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AUSTRALASIAN
EVALUATION
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Indigenous evaluation: an editorial review

Rosalind Hurworth and Graeme Harvey, *Editors*

For the first issue of 2012 we bring you a special edition of *EJA* that deals with evaluation in indigenous settings. But before we present some new articles in this field, we felt that it would be interesting to review what has been published and discussed on the topic to date (especially in *EJA*) and to see how the area of indigenous evaluation has evolved in Australasia. This task has involved a search along our shelves, as well as a more formal library search that has resulted in material that goes back more than 30 years.

The first references to evaluations amongst indigenous groups appear to have come under the umbrella of the need for *cross-cultural awareness* (Brislin & Segall 1975; Kumar 1979; Patton 1985).

In Australasia, one of the first references we could find concerning working with indigenous groups and of being culturally aware appeared in *EJA* in 1993. At this time, Westwood and Brous wrote a reflective piece based on the experience of conducting field work that required working with a 'non-mainstream cultural group'. The article used the authors' evaluation experiences to provide some lessons for evaluation practice. They determined that such evaluations need to consider: cultural taboos; sensitive issues; language; functional differences and lifestyle; but noted particularly that 'whilst this seems logical, in practice it can be difficult to apply' (Westwood & Brous 1993, p. 43).

In a similar vein, and still about cross-cultural awareness, Patricia Rogers (1995) writes about Ernie House's (1992) article, published in the *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation* where, in a discussion about stakeholder approaches to evaluation, he suggested that evaluators need to consider minority groups carefully. Ernie pointed out the difficulty of integrating the divergent (and often conflicting views) of different subgroups within minorities and that by outsiders treating all those within a minority group as 'the same' can lead to domination of decision-making by the most powerful subgroups—and therefore to a dissolution of any democratic process.

Such writing of the time gives the impression, though, that many (Western) evaluators remained somewhat aloof from the indigenous people receiving programs (e.g. Adhikari & Yik 1999). Indeed, Neale and Tavila (2007) continue to be concerned about this and so raise the issue of who carries out, or benefits from, an evaluation because 'indigenous communities have a long history of being seen as the "other" where they are researched "on" and their experience interpreted by outsiders through a different lens' (Smith 1999).

This was certainly the case for three of the articles written as a section of *EJA* in 1997 ('Indigenous perspectives', *EJA*, vol. 9, nos. 1&2, pp. 24–61). For

instance, projects undertaken in Australasia at that time did not mention the possibility of recipients becoming full-blown evaluators. This was even the case when evaluations were undertaken by (the then) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). As a manager in the Office of Evaluation and Audit in ATSIC described:

program recipients often are the least able to become fully involved in the evaluation process. This is because they are scattered in space, a national diaspora of individuals and competing service delivery groups, and limited in their familiarity with bureaucratic processes. (Batho 1993, p. 35)

The only involvement in an evaluation, therefore, that a recipient was likely to be allowed was to become an elected community representative sitting on a Steering Committee. Rather patronisingly, it was added that: 'Although the Commission's clients are not formally involved in evaluations, their views are actively sought by evaluation teams' (Batho, p. 35).

This 'external' perspective has not only been the case for Australasian indigenous groups because *EJA* has published work from other areas of the world such as pieces concerning the First Nations of Canada (Barrados 1999—an adaptation of her keynote address delivered at the 1999 AES International Conference, Perth). There again, what was written/spoken about was from the perspective of the external, non-indigenous evaluator's point of view (this was also the case for Wheeler 2007). However, Barrados raises the need for *cultural relevance* and identifies useful lessons for an external, non-indigenous evaluator such as:

- recognising and understanding the cultural dynamics of the situation
- determining the commitment of the indigenous community and its leaders to evaluation
- ensuring that there is a common understanding of the different requirements from within the indigenous community from those imposed externally (Barrados 1999, p. 36).

Moving from these ideas of making evaluations culturally relevant then changed into calls for evaluators to become '*culturally competent*'. Certainly cultural competence became important enough for the American Evaluation Association to dedicate a whole issue of *New Directions for Evaluation* to it entitled 'In Search of Cultural Competence in Evaluation' by the middle of the 2000s (Thompson-Robinson, Hopson & SenGupta 2004), but it was still directed mainly at non-indigenous evaluators.

Even with attempts at cultural competence, there were still concerns about how to reconcile tensions between trying to be aware and knowledgeable about indigenous culture and principles while trying to follow them in evaluation practice. Scougall (2006) described this dilemma succinctly:

The expectations placed on an evaluator working in an Indigenous context are often great. The ideal is someone: in close relationship with the community; employing culturally sensitive methods; fostering broad community involvement; transferring evaluation skills; and contributing to a process of empowerment and positive change. The hard reality is that evaluators are most often outsiders with limited resources and precious little time to spend in the field. By 'outside' I mean someone not of the people, culture and place. They are typically short on contextual understandings and need to work across many project sites. This precludes the possibility of any real bonding with participants. Furthermore, outsiders often struggle to 'hear' correctly and to elicit meaningful information from Indigenous people due to cultural barriers and poor rapport. Perhaps only a handful of locals will choose to become more than peripherally involved in an evaluation. These are major impediments that give rise to very real tensions between evaluation principles and practice. (Scougall 2006, Abstract)

There has also been a call for '*cultural appropriateness*'. However, Thomas (2002) points out that 10 years ago such action was often ignored (the only exceptions in Australasia seeming to be Faisandier & Bunn, 1997—where two parallel programs, one for Māori and another for non-Māori were set up to reduce alcohol addiction—Gray et al., 1995, and Mooney, Jan & Wiseman, 2002). Referring to New Zealand specifically:

the assessment of the cultural appropriateness of the service being evaluated is rarely mentioned ... [Yet] evaluators have been increasingly required to demonstrate that their research approach is consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi and responsive to the needs of Indigenous Māori people and other non-dominant ethnic groups such as those of Pacific descent. This requires attention to at least two aspects of an evaluation: (1) the appropriate design of research methods and conduct of the evaluation team; and (2) assessment of the extent to which programs and services operate in culturally appropriate ways. There has been relatively little discussion of how these aspects might be incorporated into the design of evaluations. (Thomas 2002, Abstract)

To address the second point, Thomas (2002, p. 53) suggests that to be culturally apposite requires: appropriate practice management; staff training; use of cultural advisers; the creation of networks with local indigenous groups; and liaison with specialist service providers. In conclusion, Thomas presented a framework for assessing cultural appropriateness including key components and potential indicators.

One solution to such issues has been a 'side-by-side' arrangement that involves partnering a local indigenous

worker with local cultural knowledge alongside a non-indigenous non-evaluator with relevant qualifications. This was supposed to produce a 'balanced' evaluation team. But the problem remained that work was still being carried out 'on' 'indigenous groups' and the challenge remained to enable indigenous groups to drive their own destinies. Consequently, indigenous authors have long advocated a realignment of power relations between researchers and evaluators (Taylor 2003, p. 48).

This translated into the beginnings of positive action. One of the major authors suggesting a change within Australia was Scougall (1997, p. 53) who stressed that:

Evaluation only becomes relevant to Aboriginal people when it is conceived of as a process that enables communities to understand their situation better, give voice to their own issues and concerns and determine a direction forward.

and therefore, decisions should not be taken by the 'dominant culture' (Scougall 1997, p. 59).

Scougall (2008) also reported that FaCSIA (the then Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) had convened an Indigenous Community Capacity Building Roundtable in 2000 that produced eight principles to guide evaluations with Indigenous families and communities. These comprised:

- encouraging partnerships between government and Indigenous people in program design and implementation
- identifying positive role models and successful approaches
- empowering Indigenous people through developing leadership and managerial competence
- targeting youth and children in regard to leadership development, esteem building, etc.
- building on the strengths, assets and capacities of Indigenous families and communities
- empowering Indigenous people to develop their own issues
- giving priority to initiative that encourage self-reliance and sustainability
- fostering projects that consider Indigenous culture and spirituality (Scougall 2008, p. 4).

Similarly, Sanga and Pasikale (2002) articulated principles for any evaluation activity with Pacific islanders including:

- maintenance of dignity
- creation of enduring relationships rather than sporadic encounters
- good communication
- reciprocity where possible
- empowerment.

In the light of such sentiments there was then a push for *more participatory and collaborative evaluations* and EJA began to report projects that attempted to incorporate such approaches (e.g. Neale & Tavila

2007), even in challenging circumstances (such as Spooner, Flaxman & Murray's, 2008, involvement in an Aboriginal boys' crime prevention program).

But at the turn of the new millennium, the desire for indigenous groups to take ownership of their own destinies grew; sometimes with the help of others. For example, McIntyre (2002) acted as a facilitator and empowerment coach of Indigenous facilitators who were developing a Community of Practice for a process evaluation involving governance of an Aboriginal public housing association.

However, the winds of change began to blow in more strongly, with indigenous groups taking charge of their own evaluations and so becoming more influential in their own right. The watershed and great stride forward occurred in the evaluation world about a decade ago, in 2003, when the AES Board of the day identified indigenous evaluation as a strategic objective. (In a later article, Nan Wehipeihana, 2008, described the factors leading up to this decision, as well as future strategies required).

In the same year (2003), Russell Taylor was asked to give a Keynote Address at the AES International Conference in Auckland. Called 'An Indigenous Perspective on the Inter-Cultural Context', the content concentrated on the idea of renewing ethical evaluation practices when working within inter-cultural contexts (Taylor 2003). This was a real milestone in that it was the first time an Indigenous person literally took centre stage to speak about indigenous evaluation.¹

As part of the same event, a two-day indigenous 'Wānanga' (forum) was held. The purpose was to discuss developments, issues and other themes relevant to evaluations involving Indigenous people. Wolfgramm, Oliver & Akroyd (2003) reported that topics covered included building community capacity in evaluation and issues in the development of a *Kaupapa Māori* evaluation framework, that is, to undertake evaluation from an indigenous viewpoint.

This work has begun to bear fruit, especially in regard to *indigenous evaluation frameworks*. For example, Boulton & Kingi (2011) reflected on the use of a Māori conceptual framework from which to evaluate a complex health policy regarding obesity. This approach considers: Māori: Development; Autonomy; Delivery; Leadership; Integration; Responsiveness; and Environmental perspectives. The authors discuss the usefulness of employing such a framework and conclude that it:

not only provided a practical analytical tool for Indigenous evaluators, but also the means by which the wider team could ensure rigorous and robust data analysis, thereby guaranteeing the production of relevant findings for the commissioners. (Boulton & Kingi 2011, p. 1)

And so we come to the current issue. In the first article, the necessity for culturally competent evaluation is called for once again but continues to emphasise how it must come from the indigenous viewpoint. In her article, Sandy Kerr extends the work of Boulton and Kingi to show how historically held values, rules and customs reflected in *Kaupapa Māori* (i.e. 'carrying

out things properly from a Māori standpoint') have underpinned the development of *Kaupapa Māori* theory. This 'theory' has then provided a platform for the emergence of a framework for the practice of evaluation in the context of the evaluation of Māori programs in Aotearoa New Zealand. Six principles evident in this practice are discussed (i.e. the principles of control, challenge, culture, connection, change and credibility). The relationship of these principles with Māori culture, the work of *Kaupapa Māori* theorists, and their congruence with broader contemporary evaluation theory is explored.

Next, Anne Markiewicz uses her experience to reflect on issues to be considered when evaluating programs for Indigenous Australians. From the perspective of a non-Indigenous evaluator, the four principles of respect, relevance, responsibility and reciprocity (based on the research framework of Evans et al., 2009, developed in British Columbia) are examined against the background of the unique historical, social, economic and psychological conditions that have shaped the experience of Indigenous Australians. While the principles outlined may be seen as core to effective evaluation generally, the issue of building trust between the evaluator and Indigenous community members is seen as a necessity. Each of the principles is then elaborated upon to reflect an Australian perspective and to provide evaluators with strategies to implement these.

The two following articles (by Maya Haviland with James Pillsbury, and Megan Price et al.) provide case studies of particular, individual evaluations and explore the issues, challenges and learnings from these projects. Both evaluations were undertaken in Western Australia and mutually reinforce the need for continuous learning of all stakeholders in order to build an understanding of effective indigenous evaluation practice.

In their evaluation of the Jalaris Kids Future Club, Haviland and Pillsbury highlight some of the issues encountered in: identifying appropriate and non-discriminatory benchmarks for measuring outcomes for Indigenous children; collecting evidence through culturally appropriate methods; and being sensitive to local kinship networks and the relationships between these. In particular, their article indicates the need for flexibility and responsiveness in supporting the evaluation process. They also outline the challenges that distance and resourcing can pose when attempting to develop evaluation partnerships and build evaluation capacity as part of a participatory approach.

Last, Price, McCoy and Mafi focus on the need for Aboriginal² community ownership and empowerment to be integral to the evaluation process. As non-Aboriginal evaluators working with remote communities, this article identifies a number of messages. Of these, the need to build (and often rebuild) trust is paramount. This requires time and, in this case, the use of an intermediary or 'sponsor' to support communication and build perceptions of legitimacy with stakeholders was found to be a valuable strategy.

Appropriate methodology was also perceived to be key—during which the use of an iterative approach was seen to assist the building of contextual understanding and constructive engagement with community members.

Varied approaches to the collection of data, including the use of art-based methods, proved successful in providing communities with the means to tell their stories in culturally appropriate ways. More importantly, the authors indicate the importance of engaging continually in reflexive practice to allow for adaptability in the evaluation process so that it remains effective and meets the needs of all stakeholders.

Well, that brings you all up to the minute with current topics and exemplars associated with indigenous issues. By the time this issue reaches you all, the AES International Conference in Adelaide will be upon us. We hope this generates some new material for Issue 12/2 at the end of the year. We are also interested in acquiring articles on Evaluation in the International Development Sector as there are likely to be many presentations on this topic during the conference and this could form the next 'Special Issue'.

Notes

- 1 This has continued with Fiona Cram, for example, talking at the AES Perth International Conference about Māori frameworks of evaluation (Cram 2008).
- 2 Price et al. note that the word 'Aboriginal' rather than 'Indigenous' is used in their article as this is the preference of the Aboriginal communities they have worked with.

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*All material published in AES journals has been highlighted in bold.

Kaupapa Māori theory-based evaluation

In an environment where Māori approaches to evaluation are developing quickly, with ever-widening influence, this article is an attempt to capture the theoretical roots of Kaupapa¹ Māori evaluation approaches. From a range of Kaupapa Māori theorists, six principles are drawn and their relevance to evaluation theory and practice is discussed. These principles are then mapped to major movements in evaluation theory, illustrating how Kaupapa Māori theory-based evaluation, arising as a unique praxis within the context of Aotearoa² New Zealand, has strong alignment with international developments.

Introduction

Kaupapa Māori theory (i.e. carrying things out properly from a Māori standpoint) has provided a theoretically sound platform from which unique evaluation theory and practices have been developing in Aotearoa New Zealand. The first part of this article describes the evolution of Kaupapa Māori program evaluation from its roots in Kaupapa Māori theory. Drawing on the work of a range of theorists working in this field, six key principles of Kaupapa Māori theory are outlined and their application to program evaluation are discussed. The second section demonstrates the place of such theory in evaluation generally, by drawing parallels with the development of evaluation internationally.

Theory in evaluation

Theory is integral to evaluation, as it is the point at which evaluation is able to define its purpose, parameters and, to a certain extent, its modus operandi (Alkin 2004; Scriven 1991). All evaluators are concerned with theory even if it is informal and implicit because it is theory that defines what evaluation actually is, who is involved and how it is practised. Fundamentally, it is theory that decides what can legitimately be observed and what can be evaluated (Scriven 1991, 2003).

Furthermore, theory has moved the program evaluation field forward from perceiving its function in terms of assessment to meet management decision-making needs (originating with the early educational evaluation of Ralph Tyler (1942)), towards approaches that seek to affect policy and practice for the betterment of people, that is, through evaluation theorists such as House and Howe (2000) (Alkin 2004; Scriven 2003). It is theory that precipitated the move from the acceptance of an external reality and absolute truth towards belief in multiple socially constructed realities, and all that that entails. It is theory that now takes us deep into the minefield of what development ('betterment') is, on what basis, and who decides. It is theory too that is able to help explain and make sense of the complexities involved in embracing a multiplicity of diverse 'socially constructed' realities for as Mataira (2003) points out:

Deconstruction of complex constructs requires a theoretical premise. Thus, the layering of theory upon empirical observation allows us to see how these are influenced, and in turn how they influence political social environmental and economic environments.

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So, theory serves many and diverse purposes in evaluation. In Kaupapa Māori theory-based program evaluation, one of the key functions of theory is to help make sense of the complex world in which we live. Certainly, by its very name and nature, Kaupapa Māori theory has its own unique characteristics and epistemological understandings for making sense within Māori contexts (Moewaka Barnes 2000; Smith 1997).

Kaupapa Māori theory

The term ‘Kaupapa Māori’ is used to describe all manner of Māori undertakings and Māori-focused endeavours, and should be distinguished from Kaupapa Māori theory.³ Kaupapa Maori theory is relatively new, emerging from ‘organic community processes’ (Pihama 2001, p. 100) within the education field in the late 1980s and into the 1990s. ‘Kaupapa Māori is not new, having its origins ‘in a history that reaches back thousands of years’ (IRI 2000, p. 3). According to Mereana Taki (Taki 1996, p. 17, cited in IRI 2000, p. 3) the concept of kaupapa means ‘ground rules, customs, the right way of doing things’.

Kaupapa Māori existed long before the signing of Aotearoa New Zealand’s founding document, the Treaty of Waitangi⁴ (Walker 1996). Signed by the British Crown and Māori representatives in 1840, controversy exists over the interpretation of the Treaty, particularly in relation to different versions: a Māori version and an English version. The Treaty is important to Kaupapa Māori theory as the principles contained within the Māori version of the Treaty underpin the argument for the theoretical space occupied by Kaupapa Māori theory, research and evaluation (Pihama 2001; IRI 2000; Walker 1996). Walker (1989) contends that, if *mana whenua* (customary authority exercised by a tribe or sub-tribe) had been the term used in the Treaty of Waitangi instead of the word *kawanatanga* (a translation of governance), Māori would have had a better idea of the Crown’s intention and would have refused to sign. Contention pertaining to the Māori and English translations continues to this day, with Māori arguing that the Māori version is the legitimate version. This is also the legal position in international treaty law. The Māori version expressly preserves the power and autonomy of the chiefs and it is this commitment by the Crown in 1840 that underpins Kaupapa Māori’s self-determination stance with the government.

The term, ‘Kaupapa Māori theory’ was coined in the late 1980s and it has links with critical theory within a constructivist epistemology (Smith 1997).⁵ The linking of ‘Kaupapa Māori with ‘theory’ was an express challenge by Graham Smith, a Māori educationalist at the University of Auckland, to the narrow interpretation of theory as it had been applied in education in Aotearoa New Zealand (Smith 1997). In the process of making this challenge, he opened a space to support Māori academic writing, developing a counter-hegemonic practice that aimed to be transformative for Māori (Smith 1997; IRI 2000). Smith (2003, p. 5) contends that

there are at least five elements necessary for theory to be transformative for Māori:

- 1 It needs to be seen as a potentially useful tool for assisting positive transformation of ... [Māori] conditions.
- 2 It needs to be seen as a ‘tool’—useful in the right hands and potentially destructive in the wrong hands. Thus the onus is on the person selecting to use the theory (or not to use it), i.e. to assess its relevance and usefulness.
- 3 It needs to be transformative because the ‘status quo’ for most indigenous contexts is not working well and needs to be improved.
- 4 It needs to move beyond a homogenizing position of seeing ‘struggle’ as a single issue and therefore needs to be adaptable to develop multiple transforming strategies (some of which might be applied simultaneously).
- 5 It needs to be accountable to the community; the ideas around praxis and ‘action research methodology’ are useful here.

The importance of defining the terminology is acknowledged but IRI (2000, p. 2) asks the cautioning question: ‘Who controls the definition of Kaupapa Māori principles?’ IRI goes on to caution against strictly bounded definitions that control the way that the term ‘Kaupapa Māori can be used and applied and by whom. They point out that although most of the writing about Kaupapa Māori theory initially originated from a group of academics based at the University of Auckland, Kaupapa Māori can neither be ‘owned by any group nor can it be defined in such ways that deny people access to its articulation’ (IRI 2000, p. 14). It must therefore be flexible enough to be inclusive of the diversity of Māori communities and contexts.

However, Kaupapa Māori theorists⁶ have understood the need to articulate key concepts as well as to identify elements (Pihama 2001), practices and procedures (IRI 2000). Most have ordered their articulation of Kaupapa Māori theory in relation to *key principles, concepts or elements*, thereby avoiding a Kaupapa Māori checklist or recipe that would be antithetical to the fundamentals of Kaupapa Māori theory (IRI 2000). The following section draws together a number of these articulations while identifying considerable commonalities.

Kaupapa Māori principles

To demonstrate congruency among Māori theorists and practitioners the Table 1 provides an analysis of key principles attributed to Kaupapa Māori praxis. Theorists were selected for inclusion in the table because they have been instrumental in the development of Kaupapa Māori theory or they have written about the theory as praxis in research.⁷ One evaluation practitioner who has published her concept of Kaupapa Māori evaluation has also been included (Moewaka Barnes 2009).⁸ The practice aspects have been considered along with the more purely theoretical,

as Kaupapa Māori theory, from its origin, is a theory of praxis where thinking and practice work together in iterative ways (Smith 1997; Walker 1996).

As you would expect from a dynamic but coherent theory, the following analysis reveals many overlaps and similarities. Without trying to control the definition of Kaupapa Māori principles⁹ too tightly, key concepts have been compared and contrasted, with commonalities grouped under the following five principles:

- A. *Control* principle (Māori control/ownership)
- B. *Challenge* principle (analysis and mediation of power relationships)
- C. *Culture* principle (Māori as normative including the survival and revival of Māori language and culture)
- D. *Connection* principle (relationship-based knowledge sharing and generation *whānau/hapū/ iwi* etc., plus creation of new knowledge through local and international relationships)
- E. *Change* principle (transformative for Māori)

A sixth principle emerged from theorists who focus on principles of practice in research and evaluation. This is the:

- *Credibility* principle (highest quality standards for Māori)¹⁰

Table 1 shows the concepts articulated by theorists and gives an indication of where the concepts relate to the identified principles of Kaupapa Māori theory (columns on the right).

Kaupapa Māori theory in evaluation

The six principles of Kaupapa Māori research as shown in Table 1, apply to evaluation in much the same way as they apply to other forms of social science research. Although distinctions between social science and evaluation are contested, a general distinction is that evaluation is usually designed in order to make decisions while research is designed to add to human knowledge. Evaluation may try to access the effectiveness of a program and may also aim to help practitioners achieve results or solve problems to become *more* effective. Casswell (1999, p. 198) also highlights the distinction in that ‘evaluation differs from other research in the degree to which it is utilisation focused’.

In order to achieve a useful comparison between Kaupapa Māori praxis and evaluation, the following section describes more specifically what is meant by the Kaupapa Māori principles and how these might apply to the general context of evaluation. Once the principles are understood we are able to position them in evaluation’s broader theoretical landscape.

Control principle

The idea of Māori *tino rangatiratanga* (Maori self-determination) is a feature of Kaupapa Māori research and evaluation as all the theorists highlighted. Irwin (1994) and Pihama (1993), Walker (1996) and Smith

(1997) all refer to *tino rangatiratanga* as key to Kaupapa Māori research and evaluation activity. For Walker (1996), all Kaupapa Māori understandings adhere to a central notion of *mana whenua*—translated as sovereignty over land. She contends that control over lands is at the heart of the Treaty of Waitangi and, by extension, issues of control and self-determination for Māori. Meanwhile, Smith (1997) aligns self-determination with ‘relative autonomy’ subtly introducing the question of how much control is enough. Although there is some discussion about the level of Māori control required for Kaupapa Māori research, there is consensus that a Kaupapa Māori approach to research must allow for Māori control of knowledge. This includes control over the epistemological understandings as well as what is being researched, by whom and in what manner the research is being conducted.

In evaluation, Māori exercising *tino rangatiratanga* (self-determination) may encompass control over what is evaluated, how and by whom and might include control over evaluation theory, design, process and dissemination (Bishop 1996; Cram 1997). In general evaluative terms this could be seen as the people most involved in the program being evaluated, having control over the evaluation. The extent to which this should happen is a hotly debated issue in the Aotearoa New Zealand evaluation context as well as in the international evaluation arena.

Furthermore, a Kaupapa Māori context means that Māori must have at least a degree of control over the evaluation. How much control is required, by whom, and to what ends, are also contested issues even for Kaupapa Māori theorists. However, most call for a high degree of Māori control in evaluation premised on Māori rights as partners with the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi (Bishop 1996; Cram 1997; Irwin 1994; Pihama 2001).

Meanwhile, the principle of Māori *control* or ownership when applied to evaluation, is somewhat complicated by the general context of program evaluation. Program evaluation almost always needs to serve an accountability function to the taxpayers and voters of Aotearoa New Zealand—as most involve public money either in the program being evaluated or in the funding of the evaluation, and frequently both.

The Kaupapa Māori ideal of Māori *control* in this context can be seen to introduce a bias to the evaluation and evade necessary accountability. Bias in evaluation is of course possible and some would argue that it is unavoidable (Stake 2003). However, when it is assumed that Māori control means that the evaluation will be unfairly biased and not able to provide accountability, the underlying assumption is that non-Māori control is fairer—somehow inherently less biased. Kaupapa Māori theorists would challenge this assumption as one predicated on western power. In fact, Kaupapa Māori theorists would argue that those who make that assumption are not able to see their own culture (Pihama 1993, 2001). Furthermore, the combination of cultural invisibility and cultural dominance could potentially

TABLE 1: MAORI THEORISTS AND KEY PRINCIPLES

Kaupapa Māori theory						
Theorist	Kaupapa Māori principles/concepts The order in which the Kaupapa Māori concepts are presented is taken from each theorist’s writings. It does not necessarily represent a priority ranking.	Kaupapa Māori principles				
		A	B	C	D	E
Graham Smith Kaupapa Māori Matrix (Smith 1997)	<i>Tino Rangatiratanga</i> (Self-determination)	X	X	X	X	X
	<i>Taonga Tuku Iho</i> (Cultural Aspirations)			X		X
	<i>Ako Māori</i> (Culturally Preferred Pedagogy)			X	X	
	<i>Kia Piki ake I nga Raruru o te Kainga</i> (Socioeconomic Mediation)	X	X	X		X
	<i>Whānau</i> (Extended Family Structure)			X	X	
	<i>Kaupapa</i> (Collective Philosophy/Vision)	X		X	X	X
Leonie Pihama Unpublished PhD thesis (2001)	<i>Te Reo me ona Tikanga</i> (Language and Culture)			X		
	Treaty of Waitangi		X		X	X
	<i>Tino Rangatiratanga</i> (Self-determination)	X	X	X	X	X
	<i>Taonga Tuku Iho</i>			X	X	
	<i>Whākapapa</i>			X	X	
	<i>Whānau/Whānaungatanga</i>			X	X	
	<i>Ako Māori</i> (Teach and Learn)			X	X	
	Decolonisation	X	X	X	X	X
Sheilagh Walker Unpublished Master’s thesis (1996)	Praxis		X			X
	<i>Tino Rangatiratanga</i> (Self-determination)	X	X	X	X	X
	Resistance		X			
	Living in our own world	X		X	X	
	Treaty of Waitangi		X		X	X
	<i>Mana Whenua</i> (sovereignty over land)	X		X	X	X
Theorist	Kaupapa Māori research					
Linda Smith 1999 (working principles)	<i>Whākapapa</i> (Connection)			X	X	
	<i>Te Reo me ona Tikanga</i> (Language and Culture)			X		
	<i>Rangatiratanga</i> (Self-determination)	X	X	X	X	X
	<i>Whānau</i> (Extended Family)			X	X	

continued overleaf

TABLE 1: MAORI THEORISTS AND KEY PRINCIPLES (CONT.)

Theorist (cont.)	Kaupapa Māori research (cont.)	A	B	C	D	E
Linda Smith (1999) Kaupapa Māori ethical code of conduct (See definitions in Smith 2005)	* <i>Aroha ki te tangata</i> (a respect for people)			X	X	
	* <i>Kanohi kitea</i> (the seen face; that is, present yourself to people face to face)			X	X	
	* <i>Titiro, whakarongo . . . korero</i> (look, listen . . . speak)			X	X	
	* <i>Manaaki ki te tangata</i> (share and host people, be generous)			X	X	
	* <i>Kia tupato</i> (be cautious)		X	X	X	
	* <i>Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata</i> (do not trample over the <i>mana</i> of the people)		X	X	X	
	* <i>Kaua e mahaki</i> (do not flaunt your knowledge)		X	X	X	
Kathy Irwin (1994)	Culturally safe for Māori	X		X		
	*Māori researchers/mentorship of elders	X	X	X	X	
	Culturally relevant and appropriate	X		X	X	
	*Rigorous research				X	
	Whānau (Family)	X		X	X	
Russell Bishop (1996)	Treaty of Waitangi		X		X	X
	Non-Māori able to be involved—Treaty Partnership	X	X		X	X
	Whānau (Family)	X		X	X	
Helen Moewaka Barnes (2000)	Māori control	X	X			
	Māori as normative		X	X	X	
	Benefit of Māori					X
Sheilagh Walker (1996)	Tino Rangatiratanga (Ownership)	X		X	X	X
	Social justice		X			
	Māori world view	X	X	X	X	
	Te Reo (Language)			X		
	Whānau (Family)			X	X	
Theorist	Kaupapa Māori evaluation					
Helen Moewaka Barnes (2009)	A ‘collective’ journey	X			X	X
	The goal is negotiated	X	X		X	X
	All parties are united in achieving the goal				X	X
	Others with the same or complementary goals may join along the way (network building, collaborations and capacity building)				X	X
	The journey itself is important for relationship building and learning				X	
	It is by Māori, for Māori, towards Māori development and self-determination	X	X	X	X	X

lead to far greater bias than control of research by a culturally aware minority such as Māori (Pihama 2001).

It can also be argued that Māori are citizens to whom the government must also account for their spending, and that Māori quite rightly want to see taxes being used for their benefit as guaranteed by the Treaty. Under the Treaty of Waitangi, Māori not only have the individual rights of citizens but collective rights as partners with the Crown. This argument is supported by statistics that indicate that government spending is failing to provide equitable outcomes for Māori who fall behind the rest of the population in all the key indices for socioeconomic success.¹¹

Challenge principle

Theorists such as Pihama and Walker place a strong emphasis on the analysis of all power relationships in Kaupapa Māori research and evaluation and on resistance against hegemonic dominance in its many guises within the research and evaluation environment. For example, Pihama highlights 'decolonisation' and Walker 'resistance' as key to Kaupapa Māori research and evaluation. This can be seen as the *challenge principle* whereby Kaupapa Māori research occupies a strategic position that seeks to challenge the dominant constructions of research and ensure that Māori values, priorities and processes are to the fore. Kaupapa Māori theorists argue that the need to challenge power is a product of colonisation (Cram 2004; Pihama 2001; Smith 1999) and assert that, under the Treaty of Waitangi, Māori have a right to challenge the dominant culture and the power of the Crown where it infringes on Māori rights to self-determination.

The challenge principle is inseparable from issues of control and manifests in evaluation through an emphasis on examining who controls the evaluation, not only in terms of the underlying evaluation theory but also the processes for contracting and conducting evaluations and the dissemination and utilisation of findings. There is also a commitment to research and evaluation seeking to mitigate, if not eliminate, power differentials that disadvantage Māori and advantage non-Māori.

Culture principle

For a colonised people, the Māori challenge to the dominant research paradigms and control over research are foundational to the *culture principle* of Kaupapa Māori research. It follows that Māori control over the research/evaluation agenda ensures that Māori cultural norms will be embedded in the research as the legitimate *modus operandi*. The culture principle whereby Māori values and systems are given full recognition in the research is found in the writing of all featured theorists. Smith (1997) refers to this as '*Taonga Tuku Iho*' or 'cultural aspirations principle'. Walker refers to it as 'living in our own world', while Irwin refers to Kaupapa Māori research as needing to be 'culturally relevant and appropriate'. Moewaka Barnes simply states that one of the key principles for Kaupapa Māori research is 'Māori as normative'. Issues of Māori

identity are also embedded in the culture principle with theorists widely acknowledging the link between cultural identity and Māori socioeconomic and spiritual wellbeing.

In reference specifically to language maintenance, theorists argue that the demise of Māori language and culture in everyday Māori life is a product of the colonising agenda. When Māori language and culture are regarded as legitimate, then Māori will, once again, be able to be 'normal' (IRI 2000). For some theorists, the work towards this revival of language and culture is central to the Kaupapa Māori theoretical agenda and research enterprise.

The culture principle translated into a Kaupapa Māori evaluation context would ensure that evaluations are specific to the Māori context. This means that Māori concepts, practices, protocols, language and cultural practices become normalised in the design and implementation of any evaluations. In this way, Māori cultural norms are viewed as 'ordinary' (Moewaka Barnes 2000) in Māori evaluation because Māori have a right under the Treaty of Waitangi to govern their own affairs and maintain traditions and resources. Again, the *culture principle* cannot be divorced from the previous principles of *control* and *challenge* to the dominant paradigm in evaluations. In a Kaupapa Māori evaluation context, Māori ways of knowing and doing are integral and can never be mere add-ons to facilitate evaluation buy-in, even though Kaupapa Māori approaches to evaluation may be very useful in producing this (IRI 2000).

Connection principle

Māori cultural underpinnings of Māori (genealogy) and concepts of collective responsibility, generally along traditional Māori lines or community structures are important when addressing Māori socioeconomic disadvantage (Smith 1997). The *connection principle* of *whakawhanaungatanga* (establishing relationships) is also important in the generation and sharing of knowledge. The Kaupapa Māori research theorists refer to the critical importance of the relationship of *whānau* (extended family) in particular as integral to Māori cultural survival and Māori wellbeing. Smith (1997) refers to the connection principle as 'Kaupapa', identifying the need to be unified in regard to collective responsibility and a shared vision. Irwin (1994) contends that it is appropriate for Māori researchers to be under the mentorship of elders. For all theorists, the closely aligned practice of collective responsibility is a central tenet of Kaupapa Māori theory.

The connection principle includes Māori ways of establishing and maintaining relationships. Smith (1999) has articulated some of the protocols governing relationships in research and evaluation. These include: respect, listening, being hospitable, being cautious and remaining humble. She does not prescribe a code of conduct, stressing that respect is key to Kaupapa Māori research relationships. 'Through respect the place of everyone and everything in the universe is kept in balance and harmony' (Smith 1999, p. 120).

In accordance with this principle, knowledge generation and sharing in evaluation practice requires evaluation practitioners to prioritise the development and maintenance of appropriate relationships in order to be credible and for the evaluation to be rigorous. *Whānau* (extended family), *hapū* (sub-tribal) and *iwi* (tribal) structures are likely to be important connections, although under the *connection principle* Kaupapa Māori evaluations would prioritise collaborative relationships that aim to facilitate the best outcomes for Māori. In some circumstances these may be local and international connections for the creation and sharing of new knowledge of benefit to Māori. A number of Kaupapa Māori theorists stress the importance of non-Māori involvement under a Treaty-based partnership model (Bishop 1996; Cram 1997). Moewaka Barnes (2009) highlights the connection principle in her ‘hikoī’ (march or walk) concept of evaluation. Kaupapa Māori evaluation is described as a collective, collaborative journey with negotiated and shared goals between evaluators and the evaluated where the evaluation journey is important for relationship-based learning (Kerr 2006).

Change principle

The idea of positive change for Māori is inextricably embedded in Kaupapa Māori theory and research. A Kaupapa Māori understanding of change is founded on transformative praxis and this is an important principle for all the featured theorists. Increasingly, Kaupapa Māori theorists call for ‘Māori to develop initiatives for change that are located within distinctly Māori frameworks’ (Pihama & Penehira 2005, p. 10). For Pihama, Kaupapa Māori theory critiques ‘all forms of oppression that seek to deny our fundamental place as Māori’ (Pihama 2001, p. 139). From this perspective, decolonisation means engaging with all forms of oppression and every structure that maintains oppression. Pihama warns that it must be Māori who analyse the impact of colonisation critically and seek changes on the basis of that critical analysis. Smith asserts that Kaupapa Māori needs to be transformative and asserts (in relation to Kaupapa Māori education) that there is ‘the need to focus on the process of “transforming”’, and on the transformative outcomes: What is it? How can it be achieved? Do indigenous people’s needs and aspirations require different schooling approaches? Who benefits?’ (1997, pp. 17–18). Moewaka Barnes (2009) expresses the change principle, as Kaupapa Māori research and evaluation having to be of benefit to Māori. For these reasons, Māori development is critical to the Kaupapa Māori research agenda.

The change principle also incorporates the concept of ‘*koha*’ that in simple translation could be taken to mean ‘reciprocity’—giving something back for whatever is received. For Smith (1999), the concept of *koha* is encompassed in ‘*manaaki ki te tangata*’ that stresses the collaborative approach to research in Māori contexts. In an evaluation, this would mean that the evaluation would not only aim to assist Māori transformation,

but evaluators would be fully cognisant of the value of information given to them by participants and aim to ensure that all participants receive something of value in return (Moewaka Barnes 2009; Pipi et al. 2004). The range of possible options for contributing to a program and to evaluation participants is as wide and varied as the programs and participants themselves. However, the transformative change principle leads, in many cases, to evaluations contributing their *koha* in terms of capability and capacity building. Evaluation in a Kaupapa Māori frame also often means that a *whākapapa*-based relationship or those formed in other ways prior to an evaluation, not only adds rigour and *credibility* to the evaluation, but is likely to endure after the formal evaluation period. Even new relationships, once established, may require evaluator contributions to a Māori group or community of their knowledge and experience well past the end of the evaluation.¹²

Credibility principle

The principle of research and evaluation *credibility* encompasses is the idea of professional competence and also the concepts of research/evaluation credibility. The *credibility principle* features explicitly in the work of a number of Kaupapa Māori theorists (Irwin 1994; Smith 1999) and is implicit in the work of all theorists. Implications for credible ethical research practices are embedded within all the Kaupapa Māori principles previously outlined, thus the credibility principle is inextricably linked with them all.

In a Kaupapa Māori theory framework, research credibility and researcher credibility are interdependent. Professional *credibility* of the researcher is strongly related to the *culture* and *connection* principles. Appropriate relationships and cultural know-how are as fundamental to the credibility principle of Kaupapa Māori research as having professional research knowledge and experience. Smith (1999) does not attempt to define systematic or scientific research standards but argues that establishing research credibility requires credible researchers and systematic and rigorous research methods. In her ‘Ethical Code of Conduct’, she articulates a range of ethical practices for engaging in Kaupapa Māori research/evaluation that illustrate some of the ways in which researcher credibility is built and maintained in Māori contexts. Irwin (1994) considers a definition of rigorous research within her Kaupapa Māori principles, first emphasising mentorship of elders as necessary to research being conducted competently within Māori contexts and requiring Māori researchers. Kaupapa Māori theorists argue that ‘being Māori does not preclude us from being systematic, being ethical, being “scientific” in the way we might approach a research problem’ (Smith 1999, p. 203; also see Irwin 1994; Moewaka Barnes 2009). Meanwhile, for Cram (2002, p. 13):

A Kaupapa Māori approach does not exclude the use of a wide range of research methods but rather signals the interrogation of methods in relation to cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural reliability, useful outcomes for Māori, and other such measures.

In evaluation the Kaupapa Māori credibility principle applies, as it does in evaluation generally, to the conduct of rigorous approaches using methods able to provide reliable answers to evaluation questions (Irwin 1994; Smith 1999). In Kaupapa Māori evaluation, the theory, methodology, methods and practices must all be appropriate to the Māori research context in order to provide reliable, competent and credible evaluations. The five key principles of Kaupapa Māori theory as previously outlined (including consideration of Māori *control* and *challenge*, *culture and connection* practices and ultimate positive *change* for Māori) are therefore integral to the sixth principle, evaluation *credibility*.

These six Kaupapa Māori principles, although having been developed within the very specific context of Māori and colonial history in Aotearoa New Zealand, show a surprising degree of similarity with international developments in the field of evaluation. The next section examines how Kaupapa Māori theory-based evaluations fit within that international evaluation context.

The international evaluation context

It is generally agreed among evaluation theorists that evaluation has its roots in social science research methodology and notions of accountability (Alkin 2004; Scriven 2001). That is the point at which general agreement between evaluation theorists seems to end. On questions of evaluation theory and practice, evaluators are divided on everything including the purpose of evaluation, how to conduct it, and what to do with the results.

The lack of agreement on the fundamental purposes of evaluation poses distinct challenges when trying to position the principles of Kaupapa Māori research within the field. To achieve a comparison of how the six principles of Kaupapa Māori research apply to the complex milieu of evaluation theory requires some degree of categorisation of evaluation theory.¹⁵

Table 2, modified from a simple schema by Michael Scriven (2001), provides an overview of theories of evaluation that have risen to prominence as ‘the one true way’ (2001) in evaluation since the practice of systematic evaluation began. It is useful in that it indicates some of the primary shifts that have occurred over time and forms a basis for discussing how the principles of Kaupapa Māori evaluation relate to international developments in the field. By picking out the key developments in the field (which he sees as overemphasising their theoretical position), Scriven’s schema has provided a simple framework by which to compare the principles of Kaupapa Māori theory-based evaluation.

Kaupapa Māori evaluation in the international context

Table 2 shows Scriven’s schema and a summary of the alignment of Kaupapa Māori evaluation principles to evaluation theories. This schema and Kaupapa Māori alignment are discussed in more detail below.

Kaupapa Māori evaluation alignment with Decision Support and Consumer Service Evaluation

The application of scientific management to state-administered provision of welfare during the Great Depression years in the United States is widely recognised as the birthplace of program evaluation. In the years following the Great Depression, evaluation was strongly influenced by the development of social sciences. A focus on social inquiry and the use of science methods can be seen in the early work of theorists such as Ralph Tyler (1942) and Donald Campbell (Campbell 1957; Campbell & Stanley 1963, 1966).

For early theorists, the chief activity of evaluation was an unbiased assessment of the consequences of programs or parts thereof (Chelmsky 1997). At that time, the preferred analytical methods were quantitative.

Scriven describes the focus of evaluation in the early days as *Decision Support* (Scriven 2001). Decision Support-type evaluation theory asserts that it is the job of the evaluator to focus on identifying and meeting managerial information needs based on definitions of success determined at a managerial level (Wholey 1983). This early purpose of evaluation, that is, to assist with management decisions, remains an important focus for many evaluations today.

By the late 1960s and early 1970s some theorists had come to see the management-orientated model as deficient because it didn’t take program beneficiaries’ needs into account (Scriven 1983). At this time, Scriven (1983), the principle Consumer Service theorist, argued that programs generally exist to meet identified needs of consumers and evaluation should therefore privilege the needs of program consumers over management. The Consumer Service approach to evaluation is based on the consumer product metaphor and is primarily summative.

Referring to Table 2, there is little congruence between Kaupapa Māori principles and evaluation theories in the early days where Decision Support and Consumer Service held both practical and theoretical sway. The change principle is the only point of alignment and even here, the two concepts of change are divergent. Decision Support evaluations typically focus on collecting data on management concerns such as budgets, time frames, targets and value for money—information that is used to inform decisions about changes to programs or their funding. This type of information may be collected in Kaupapa Māori evaluations, but it occurs ideally within a context where issues of *control*, *challenge*, *culture*, *connection* and positive *change* for Māori are major considerations. Where *change* is a key focus for Decision Support evaluations it is generally according to management’s criteria of success.

A Kaupapa Māori approach to evaluation does not preclude collecting data for *decision support*. Iterations based on this approach, such as Utilisation-focused Evaluation (Patton 1978, 1997) consider a range of stakeholders in ways that may be consistent

TABLE 2: ALIGNMENT OF NEW DIRECTIONS IN EVALUATION THEORY (ADAPTED FROM SCRIVEN 2001) WITH KAUPAPA MĀORI PRINCIPLES

Evaluation theories schema						
Development of evaluation theories	Description	Kaupapa Māori evaluation principles:				
		A	B	C	D	E
		A. Control B. Challenge C. Culture D. Connection E. Change * Credibility				
Decision Support	*Evaluations assist program managers to make decisions about programs. Includes goal achievement models					X
Consumer Service	*Summative focus on assessing if the needs of program consumers were being met					X
Formative Approach	Evaluation is always formative. *Emphasis on context in evaluation			X	X	X
Collaborative Evaluation	*Evaluation should always be a collaborative effort with the evaluated	X	X	X	X	X
Theory-driven Evaluation	*Generating explanations of success and failure as the core function of evaluation	X	X	X	X	X
Constructivist/Postmodern Evaluation	Evaluation is always a projection of subjective values onto the subject matter	X	X	X	X	X
Transformative Evaluation	*Evaluation exerts power that should be used to provide solutions to social problems	X	X	X	X	X

with the Kaupapa Māori *cultural*, *change* and the *credibility* principles. However, the inclusion of cultural considerations in Utilisation-focused Evaluation (UFE) would generally have been out of concern for the ‘personal factor’ (Patton et al. 1977) and the buy-in that identification with the evaluation generates (Alkin 2004). The UFE concern with *change* is based on the evaluator being able to adapt the evaluation to suit the context and needs of the intended end users in the best way, in order to ensure a higher probability of utilisation. Although UFE can, in some cases, pay considerable attention to the context including the *culture*, and place great emphasis on generating *change*, this is motivated by the overarching goal of achieving evaluation utilisation and may be quite removed from the underlying concerns of a Kaupapa Māori approach to evaluation.¹⁴

The Consumer Service approach focuses on assessing whether the needs of program recipients have been met, and therefore, is closer than Decision Support evaluation to the Kaupapa Māori *change* principle. *Change* for Consumer Service evaluation is about assessing whether consumer needs are being met. For Kaupapa Māori evaluation the focus is on ensuring that the evaluation is of benefit to Māori, as well as assessing the benefits or otherwise of the program to

Māori. The change principle has led most Kaupapa Māori evaluation theorists to advocate for ‘formative evaluation’ alongside the more summative approaches of Consumer Service evaluation.

Kaupapa Māori evaluation alignment with a Formative Approach

The great debates about evaluation purpose, approaches and methodologies heated up in the 1970s and 1980s, fuelled by emerging differences in fundamental epistemologies underlying evaluation. Championed by Cronbach (1982) who argued that evaluation’s primary purpose was for enlightenment rather than instrumental uses, evaluation was considered to be not just about providing management assistance or making summary judgements about a program. Whereas his predecessors, such as Campbell and Stanley (1963), had been influential in promoting internal validity as the *sine qua non* of evaluation research, Cronbach sought to establish generalisable knowledge, envisioning program evaluation as ‘a process by which society learns about itself’ (Cronbach & Associates 1980, p. 2). In Scriven’s schema this approach is characterised as the Formative Approach.¹⁵

In Cronbach's theories on the Formative Approach we see the beginnings of a stronger alignment with Kaupapa Māori principles. The Formative Approach aligns to some degree with the *change* principle and with the Kaupapa Māori *culture* and *connection* principles. The emphasis on program evaluation being essentially formative—that is, evaluation conducted with the 'intent to improve' (Scriven 1991, p. 168)—aligns, to some degree, with the *change* principle where positive change for Māori is a key aim. Cronbach contends that insights into complex social problems are attained by looking at how programs operate across multiple settings (Cronbach & Associates 1980) and introduced the idea that evaluation give serious consideration to how context influences programs and to gaining multiple understandings. This approach legitimised the consideration of context-specific factors such as culture and appropriate connections and also opened the door to the development of relativist evaluation theory and practices. However, Cronbach's approach, emphasising formative evaluation input, stops well short of defining evaluation as needing to fulfil any kind of social justice function, which is implicit in evaluation based on Kaupapa Māori principles of *control*, *challenge* and *change*.

Kaupapa Māori evaluation alignment with Collaborative, Theory-Driven and Constructivist Evaluation

As previously stated, the purpose of Scriven's schema is to highlight some of the overemphasised theoretical positions in evaluation. With the ascendancy of Transformative Evaluation from Collaborative Evaluation, different degrees of emphasis were placed on various aspects of evaluation (Scriven 2001). It is important to note that there may be significant overlaps between all of these theoretical positions. For example, Collaborative Evaluation approaches, such as Empowerment Evaluation can align strongly with *transformative* approaches; while Theory-driven Evaluation may well be *collaborative* and have a *transformative* emphasis.

In Scriven's schema all the developments in evaluation that 'allow those who are being evaluated to participate in the evaluation' (Scriven 2001, p. 27), such as *collaborative*, *participatory* and *empowerment* evaluation are positioned together under Collaborative Evaluation.¹⁶ Evaluation as a collaborative exercise resonates with all Kaupapa Māori principles, and particularly with the *control* and *connection principles*. *Collaborative* evaluation approaches, developing at about the same time as Kaupapa Māori theory, moved further towards allowing for a social justice function in evaluation, in that multiple stakeholder voices, including minority voices, are deliberately sought in all phases of an evaluation.

Postmodern philosophical positions about inquiry also had a major influence on evaluation paradigms from the 1970s onwards. Social reality was increasingly

seen as constructed and so, for evaluation, there was no 'right' description of a program. Seeking synthesis and consensus became the modus operandi of postmodern evaluation (Stake 1996). Scriven loosely aligns *constructivist and postmodern evaluation theory* with *theory-driven* evaluation (Scriven 2001, 2003). Theory-driven¹⁷ Evaluation (TDE) developing out of lessons learnt in the 1970s and 1980s about the difficulties of programs addressing major social problems effectively, aimed to explore the theory and processes involved in achieving results as well as addressing the question of whether results were achieved (Chen 1990; Donaldson 2001). Scriven characterises TDE as a theoretical approach to evaluation predicated on the notion that generating explanations of success and failure is a core function of evaluation.

TDE so defined, requires articulation of a program theory of change and the explanation of successes and failures of the program according to the theory of change (Donaldson 2007). TDE is not so much defined by a theoretical position as it is by a process (Donaldson 2001, 2007). Depending on who is involved in the process and how, TDE might either align closely with Kaupapa Māori principles of evaluation or be widely divergent. Although, it is difficult to relate it directly to Kaupapa Māori principles, this in no way precludes the use of theory-driven evaluation processes in Kaupapa Māori evaluations. Indeed TDE is now a widely used approach in Kaupapa Māori theory based evaluations because it not only facilitates Māori control of the evaluation and its parameters, but also assists with articulating Maori aspirations and determinants of program success.

Kaupapa Māori evaluation alignment with Transformative Evaluation

Transformative Evaluation theorises evaluation as a process aimed at the solution of social problems (Mark, Henry & Julnes 2000; Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey 1999). In Scriven's schema he includes Democratic Deliberative Evaluation along with Transformative Evaluation theorists. Democratic Deliberative Evaluation (DDE) encompasses democratic and dialogical approaches to evaluation where all relevant interests in the evaluation are given full expression. The DDE approach, championed by House and Howe (2000), rose to prominence as theorists embraced the idea that the democratising function of evaluation is a key function of evaluation along with the transformation of society towards equity goals. For example, in more recent years Patton has developed UFE by broadening the scope to include other approaches and has introduced Developmental Evaluation where the evaluator becomes a part of the program team to assist with program development (Patton 2010). According to Patton, 'using evaluation to mobilize for social action, empower participants, and support social justice' are now 'options on the menu of evaluation process uses' (Patton 1997, cited in Alkin 2004, p. 49). With the

inclusion of these other approaches Patton's approach has evolved towards a transformative theoretical position and a theory of evaluation that resonates strongly with Kaupapa Māori evaluation principles.

It is obvious that Kaupapa Māori principles in evaluation resonate with democratic deliberative approaches and strongly correlate with *transformative* evaluation approaches. DDE, with its focus on mitigating power differentials in order to ensure that all stakeholders are given an equitable voice during an evaluation, aligns with the Kaupapa Māori principles of *control* and *challenge* and also takes into account the contextual factors such as *culture*. The DDE emphasis on reflective reasoning, with shared and negotiated decision-making, is congruent with Kaupapa Māori's principles of *connection* and *change*. However, Kaupapa Māori evaluation is not as concerned with democracy as it is with a type of control that enables Māori to have the strongest 'voice' in evaluations that occur within Māori contexts. The argument for the right to this level of control is predicated on Māori rights to self-determination guaranteed by the Crown under the Treaty of Waitangi. The ultimate aim of Kaupapa Māori theory and its practice in evaluation is to transform society in order to make it a better place in which Māori can thrive. With the focus on *change*, Kaupapa Māori and *transformative* evaluation are closely aligned. However, even the newer iterations of evaluation approaches that emphasise cultural competency, advocacy and partnerships (Mertens 2008) may totally miss the mark in terms of allowing for the *tinorangatiratanga* (self-determination) that underpins the *control* principle in Kaupapa Māori evaluation. Wehipeihana (2008) cautions that these approaches often facilitate access to Māori by non-Māori evaluators and may still serve the needs of the non-Māori evaluator more than the Māori themselves.

Conclusion

Scriven's schema is a useful tool for highlighting some of the major directions in evaluation theory from the 1940s to the present. Since the schema was developed, there has been no new 'cornucopian revolution' in evaluation¹⁸ and more recent approaches would fit within the existing schema. In 2011, it still provides a simple, useful framework from which to compare and contrast Kaupapa Māori principles with major developments in the evaluation field. This comparison confirms that Kaupapa Māori theory-based evaluation, arising from the specific context for evaluation of Māori programs in Aotearoa New Zealand, is a unique expression of evaluation theory and yet is congruent with theoretical developments in the international evaluation field.

Kaupapa Māori theory is an evolving praxis, and this article is but one small attempt to capture Kaupapa Māori theoretical roots and the legitimacy of its foundations within evaluation's theoretical landscape. There is some urgency concerning this endeavour as little has been written about the theoretical foundations of Kaupapa Māori or other Māori approaches to

evaluation, even though Māori approaches are developing quickly with ever-widening influence. The identification of Kaupapa Māori principles must be recognised as a bounded and limiting approach to describing what a theory of praxis is. Kaupapa Māori evaluation is not a set of principles to be referred to in evaluation—it is theory that articulates Māori-lived reality poorly.

Not all Māori approaches to evaluation are identified as Kaupapa Māori, although many share similar principles.¹⁹ Some Māori evaluation theorists and practitioners, while acknowledging the influence of Kaupapa Māori theory, have developed methodologies in parallel to, rather than embedded in, Kaupapa Māori approaches. Indeed, the developments in Māori evaluation praxis have been described and debated whenever Māori evaluators meet at evaluation conferences and on evaluation websites and blogs.²⁰ This is living theory. It is being challenged, critiqued and developed by both the old and a new generation of theorist-practitioners in research and evaluation. Some have moved beyond Kaupapa Māori to new theories while still acknowledging the platform for theorising, writing and practising evaluation within Māori world views provided by Kaupapa Māori theory.

In this dynamic mix, Kaupapa Māori and other Māori approaches to evaluation have influenced the general approach to evaluation in Aotearoa New Zealand and have a growing impact on indigenous evaluation theory and practice. One example of the Māori impact on the national evaluation scene is the use of Māori concepts (expressed in Māori language) in the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (anzea) *Draft Evaluator Competencies*. The Māori language is used:

in response to some particular ideas or concepts being better expressed and more fully captured in another language, in this case Te Reo. The use of Te Reo is not meant to confine these particular ideas or concepts to Māori, rather they are intended to apply to and be inclusive of all people. (anzea 2010, p. 6)

The final version of the *Evaluator Competencies* produced by anzea, Aotearoa New Zealand's professional evaluation body, also indicate a very strong commitment to culturally competent evaluation, in that cultural competence is not merely a peripheral aspect but a central component of the framework of evaluator competencies.²¹ In Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori have long argued that culture is a central part of evaluation and for issues of power and control and Māori/non-Māori relationships to be addressed. Kaupapa Māori theory has provided a theoretical platform for that argument, premised on Māori rights under the Treaty of Waitangi. Although obviously specific to this context, our struggle to articulate, critique and utilise a Māori theoretical foundation for evaluation is instructive to other indigenous peoples. It may perhaps also be useful to the wider international evaluation field as we all continue together in the struggle to develop evaluation theory.²²

Notes

- 1 Kaupapa means platform or base.
- 2 Aotearoa is the Māori term for New Zealand.
- 3 For a summary of early development of Kaupapa Māori and Kaupapa Māori theory, see IRI (2000, pp. 3–8).
- 4 This Treaty was written in order to recognise: a British Governor of New Zealand; and ownership by Māori of their own lands and Māori rights as British subjects.
- 5 For discussion on the relationship between Kaupapa Māori theory, critical theory and constructivism see Eketone (2008) and Smith (1999, pp. 185–191).
- 6 Theorists have been included in this article because they have been instrumental in the development of Kaupapa Māori theory (e.g. Smith, G, Pihama, L), while others have written about the theory as praxis in research and evaluation (Bishop, R, Irwin, K, Moewaka Barnes, H, Smith, L, Walker, S).
- 7 Although these theorists acknowledge Kaupapa Māori theory in their writings, they do not necessarily all identify as Kaupapa Māori theorists.
- 8 This is not to imply that Moewaka Barnes is the only noteworthy Māori evaluation theorist. There are many other influential Māori evaluation practitioner–theorists who have not been included in Table 1 because their theories or their published works do not fit within the framework for this article. The writer has attempted to acknowledge and include the important contributions of other Māori evaluation theorists by referencing their work at appropriate places throughout the article.
- 9 The writer understands that Kaupapa Māori theorists may themselves have resisted compartmentalising Kaupapa Māori theory, seeing it as ‘the deconstructive mode of Pākeha writers’ (Walker 1996, p. 118). Kaupapa Māori theorists are invited to critique this interpretation of their writings on Kaupapa Māori theory and by so doing will further engage with the theory.
- 10 Indicated in Table 1 with an asterisk (*).
- 11 See *The Social Report 2010*, Ministry of Social Development (2010).
- 12 For more information on reciprocity in evaluation see: *Report on the SPEaR Best Practice Maori Guidelines Hui 2007* (a collaboration between SPEaR and Aotearoa/ New Zealand Evaluation Association (anzea); and *SPEaR Good Practice Guidelines*, Social Policy Evaluation and Research (SPEaR) Committee (2008), Ministry of Social Development, Wellington.
- 13 For a fuller schema of evaluations theoretical landscape see Alkin (2004), *Evaluation Roots: Tracing Theorists’ Views and Influences*, Sage, California.
- 14 Patton has moved on to ‘Developmental Evaluation’ that resonates more strongly with Kaupapa Māori principles. Refer to the section in this article: ‘Kaupapa Māori alignment with Transformative Evaluation’.
- 15 Here Scriven is not referring to ‘formative evaluation’ as such, but to evaluation theory that all but denies any summative merit in favour of formative educative approaches to evaluation.
- 16 Although Scriven’s schema, developed a decade ago, does not include some of the more recently named evaluation approaches such as ‘Advocacy Evaluation’, it is likely that he would include these approaches in the general group of those that seek to be transformative.
- 17 ‘Theory’ is used in this context to denote the very specific ‘theory of change’ that explains how a particular program is expected to achieve results.
- 18 In recent blogs and presentations, Scriven has been seeking a ‘Third Cornucopian Revolution’ in evaluation. For interesting discussions on this topic see <<http://genuineevaluation.com/author/scriven>>.
- 19 See Kennedy and Wehipeihana (2006) for a stocktake of policies, guidelines and standards for ethical research involving indigenous peoples nationally and internationally. The stocktake identifies a set of principles that resonate strongly with the Kaupapa Māori principles in evaluation, as outlined in this article.
- 20 See <<http://genuineevaluation.com/working-across-the-cultural-divide-in-evaluation>>.
- 21 A final version of the anzea *Evaluator Competencies* (2011) can be found at: <http://anzea.org.nz/images/documents/110801_anzea_evaluator_competencies_final.pdf>.
- 22 See Kawakami et al. (2007) for a discussion of how indigenous evaluation values and methods may improve the general practice of evaluation.

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Closing the gap through respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility: issues in the evaluation of programs for Indigenous communities in Australia

This article outlines key considerations and issues inherent in undertaking effective evaluations of programs developed for Indigenous Australians, written from the perspective of a non-Indigenous evaluator.

The considerations identified include a number of professional practice areas, namely the need for evaluators to: operate with an understanding and appreciation of the *historical and systemic context* experienced by Indigenous Australians; work from the basis of a solid *code of ethics and practice standards*; and operate with high levels of *cultural sensitivity* and the ability to appreciate Indigenous world views and differences. Another central consideration identified in the article is that evaluators need to hold a commitment to produce *useful and useable evaluation findings* that can inform future program design and social policy in relation to improving the health and wellbeing of Indigenous Australians.

The article develops a number of principles for evaluators to follow in evaluating programs developed for Indigenous Australians. These include: having *respect* for the importance of historical, socioeconomic and psychological context; commitment to ensuring *relevance* in methodologies and approaches used; *reciprocity* in considering the benefits for participating Indigenous communities; and *responsibility* in undertaking effective communication and consultation.

While most evaluators would agree with the above principles and values, the latter can be more challenging to apply in practice and examples of their application to evaluation, and the inherent challenges in the Indigenous context, are described. Such challenges include: operating within the restrictions of government silos with difficulties portraying the complex interrelationships that reflect the lives of Indigenous Australians; reaching consensus on *evaluation design and implementation*; working within restricted *time frames* with lack of opportunity to appreciate and reflect the unique differences among Indigenous communities across Australia; limitations inherent in engaging a broad and representative group of *Indigenous stakeholders*; and lack of control by the evaluator over the *dissemination and influence* of evaluation findings and results that link with subsequent decision-making processes.

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Introduction

Evaluations of programs for Indigenous Australians should reflect the same degree of good practice as all evaluations strive to achieve. These evaluations, however, have additional complexity resulting from the context of Indigenous people's history and culture and current levels of disadvantage within Australian society. At June 2006, the estimated number of Indigenous Australians was 17 000 or 2.5 per cent of the total Australian population (ABS 2006). Indigenous Australians generally experience poorer health, lower life expectancy, higher rates of death and disability, and compromised quality of life and wellbeing when compared to the total Australian population. In addition, they are over-represented in incarceration and child protection systems.¹

Consequently, to address the level of disadvantage, and to 'close the gap'² for Indigenous Australians, it is important that programs or initiatives designed for Indigenous Australians are evaluated fully to determine 'what works for whom, in what contexts, and how' (Pawson & Tilley 1997). In consideration of the above, effective and credible evaluations of programs designed for Indigenous Australians should: be informed by an understanding of Indigenous history and culture; be culturally sensitive; appreciate Indigenous world views and differences; operate ethically; and reflect good practice in evaluation. Evaluations undertaken should also be capable of producing findings that can inform future program design and social policy.

This article aims to outline some of the key issues in undertaking evaluations of programs concerning Indigenous peoples and communities in Australia.³ It has been written from the perspective of a non-Indigenous evaluator as the current prevailing pattern in Australia is that most evaluations of programs for Indigenous peoples and communities are likely to be 'undertaken or led by non-Indigenous peoples' (Wehipeihana 2008). This pattern highlights the need for greater capacity development and mentoring over a longer time frame to enable Indigenous community members to become evaluators.

By contrast, New Zealand possesses a considerable number of Māori with expertise in evaluation. It is not surprising then that guidelines and practices have been developed in relation to the conduct of evaluation with Māori communities. Until greater capacity is developed within Australian Indigenous communities for the management and conduct of evaluation activities, the presence and involvement of non-Indigenous evaluators is likely to continue. In this context, it is important that the issues and challenges involved in undertaking evaluations of programs for Indigenous communities are identified, recognised and addressed.

This article is not able to encompass all the issues that can potentially arise from the process of undertaking evaluations in an Indigenous context. It highlights selected issues including understanding the impact of the historical and systemic context of Indigenous Australians, working to principles of

ethically good practice and ensuring evaluations can inform social policy as well as good practice in the delivery of Indigenous programs and services. Each aspect is considered in turn below.

Historical and systemic context

One of the first challenges in undertaking evaluations of programs designed for Indigenous Australians is recognition that Indigenous peoples and communities have experienced unique historical, social, economic and psychological conditions. These need to be considered in the design and conduct of any evaluations that involve Indigenous people. Contextual factors impacting on Indigenous Australians have been identified by Scougall (2008, p. 73). These include:

- *Historical factors:* Experiences of colonisation, racism and discrimination have resulted in the breakdown of social cohesion leading to negative life experiences for many Indigenous Australians.
- *Social factors:* Experiences of separation, loss and institutionalisation have resulted in sub-optimal parenting practices, negative peer influences as well as the normalisation of violence and substance abuse for many Indigenous people.
- *Economic factors:* Many Indigenous Australians have experienced inter-generational unemployment, poverty and limited educational advancement.
- *Psychological factors:* Intergenerational trauma, stress and negative childhood experiences have often resulted in social disconnection and isolation; disempowerment; lack of coping strategies and social skills and mental health and substance abuse issues for many Indigenous Australians.

One of the implications of the above historical and systemic factors for evaluation is that causality is seldom simple or linear, and cause and effect can be difficult to disentangle (Scougall 2008, p. 73). An example from practice comes from the evaluation of a suite of family violence prevention programs in Australia (conducted by the Office of Evaluation and Audit, Indigenous Programs, 2007). In attempting to identify the emergent outcomes and impacts in the reduction of the incidence and prevalence of family violence among Indigenous communities, the evaluator also had to consider the characteristics of communities in terms of: level of social disadvantage; degree of remoteness; levels of substance abuse and alcohol consumption; and implications of the aggregation of different families and language groupings.

It is difficult therefore to evaluate program interventions for Indigenous Australian peoples and communities based on discrete silos of education, employment, health, mental health, income support, child protection, alcohol and drug abuse, crime, family violence or other areas of social provision. These sectors tend to intersect and evaluations need to be able to identify the complex interrelationships that reflect the lives of Indigenous Australians.

Another significant implication for evaluation of the context impacting on Indigenous peoples and communities is recognition that the Indigenous community is diverse and variations in appropriate programmatic responses will inevitably arise. Thus evaluation of one program deemed to be successful in one setting may not be transferable to another State/Territory or another community. As Libesman (cited in Scougall 2008, p. 74) explains:

Adding to the difficulty of doing something constructive about Indigenous family and community issues is the fact that one-size-fits-all prescriptions seldom work well in a policy environment that is characterised by cultural and contextual diversity. Rather programs and services have to be tailored to meet local needs and circumstances.

Good practice and ethics

Another challenge for the evaluator is the ethics and good practice associated with implementing evaluations. In this regard, there has been a degree of lack of trust of researchers by Indigenous community members, who often believe that researchers take information for their own purposes while nothing changes on the ground for Indigenous people as a result of the research process. Research and evaluation, of course, differ as disciplines. Research is undertaken in order to contribute to knowledge generation and advancement, often for the purposes of obtaining higher qualifications or the publication of articles in academic journals. However, evaluations are generally commissioned by government departments or non-government organisations wanting to determine if their program interventions have been effective and have achieved results. By its very nature, evaluation should have a greater level of use and application for Indigenous peoples and communities. However, there is a great deal to be learnt for the discipline of evaluation from research, as its application has had a longer history in an Indigenous context. The NHMRC (2003b, Introduction) report that:

Over the years there has been a lot of research undertaken in our communities into aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and well being. Sometimes the outcomes from this research have not always benefited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

Nevertheless, guidelines have been developed for ethical conduct in Indigenous research in Australia (AIATSIS 2002; NHMRC 2003). These Guidelines are of interest to evaluators as a reference point for ethical conduct, particularly given the absence of specific guidelines developed for Indigenous evaluation in the Australian context. As a result, evaluation should follow similar principles to social research in its application of ethical principles. The NHMRC Guidelines identified a range of core values and principles to be considered in the research process.

The principles identified in the Australian context were supported by the work of the Institute for Aboriginal Health at the University of British Columbia (UBC), that developed a framework for its research activity, emphasising the 'Four R's' of research with Aboriginal communities: respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility (Evans et al. 2009, p. 895). This framework is outlined in Figure 1.

Applying the four R's of research with Aboriginal communities

While most evaluators would agree with the above principles and values, they can be more challenging to apply in practice than they are accepted in theory. A description of examples of their application to evaluation, and the inherent challenges in the Indigenous specific context, follows.

Respect for culture

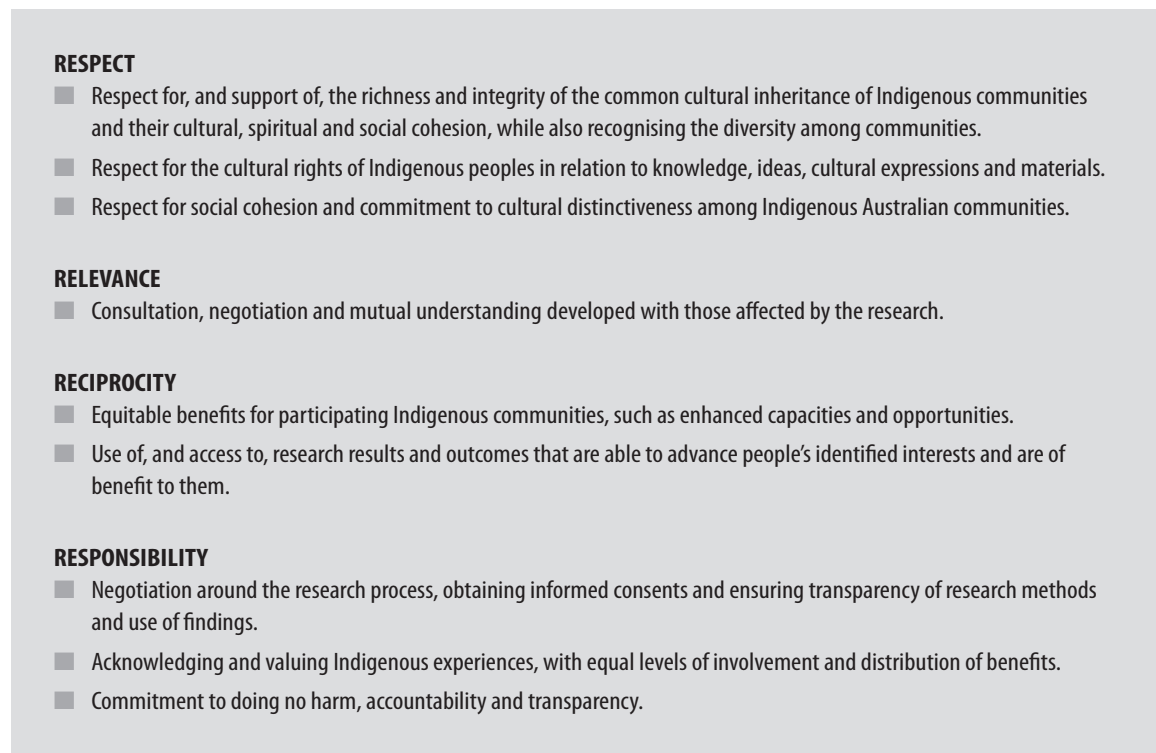
Most evaluators undertaking evaluations of programs developed for Indigenous peoples and communities would ideally hold a commitment to and value the cultural distinctiveness of Indigenous Australian communities. This respect, however, needs to be translated to all processes of the evaluation, including the design of the evaluation and its choice of methods, the process of interviewing Indigenous peoples and community members as well as the way the data that has been gathered is interpreted, analysed and reported.

It can be argued that culturally responsive evaluations should make strong use of qualitative techniques (Frierson, Hood & Hughes 2002; Berends & Roberts 2003). In consideration of this, the interviewing and interpretive skills of the evaluator are critical to the collection and analysis of qualitative data. Also important to the process of engagement between the evaluator and interviewee are sensitive interviewing techniques that can identify non-verbal as well as verbal cues and the capacity of the evaluator to create a context that is non-judgemental and empathic. The ability of the evaluator to interpret data in a way that is true to the situation, avoiding personal bias, is also important. At the same time:

Deriving meaning from data in program evaluations that are culturally responsive requires people who understand the context in which the data were gathered (Frierson, Hood & Hughes 2002, p. 71).

Even so, reaching agreement between the commissioner of the evaluation and the evaluator regarding the ways in which an evaluation is designed and implemented can be difficult to achieve in practice. While the evaluator might support the use of more participatory and qualitative methods that offer greater levels of cultural sensitivity, the commissioner of the evaluation might be looking for quantitative results that would require a methodology that would be more difficult to implement in practice. One example of this was an evaluation where the evaluation commissioner wanted to track Indigenous community members over

FIGURE 1: THE FOUR R'S FRAMEWORK FOR RESEARCH WITH ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES



a three-year period after the program intervention had ceased to establish longer term impacts. The feasibility of this approach was questionable given the level of transience among Indigenous community members in this particular community. Additionally, without an intervention in place there were ethical issues in relation to the benefits for community members of their participation in such a process.

In contrast to the control by commissioners over evaluation designs of Indigenous programs, the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)'s Indigenous Evaluation Framing Project aimed to inform and create evaluation designs that ensured evaluation rigour based on Indigenous ways of knowing and the core values of Indian communities (Richard & LaFrance 2006).

A further example of differences in views of appropriate evaluation methodologies for Indigenous programs regards specification of the time frames within which evaluations are expected to take place. While the commissioner of the evaluation might seek results from the evaluation sooner rather than later, the processes of collecting data from Indigenous communities may be more protracted and require a greater length of time and patience. The holding of a funeral in a community when data collection is scheduled, for example, is likely to delay the evaluation process considerably. Consequently, Pyett, Waples-Crowe & van der Sterren (2009, p. 52) stress that:

First we reiterate the importance of understanding and accepting the extra time that will be needed to develop

relationships of mutual trust. Not all researchers have the time or the patience needed and few funding bodies or research institutions allow sufficient time and resources for this essential aspect of research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations.

Evaluation methodologies thus need to be both realistic and culturally sensitive in their approach.

Respect for diversity in Indigenous communities

Larger scale national evaluations do not always allow for in-depth, locally customised investigations. A broader brush approach is often adopted to try to encompass the most common, or general, features of program results. Even within a single community, there may be a number of different family and language groupings that require customised responses. For the evaluator, the challenge is responding to the diversity of Indigenous peoples and communities within the scope of the evaluation time frame, budget and design. Again, the time frames set by the commissioner of the evaluation may not be realistic or in alignment with the need for the evaluator to spend more time in a community to appreciate and reflect its diversity. One example was an evaluation of a youth homelessness prevention program in a community that contained a large number of different family and language groupings. It had been the practice in the State in which this program operated to herd together Indigenous peoples in government reserves in order to segregate them. The consequence of this historical practice was a community left scarred by intercultural infighting and

conflict. An evaluation, given the inherent complexities of this community, and an anticipated quick turnaround, was difficult to achieve.

The use of community leaders who support the evaluation and can assist the evaluators to navigate entry to communities can be a positive approach to undertaking evaluations of Indigenous-focused programs (Berends & Roberts 2003). The corollary of this situation is that there can be limitations encountered in speaking to one person or family group within a community because they are in professional roles or are spokespeople and thus easier to access. These contacts may not always reflect the full membership of the community, and this has implications for the principle of equity when undertaking evaluations. This poses a challenge for the evaluator in ensuring they have an introduction to, and achieve a good understanding of, issues facing the range of community members and also appreciate and negotiate the differences that may exist within a community. One example of this arose during an evaluation undertaken in one regional town where the Indigenous community was represented by two key families. One family represented child welfare issues and the other family educational issues, but the families were in conflict, so it was difficult to access both perspectives in the one consultancy. Furthermore, the key members from each family acted as 'gatekeepers' restricting access to community members beyond their family groupings. Thus there were concerns that the evaluation was not capturing the views of all Indigenous community members.

Relevance: ensuring that evaluations inform social policy and guide good practice

For evaluations to have benefits to the Indigenous peoples and communities that have participated in the process, they need to be used to guide the development of good practice in programmatic and service delivery responses as well as inform social policy development. As a result, the role the evaluator can be one of an agent of change (Taylor 2003, p. 46). Areas of possible influence that evaluators and evaluations can achieve can be through:

- developing an enhanced *understanding* of the issues impacting on Indigenous Australian peoples and communities
- representing *indigenous voices* and concerns and reflecting these in reporting
- facilitating *discussion and debate* of current programmatic approaches and policies
- *developing, informing or reviewing* government-funded programs, their designs and implementation
- *influencing, developing or changing* government policies and measuring their impacts.

An example of influence at the social policy level was the *Little Children are Sacred* report⁴, which highlighted evidence of child abuse in the Northern Territory's Indigenous communities. This report

led to the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER), which was introduced in June 2007. NTER is 'a set of measures designed to protect children, make communities safe and build a better future for people living in Indigenous communities and town camps in the Northern Territory' (see FaHCSIA website⁵). One could argue that the response to the *Little Children are Sacred* report was ill considered given the complexity of the issues and the need for sensitive and well-considered responses. This example is included as an illustration of potential influence.

In order to have influence, evaluations should provide credible information to enable the incorporation of lessons learnt into decision-making process (Kusek & Rist 2004). Ideally, evaluations undertaken should be linked to organisational processes for project design and annual planning. Some of the factors that impact on the influence of evaluations include: the organisational learning culture; the value and credibility of the data and findings generated by evaluation processes; and the timing of the generation and communication of findings in concert with decision-making processes.

The following strategies may assist with increasing the utility of evaluation findings for Indigenous peoples and communities. The first strategy involves fostering an organisational environment that is conducive to, and supportive of, evaluation functions, embracing the concept of becoming a learning organisation that adopts evidence-based decision-making processes. Thus, the development and design of programs to address disadvantage among Indigenous Australians should be based on evidence and data regarding likely effectiveness rather than developed for political expediency. The second strategy involves ensuring that evaluations of programs designed for Indigenous people are credible, use appropriate data collection methods and are inclusive of strategies for effective communication and marketing of results. The third strategy involves timing the release of evaluation results with critical decision-making points, such as at budget allocation time (McKay 2007).

Evaluation processes for Indigenous programs therefore need to: be aware of and address the salient policy issues and concerns; be undertaken in a timely way in relation to policymaking time frames; develop good relationships in order to communicate the findings effectively; and finally, foster a policy environment that is favourable to the use of evaluation findings as part of the decision-making process.

Reciprocity

For the purpose of this article, reciprocity is defined in two ways: appreciation for the contribution to the evaluation made by Indigenous peoples; and dissemination of the results of the evaluation to Indigenous communities who participated in the process.

The use of appreciation fees or gifts are common when undertaking evaluations. In working with Indigenous communities the issue of appreciation fees and gifts requires forethought. Some evaluators

will provide direct cash benefits for individuals who participate, others prefer gifts while yet others will make a contribution to the local school or a community facility or organisation. Whatever the form of appreciation, the implications require careful consideration. For example, in one evaluation, a focus group was held in a remote community where it was not clear who was actually participating in the focus group and who was standing on the periphery listening in on the discussion. Therefore, the question arose about who should receive the \$20 appreciation fee that was being distributed.

The issue of dissemination can also be problematic for evaluators. It is often the client or commissioner of the evaluation, not the evaluator, who has control over the dissemination process. The NHMRC (2003b) guidelines indicate that findings available from any research should be presented back first to the community prior to being made more public. Such an action is not always achievable and can create tensions for evaluators. Encouraging commissioners of evaluations to produce an easy-to-read version of the more technical final evaluation report is one possible dissemination strategy. Presentation of the evaluation findings to a reference group with representatives from Indigenous communities who have participated in the evaluation is another possible strategy.

Responsibility

Most evaluators would commit to 'doing no harm' through the conduct of the evaluation. Harm can still occur where there is lack of sensitivity, cultural knowledge or lack of forethought. Potential areas for possible harm need to be identified during the evaluation planning process. For example, asking an Indigenous woman about her experiences of family violence might result in a backlash from her partner when he hears about her disclosure to an outsider. Asking a young person from an Indigenous community about his offending or substance misuse might result in disclosures of serious offences for which the young person has not been charged and that may require further police action. Concerns that evaluations are not always undertaken in the most ethical manner are reflected in the following statement:

In practice proper ethical principles for research involving Indigenous peoples are too frequently being either ignored and/or deliberately circumvented and devalued. (Taylor 2003, p. 46)

Use of informed consent processes can ameliorate some, but not all, of the potential harm involved when interviewing Indigenous people about sensitive issues. While research may have been approved by an Ethics Committee, evaluations may not have been through such scrutiny; for example, about the nature of the questions to be asked. In these situations, careful consideration of the questions to be asked and resulting implications need to take place.

Conclusion

This article has provided an overview of some of the challenges likely to be experienced by evaluators when undertaking evaluations of programs established for Indigenous Australians. Based on the principles and discussion above, evaluators concerned with programs established for Indigenous peoples and communities should aim to:

- respect Indigenous peoples and communities by understanding the context whereby evaluators need to:
- develop their understanding of Indigenous history, culture and social context and reflect this understanding in both the designs of evaluations as well as the interpretation of evaluation results
- appreciate Indigenous perspectives and world views while also allowing for, and accommodating, differences from people to people and community to community.
- ensure relevance by negotiating methodologies and approaches with commissioners of the evaluation whereby evaluators:
- advocate for the design and use of evaluation methodologies that involve collection of data in culturally appropriate ways
- apply realistic methodologies and time frames for the conduct of evaluation
- build partnerships with commissioners of evaluations to produce credible and useful evaluation findings and results.
- act with responsibility by developing interpersonal and communication skills so that evaluators:
- ensure that they act with cultural sensitivity and in a culturally appropriate manner at all stages of the evaluation process
- develop high-level interviewing skills that can respond to non-verbal cues and interpersonal sensitivities
- negotiate with participants in the evaluation process to ensure an understanding of its purpose and use.
- exercise reciprocity by considering benefits whereby evaluators:
- ensure that consequences of questions asked are fully considered in order to 'do no harm'
- operate in an ethically appropriate manner using informed consent processes
- consider appropriate benefits for participants through direct reciprocity and/or dissemination of evaluation findings
- ensure that evaluation is capable of producing findings that can inform future program design and social policy wherever this is possible and achievable.

Notes

- 1 Indigenous children are six times more likely than non-Indigenous children to be abused (Indigenous People's Organisation's Network of Australia, *Submission to the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people—Australian mission*, August 2009, at <http://www.humanrights.gov.au/social_justice/publications/srip_2009/index.html>).
- 2 The Close the Gap campaign commenced on 4 April 2007 and called on Australian governments to commit to closing the life expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation. In the 2012–13 federal budget, the government increased its investment in Closing the Gap reforms (Closing the Gap Clearinghouse (AIHW, AIFS) 2012).
- 3 The term 'Indigenous' is used in this article to encompass Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It is acknowledged that specific cultural identities (such as Koori in Victoria) have not been reflected in the use of this term.
- 4 Anderson, P & Wild, R, *Ampe Akelyernemane Meke Mekarle 'Little Children are Sacred' Report* of the Northern Territory Board of Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse, Darwin 2007.
- 5 Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) website, 2009, <<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/indigenous/progserv/ntresponse/Pages/default.aspx>>.

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Challenges faced when evaluating the Jalaris Kids Future Club

Jalaris Aboriginal Corporation in Western Australia was established in 1994 to look after the needs of an Aboriginal community. The organisation's most recent project is the 'Kids Future Club', an after-school activities program.

Jalaris has a history of evaluating their work using a participatory action research approach, but decided to approach evaluation of the Kids Future Club in a slightly different way. This article discusses the reasons for the changed approach, the efforts made to develop culturally appropriate tools for data collection, and the challenges encountered in undertaking evaluation of outcomes for individual children in the context of Jalaris and their Aboriginal community.

The tensions between ethical approaches to working within the Aboriginal kinship network and undertaking evaluation that required detailed observation and data collection of individuals proved to be irreconcilable for Jalaris.

Lessons learnt from this evaluation process may inform future efforts to evaluate Aboriginal community initiatives.

Introduction: the setting

The Jalaris Aboriginal Corporation was established in 1994 by the Morris family in Derby, Western Australia, to look after the needs of their local Aboriginal community. Jalaris staff work primarily through their kinship network, engaging with extended family members on issues to do with children, health, nutrition, housing and education.

Over the past 16 years Jalaris has run a variety of community and family programs, including a low-cost general store, a mobile nutrition program, a family support outreach service, children's and women's drop-in programs and a mobile health caravan. Their most recent program, the 'Kids Future Club', involves an after-school activities centre for local kids that runs three afternoons a week and provides educational games, activities and healthy snacks.

Jalaris Aboriginal Corporation has a long history of evaluating their work using a participatory action research approach (Haviland 2004). Previous evaluations have focused on case studies of change, and community feedback on the overall program in order to understand Jalaris' broad impact on families and the community in the Derby region (Haviland & Jalaris Aboriginal Corporation 2003). In associated reports, case studies were used to illustrate the kinds of issues Jalaris was working with and the approaches they took to creating positive change concerning those issues. Jalaris staff also documented their practices, illustrating how they go about their work and why they do it the way they do. These early evaluations focused

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mainly on the processes used and the impacts Jalaris and others could observe over time.

In recent years other significant research has been carried out about the issues facing Aboriginal people in the Derby region. These studies provide more reliable regional statistics in key areas such as Aboriginal child health, educational attainment and participation, social and emotional wellbeing (Telethon Institute for Child Health Research 2004; Telethon Institute for Child Health Research 2005; Telethon Institute for Child Health Research 2006a; Telethon Institute for Child Health Research 2006b), drug and alcohol issues facing young people (Haviland 2006), as well as research into some of the underlying social issues that affect families in the region, such as housing, workforce participation and service provision for Aboriginal people (Data Analysis Australia 2005; Department of Indigenous Affairs (DIA) 2005; Taylor 2006). Such research provides good evidence about the complex issues facing people in the Derby community, as well as providing some baseline statistical data that can put Jalaris' work in context. As this regional research was emerging, funding and policy priorities at state and national levels began to demand more specific 'evidence' about the impacts and outcomes of local projects.

At the same time, early childhood policy has been shaped by the growing body of longitudinal research demonstrating the impacts of different practices on individual child development. As a result, programs funded under such policies had a growing focus on 'evidence-based practice' and funding bodies increasingly sought more detailed evidence about the outcomes of projects at individual and family levels. Although Jalaris is known to be an effective, rigorous and well-respected organisation, they realised that in order to secure appropriate funding they needed to expand their research and evaluation approach to provide evidence of specific outcomes at individual and family levels, if possible.

The evaluation approach

We began the process of evaluating the Jalaris Kids Future Club project with the dual goals of:

- 1 Building on several years of participatory action research evaluation, which had focused on Jalaris' own agenda for community feedback and critical reflection on practice.
- 2 Expanding the evaluation to provide more specific evidence of the outcomes of Jalaris' work for Aboriginal children and their families in Derby.

Three years of funding (2007–2010) for the Kids Future Club by the Office of Aboriginal Health, Lotterywest and Caritas Australia allowed for a three-year evaluation plan to be developed that allowed more depth and structure to the evaluation process than had been possible under previous shorter term funding. Fortunately, Jalaris staff were very open to trying new and different approaches to evaluation, and were actively engaged with questions such as what

constitutes evidence in the context of their work with Aboriginal children and families and how this evidence could be gathered.

The evaluation plan was developed in collaboration with a range of stakeholders and potential collaborators. In 2007, as funding for the Kids Future Club project was being finalised, Jalaris hosted a series of workshops with funding bodies, community agencies and researchers they hoped would become involved in the implementation and evaluation of the project.² These workshops helped develop an evaluation approach that focused on outcomes for individual children and their families in key areas such as health, child development and educational attainment, as well as looking at issues in project implementation and broader project goals such as staff training.

We recognised early that it was a tricky task to show impacts and outcomes of involvement in our projects on individual children and families. Foremost in our minds were the ethical issues related to researching children and their families. In following Jalaris' core principles we knew that the evaluation work that we were to do should have a positive impact on how we work with the children, and on the children themselves. We did not want to continue to measure the deficits and 'failures' of local Derby children. We also didn't want to collect information that exists elsewhere, or that didn't have any value in terms of contributing practical knowledge of how to make positive change in real people's lives. We also didn't want to accept standard and universal ideas about what success, health and positive development look like. We believed that the social, economic and cultural context of Jalaris' work needed to be factored into measures of success in a project such as the Kids Future Club. With that in mind, we did not want to measure Derby children against standards established for those from different cultural, social, economic and geographic situations. In addition, we knew that the 'gold standard' approach to research involving comparison with a control group was inappropriate in the Derby context. This was because Jalaris' approach to working with children and families is that anyone who wants to participate in a program is free to do so and the Jalaris Corporation would not consciously exclude children to aid the evaluation process.

As a consequence, these considerations shaped our approach to the evaluation. Building on an action research approach that had long complemented the reflective and adaptive way of working that Jalaris prefers, we looked to introduce some new tools and approaches to examine outcomes for individual children.

Additionally, to have a positive impact on project implementation, and, therefore, on the children and families involved in the Kids Future Club project, it was important that the evaluation process be as unobtrusive as possible. This meant that day-to-day data collection had to be undertaken by the core staff of Jalaris with the aim of introducing as few additional people as possible.

Different kinds of knowledge can be generated by people who are close to the action than by people

who stand outside the action. In general, we recognise that people inside the action have a unique perspective that understands the cultural, social and historical context of what is happening in this work. At the same time, we recognise that people close to the action can unwittingly make assumptions, miss things due to over-familiarity, and have a vested interest in the outcomes. To combat such a situation, we wanted to develop partnerships with people with expertise in child development, health and education to support the collection and analysis of evaluation data. Subsequently, in the design phase of the evaluation, we worked with a range of people familiar with the cultural and social setting in the West Kimberley, and also experts in key areas relevant to the project.³

Seeking evaluation partnerships

The expert input was valuable in shaping an initial evaluation approach, but long-term partnerships were hampered by a variety of factors. As Jalaris relies for its success on working through its kinship network and maintaining local control of their projects, we could not provide unlimited access or control of the evaluation process to external evaluation partners. For some, this was felt to compromise the independence of the work to such an extent that they chose not to participate.

Furthermore, staff turnover and changing internal priorities within some potential partner agencies, such as Derby Community Health Service⁴, prevented the establishment of long-term research collaborations with them. Finally, because of the distance of Derby from major universities and tertiary institutes, the cost of hands-on participation in the research process by many of the people consulted in the design phase proved to be prohibitive, although a number of people contributed significant time and energy, at their own expense, to support the early stages of the evaluation.

Data collection strategies

With regard to the data collection, we developed a range of strategies. These included methods that had been tried and tested in previous evaluation work with Jalaris, such as: staff keeping daily logs and participating in regular reflective conversations; photos and videos of activities at the Kids Future Club; gathering of statistics on attendance at the Club; and undertaking periodic interviews with parents, community members and Jalaris staff. The new strategies that were introduced in this evaluation cycle included: children from the Kids Future Club interviewing each other; gathering statistics on self-reported school attendance by those students coming to the Club; and the development of a sample of children to track more closely over the three-year evaluation period.

The Kids Future Club study group sample

At the beginning of 2008, a group of 43 children were identified to track over the three years of the Kids

Future Club evaluation. By the end of 2009, we had narrowed this down to 41, as two of the group did not attend the Club after 2008.

The sample group for the evaluation was selected to show something about what happens for those children involved in the Kids Future Club and to give more detailed information about who attended the Club. The sample was chosen to cover the range of social issues, family and household types experienced by children coming to the Club. These children were selected by the staff at Jalaris and written and oral permission to include them in this evaluation was given by their primary carer.

Thirty of the those in the sample comprised a core group of local children who attend the Club regularly. They live in Derby, that is, in the area around the Club. Another 11 were considered transient, that is, they live part-time in Derby, and part-time in an outstation or other Kimberley community, but still come regularly to the Kids Future Club.

We hoped to get two kinds of data from the study group sample: first, a profile of those attending the Club, with detailed information about their family and household structure. For this we developed a profile of each child in the study sample. This profile information was based on a simple form that the Kids Future Club Education Coordinator filled in at the beginning of the study period and updated in collaboration with the evaluator every year. Prior to filling in the profile, the Education Coordinator obtained signed permission from the primary carer of the child for them to participate in the evaluation sample.

Second, we wanted to track the social, emotional, behavioural and physical development of those in the sample over three years. However, it was a challenge to identify a tool that would enable us to gather and analyse this data. We were interested in using checklists or similar that were already being used with Aboriginal children in WA, so we looked at the checklists for evaluating child health and development used by Derby Community Health Service, as well as the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI)⁵, which had been trialled with some Western Australian communities in the years prior to us commencing the evaluation.

Unfortunately, we did not find a tool that suited our needs, and we recognised that the existing tools we had to draw from had serious limitations in terms of their suitability for use with local Aboriginal children. For instance, the Early Development Index⁶, on which the AEDI is based, has come under significant attack for reflecting a conception of child development that does not take into consideration the differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Li, D'Angiulli & Kendall 2007). Also, we knew that it was not appropriate to use measures that required comparison against standardised benchmarks. We were looking for a tool that helped to measure children's development against their own baseline. However, as there were, to our knowledge, no validated tools designed to do this for our specific community, we decided to press ahead in creating our own tool,

adapting some of the key domains from the tools mentioned above into a checklist format we hoped would be easy to use in the context of Jalaris.

The Study Sample Observation Checklist we developed had two aims. One was to gather data on individual children that could help gain a picture of the ways that regular engagement with the Kids Future Club might be impacting on their development, and the second was as a tool to support Club staff and participating agencies to look closely at developmental issues in kids at the Club.

Challenges in the evaluation

However, using the observation checklist in the context of Jalaris proved to be extremely problematic. First of all it was very time consuming, requiring at least an hour per child to complete. It was also expected that an observation would be conducted with each child in the study sample every six months.

Because it was important not to introduce external evaluators into the day-to-day running of the project solely for the purpose of data collection, the work had to be undertaken by someone who worked regularly at the Club and interacted with the children. In the first months of the Club, a Derby Community Health Service nurse spent one afternoon a week running activities and undertaking informal health checks. In this capacity she was able to closely observe the health and development of the children she saw each week. Over several months she was able to document significant behavioural and developmental changes and make suggestions about culturally and age-appropriate activities that could enhance child development at the Club. However, following staffing changes at Derby Community Health Service her role did not continue. As a result, it was decided that the Kids Future Club Education Coordinator, who is an extended family member to most of those who attend the Club, completed the observation checklists.

Another problem we encountered was that to gather such detailed information required a level of observational skill and expertise that could only be developed through training. Because we had not been able to develop stable research partnerships with external researchers, there was very little practical support or training available for the Kids Club Education Coordinator in order to undertake this data collection task.

Originally, it had been hoped that the first two years of the program would include intensive staff training in the areas of child development, nutrition and early childhood education, thereby contributing to the capacity of Jalaris staff to gather accurate and relevant data, as well as to be engaged in the process of analysis. However, Jalaris struggled to access any training at all, let alone of the quality and focus needed to support the evaluation process. As a result, to aid in the process of gathering the observational data, Jalaris hired a specialist from Murdoch University in mid-2009 to undertake some one-to-one training with the

Kids Club Education Coordinator about observational data collection. The observation checklist format was also simplified to include question prompts. Although useful, such steps still could not overcome the barriers to effective data collection encountered during the Jalaris evaluation.

In addition to the practical issues of time and lack of training, there were cultural issues impeding data collection. From the outset it was clear that the agenda to research outcomes for individual children was driven from outside Jalaris. As early as the initial planning workshops, it was clear that there was a divergence in agendas about what should be evaluated and how, with the push for research that would contribute 'evidence' about individual child and family outcomes being driven by non-Aboriginal participants. This divergence reflected subtle differences in comprehension and articulation of the purpose of the evaluation, of what success would look like on the ground, and what methods were appropriate and rigorous in the specific context of Jalaris' work.

Over time it became clear that formally evaluating the trajectory of individual children was not considered useful to the staff at Jalaris. In fact, it proved potentially to hinder the core work of the program. This occurred not only by consuming considerable amounts of time, but because it was deemed to jeopardise the social and kinship relationships, on which much of Jalaris' work is based, by placing family members in the position of recording information about children who are their kin. The process also had the potential to be seen as passing judgement on the children or their families. Thus, the specific information that was needed at regular intervals could not be gathered in an objective or 'safe' way by a family member, as they were very conscious of how their records might be interpreted by the families concerned.

During the second year of data collection a parent was consulted about the appropriateness of the data being collected, and she expressed dismay that a family member was recording some seemingly judgemental information. She was willing for her children to participate in the study group, but felt that the level of information being observed was too intrusive into family life. After two years of attempting to gather the observational data it became clear that the observational checklist approach was not going to be effective in the setting of Jalaris, and so this data collection method was abandoned.

Other conflicts regarding data collection

Jalaris understands the value of knowing the developmental strengths and weaknesses of individual children in order to support the development of specific skills in the context of formal education (i.e. reading levels in school). However, its approach to the Kids Future Club as a learning environment is one in which all skill levels are considered equal and kids are offered a range of enriched activities from which they can choose freely to participate or not. Jalaris distinguishes

itself from other learning environments (such as a school) by maintaining the principle that children are not required to participate in particular ways, beyond maintaining a culture of non-violence.

Furthermore, Jalaris is aware of the differences in development of individual kids participating in the Club and of social factors impacting on them (when pressed, staff members at Jalaris can provide detailed information on most children's social, physical and cognitive strengths and weaknesses). However, Jalaris sees the Club as a space where those attending are free to be themselves without judgement and where a range of activities in which they can participate or not, without compulsion, is offered. Interventions are only introduced if there is a clear health issue, or if help is specifically sought from a child or a family member. As a result, the observation checklists did not enhance the work of Jalaris, and posed a risk to the relationships of trust within the kinship network that underpin all of the organisation's community development work. The potential costs of the method to the community development work outweighed the potential benefit of being able to contribute a form of 'evidence' considered to be of value to both funders and policymakers.

Conclusion

Overall, evaluating individual outcomes in a program such as the Kids Future Club in a way that is culturally appropriate is trickier than it might appear at the outset. The logic driving the work of the project had to shape the methods of research and evaluation that were used, and as a result certain kinds of 'evidence' were not able to be presented, although the outcomes that the evidence sought to demonstrate was still achieved.

The abandonment of the Study Sample Observation Checklist, with the result that we cannot present evidence of individual child outcomes as a result of participation in the Kids Future Club, does *not* mean that the project failed to achieve positive outcomes for individual children in terms of their health, physical, social and educational development. Rather, due to structural constraints of limited resources and training, and cultural constraints about appropriate forms of research within family groups, we have found that we were unable to gather and present this information in an ethical, sensitive and systematic way. It is a paradox that the methods required to provide 'evidence' of effective practice in the Kids Future Club would have altered and potentially undermined the practice itself.

Eventually, a mixed methods participatory approach to evaluation, relying on critical reflection of project participants, interviews, case studies, observation and participatory documentation has, in the end, formed the basis of the 2007–2010 evaluation of the Kids Future Club.⁷ These methods are in line with the principles of action learning and participatory community development that guide Jalaris' work.

We hope that the outcome of the evaluation has still shown the strengths and weaknesses of the Kids Future Club project in a way that is instructive for future work of this kind. We believe that the evaluation process has enhanced the project by providing a context of critical reflection and sources of relevant data throughout the three years of the project, even though there were challenges along the way.

Notes

- 1 In his capacity as a Project Reporter at Jalaris Aboriginal Corporation, Derby, James Pillsbury has worked closely with Maya Haviland in evaluating Jalaris' projects over many years and made significant intellectual and editorial contributions to this article.
- 2 Participants in the first workshop included representatives from Jalaris Aboriginal Corporation, Side by Side Community Project Consulting, Derby Community Health Service, the Public Health Association, Caritas Australia, Lotterywest, and the Derby Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination.
- 3 These people included Dr Jane Fremantle (The University of Melbourne, member of the Public Health Association of Australia), Dr Libby Lee (Murdoch University, Perth), Sue Ferguson Hill (Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Perth).
- 4 Derby Community Health Service is a branch of the Western Australia Department of Health.
- 5 The AEDI is a population measure of young children's development. Like a census, it involves collecting information to help create a snapshot of children's development in communities across Australia. Teachers complete a checklist for children in their first year of full-time school. For further information, refer to <http://www.rch.org.au/aedi/about.cfm?doc_id=13152>.
- 6 The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a national tool developed in Canada to measure children's readiness for school. The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) is based on the Canadian EDI (Janus et al. 2009; Li, D'Angiulli & Kendall 2009).
- 7 The *Jalaris Kids Future Club Final Evaluation Report 2007–2010* can be downloaded from <<http://www.communityprojects.com.au/tag/jalaris>>.

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Progressing the dialogue about a framework for Aboriginal evaluations: sharing methods and key learnings¹

Aboriginal evaluation methodology is a relatively new construct. While much insight has been generated in recent years in relation to conducting research among Aboriginal groups, little has been generated concerning evaluation methodologies. How are Aboriginal projects evaluated, by whom and for what purpose? What do Aboriginal people want evaluated and how might this be measured? How can non-Aboriginal evaluators respond to these issues effectively and respectfully in their evaluation of Aboriginal programs? This article draws on experience in conducting various evaluations among Aboriginal groups and focuses on the evaluation of an intermediate labour market program² conducted in a remote part of Western Australia that used a multifaceted approach involving interviews, art and photovoice to capture how local people perceived the program's strengths and weaknesses. Various techniques were also used to increase engagement, hear the 'voice' of local people and make findings accessible to community members, program staff, government and other sectors. This article also addresses the important cultural and community factors that influenced the evaluation design and subsequent implementation of the findings. In addition, it shares key learnings in an attempt to consider further shaping the development of a framework for conducting effective and collaborative evaluations with Aboriginal organisations and communities.

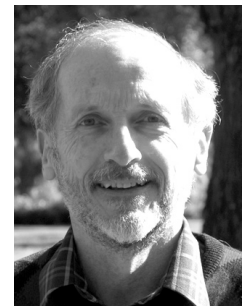
Introduction

This article presents the views of three non-Aboriginal³ evaluators, each with varied experience in evaluating programs and services involving Aboriginal people living in urban, regional and remote communities of Australia. It shares our learnings, predominantly drawn from an evaluation of an intermediate labour market program involving local men and women living in a remote community in the Southern Kimberley region of Western Australia. It describes a valuable learning process, while also highlighting that we still have much to learn. Through shared reflexive practice we hope to help progress the development of a framework for conducting more effective, respectful, empowering and collaborative evaluations with Australia's Aboriginal organisations and communities.

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While it is recognised that a number of existing frameworks already provide guidance for this field of work (AES 2010; AIATSIS 2011; Orr et al. 2009), these either focus on research rather than evaluation or they generalise across various, and often very different, communities and contexts. The development of a framework for conducting more effective evaluations with Aboriginal organisations and communities should undoubtedly be underpinned by the principles outlined in existing research guidelines. However, we also believe that such a framework should be informed by reflections on the following questions that have been asked of us, and which we have asked ourselves:

- 1 How are evaluations targeted to Aboriginal people, by whom and for what purpose?
- 2 What do Aboriginal people want evaluated and how might this be tackled?
- 3 How can non-Aboriginal evaluators respond to these issues effectively and respectfully?

1 How are evaluations targeted to Aboriginal people? By whom and for what purpose?

Too often we hear the criticism that evaluations (and research) with Aboriginal communities have been conducted by ‘outsiders’. ‘Outsiders’ are often perceived to attempt to engage on a short, one-off basis, often arriving with a predetermined agenda to extract specific ‘data’ without prior consultation. They then leave without any follow-up regarding implementing possible recommendations or benefits for the community. Furthermore, evaluations sometimes occur without locals seeing any change or improvement as a result of their efforts. It is no wonder that many Aboriginal people have been left feeling suspicious of, and disenfranchised by, the evaluation process.

As part of the problem, evaluations can be perceived to come from ‘outside’ the community’s interests and control and based instead on an external agenda, such as seeking to know that project funds have been well spent. This can lead to the disempowerment and disengagement of local people. Furthermore, the questions local people seek to ask and the answers they wish to strengthen can be ignored in the light of outsiders’ evaluation frameworks, funding priorities and values. Communities that have a long history of disengagement can become more so and key insights can be overlooked.

For example, when we went to evaluate an intermediate labour market program within a remote Aboriginal community, we did so in order to provide the organisations that initiated the study with quantitative evidence that the programs they were funding were effective in meeting contractual targets. Such evidence included: numbers of young men engaged in employment and training; attendance rates; and number of houses built. However, as we came to know more of the inner workings of the program, we

uncovered qualitative evidence that shed new light on the quantitative data. Without the latter, the former quantitative findings would have been quite limited. It would have meant avoiding engagement with the local community and the subsequent identification of new issues that community members considered to be critically important to the success and sustainability of the program.

One finding related to the culture of work and how some young men faced a number of obstacles in taking up full-time employment. Such insights offered the possibility of devising strategies that could begin to address key underlying issues facing the objectives of the program. Thus, in our experience it was important to bear in mind the evaluation questions ‘outsiders’ were asking, as well as those asked by ‘insiders’.

Further considerations when carrying out evaluations with Aboriginal communities

In line with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) principles of research (AIATSIS 2011), the National Health and Medical Research Council’s (NHMRC) values and ethics guidelines (NHMRC 2003) and others (e.g. Taylor 2003, p. 47), we firmly support that, in order to conduct ethical and respectful evaluations with Aboriginal people, consideration must be given to the ‘before’, ‘during’ and ‘after’ stages of the evaluation process. This includes: up-front and ongoing consultation; negotiation and mutual understanding; ongoing respect and recognition; free and genuine involvement of Aboriginal people; and the delivery of a final product that is accessible and incorporates shared benefits for both parties, including giving back to the Aboriginal people a report that responds to their needs and interests.

However, there remain a number of challenges for evaluators in implementing these principles. Literature (Scougall 2006; Spooner, Flaxman & Murray 2008) and our own experiences highlight these as most commonly being: the considerable time involved in establishing rapport and building trust with the Aboriginal people involved; the distance and time involved in accessing many Aboriginal communities; the costs associated with committing the necessary resources to the project; the lack of understanding about this matter by many funding bodies; and, not least, the lack of cultural competence and contextual knowledge held by evaluators.

As evaluators, we need to recognise that we are outsiders in the community and, therefore, we must consider our actions before, during and after community visits. It is important to first seek permission to visit from the Community Council or other key representatives, and time needs to be allowed for this approval process to occur. Similarly, time and resources need to be committed to a multi-staged process, including multiple community visits. The scheduling of engagements with the community needs to be flexible, and must factor in planned and

unplanned cultural events and ceremonies. In addition, there are often travel difficulties caused by weather and infrequent transport options.

In the example already mentioned, we incorporated four stages into our evaluation process, in an attempt to avoid the disenfranchising process of many predecessors and in order to genuinely respect the phases of 'before', 'during' and 'after'. This included three community visits, each involving about a week on-site, and an additional week travelling to and from the community. Specifically, the work comprised:

- *Stage 1:* Seeking permission from the local Council to visit; we could not assume this permission.
- *Stage 2:* A visit to: provide background for the intended evaluation; introduce the evaluation team; seek input from locals on how they perceived the need for evaluation; and ascertain how they would like the evaluation process to work (while clarifying any issues related to this and expressing a willingness to be flexible).
- *Stage 3:* A visit to gather data and seek ongoing feedback on the evaluative process.
- *Stage 4:* A visit to present the evaluation findings to local stakeholder groups and to disseminate the report while allowing time for community members to reflect and provide feedback.

Fortunately, in our experience, we had a supportive management team committed to a respectful evaluation process. This is not typical however. Often the challenge is getting the organisations that seek the evaluation to see value in, and commit costs to, the necessary time and resources required to build an evaluation relationship with the local community and key stakeholders. It is important, however, to have these organisations recognise this value if evaluations are to be based on consultation and trust and seriously attempt to evaluate according to the questions that those most involved wish to ask.

Who should evaluate? The use of sponsors

With regard to the issue of who should conduct evaluations among Aboriginal people, we recognise this issue is complex. Typically, the people who are most skilled at knowing whether, and how, programs work within their communities are community members. However, many communities lack the capacity or confidence to undertake evaluation, particularly in relation to their own ways of seeing and understanding the particular project. While it is our belief that evaluators themselves need not be Aboriginal, we believe that non-Aboriginal evaluators need to acknowledge that their cultural difference can present significant barriers to them interpreting the feedback and messages communicated by local Aboriginal people fully and accurately (Taylor 2003; Wehipeihana 2008, p. 42). This refers not just to barriers in interpreting local tongue, but also interpretation of colloquialisms, non-verbal communication and local cultural practices.

Because of this inability for an 'outsider' to ever completely understand the specific cultural context of a community, like others, we believe that engaging a 'sponsor' who has community knowledge and experience is imperative to increasing communication and trust. This 'sponsor' can provide the evaluator both with guidance and translation concerning cultural norms and practices, and a 'gateway' to the community, its leaders and those who can offer insight and comment on the project (Berends & Roberts 2003; Taylor 2003). This process of breaking down the walls to engagement to ensure the Aboriginal people involved are heard as well as seen is important (McCoy 2012).

If chosen wisely, the 'sponsor' should also be able to help build social capital and increase the legitimacy of the project (Spooner, Flaxman & Murray 2008, p. 30). Of course, in choosing the 'sponsor', consideration needs to be given to whom this might be, in order to avoid dominating voices or the intrusion of an outside agenda. Projects can generate political conflict between kinships or community members and/or may not adhere to appropriate gender or local cultural protocols (de Lancer Julnes, cited in Spooner, Flaxman & Murray 2008, p. 30).

Building rapport

In our example, our 'sponsor' been known to the community for over 20 years, including many years living within the community. He had built rapport with a diverse range of community members and also shared an understanding of the local culture and language. Engaging him as a 'sponsor' was a critical component of the evaluation's success. Not only did it assist in engaging local people (particularly the men), but it also helped guide culturally appropriate conduct for the evaluation, including an understanding of gift exchange, gender and conflict protocols. He also knew about the community's unique experience with colonisation as well as how the latter continued to influence people's behaviour and attitudes.

The 'sponsor's' involvement also ensured local voices could be better understood and represented more accurately, particularly during data analysis and reporting. Moreover, it meant the process involved in developing relationships and rapport with the community became significantly prioritised, focused and supported.

Other program staff living in the community were also invaluable in helping one of the authors engage with local community members because of their existing relationships and rapport with the community. In acknowledging the distinction between men's and women's cultural business, it was appropriate to have a well-regarded female provide the introduction to the local women. Of course, there were still no guarantees that the local women would warm to the author personally. However, having this link undoubtedly aided the process. The value of multiple site visits (and multiple interactions within each visit) became apparent through engaging the local women. What began as seemingly quite silent,

distant and disinterested interaction on behalf of the women, strengthened over time to become warm, open, engaging and rewarding.

Reporting

Evaluations, like research, should be perceived by those experiencing it to be of benefit and value. Like Russell Taylor (2003, p. 46), we believe that evaluators (and the evaluation process) should act as a ‘potential agent of change’ by empowering community members and local organisations to initiate or continue positive change. This role can manifest itself through all stages of the evaluation, influenced by how and by whom the evaluation is conducted and particularly through the evaluation reporting process.

Evaluation findings need to be delivered in a format that is accessible and able to be utilised by all stakeholders, particularly the Aboriginal people involved. Quite often we, as evaluators, are required to prepare long, detailed reports for government and other funding bodies. However, this format is not always of interest or accessible to all Aboriginal people, particularly for those where English is a second or third language. Thus, evaluators should consider preparing multiple reports that are tailored to various stakeholders. As part of this, consideration should also be given to the use of oral, visual and interactive reporting to provide a more engaging and typically more accessible report to communities (Berends & Roberts 2003, p. 58).

For our community evaluation we decided that two reports would be necessary—a report that addressed each of the contractual key performance indicators (KPIs) comprehensively, plus a text and visual A3 poster report that described: the community’s journey with the program; their thoughts on its effectiveness; outcomes they had recognised; and challenges and future needs relating to the program. Like others (Tsey 2000, p. 305), we found using the participants’ own words and/or personal narratives in the report to be an effective way of not only helping ‘outsiders’ understand the local context, but also encouraged participants to feel a sense of ownership and pride in the report. Copies of the poster report were given to the community to provide them with a permanent record of the journey as well as a tool for learning, sharing, reflection and teaching (Tsey 2000, p. 306).

Building evaluation skills in the community

One important aspect where our evaluation lacked strength concerned the inability to build evaluation skills and capacity within the local community. This was not due to our disregard for the strategy. We agree with the Australasian Evaluation Society and others (Gray et al. 1995; Wehipeihana 2008, p. 42) that the opportunity for Aboriginal people to develop and strengthen their evaluation skills is important for encouraging shared ownership and benefit and project sustainability. In the past, however, we, like others, have found this practice easier said than done, particularly

when working with remote communities (Berends & Roberts 2003, p. 57).

Some of our biggest challenges have been overcoming the legacy of historical suspicion of evaluation by Aboriginal people. This was ‘whitefella business’. Additionally, we were challenged by the limited time available to develop relationships and skills, difficulties in knowing who to involve and how to seek interest, and a general uncertainty regarding the logistics of such an approach. Nonetheless, we firmly believe capacity building is a mutually beneficial strategy. It is one we intend to pursue in our follow-up evaluation with the same community, with an effort to also learn from our past experiences.

2 What do Aboriginal people want evaluated and how might this be tackled?

It is impossible to answer what Aboriginal people want evaluated in relation to a specific project without them being involved from the outset, having some control over the process, and offered some investment in the results. Evaluators need to consider that some aspects that they think should be examined may be ones that Aboriginal people do not support—either because they find them culturally insensitive, too intrusive, irrelevant or perhaps too complex and difficult. In such cases, this means exploring alternatives that satisfy the needs of all those involved.

In relation to data collection, we reiterate that multiple site visits are critical to allow for adequate rapport building and contextual understanding. Beyond this, we have learnt that it is not helpful if evaluators are too prescriptive about particular methodologies at the project’s outset. Rather, the methodological approach needs to be flexible and tailored to the project, the key questions being asked and the people involved. Influenced by local stakeholders’ views on how they believe ‘data’ should be provided, this may mean being flexible in regard to particular evaluation approaches and choosing methods that engage critical issues. It may also mean educating funding bodies around the realities of ‘data’ and/or what participants believe is important to know.

Both qualitative and quantitative data can play a key role in telling a program’s story, and a challenge for evaluators is to use each to complement the other. The use of creative qualitative methods such as art, music, games and role-play offer much value, as they can be both descriptive and flexible (Berends & Roberts 2003). They can also provide depth and context, thereby adding to the ‘numbers’ often sought by funding bodies. Similarly, statistics can provide objective and helpful baselines and comparison points against which change and improvement can be measured.

In our evaluation project, we used a multifaceted approach that involved analysis of program and community reports to provide the statistics, plus semi-structured interviews, art and photovoice to capture people’s thoughts and feelings. As part of this latter process, both men and women were invited to draw or

paint their ‘story’ of the program and then retell this story in their own words. Similar to Tsey (2000, p. 305), we found an important feature of such activity involved allowing people time to reflect and tell their story, and, in doing so, helping participants become aware of the changes the program had introduced into their lives.

We chose an art-based methodology because of our knowledge of the community’s existing interest and comfort with such activity. The women who participated were already engaging in other art activities, so our exercise became a voluntary extension of these activities. After confirming local protocols in relationship to ownership of the art, we offered willing participants the necessary art materials and invited them to take time to reflect and express their feedback creatively through drawing or painting. Others engaged in photovoice by using a camera to show what was important to them. The level of enthusiasm these activities generated and the speed at which locals responded (i.e. overnight) was testament to the effectiveness of such methods in this instance.

Finally, while using all these methods to enhance engagement, it was important for us to understand and respect local views and behaviours concerning different environments and spaces. As with Tsey (2000, p. 304), we recognised the importance of ensuring the environment in which the engagement took place was safe, supportive and informal. Beyond this, we needed to understand that separate defined spaces within the community existed for men, women, families, etc. For example, when interviewing young Aboriginal men, many of whom were uncomfortable meeting and sitting down in a formal office, we chose more open spaces where they could relax and chat more easily. These were typically places where men would often gather, and which were considered to be ‘safe’. For women, different spaces that were specific and safe to them were also used.

3 How can non-Aboriginal evaluators respond to these issues effectively and respectfully during evaluations of Aboriginal programs?

The evaluation described in this article took us on a pathway that strayed from the original evaluation plan and framework and this required continuous learning from all stakeholders. There were also issues such as funding delays, a later-than-ideal commencement date and competing community agendas that impacted on the ability to conduct the evaluation—in particular, when trying to build local evaluation capacity and when attempting to provide feedback to communities in a timely manner. However, reflexive practices in the face of these barriers did allow the evaluation to proceed effectively and for the report to be disseminated to stakeholders. Through this process, there were a number of important learnings gained, including:

- The importance of ‘before’, ‘during’ and ‘after’, while recognising the challenges, often beyond our

control, in truly respecting and implementing these stages, (particularly as the evaluation can often be viewed by the community to be less important than the ebb and flow of their daily life).

- The need to allow ample time for the community to understand the evaluation purpose and identify and engage with the key evaluation questions.
- The need to provide enough time for evaluator(s) to develop rapport with various community stakeholders and gain contextual knowledge.
- The critical need to engage community members from the outset through the trust and support of a ‘sponsor’. In doing so, evaluators can begin to gain cultural understanding and information about the context. More importantly though, locals need to have a say in how evaluations impacting on them should occur, and how, and if, the findings can be used to benefit the community.
- The importance of using flexible and creative methods such as art and photography for gaining local views and allowing local voices to be heard clearly, and complementing these methods with quantitative data and findings in order to provide funders with a more thorough and holistic picture.
- The importance and need to educate funders about realistic timings, cost, ‘data’ etc., and ultimately what is possible to achieve through an evaluation process.

Conclusion

Reflexive practices involve adaptability that can more effectively assist with the progression of evaluations. By allowing flexibility in timing, engagement, data collection and results dissemination, the evaluation process becomes a journey that evaluators and the community can take together. Hence, reflexive practices become an underlying theme in the idea of a framework for evaluating programs targeted to Aboriginal people. While it is very difficult to develop a specific framework that would be applicable to Aboriginal evaluations right across Australia due to different local cultures and contexts, we believe those engaged in the evaluation sector need to engage continually in reflexive practices and give thought to how we can synthesize these learnings into a discussion about how to carry out appropriate and valuable evaluations while engaging and working with, and among, Aboriginal people.

Notes

- 1 An earlier version of this article was presented at the Australasian Evaluation Society International Conference, Sydney, 29 August – 2 September 2011.
- 2 Intermediate labour market programs act as a bridge between unemployment and the mainstream labour market by providing temporary waged employment in a genuine work environment with ongoing support and training.

- 3 In this article we use the word 'Aboriginal' rather than 'Indigenous' as the people we have worked with use, and prefer to use, this term.

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BOOK REVIEWS

edited by Darrel N Caulley

Title:	Key Concepts in Corporate Social Responsibility
Authors:	Suzanne Benn and Dianne Bolton
Publisher/year:	Sage, Los Angeles, 2011
Extent/type:	246 pages, paperback
Price:	AU\$39.95 or NZ\$57.95 from Footprint Books which offers a 15% discount to AES members, phone 1300 260 090 (within Australia) or +61 2 9997 3973 (from outside Australia), email <info@footprint.com.au>, website <http://www.footprint.com.au> for the latest prices
ISBN:	978-1-84787-929-5

This is not the type of book one reads from cover to cover, but rather a handy reference one dips into from time to time as the need arises. This text would be useful as an introductory resource for undergraduate students.

Do businesses have responsibilities to society broader than making profits for business owners and investors? Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is concerned with the ways in which an organisation exceeds its minimum obligations to stakeholders as specified in regulations and corporate governance standards. Legislative frameworks give uneven attention to the rights and obligations of different stakeholder groups. Hence it is useful to distinguish between the interests of contractual stakeholders such as customers, suppliers and employees, and the interests of other stakeholders such as local communities and informal interest groups that do not enjoy this same level of legal protection.

Purpose and target audience

According to the authors, this text introduces the key concepts in corporate social responsibility, bringing together the essential issues relevant to the responsible management of businesses, not-for-profit organisations and government. This text

is a guide to both the theory and implementation of CSR, providing students, researchers and practitioners with a cross-disciplinary perspective of CSR. The intention of this book is to help readers identify CSR issues and make better decisions in the current complex and shifting business environment (p. x).

Description

This publication provides a multidisciplinary perspective on 50 'key concepts' within the field of CSR. These concepts range from 'Agency Theory', 'Business Ethics', and 'Greenwash' through to 'Philanthropy', 'Social Capital' and 'Triple Bottom Line'. Entries focus on definitions, the relevance of the concept to the field, debates and tensions surrounding the concept, examples of application, and references for further reading. The chapter on 'Civil Society' is a typical example covering 'What is civil society?', 'History of the term', 'Civil society and democracy', 'Global civil society', 'Critique of the term', 'Civil society and CSR', and finally 'References'.

Strengths and weaknesses

The strengths of *Key Concepts in Corporate Social Responsibility* include:

- The text covers a great deal of ground in its 246 pages

and provides short overviews of each of the 50 key CSR concepts.

- The book is written in an easy-to-read plain-English style. Coupled with the effective use of chapter subheadings, this makes for a very reader-friendly publication. This would suit undergraduates and students who have English as their second language.

- A list of references for further reading is included at the end of each chapter, which is very helpful.

This text also has some significant weaknesses:

- More information about the history and theory of CSR should have been included in the book (see Carroll 1999). This would have helped to unify the text and place individual concepts into a broader framework.
- While acknowledging that this text is an introduction to CSR concepts, nevertheless a few chapters seemed a bit superficial and rather dull reading.
- I found that the content and style of the individual chapters varied considerably, perhaps reflecting the input of different authors. While the text has two official authors the book's

acknowledgements section also thanks two students for their assistance in ‘assembling’ this work. This publication reads as if several different people put it together in a hurry. It would benefit significantly from further editing.

Overall summary

This is a useful introductory reference for undergraduate students and for those from a non-English speaking background. It would also be a good supplement to a more comprehensive text such as Crane et al. 2008. Despite the authors’ intentions it is difficult to imagine CSR practitioners or researchers making use of this introductory text.

Readers may be interested in:

- Carroll, A 1999, ‘Corporate social responsibility: evolution of a definitional construct’, *Business & Society*, vol. 38, no. 3, pp. 268–295.
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Title:	Multisite Evaluation Practice: Lessons and Reflections From Four Cases (New Directions for Evaluation, No. 129)
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A volume of papers drawn together by their common concentration on the problem of multi-site evaluation is a very timely addition to the evaluation literature on two accounts. First, like the US Government, the federal government in Australia is centralising the delivery of a host of government-funded services ranging from social services, such as health and education, to physical services that include telecommunications and transport. Evaluation of such programs, which may be delivered in different time frames, at different local levels and to different target populations, therefore requires a different approach to evaluation, that is, multi-site evaluations. This book addresses this issue.

A second reason why this book is innovative is the focus

of the book. A key tenet of evaluation theory is that those whose performance is being evaluated should be involved in the evaluation. This is both a practical and an equitable issue.

A practical reason for the participation of those who were impacted by an evaluation was to encourage the collection of valid and reliable data and to ensure a response to the evaluation findings. A significant contributor to theory about participation in evaluation, Michael Patton (2008) in his seminal model of *utilization-focused evaluation* states that utilization-focused program evaluation is evaluation for intended primary users. He developed his model by seeking the views of people from a variety of government organisations on the impact of program

evaluation on funding, operations, decision-making and public policy. He found that the more people were involved, the more likely they were to respond to the results of the evaluation. The response may be to modify the ‘evaluand’, that is, the inputs, process or objectives of the entity being evaluated, or to increase or decrease its level of funding.

The equitable issue revolves around the premise that those who were the users of an evaluation should have some say in how it is conducted. This premise is reflected in the American Guiding Principles for Evaluators as well and the AES Code of Ethics. The Joint Committee on Program Evaluation Standards identified four attributes of a sound evaluation. Relevant here are the attributes of *utility* and *propriety* (Stufflebean &

Shinkfield (2007). In regard to utility, the standard states (p. 87): 'An evaluation should be useful. It should be addressed to those persons and groups that are involved in or responsible for implementing the program being evaluated'. A propriety standard is intended to protect the rights and dignity of those involved in the evaluation.

However, the focus in this book is not on the use of evaluation findings by primary users, that is, those who commissioned and funded the evaluations described in the book. Instead it examines the impact of the evaluations on those who were possible 'unintended' users who participated in the evaluation either by choice or requirement: the local planners, project managers and evaluators engaged in the delivery of programs at the coalface. Their research addressed the questions: what was the impact of the national multi-site evaluation on these people? What did they get from the national evaluation?

The editors of this book, Jean King and Frances Lawrenz are steeped in evaluation expertise. I first met Jean King, one of the authors some years ago when she accompanied her husband, Michal Patton, to Australia. Professor King specialises in qualitative approaches and Professor Lawrenz in quantitative methodologies.

The authors differentiated between 'participation', that is, those who were making decisions about the larger study, and 'involvement', which referred to the actions of those required to be involved through their roles in the local program. So another question was: were there differences between those who participated and those who were involved? And, what were the factors that promoted or inhibited involvement? An assumption was that those who were more actively involved were more likely to use the evaluation results.

Another value of this book is related to its title. It did demonstrate one way in which multi-site evaluations could be conducted. The book introduces the reader to evaluation of four case studies that

were part of a major program, the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program funded by the US National Science Foundation (NSF). The NSF provided \$250 million for 346 projects and centres across the US with the purpose of improving technological education and thus improving competence across the US. All NSF programs are required to conduct formative evaluations of individual projects. In addition, in 1999, the NSF gave \$3 million to the Evaluation Centre at Western Michigan University to evaluate the entire program. The purpose was to provide information to the NSF for program decision-making and accountability to Congress.

Following an introductory chapter, the next four chapters of the book describe the four evaluation case studies that illustrate evaluations conducted across multi-sites and projects. Each chapter, written by the project's evaluation team, uses a common structure to describe each project, the evaluation methodology, its findings and their use, the limitations of the evaluation, and its implications. In each case, a major emphasis is placed on the patterns of involvement of the local stakeholders. These include, but are not confined to project evaluators, project leaders and teachers. Three of the programs are described as examples of traditional program evaluations, while the fourth, the MSP-RETA project represents a program-level evaluation that did not evaluate the projects but was intended to give evaluation technical assistance to the local evaluators (see Table 1).

Chapter 5 (Roseland, Greenseid, Volkov and Lawrenz) documents the impact that the four multi-site evaluations had on the broader fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education, and evaluation. The impact evaluation measures are citations, evaluation products and a survey of Principal Investigators (PIs) of the research projects. Types of evaluation products include instruments/tools, presentations, publications, dissertations, newsletters and reports. From the results it appeared that the

evaluations had little real 'impact'. There were many publications but not surprisingly most outputs were the evaluation reports from the highly funded and bigger products.

While the research outputs from the programs are of interest, it seems rather ambitious to call this an impact study as no attempt is made to gauge whether the program had achieved any of its objectives or made the social or economic differences that were the aims of the program. It also raises questions for another time about the usefulness and validity of these measures of what are regarded universally as measures of research quality and outputs.

In Chapter 6, Lawrenz, King and Oom present the results of the study of involvement across the four case studies. They conclude that involvement varied depending on the type of evaluation activity engaged in, and the demands of the activity, and that among the reasons for the low reports of involvement was because the respondents canvassed in these evaluations were not the typical participants, that is, the NSF funders of the evaluation. Furthermore, the respondents had different ideas of what they perceived as involvement. Unlike traditional evaluations in which participation is usually referred to in the design or conduct of the evaluation, some of the respondents thought that simple attendance at a meeting could be called involvement. One of the significant findings was that involvement was more likely to be fostered by some face-to-face activity focused on the evaluation.

Lessons learned by the evaluators are addressed in Chapter 7. The six authors discuss six lessons that could be of use to other multi-site evaluators. Their lessons relate to control of decisions, use of evaluation process and outcomes, supporting project staff, serving as a buffer between funder and projects, leadership in cultural issues and the importance of high-quality designs. In Chapter 8, Kirkhardt takes up the issue of the importance of cultural issues in influencing the take up of evaluation results. She discusses how

TABLE 1: EVALUATION METHODS APPLIED IN FOUR TRADITIONAL EVALUATIONS AND ONE IMPACT EVALUATION

Evaluation method	Advanced Technological Education (Ch. 1)	Teacher enhancement (Ch. 2)	Enhancement in teacher preparation (Ch. 3)	Maths–Science partnership (Ch. 4)	Impact (Ch. 5)
Online survey	X	X	X		X
Interviews	X	X	X	X	
Review of archival documents, publications	X	X	X	X	
Reflections by the program evaluator	X	X	X	X	
Citation analysis					X
Evaluation products					X

that consideration of culture leads to reflection on power and influence, ownership and whose agendas are being served, ignored or impeded when evaluations exert influence.

An external view of the case studies is provided in Chapter 9 by Brandon who concludes that the four case studies add to the literature on evaluation use. He concludes that unlike this research, most previous studies were focused on single-site use and that this study made an original contribution by comparing four case studies and also investigating the unintended use of evaluations. He points out that the design of the case studies was not ideal for showing causality as they did not involve the systematic manipulation of variables and that this could be the subject of future research.

How to engage participants through networking and dissemination of information is the topic of Chapter 10 by Goodyear. She provides a model of a communication strategy by reference to the Innovative Technology Experiences for Teachers Program. This developed an evaluators' 'community of practice' by providing: evaluation technical assistance or 'evaluation marriage counselling'; an electronic online peer exchange and discussion group; conference calls and live Webcasts; annual conferences; opportunities to join research working groups; and access to

an online evaluation instrument database.

The final chapter by Mark reviews what evaluators know about evaluation use and taxonomies of types of use, and he draws some conclusions about the potential for further research into multi-site evaluations. In describing his model of evaluation use, he notes that evaluations can operate at different levels of analysis (individual, interpersonal and collective), have different types of consequences (including cognitive/affective and behavioural or conceptual and direct), and engage thinking (elaboration and motivational) processes. He suggests that in multi-site evaluation with their complexity, multiple stakeholders and multiple locations, these constructs could be used to build an evaluation 'pathway' that would guide the conduct of evaluation and provide a framework for future research into evaluation use and influence.

This useful book is a publication of the American Evaluation Association. It is one of the series of New Directions for Evaluation and has an excellent index. As such, it provides an account of thorough and professional evaluations that will be easy for both evaluators and policymakers to read and understand.

One of the achievements of the book is the ways in which the editors managed the 15 authors who

collaborated to achieve this result.

The editors have drawn together a collection of papers that address a common problem from a number of different perspectives. Although the authors took different approaches to the topic, the book as a whole had a unity of purpose.

The limitation to their approach has its origins in the very complex nature of multi-site programs. The various program components are very different in their budgets, objectives, delivery modes and contexts. Attempts to evaluate such programs suffer from a number of weaknesses associated with aggregation of conflicting views, disciplinary approaches and methodologies (Scriven 1994). These may be reasons why the authors' conclusions about the value of the program and the methodologies of evaluation appear to have taken second place in the book to the issue of the value of such evaluation efforts to stakeholders other than the program funders. Indeed, the 'lessons learned and reflections' appear to highlight the problems rather than the solutions. From this perspective I feel that the lessons on evaluation 'practice' in regard to multi-site evaluation promised by the title of the book are only marginally successful.

Nevertheless, there are reflections and valuable lessons to be learned. First, this multi-site evaluation attracted the sizeable budget that enabled a

raft of significant evaluations to be conducted. Second, the volume outlined a number of both quantitative and qualitative ways in which such programs can be evaluated and the different data sets used to complement each other.

The lessons learnt from attempts to engage local stakeholders are revealing. Toal, Arlen and Gullickson found that expectations of being evaluated and accountable contributed to feelings of involvement and increased the impact of the evaluations. So too, did revealing the names of people who did not respond to an evaluation survey. Some respondents did not feel involved despite being invited to participate; others felt overloaded with requests for information, and saw the program evaluation as an additional burden. The most effective participation came from those who gained professional knowledge and expertise from

the evaluation. However, in that evaluation the project was designed to provide technical tools for locals to conduct evaluations.

The book is original in addressing a taxing problem for governments and evaluators. This is not to suggest that the authors resolve the problem, but rather that they draw attention to the problem and open the door for further research into how evaluations of multi-type programs delivered in multi-site locations could be addressed.

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As an academic (who has taught evaluation, research methods and statistics) and evaluation practitioner for over 25 years, I have to admit I cringed when I saw Salkind’s book. However, on reflection, and after scanning the three dozen books on research methods and statistics in my bookshelves, I found and was prompted by Hollander & Proschan’s (1984) book, *The Statistical Exorcist*, to recall my attempts to deal with the anticipation of ‘statistics anxiety’ among my students. Unfortunately, I found such a book did not feature well as a primary text in the curriculum of university courses on research

methods for two reasons: because of the academic cringe (after all, we know what’s best for the student); and because it is difficult to set exam questions and assignments when the text has already given away your edge with the quirky examples and cases you have tried to use in class.

For the academic (including the ambitious doctoral student), the circus theatrics, comedy routines and cartoon graphics (as well as the big bold fonts to grab attention as if the reader was unable to focus) used in these two books to reduce the anxiety of the poor sufferer of statistics, may be distracting. However, on deeper inspection beneath these

distractions there is substance, dare I say ‘validity’ (‘Whoa! What is the truth?’, Salkind, p. 117—see what I mean?).

Nevertheless, from the point of view of those who need to gain or revise their understanding of statistics as part of their involvement in an evaluation, there may be some limited benefit.

By the way, neither the term nor the concept of ‘evaluation’ is specifically covered in Salkind’s book. However, it does cover experimental and hypothetico-deductive approaches to quantitative data collection and analysis.

The focus of this book review has faithfully followed an

approach to the logic of empirical data analysis. For instance, in the layout of the book the chapters introduce each stage of the understanding of statistics: from variability, associations (correlations), forming hypotheses or research questions, probability and scaling construction (reliability and validity), through to the commonly used statistical tests tailored to the number and type of independent and dependent variables. With this approach lie both the book's strengths and weaknesses. The approach is avowedly practical, aimed at the reader with no technical or mathematical background, minimising some aspects of the underlying theory (although it does refer to websites where the theory might be elaborated). That may be useful for the uninitiated but it does limit its relevance to most research methods and evaluation courses that assume postgraduate entry (presumably these students would have already had to face and cope with any statistical anxiety).

To give a systematic evaluation of this book, I refer to seven criteria that I have espoused in such reviews (Sharp 1991); I proposed that any publication of this kind (which purports to be a practical 'handbook') should meet the following seven criteria:

- 1 **Be comprehensive and eclectic:** This book does not meet this criterion in terms of breath and depth of methods (although naturally it avowedly eschews this criterion); for example, it does not deal with statistics for evaluation where there are ethical and other limits on the experimental approach based on hypothesis testing etc. However, in terms of statistical software for working its examples, although it focuses on SPSS software, it also illustrates its cases with MS Excel, after introducing the other possible alternatives
- 2 **Offer a heuristic system:** Indeed this is a strength of this book in that there are two heuristic systems in play: (1) in the explication of the approach to reading the book (e.g. system of indicative icons and happy face ratings of degree of difficulty of the material to guide the student) and (2) a glossary, appendices (e.g. an introduction to SPSS) and many useful step-by-step guidelines, with clear examples that illustrate the techniques
- 3 **Provide a valid framework:** It does offer a systematic research-based approach to data gathering and analysis
- 4 **Provide case examples from a variety of fields:** There is a rich store of examples and websites from a diversity of fields, with reference to published cases, albeit with a bias towards the social sciences but little specifically related to evaluation practice
- 5 **Be user-friendly:** This is supposedly the most student-friendly statistics book available. It is very easy to read, but in its attempt to live up to its own hyperbole I found it to be off-putting and distracting for what I think a practitioner might want; and postgraduate students might want a more serious handbook or an academically thorough textbook. Nevertheless, it does have useful tables of contents and indexes
- 6 **Be technically competent:** There is no doubt that Salkind has demonstrated his command of the research and technical aspects of statistics in this book, which is now in the 4th edition
- 7 **Provide an adequate explanation:** Undoubtedly Salkind has conveyed the relevant *information* for the uninitiated; he has done well in covering not only the basics but also the bases underlying the data collection, analysis and reporting of statistics for social research.

Overall strengths and weaknesses

The main strength of this publication is its accessibility to meet the needs of those with 'statistical anxiety', with clear introductions to data collection and statistical analyses. Its weakness is that it may be too focused on the beginner and marginalise (dare I say 'patronise') the postgraduate research student or evaluation practitioner who may also be wary of statistics but would need something more substantial.

Overall, I am ambivalent about this book for the evaluation practitioner and would not use it as a supplementary text for my postgraduate courses and workshops.

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As many readers will know, the American Evaluation Association publishes a quarterly journal or sourcebook of material, each devoted to a single topic brought together under the direction of a guest editor. These sourcebooks appear in a number of forms, including debates, long articles and, in this case, a collection of papers reflecting different aspects of a common theme; they invariably offer an excellent critical summary of contemporary thought on the topic in question.

Patricia Patrizi and Michael Q Patton have chosen to focus this issue of *New Directions* on the evaluation of strategy. This is somewhat novel as the unit of analysis of most evaluations is usually one of the five Ps: projects, programs, products, policies and personnel. The volume comprises five chapters; the first by the editors considers the implications of making strategy the evaluand, while the last reflects on some emerging issues of process and method. In between there are three case studies of strategy evaluation in practice: Wind and Carden's review of strategic work at Canada's International Development Research Centre; Patrizi's assessment of the end-of-life grant regime of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; and Sherwood's analysis of the WK Kellogg Foundation's devolution initiative. While these provide a rich source of analysis and reflection and make a welcome contribution to this new focus on strategy, in the words of the editors this is 'merely the beginning of inquiry into these questions'.

The most important question to emerge from this review is:

what do we mean by strategy or to be strategic? Patrizi and Patton take both a pragmatic and a principled approach to this in considering how these terms are used by leaders in business, government and the not-for-profit sector and what its etymological roots are. It is clearly the case that leaders across all of these sectors increasingly use the terms 'strategy' or 'strategic' to describe what they do and what they want to achieve. What self-respecting organisation these days does not have a strategic plan, adopt a strategic approach to managing its business and perhaps even have a strategy unit or a director of strategy? But this does not necessarily tell us how their plan is any more strategic than the one they had before, when it was simply called a plan, or how their strategic approach differs from their previous approach, or what the director of strategy actually does that is strategic. It is not difficult to imagine a Clarke and Dawe conversation at the end of the Thursday edition of ABC's 7.30 current affairs program on these topics.

The etymology of the term reveals its origins in the Greek term *strategos*, which means to think like a general, remembering that in ancient Greece military leaders were also territorial governors. The *stratego*i were expected to think therefore in broad terms, to appreciate the big picture, not just in their battlefield manoeuvres but also in their governance of subject places and people. The *Macquarie Dictionary* defines strategy as: 'generalship or the science or art of combining and employing

the means of war in planning and directing large military movements and operations'. Less militarily, it refers to: 'skilful management in getting the better of an adversary or attaining an end', or 'the method of conducting operations, especially by the aid of manoeuvring or stratagem'. Sometimes, strategy is distinguished from tactics but apart from a subtle inference that tactics are more specific and focused, the definitions are similar in their emphasis on planning and managing battlefield operations and on gaining advantages. It is perhaps not surprising that this type of discourse is appealing to captains of industry, but more so that managers and leaders in the philanthropic, not-for-profit and community sectors have so readily accepted a set of words so steeped in militarism.

But to the substance of the collection. In their opening chapter, Patton and Patrizi report that in their world of evaluation of, with and for major North American philanthropic organisations, almost everyone believes they should have a strategy; not everyone does in practice and indeed some leaders now complain of being 'strategied out' (p. 9). In their attempt to pin down precisely what it is that everyone is now so preoccupied with and what it would mean for strategy to become a new evaluand, they make an interesting point:

we want to emphasize that evaluating strategy is not about evaluating strategic planning, or even strategic plans. It is about evaluating *strategy* itself. And that, we shall argue, makes all the difference. (p. 6)

They elaborate in following an approach and conceptualisation developed by the noted management scholar, Henry Mintzberg, who argues that strategy is not a program or a plan, but what is actually done. In other words, published strategies may be easy to access and to analyse, but they do not always give a good indication of what actually happens in practice, and what happens in practice should be the object of our attention. This sound principle would encourage the practising evaluator not to disregard the published strategy, but to study carefully its implementation, perhaps even speculating on what different strategy would explain better what was happening in practice. Scholars of evaluation theory will see the similarities in this approach with Michael Scriven's seminal work on goal-free evaluation (e.g. Scriven 1991)

Patton and Patrizi refer favourably to Wehipeihana and Davidson's (2010) recent work on strategic policy evaluation in which they argue that what distinguishes strategic evaluation from just policy evaluation is its contribution to painting a big picture and answering macro-level and cross-project questions (p. 22). This is rather more helpful than the conclusion to their contribution, in which they say, 'In essence, evaluating strategy can be an evaluation strategy' (p. 26).

The three chapters that present case studies are all interesting in their presentation of detailed accounts of strategy evaluation in practice. Wind and Carden draw interesting conclusions about the importance of organisational culture in framing the conduct of evaluations, and especially about the consequences of working in what they term an 'ad hococracy' and what others might call a culture of adaptive management. Patrizi's evaluation of the end-of-life grant-making regime is noteworthy because the very process of review enabled a strategy to become explicit and to emerge 'as a thread that gave coherence to the diversity

in the grant making' (p. 48). She also notes that 'strategy is rarely captured in documents and what was written often did a better job of expressing a vision than doing justice to the multitude of subtle ways that strategy was actually enacted' (p. 49). In other words, we should be wary of putting too much weight on documents that claim strategic significance and look instead at actual practices and the principles that might make sense of them. Clearly Elmore's (1979) backward mapping still has some resonance. Patrizi's concluding sentence is perhaps the most significant though:

It was not the kind of strategy based on inputs, outputs, and outcomes derived from 'logic models', but strategy built on close-to-the-ground reconnaissance, intimate understanding of how systems work and develop, and, most important, a deep appreciation of and willingness to work side by side with talent in the field. (p. 67)

My concern with this statement is that it suggests a significant difference between these two approaches and implies that logic models and any systematic consideration of the balance of inputs and outputs in the achievement of outcomes are somehow too crude, unsophisticated and lacking in 'deep appreciation' or 'willingness to work with talent'. Of course this may be the case, but it ain't necessarily so and there may be similar dangers in adopting a deliberately unstructured approach that simply collects and rehearses a set of beliefs and intuitions from those within a policy institution.

Sherwood's review of the Kellogg devolution initiative is most interesting because it revisits an evaluation story and re-tells it 'through the lens of strategy' (p. 70). This retrospective interpretation is necessary because at the time of the initial evaluation, the issues were not framed as matters of strategy

at all. Like Moliere's *bourgeois gentilhomme*, M Jourdain, who did not realise he had been speaking prose for the last 40 years, the Kellogg Foundation staff did not realise at the time that they had been engaged in 'a strategic intervention aimed at bringing accountability to the governmental devolution process' (p. 71).

In the concluding chapter, Patrizi takes up the challenge of synthesising the important lessons to be learnt from the case studies. She helpfully distinguishes between strategy as plan, strategy as perspective, strategy as position and strategy as pattern. Plans represent the intentions of strategic actors, but should be treated as data rather than as guidelines against which to assess performance. Perspective represents a general disposition about how to be effective, a world view if you will, while position refers to the location of action and outcomes. The identification of patterns is the foundational activity in any strategy assessment, but only a first step on which further analysis is built. She concludes that strategy is 'a place where theory and practice intersect or collide' and where thought and action intersect' (p. 100). Furthermore, the assessment of strategy is:

inextricably a partnership between strategist and evaluator and cannot be productively disassociated from the doing. Therefore, it is not work for those who seek distance and objectivity. At its heart, strategy evaluation is an enterprise of serious and critical appreciation. (p. 101)

Will practising evaluators find this collection helpful and interesting? Interesting certainly, helpful perhaps. It brings a degree of conceptual clarity to a complex field, but also introduces some new complications that require further analysis. It certainly provides fresh grist to the mill of academic debate, although it also resurrects some longstanding notions and perspectives from the

past of policy studies. Would the prospective commissioner of an evaluation of strategy be better placed in doing so having read this collection? Maybe, but they might also conclude that it is all a bit too difficult and revert to a more straightforward and possibly simplistic evaluation that compare inputs, outputs and outcomes.

This collection draws on the insights and experience of some of the most influential evaluation practitioners in the USA and presents a concise description of the state-of-the-art of strategy evaluation. It merits a wide readership and represents an important contribution to the field.

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As a Māori, community-based health researcher who trained at the time when Smith’s seminal work, *Decolonising Indigenous Methodologies* (1999) had just been released, I was pleased to be asked to review a new Sage publication entitled *Indigenous Research Methodologies* by an indigenous author hailing from Botswana. The book promised to present a unique perspective on post-colonial research and evaluation methodologies, on the myriad value systems and world views that exist in research and, in the author’s own words, ‘sensitize researchers and students to diverse epistemologies, methods and methodologies’ (p. xv). The author notes that while

there is a growing awareness of Other values systems, world views, and marginalised epistemologies, questions remain regarding the nature of these epistemologies, the philosophical basis from which they derive, how they are to be validated, and their contribution to scholarship and the academy more generally. In writing this book, which will appeal to students of research and current researchers alike, the author seeks to address these concerns, providing a text that draws together and discusses post-colonial and indigenous epistemologies and methodologies from around the world.

The book has clearly been written as a teaching tool for

those undertaking postgraduate study and is recommended by the author for students in the fields of education and the social and behavioural sciences. New Zealand and Australian students in the fields of community and public health would also find this text to be a useful complement to our own indigenous research methods textbooks, as it provides a broader discussion of post-colonial epistemology and methodology, drawing on examples and case studies from the third and fourth worlds. In addition to students of research methods, current researchers addressing issues of power from the perspective of coloniser/colonised, self/Other,

gender, ethnicity, race and disability will find the book to be a useful reference.

Divided into 10 chapters, each begins by outlining a number of learning objectives that readers should achieve by the conclusion of the chapter, and a 'Before You Start' section that poses a series of questions for readers to consider. Scattered throughout each chapter are practical activities for readers to complete. The inclusion of the learning objectives, the 'Before You Start' questions and the activities not only stimulate critical thinking and discussion in the neophyte, but also provoke the more senior researcher to consider how their own research practice may be improved. Chapters conclude with a summary of the key points covered and a list of further readings.

The book has a number of stated goals, namely to:

- promote the recovering, valuing and internationalising of post-colonial indigenous epistemologies, methods and methodologies
- explore and critique some of the dominant paradigms, using arguments based on the philosophies of the researched, as well as their ways of knowing and their experiences with colonisation, imperialism and globalisation
- present a post-colonial indigenous research paradigm as an overarching framework to explore the philosophical assumptions that underpin the use of post-colonial indigenous methodologies
- theorise post-colonial indigenous ways of doing research, explore the application of these methodologies through case studies and give illustrative examples
- foreground interconnectedness and relational epistemologies as a framework within which to discuss post-colonial indigenous methodologies from across the globe
- illustrate power relations in the research process.

To achieve these not insignificant goals, the book covers everything from epistemological and theoretical positioning, through to detailed investigations and case studies of particular methods. Each chapter covers a specific topic and begins, as one might expect in a research methods text, with an examination of Western and non-Western knowledge systems (Chapter 1) and the relationships between epistemology, methodology and theory (Chapter 2). Taken together, these chapters provide the overall context for the book, outlining the existence of the two knowledge systems within which the bulk of academic research work is undertaken: the Euro-Western tradition that underpins the Western academy, and the non-Western and so-called 'peripheral' knowledge system of the colonised Other. These initial chapters also reflect on the difficulties scholars face when their knowledge, values and ethics are determined and driven by the latter knowledge system, yet their academic credibility as researchers is measured by the former. Chapter 1 introduces the reader to a range of terms that are used throughout the text, defining and explaining concepts such as 'imperialism', 'colonisation', 'globalisation', 'post-colonial' and 'indigenous' and 'decolonisation': the latter being identified as a process that many indigenous researchers are themselves currently undertaking. Specific research concepts such as ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology are also defined and discussed according to the paradigm from which they emerge: the post-colonial indigenous research paradigm or Euro-Western research paradigms (such as the positivism/post-positivism, interpretive and transformative paradigms). Chapter 2 discusses post-colonial indigenous theory and critical race theory as potential decolonising tools and continues the discussion introduced in Chapter 1 regarding

the importance of ensuring one's research approach does not continue to 'Other' the already marginalised. The author outlines the harms caused by methodological and academic imperialism and the need to remain vigilant in the language, literature and theories drawn upon when researching with marginalised communities and the colonised Other.

Chapter 3 draws the discussions on theory, epistemology, ontology and methodology presented in the first two chapters together by presenting a real-world example of deficit theorising; drawing on excerpts from studies on HIV/AIDS prevention. The chapter begins by arguing that as the research methods of the First World continue to construct the world according to a system of binary opposites, it is necessary to understand the actors that comprise each of the two groups. Hence an explanation of the centre/periphery, and self/Other dichotomies is provided as an introduction to the HIV/AIDS case study; an example that provides evidence that in a contemporary setting research can still 'Other', still marginalise and still dismiss indigenous voices, values and knowledge.

Chapter 4 marks a return to the theory, presenting a discussion on post-colonial indigenous research methodologies and philosophies and the world views that inform them. The author provides a useful summary of the characteristics of indigenous research derived from Grenier (1998) and the important role indigenous knowledge plays in the articulation of indigenous research methodologies. Two post-colonial indigenous research approaches are also introduced: the indigenisation of conventional research, a process whereby researchers critique 'Euro-Western methodological imperialism'; and a relational indigenous research paradigm, based on the premise that relations may exist across time and space, occur between the living and non-living, and involve spirituality, the importance of the land, and an understanding of the cosmos.

Several examples and case studies of relational ontology, epistemology and axiology from Africa, Canada and Australia illustrate the perspectives held by indigenous peoples in these countries.

Chapter 5 presents some of the key methods and methodologies employed in post-colonial and indigenous research such as oral literatures and storytelling, as well as kaupapa Māori research, medicine wheel and Afrocentric methodologies. Chapter 5 explores the role of language, oral literature and storytelling as valid methods in a post-colonial indigenous-based research process. A discussion of ethnophilosophy, a term used to refer to the collective world views of people that are 'encoded on language, folklore, myths, metaphors, taboos and rituals' is presented. The author is herself published in this field and draws on her expertise and those of others to illustrate how proverbs may be used as conceptual frameworks or even to explore community-constructed ideologies. The chapter also canvases the use of story and storytelling, of folklore and myth, of songs as valid research methods. The author also asks the reader to consider the language that is used to present research and whether the language of the coloniser is indeed the most appropriate for the indigenous voice.

Chapter 6 is possibly one of the most important chapters, and for Indigenous scholars, most interesting, of the book. Under the heading of 'culturally responsive indigenous research methodologies', the chapter begins with a discussion of the relationship between paradigm, methodology and methods before traversing the equally vital topic of validity and reliability in qualitative research. This section of the chapter explores how rigour, credibility and validity may be assured in indigenous research approaches. The chapter then draws together some of the high-level concepts introduced in earlier chapters (epistemology, ontology, axiology), with indigenous research methods, to

illustrate examples of culturally responsive indigenous research. Three methodologies informed by a postcolonial indigenous research paradigm are showcased in the chapter, namely kaupapa Māori research methodologies; methodologies based on the medicine wheel and Afrocentric methodologies. The final sections of the chapter are dedicated to discussing issues of accountability and ethics in research, and more specifically the role the researcher can play as a help or a hindrance in any research activity.

Chapter 7 examines one particular qualitative method, that of the interview, in greater detail. In this chapter the various forms of 'interviewing' method that have emerged from the post-colonial indigenous research tradition are presented and critiqued from a post-colonial and indigenous lens. The author then explores a number of alternatives to the traditional form of interviewing and explores why they present a better method for drawing out information in the indigenous context. The chapter concludes by outlining a series of principles describing the post-colonial indigenous interview and presenting a set of practical guidelines to inform the interview process.

Chapter 8 describes and examines Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods in depth, explaining the action research cycle, the role of the participant as co-researcher, outlining the key elements in community-based participatory research (CBPR), and then describing in detail one particular form of PAR—the Participatory Rural Appraisal. The research process used when undertaking PAR is outlined for the reader in some detail.

Chapter 9 explores post-colonial indigenous feminist research methodologies and methods (as opposed to Western feminist theory and methods), outlining how these methodologies and methods have come about, and the aims of research undertaken in this context. A brief description of Western Feminisms is presented

before the author outlines indigenous feminist research theories and practices. This chapter provides an interesting analysis of the appropriation by indigenous feminist theories of Western feminist theories in order to 'critique all forms of patriarchal oppressions'.

The final chapter looks at the concept of partnership in research activity, the different forms of partnerships that characterise research activity, and why well-functioning and respectful partnerships in any research endeavour are vital. In this chapter the author presents a number of considerations for researchers who seek to engage in meaningful, relevant and transformative research activity with individuals and communities, research that ensures the integrity of the research process and results in useful research outcomes for all involved. The chapter also notes the importance of integrating knowledge systems (indigenous and non-indigenous) to improve research outcomes and research utility. It concludes by presenting a framework for planning and executing a post-colonial indigenous research study.

Overall, I found much to commend this text, not the least of which is the addition to the academy of a scholarly text that presents examples and illustrations of indigenous world views, perspectives and methods beyond those centred around Australia, the Pacific and the Pacific Rim nations (including Canada and the USA). The breadth of literature covered in this text provides a solid foundation for the emerging indigenous researcher as well as offering interesting articles and texts for the more established researcher; some of the African literature in particular is compelling. The book is well set out, and while the order of the chapters seemed to jump between theory and practice a little at times, it did cover the major issues facing indigenous researchers, undertaking research using indigenous research methodologies.

I would recommend this text to any researcher wishing to further their knowledge in this field.

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Editor:	Sandra Mathison
Publisher/year:	Jossey-Bass and the American Evaluation Association, 2011
Extent/type:	140 pages, paperback
Price:	A\$34.95/NZ\$39.99 from Wiley Australia which offers a 15% discount to AES members, phone 1800 777474 (within Australia), 0800 448 200 (from NZ only), +61 7 3345 8444 (from overseas), email <aus-custservice@wiley.com.au>, website <http://www.wiley.com> for the latest prices
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On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the American Evaluation Association, this issue of its journal *New Directions for Evaluation* is designed to highlight the voices of ‘novice evaluators, those just entering the field and who will be the next generation of evaluation practitioners and theoreticians’. Evaluators who had been in the field for less than five years were invited to share ‘what matters to them, theoretically, conceptually, and practically, as they begin their professional lives as evaluators’. The resultant publication includes 20 short articles chosen by the Editorial Board on criteria including the basis of clarity of the proposal, the ‘newness’ of the topic, and its appeal to a broad audience of evaluators.

The descriptor attached to the articles in the publication’s title, *Really New Directions*, could be somewhat misleading. This is recognised by the Editor who

notes that the selection reflects ‘what *may* be glimpses into the future discourse in evaluation’ [reviewer’s italics], adding that only time will tell if the topics are foundational. It should also be noted that the contributions are largely drawn from beginning evaluators from the United States, perhaps understandably so, given the prime target audience of the publication and its sponsoring organisation. A check of authors reveals that 17 are from the United States, 1 from Canada, 1 from New Zealand and 1 from South Africa.

The matters covered by the articles address a range of topics:

- possible contributions to evaluation from other disciplines—sociocultural theory, the humanities, political psychology and basic social science (four articles)
- evaluation techniques or methods—use of non-equivalent dependent variables,

using graphic design in presenting findings, conducting focus groups electronically or online (three articles)

- evaluator roles—issues in identifying as a feminist evaluator, engaging with racial and ethnic minority groups, challenges in being a novice evaluator, and navigating relationships at the interface between program funders and culturally diverse communities (four articles)
- issues in evaluation within organisations—developing a new evaluation unit in an organisation, engaging with reflective practitioners, evaluation of multinational programs, and using organisational memory directories and networks (four articles)
- concepts—issues related to performance management

systems, and using effectiveness engineering as a way of seeing evaluation approaches that engage goals beyond determination of merit, worth or significance (four articles)

- technology in evaluation—use of electronic health record data, shifting evaluator roles in the face of emerging information technologies, and the challenges and issues in evaluating online learning (three articles).

Essentially it is a sample bag of topics, with enough variety to attract a wide range of audience interests. The articles are samples in the sense of providing a small taste of the topics, varying in length from four to nine pages. For readers who wish to explore particular topics in greater depth, a reference list accompanies each article.

Apart from the topic groupings outlined above, certain themes may be seen across the articles. One of these carries particular significance for the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) and its members, namely cultural competence. This is addressed in two of the articles, one by Dominica F McBride, 'Sociocultural Theory: Providing More Structure to Culturally Responsive Evaluation', and the other by Paula White and Amohia Boulton, 'Sailing Through Relationships? On Discovering the Compass for Navigating 21st Century Evaluation in the Pacific'.

The link to the AES lies in the Society's implementation plan for its Ten Year Strategy (2010–2020) (Australasian Evaluation Society 2011). This plan includes development of a Professional Learning Strategy that will involve 'reviewing core competencies developed by the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation Association (anzea) and the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) for evaluators around which professional learning and practice standards can be built'. For anzea, cultural competence is seen as a central component in its framework of evaluator competencies and practice standards (Aotearoa New Zealand

Evaluation Association 2011). For the CES, cultural competency may be seen as an integral component of its Situational Practice competencies, which focus on 'the application of evaluative thinking in analysing and attending to the unique interests, issues, and contextual circumstances in which evaluation skills are being applied' (Canadian Evaluation Society 2012).

McBride begins with the premise that the pervasiveness of culture in everyday life, often guiding behaviours, cognitions, decisions, institutions and governances, means that it cannot be ignored in the field of program evaluation. Its growing recognition as a driving force has been accompanied by the development of culturally responsive evaluation (CRE) in which cultural competence is an essential attribute for the evaluator. McBride seeks to enhance the operation of CRE, and thereby the application of cultural competence, by outlining how sociocultural theory can be applied to evaluation, and in particular to program evaluation.

Drawing on six assumptions underpinning sociocultural research, McBride develops a framework to supplement CRE that, in summary, involves the following:

- examine the evaluand with culture considered and in its natural environment
- study the history and context of the evaluand in seeking to develop understanding of its operation
- consider the individual, interpersonal and contextual dynamics in assessing the various aspects of a program and how each of these influences a program's effectiveness
- avoid stereotyping—explore both commonalities and differences within and between groups
- adopt evaluation methods and designs drawn from a variety of disciplines in order to develop

understanding of the relevant cultural and human dynamics

- be self-reflective and aware of the influences of our own culture and institutions on our own perspectives and evaluation activities.

In using this framework, McBride contends that it can enhance an evaluation by adding to its robustness and validity, and by promoting the evaluator's relationships with stakeholders through its focus on respect for others.

The significance of relationship building in promoting sound evaluation is further explored in the White and Boulton article, drawing on the authors' experiences as emerging evaluators in New Zealand. They contend that working in the context of a bicultural nation with a multicultural population poses unique challenges. Of these, the key one in their view is navigating relationships at the interface between program funders and culturally diverse communities. This requires gaining the trust of each evaluation stakeholder from the outset and maintaining their comfort levels throughout the course of the evaluation. In turn, this requires deep understanding of the holistic and relational cultural norms of some communities with whom they work, and the capacity to adopt evaluation approaches that recognise these. For White and Boulton, the 'goodness' of their evaluation practice is measured by how well they navigate relationships with stakeholders in such contexts.

These two articles provide a timely call to evaluators, particularly in multicultural societies in Australia and New Zealand, to reflect deeply on the ways our conceptualisation, approach, design and implementation of evaluation is shaped and informed by our own specific cultural background and expectations. What is the nature of cultural competence that we claim to bring to evaluation and how deeply does it impact on how

we operate? If cultural competence is accepted as one of the AES core competencies, what are the implications for the design of professional learning and practice standards to foster and support it?

The two articles cited are essentially building a case for a re-conceptualisation of evaluation as many currently know and practice it. This does not necessarily mean completely abandoning the range of currently predominant Western approaches. Rather, it suggests a move to developing ways of evaluation thinking and practice that are more attuned to the complexity of values that guide the multitude of stakeholders in our multicultural societies.

These two articles illustrate the main value of the publication, as seen by this reviewer, namely its challenges to current thinking and practice. Not all of the articles will strike a chord with each reader, and some articles will not necessarily be seen as reaching out, or extending current knowledge. They are worth reading, however, to the extent that they raise questions and provide beginning points for more detailed examination and discussion.

The publication may be seen as suitable for a range of audiences. For the neophyte evaluator, it provides a link to others beginning in the field to see what they are thinking and

doing. For students in evaluation or related fields, it provides a sense of the breadth, depth and creativity that the field embraces. For experienced evaluators, it adds to the fascinating complexity of the field by providing slightly different and possibly new perspectives to consider.

It was noted at the beginning of this review that the contributions were largely of North American origin. It would be interesting to publish a series of articles drawing on the experiences of neophyte evaluators living and working in the multicultural contexts of Australia and New Zealand. The New Zealand contributors to the reviewed publication have provided an interesting and thought-provoking article. Articles from other emerging evaluators in this part of the world could provide further glimpses, insights and challenges as part of the local development of the profession. If not presented in a publication, such as a dedicated issue of the AES journal, perhaps such contributions could be considered as the basis for a roundtable or themed sessions by future AES Conference organisers.

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Title:	Needs Assessment: An Overview
Authors:	James W Altschuld and David Devraj Kumar
Publisher/year:	Sage, Los Angeles, 2010
Extent/type:	168 pages, paperback
Price:	A\$74/NZ\$99 from Footprint Books which offers a 15% discount to AES members, phone 1300 260 090 (within Australia) or +61 2 9997 3973 (from outside Australia), email <info@footprint.com.au>, website <http://www.footprint.com.au> for the latest prices
ISBN:	978-1-4129-7584-1

'I'm being quite useful. This thing is a Thneed.

A Thneed's a Fine-Something-That-All-People-Need'

(From *The Lorax* by Dr Seuss, Random House, New York, 1971)

It is a little ironic that this book is being reviewed at the same time as Hollywood releases the first feature-length adaptation of Dr Seuss' children's book *The Lorax*. The Dr Seuss book covers an imaginary land's fight against industry, which is destroying the environment to produce *Thneeds—a fine something that all people need*.

The irony relates primarily to the fact that Altschuld and Kumar's book assumes that we need another publication explaining their systematic method and model for needs assessment. Their model has been promoted in much the same form since the mid-1980s and like the Dr Seuss book (written in 1971), much of the Altschuld and Kumar book seems outdated. Although they make passing references to the more recent concepts of evidence-based policy, outcomes-based assessment, benchmarking and the criticality of evaluation, the book continues the terminology and the concepts of needs assessment of the 1970s and the 1980s. For example, it uses concepts and phrases such as 'rendering knowledge into an integrated whole ... and making intelligent choices ... by synthesising data ... rendering data ... and making data "meaningful"' (adapted from pp. 45–46); or 'keep the discussion on track and frequently summarise

on flip charts, overheads, or a quickly generated PowerPoint presentation' (p. 69).

The model and the approach are dated and the book is written in a folksy narrative style apparently to promote the authors' needs assessment model. The text is full of parenthood clichés such as: 'dealing with the jigsaw puzzle of needs data' (p. 26); 'the facilitator is a weaver of the tapestry of needs assessment' (p. 30); (the facilitator should) 'maintain even-handedness while walking on this tightrope' (p. 38); and (my favourite) (don't) 'upset the appplecart' (p. 54).

Not that it is actually an elaboration of Belle Ruth Witkin's 1984 three-phase model—a fact the authors freely, openly and from the very start of their book admit.

The book is one of five books that form a 'kit', which the author's state will be useful to practitioners, academics, consultants, managers, decision-makers, facilitators and members of needs assessment committees (NAC).

The five books in the kit cover the standard sequence of activities followed in most research undertakings. The books are a major intellectual investment by Altschuld (co-authoring four of the five books). The books in the kit are entitled:

- *Needs Assessment: An Overview* (James Altschuld and David Kumar)
- *Needs Assessment: Phase 1—Getting Started* (James Altschuld and J.N. Eastmond Jr)
- *Needs Assessment: Phase 2—Collecting Data* (James Altschuld)

- *Needs Assessment: Analysis and Prioritization* (James Altschuld and Jeffrey White)

- *Needs Assessment: Phase 3—Taking Action for Change* (Laurel Stevahn and Jean King)

The introductory/overview book (the subject of this review) is an easy read because of the authors' use of a personable narrative style. However, in my view, they too often meander into discussions, elaborations, anecdotes and asides that at times appear folksy rather than informative. In some parts it feels as if the reader is listening to a grandfather reciting from *The Lorax!*

The overview book contains six chapters, four of which (Chapters 3 to 6) address the detail of the authors' three-phase approach to needs assessment. These chapters are quite detailed and provide an illustrated step-by-step guide for implementing the authors' approach to needs assessment. Like most self-promotional textbooks, the literature review is cursory and reads as self-complementary. There is limited objective discussion of the alternative approaches to needs assessment and there is little consideration of the pros and cons of each, nor a meaningful discussion of alternative points of view. This is a serious oversight and would have been very helpful if the authors intended the book to provide a broad overview on needs assessment.

The authors' needs assessment model is articulated in a detailed step-by-step specification of the process (phases, stages, procedures, techniques, tools, questions to ask, things to avoid)

in implementing the (Witkin's) three-phase model of needs assessment. The authors appear to have contradicted themselves when they state their intent as 'not attacking the endeavour from a prescribed, straitjacket viewpoint' (p. xii). Despite this disclaimer, the text, whether intentional or not comes through as directional and prescriptive. The choice to turn the book and, in particular, a book that is meant to be an 'overview', into a step-by-step 'how to' book, runs the risk of the *process* (implementing a specific needs assessment model) becoming more important than the *purpose* (to discuss and establish the best way to build an evidence-based demonstration of need). In my view, the overview suffers significantly from this imbalance.

Evaluators in the early stages of their career may find the book useful as it provides a comprehensive set of checklists, guidelines and questions to be asked by the needs assessment team as they work through the

authors' logical linear process. There are some good case study examples—most with a focus on needs assessment in the educational context, and there is certainly a role in needs assessment for batteries of relevant questions and clues on how to best proceed to the next step in the needs assessment process. These are helpful. But the overall result is that the process outlined in the book is too detailed and prescriptive and in some sections, the commentary is overly simplistic, often anecdotal and occasionally banal.

Despite the authors' assertions otherwise, I suggest that the book is probably best targeted to undergraduate students as part of an introductory course on method and could well fill an important role with that cohort.

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Title:	Qualitative Inquiry: Thematic, Narrative and Arts-Informed Perspectives
Author:	Lynn Butler-Kisber
Publisher/year:	Sage, Los Angeles, 2010
Extent/type:	155 pages, paperback
Price:	A\$49.95/NZ\$69 from Footprint Books which offers a 15% discount to AES members, phone 1300 260 090 (within Australia) or +61 2 9997 3973 (from outside Australia), email <info@footprint.com.au>, website <http://www.footprint.com.au> for the latest prices
ISBN:	978-1-4129-4820-3

This book is intended for postgraduate students at all stages in the qualitative inquiry process. It will be helpful for those who supervise theses. It will be useful to evaluator training in qualitative inquiry. The book is an introductory one that addresses the theory and practice of choosing and designing a qualitative approach and the methodological and analytical ramifications that follow from making such choices. The book is a useful starting point for students on evaluation training

courses who have opted to develop a qualitative evaluation project.

While the author discusses a number of typologies for classifying qualitative inquiry, she comes up with a new typology to organise the book. She says that qualitative inquiry can be divided into three basic types of inquiry: *thematic* (Chapters 3 and 4), *narrative* (Chapter 5), *arts-informed* (Chapter 6 through 9, including poetic inquiry, collage inquiry, photographic inquiry and performative inquiry).

The author claims in Chapter 2 that there are six main issues that qualitative researchers face when conducting their work: trustworthiness (the opposite of validity); particularisability (the opposite of generalisability); access and consent; reflexivity; voice; and transparency. However, the author deals with these somewhat briefly and somewhat superficially.

Chapter 3, one of the thematic chapters, is titled 'Constant Comparison Inquiry', and discusses qualitative analysis based

on grounded theory. The author gives three good examples of how to develop categories out of field texts. A useful section is the use of visual mapping for conceptualising field text material. In this section she discusses and gives an example of concept mapping of categories. Also in this section she discusses cartographic mapping in qualitative inquiry, which is a process of translating thematic field text material onto some form of map or schematic in order to get more holistic and conceptual understanding of it. The author gives an interesting example of a study of a campus audit of night safety at McGill University in Montreal in Canada.

Chapter 4, the second of the thematic chapters, deals with phenomenological inquiry. From a philosophical point of view, phenomenology is a difficult area to understand, especially as there are a number of types of phenomenology. This is also true of phenomenological inquiry and there are a number of methodologies for carrying it out. The chapter discusses a series of possible analytic steps that include: extraction of significant statements; formulation of meanings; aggregating of formulating meanings into clusters of theses; validation of clusters with original descriptions; preparation of an exhaustive description of the phenomenon; and final validation with participants. These are general steps and different phenomenological methodologists give different steps. However, the chapter serves as a general introduction to phenomenological inquiry, which is helped by three fairly detailed examples.

Narrative inquiry had grown exponentially in the last 25 years and is the topic of Chapter 5. The chapter traces the roots of narrative from the life histories of the sociologists of the Chicago School of the 1920s, and the anthropologists of the same vintage who gathered life histories to understand experience in organisations and in other cultures.

Feminist work in the late 1960s and 1970s used narrative to bring the previously silenced stories of women from the margins to the centre. In the 1970s sociolinguists examined narrative structures and the function of narratives in everyday life, and opened the doors to the burgeoning interest in narrative in the 1980s and beyond. This work has given credence to the value of personal, practical knowledge and the notion that narrative itself is a form of inquiry. 'Finally examples of narrative constructions are shared using Labov and Waletzky's (1997/1967) structural analysis, Rhodes' (2000) ghostwriting approach, and Mishler's (1992) narrative analysis' (p. 62).

Chapter 6 discusses the use of poetry in qualitative research, which is not particularly new. As early as 1982 anthropologist Toni Flores was using poetry in her work (Flores 1982). The chapter suggests that two ways of framing and thinking about poetry inquiry are as 'found poetry' when words are extracted from transcripts and shaped into poetry form and as 'generated', or more autobiographical poetry, when the researcher uses their own words to share understanding of their own and/or others' experiences. Found poetry is the rearrangement of word, phrases and sometimes whole passages that are taken from other sources, such as transcripts, and reframed as poetry by changes in spacing and/or lines (and consequently meaning) or by altering the text by additions and/or deletions. Generated poetry is when researchers use their own words to describe an interpretation discovered in their research. The author describes in detail the process with examples of how to go about writing both forms of poetry. If the reader feels like they want to try to use poetry in their research, this chapter is a good place to start to learn.

The term 'collage' refers to the process of cutting and sticking found material onto a flat surface and is the topic of Chapter 7. The chapter examines

collage production that uses found images from popular magazines as a reflective process, as an elicitation for thinking, writing, and/or discussion, and as a conceptualising approach. Note the collage is not used to represent the results of a piece of research, but is used more for reflection about the researcher and the research. I am not convinced about the great value of collage inquiry. The author gives a number of examples of collages and their associated reflections.

Chapter 8 examines three specific ways of using photographs and/or film in inquiry; as a means for reflection, elicitation and representation. The author writes:

It shows, by using an adapted approach for interpreting family photographs created by Richard Chalfen (1998), how a researcher was able to derive a greater understanding of herself as a researcher. It introduces the process of 'photovoice', which uses photographs taken by research participants to record and reflect upon social needs, promote critical dialogue and ultimately reach policy makers (Wang 1999), and shows how a researcher used an adapted version to this type of participatory action researcher (Lykes 2001) to give voice to autistic, adolescent participants to her study. Finally it discusses visual narrative inquiry and how visual narrative episodes (VNE) were created from videotaped data to illustrate the documentation process and resulting teaching/learning events in a teacher-researcher study of an elementary classroom. (p. 124)

Chapter 9 looks at performative inquiry, that is, performance of a play script based on qualitative research data collected by a researcher(s). There are two main umbrella terms: 'ethnodrama' and 'readers theatre' are used to encompass performative inquiry. Saldana (2008, p. 283) writes:

An ethnodrama is a written, artistically composed arrangement of qualitative data

using such dramatic literary conventions as monologue, dialogue, and stage directions (p. 196) ... The goals of ethnodrama are to educate and foster avenues for social change by producing very vivid and credible accounts of lived experience that will generate an aesthetic, intellectual and emotional response from the members of the audience.

Readers theatre (RT) is a joint dramatic reading from a play text, usually with no memorisation, no movement and a minimum of props, if any at all. 'Unlike traditional theatre, the emphasis is on oral expression of the text, rather than on acting and costumes' (p. 140). The chapter is a good introduction to performative inquiry.

The author finishes the book with a page-and-a-half chapter titled 'Future Directions'. She writes:

The theme of evaluation cuts across every chapter in this book—in thematic narrative, narrative and most importantly in arts-informed inquiry ... More space, time, and emphasis needs to be devoted to evaluation at conferences, in journals and other forms of scholarly communication. Evaluation must become an integral part of ongoing inquiry conversations, not tacked on as an afterthought or relegated to separate discussions. (p. 149)

I think the author is not talking about the use of the various

forms of inquiry discussed in this book to do evaluations, but she is talking about evaluating these forms of inquiry. She then goes on to talk of the need for artists and researchers collaborating. This is an acknowledgement that the researchers are generally not expert in the particular form of art they are using in their inquiry. There is a need for a book on the art and techniques of practice of using the various forms of the arts used in qualitative research.

I recommend the publication as an introductory book on how to use thematic, narrative and arts-informed forms of inquiry in qualitative research. It is simply and clearly written with lots of examples. What is missing is a discussion of how to write a play, a collage or any other forms of the arts. For example: what makes a play a good play and how to evaluate what makes a particular type of art a good form of the art.

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