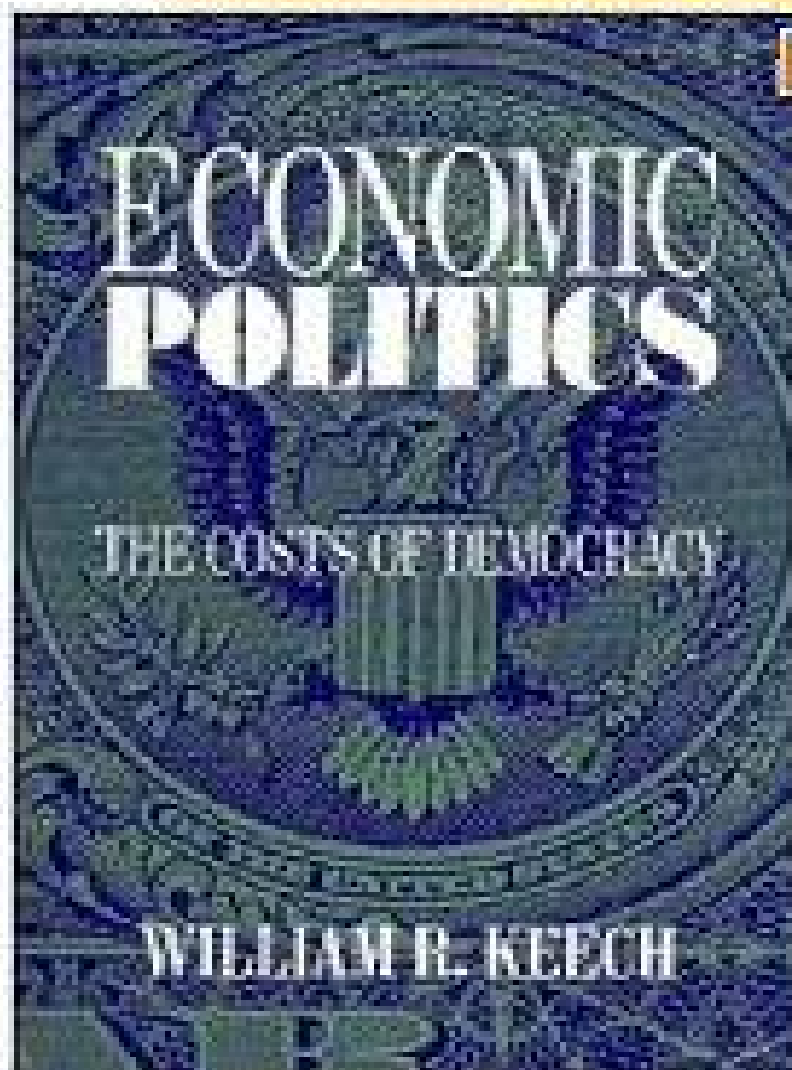


# Evaluation and democracy: costs and benefits

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# Why this topic?

- Evaluation is no longer a baby industry;
- In related fields like policy analysis and auditing, problems dealing with the balance between costs and benefits have existed ( and still exist?);
- Is the economic *Law of diminishing returns* applicable to the world of evaluations?

# Societal benefits of evaluation (practices)-1

- *The first benefit is increased transparency and accountability*
- *Second: our work stimulates (organizational) learning by governments and other public sector organizations*
- *A third benefit of evaluation is that it stimulates democratization*
- *Evaluations produce dissent and society needs dissent: benefit # 4*

## Societal benefits of evaluation (practices)-2

- *Evaluation stimulates experimentation, benefit # 5;*
- *Evaluation guarantees stable, systematic and just-in-time 'streams of knowledge' in stead of ad hoc & ad hominem knowledge about policies, programs and problems.*

# Societal costs of evaluation (practices)-1

- *Routinization of evaluations;*
- *The production of error costs,*
  - *because of sloppy reconstructions of the policy theory/intervention theory;*
  - *Because of low quality impact evaluations (questionable designs, positive bias; exposure time problems etc)*
  - *other causes*

## Societal costs of evaluation (practices)-2

- *Greater transparency but in fact more proceduralization, regulation and protocollization as cost # 3*
- *What is left of Wildawsky's evaluation as 'speaking truth to power' or Sunstein's 'production of dissent'?*
- *Evaluation briberies as a cost of our work?*

## *Three suggestions for the route to follow....*

- 1. Go 'back to the future' and do more impact evaluations and less compliance studies, process/implementation studies, rankings 'stuff' and lookalikes;*





■ DAC Evaluation Network ■ Evaluation Cooperation Group ■ International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation ■ UN Evaluation Group



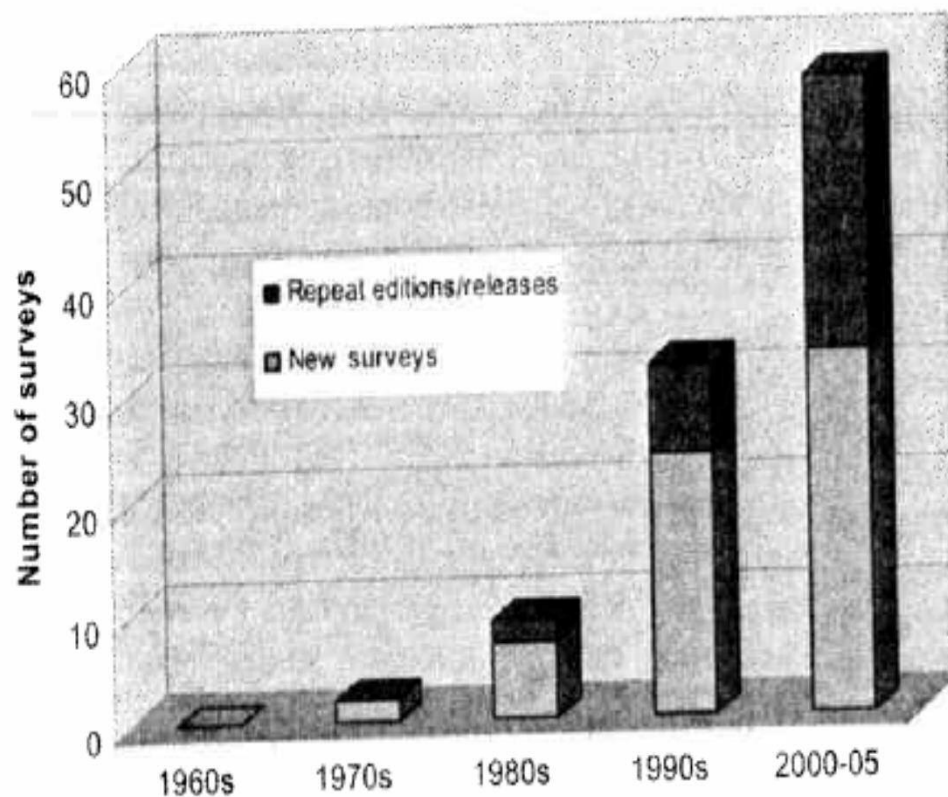
# Impact Evaluations and Development

## NONIE Guidance on Impact Evaluation

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**Figure 1.** Surveys Measuring Aspects of Governance. Sources: Besançon 2003; Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2006.

- *Suggestion # 2: Reduce paradigm wars and join forces;*
- *Suggestion # 3: Bringing theory back in: increase the explanatory power of evaluations*

Thank you

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