a democratic approach to evaluation that takes particular American form as it seeks primarily to address inequities of social class and minority culture and to advance “social justice” in the context at hand and in the broader society (House, 1980, 1993; House & Howe, 1999). House attends specifically to the ways in which evaluation not just influences but actually serves to constitute public decision-making institutions and discourses, and thereby policy directions.

Evaluation always exists within some authority structure, some particular social system. It does not stand alone as simply a logic or a methodology, free of time and space, and it is certainly not free of values or interests. Rather, evaluation practices are firmly embedded in and inextricably tied to particular social and institutional structures and practices. (House & Howe, 2000, p. 3)

Given that evaluation is embedded in the fabric of public decision-making rather than an independent contributor to it, evaluation “should be explicitly democratic” (House & Howe, 2000, p. 4). As such, evaluation can help to constitute a more democratic society.

The character of democracy promoted by House is one of *deliberation in service of social justice*. Historically, House rejected a pluralist model of democracy favored by many liberal social scientists for much of the twentieth century, because it does not attend seriously to the interests of the least advantaged.⁵ In the pluralistic model, “the political system is kept in equilibrium by group elites bargaining for their constituencies and government elites reaching accommodations. There is little need for direct participation by individuals other than to express their demands to their leaders” (House, 1993, p. 118).⁶ However, argued House, pluralism often excludes some stakeholders, usually the “powerless and the poor” (House, 1993, p. 121) because there are no special provisions for their inclusion. Further, “many critical issues never arise for discussion, study, or evaluation . . . [In particular] fundamental issues involving conflicts of interest often do not evolve into public issues because they are not formulated” (House, 1993, pp. 121–122). (This discussion of House’s views on democratic theories is continued below under “Rationale.”)

In collaboration with philosopher colleague Kenneth Howe, House has most recently presented a *deliberative democratic* model for evaluation (House & Howe, 1999, 2000). This model intentionally insures that the *interests* of all stakeholders, specifically those of the powerless and the poor, are respectfully included.⁷ And it prescribes procedures by which stakeholders interests are articulated, shared, and advanced in evaluation, even when, or perhaps especially when, they conflict. These procedures rest on three inter-related principles: *inclusion*, *dialog*, and *deliberation*. Inclusion means that the interests of all legitimate stakeholders are included in the evaluation. “The most basic tenet of democracy is that all those who have legitimate, relevant interests should be included in decisions that affect those interests” (House & Howe, 2000,

p. 5). Dialog (among stakeholders) is offered as the process through which the *real or authentic interests*, as compared to the perceived interests, of diverse stakeholders are identified. And deliberation is the rational, cognitive process by which varying, even conflicting stakeholder claims are negotiated. These may be claims of values, interpretations of evaluation results, or action implications. Deliberation means that all such claims are subject to reasoned discussion, with evidence and argument. In deliberative democratic evaluation thus, the evaluator's role is crucial and challenging, as he/she is charged with insuring these principles of inclusion, dialogue, and deliberation through skillful facilitation and diplomatic leadership.

Rationale

The epistemological rationale underlying House's ideas about deliberative democratic evaluation fundamentally involves a rejection of the fact-value dichotomy and thus the possibility of a value-free evaluative science. Instead, "we contend that evaluation incorporates value judgments (even if implicitly) both in the methodological frameworks [see also House, 1993, chapter 8 on "methodology and justice"] and in the concepts employed, concepts such as 'intelligence' or 'community' or 'disadvantaged'" (House & Howe, 1999, p. 5). Also rejecting both extreme relativism (radical constructivism) and post modernism as viable frameworks for a value-engaged evaluation practice, House & Howe (1999) emphasize the importance of legitimizing values as intrinsic to evaluative knowledge claims, but also subjecting them to reasoned deliberation, using appropriate rules of evidence, argument and negotiation.

The question then becomes, what values should evaluation promote? In response, House has argued for fundamental democratic

values, namely social justice and equality. The quotation from Howe at the beginning of this chapter attests to the defensibility of democratic value choices. Specifically, House & Howe advance a modified version of political-moral theorist John Rawls' egalitarian formulation of distributive social justice (Rawls, 1971). Rawls' original principles of justice (a) call for equal liberties for all persons and (b) address social and economic inequalities so that the greatest benefits accrue to the least advantaged, while also attached to opportunities fairly open to all. This conception of justice protects the interests of the least advantaged by allowing unequal distribution of resources under conditions of "fair equality of opportunity." Yet, recognizing that these principles exclude the "least advantaged" from defining their own needs and negotiating for themselves the distribution of societal goods, the revised egalitarian position refocuses equality as a principle of democratic *participation* (rather than only one of distribution, Guttman, 1987). Equality in this view refers not just to the distribution of goods but also to the status and voice of the participants, in part to enable meaningful participation in the democratic process by all.⁸ "Goods, along with needs, policies, and practices, are investigated and negotiated in collaboration, with democratic deliberation functioning as an overarching ideal" (House & Howe, 1999, p. 108; see also Howe, 1997). And so, deliberative democratic evaluation advances "an egalitarian ... conception of justice that seeks to equalize power in arriving at evaluative conclusions" regarding effective social programs and policies (House & Howe, 1999, p. 134).⁹

Major Implications for Practice, with Illustrations

Deliberative democratic evaluation importantly aims to be "objective," in the sense of being

impartial and unbiased, that is, equitably inclusive of all important interests and perspectives. “Objective” in this theory further means to be rational or reasoned through both the methodological canons of the discipline and through the interactive and argumentative processes of dialog and deliberation.

Beyond this, guidelines for deliberative democratic practice emphasize evaluative processes and commitments related to the major tenets of this theory, rather than any particular questions, methods, or procedures. Specifically, 10 questions are offered to guide the deliberative democratic evaluator: (1) Whose interests are represented? (2) Are major stakeholders represented? (3) Are any major stakeholders excluded? (4) Are there serious power imbalances? (5) Are there procedures to control power imbalances? (6) How do people participate in the evaluation? (7) How authentic is their participation? (8) How involved is their interaction? (9) Is there reflective deliberation? (10) How considered and extensive is the deliberation? (House & Howe, 1999, p. 113).

Instances of deliberative democratic evaluation in practice remain rare, perhaps because it is acknowledged to be an idealized theory (House & Howe, 1999, p. 111), though see Howe & Ashcraft (in press) for one example. At the same time, many evaluators with similar political commitments have both espoused and endeavored to implement particular features of this evaluation theory. Tineke Abma, for example, has conducted a number of evaluations featuring stakeholder dialog (Abma, 2001a). Some of her work suggests that constructing narratives to represent evaluation findings and engaging stakeholders in dialogs about these narratives is a promising approach to meaningful dialog with authentic stakeholder participation (Abma, 2001b).

Ove Karlsson (1996) has also used dialogs in evaluation, particularly to engage stakeholders in developing deeper understandings of program advantages and disadvantages,

especially for intended beneficiaries. Karlsson’s work indicated that a significant challenge in implementing a meaningful, equitable dialog is that stakeholders come to the table with differential resources for participation (and see Guba & Lincoln, 1989). In this regard, Cheryl MacNeil (2000, 2002) has experimented with the idea of implementing deliberative forums for negotiation of important evaluative findings and action implications, in conjunction with some advance coaching to prepare for these forums for stakeholders with limited verbal fluency or limited experience in articulating their own ideas, views, and stances.

Deliberative democratic evaluation is a challenging ideal to implement because existing arrangements of power and privilege render equitable, authentic participation by all stakeholders difficult to actualize. But, of course, the very point of this theory is to conduct evaluations that help to rearrange (redistribute) power and privilege in more just and equitable ways.

Critique

House & Howe’s deliberative democratic evaluation aspires to help constitute a socially just and equitable society in which all citizens actively and authentically participate in rationale deliberation about their common and conflicting interests toward reasonable agreement about appropriate public decisions and directions. As an important societal institution, evaluation is both constituted by and helps to constitute this just and rational democracy. And the evaluator contributes professional methodological skills but more importantly facilitation in conducting authentic dialogs and meaningful deliberations and strong advocacy for democracy and an egalitarian conception of justice.

This vision is acknowledged by its own authors as idealistic and difficult to implement wholesale in today’s democracies, with their special-interest politics and sound-byte media domination. But, to conduct evaluation in the

absence of this kind of democratic vision is “to endorse the existing social and power arrangements implicitly and to evade professional responsibility” (House & Howe, 1999, p. 111). So, the ideal can still serve as useful guide and framework for evaluation practice.

More substantively, some critics, even with closely allied evaluation theories (Kushner, 2000; Stake, 2000) do not agree that the promotion of democracy is the main purpose of evaluation and further worry about the imposition of the evaluator’s own values in the process of judging quality, which they see as a form of advocacy and activism. And advocacy remains irreconcilable with notions of respectable evaluation in most evaluation communities. (Datta (1999, 2000) has written especially thoughtfully on the intersections of evaluation and advocacy.) Other critics, notably Arens & Schwandt (2000) express concerns that the dialogic and deliberative strands of this theory require further development (along lines of reciprocity, for example) lest they risk “covert domination – a hegemonic process cloaked in pseudo-participation” (p. 333). (Similar concerns are raised about participatory evaluation, as noted below.) And finally, there are those who argue that House & Howe do not go far enough in envisioning an evaluation process with strong potential for meaningful social change. As described in the sections that follow, these arguments include challenges to the expert status and authority of the evaluator and challenges to the assumptive framework within which evaluative knowledge is generated, including the critical and actionable strands of such a framework.

Extending Historical Legacies in Ideologically Based Evaluation: Participation and Social Critique

There are two additional major clusters of conceptual ideas in ideologically based evaluation

that have grown up alongside the ideas of MacDonald and House but have drawn their primary inspiration from other traditions in social research. These two clusters, which relate to stakeholder participation and empowerment and structural social critique, respectively – are interconnected and overlapping, but discussed here separately, highlighting both commonalities and differences.

Participatory Evaluation

Originally influenced by trends and developments from outside the evaluation field, notably, participatory research and then participatory action research, especially in contexts of international development in the southern hemisphere (Fals-Borda, 1980; Freire, 1970; Hall, 1981), participatory approaches to evaluation directly engage the *micro-politics* of power by involving stakeholders in important decision-making roles within the evaluation process itself. Multiple, diverse stakeholders – most importantly, stakeholders from the least powerful groups – collaborate as co-evaluators in evaluations, often as members of an evaluation team. All collaborators in participatory evaluation share authority and responsibility for decisions about evaluation planning (key evaluation questions, evaluation design and methods), implementation (data collection and analysis), and interpretation and action implications. The primary intention of such participation is individual and group stakeholder agency and empowerment, towards the broader ideal of social change in the distribution of power and privilege.¹⁰ Participatory “evaluation is conceived as a developmental process where, through the involvement of less powerful stakeholders in investigation, reflection, negotiation, decision making, and knowledge creations, individual participants and power dynamics in the sociocultural milieu are changed” (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998, p. 9).

A leading theorist-practitioner of participatory evaluation is Elizabeth (Bessa) Whitmore, who has used her social work facilitation skills in excellent service of participatory evaluation in varied contexts (Whitmore, 1991, 1994, 1998). Many of the ideas about participatory evaluation advanced in this section come from Whitmore's work. The empowerment evaluation theory of David Fetterman (2001) is also part of this tradition. Fetterman's work extends the concept of empowerment to the ideal of self-determination, so that the primary purpose of evaluation becomes individual and group self-determination through evaluation participation and capacity building. And Egon Guba & Yvonna Lincoln's (1989) fourth-generation evaluation approach is also connected to this tradition (although it more accurately straddles the participatory and critical/emancipatory traditions). While not an explicitly participatory approach, fourth-generation evaluation seeks authentic, localized constructions of program knowledge from multiple and diverse stakeholders through a dialogic process in which the evaluator serves as negotiator. Legitimizing diverse voices and multiple knowledge constructions are core ambitions of fourth-generation evaluation.

Rationale

As noted, participatory evaluation shares significant history with the frameworks and ideologies underlying international development. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, multiple challenges arose to the dominant development paradigms, which were perceived by development workers, advocates, and others as exploitive, fostering dependency, narrowly focused on macro-economics, and divorced from urgent local problems of human suffering due to poverty, lack of education, and disease. Development workers

and researchers/evaluators alike found welcome responses to their disillusion with dominant development paradigms in the liberatory ideas of adult educator Paolo Freire (1970), the action-oriented ideas of action researchers like Orlando Fals-Borda (1980) and Budd Hall (1981), and the participatory research ideas of Rajesh Tandon (1981) and, in the US, John Gaventa (1980), among others. Collectively, these ideas called for people's own participation in the construction of knowledge regarding their own lives, including the experiences and effects of development interventions on their lives. Not only are people legitimate authors of their own life stories, but enabling such authorship can itself generate greater efficacy and empowerment among those targeted by development efforts. Moreover, the knowledge to be constructed should be "actionable" knowledge with intrinsic action implications and directions, in contrast to abstract or conceptual knowledge that requires separate application to practice. In these ways, participatory evaluation of development efforts can promote values of respect and equity, serve empowerment aims, and thereby encourage development programs to do the same.

Beyond these specific political and philosophical bases, participatory evaluation shares with critical evaluation (discussed in the next section) justifications in broader radical and emancipatory traditions of philosophy and ideology. These include the theories of Marx, Gramsci, Habermas, and other critical social scientists. From these theories, participatory evaluators understand that "working to achieve emancipation requires more than a textured criticism of oppressive structures. Emancipation demands action and radical change firmly grounded in, but not obfuscated by, theory. Activity gives meaning to the theory, and the melding of both in praxis gives inquiry not only a political but a moral and ethical significance." Further, participatory

evaluators “begin, continue, and end with the individuals whose lives are at the center of the evaluation ... The ethical starting point is equity in research relationships ... [by which individuals can] work collectively toward understanding of one’s self, one’s place in the world, the societal conditions that permit change” (Brisolera, 1998, pp. 30–31).

So, central to conceptualizations of participatory evaluation is the importance of broadening the bases and control of knowledge production to include the people who are the objects of evaluation, thereby facilitating their empowerment.¹¹ People are empowered, that is, “through participation in the process of constructing and respecting their own knowledge (based on Freire’s notion of ‘conscientization’) and through their understanding of the connections among knowledge, power, and control” (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998, p. 8). (See Brisolera, 1998, for further discussion of these sociopolitical and philosophical roots of participatory evaluation.)

Implications for Practice, with Illustrations

“It’s the process that counts” (Whitmore, 1991). That is, what matters most in participatory evaluation practice is the process and experience of stakeholder participation and its enablement of empowerment. This process is intrinsically valued for its empowerment potential, over and above the evaluative results and reports. Most importantly, “participatory evaluation is a set of principles and a process, not a set of tools or techniques (Burke, 1998, p. 55).

Given its connections to the vast enterprise of international development, participatory evaluation has a rich practical history, in contrast to other democratically oriented evaluative approaches. Accompanying this history are many thoughtful reflections on the promises and challenges of participatory evaluation in the field, reflections that honor

its commitment to principles and process. Samples of these follow, as illustrations of many of the major themes in this literature.

Reflecting on multiple participatory evaluations of local community-based programs (primarily in the fields of education, youth development and child care provision), Greene (1997) asserted that “in its ideal form, participatory evaluation intentionally involves all legitimate stakeholder interests in a collaborative, dialogic inquiry process that enables the construction of contextually meaningful knowledge, that engenders the personal and structural capacity to act on that knowledge, and that seeks action that contributes to democratizing social change” (p. 174). Greene’s attention to the consequentialist character of meaningful stakeholder participation is echoed by many, as action is directly connected to the empowerment agenda of this approach. Burke (1998), for example, asserted that a participatory evaluation process “must ... be useful to the program’s end users ... [and] rooted in [their] concerns, issues, and problems” (p. 44). And Guba & Lincoln’s fourth-generation evaluation approach is oriented around the “concerns, claims, and issues” of participating stakeholders.

More broadly in the domain of participatory evaluation of development assistance, Reiben (1996) offered a set of criteria for distinguishing genuine from more token forms of participation (though see Gregory, 2000 for a critique of these ideas):

1. Stakeholders must have an active role as subjects in the evaluation process, that is, they identify information needs and design the terms of reference, rather than have a merely passive role as objects of mere sources of data.
2. As it is practically impossible to actively include all stakeholders in the evaluation process, at least the representatives of beneficiaries,

project field staff, project management, and the donor should participate.

3. Stakeholders should participate in at least three stages of the evaluation process: designing terms of reference, interpreting data, and using evaluation information.

These criteria can be readily mapped onto Cousins & Whitmore's (1998) conceptual emphasis on depth of stakeholder participation, range of stakeholders who participate, and degree of stakeholder vs. evaluator control of the evaluation process, respectively, as critical dimensions of participatory evaluation.

Regarding who should actually participate in participatory evaluation, Mathison (1996) has challenged the field to consider forming evaluation teams with varying numbers of stakeholders that correspond to each group's overall size in the context at hand. For example, a participatory evaluation in an educational context would have many more students and parents than teachers or administrators. Mathison also discusses the problematic nature of asking stakeholders to represent the views of their group, absent any formal process for such representation (see also Gregory, 2000). In most contexts, participatory evaluators have come to accept that participating stakeholders can only represent themselves, rather than the views of the group to which they belong.¹²

Concerns about who participates are a common practical challenge in participatory evaluation. Far too often, participatory evaluations are initiated with but one or two token participants from the beneficiary group, even though this is the group directly targeted for empowerment. The reasons for this challenge are complex and contextual and often include issues of access, time, location, familiarity and comfort, language and verbal fluency, and overall understanding. Even when participation is framed in ways more familiar and comfortable to beneficiaries, their participation

(and consequent empowerment) are the evaluator's agenda, not theirs. Seigart's (1999) extraordinary but ultimately unsuccessful efforts to recruit beneficiaries (parents) for her participatory evaluation of a school-based health clinic well illustrate these challenges.

Other practical challenges to participatory evaluation include the facilitation skills needed by the evaluator, possible dissonance between the values intrinsic to participatory evaluation and the values embodied in a given program and its context (Coghlan, 1998; VanderPlaat, 1995), the time demands on program staff for participation, and the challenges of conducting an evaluation that requires active staff and beneficiary participation in an organization that lacks an evaluative culture (Brisolera, 1997) or in a local context with conflicting demands from a national evaluation (Biott & Cook, 2000).

Critique

Participatory evaluation in theory aspires to a participatory form of democracy, in which meaningful participation becomes constitutive of genuine citizenship, both privileges and responsibilities therein (Barber, 1984). There are significant practical challenges to implementing meaningful and effective participatory evaluation, probably because it is more an orientation and commitment to a set of principles than a clearly defined set of procedures. But, even in theory, its reach is limited. Participatory evaluation concentrates on individual empowerment or on changing individuals, primarily within a time-limited evaluation process, with little planned carryover to issues of voice and power outside the evaluation or after it is over, or few concentrated efforts to change institutions and practices of decision-making. Meanings of empowerment also remain unclear and often unrealized or more imposed than authentically enabled.

At the same time, participatory evaluation importantly legitimizes multiple sources of knowledge and multiple and diverse knowledge producers. Participatory evaluation further knits democratic values into the very fabric of evaluative work, positioning evaluation as itself a democratizing practice serving the well-being of those least advantaged in our contemporary societies.

Critical Evaluation

Loosely clustered under the label of “critical evaluation” are several other ideologically oriented evaluation approaches that seek to engage the *macro-politics* of power by focusing evaluation (content *and* process) around societal critique. These evaluation approaches are informed by some form of a critical social science epistemology (Fay, 1987) and endeavor to conduct social analyses that reveal structural injustices and to generate actions that can redress such injustices. Central to all of these approaches are principles of collaboration, critical theorizing and reflection, and political action with a transformative or emancipatory intent. Critical forms share considerable philosophical and ideological ground with participatory evaluation. Among the key differences are that critical evaluation is relatively more oriented toward macro structural issues, compared to the micro emphasis of participatory evaluation; more attentive to the actual substance of the evaluation, compared to participatory evaluation’s emphasis on the process; and politically more radical – compare the agendas of empowerment and emancipation.

Critical forms of evaluation fully situate the social and educational practices being evaluated (as well as evaluation itself as a social practice) in their contested socio-cultural-political contexts. Rejecting the atheoretical idea that “practice exists as a commodity on its

own that can be separated out for study,” critical evaluators see practice as “constructed within legislative, policy, and funding processes and ... shaped through dimensions of class, gender, race, age, sexuality and disability” (Everitt, 1996, p. 174).

Practice is also “continuously negotiated by all those involved [and] people’s interests in practice ... constitute political interests and [thus] may be conceptualized in terms of who loses and who gains” (Everitt, 1996, p. 178). This perspective disrupts taken-for-granted ways of understanding practice and opens the door to evaluative scrutiny of broader societal, especially political structures and discourses, alongside programmatic practices.

The program, project, and practices to be evaluated ... [are] understood as being constructed through discourses, which in turn need to be understood in terms of power: whose interests do they serve? ... Evaluation becomes concerned with contributing to the deconstruction of discourses that serve consistently to render some less powerful than others, and some ways of knowing the world more credible than others. (Everitt, 1996, p. 182)

Critical forms of evaluation are multi-perspectival, respecting a diversity of stakeholder interests and experiences, but they are not completely relativistic. Rather, evaluative judgments of merit or “goodness” are accomplished through processes of stakeholder engagement, dialog, and critical reflection about the practices being evaluated – intertwined with critical theorizing about how power, opportunity, and privilege are constituted, distributed, and maintained in the context at hand (often by discourses outside the context). The evaluator’s role is to facilitate stakeholder engagement, dialog, and reflection and, perhaps most importantly, to contribute the lenses and substance of critical theory. Evaluative judgments in critical evaluation thereby aim to be

transformative, deconstructing inequitable distributions of power and reconstructing them more fairly and justly.

Snapshots of four examples of critical approaches to evaluation are offered next, as these abstract ideas gain clarity through specificity.

Examples of Critical Theories of Evaluation

The *critical evaluation theory* of Everitt & Hardiker (1996) offers several principles for critical evaluation practice in service of differentiating judgments of good, poor, and even corrupt practice. These principles, include, for example, “scepticism of rational-technical modes of practice” and “removal of the ‘otherness’ that may be attributed to those lower in the hierarchy, to users and to those relatively powerless” (Everitt, 1996, pp. 180, 181). In practice, this theory relies primarily on reflective and dialogic methods for generating evidence, accepts that such evidence cannot reveal the one “truth,” and thus turns to political considerations as the basis for making evaluative judgments. “If there are no centers of truth ... then there are only working truths and relative truths. The full participation of those involved in making decisions about what is going on and what should be done is the only way to define non-oppressive, culturally pertinent truths and working, practical judgments” (Howe, 1994, p. 525, cited in Everitt, 1996, p. 186). And so, in this theory, a practice is judged as “good” if it is rooted in development processes and needs identification that themselves are democratic and fair – “having equality as [their] underpinning value and goal” – and if the practice serves to bring about equality, “enabling all people, irrespective of their sex, ethnicity, age, economic position, social class and disability, to flourish and enjoy human well-being” (Everitt, 1996, p. 186). A practice is judged “good enough” if it

is moving in these directions, “poor” if it makes no attempt to meet criteria of democratic equality, and “corrupt” if it is anti-democratic and unfair.

The *communicative evaluation theory* of Niemi & Kemmis (1999) is rooted in Habermas’ theory of communicative action, specifically the character and purpose of public discourse within democracies, and in traditions of participatory action research (PAR) (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). Communicative evaluation aspires to help establish and nurture democratic, public conversational spaces in which “citizens can come together to debate and deliberate, creating discourses that may be critical of the state and that have the potential for contributing to the development of new or different public policies or programs” (Ryan, 2004, p. 451). In practice, communicative evaluation establishes a local site for stakeholder conversation and practical deliberation about locally important program issues. In addition, drawing from PAR traditions, communicative evaluation emphasizes joint ownership of the evaluation, collaboration in evaluation implementation, critical analysis and reflection, and an action orientation. The communicative evaluator’s role is one of enabling and supporting stakeholder conversation and reflection on action.

Merten’s *inclusive evaluation theory* (Mertens, 1999, 2003) is rooted in a “transformative-emancipatory” paradigm and is especially concerned with discrimination, oppression, and other injustices suffered by people in marginalized groups. Inclusive evaluation intentionally seeks to include such people in the evaluation process and to focus key evaluation questions, and thus designs and methods, around their experiences of injustice. For example, an evaluation of an educational curriculum would probe the ways in which gender, age, class, race, ethnicity, sexual preference, and disability status were portrayed in the curriculum, with an eye to discriminatory

portrayals and another eye on possibilities for change. Much like House & Howe's deliberative approach, Mertens' inclusive evaluation strives for objectivity, defined as lack of bias and "achieved by inclusion of all relevant stakeholders in a way that authentic and accurate representations of their viewpoints are considered" (Mertens, 2003, p. 95). Also like House & Howe, the inclusive evaluator retains authority and responsibility for ensuring that "quality evaluation is planned, conducted, and used" (Mertens, 2003, p. 104).

Finally, *feminist perspectives on evaluation* draw their inspiration from feminist theories and feminist politics (Seigart & Brisolera, 2002) and characteristically have two major emphases. First, a feminist lens is centered on the well-being of girls and women, or as expressed in one of Ward's (2002) key principles for conducting feminist evaluation, "Place women and their material realities at the center of evaluation planning and analysis [and] ... understand the problem context from a feminist perspective" (pp. 44, 47). This means that whether or not the program being evaluated seeks specifically to benefit females, a feminist evaluation will ask if and how it does so, or not (much like Mertens' concentrated focus on people from marginalized groups). Second, consistent with all ideologically oriented evaluation approaches, feminist evaluation attends seriously to the evaluation process but gives it a particular feminist cast. A feminist evaluation process is self-consciously collaborative and reciprocal, trusting and caring, and ideally conducted with humility and grace, as these are strong feminist values (Beardsley & Miller, 1992; Ward, 1992).

Critique

Critical approaches to evaluation aspire to engender more participatory and deliberative forms of democratic decision-making, through

a process of assisting people from oppressed groups to realize, understand, and actively seek to change the historical conditions of their oppression. As such, critical evaluation is subject to critiques similar to those offered for democratic and participatory evaluation approaches, including questions of feasibility and acceptance. Moreover, critical approaches to evaluation, more than the others, impose a particular set of values onto the evaluation context and invite stakeholders to engage with these values – those of structural critique and emancipation. Justification for this imposition remains widely sought. In addition, critical evaluation primarily offers theoretical lenses through which existing ways of setting public policies and designing ameliorative programs for those in need are soundly challenged. Alternatives are not as readily offered in these approaches.

At the same time, the critical voice is an essential one. It guards against satisficing and complacency.

Contemporary Developments

Finally, two ideologically oriented contemporary evaluation theories-in-the-making deserve brief mention. Both attend directly to issues of culture and, relatedly, race and ethnicity, and both seek to supersede historical legacies of enslavement and colonization with theories rooted in once-dominated cultures. The first is primarily relevant to racial and ethnic minorities in the US, and the second to indigenous peoples in North America and the Pacific.

Culturally and Contextually Responsive Evaluation

A group of primarily African American scholars in the US has been developing an approach to evaluation that is culturally and contextually

responsive, meaning, consonant with the ways of knowing and ways of being particular to a given minority community in the US. This group includes Henry Frierson (Frierson, Hood, & Hughes, 2002), Rodney Hopson (2000, 2001), Stafford Hood (1998, 2001), and Veronica Thomas and Gerunda Hughes (Thomas & Stevens, 2004a).¹³

Consistent with other race-conscious theories, culturally and contextually responsive evaluation begins from a standpoint that summarily rejects deficit thinking and embraces starting points that emphasize the “strengths” and “assets” of underserved communities. Further, problem identification and definition must be located within the minority community to be served, as racist and discriminatory habits of mind persist in the larger society, despite considerable legal progress (Madison, 1992). What constitutes a social “problem” from the vantage point of the dominant society (say, “at risk” youth) is likely experienced and understood quite differently from within the communities where such youth live (say, youth without meaningful education, recreation or employment opportunities). For similar reasons, the character and logic (or theory) of an intervention designed to ameliorate an identified problem must be grounded in the culture of the context to be served (Madison, 1992). Just who can be a culturally responsive evaluator is an additional issue; significant shared life experience with those being evaluated is an essential qualification, argue many (Hood, 1998, 2001; Thomas, 2004).

To date, the most comprehensive approach to culturally and contextually responsive evaluation has been developed by the group at Howard University. The approach was developed in tandem with the Talent Development Model of (Urban) School Reform (TD), which is a major project of the Howard University Center for Research on the Education of

Students Placed at Risk. The TD program itself is rooted in cultural responsiveness and respect, blending elements from critical pedagogy, school restructuring ideas, and research on the effective education of children of color (Thomas, 2004).

The TD evaluation approach ... seeks to be practical, useful, formative, and empowering for the individuals being served by TD evaluations and to give voice to persons whose perspectives are often ignored, minimized, or rejected in urban school settings. ... [Moreover, the TD] evaluation framework seeks to reposition evaluation in low-income urban contexts as accountable not only for producing accurate and relevant information on the program being evaluated, but also for enabling and contributing to the program’s social betterment and social justice intentions. (Thomas & Stevens, 2004b, p. 1)

[Moreover] standards of evidence for evaluations of TD projects encompass both scientific-methodological and political-activist criteria. (Thomas, 2004, p. 6)

The TD evaluation approach rests on five inter-related major principles (from Thomas, 2004):

1. *Key stakeholders*, including students, parents, teachers, and other school personnel, are authentically *engaged* throughout the evaluation process. “TD evaluators enter the urban school contexts being studied gently, respectfully, and with a willingness to listen and learn in order to plan and implement evaluations better” (p. 8).

2. The substance and process of the evaluation are *co-constructed*. “Co-construction is defined as evaluators’ collaborating and forming genuine partnerships with key urban school stakeholder groups ... and TD project designers and implementers in order to conceptualize, implement, and evaluate school reform efforts in a manner that is responsive to the school’s context Co-construction seeks to democratize

the evaluation process by lessening the implicit, and sometimes explicit, power dynamics between evaluators and project stakeholders” (p. 9). Distinctively, as co-construction suggests, the TD evaluator is an engaged member of a larger evaluation team, all of whom are accountable to the aims of the intervention.

3. TD evaluation attends meaningfully to *culture and context*, where context refers to “the combination of factors (including culture) accompanying the implementation and evaluation of a project that might influence its results, including geographical location, timing, political and social climate, [and] economic conditions” (p. 11). In this regard, TD evaluators must be culturally competent, preferably sharing the same cultural background as those being studied. Having a shared cultural life experience affords greater sensitivity to and understanding of relevant contextual issues.

4. “TD evaluations embrace the underlying philosophy of *responsiveness* found in the literature,” notably, the importance of “respecting, honoring, attending to, and representing stakeholders’ perspectives” (p. 13, emphasis added).

5. Finally, TD evaluators use *triangulation of perspectives* in multiple ways, including triangulation of investigators, methods and measures, target people, and analyses. Triangulation is valued in this approach primarily for its inclusiveness of perspective.

Evaluation by and for Indigenous Peoples

Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s 1999 book entitled *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples* is continuing its significant influence well into the twenty-first century. Smith is a Maori educational scholar from New Zealand. “The ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism

remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world’s colonized peoples” (Smith, 1999, p. 1). In this book, Smith reclaims the meanings of research and knowledge, as well as the right to be a knower, for indigenous peoples. She does so with a relentless critique of Western research on indigenous peoples, followed by an articulation of an indigenous research vision and agenda. This agenda is centered around the goal of indigenous peoples’ self-determination and uses processes of decolonization, healing, mobilization, and transformation, processes “which connect, inform, and clarify the tensions between the local, the regional, and the global” (p. 116). Using the metaphor of oceans, there are also three tides in this research agenda – survival (of peoples, languages, spiritual practices, art), recovery (of land, indigenous rights, histories), and development (of communities, economic opportunities, pride) – representing the ebb and flow of conditions and states of movement on the way to self-determination.

Smith further presents Maori approaches to research, called Kaupapa Maori research. “Kaupapa Maori, however, does not mean the same as Maori knowledge and epistemology. The concept of *kaupapa* implies a way of framing and structuring how we think about ... ideas and practices Kaupapa Maori is a ‘conceptualization of Maori knowledge’” (p. 188). Kaupapa Maori research is informed and guided by Maori philosophy and worldview. It “takes for granted the validity and legitimacy of Maori [and] the importance of Maori language and culture, [and it] is concerned with the struggle for autonomy over our own colonial well being” (p. 185). Kaupapa Maori researchers disagree whether or not non-Maoris can conduct meaningful Kaupapa Maori research.

Reclamation of native epistemologies as frameworks for social and educational research is happening in other locales around

the globe (Cajete, 2000). And evaluators are beginning to use these to develop distinctively indigenous ways of thinking about and conducting evaluation. For example in the US, Joan La France is contributing to efforts to articulate the meanings of culturally competent evaluation “in Indian country,” which include “the importance of understanding the implications of sovereignty ... , the significance of an emerging indigenous framework for evaluation, Indian self-determination in setting the research and evaluation agenda, and ... particular methodological approaches” (LaFrance, 2004, p. 39). Candidates for elements of an indigenous framework for evaluation include the importance of trust (rather than evidence), community, holistic thinking, and from Cajete (2000), a profound “sense of place” and being part of the web of the natural world. In New Zealand, Fiona Cram and colleagues (Cram, Ormond, & Carter, 2004; Cram et al., 2002) are pursuing conceptual and political questions of research ethics for research and evaluation with Maori people, as well as endeavoring to apply Kaupapa Maori in evaluation studies, “as a basis to explore a political, social and cultural analysis of [for example] domestic violence within the context of [domestic violence] programmes” delivered to Maori people by Maori providers (Cram et al., 2002, p. iii). And across the Pacific, indigenous evaluators from New Zealand and Hawaii met together in 2003–2004 to begin to share common visions and possibilities (http://www.kohalacenter.org/ws_pono040116.html and <http://www.ksbe.edu/pase/researchproj-evalhui.php>).

Reprise

The landscape of democratically oriented approaches to evaluation is richly textured. It is rooted in some very important ideas about

knowledge production, legitimacy, and ownership; about the character and role of values in evaluative knowledge generation; and about the connections between evaluation and democratic principles, practices, and institutions. And it is populated today by equally important ideas related to participation and empowerment, dialog and deliberation, public spheres for communication, emancipation and social critique, cultural responsiveness, and self-determination.

Table 5.1 presents a summary of key ideas from each genre of democratically oriented evaluation discussed in this chapter, specifically as related to philosophical framework, views of democracy, and macro and micro positions for evaluation in society. As with any simplified presentation, this table omits important ideas and suggests sharp lines demarcating one genre from another, when actually there are many shared concepts and commitments among them. This table also represents my own sense-making of these complex ideas; others may have differing interpretations. Important sources in the construction of this table were Hanberger (2001) and Ryan (2004).

The meanings of the various kinds of democracy featured in the table are as follows. In a representative democracy, ordinary citizens participate primarily by electing elites, who are empowered to carry out and are responsible for public decision-making. A participatory democracy emphasizes the importance of people’s direct participation in activities and decisions that affect their lives. Such participation is viewed as constitutive of democratic citizenship. And a deliberative democracy emphasizes the importance of communication, dialog, deliberation about public issues among free and equal citizens. This democracy features a commitment to reasoned discourse on matters of public policy in spaces free from domination. The different traditions of democratically oriented evaluation

variously serve one or more of these different conceptualizations of democracy, though with a shared agenda of making the processes and results of public decision-making more inclusive of multiple stakeholder interests and values, more broadly based on multiple stakeholder knowledge, and thereby more likely to provide an equitable and just distribution of goods and services.

Clearly, there are challenges to the premises of democratically oriented evaluation. Many evaluators and evaluation commissioners, especially in the Anglo-American tradition and especially with today's infatuation with technocratic ideas about public accountability, reject out of hand a value-committed stance for evaluation. Instead, these critics believe that standards of impartial objectivity, attained via excellence of method, are needed to support contemporary accountability concepts like performance indicators, results-based management, and evidence-based decision making, all part of the current "climate of control" (McKee & Stake, 2002). Also problematic are the meanings of such lofty ideals as democracy itself, inclusion, social justice, equity, empowerment, self-determination, along with the meanings of such processes as participation, dialog, deliberation, and cultural responsiveness. These concepts must be specifically and contextually defined if democratic approaches to evaluation are to gain any practically meaningful purchase in the field. They currently offer inspiration, much of which remains unrealized in practice.

There are also substantial practical challenges to the implementation of democratically oriented evaluation. These include challenges to the acceptability of ideologically based evaluation among many stakeholders and to the feasibility of its implementation in particular evaluation contexts. Regarding acceptability, persuading evaluation commissioners that it is indeed in their interest to share power more equitably with program

staff and especially beneficiaries is a significant practical hurdle in most evaluation contexts. McKee & Stake call this "paying for trouble making" (2002, p. 134). Persuading the disempowered and marginalized people in a given context that it is also in their interest to (a) participate in the evaluation and (b) share this participatory space with program staff, managers, and others from more powerful groups also poses substantial hurdles in most evaluation contexts. The intensity of the evaluation process in these evaluation approaches presents special challenges of practicability and feasibility. For example, conducting a meaningful participatory or deliberative evaluation within a large-scale, multisite study or within a time-limited study would be difficult at best and likely of limited democratizing value. And even with interested stakeholders and citizens, participation in an evaluation study has to compete with multiple demands and opportunities already present in their lives for professional development, personal commitment, and civic engagement.

Additional practical challenges for implementing democratically oriented evaluation approaches include meaningfully operationalizing lofty democratic ideals and commitments in specific contexts, developing facilitation and dialogic skills in evaluators, creating the time and spaces needed for messy processes like participation and deliberation, and maintaining methodological excellence while advocating for democratic ideals.

Yet, at the end of the day, democratically oriented approaches to evaluation offer considerable promise. They are anchored in a profound acceptance of the intertwinement of values with facts in evaluative knowledge claims and the concomitant understanding that all evaluation is *interested* evaluation, serving some interests but not others. They are also anchored in turn to democratic values as the most defensible interests to be served

in evaluation – democratic values enacted in evaluations designed to serve the public right to know or citizen participation in decisions that affect their lives or reasoned deliberation among diverse stakeholders regarding important policy directions or self-determination among oppressed peoples. These visions position evaluation as itself a democratizing social practice, but not in ways that exclude traditional evaluation audiences like policy-makers and program staff nor reject traditional evaluation roles like gathering credible information useful for program improvement or organizational learning. For democratically oriented evaluation is an inclusive practice, that is distinctive not for its technical methodology, but rather for its societal location in service of democratic ideals and its concomitant evaluator role as a facilitator and advocate of democratic engagement through evaluation.

Notes

1 It should also be acknowledged that many if not most evaluation theorists position their work in service to an open and rational democratic society. These many other theorists characteristically conceptualize evaluation as providing impartial empirical evidence to help public officials make informed and fair decisions about effective policies and programs. As such, they position evaluation on the sidelines of democratic decision-making. What is distinctive about the theorists reviewed in this chapter is their positioning of evaluation as inherently and inevitably entangled with and constitutive of the politics and values of such decision-making.

2 The early roots of Lee Cronbach's vision of an educational role for evaluation are evident here (Cronbach & associates, 1980).

3 In fact, the turn to the case study preceded MacDonald's articulation of democratic evaluation. The 1972 "Cambridge Manifesto", drawn up by a gathering of evaluators at Cambridge University, sought explicitly to legitimize interpretive methods for evaluation and to anchor evaluative work in a public service obligation (see McKee & Stake, 2002). MacDonald was joined in this turn to case

studies and other qualitative methods for evaluation by a number of prominent evaluation theorists, including in the UK Stephen Kemmis, Helen Simons, David Hamilton and Malcolm Parlett, and in the US Robert Stake, Louis Smith, Elliot Eisner, Egon Guba, Yvonna Lincoln, and Ernest House. During this heady, formative era in evaluation, the Centre for Applied Research in Education (CARE) at the British University of East Anglia and the Center for Instructional Research and Curriculum Evaluation (CIRCE) at the American University of Illinois both served as vital sources of energy and creativity for new developments in evaluation theory. Many of these evaluation scholars gathered a number of times at CARE and CIRCE to share ideas and support, thus catalyzing the rich and highly influential body of work generated during this era.

4 Examples of these principles include: "No participant will have unilateral right or power of veto over the content of the report." "The perspectives of all participants and interested observers have a right to be considered in the evaluation." "The process of negotiation of accounts will, where necessary, be phased to protect participants from the consequences of one-way information flow. Parts of a report may first be negotiated with relevant individuals who could be disadvantaged if the report were negotiated as whole with all participants." (McTaggart, 1991, pp. 10–11.)

5 At this time, House maintained that American social scientists had been especially reluctant to "recognize social classes as enduring causal entities that influence life chances in US society" (House, 1993, p. 124), while considerable progress had been made in recognizing gender, race, and ethnicity (and other historical markers of disadvantage and discrimination). House also rejected the libertarian and utilitarian forms of distributive justice within liberal democratic thought.

6 This pluralist model underlay the emergence of stakeholder-based evaluation (Gold, 1983), which explicitly sanctioned the importance of multiple stakeholder perspectives in evaluation, although gave little guidance for the resolution of conflicts among diverse groups (Weiss, 1983).

7 In this theory, "an interest is anything conducive to the achievement of an individual's wants, needs, or purposes, and a need is anything necessary to the survival or well-being of an individual. To be free is to know one's interest; or to possess the ability and resources, or the power and opportunity,

to act toward those interests; and to be disposed to do so" (House, 1993, p. 125).

8 House & Howe's (1999) arguments in favor of a deliberative, participatory vision of democracy also include arguments against views they label technocratic (stripped of values), emotivist (values determined by non-rational means), preferential/utilitarian (all preferences maximized), hyper-egalitarian (all views count the same), and hyper-pluralist (diversity more desirable than consensus).

9 The meaning of "effectiveness" here is surely consonant with the deliberative, participatory conceptualization of justice that frames this evaluation approach – so that a "good" program is one that advances the well-being of the least advantaged and one in which the least advantaged themselves equitably participate in program definitions, decisions, and directions – although this is not explicitly stated.

10 This discussion focuses on "transformative participatory evaluation" and excludes "practical participatory evaluation" (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998). Participation in the latter genre of participatory evaluation is instrumental, designed to enhance evaluation utilization, rather than motivated by ideological agenda. As ideologically oriented evaluation approaches are the focus of this chapter, utilization-oriented participatory evaluation will not be discussed. Similarly, because of its largely instrumental rationale, the early stakeholder model of evaluation (Gold, 1983) is also excluded from this discussion (but see Chapters 3, 12, and 15, this volume, for discussions on stakeholder participation in service of utilization).

11 MacDonald sought to broaden the ownership of and access to the information generated in an evaluation. Participatory evaluation seeks to broaden actual authorship of this information.

12 This challenge of representation is relevant to all democratically oriented evaluation approaches which rest on stakeholder participation or engagement.

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