



Sensing Value

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Nature of Values

- **Value =
Criteria Dimension**
- **Evaluation =
Reasoning + Evidence about Values**
- **Valuing Process =
Criteria / Standard / Performance /
Value Judgement**

Value Puzzles?!?

- **Holding Incompatible Values**
- **Passionate Commitment**
- **Impervious to Reason and Evidence**
- **Uniformed? Unthinking? Obstinate?**

- **Missing Important Aspects of How People Judge Value?**

Sensing Value

- We see the value of something.
- We *feel* it is the right thing to do.
- Somehow it *seems* wrong.

Evaluation =

- Reasoning +
- Evidence +
- Perception +
- Affect +
- ????
- about Values?

Observation #1

- **Theory is one of the least researched aspects of evaluation.**

Observation #2

- **The topic of values is one of the least studied aspects of evaluation theory.**

Observation #3

- **Most current conceptual and empirical research on evaluation is designed to improve practice, some perhaps to benefit the profession, but little is designed to contribute to the underlying discipline of evaluation.**

Observation #4

- **Current writings on the theory of value emphasize their role in a cognitive process of making evaluative judgments.**

Observation #5

- **Everyday decisions about values reflect more about affect than about reason.**

Observation #6

- **Current theories of value inadequately represent our own shared experience.**

Observation #7

- **To construct a proper theory of values and valuing that guides practice, supports the profession, and provides the needed underlying knowledge base for a discipline of evaluation, conceptual and empirical research is needed that addresses such questions as the following.**

Disciplinary Research Questions for a Theory of Values

- 1. What is the nature of human values?
- 2. What are the sources of human value?
- 3. How are values acquired, shaped, changed?
- 4. How do values drive, shape, and influence individual and group human understanding and behavior?
- 5. What are the relationships among held values, subsequent actions, and ultimate consequences?

Disciplinary Colleagues Relevant to Understanding Values in Evaluation

- **Philosophers**
- **Cognitive / Social / Personality Psychologists**
- **Sociologists**
- **Theologians**
- **Historians**
- **Cultural Ethicists**

How Are Values Related to Actions?

- Why do people act inconsistent with their own self-interest?
- Failure to contribute to employer-matched retirement plans?
 - Inability to estimate funds needed
 - Insufficient disposable income
 - Immediate vs long range needs
 - Procrastination
- Behavioral economics:
- How to interpret relationships between stakeholder values and actions

How do peoples' perceptions influence their judgments of value?

- Death rates decreasing for blacks and Hispanics, increasing for whites age 45-54 due to drug overdoses, alcohol abuse, & suicide
- Reference group theory – “explains why people who have more may feel that they have less” – whites feel worse off than parents, others feel better off than parents
- Sociology:
- How to interpret value judgements in evaluation – “compared to what?”

Translational Research on Values

Thank You

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