

A mature evaluation culture
shaped by a domestic tradition...

A self perception of harmony and
consensus...

and a belief in government and science
(policy commissions)

...and an american import in the 60s

- Program budgeting
- School reforms
- Social reforms

The domestic tradition made it possible for Sweden to respond quickly to the call for more evaluation.

A stream of evaluative information

- All governmental agencies have some sort of assignment to evaluate their own activities
- Evaluation bodies (sectorial)
- Ad hoc commissions
- The National Audit Office
- Parliament committees

It has been taken granted that evaluation is a
good thing...

but today, when evaluation is a powerful player,
we have to ask fundamental questions

- Do we exaggerate the importance of evaluation – can it be too much evaluation?
- Is evaluation embedded in certain, questionable, administrative ideas?
- Does evaluation fit incremental times more than non-incremental?
- Are our notions about utilization too naïve?

Of course, everything depends on definitions.... but

A lot of research, which we will not label evaluation, can be used in order to construct and improve interventions

Evaluation can supersede other forms of knowledge production

Evaluation has negative side-effects

The formative years of evaluation were dominated by certain administrative ideas

- Values and technique
- Goals and means
- Politics and administration
- Programs could be improved in an ongoing process
- Evaluation (and evaluation systems) could feed this ongoing process in order to gradually improve interventions
- Questions are about existing interventions

Non-incremental times

- Earlier courses of action are blocked. Earlier programs have to be abolished or fundamentally questioned.
- The questions are about alternatives, creation of new instruments or institutions.
- Knowledge which has been produced within earlier policy frameworks is less relevant

Our notions about utilization has been naive

- The childhood of evaluation (pre-Weiss). A simple S and R model.
- Weiss and many followers: Different forms of use and also understanding of the importance of the process. But still a **direct** relationship between the evaluation-side and groups who are involved in interventions/policies
- Knowledge communities, “Knowledge banks”, evaluation will have an indirect relation to groups involved in interventions/policies.