



Linking Evaluation and Social Justice

Friday 15 October

9am-4.30pm

Seasons Hotel – 37 Pier St, Perth.

Workshop Overview

This workshop explores the basic assumptions that encompass human rights as a driving force to define the evaluator's world view and how it impacts decisions in the evaluation process. Many evaluations occur in contexts in which issues of social justice are salient; the transformative paradigm will provide the philosophical framework for determining contextual considerations in designing and conducting transformative mixed methods evaluation in ways that link the evaluation process and outcomes to the furtherance of social justice. The workshop is geared to meet the needs of evaluators who have responsibility for evaluation in communities that reflect diversity in terms of culture, race/ethnicity, religion, language, gender, and disability. Participants will be able to deepen their understanding of basic concepts and principles of evaluation by extending these to include dimensions of cultural diversity and transformative mixed methods approaches.

Specific examples will be used to demonstrate how a transformative mixed methods approach enhances the evaluator's ability to accurately represent how deficit perspectives that are taken as common wisdom can have a deleterious effect on both the design of a program and the outcomes of that program. Alternative strategies based on transformative mixed methods will be illustrated through reference to the presenter's own work, the work of others, and the challenges that participants bring to the workshop.

Workshop Format

In plenary session, a formal presentation integrated with large group discussion will address the following question: What are the implications of the transformative paradigm for the use of mixed methods directly focused on the furtherance of social justice?

Following a mini lecture, small group brainstorming with subsequent large group sharing will address the following questions: What are the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for an evaluator who works from a transformative stance? How does one acquire such skills? What approaches are useful for an evaluator to undertake a transformative mixed methods evaluation in diverse contexts?

Specific case study based, interactive activities will give participants an opportunity to apply the theoretical principles of the Transformative paradigm to methodological questions, such as: How can transformative mixed methods be applied to increase the probability of social justice goals being achieved? What sampling strategies are appropriate? What does it mean to address the myth of homogeneity? What data collection strategies are appropriate for diverse groups in transformative mixed methods evaluation? What are the implications for the evaluator's role in terms of the use of the findings for transformative purposes? The

workshop will end with an interactive session in which participants will have the opportunity to discuss the application of transformative mixed methods strategies to their own evaluation work.

About the Presenter

Dr Donna M Mertens, Professor, Department of Educational Foundations and Research at Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, teaches research methods and program evaluation to graduate-level deaf and hearing students in multiple programs. These include education, administration, psychology, social work, audiology and international development.

The major focus of Donna's work is the blending of issues of social justice and human rights with research and evaluation frameworks and methods.

She is currently the editor of the Journal of Mixed Methods Research with Max Bergman as co-editor. A past-president (1998) of the American Evaluation Association, she provided leadership for AEA's Diversity Initiative and its resulting Graduate Internship for Evaluators of Color, as well as for the establishment of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation.

She has authored/edited several books, including:

- Indigenous and Post-Colonial Research (with Bagele Chilisa, Left Coast Press, in preparation)
- Program Evaluation (in press, Guilford)
- Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods (3rd ed., Sage, 2010)
- Transformative Research and Evaluation (Guilford Press 2009)
- Handbook of Social Research Ethics (with Pauline Ginsberg, co-editor, Sage 2009)
- Research and Evaluation Methods in Special Education (Corwin, 2004, with John McLaughlin, co-author)
- Parents and their Deaf Children: The Early Years (Gallaudet Press, 2003, with Kay Meadow Orlans and Marilyn Sass Lehrer, co-authors)
- Research and Inequality (Taylor & Francis, 2000, with Carole Truman and Beth Humphries, co-editors)

Donna has also published in such journals as the American Journal of Evaluation, American Annals of the Deaf, and Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. She has conducted international development and evaluation activities in Egypt, Costa Rica, Israel, South Africa, Niger, Brazil, and Peru.

For more information about Donna visit the [Gallaudet University website](#).

REGISTRATION

AES Members can register by emailing michelle.bye@ipaawa.org.au with the following details:

Name

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