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***READ ABOUT THE FUTURE OF
EVALUATION PRACTICE NOW!***

**Evaluating Social Programs and Problems:
Visions for the New Millennium
Stewart I. Donaldson & Michael Scriven
Claremont Graduate University**

Prominent evaluation theorists and evaluators from diverse, sometimes rival, backgrounds, and from a range of social problem solving settings assembled at the Claremont Colleges to debate how evaluation should be practiced in the 21st century. As a result of this rich, dynamic, vibrant, and sometimes contentious discourse, this volume contains the most up-to-date and comprehensive information on modern theories of evaluation practice.

**Stewart I. Donaldson & Michael Scriven, Claremont Graduate University –
Diverse Visions for Evaluation in the New Millennium: Should We Integrate or
Embrace Diversity?**

**Michael Scriven, Claremont Graduate University – Evaluation in the New
Millennium: The Transdisciplinary Vision**

In the new millennium, applied social science will divide into the progressive, evaluation-enriched school, and the conservative evaluation-impaired school. The evaluation-impaired branch, following in the tracks of typical applied social science departments today, will gradually wither on the vine, with its aging adherents exchanging stories about the good old days. The evaluation-enriched group, continuing to be led, we hope, by Claremont Graduate University, will educate the next generation in the “Evaluative Social Sciences.”

A key point in the war against snake oil is that it can't be won by those who just have a Ph.D. in what is now generally thought of as the Applied Social Sciences. The missing elements in the traditional curriculum are provided in Scriven's informative and thought-provoking chapter; see “The Something More List.”

**Joseph S. Wholey, University of Southern California & U.S. General Accounting
Office (GAO) – Improving Performance and Accountability: Responding to
Emerging Management Challenges**

David Fetterman, Stanford University – Empowerment Evaluation Strikes a Responsive Cord

Yvonna S. Lincoln, Texas A&M University – Fourth Generation Evaluation in the New Millennium

Donna M. Mertens, Gallaudet University – The Inclusive View of Evaluation: Visions for the New Millennium

Stewart I. Donaldson, Claremont Graduate University – Theory-driven Evaluation in the New Millennium

William D. Crano, Claremont Graduate University - Theory-driven Evaluation and Construct Validity

Edith P. Thomas, U.S. Department of Agriculture – Diverse Evaluators for Diverse Communities

Bianca L. Guzman, CHOICES – Examining the Role of Cultural Competency in Program Evaluation: Visions for New Millennium Evaluators

Melvin M. Mark, Pennsylvania State University & Editor of the American Journal of Evaluation – Toward an Integrative View of the Theory and Practice of Program and Policy Evaluation

A “vision” can refer to a thoughtful depiction of desired future states. But the term “vision” can also refer to something akin to a nightmare or a hallucination. Melvin Mark tries to sort out the thoughtful portrayals of a desired future from the more nightmarish possibilities.

While there seems to be a decline in papers about the so-called paradigm wars, there are strong echoes of the paradigm wars in this volume, if not an outright resumption. Whatever peace has been achieved remains an uneasy peace. For example, it seems ironic when evaluators who espouse inclusion, empowerment, and participation would like to exclude, disempower, and see no participation by evaluators who hold different views.

Whether or not the visionaries intended it that way, it is easy to read most of the visions as though they give a central place to one evaluation approach in the future. The resulting over advocacy raises the specter of a nightmarish vision. In this nightmare scenario, integration of different evaluation choices does not occur: evaluation clients are not given a full range of choices but are unduly restricted by the predilections of the evaluator; the field splinters off more rather than coalescing into a large and more influential professional association; and consequently, evaluators’ visions become even more influenced by their limited sight, because they no longer can learn from those who take a different approach.

Desirable visions can inspire and guide. Undesirable visions can also motivate, stimulate action to avoid the unwanted future. Impressive evaluators have shared their visions in this book. May we all be wise in how we see fit to translate them into action.

Evaluating Social Programs and Problems is a valuable resource and should be considered required reading for practicing evaluators, evaluators-in-training, scholars and teachers of evaluation and research methods, and other professionals interested in improving social problem solving efforts in the new millennium.

For more information about this volume please contact Paul Thomas, Program Coordinator, Claremont Graduate University @ paul.thomas@cgu.edu or 909 621-8084, or Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. @ www.erlbaum.com or 1-800-926-6579.