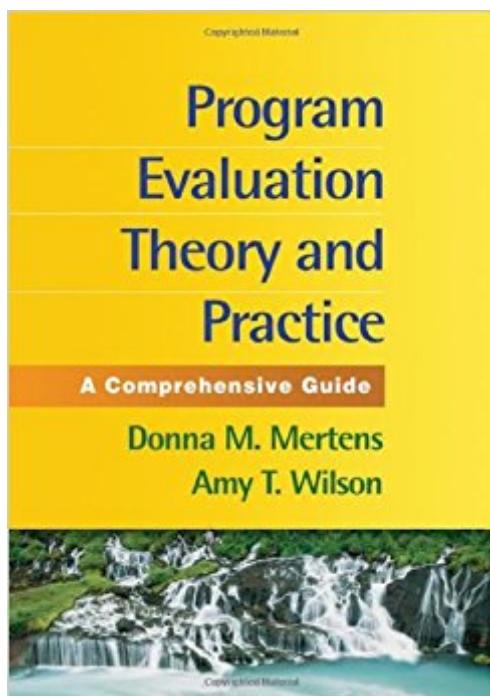


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Program Evaluation Theory And Practice: A Comprehensive Guide



Synopsis

This engaging text takes an evenhanded approach to major theoretical paradigms in evaluation and builds a bridge from them to evaluation practice. Featuring helpful checklists, procedural steps, provocative questions that invite readers to explore their own theoretical assumptions, and practical exercises, the book provides concrete guidance for conducting large- and small-scale evaluations. Numerous sample studies—many with reflective commentary from the evaluators—reveal the process through which an evaluator incorporates a paradigm into an actual research project. The book shows how theory informs methodological choices (the specifics of planning, implementing, and using evaluations). It offers balanced coverage of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches.

Useful pedagogical features include:

- *Examples of large- and small-scale evaluations from multiple disciplines.
- *Beginning-of-chapter reflection questions that set the stage for the material covered.
- **"Extending your thinking" questions and practical activities that help readers apply particular theoretical paradigms in their own evaluation projects.
- *Relevant Web links, including pathways to more details about sampling, data collection, and analysis.
- *Boxes offering a closer look at key evaluation concepts and additional studies.
- *Checklists for readers to determine if they have followed recommended practice.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Written in clear, jargon-free prose, this is a coherent and pragmatic guide for students and

practitioners in any discipline who are involved in evaluation theory and practice. Doing justice to the various branches and theories informing evaluation practice, the text presents real-world evaluation examples and lessons with an acute understanding of the limitations and politics that evaluators must navigate. Its strong pedagogical apparatus encompasses graphic organizers, application exercises, Web resources, and self-reflection questions, all grounded in concrete examples and applications from across fields and disciplines. Mertens and Wilson's book is a boon for graduate students and teachers."--Sharona A. Levy, DPhil, Chair and Director, SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) Program, Brooklyn College, City University of New York" I was pleased to see the broad scope of this book, which sets it apart from many others that focus on a single aspect of evaluation. The authors put evaluation in its proper historical context before moving on to methodology and the planning and implementation phases of this unique type of research. The book stimulates critical thinking while helping readers become more savvy producers and consumers of research."--Wendy L. Hicks, PhD, Department of Criminal Justice, Loyola University New Orleans"This text provides a comprehensive, thorough presentation of program evaluation as an enterprise with a rich history, diverse perspectives, and widely varied applications. Among the best features of this text is the consistent use of well-conceived questions to transition readers' thinking between chapters and constantly challenge them to consider multiple perspectives. The text strikes a good balance between epistemological and theoretical understanding and practical applications."--Steven R. Rogg, PhD, Lesson Study Alliance, Chicago, Illinois"Standing out in a sea of evaluation texts, this book takes evaluation training to another level. It provides a solid, coherent discussion of the field in the 21st century. Mertens and Wilson address step-by-step methodological considerations in conducting evaluations, with special attention to the transformative paradigm. Illustrating how mixed method evaluations are conducted in a variety of settings, the book goes beyond buzzwords to demonstrate concrete strategies that are used in the field. What really sets this book apart is the opportunity it affords students and practicing evaluators to think through their evaluation practices more deeply, considering not only the methods they use but also the general philosophy that drives every evaluation they conduct. A 'must have' for students, scholars, and practitioners."--Katrina L. Bledsoe, PhD, Education Development Center, Inc., Washington, DC"A refreshing feature of this text is its coverage of philosophical perspectives and their relationship to evaluation approaches. The book makes an important contribution in helping readers understand their own views of evaluation and how paradigms shape the evolution of evaluation theory. The organization of evaluation paradigms into four branches--the methods, use, values, and social justice branches--offers a useful analytic lens that accurately represents

current directions in the field."--Linda B. Schrader, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Florida State University" Mertens and Wilson want students to think about and actively decide what theoretical and philosophical position they will take in their evaluation practice: post-positivist, constructivist, pragmatic, or transformative. Evaluation examples combined with provocative questioning will challenge what students think they know and how they know it. Preparation for undertaking an evaluation does not stop here--Mertens and Wilson continue to raise issues of politics, power, and privilege as they take students through planning and implementing an evaluation. As expected, Mertens and Wilson have provided an exposition of evaluation that has both style and worth."--Fiona Cram, PhD, Director, Katoa Ltd, New Zealand

Donna M. Mertens is Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Research at Gallaudet University, where she teaches advanced research methods and program evaluation to deaf and hearing students. She received the Distinguished Faculty Award from Gallaudet. The primary focus of her work is transformative mixed methods inquiry in diverse communities, with priority given to the ethical implications of research in pursuit of social justice. A past president of the American Evaluation Association (AEA), Dr. Mertens provided leadership in the development of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation and the establishment of the AEA Diversity Internship Program with Duquesne University. She has received AEA's highest honors for service to the organization and the field, as well as for her contributions to evaluation theory. She is the author of several books and is widely published in major professional journals. Dr. Mertens conducts and consults on evaluations in many countries, including Egypt, India, South Africa, Botswana, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, and Costa Rica. Amy T. Wilson is Director of International Programs at the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, where she leads a team of deaf educational specialists who share their expertise, knowledge, and technical skills with parents, educators, and professionals in economically poor countries. Dr. Wilson was a professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Research at Gallaudet University for 14 years. After living in developing countries and noting the poor assistance people with disabilities were receiving from U.S. development organizations, she developed Gallaudet's MA degree in International Development. The degree, which is the only one of its kind in the United States, focuses on the inclusion of people with disabilities in development assistance programs and in nongovernmental, federal, and faith-based development organizations both in the United States and overseas. Dr. Wilson was Program Director of the International Development Program; she also taught deaf and hearing students research and evaluation, theory and practice of international

development, micropolitics, community development with people with disabilities, multicultural education, and gender, disability, and development. Dr. Wilson evaluates and advises development organizations and agencies (e.g., U.S. Agency for International Development, the InterAmerican Development Bank, the World Bank, and the Peace Corps) about the inclusiveness of their programs, as well as their effectiveness with various disability communities.

Do not find this book to be very well written. It is dry and hard to get through.

This book seems almost impossible to digest and it seems the authors' intent to make it so. It is extremely difficult to get through this text without wanting to slap someone!

A student's guide to program evaluation that relies equally on theory as it does on practice. I was hoping for something more practical though.

Perfect.

General vision of the field with an excellent and pragmatic approach for students and professionals. This work provides a stimulant reading and a willingness to put our learning in practice.

Awesome

Exactly what I needed

Good, helpful for my college course and it was recommended by my professor to buy this book and got it on .com

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