

anzea Conference 2012 Keynote Addresses

Thereza Penna Firme is a Cesgranrio Foundation Senior Evaluation Consultant Professor (retired) in education and evaluation at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Thereza is a co-founder and President of the Brazilian Monitoring and Evaluation Network, established in 2002. She has been the Coordinator of the Stanford University Evaluation Center extension in Rio de Janeiro, working with David Fetterman in the field of empowerment evaluation in childhood education and with socially disadvantaged groups. She has published widely on the area of evaluation as a tool for democracy.

Evaluation as a tool for democracy

Saudações Brasileiras! Evaluation has the potential to be a powerful tool for the practice of democracy. In order for that to occur, utilization of results must be assured, and the value of evaluation needs to be understood in both government and private sector contexts. The Brazilian Evaluation Network (BEN) was created approximately ten years ago in a country with only a recent history of democratic practice. It was conceived as part of an international cooperation for the promotion and development of evaluation stimulated by UN organisms such as UNICEF (Segone, 2002) and was initially constituted as a network of individuals within institutions. Belief in evaluation as a means to promote important values for the improvement of democracy, such as transparency, reflection, critical thinking, participation and debate, was the reason behind the creation of the BEN, whose current mission statement reads: "Develop and enhance the culture and practice of public interest evaluation within the Brazilian society." Within a theoretical framework, networks do not have boundaries or limits for debate. However, cultural and historical factors can create significant limits on the discussions and boundaries among its participants (e.g. evaluation stakeholders). In my presentation, I will shed light on some of the limits and boundaries to building evaluation culture, and reflect on how they are being overcome in the contemporary Brazilian context, and on some implications for the everyday practice of evaluation practitioners.

Samantha Lundon (Tainui, Ngāti Te Ata, Ngāti Makirangi) is the kaihautu of Ideal Success Charitable Trust, a Māori provider in Manurewa. She served on the Board of the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and was integrally involved in its move from an audit to an evaluation system. Ideal Success Charitable Trust has been delivering services to Māori in the Manukau region for many years, working in particular with socially disadvantaged whānau. Ideal Success recently received funding from ASB Trust to deliver an innovative programme (Nga Huarahi Tika) in Manurewa and as part of that, their team is trialling a very innovative self-evaluation framework which involves building evaluation capacity through self-reflection with the client group, as well as a 360 degree model for clients and providers to evaluate reciprocally.

Getting it together through whanaungatanga, shared understanding and trust: A service provider's perspective on 'being evaluated'

Why does the prospect of an evaluation make providers apprehensive? What drives their anxiety? What are the particular sources of apprehension for a kaupapa Maori provider? In what ways does anxiety about losing intellectual property or meeting the imagined expectations of funders and evaluators influence the ways that providers react to evaluators and evaluation? Drawing on her experiences from working with a very broad spectrum of people, from Black Power wives to government Ministers, and in a range of roles including advocate, educator, advisor, programme developer, manager, and at governance level, Samantha will share her frank reflections on the issues for service providers when evaluation is a contractual requirement.

Samantha's kōrero will also cover what's needed from evaluation practitioners and evaluands, in particular kaupapa Māori service providers, in order to build the honest communications and shared understandings that form a relationship of trust. It is this trust, Sam argues, that is crucial for evaluation that is valid, and which also produces benefits and learning for everyone involved, including the evaluators.

Yoland Wadsworth is a Fellow of the Australasian Evaluation Society (AES) and author of the best-selling book 'Everyday Evaluation on the Run' (3e Allen & Unwin 2011). She received the AES ET&S Award for an 'outstanding contribution to evaluation in Australia' in 1996, the AES Caulley-Tulloch Prize for Pioneering Evaluation Literature for the 'U&I' acute psychiatric services staff-consumer collaborative evaluation studies (with Maggie McGuinness & Merinda Epstein) in 1995, and the AES National Policy & Systems Award for the Narrative Evaluation Action Research (NEAR) community health promotion capacity-building project for the Department of Health (with Karen Goltz, Ani Wierenga and Gai Wilson) in 2007. She is currently Adjunct Professor, Centre for Applied Social Research, RMIT University, Hon Principal Fellow, McCaughey Vic Health Centre, University of Melbourne and Distinguished Fellow of the Action Research Center, University of Cincinnati. In 2010 her ground-breaking book Building in Research and Evaluation: Human inquiry for living systems was published by Allen & Unwin.

Conceptualising the building in of evaluative inquiry for more truly living human systems

Yoland will outline her groundbreaking transdisciplinary theory of a 'living systems epistemology'. Living Systems Inquiry brings together diverse evaluation methodologies and techniques into a coherent inductive-abductive-deductive action research cycle. It can be conducted at a small scale in individual or small group evaluations, or at a larger scale when we carry out social or organisational evaluation. Yoland will introduce and illuminate her Living Systems meta-evaluation conceptual framework with examples drawn from more than thirty years of her practice-based evaluative research experience with small groups, large organisations, and whole communities.