



The Landscape of Evaluation Theory Contribution of Australasian Evaluators

John Owen
Centre for Program Evaluation
The University of Melbourne

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What do we mean by Landscape?

Oxford Dictionary:

“... the distinctive features of a sphere of activity.”

Synonyms:

Perspective

Terrain

Sweep

Panorama

Outlook



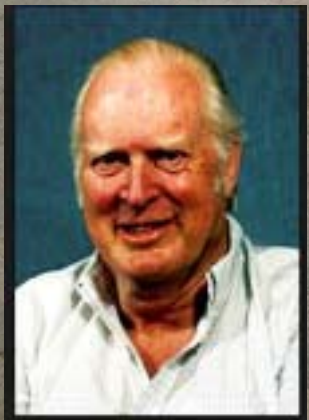
Historical Perspective



Early evaluators, pre 1960:

Tyler, Lewin, Lazarfeld in the USA

1960s: US Great Society, development of concepts and principles.



1967: Theory of Evaluation; judgment of merit/worth; accountability

Widening the Terrain

From 1980: Expansion of evaluation

- to influence program under review
- for decision-making: Patton, Wholey

definition 2

definition 1

Traditional definition 1: evaluation as the judgment of merit/worth.

Contemporary definition 2: evaluation as the production of knowledge based on systematic enquiry to assist decision-making.

Increasing the Sweep

Emergence of evaluation over time:

- USA
- Canada/Australasia/UK
- Western Europe
- Now world-wide adoption, the IOCE

Move towards evaluation as a profession:

a body of persons engaged in an occupation or calling
(Macquarie).

Australasian Terrain



Australasian Terrain: Influence of the AES

Wide range of practice: role of the AES since 1988

Harnessing and disseminating knowledge about evaluation to members and the wider community.

Support for evaluation across the Asia-Pacific.

Evaluation Journal of Australasia a key platform.





Objects of Evaluation

Activity/Event/Strategy	8
Program	37
Organisation	16
System	27
Management/Policy	6
Other	5

Examples

Strategy

Kotvojs, F and Hurworth, R (2013). Evaluating capacity development: what do we really want to know? 13,1, 4-14.

System

Hanwright, J and Doherty, S (2008). Promoting evaluation culture across a government department. 8,1, 20-25.

Policy

Doty, A (2008). An examination of the value of the Victorian Government's investment logic map as a tool for front-end evaluation of investment proposals. 8,1, 26-39.

Evaluation Emphases

Models (e.g. empowerment, benchmarking)	21
Methodologies/methods (e.g. goal attainment, surveys)	40
Negotiation/planning	10
Evaluation culture/capacity	8
Impact measurement (performance, ROI)	10
Utilisation (influence, accountability)	10
Other (ethics, etc)	1

Strong within-article link between epistemology and methodology.

Content Areas

Education	23
Medicine	19
International Development	16
Indigenous	16
Community/Family Services	12
Other	10

Landscape of Evaluative Knowledge

***Practice:** the action of performing or doing something, as opposed to theory or speculation, inclined towards or fitted for actual work or useful activity.*

***Theory:** coherent general propositions used as principles of explanations for a class of phenomena, or a particular conception of something to be done or of the method of doing it, a system of rules or principles.*

Markiewicz, A (2013). The political context of evaluation: what does this mean for independence and objectivity? 8,2, 35-41.

Landscape of Evaluative Knowledge

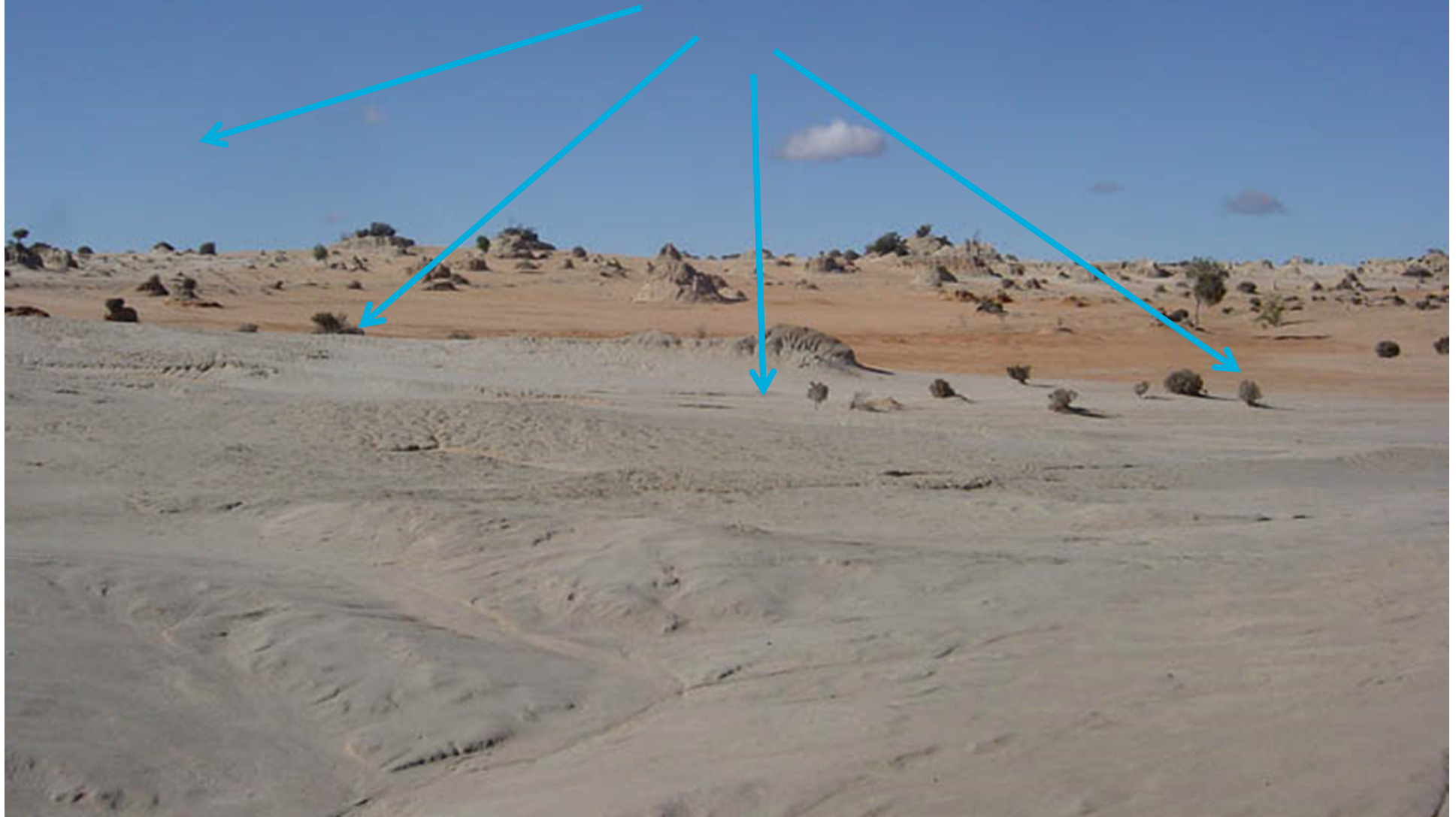
Praxis: the act of engaging, applying and reflecting upon ideas, between the theoretical and the practical: the synthesis of theory and practice without presuming the primacy of either.

Cummings, R (2006). What if: the counterfactual in program evaluation. 6,2, 6-15.

Hind, J (2010). Additionality: a useful way to construct the counterfactual qualitatively. 10,2, 28-35.

Strong emphasis on Praxis in EJA articles

Contributions to the International Terrain



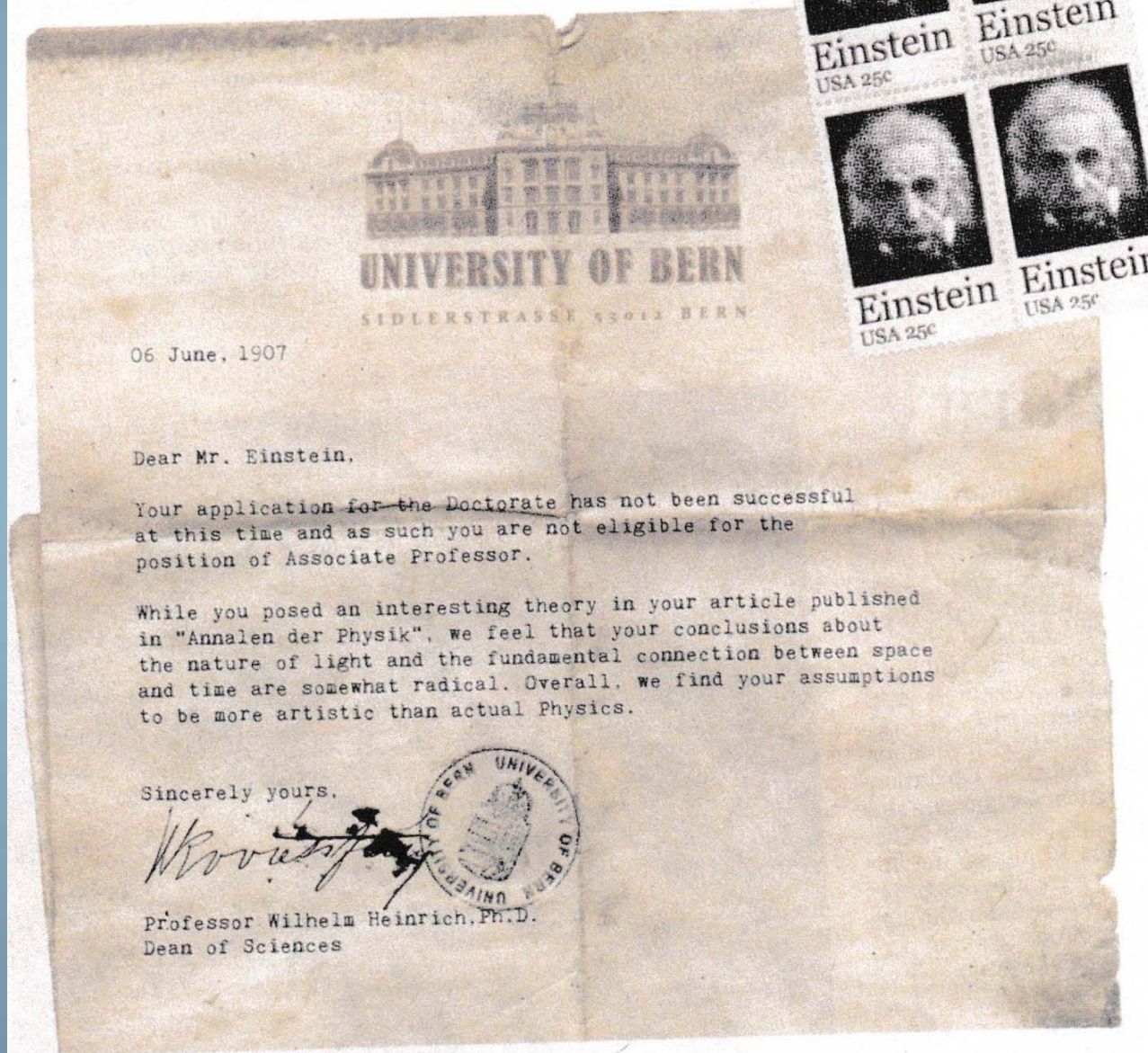
Fissures in the Australasian Landscape?

The case of policy evaluation

Stewart, J and Jarvie, W (2012). Haven't we been this way before?
Evaluation and the Impediments to Policy Learning. Australian Journal
of Public Administration, 74, 2, 114-127.

Is there a helping profession/management divide?

Fissures in the Australasian Landscape?





Issues and Questions