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Politics or science - evaluation and the case of urban renewal

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In the tracks of the increasing interest of solving the problems of the urban housing estates a new wave of evaluations are growing up. The state, the municipalities (communes) and the housing companies intentions are now to be seen in investigations, projects and development agreements intended to face destructive patterns of segregation, to rearm neglected urban areas or to facilitate jobgrowth. Billions of Swedish crowns will be spend on projects trying to change downward spirals in the most problematic housing estates during the next three to fours years. Evaluations are linked to these changeprojects expecting to help implement politics. This development raises questions about the relation between politics and science, the evaluations importance for the process in the estate as well as about the methods that are to be used in the evaluation practice.

In this paper I will discuss whether this should be regarded as a progress or a problem. The paper deals with the classic conflict between politics and science as shown in a program-evaluation of a project dealing with the renewal of 13 suburbs in Stockholm. In the first part I discuss general aspects of program-evaluation. In spite of a lot of problems concerning the practice of evaluation it is becoming more and more popular in programs with ambitions to develop social change. Even if there is a great deal of uncertainty it is now being suggested that different modes of evaluation should replace activities of planning. In the second part I apply this discussion on an evaluation of the outer-city project where the city of Stockholm the last years has spent more than 500 mil. Swedish crowns on renewal in 13 suburbs. I will concentrate on what to learn from this evaluation. Is it for example possible to evaluate goals in a program with a great deal of goal drift? How do you deal with reports from the program if they are unreliable? And in what respect is the evaluation used by the stakeholders? Then I discuss the demands and big expectations that now are rising in Sweden where the state invests 3 billion Swedish crowns in a big program trying to restore problematic suburbs in 7 cities. Around 3 % of the budget should be used on evaluation. I argue that it is necessary to solve a couple of important questions: what will be the relationship between the evaluator and the stakeholders? How will these evaluations concern issues of democracy and participation, theory and other essential aspects?

The drift for program evaluation

In spite of a comprehensive scientific production of knowledge, recurrent investigations and plans from national, municipal and housing companies the modern suburb seems more or less resistant against the solutions. The exposed estates could be described as an area of problem followed by recurrent projects. In this picture exists an almost lack of evaluation and knowledge of the consequences of the programs nationally and locally (SOU 1998:25, OECD 1998). A complex picture is painted with little cooperation between actors, rigid authorities, fastly altered problems, late initiatives and composed needs. Adding defective and unsystematic documentation. There are however researches within the field of urban planning who assert that ex ante-planning is replaced by ex post-evaluation due to the rational planning models lack of accuracy and decreasing credibility. It happens along with rising models of prior evaluation, frequently actor- and dialoguebased (Forester 1997, Healey et al 1991).

One important question is whether the increasing interest of evaluation is creating new relations between sciencebased competence and political practice, a classical strained relation (Eliasson & Nygren 1980, Albæk & Winter 1993). Is politics rationalized and sciencetificated by an increasing use of evaluative know-how? Or will researchers and evaluators evolve as

interests among others when they take place in the local context of an estate? Evaluation is one possible source of information in the interactive process of determination. Exploitation of evaluativedriven knowledge links to the queue of problems that have been sorted out in connection to the use of knowledge in rational decisionmaking as well as the need of finding arguments as political ammunition (Albæk 1988, Nilsson & Sunesson 1988).

Researchbased competence creeps up to a stakeholder who successively is becoming convinced of its importance and applicability. This takes place in an interactive process where scientific knowledge is one of many other possible factors at the same time (Weiss & Bucuvalas 1980, Weiss 1993, Vedung 1997). Evaluation have become more and more stakeholderoriented facing recommendations that evaluators should make arrangements to secure the use as early as possible

Evaluations are now put forward as a way to solve problems in declined housing estates in spite of the exposed problems that the international evaluationcommunity has observed. On the other hand there are a rising number of public organizations that are facing accurate demands to show the results of their work, a matter that seems to have risen because of the cut-downs during the last decade. Such demands on good quality are risen by founders, central bureaucratic administrations convert to evaluative units and local development, research and evaluation units are being put up within and among communes, frequently along with universities and colleges (Nilsson 1993, Tydén 19xx). Right now we are facing a rising potential of evaluators as well as rising demands of those evaluations but it is uncertain how this activity will model politics.

The malaise of evaluation within our field is shown in the Swedish National Integration Office (Integrationsverket) newly published national evaluation of programs where 12 communes got funded in order to develop programs dealing with segregation and exklusion in estates with many immigrants. Defiance demands that 3 % of the budget should be spent on evaluation there are to be found examples of communes who hardly are able to account how their money have been spent (Integrationsverket 2000). Ignorance of needs of service, goaldrift, and lack of documentation seems to be regular conditions - no less resolving authorities claim that the investments should be regularly evaluated.

An additional topic concerns the modeling programevaluations. Ahead the already claimed problem concerning the use of evaluation a lot of other aspects come clear dependent on the unclear field of theory, criteria, method and relation to stakeholders (Shadish & Cook & Leviton 1991). From giving the impression of an unproblematic expertdriven method a prior to the effectiveness of programs we now face an abundance of method and theory. Every study is claiming its especial design asserts (Weiss 1993) while other advocate case studies (Stake 1993), stakeholderanalysies (Patton 1978), monitoring (Rossi et al 1999) or goal-free evaluations (Scriven 1973).

The fourth generation of evaluations are characterized of being complex and trying to balance a host of demands concerning public control, method-and theoryawarness and to maximize the participation of the stakeholders (Lincoln & Guba 1989). In Sweden professor Evert Vedung has tried to assort among this gaudy crowd of recommendations at the same time as the amount of methodoriented books have risen noticeably amid the late nineties, especially those that advocate qualitydevelopment. Investigations of evaluations within the field of urban renewal confirm the depiction of a dim deploy (Sahlin-Andersson 1995, Persson & Johansson

2000, Integrationsverket 2000, Socialstyrelsen (National Board of Health and Welfare) 1999). Evaluations seem to be unsuitable when making decisions - anyway these activities expand within the field of urban renewal.

The outer-city project of Stockholm

The Swedish million-program could be described as a never healing suppuration. One million flats were build during a tenyearperiod starting in the sixties. This once so successful welfareprogram and manifestation of planning and buildingcapacity is now a challenge for housing companies and local authorities. From time to time new programs are launched in order to develop welfare and combat processes of segregation and poverty. The so far biggest initiative taken by a Swedish town started in 1995 and is still running; The outer-city project of Stockholm (Ytterstadssatsningen). I will report from an evaluation that I was responsible for in the fall of 1999 and concentrate on my experiences as an evaluator (Denvall & Lahti Edmark 1999). However I will start by recalling the program, its goals, its process and its outcome.

The initiative

The initiative was taken by a socialdemocratic politician who wanted to create equal living-conditions in the city. She was lucky because in the year of 1995 the city sold its cable network company and suddenly had a couple of hundred million Swedish crowns to spend. The town also decided that the housing companies should put in the same amount of money as the city, in all 500 million crowns. The politician managed to get support from her own party for the idea of a big outer-city program but the political opposition was very critical. The project started as planned, up to 50 persons were employed as projectleaders and administrators, 13 of the most deprived estates in Stockholm took part. In those areas lived around 100 000 persons. The estates shared the same kinds of problems: high rate of unemployment, many immigrants, many people on social welfare, lack of public service and in many cases run down housing estates as well as commercial and public centers. It was those severe problems the program had to face in what was described as a never-ending process and the most important mission for the city. The downward spirals had to be broken. The work that should be done have many connections with classical community work. To succeed a bottom-up strategy was crucial. In each of the areas a cooperationgroup was organized. Everybody who was interested was welcome to participate. The group organized smaller workteams and collectively decided after profound discussions what was to be done. However the group did not have access to money and had to ask the administrators of the city who took the decision.

Goaldrift

During the five years that have passed the goals in the program have changed from combating unemployment, segregation and poverty to deal only with the physical conditions of the houses and the neighborhood. The goaldrift is caused by the changing political majority in the town hall. From 1998 the former opposition is in charge is not interested to support an initiative that was been taken by their political opponents. Instead the focus is on outdoor

conditions and no socially based projects are founded any longer. The housing companies are now the only economical contributors.

The drift created severe problems both among projectworkers and inhabitants and during a period nobody knew what was taking place. Should the program be aborted or not? Was there any use to engage? This created an ad-hoc like organization and a lot of questions came up though nobody knew the correct answer.

Realization

The firm ground was supposed to be the direct-democratic cooperationgroups. This was an innovation and the concretiation of the projects bottom-up perspective and the solution how to bring up a dialogue with the inhabitants. Around 2 % of the inhabitants in each district was engaged in the work. The first public meetings could gather a couple of hundred people who discussed the problems and the future of their local community. As the years passed by a group of 20 - 30 people was the average during a meeting. Investigations show that the people who took part not was representative for the whole population in the community. Those who got engaged were mostly born in Sweden, quite many had a job and they were middle-aged or older. Women, immigrants and youth had to be mobilized by the projectleaders in order to participate.

The participation was declining during the process due to two reasons. One is that the decisions were taken longer and longer away from the cooperationgroup as time went on. More and more local authorities wanted to give their opinion on the suggestions that were risen in the cooperationgroups. It not only meant that their influence declined, it also meant that many months passed from a discussion and a suggestion in the group until the political authorities had made their confirmation. Practically the importance of the bottom-up perspective had been reduced slowly but steady although the political manifestation said the contrary. From being guarded upon as experts on the local community the inhabitants were more or less a part of the traditional administration.

The other reason was the problem of money. From the beginning it was said that money was no problem and the project was looked upon as having pockets filled with gold. The consequence was many suggestions and a lot of activity in the beginning. However the more economic oriented administrators discovered overspending and over a night all projects were stopped. This caused severe lack of trust and many inhabitants concluded: "You can not rely on a politician". Only a few inhabitants now take part of the still existing cooperationgroups.

Outcome

When you spend 500 million in 13 suburbs things start to happen. During the years 2 000 people have spent many hours in 3 - 4 000 meetings trying to create better places to live. Among all the projects that took place are especially physically changes: improvements in the environment, for instance parks, painting and restoring buildings and run-down commercial centers and building of out-door swimming arenas. In the start of the project it was ok to concentrate on socially oriented topics and a lot of festivities were arranged, seminars took

place, studytrips were made, networks were supported and different social projects took place in the communities based upon initiatives from local groups.

Since the political majority wanted to prioritize the physical changes with a precise one-time budget the socially oriented ideas stopped after a couple of years. The politicians were afraid that the outer city project should cause returning costs. The social projects should be funded by the ordinary local authorities was the idea. The severe cut-downs made that very problematic for the authorities who wanted the project to pay instead...

It is difficult to tell the long term effects of the outer-city project. Partially because no thorough evaluation has been funded. However it is clear that the cities goal to prevent further segregation is severely challenged by the cities other decisions: cut-downs on care, welfare and the schoolbudgets as well as the changing of rental flats into private owned in attractive inner city areas.

The case of evaluation

Stockholm's difficulties to carry through the outer-city project are not extraordinary. Not in a Swedish context and not in an European. Unfortunately there are many signs showing that this projects could lean on many others with great ambitions but where the reality brutally has fought back.

"The state and the communes have founded large amounts of money during the last decades to counteract upon segregation. It is however not so that the results are related to the economical investments. The initiatives have not been able to affect the reasons for segregation and the problems that are caused. The changes have shown to be of very limited duration" (SOU 1998:25 pp 121)

The cited Swedish investigation above is accompanied by a report from OECD (OECD 1998, Integrating Distressed Urban Areas) which conclude that no simple solutions exists. Around 10 % of those who live in urban areas of the people in OECD-countries live in local communities with heavy problems. One of those is that the local authorities seem to be to rigid to match the fast changing development and problems are taken care of when it is too late. According to this report investments are necessary in many ways: education, renewal, economical development and integrated programs which combine internal initiatives with external support. In other words there is a demand for forceful politics based upon cooperation between local actors. This new politics should be based upon participation of the actors especially inhabitants, a clearer role for external investors, improved coordination of politics and different forms of partnership. There is a need for experiments that combine education, economical development and physical improvements with supporting the local community.

And there is a great need to learn from what is taking place.

1. The call for instant action

One of the important issues when starting a program like this one is the relation between action and knowledge. Should those who are responsible lean on to earlier experiences and to what

extent should that knowledge influence the program? Or is it better to act immediately and solve the problems that rise under way?

The city of Stockholm supported hundreds of programs trying to bring about changes in the housing estates before the outer-city project started. Lots of books, dissertations, articles and reports have been made and there is a substantial pack of knowledge. This exist both in writing and as experiences from those who have worked with those earlier programs. This new project choose instant action. There was no time to spend building on knowledge - the big thing was to get started as soon as possible. 13 offices had to be organized, projectleaders should be hired and supported etc, etc.

This lack of interest for knowledge has characterized the start in other ways. Not only did the responsible administrators neglect earlier experiences, nobody seemed either to plan for the day when somebody wanted to know the results from the outer-city project; evaluation was not a big deal during the start. No plan was presented and contacts with interested researchers and evaluators were unsystematic and ad hoc. This should be compared to the recommendations in a somewhat similar program; "The War on poverty" in USA in the sixties where 2 % of the budget was used on evaluation. In the recent programs founded by the Swedish state 3 % of the budget should be spent on evaluation. An estimation is that 0.3-0.4 % has been used in the outer-city project in order to understand what it has caused.

2 The lack of systematic documentation

The absence of planned evaluation was combined with an absence of guidelines to those who worked in the project how they should document their work. This is the reason why there now exist a lot of different kinds of written material. However, this is probably no unusualness - the other way around would have been something to pay attention to.

But it creates problems when trying to understand what has been taking place in a half a billion project. Who is supposed to read and to judge hundreds of internal PM:s and reports and try to figure out what is relevant information and what is not? Sources differ in reliability and the reader has to ask: is this the way things are or the way they are described? Usually this creates no big problems but the fact is that the credibility of internal PM:s could be questioned for many reasons:

- As an employee you need the respect and the legitimacy as well from inside your own organization as from the surroundings. A fact that creates a tendency to overestimate your own results and that problems will be underestimated or overlooked, sometimes enlarged. This gives protection in many ways.
- Projectworkers carry a certain discourse, they are colored by the language and the reality that is built up in a certain activity. It is inherited and stuck in the walls of the organization.
- If not specified demands are put forward sooner or later the norm of "anything goes" is created. Things are also getting so familiar that they become invisible and are not mentioned for those who are not involved.

To summarize: Internal documentation could be severely questioned in many ways, not only in a traditional scientific way. One specific problem is that poor documentary quality in a program that also lacks external insight creates an obvious risk for pure arbitrariness (read

politics). This is a seldom mentioned democratic problem; which group holds up the picture of a program? Who is given the right to speak?

3. Quest for goal evaluation

It is my experience that those who are not very familiar with evaluation often ask if the goals are fulfilled. I then usually ask back; "Do you mean the official or the unofficial goals, the goals in the start or the goals that are in use now?"

This was the case in Stockholm. The politicians wanted to know if the goals were accomplished: "It is very important to evaluate the goals that are set up" said the political authority in the beginning of 1999. But goals are extremely unprecise and a difficult conception when conducting an evaluation. Goals are often the result of negotiations and conflicts, a sort of protocol from a certain point in a long during process. And they do not have to be concerned with the program at all. Goals exist parallel, goals are ambiguous and goals - as we have seen - they drift. And evaluation out of a goalperspective is often regarded upon as top-down activity. To order a goalevaluation after four years when no one had thought about it before shows the lack of experience and insight that has characterized this program in many other aspects.

However there are some things that you are able to do as an evaluator. You can clarify the official goals and how they may have changed, you can if you have a lot of time conduct investigations about the stakeholders unofficial goals and you can show drifting and conflicting goals. Conducting evaluations around goals is an important democratic issue, but it is tricky. One reason is that different stakeholders often have to keep their true goals for themselves in order to achieve what they really want (Sahlin-Andersson 1989). That is why stakeholders seldom investigate what they really mean with conceptions like "participation" or "community".

4. Scrutiny or evaluation?

The mission to evaluate seemed like throwing the yeast after the dough into the oven. The program had been running for almost five years, there were very obvious political conflicts, administrators and projectleaders were afraid that their jobs were ending, it was unclear if the program should continue and almost no inhabitants conducted the cooperationgroups any longer. The outer-city project had gone from 100 mph to a stop, in fact it even went backwards in the fall of 1999.

It seemed for the reasons above not relevant to conduct a goaloriented evaluation, to present an evaluation of the outcomes was not possible since this would have demanded a thorough planning years ago and it was too late to follow the process. This was reality miles away from fancy declarations of the importance of evaluation. Our final decision was to make an expertdriven scrutiny. Not a real evaluation but inspired by the five important steps that guide program evaluators:

A Show the program's knowledge of the problem it is supposed to solve

B What are the intentions in the program and how is the program's idea of how to conduct changes in the local communities?

C How is the intervention conducted, how is the program realized?

D Which is the relation between the goals of the program and its outcome?

E What does the program cost?

Our main source of information was the programs internally produced texts (PMs, reports, decisions) together with some minor investigations made by outside researchers. Since we had severe doubts about the standard of the material we had to check the quality of the main texts that we were supposed to use. A model was produced and 12 texts were carefully analyzed and graded:

- Title, extent
- Investigator, author, relation to the outer-city project
- Goal and topic
- Methods, design
- Content
- Validity
- Reliability
- What information does the text give
- General impression, a grade was given (+ +, +, 0, -, - -)

Our impression was that the projects 12 main documentations were split between thoroughly conducted investigations with a high degree of reliability all the way to reports that seemed to have been written without any purpose and with no readers in sight. Our main criticism was the lack of internal communication. The texts seldom refereed to each other, they were not related to earlier knowledge or to the cities outspoken goal to fight against segregation. It seemed as if almost anyone tried to invent the wheel once again. To this picture adds the fact that at the same time as those documents were produced an intense process was taking place in Sweden with a lot of discussions concerning how to handle the problems in the million-program. This was seldom refereed to.

It was obvious that nobody had been in the position to know what the program was creating, its preferable outcomes or its shortcuts. This flagrant lack of knowledge and the fact that everybody only had a tiny piece of the whole picture must have created tremendous frustration, irritation and many questions.

5. And then?

In the literature of evaluation many different modes of use are being described:

Interactive, instrumental, enlightenment, legitimacy, ritual and tactical. Which one has then been taking place in this case?

Given the fact that the evaluation was deeply critical, that the chief of the project was very anxious and wanted to read the text ahead - almostly nothing has happened. A seminar took place five months after the text was delivered, it was printed within a months time, but most of all has been silence. Probably it is the case of slow enlightenment combined with a strike of embarrassment because the problems the program had caused. A new political authority has taken over a heavily slimmed project, new administrators work and the goals are specially oriented towards physically change. In spite of my recommendations the text has not yet been delivered to libraries in the 13 districts, it has not yet been publicized on the web and nothing is known about if it has been discussed in the cooperationgroups. However the interest in

communes outside of Stockholm is quite obvious. It seems to be a combination of curiosity, malicious joy and the drift to learn and to develop projects of their own. Everybody seems to be anxious not to repeat the mistakes already done by the big neighbor next door.

And in Stockholm new projects with new money are growing up. These are supposed to integrate with the outer-city projects.

The drift for new programs

The evaluation made clear that the outer-city project have had severe problems. And the problems within the city are still flourishing, in fact they have been widening during the last decade. "Welfare is at a crossroad" is the conclusion from a commission that recently has gathered and judged the development within this field in Sweden (SOU 2000:3). In many aspects indicators show a decreasing welfare although we now have an expanding economical situation. The question is if this is a enduring process or if the situation for certain groups (immigrants, youth, women with children) will go from bad to worse.

In this aspect it might be of importance that the Swedish state has passed a Bill "Development and justice - a policy for metropolitan areas in the 21st century". It is being presented as the first step in a process in which the central government, the regions, county councils and municipalities shall work together to create growth in vulnerable metropolitan areas:

"Improvements in the labour market must also be felt in the more disadvantaged city neighborhoods. A modern, future-oriented and cohesive metropolitan policy must have as its objective the fostering and development of all the positive features of a city, at the same time as class differences are minimized. Long-term improvements in living conditions in disadvantaged neighbourhoods must be worked out in cooperation with the people who live there." The minister in charge 1999.

In order to fulfill those goals the state has made local development agreements with seven metropolitan areas and it has set up a commission to develop and control the national metropolitan policy. This commission should coordinate the governments work in order to improve the living conditions in disadvantaged neighborhoods and to support and control the seven municipalities that take part in this program. Those cities share over SEK 2 billion and have to put in the same amount of money themselves.

In order to turn national goals into local, demands are put forward about annual reports and to carry out overall evaluations in the cities that take part. 3 % of the budget is recommended to be used and evaluators from different universities have recently been engaged. We can look forward to many reports and an expanding evaluation practice in this Swedish version of "War on poverty". How will the evaluators handle this highly political matter? Will their work be of any meaning to the deprived estates? I will conclude this paper by presenting four possible scenarios that will be painted in sharp colors.

		Estates	
		Status quo	Progress
Evaluation	Success	Knowledge	Support
	Failure	Conflicts	Ignorance

Estates in progress

In this scenario the political initiative is still on the agenda, the metropolitan case is at a true meaning a long-term action and not a temporary plan. There are many signs showing this interest: resources are allocated to the estates that are in focus, experiments are being organized on different forms of democratic solutions with the goal to support participation from inhabitants, there is a substantial job growth, economic development and money are brought into those areas in progress.

1. Support

In this positive spiral there is an interest to learn from what is happening. Those who are in charge do not try to invent the wheel once again, instead the politicians and the local actors have established organizational forms where they are ready to seek for knowledge and not are interested in repeating their precursors mistakes.

In this development the seek for knowledge during the process is of great importance. Evaluative work takes two directions, to support the local development and to give founders and outside actors insight in the process. This is often a conflict since it demands two different strategies of the evaluator, that of a consult and that of a researcher. In this scenario those two dimensions are fully understood and respected and run along each other. The evaluations are based upon an understanding of the need for controlgroups since that is what often is needed to give reliable answers to the questions that the different stakeholders put forward. In planning the evaluation there have been substantial dialogue with minorities in order to take care of their interests.

This indicates that a number of classical strategic problems have been sorted out: criteria, theories, methodological issues and the question of how the involved actors should participate in the work. This has been decided in a process characterized by dialogue, trying to respect the different stakeholders legitimate demands of information and influence. As a part of the evaluation the evaluators use different workshops (open space, search-conferences, etc) which combine two goals. Partly these workshops help to gather information from the participants, partly they function as a way to enlarge the discussion and the involvement from the neighborhood. Further the evaluator has access to instant and important statistical data: about

the changes in segregation, jobs and conditions for minorities. They have good support from the governments commission in order to compare the situation between the different estates.

2 Ignorance

Within this scenario the evaluation has come to a dead-end. The progress of the estate has been of no doubt but the evaluation has taken no part in this process. This could happen for many reasons:

- the political scenery may be overtaking the presence of the evaluators. There is no need for evaluation, the progress is made out of political channels that bring forward different kinds of resources. In this the evaluation is of little value
- the evaluation may suffer from its own wellknown diseases, the challenges that I put forward above may not have been solved out. There may be a report after all but nobody cares about it.

If this scenario takes place it may illustrate a lack of confidence between the evaluation and the work in practice. Actors have perhaps not agreed of how to cooperate, what has been looked upon as a progress might be regarded as something quite different in the eyes of a neutral observer.

Estates in status quo

If there is a chance that things can go wrong they will, according to Murphy's law. Let us face the risk that money does not influence the downward spiral enough to change its direction, the politicians may find other areas to finance, there may be a shift in the political majority like in Stockholm and a change in goals may occur. If the present good financial situation suddenly changes the cities who put in a lot of money may have to reset their decisions. And perhaps will the different actors on the local scene not demonstrate unity but deviance. What will for instance happen if conflicts between ethnical minorities rise? Or if the demands from certain groups are not fulfilled? Or if like in Stockholm there are money coming from one direction (the project) and at the same moments there are cut-downs on care and welfare?

3. Knowledge

If we take the scenario with the project in back-lash but a report is presented that is intrinsic and that gives the answers of why things could develop like they did, we have a very common situation. Often in the history of science reports are given that gives lots of interesting information of programs that have failed in one way or another. Think of Peter Halls book about famous planning disasters (19xx) or Wildavskys and Pressmans (1984) classical study of "Implementation" with the long undertitle: *How great expectations in Washington are dashed in Oakland; or why it's amazing that federal programs work at all, this being a saga of the economic development administration as told by to sympathetic observers who seek to build morals on a foundation of ruined hopes.*

A work that gives no contributions to real life may still be an academic success. It takes of course a lot of work to build that kind of knowledge. Unfortunately it is not to seldom that academics are the long-time survivors. This has been criticized and described as a degeneration and an internal problem for the social science (Rothstein 19xx). It is of no risk to describe the complex changes from a desk behind the computer, the challenge should be to contribute to create a better world. Then we stand ahead of a classical problem concerning the role of social science.

4. Failure

There is always the risk of a meltdown where both the program and the evaluation will fail. Conflicts, lack of resources and failure in many of the problems that an evaluator have to solve makes this an evident risk.

This should however be avoided partly because of the networks that are established among the evaluators as well as the long-term conditions that they will work under. But one sort of failure is very obvious and it was also noticed in the evaluation of the outer-city project. It has to deal with the mission to evaluate and the way evaluations are put up. There is a risk that minor groups interests will be put aside and the needs of the majority will be dominating. Thus the program may fail in certain aspects but be successful in others, and so may the evaluator.

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