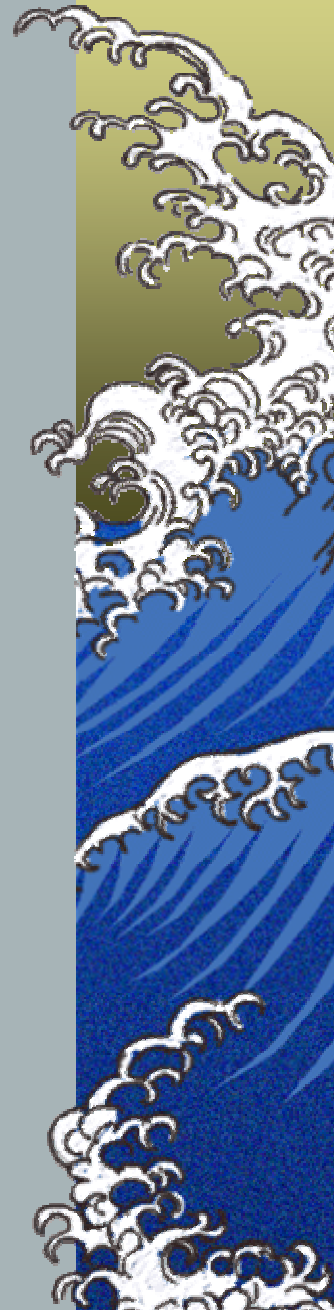


Participatory Evaluation Up Close

Brad Cousins

University of Ottawa



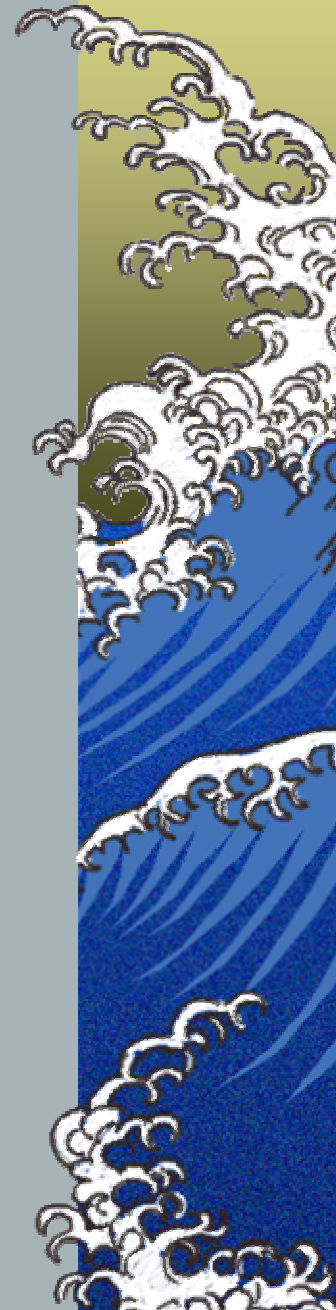
What is participatory evaluation?

- ▶ *Applied systematic inquiry for the purposes of making **judgments** about the merit and worth of programs or supporting program decision making.*
- ▶ *Evaluation that involves trained evaluators **working in partnership** with non-evaluator stakeholders.*



Why do participatory evaluation?

- Pragmatic: *Problem solving rationale; instrumentality; enhance evaluation utilization.*
- Political: *Democratic rationale; amelioration of social inequity; enhance self-determinism; emancipatory/empowerment focus.*
- Philosophic: *Epistemological rationale; deepen understanding of meaning; constructivist focus.*



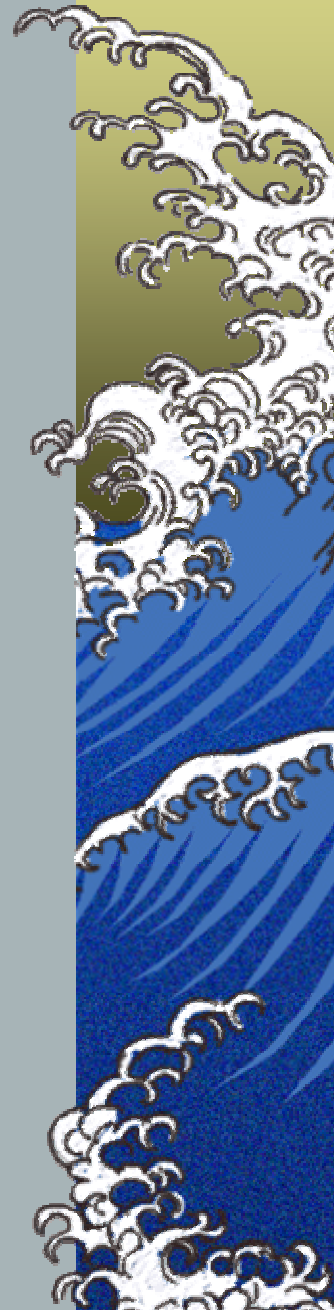
Two Streams of Participatory Evaluation

- ▶ *Practical Participatory Evaluation (P-PE)*
 - *Utilization-oriented, problem solving*
- ▶ *Transformative Participatory Evaluation (T-PE)*
 - *Democratic, emancipatory, empowerment-oriented*



When to choose P-PE?

- ▶ *Formative, improvement-oriented context.*
- ▶ *Reasonable consensus on issues.*
- ▶ *Organizational/program practitioner commitment.*
- ▶ *Sufficient resource base of time, money and personnel.*



Differentiating form in Collaborative Inquiry

1. *Control of technical decision making*

Stakeholder [____/____I____/____] *Evaluator*

2. *Diversity among stakeholders selected for participation*

Diverse [____/____I____/____] *Limited*

3. *Power relations among participating stakeholders*

Conflicting [____/____I____/____] *Neutral*

4. *“Wieldiness” of evaluation implementation*

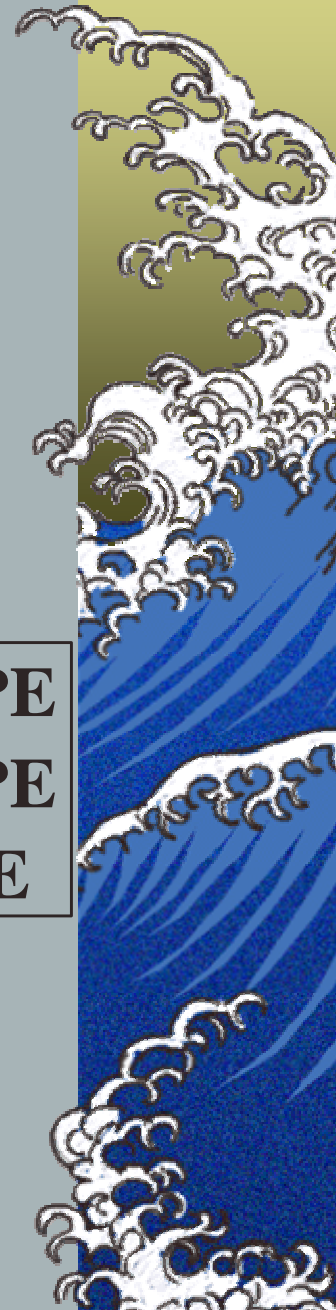
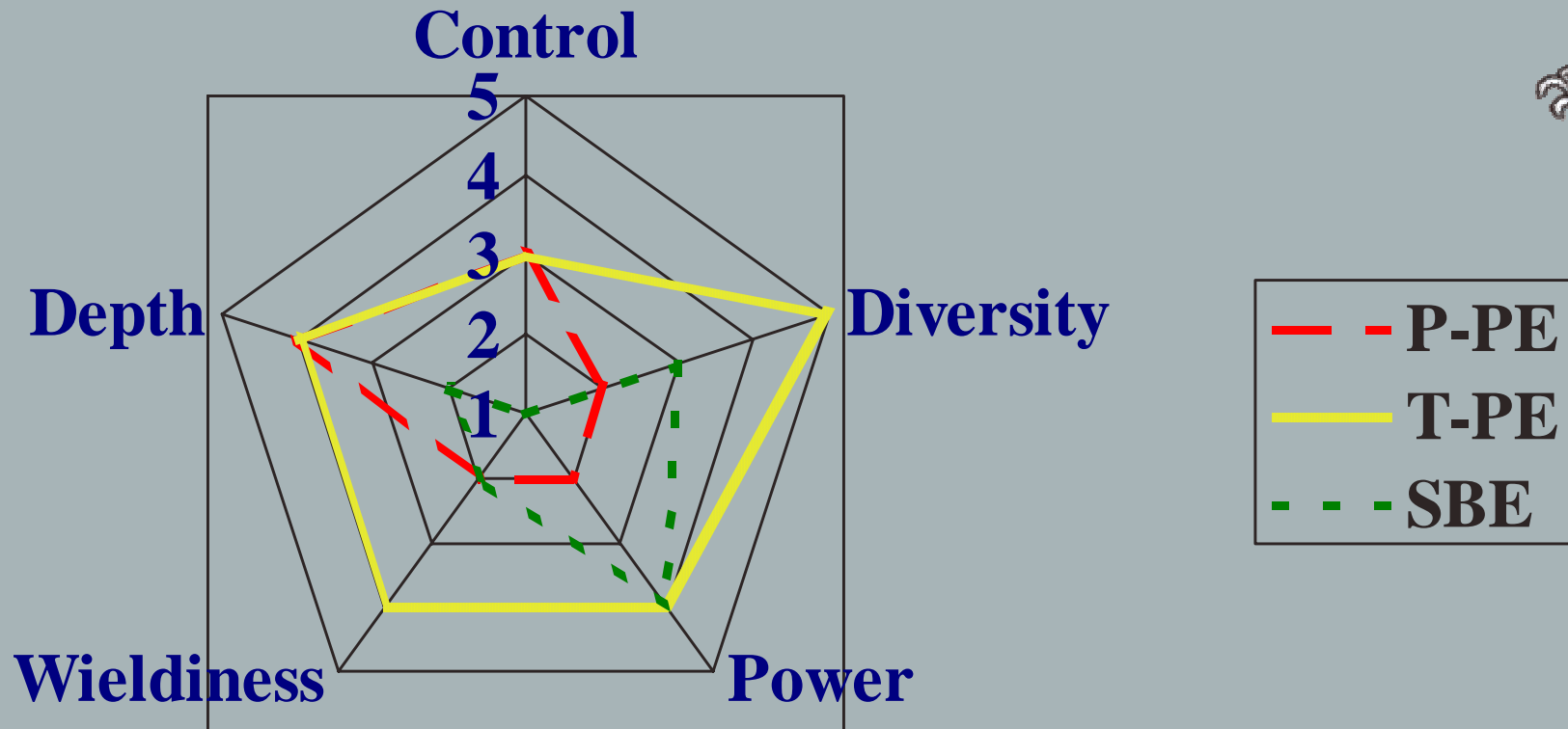
Unwieldy [____/____I____/____] *Wieldy*

5. *Depth of participation*

Deep [____/____I____/____] *Consultative*



Differentiating form in Collaborative Inquiry



Factors and Conditions

Participatory Practice

Consequences

Evaluation Context

- ⇒ Expertise
- ⇒ Communication
- ⇒ Instruction
- ⇒ Time
- ⇒ Resources
- ⇒ Role flexibility

Decision/Policy Setting

- ⇒ Admin support
- ⇒ Micro politics
- ⇒ Culture
- ⇒ Information needs
- ⇒ Impetus
- ⇒ Skills

Interactive Processes

- ⇒ Control of evaluation decision making
- ⇒ Diversity in participation
- ⇒ Power relations
- ⇒ "Wieldiness"
- ⇒ Depth of participation

Evaluation Knowledge Production

- ⇒ Responsiveness
- ⇒ Credibility
- ⇒ Sophistication
- ⇒ Communication
- ⇒ Timeliness

Evaluation Utilization

Process Use

- ⇒ Individual
- ⇒ Group
- ⇒ Organizational

Use of Findings

- ⇒ Conceptual
- ⇒ Instrumental
- ⇒ Symbolic

Knowledge Utilization

- Liberation
- Emancipation
- Enlightenment
- Empowerment
- Self Determination



Results-Based Evaluation

- ▶ *Accountability-oriented (summative vs. formative)*
- ▶ *Outcome-oriented vs. input-process-output-outcome (Explaining variation in program outcomes?)*
- ▶ *Monitoring vs. Evaluation vs. Research. (Early detection and diagnostic input does not equate to formative evaluation)*

