

Democratic governance and evaluation

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Introduction

During the last 30 years there has been a shift away from traditional government to different models of governance in modern democracies (cf. Pierre and Peters, 2000; Björk, Bostedt and Johansson, 2003).¹ There are many reasons for this shift. New forms of governance have emerged as a response to legitimacy problems and to implementation problems, for example. Today political authority is fragmented and as a rule there are many stakeholders involved in public policy making. Some actors have been given a role by the government where other actors have empowered themselves. Generally, the need for evaluation grows when new governance models are introduced. In the field of implementation research and policy and program evaluation much attention has been paid to implementation problems and how to handle such problems.² However, the steering and implementation process is not the same in different governance settings and therefore the evaluation needs differ as well. This is one reason why we need to discuss the interplay between evaluation and democratic governance.

Since governance and democracy are changing phenomena, and evaluation is embedded in these structures, there is a need to illuminate and discuss the role of evaluation. Evaluation is to most people thought of as a democratic tool, but what do we mean with democratic evaluation? Furthermore, what is the role of evaluation in times when democracy and governance are changing? The many meanings of democracy and the shifting role of evaluation in various democratic governance settings are also a motive for discussing governance and democratic evaluation.

Governance issues can be discussed in relation to different political systems. However, in this paper the discussion is confined to democratic governance systems. The premise of this paper is that governance, democracy and evaluation affect one another in different ways. Governance is intertwined with democracy, and democracy and governance can be maintained or strengthened by evaluation, for example. Because different models of governance and democracy presuppose one another, evaluating governance models, or programme processes/outcomes where a specific governance model sets up the context, have implications for the model under scrutiny and subsequently for democracy. Accordingly, the implications of democratic evaluations need to be discussed in various ways. For analytical purpose democracy and governance are sometimes kept apart.

The first line of argument of this paper conveys the notion that a given governance model affects democracy through a process that reinforces a certain democratic orientation. Certainly, the interrelation between governance and democracy can be observed in many ways, i.e., a clear democratic orientation can in the first place influence the choice of governance model. Understood this way, a governance model is based on, or presupposes, a certain democratic orientation.

The next line of argument is based on the observation that evaluations have implications for governance and democracy, and because these phenomena are interdependent, evaluation

¹ Governance refers to new, emerging institutions that have transformed from established forms of government (see for examples: Pierre and Peters, 2000; Björk, Bostedt and Johansson, 2003).

² Implementation research has illuminated that the top down initiated implementation chain, crucial to representative democracy, frequently does not work as representative democratic theory prescribes. Pressman's and Wildavsky's (1973) book *Implementation: How Great Expectations in Washington Are Dashed in Oakland* ... was one of the first books that brought attention to implementation problems in modern democracies.

affects them simultaneously. The implications can appear in several forms. Evaluation can be developed in support of a certain governance model and democratic ideal, or evaluation can indirectly affect governance and democracy in more subtle ways, through assumptions made in the evaluation commission which structures the evaluation, how citizens are conceptualized in the evaluation, the evaluation questions, to mention but a few examples. Evaluation may help to maintain, strengthen or weaken a governance model and a related democratic orientation. In other words: the results and conclusions of an evaluation can have implications for a model's future legitimacy. When an evaluation presents positive critique about a governance model, or the processes or outcomes that are delivered from programmes embedded in a governance setting, the model is, as a result, at the same time strengthened, while negative critique may have the opposite impact. Although this influence may be difficult to examine empirically, it should be illuminated, discussed and accounted for. Generally, the systemic influences of evaluations have been overlooked, but living in an audit (evaluation) society (Power, 1997) one needs to understand these implications better.

The aim of this paper is more specifically to discuss how three general models of democratic governance can be evaluated, and to unpack three broad democratic evaluations orientations and discuss the implications of leading democratic evaluations.

Governance models

As indicated above, current public policy making involves different levels of government, trans-national and private/civil institutions and actors. There are many different models of governance in use in modern democracies, partly because differences in tradition and division of power between levels of government, and also because new ways of dealing with real world problems have been presented and tried out in many countries. There is no intention to try to cover them all in this paper. On the contrary, this paper seeks to reduce complexity and discuss basic issues related to evaluating governance. Before looking into three general governance models there is a need to clarify what is meant by governance in this paper and to relate the models to prevailing theories of governance.

There is a need for a concept that moves away from traditional forms of government towards more complex and multi-actor forms of steering and coordination. From the literature we know that governance is used in many ways and refers to phenomena such as governing (Jessop, 1998; Stoker, 1998; Pierre and Peters, 2000), policy networks (Rhodes, 1997), public-private partnerships (Wettenhall, 2003), corporate governance (Williamson, 1998), multilevel governance (Hooghe and Marks, 2001), and societal governance (Kooiman, 2000).³ Governance is also now and then used for a new analytical perspective or framework (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Björk, Bostedt and Johansson, 2003). In short, governance has multiple meanings and is an umbrella concept referring both to a new analytic framework for analysing different modes of steering and coordination, and a concept referring to different modes of governing where public and private institutions and actors are involved (Pierre and Peters, 2000; Björk, Bostedt and Johansson, 2003). In this paper, governance refers to the second meaning, i.e., an empirical phenomenon that can appear in various forms.

³ For an overview of the use of the term governance see Pierre, 2000; Pierre and Peters, 2000; Björk, Bostedt and Johansson, 2003.

Pierre and Peters (2000) discuss governance from a state perspective and separate between four governance structures: hierarchies, markets, networks and communities. These structures or models differ in many respects, for example, concerning the role of the state, the power conditions between institutions/actors and the conditions for accountability (p.67-68). In this paper some of these governance structures are discussed in relation to evaluation but without adopting a state-centric perspective. The models discussed here are models which evaluators recognize in policy and programme evaluation. With Pierre and Peters' classification the *state-coordinated* and the *local government coordinated model*, the first two models that shall be discussed below, can be understood as two subtypes of hierarchies, whereas the third *multi-actor-coordinated model*, is a model that takes into account both governance through networks and governance through communities.⁴ To be clear, these models are ideal types and developed for analytical purpose, that is, to help identify and simplify governance settings that evaluators and policy analysts frequently deal with.

With that said, what are then the most important characteristics of the three models? Basically the models differ on who possesses power to govern and coordinate policies, programmes and projects or more specifically concerning: the legal grounds and regulations; the democratic orientations; principal-agent relations; implementation process; and the conditions for accountability (see Table 1).

March and Olsen (1995:22-23) draw attention to the different rules and regulations that legalize and legitimize different forms of democratic governance. The authors underscore that "legitimate authority" in modern democracies is based on consent attached to a system of constitutional rights as well as rules which specify the basis of legitimate power. In addition, they discuss the limits regarding "political contracts" and "rules" for political collaboration and governance. These rules and regulations are the legal sources for the first two models of governance discussed in this paper. (I have not found an explicit discussion in governance literature on the rules and regulations shaping various forms of multi-actor governance.)

The *state-coordinated model* is the most familiar model, and it is probably still the most common type of governance in democratic nation-states. Here, this model is presented in a context of many actors, but it is still the same as conventional government. In this model governance starts with a state decision, taken by the peoples' representatives or the political/administrative elite.⁵ In other words, the state is the principal, and lower levels of government and other actors are the agents. What, then, can we say about the model's feasibility to deal with real world problems? Policy problems that are "tame" and rather uncomplicated can be dealt with effectively this way. The implementation process is top-down and demands strong management control to work well. An advantage with this model is that conditions for accountability are clear, that is, national politicians and officials can be held responsible for actions taken or not taken.

⁴ In this paper markets are not discussed as such because the focus is on governance settings where at least some level of government is involved. Governance settings where "hierarchies" and "markets" interact are covered with the third model. Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), for example, can be conceived as forms of governance and included in the multi-actor coordinated model. Various forms of PPP exist (Wettenhall, 2003) but are not usually discussed in terms of governance.

⁵ The classification of democracy is based on three models of democracy: representative or elitist, participatory, and deliberative or discursive democracy (cf. Dryzek, 1996; Hanberger, 2001, 2003).

Table 1 Characteristics of three governance models

Characteristics	Governance models		
	State coordinated	Local government coordinated	Multi-actor coordinated
<i>Legal ground/regulations</i>	State decisions	Local government, (state, EU decisions)	Partnership agreements/contracts
<i>Democratic orientation</i>	Representative/elitist	Representative/elitist or discursive	Participatory or discursive
<i>Principal</i>	State	Local government (state, EU)	Participating actors
<i>Agents</i>	Municipalities, firms, organizations	State, firms, citizens, organizations, (local government)	Participating actors, external actors
<i>Type of policy problems</i>	Tame/gentle	Wicked/complex	Wicked/complex
<i>Implementation process</i>	Top-down, strong management control	Top-down/bottom-up, intentions adjusted to local conditions	Bottom-up, achieving consensus on some goals, collective learning
<i>Conditions for accountability</i>	Clear: National politicians (and officials)	Divided: Local/national politicians or EU officials	Divided or unclear: partnership members

Note: The first principal in any democracy is the citizens. In the second model the principal is shared between national and sub-national citizens. In the third model, all participating actors are principals.

The local government model is a model where local governments have taken a governing role or been given a governance or implementation role. The legal ground is first of all decisions taken by local governments themselves. However, the mandate can also start off with decisions taken at the central state or EU level; decision power has been delegated together with some degree of discretion for local governments.⁶ In addition, the power and responsibility to fill a programme with content, or coordinate the implementation, can be decentralized.⁷ The democratic orientation of this model is basically that of representative or elitist democracy. Programmes and actions could either be legitimized through the national or municipality representative process. However, the democratic course can also be oriented towards discursive (deliberative) democracy. Currently, local governments try out new modes of policy making as a complement to representative democracy. This model can be feasible when dealing with social problems that are complex and in areas where local conditions vary a lot; the need for local adjustments is then considerable. The implementation process can be described as a combined top down and bottom-up process where intentions are adjusted to local conditions and needs both from the top and the bottom. The principal-agent relations are complex in this governance model because different levels of government are involved in the

⁶ In federal states, as well as in states with a high degree of autonomy and self-determination for local governments, the division of power between the levels is constitutionally regulated.

⁷ Scharpf (1988) and Hooghe & Marks (2001), for example, have applied an EU-centric perspective and followed how the EU institutions interact with institutions at lower levels, first and foremost with the state and regional level. Anders Lidström (2004) refers to this perspective as an EU-down perspective and contrasts this perspective to a city up perspective on multilevel-governance.

making and implementation of public policy. When power and responsibility are divided the conditions for accountability can be unclear.

The *multi-actor level model* represents governance situations where national and local government are but two among several actors trying to steer and coordinate collective resources. The legal ground for this governance model is agreements and contracts between participating actors. Depending on the scope and depth of the governance and collaboration, the democratic orientation can be that of participatory or discursive (deliberative) democracy. Similar to the local government model, the principal is not one but many and the principal-agent relations are not all that clear in this model. Moreover, the concept of principal-agent is not quite relevant to apply because the participants can be both principal and agent, i.e., in situations where a programme is developed and implemented in collaboration. The model is feasible in situations where problems are complex or wicked and where actors need to discuss the problem situation and come to public judgment about what the problem is and what needs to be done to deal with it. Concerning conditions for accountability this is a weak point in this model. All participants are responsible for joint actions or inactions, and at the same time each actor is also responsible to the organizations he or she represents. But in a worst case scenario, nobody takes responsibility and can therefore not be held accountable. The third model is a model where national and local government authority is distributed up, down or out⁸ and is therefore a model which can serve as a benchmark for empirical analysis without giving bias to public institutions and actors.

In relation to Pierre and Peters (2000), the classification made here is not state-centric. Obviously, none of these models pay attention to governance at the international or EU level explicitly, nor is the regional level in focus. However, the local government coordinated model covers, or can be replaced by, a regional government coordinated model, whereas governance where EU or other international institutions and actors are involved, is covered by the second or third model. How democratic governance settings can be analyzed with these three models will be discussed below.

Evaluating governance

In policy and programme evaluation a specific governance model can be an object for evaluation or an institutional condition for an evaluation. In both cases there is interplay between evaluation and governance, and evaluation carries implications for governance.

How, then, can democratic governance be evaluated? I suggest two ways in this paper. The first way is to look into the inherent value of the models and the second is to compare real models against ideal models. A third way, which is not discussed here, would be to evaluate governance according to some markers or meta-criteria which are not yet in the models; stakeholder participation, feasibility for different policy fields, goal achievement, and effectiveness, for example.

With that in mind, let us then look at the first method. Assessing the inherent value of the models can be done by looking into the content of the ideal models. A model's advantages are expressed in the content specified in the ideal model, whereas the disadvantages mainly fall outside the model. The content, summarized in Table 1, can also be understood and used as

⁸ Pierre and Peters (ibid. chapter 4) talk about moving up (international level), moving down (regional, local and community level) and moving out (NGOs, corporatization and privatization level) state power.

evaluation criteria. I suggest that the models' characteristics regarding how to promote *democratization* in a specific way, the *feasibility to deal with different kinds of policy problems*, the *implementation process*, and *conditions for accountability* can be used as assessments criteria.

The state coordinated model seems appropriate for maintaining or strengthening a representative democracy, primarily in policy areas where the legitimacy for state actions is rather high. In contrast, the local government and multi-actor model seem more accurate for promoting participatory or discursive/deliberative democracy and democratization. After the salient features of the models have been briefly outlined, the democratic implications will be discussed in more detail. Regarding the nature of social problems the state coordinated model appears appropriate for dealing with (solutions to) 'tame' problems; securing an equitable distribution of child subsidies to families, for instance. Provided that the subsidy has a general acceptance, seeking the most efficient distribution will be uncontroversial. In fact, any problem to which a straightforward, technical solution is available could be governed and implemented this way. When the 'problem' is to meet the needs of individual citizens, with unique and frequently complex needs, a great deal of discretion and responsibility for front line workers, i.e. teachers, nurses, social workers etc, is required. Citizens are in the local government model, and in particular the multi-actor model, assumed to be responsible and well-informed actors able to contribute with local knowledge, and to the legitimatization of policy development and implementation (cf. Fisher, 2003:205ff.). The local government and multi-actor coordinated models seem better suited to deal with complex problems and to add legitimacy to a policy. Front line workers who are given the opportunity to adjust the policy to real conditions and pre-requisites of the organization are presumably more committed when they meet and interact with citizens (cf. Hanberger, 2003). The state oriented model demand a top down and strong management controlled implementation process to work well. In contrast, the two other models, in particular the multi-actor model, can work only when the implementation process is coordinated from the bottom and up, and where freedom of choice exists for arriving at consensus on some common goals. The state, but also other actors, may prefer a certain kind of implementation process because it strengthens a certain democracy. Thus, a model's characteristics indicates the inherent advantages of the model. By comparing the models' characteristics and pros and cons in theory, the evaluator can say something about the models' potential merits and feasibility to deal with certain problems, and promote certain principles and values. Considering different governance models' advantages and disadvantages can be helpful to politicians, civil servants and citizens.

What about the second way? Comparing real governance models or settings against these three ideal models provides insight into prevailing old and new governance models' strengths and weaknesses. I suggest that the governance models can be used with a Weberian method in assessing real governance models performance. Real models can first of all be classified in relation to these three ideal models. To find out whether or not a real model resembles any of these three models is a first step in the evaluation. A real model can have some features that go hand in hand with one of the ideal models, whereas other features seem odd. This would be the case when a real model is used for policy problems that are not predetermined as feasible in the ideal model, for example. In this situation the evaluator can argue that the model under scrutiny can be improved by refining it in direction towards the requirements of the ideal model. In practice, a real governance model can best be described as a hybrid model of two or even all three models. Whether a certain hybrid model performs better or worse in some respects, compared with any of the ideal models, is an empirical question.

Thus, how well a prevailing governance model performs, that is, how well it helps resolve problems and challenges and promote certain values, can partly be understood with reference to these ideal models. In addition, when processes or outcomes delivered through programs or policies embedded in certain governance structure, the systemic implications of the evaluation can be understood in terms of legitimatizing or de-legitimizing the governance structure.

Democratic implications of governance

So far, the democratic implications of the three governance models have not been discussed in detail. I am not saying that there is a straightforward and unquestionable influence of each governance model on a specific democracy as indicated in Table 1. The second and third models are open for different democratic implications. In practice, the influences can be subtle and follow different tracks. Basically, it is both an analytical and empirical question to identify and assess the democratic implications of different models of governance.

A state coordinated governance model most likely strengthens a representative or elitist democracy. In this model, the involvement and participation of other actors are limited or controlled by the state. Power and accountability are compatible, that is, the elected politicians act on the mandate gained in elections and are accountable to the ordinary citizen. First of all they are responsible for the content and scope of public policies and programmes, including actions not taken. Power and accountability rest with the same actor in this model. Political parties not only have a responsibility to give citizens an opportunity to influence changes in the general policy direction, but also to transform or change the governance model in use, if that is considered being the right way to go. In the next election citizens can choose to vote on those in power or cast their votes on another candidate or party. Thus, in this case, the conditions for accountability and democratic control are clear and straightforward; national politicians are accountable for actions taken and not taken.

On the one hand, the democratic implication of the local government coordinated model depends on the power distribution between levels of governments, and on the other hand, whether or not the governance model moves towards other notions of democracy. If the starting point is a local government programme (decision) that has been accepted through a local representative democratic process, the governance (process) first of all affects local representative democracy. Furthermore, some form of local elite democracy can be reinforced, that is, the political and/or administrative elite can gain support (cf. Farazman, 1999 a; 1999b). In cases where local governments have been delegated power with a limited degree of autonomy, and primarily as agents to the state, the applied governance model strengthens at the outset national democracy. Local governments and administrations act as agents to effectuate state decisions and policies. Accordingly, local democracy is not strengthened. On the contrary, local democracy is being side-stepped.

In contrast to these cases, in settings where stakeholders, including citizens, are invited to participate in the policy process, and where those in power provide forums/meeting-places for deliberation to deal with policy problems and where other actors can influence the making and adjustment of policies and programmes to local conditions and needs, a deliberative or discourse democracy is strengthened (cf. Hanberger, 2003). Thus, from a citizen perspective, local politicians are held accountable for actions taken or not taken, as well as for initiatives to improve democracy.

What about the democratic implications of the multi-actor governance model? This model is applicable to situations where many actors, both mandated and not mandated, are involved. Principally, within this general model, one can distinguish several sub-models which may have different implications for democracy. Global, international or multilevel governance, taken together, will first of all strengthen the participating institutions, actors and the actual distribution of power among these “principals.” The democratic implication is in most cases modest and can be identified in different ways. The impact on democracy most likely depend on how successful these institutions and actors are in dealing with policy problems. Policies and programmes developed within the EU have so far been suffering from a democratic deficit, i.e. EU-citizens can only to a small extent influence EU policies and programmes through voting on national EU-candidates and national parties’ EU-policies. Public policy, in the European context, is made and implemented by numbers of actors and agencies both from the member states, at different levels, and from the EU. Policy and programme processes follow multiple procedures and trajectories.

“The preparatory, decision making and implementing institutions supplement and rely upon each other, but they also have relative autonomy and are unable to control each other.”
(Sand, 1997)

This governance situation is problematic from a democratic point of view; first and foremost from a representative or elite democratic perspective. According to representative democratic theory power and accountability should be clear and embraced by the same actors. When the state and EU build their policies and programmes on non-accountable actors there is a risk that democracy is side-stepped and instead some kind of corporatism is reinforced.

Similar to the local government model, when different levels of government participate in multi-actor governance settings and when this participation have been legitimized by citizens, through a general support in elections, an elite democracy can also gain some support. In contrast, in governance settings where local and regional actors from the public and private sector participate, the democratic implications can be different. Network collaboration where participants by definition are principals, and take joint initiatives to develop and implement policies together, a discursive (deliberative) democracy or a corporatist order can be strengthened. Furthermore, when active citizens collaborate with front-line workers the conditions for accountability are not the same as in representative democracy. Citizens share responsibility with politicians, civil servants and professionals, and all these actors are informally evaluated and held responsible continuously (Hanberger et al 2004). If the policy mandate is a result of delegation of state power to partnerships or communities, and the mandated actors are given the opportunity to decide for themselves, and if accountability is disintegrated from the political system, then a participatory democracy can gain some support. Thus, evaluating democratic impact of multi actor governance must be open for different implications for democracy.

Implications of democratic evaluations

Apparently, an evaluation does not take place in an empty space, rather an evaluation is part of a context which can be framed and accounted for in different ways. Here, the context is understood in terms of different democratic governance structures. From now on the centre of attention is on evaluation and on the systemic implications of evaluation. First, three broad democratic evaluation orientations will be unpacked, and then the implications for democracy shall be discussed.

When evaluators claim they undertake democratic evaluations it is not clear what this means. Some evaluators have developed so called democratic evaluations in support of democracy, where others could be referred to as democratic because they are embedded in a democratic framework. Most evaluators commit themselves to democratic ideals and view their work as part of a larger democratic project. However, in times when democracy is changing and when democratic theorist, ordinary citizens, decision makers, and evaluators have different understandings of what democracy means and should mean, the options for elaborating democratic evaluations are numerous. Due to this situation there is a need to elucidate what kind of democracy an evaluation reinforces. If evaluation is viewed as a democratic tool, and a support for democracy, this implies that democracy is upheld or strengthened in one way or another. Certain democratic values, i.e., dialog, deliberation and accountability can be promoted. Further, the evaluation can, more generally speaking, promote the existing (representative) democracy or give way to alternative models of democracy. Principally, an evaluation can be developed more or less in support of elitist (representative), participatory or discursive democracy. I am not suggesting that real regimes do not comprise elements from different models of democracy or that a certain democratic evaluation only supports one democratic ideal. Real regimes and democratic evaluations often have implications for more than one democratic notion. However, when we try to understand the democratic implication of evaluations we need to know - in what direction is democracy moving, and what is the role of democratic evaluation in this process?

Three notions of democracy

Democracy understood as a regime where the people or “demos” govern public affairs is uncontroversial. However, when the principals and institutions shaping a democracy are made explicit, the shared understanding disappears. What do we mean with demos, the public and common affairs? There is a huge body of literature on democracy and democratic governance which offers different answers to these questions. Generally, and according to John Dryzek (1996:5), democratization can mean increasing either *franchise* (by lowering the qualifications for voting), *scope* (by expanding the domains of democratic control), or *authenticity* (by increasing substantive and informed democratic control). None of these dimensions should, maintains Dryzek, be sacrificed for the sake of another; all notions of democracy depend on the existence of a number of participants in a political setting, a domain for democratic control, and a degree of authenticity.

In the context of policy and program evaluation franchise is fixed whereas the scope and authenticity of the democracy can differ. Scope can also, in the context of democratic evaluation, be understood in terms of *inclusion* of stakeholders in the policy or evaluation process whereas authenticity can be interpreted in terms of *dialog* and *deliberation* or

discourse. The issues of dialog and discourse direct attention to democratic learning, speech-rules, the procedures to deal with power imbalances, for examples (cf. House and Howe, 1999). In addition, democratisation can also mean increasing democratic steering, internal or external control, or enhancing accountability. These values are more associated with representative democracy, whereas dialog and deliberation are more related to participatory and discursive democracy.

At least three broad democratic evaluation orientations can be distinguished in literature and in contemporary societies. These approaches are associated with the three most common theories of democracy discussed by democratic theorists today. More theories of democracy exist, but the point is not to be comprehensive in this paper. Before the various democratic evaluations are outlined and discussed there is a need to briefly summarize the theories of democracy which are the basic sources for most democratic evaluation approaches.

According to the theory of *elitist democracy*, political elites compete for power in open societies (Schumpeter, 1942). This theory, sometimes referred to as the liberal or Lockean view (Habermas, 1996), assumes that citizens can control their government by choosing among competing elites. Ordinary citizens are encouraged to participate every three or four years in elections. Citizens are not given a direct role in the policy process, and democratization implies improving the elite's representation of the people. In other words, the core idea here is that of representative democracy. Good conditions for accountability, with clear principal-agent relations, are essential values in this notion of democracy. This notion of democracy is implicit in the expert-oriented or technocratic policy discourse and practice (cf. Hanberger, 2001).

The *participatory* theory of *democracy* assumes that people's participation is the most important quality of a democracy. According to this view, the power of the people is exercised when they participate. Accordingly, apathy and non-participation are seen as the major threats to democracy. Moreover, participation is assumed to foster democratic citizens. Participation is moreover presumed to help in the creation of identity, to encourage a desire to participate further in common affairs, to develop responsibility, and so on. According to this view, it is only through participation that the idea of democracy can be realized (Pateman 1970). According to Habermas (1996), citizens' participation in will-formation serves to constitute society as a democratic community. In contrast to an elitist democracy, participation between elections is assumed to vitalize democracy. Various notions of participatory democracy exist, but it is not the purpose of this paper to describe them all. Here, *constrained participatory democracy* primarily refers to a democracy which encourages more participation than the elitist, but less than the discourse notion and without any qualitative requirements linked to the participation (cf. Dryzek & Torgerson 1993). Applied to the context of public policy, citizens are encouraged to participate in the policy process before a policy is decided or launched, and thus primarily in the planning process (Renn et al., 1993). Another case of participatory democracy, already mentioned, is when freedom of choice and responsibility have been delegated to communities.

The *discourse* theory of *democracy* is also concerned with participation. However, this theory goes one step further in its participatory requirements. According to this view, the idea of democracy can only be realized through discussions among free and equal citizens. This type of democracy, sometimes called "deliberative democracy" (Elster, 1998; Dryzek, 2000), is not an aggregation of opinion of the will of the majority but is a democracy founded on a common commitment to a mode of reasoning on matters of public policy. The discourse is

open to those affected by collective decisions and/or their representatives (Dryzek, 1990, 2000; Habermas, 1996; Elster, 1998; House & Howe, 1999). It is a mode of decision making by “means of arguments offered *by* and *to* participants who are committed to the values of rationality and impartiality” (Elster, 1998, p. 8).⁹ Democratization, from this viewpoint, implies (re)creating meeting-places where communication without domination can take place. Accordingly, democracy is not primarily realized in elections, but rather in situations where policy-makers and citizens have access to basic information, and are given enough time and trust to participate in practical reasoning¹⁰ to resolve social problems.¹¹

The three notions of democracy differ regarding whether democracy is made *for*, *by* or *with* people. However, they all prescribe some amount of public participation. According to elitist democracy, however, citizens are only encouraged to influence the general direction of public policies and programs by choosing between political package deals in elections. In contrast, participatory and discourse theories suggest that citizens need to participate more often and in different ways in order for a regime to be called democratic (Deleon, 1997; Dryzek, 1996, 2000; Fischer, 1993; Healey, 1993; House & Howe, 1999; Khakee, 1999; Premfors *et al.*, 1994). Besides elections, participatory democracy endorses such means of participation as referenda, and discourse democracy endorses these plus new meeting-places/forums for public debate.¹² Democracy “by” and “with” the people are not contradictory to representative democracy but instead, for the most part, complementary.

Democratic evaluations

With these notions of democracy in mind we can move forward to discussing three broad democratic evaluation orientations derived from democracy theory and evaluation theory. Prevailing democratic evaluations, and also evaluation approaches that are not labelled democratic evaluation, can be analyzed in relation to these broad democratic evaluation

⁹ This notion of democracy actually consists of two sub-categories, the liberal constitutionalist and the discursive (Dryzek, 2000). Not all notions of deliberative democracy presume discursive processes, nor are they critical to established power structures and institutions. Therefore a distinction between the liberal and critical theorists’ notions of deliberative democracy is helpful. John Dryzek (2000) suggests that the former should be referred to as the ‘liberal constitutionalist’ strand and the more critical and discursive strand should be called ‘discursive democracy’.

¹⁰ To make matters more complex, feminist notions of democracy consider inclusion (of women in particular), attitudes, and solidarity as perhaps more important than “rules of discourse” for judging whether deliberation takes place (Dean, 1997; Kelly & Simms, 2000; see also Young 2000, whose feminist notion of democracy integrates a deliberative notion of democracy with the Deweyian understanding of democracy as a form of social inquiry).

¹¹ Social choice theorists criticize the (Habermasian) assumptions of discursive democracy to be populist and naive; speech, talk and discourse are carried out by strategic actors, i.e. both speakers and listeners act strategically with pre-determined preferences, which preclude any kind of free discourse (Austen-Smith and Riker 1987, Austen-Smith 1992). Przeworski (1998) stresses that deliberation (discourse) may persuade individuals to accept ‘false beliefs’ of policies that are in their interest. For a further discussion of the critics of deliberative (discursive) democracy see Dryzek (2000). The critique could be helpful in interpreting any failure of actual forms of discursive democracy and ‘distorted communication’.

¹² In the context of a public policy, citizens are expected to act as consumers or recipients of public services, or as active citizens. Only the consumer role matches elite democracy, whereas in the participatory and discourse notions, active citizens have a role in policy making (and program development) and implementation. I will not expand on these implications more, except to point out that an exclusively elitist concept of democracy perceives all participation, except during elections, as promoting a stakeholder interest, which implies deteriorating democracy.

approaches. What, then, are the main differences between these three approaches to evaluation?

Table 2 Characteristics of three democratic evaluation orientations

Democratic orientation	Intended use/function	Evaluation focus	Inclusion¹³	Dialog	Deliberation/discourse	Evaluators role
EDE: - <i>for</i> the people	Accountability	Intended outputs and outcomes, goal achievement	Policy and program makers	Not important	Not important	Expert
PDE: - <i>by</i> the people	Self determination, empowerment, learning	Goal development, process learning and progress	Programme implementers, affected citizens/clients	Very important	Not important	Advocate, facilitator
DDE – <i>with</i> the people	Practical knowledge, learning, accountability, public debate	Stakeholders criteria, learning, outcomes	All legitimate groups	Very important	Very important	Mediator, counselor

Key: EDE = Elitist Democracy-oriented Evaluation; PDE= Participatory Democracy oriented Evaluation, DDE= Discursive Democracy oriented Evaluation.

The classification in Table 2 is based on the following alternatives:

<p><u>Democratic evaluation orientation:</u> for, by or with the people</p> <p><u>Intended use/function:</u> accountability, practical knowledge, policy or collective learning, self determination/ empowerment, public debate</p> <p><u>Evaluation focus:</u> output, outcomes, goal achievement, develop groups’ own goals, process learning and progress/program development, stakeholders criteria, policy or collective learning</p> <p><u>Inclusion:</u> political/administrative elite, all legitimate groups, affected citizens/clients/ marginalized groups</p> <p><u>Dialog:</u> procedures to control power imbalance; speech rules; facilitate authentic participation</p> <p><u>Deliberation:</u> (new) forums for deliberation, considering multiple criteria/arguments</p> <p><u>Evaluators role:</u> expert, advocate, facilitator, counsellor, mediator</p>

As indicated in Table 2, the main intended use of elitist democratic evaluation (EDE) is accountability. Whether or not the implementation chain works is crucial for the legitimacy of representative democracy. On behalf of the citizens policy makers want to know whether or not an intervention works, and if the goals have been achieved. The evaluator responds to the decision makers’ information and knowledge needs. Generally, the evaluation starts with the intentions and goals of the political-administrative elite. EDE seeks answers to questions about outputs, outcomes, and goal achievements. Evaluators are experts in investigating whether or not an intervention or method works, without questioning the stated goals. Inclusion, dialog and deliberation are not considered to be vital democratic values. On the contrary, too much inclusion, dialog and deliberation in a policy or evaluation process could

¹³ The evaluator is included in all three approaches (not indicated in the Table).

indicate efficiency problems. The perfect implementation process in representative or elite democracy is a top down process where decisions or programme goals are implemented through a prescribed implementation chain. EDE proponents view the ideal implementation structure as a norm. When an evaluation is focused on the intended outputs, outcomes and goal achievements, the evaluation reinforces representative or elitist democracy. Looking at the interplay between EDE and elitist democracy one can separate between the systemic implications and the actual support for those in power. An evaluation which indicates limited goal achievement does not provide those responsible for the policy extra credit but the EDE would still be a support for a representative or elitist democracy. Furthermore, some form of elitist democracy can be reinforced, that is, the political and/or administrative elite can gain support (cf Farazman, 1999 a; 1999b)

The main functions and intended use of participatory democratic evaluations (PDE) are self-determination, empowerment and learning. This specific approach to evaluation is more focused on whether or not concerned and affected citizens or clients are included and empowered by the programme, as well as through the evaluation process. The evaluation is designed by the people with assistance from the evaluator and the evaluator's role is to facilitate self-reflection. In that sense the evaluator acts as an advocate for self-determination. The centre of attention is on developing the involved citizens' own goals at the outset. It is also an attempt to take people's views seriously and to protect people from unnecessary exposure. Attention is then paid to process learning and whatever progress is made. The evaluation assists self-learning, and pays attention to progress made in the program. Fair conditions for dialog are considered important as well. In contrast to EDE this democratic evaluation does not consider democratic steering through a top down initiated implementation chain to be an essential democratic value. PDE is feasible for programme and project evaluations where power and freedom of choice has been delegated. Policies and programmes for economic development, empowerment of marginalized groups, and local sustainability are some examples of this.

Discursive democratic evaluation (DDE) is first of all intended to support the main stakeholders' policy learning and practical knowledge generation. The knowledge is time and context bounded and aimed at helping the participants to improve practice. The function is also to meet the general public's information needs and provide accounts for public debate. DDE seeks to include major stakeholders, including citizens, in the evaluation and assess the program to criteria considered relevant by them. Dialog and deliberation are also values and conditions that are considered important in this approach to evaluation. In contrast to EDE, democratic steering and goal achievement is not thought of in terms of a single line of rationality, rather in terms of coordination, exchange and multiple goal achievements. Accountability is important but considered to be more multifaceted compared with EDE. Outcome assessments include multiple evaluation criteria. The democratic argument for stakeholder evaluations is that public and private/civil actors or institutions have been delegated a shared responsibility to develop and implement a programme, and also because multiple criteria enhance the credibility and validity of an evaluation. The general public benefits from this type of evaluation in that it provides accessible information and insights that help the ordinary citizen to participate in public debates. The evaluation also provides a source for holding those responsible accountable.

Prevailing democratic evaluations

With these three broad democratic evaluation approaches as frame of reference we can analyze the democratic implications of prevailing democratic evaluation approaches, and also approaches that are not labelled democratic but where the democratic implications are significant. Barry MacDonald's (1976) distinction between autocratic, bureaucratic and democratic evaluations has laid the ground for the conceptualization of democratic evaluation in the evaluation literature. According to MacDonald autocratic evaluation is an evaluation approach that serves government agencies in control over the allocation of resources and "it offers external validation of policy in exchange for compliance with its recommendations" (ibid:133). The evaluator is conceived as an expert advisor and a contract guarantees the evaluator's independence and ownership of the study. In contrast, a bureaucratic evaluation provides "unconditional service to those government agencies which have major control over the allocation of educational resources." The evaluator accepts the values of the office holders and undertakes an evaluation that is credible to the policy-makers. The evaluation is in this model owned by those who hold office and it is kept and "lodged in its files", whereas the autocratic evaluation is also published in academic journals. However, MacDonald does not conceive these approaches to be democratic at all. Instead, he suggests a democratic evaluation approach which provides service to the whole community. "The basic value is an informed citizenry, and the evaluator acts as a broker in exchanges of information between groups who want knowledge of each other" (ibid:134). The key concepts of MacDonald's democratic evaluation are "confidentiality," "negotiation," and "accessibility". MacDonald also discusses the interplay between evaluation and democracy explicitly and stresses the role of evaluation as "challenging monopolies of various kinds – of problem definition, of issue formulation, of data control, of information utilisation"(MacDonald, 1978: 12). To him the democratic evaluator's role is first of all to help "all our peoples to choose between alternative societies" (ibid.) and to provide "a disinterested source of information about the origins, processes and effects of social action" (ibid.). Basically, these recommendations support a discursive or deliberative democracy.

However, the three types of evaluation developed by Barry MacDonald are somewhat problematic if interpreted in the light of democratic theory. Even though MacDonald's democratic evaluation has most in common with a discursive democracy and a DDE approach, the two other approaches also have democratic implications. The bureaucratic and autocratic approaches, contrary to MacDonald's own classification - do have characteristics that bear resemblance with the EDE-approach. The bureaucratic evaluation explicitly serves the knowledge needs of bureaucracy, that is, the administrative elite in a democracy, whereas the autocratic evaluation, although in a different and more independent way, also preserves elite democracy. Bureaucratic evaluations enhance internal control and accountability, whereas autocratic evaluations can facilitate citizens' democratic control of the political elite. Autocratic evaluations could help the people to hold those in power accountable for actions taken or not taken, and also make it easier to choose between competing political elites in the next election, for instance. The lack of openness in MacDonald's bureaucratic approach would, if too extensive, work against basic democratic values, and then be a threat to representative or elitist democracy. However, some amount of closeness and power execution is acceptable in an elitist democracy, because the people can choose between competing elites in the next election. Hence, these "undemocratic" evaluations actually have some democratic implications, and seem first of all to hold up representative or elitist democracy.

Robin McTaggart (1991), an evaluation researcher who has contributed greatly to the democratic evaluation discourse, conveys that some democratic evaluations do not seem democratic from his point of view. According to McTaggart, there is a need to make a clear distinction between representative and participatory democracy in program evaluation. The evaluator's role in MacDonald's democratic evaluation is, in McTaggart's view, problematic because "the evaluators are still in the position of speaking for the program" (ibid:19). MacDonald's democratic approach to evaluation is grounded on discursive and representative democracy, whereas McTaggart is a strong proponent for a PDE approach. He takes participatory democracy as the democratic point of departure and underscores the need for democratic evaluators to develop a position that takes people's knowledge needs seriously and "protect people from unwarranted exposure" (ibid:20). Proponents for representative democratic evaluations and "stakeholder democratic"¹⁴ evaluations overlook or deny the knowledge needs among program participants themselves (McTaggart, 1989). "Reconceptualizing evaluation in participatory terms clearly would not remove the possibility of conflict between site participants, but it would give them a chance to negotiate among themselves forms of knowledge production which enhanced the possibilities for their work" (McTaggart, 1991:20). Undertaking democratic evaluation by the people themselves (PDE) would be quite different from EDE- and DDE- approaches. The PDE approach opens up for "new and constructive kinds of dialog in and around programs and institutions" (ibid).

According to Ernest House and Kenneth Howe (1999), evaluations can and should be designed in support of deliberative democracy.¹⁵ This is a good example of a discursive (deliberative) democratic evaluation model. This approach emphasizes the importance of inclusion, dialog and deliberation. However, the DDE developed by House and Howe also comprise social justice. The argument for including social justice is that "the requirements of distributive justice and those of democracy are intertwined" (House and Howe, 1999:107). In another part of the book House and Howe argue: "This view interweaves an egalitarian [or need-based] conception of justice that seeks to equalize power in arriving at evaluative conclusions" (ibid: 134). Besides facilitating and promoting deliberative (I refer to it as discursive) democracy, this approach endorses an egalitarian, need-based, notion of social justice. Likewise, Barry MacDonald integrates an economic or egalitarian notion of social justice in his DDE approach. He suggests that evaluators, more than previously, should contribute "to reducing the gap between those who have and those who have not" (1978:13).

Some evaluation researchers have developed approaches that are not explicitly called democratic evaluation. Nevertheless most evaluation approaches have implications for democracy. Some approaches are developed to help marginalised groups to further their positions, where other approaches assist stakeholders and the general public to assess the processes and outcomes of public policies and programmes. Donna Mertens' "inclusive evaluation" (1999), for example, has most in common with participatory democracy and PDE, whereas the practical participatory evaluation approach, according to Cousins and Whitemore (1998), has more in common with discursive democracy and DDE.

As indicated, none of the three broad democratic evaluation approaches encompass assumptions about liberty, equality, or ecological sustainability, for example. In this paper these political and philosophical values are kept outside the ideal models of democracy, as well as the three broad democratic evaluation approaches. Basically citizens, their

¹⁴ Stakeholder evaluation would promote discursive democracy or give way to corporatism.

¹⁵ For a critical discussion on 'deliberative democratic evaluation', based on House and Howe's framework, see Ryan and DeStefano et al (2000).

representatives, stakeholders, and democratic theorists struggle to further these values in their realization of democracy. Obviously, when democracy is realized in practice these values are intertwined with democracy. Some theorists integrate these values in the notion of democracy (see below). Here, however, the separation of higher-order values from the democratic evaluations approaches is first of all made for analytical purpose, that is, to facilitate a principal discussion about democratic evaluations. Apparently, some political-philosophical values seem more connected with a specific democratic orientation, but principally all three democratic evaluations could support a certain notion of social justice, for example. In other words the egalitarian, need-based, notion of social justice can be integrated with elitist or participatory democracy and likewise be strengthened by the EDE- or PDE-approach.

In my view, it is a trap to link values such as social justice or sustainability with democratic (evaluation) theory. I do not argue that this cannot be done, and some theorists incorporate these values in their notion of democracy. Amy Gutmann (1980) and Philip Green (1985, 1998), for instance, convey social and economic egalitarianism as democratic values. John Dewey, another example, stresses the fact that democracy includes the mandate to dismantle formal and informal obstacles to full human development. The citizen has the right to demand “cooperation in place of coercion, voluntary sharing in a process of mutual give and take, instead of authority imposed from above” (Dewey and Tufts 1985 [1932]:348-9). Michael Newman (2000) integrates elements from all three notions of democracy discussed here, and accepts the basic features of liberal democracy, such as freedom of speech, universal suffrage, and separation of powers as key elements of democracy. Regarding liberty and equality he acknowledges “the traditional catalogue of liberal civil and political freedoms but rejects neo-liberal definitions of liberty” (ibid: 5). I could go on describing different democratic theories that are intertwined with, and refer to, specific notions of liberty, social justice and sustainability. However, the situation becomes problematic when democratic theorists work out more complex theories which in turn inspire democratic evaluation theorists to develop approaches which correspond to their own favoured mix of political and philosophical values. This leads to a situation where students of evaluation research must be prepared to encounter new approaches and a growing number of democratic evaluation approaches. I doubt that this will further our common understanding of fundamental differences among democratic evaluations or enhance our knowledge of the implications of democratic evaluation in contemporary societies. On the contrary, there is a risk that we will talk past each other even more than we do today. For that reason I suggest that it is sufficient to keep three broad democratic evaluation approaches apart from each one’s position on liberty, social justice, equality, sustainability, etc. In other words it is a call for separating between the procedural aspects of democracy on the one hand, and political-philosophical values that sometimes are thought of as part of democracy, on the other.¹⁶

¹⁶ To integrate social justice into democratic (evaluation) theory would make matters more complex. The concept of social justice is, like democracy, used very different in the literature. Most theories of justice focus on the macro level, that is, on a society’s basic structure. John Rawls (1971) Theory of Justice is one famous example. Some social justice theories cover the whole range from micro, meso and macro issues. Jon Elster’s (1992) “local justice approach” is one example. There are also a growing number of feminist theorists that start with perceived injustice experienced by disadvantaged people (women in particular). The starting point is injustice at the micro and meso level and the theorists connect prevailing problems with unfairness in a society’s basic structure. Those in favour of integrating social and economic justice into democratic theory presumes that people want egalitarian policies but this is not all the time the case. Proponents of democratic-based arguments for equality “...also confronts the chicken and egg problem that democracy requires equality and equality requires democracy” (Cunningham, 2002:158), but one can also regard “each of democracy and justice as matters of degree such that they might either support or militate against one another (ibid.). Besides political equality (rights), realized through different democratic ideals, a distinction can be made between economic and social

Implications of democratic evaluations on governance

Let us now return to the interplay between governance and democratic evaluation. A democratic evaluation can also affect governance, that is, the institutional conditions where the evaluation is embedded. Generally, the governance model or setting under scrutiny, or the expectations for a governance model in progress, can be maintained, strengthened or weakened. If the evaluation indicates major problems, which can be interpreted as consequences of the governance model, the evaluation might have a negative influence on the model. The crucial point of whether or not an evaluation will support and legitimize a governance model is the potential of making use of the evaluation for “governance promotion”. Furthermore, an evaluation tends to give authority and power to some actors in the policy area and exclude others from influence. This implies that a governance model and the mandated actors can be legitimized by an evaluation.

The following examples can illustrate how the systemic influence of evaluation can occur. The first example is an evaluation of labour market programmes (Dahlberg & Forslund, 1999). The evaluation, which was developed within a national economic framework, helped to uphold and legitimize a state coordinated governance model, and to reinforce the authority of the state as an actor in this policy area. The evaluation was about displacement effects of labour market measures. Although the evaluation did not indicate major programme success, the evaluation, according to the evaluators’ conclusions, seems to legitimize state programming and governance in this policy area.

“Does our finding of rather strong displacement effects of subsidised employment imply that such programmes should be abandoned? Not necessarily. Displacement of regular employment definitely is a cost that should be considered when launching large-scale programmes, and care must of course be taken to ensure that a minimum of crowding out takes place.” (Dahlberg & Forslund, 1999)

Programme failures (displacement effects) were treated as natural and explained by the evaluators which guided the reader to arrive at a better understanding of the preconditions and restrictions for state programming. This interpretation is not meant to underestimate a reader of an evaluation report. Some readers may interpret and use the results as an indication of programme failure and, perhaps, use the report to question state programming in this field. However, the intention in the text, cited here, indicate an indirect support for state programming in this policy field and subsequently for a state oriented governance model.

Another example illustrates how an evaluation can strengthen the second and third governance model. This example concerns an ongoing four year local programme for sustainable growth. The programme is co-financed by local-regional bodies and the EU. What is interesting with this example is also that one of the goals of this project has been to develop a *model* for local sustainable growth and accordingly this goal can be a target for evaluation. The initial evaluation was made after the first year and the evaluators identified a great number of goals, strategies and programme activities (Hanberger & Forsberg, 2003) which by no means could be achieved with the available budget and resources. This situation was highlighted in the first evaluation report, but without questioning the project leader, the municipality or the multi-actor model of governance. Similarly to the first example, a

equality, which in turn can be realized in different ways, and where democratic evaluation theorists and practitioners hold different views (cf. Rawls, 1971:224-8).

systemic effect of the evaluation can be identified at an early stage of the project; the evaluation has so far helped to authorize both public and private/civil actors to be players in the governance structure. Hence, at an early stage of the programme the evaluation seems to support a mixed local government and multi-actor coordinated governance model. The evaluation has helped to legitimize the program as such, in the sense that the project owners can refer to an external evaluation, for instance. However, if the evaluation at the end of the project would indicate that the model has failed or not met the expectations, the effect of the evaluation may well be the opposite.

Conclusion

This paper discusses two ways to evaluate governance. One way is to illuminate the inherent values of governance models and assess the models' advantages and disadvantages "in theory." The paper suggests that the models' likelihood to promote *democratization* in a specific way, the *feasibility to deal with different kinds of policy problems*, the *implementation process*, and *conditions for accountability* can be used as assessment criteria in the first case. According to these criteria, the state coordinated model seems appropriate for maintaining or strengthening a representative democracy, whereas the local government and multi-actor model seems more accurate for promoting participatory or discursive (deliberative) democracy. The state coordinated model seems suitable for dealing with (solutions to) 'tame' problems whereas the local government and multi-actor coordinated models also seem better suited to manage complex problems and to add legitimacy to a policy. A top down and strong management controlled implementation process is a prerequisite for the state oriented model. In contrast, the multi-actor model can only work when the implementation process is coordinated from the bottom and up, and where freedom of choice exists for arriving at consensus on common goals. In this way, the evaluator makes value judgments about the models' potential merits and feasibility to promote certain principles and values.

Another way to evaluate governance is to compare real models against these three ideal models. This is a method that provides some insight into prevailing governance models' performance. The standard in this case is the ideal model and the distance or gap between the manifested governance model is what is being assessed. A real model can resemble an ideal model, the ideal model then provides a benchmark for understanding a real model's potential. The evaluator can argue that an actual model that deviates from an ideal model can be changed in such a way that it fits the ideal model better. Whether or not a governance model is feasible can also be evaluated according to specific performance criteria, such as stakeholder participation, goal achievement, effectiveness etc. No matter which evaluation criteria are used, there is a need to understand the rationality of the governance model under scrutiny and the governance setting which frame the evaluation.

This paper also depicts three broad democratic evaluation orientations to which most evaluation approaches can be assessed. The first one is the elitist democratic evaluation (EDE), whose main intended use and function is accountability. The evaluator starts with a state decision, without questioning it, and designs an evaluation that is in line with the intentions of mandated actors, that is, the political-administrative elite. EDE pays attention to questions related to outputs (monitoring) and outcomes (accountability). Inclusion, dialog and deliberation are not considered to be important democratic values. The ideal implementation process in is a top down process where decisions, policy and programme goals, are implemented following a prescribed implementation chain - a chain which is the standard in EDE-approaches.

Secondly, and in contrast to EDE, participatory democratic evaluations (PDE) are more focused on whether or not concerned and affected citizens are included in the policy and programme as well as the evaluation process. Self determination and empowerment are the main functions of this approach. To provide respectable conditions for dialog are considered important. Compared to EDE, this approach to evaluation does not consider monitoring and accountability to be highly scored values. Typically, PDE is real-time evaluations developed to support programmes or projects where power and freedom of choice have been delegated and where people can decide what is best for them.

Thirdly, we have then the discursive democratic evaluation (DDE) which is intended to be used for policy learning, practical knowledge generation and public debate. This approach is characterized by an endeavour to include major stakeholders in the evaluation and to pay attention to and account for criteria considered relevant by major stakeholders, including citizens and the general public. Dialog and deliberation are also considered important in this approach to evaluation. Contrasted to EDE, steering or coordination capacity is thought of in terms of a multiple lines of rationality. Accountability is important but thought of as more multifaceted, and assessments include all those actors and institutions that share responsibility for a programme.

All three approaches can be understood as democratic tools, but only EDE and PDE can be described as forums of democracy where stakeholders, including citizens, gather to come to public judgement about pressing social problems and future actions. Viewed this way the role of PDE and DDE seems more far reaching than EDE. Furthermore, all three approaches accept representative democracy, but EDE is more limited in scope, which can be interpreted as PDE and DDE take democracy a step further. However, such steps are not appreciated by everyone and not viewed as steps strengthening representative democracy by EDE advocates.

House and Howe's (1999) deliberative democracy is a good example of a discursive (deliberative) democratic evaluation model. However, besides facilitating and promoting deliberative (or discursive) democracy, this approach endorses an egalitarian notion of social justice. To avoid a situation where we have to become familiar with a growing number of democratic evaluation approaches, which I doubt will further our common understanding of the role of democratic evaluation in contemporary societies, I suggest to keep the three broad democratic evaluation approaches apart from any possible position a democratic evaluator can take on liberty, social justice, equality, sustainability etc. This will reduce the risk of talking past each other on the subject of the intended meaning of democratic evaluation.

Taken together, democratic evaluations can legitimize, uphold or strengthen a certain notion of democracy and a specific governance model. At the same time it can reinforce the authority of certain actors in a policy field. This insight could help policy makers, evaluators, citizens and other actors calling for an evaluation to consider the options for, and different implications of democratic evaluations.

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