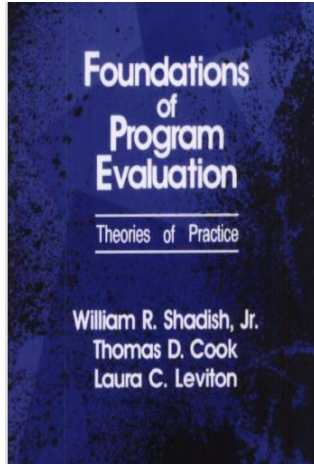




Consolutions of evaluation theory – in 20 mins!

Brad Astbury and Andrew Hawkins

Purpose



- Describe the nature and role of evaluation theory
- Provide some ways in which we have been consoled by evaluation theorists
- Provide one conceptual map for drawing on different theorists
- Inspire you to read more about evaluation theory

Evaluation theory elements

Social programming

Knowledge construction

Valuing

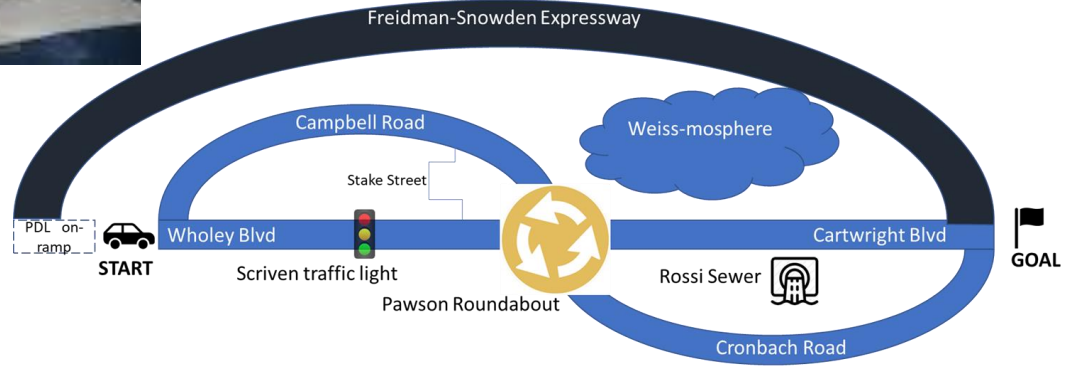
Use

Practice

From this



To this



Internal Validity

External Validity

Who cares? Why bother with ET?

1 Serves as a guide

A plausible body of principles ('field wisdom') that explain and provide direction to the practice of evaluation (methods are just tools, theories inform selection/use of tools).

2 Central to professional identity

Every profession has a knowledge base – ours is evaluation theory.

3 Moves us toward a contingency perspective

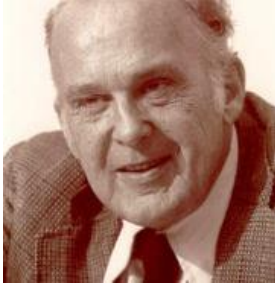
What sorts of evaluation approaches work, with whom, when and in what circumstances?

You are not alone. Your problems are common.
Most of the current controversies are old.



The Big Seven

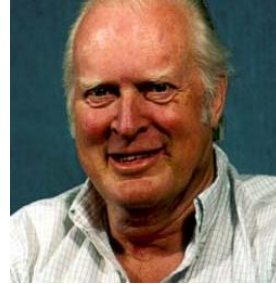
Donald Campbell



Carol Weiss



Michael Scriven



Robert Stake



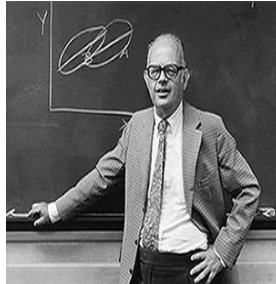
Joseph Wholey



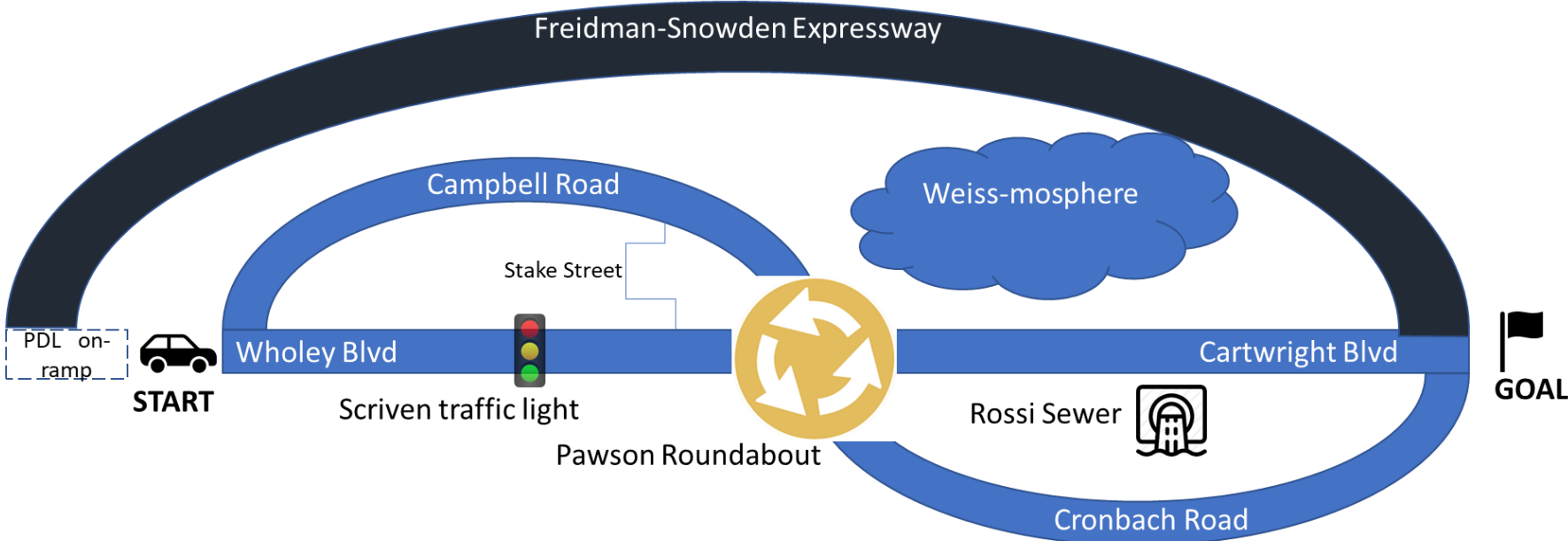
Peter Rossi



Lee Cronbach



Using evaluation theory to get from A to B



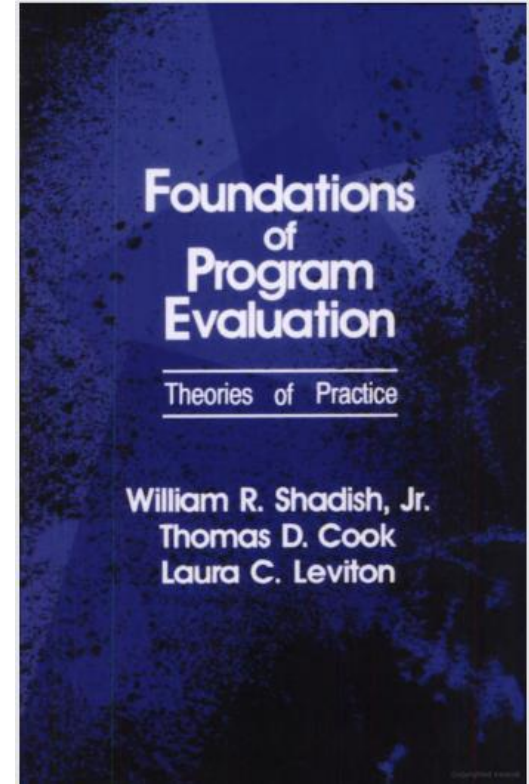
Internal Validity



External Validity

Call to Action

- Read this book
- Read other books and start a book club/ support group
- Try to get more discussion of evaluation theory in your workplace



Questions?

- In what ways has evaluation theory been useful in the ways you think about and conduct evaluation?
- Have any theorists had a particular influence on you?



Spare slide

Historical neglect of theory...why?



Evaluation is a relatively young discipline



Primarily a method/practice-driven profession



Theory not taught – most practising evaluators
come from other disciplines



High turnover rate



Evaluation 'clients' are often not interested in
theory and methodology