

Editorial

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa. He mihi mahana ki a koutou me ō koutou whānau whanui.

My warmest greetings to you.

Welcome to the fourth volume of *Evaluation Matters—He Take Tō Te Aromatawai*. It's timely that this volume explores some of the values we hold close within our evaluation work. These values include our commitments to cultural responsiveness, collaborative practice, and growing the evaluative thinking and evaluation capacity of our communities and organisations. These themes are woven through the keynote addresses and articles in this volume.

As there was no ANZEA conference in 2017, the keynotes in this volume come from two other conferences I was fortunate to attend. Robin Lin Miller's keynote at the 2017 4th CREA (culturally responsive evaluation and assessment) Conference in Chicago explored culturally responsive evaluation with LGBTQ communities of colour. Robin writes about being unsettled "that culturally responsive evaluators have given so little attention to sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression within diverse cultural contexts." She describes a personal journey that merged into a professional journey of evaluation and advocacy to give "visibility to sexual and gender minority citizens within the diverse cultural and programme spaces within which we each work."

I heard Dawn Adams of the Tapestry Institute speak at the 2013 inaugural American Indigenous Research Association Conference on the Salish Kootenai College on the Flathead Reservation, Montana, and I heard more from her the following year when she keynoted at the 2014 CREA conference. Dawn describes herself as being “the product of more than 40 years’ experience being a scientist who is a Choctaw Indian.” Her contemplation of the interface between indigenous knowledge and Western science draws upon Ian Barbour’s model of relationships between cultures that have different world-views (Russell, 2017) or, in Dawn’s words, “different truth claims.” Barbour’s model has informed her understanding of her Western colleagues and her advocacy for indigenous ways of knowing.

Two articles in this volume explore collaborative evaluation work. Gill Potaka-Osborne and Lynley Cvitanovic describe their experiences of undertaking a kaupapa Māori evaluation with the people of the rural Māori community of Raetihi. Their pragmatic approach to a lack of senior evaluators was about building internal and external evaluation capacity and using interactive data collection tools. Their evaluation work demonstrates their commitment to supporting the sustainability of the Raetihi marae-based communities. In their article, Rachael Trotman, Fiona Cram, Tanya Samu, Moi Becroft, Reremoana Theodore, Dr Tony Trinick (in association with Pt England Primary School, Manaiakalani, Sylvia Park School, Rise UP Trust, He Puna Marama Trust, Oceania Careers Academy and High Tech Youth), describe the collaborative development of a longitudinal evaluation study examining Māori whānau and Pasifika family success and their views and support of the educational success of their children and young people. Our article takes you through the history of the Māori and Pacific Educational Initiative (MPEI), funded by Foundation North, to the starting point of the next stage of MPEI, Ngā Tau Tuangahuru.

The next two articles in this volume focus on the building of organisational evaluation capacity. Toni White, Helen Percy, and Bruce Small write about evaluative capacity building within AgResearch, a Crown Research Institute for the pastoral farming sector. They argue that internal evaluation capacity will help ensure that AgResearch's research is increasingly utilisation-focused and impactful. From studying the organisation's capacity-building initiatives, the authors recognise the importance of organisational readiness and the incentivising of staff. Lisa Dyson examines the effectiveness of evaluation capacity building within high school settings. Starting with secondary schools identified as effective at self-evaluation, interviews with educators drew out what supports that success. Lisa then calls upon social development theory to frame the learnings from these educators' reflections. As she concludes, "sociocultural theory ... can be valuable to unpack the assumptions underlying their capacity-building activities and make them more explicit."

In our article, Fiona Cram, Min Vette, Moira Wilson, Rhema Vaithianathan, Tim Maloney and Sarah Baird delve into 'big data' using the metaphor of the *awa whiria*—braided rivers as a platform for conversations between Māori and non-Māori researchers about the Māori findings from the retrospective impact evaluation of Family Start, a home-visiting initiative for families with babies and young children. We begin with the *awa*—or knowledge systems—we called upon and then move to how the *whiria*—or braiding of these knowledge systems—enabled us to understand and explain the results of the impact evaluation. On another track, Julian King and Stephanie Allan look at the application of value-for-money (VfM) analysis within an international development context; namely, the Sub-National Governance (SNG) Programme in Pakistan. They developed rubrics within a mixed method evaluation to help ensure that evaluative reasoning was explicitly called upon in the VfM assessment of this initiative. As they

describe, “the use of explicit evaluative reasoning to assess VfM facilitated transparent and valid judgements by linking diverse streams of evidence to the programme design and outcome logic.”

The final component of this volume is Jane Furness’s review of Michael Quinn Patton’s book, ‘Principles-focused evaluation: The GUIDE’. Jane describes her invaluable ‘early’ encounters with Michael’s evaluation writing before providing an overview of this current book where he focuses on effectiveness principles. She describes this book as “superbly written” in “its acknowledgement and embracing of the role values play in life.”

My many thanks to the authors in this volume for sharing their evaluation work. Thanks also to the many unseen reviewers for their reviews of submissions to this and previous volumes of the journal. You go unseen, but I know who you all are (except for those who have reviewed articles I’ve authored) and really appreciate the time and thought you have devoted to your reviews. Finally, my thanks to the journal’s Editorial Board for their work, which includes: support for me, reviewing submissions and decision making, and encouraging those in their networks to write and submit papers.

Once more, I encourage you to read, enjoy, share, and contemplate the implications of this volume for your own evaluative thinking and evaluation practice.

Hapaitia te ara tika pūmau ai te rangatiratanga mō ngā uri whakatipu

Foster the pathway of knowledge to strength, independence, and growth for future generations

Fiona Cram, PhD, Editor-in-Chief

May 2018

References

Russell, R. J. (2017). Ian Barbour’s methodological breakthrough: Creating the “bridge” between science and theology. *Theology and Science*, 15(1), 28–41.