Never wanted to be your boss: operationalizing empowerment evaluation as workers’ control

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Never Wanted to be Your Boss: 
Operationalizing Empowerment Evaluation as Workers’ Control

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the 
requirements for the award of the degree of 

Master of Arts (Research)

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2014
This thesis examines Empowerment Evaluation, a form of stakeholder-involvement oriented program evaluation, whose use has become widespread over the last 20 years. Empowerment Evaluation is designed to encourage the empowerment of participants in the evaluation, and their development of program evaluation skills (Evaluation Capacity Building) within an evaluation approach where primary and final decision-making power is in the hands of the participants. In such a process the evaluator’s role is as a resource, facilitator, and critical friend, rather than as decision-maker.

Various applications and interpretations of Empowerment Evaluation are examined, together with the particular concept of empowerment involved, in terms of their practical application. Empowerment can be regarded as both a process and a state of being. It can refer to (i) self-efficacy, (ii) the ability or permission to use a skill, or (iii) a change in group or community power relations. This thesis argue that empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation is best operationalized as a practice and goal of direct democratic decision-making within the evaluation process, analogous to workers’ control in industry.

Six already existing case studies of self-described Empowerment Evaluations were examined and showed a consistent association between strong commitment to empowerment as change in group relations/control and maintaining direct democratic decision-making within the evaluation process. They also showed a consistent association between having a primary goal of Evaluation Capacity Building and abandoning direct democratic decision-making under the pressures of time and resources. These were the same pressures that were successfully resisted when empowerment as a change in group or community power was given equal importance.
This has implications for program evaluation theorists and practitioners. It points to those situations where Empowerment Evaluation would not be the most suitable approach. It also shows the essentiality of clarity and commitment to the direct democratic decision-making process involved in a fully successful EE. The conclusions justified the thesis that empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation can be usefully operationalized as analogous to workers’ control.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my supervisors Dr. George Matheson and Associate Professor Diana Kelly. Together with Dr. Patrick McGivern they have given strong support and made every effort to see me finish this thesis.

I also wish to thank Dr. Michael Donaldson and Dr. Mark Rix, who were supervisor and co-supervisor at an early stage. Dr. Richard Howson was probation supervisor during 2013.

I would like to thank Dr. Brian Martin and the Writing Group for continual support and encouragement. Dr. Glenn Mitchel has encouraged and read material as I tried to reach completion.

I would also like to thank fellow post-graduates Scott Burrows, Rebecca Walker, Ben Morris, Josip Matesic, Peter Gibson and Frank Huang for continual discussion and encouragement.

Scott Burrows, Josip Matesic and Anne Melano have given me help and encouragement when most needed, and regularly read material despite their own work loads.

I also wish to thank Kobi Burton of the Administrative Staff, and Rachel Fletcher of the Audio-Visual Support unit, for help and cooperation vital to completing this thesis.
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with Empowerment Evaluation. This is a specific form of program evaluation, developed by David Fetterman and Abe Wandersman (Fetterman, 1994; Fetterman, Kaftarian & Wandersman, 1996), which has been applied to the evaluation of a wide range of programs over the last 20 years.

Empowerment Evaluation is one of a number of approaches to program evaluation that depart from a “traditional” outside expert approach. Fetterman argues that the umbrella term for program evaluations in which there is some sharing of, or involvement in, decision-making by evaluator and others connected in some way with the program being evaluated, whether as staff, funders, clients or affected parties, should be “stakeholder involvement in evaluation” (Fetterman, Wandersman, Rodriguez-Campos & O’Sullivan, 2014). He argues strongly against the previously common use of the term “participatory evaluation” for the same general approach to evaluation.

For the purpose of this thesis, the nomenclature advocated in Fetterman et al (2014) will be adopted. Following Fetterman et al the umbrella term used here is “stakeholder involvement”, and within this particular definitions of Collaborative Evaluation, Participatory Evaluation, and Empowerment Evaluation are specified. However, there has been widespread past use of the term “participatory evaluation”, as an umbrella term (Patton, 1987; Whitmore and Cousins, 1993; Cousins and Brandon, 2004, Cousins and Chouinard, 2012, Cousins, Chouinard and Brandon, 2014). Because of this, to avoid confusion, capitals will be used for all references to O’Sullivan (Collaborative Evaluation), Rodriguez-Campos (Participatory Evaluation), and Fetterman and Wandersman (Empowerment Evaluation). Small letters will be used for “participatory evaluation” either as an outmoded umbrella term or in regard to the work done by Cousins and Whitmore (1998) and Cousins and Chouinard (2012). The same will apply as regards collaborative and empowerment evaluation.
when reference is to collaboration in general or evaluation relating to, or
evaluation of, a process of empowerment but not to the specific approaches
advocated by O'Sullivan (Collaborative Evaluation) or Fetterman
(Empowerment Evaluation).

There are at least two problems with the rival umbrella terms of
“stakeholder involvement” and “participatory evaluation” or “collaborative
evaluation”.

The first is that data contributed via questionnaire in the course of an
evaluation by stakeholders can count as “stakeholder involvement”, and
data contributed in exactly the same way by program participants can count
as “participatory evaluation”. This legalistic level of “involvement”, or
“participation”, is not the intention of the advocates of either of these terms.
Advocates of both seek a situation where aspects of evaluation activities and
decision-making and shared in a meaningful way. However, taken by itself,
neither term can specify the nature of the participation/ involvement
intended.

A further problem is that as a common-sense term “stakeholder
involvement” refers to a process, and “participatory evaluation” refers to an
evaluation approach. The same applies to “collaborative evaluation”. As
“participatory evaluation” refers to an evaluation carried out with the
participation of stakeholders or program participants, it also refers to a
practice and an implied process. None has clear priority over the other.
Historically the three terms have been used as virtual synonyms.

Introduced by David Fetterman in his 1993 Presidential Address to the
American Evaluation Association (Fetterman, 1994a), Empowerment
Evaluation has several main characteristics. It is concerned with increasing
the ability of program staff or users to carry out evaluations of their own
programs. It does this by giving all primary and final decision-making
power in the evaluation over to the participants. The evaluator in this
situation acts as a facilitator, a resource, or a critical friend. Empowerment
Evaluation aims to produce a worthwhile evaluation that will be used to further the program involved. It also aims to be empowering.

This last claim is the main subject of this thesis. Empowerment is a term with several distinct but often vague meanings. It can be applied at the individual, organizational or community level. It can be regarded as referring to a feeling or attitude of being empowered, to the permission or skill to do some task, or to a change in power relations in which a disempowered group becomes empowered by a structural change in organization and decision-making.

As an addition to the growing field of stakeholder involvement program evaluation, Empowerment Evaluation built on a base of accepted practices. As an attempt to give power over to the participants, to create a situation where the final decision-making in the evaluation process was theirs and theirs only, it broke with all accepted practice. To some critics it appeared to nullify the role of the evaluator, despite Fetterman’s commitment to the role of the evaluator in Empowerment Evaluation as facilitator, coach, and critical friend.

1.1 Scope of Thesis

This thesis will examine the bases of Empowerment Evaluation, where it fits within the history and development of US program evaluation, the role of ideas of democracy and participation within this history, and the effects of these factors on the reception and dominant interpretation of Empowerment Evaluation. It will also look at changes in emphasis in its development and practice. A major concern is the effect of various interpretations of the concept of empowerment in the practical application of Empowerment Evaluation.

The purpose of the thesis is to examine various interpretations of Empowerment Evaluation, together with the concept of empowerment
involved, in terms of their practical application. The position being argued is that empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation is best operationalized as a practice and goal of direct democratic decision-making, analogous to workers’ control in industry. “Workers' control” here refers to a form of workplace organization in which all “management” power is held by the workers as a group in a system of direct democratic decision-making.

The first part of Chapter II consists of a literature review covering the development of stakeholder-involvement oriented forms of program evaluation, and the debate about the nature and status of Empowerment Evaluation, within the context of US and North American program evaluation. It examines such issues as:

- Two important concepts in evaluation that had a particular effect on the development of Empowerment Evaluation. These are the development of utilization-focused evaluation, and the concurrent development of the concept of process use within evaluation.

- The development of stakeholder involvement oriented forms of evaluation

- The development of a concern with Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB), referring to the ability of programs to integrate evaluation concepts and practices into their normal functioning

- The possibility that Empowerment Evaluation, with its apparent core position of giving primary and final decision-making power in the evaluation to the participants (client, funder, program staff and managers), seemed to be the restarting of the paradigm wars. These were often bitter disputes over the use of quantitative and qualitative methodologies within the American Evaluation Association (AEA). This may be the source of some of the anger in the disputes in the initial stages that initially followed its introduction.
• The consistency of this concern over final decision-making power with the later acceptance of Empowerment Evaluation by former opponents in the form of ECB with safeguards for validity.

• Changing positions within the debate on Empowerment Evaluation

• Fetterman’s 10 Principles of Empowerment Evaluation, and the nature of Empowerment Evaluation

• The growing acceptance of Empowerment Evaluation in the form of Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB).

• The continuing questioning of what Empowerment Evaluation actually is, for example Bradley Cousins’ “Will the Real Empowerment Evaluation Please Stand Up?” (Cousins, 2005) and Fetterman’s “Empowerment Evaluation’s Principles in Practice: Assessing Levels of Commitment” (Fetterman, 2005).

The second part of Chapter II considers the methodology being used. As the question requires a close analysis of process throughout an evaluation, a multiple case study approach was used to examine the nature and effect of direct democratic decision-making within the evaluation process.

Surveys and interviews both required access to people who had taken part in Empowerment Evaluations. Such people were not available. This approach would have been most useful in conjunction with participant observation of a number of Empowerment Evaluations. In such a situation it would be possible to combine interviews, focus groups and a posttest/retrospective pretest survey, allowing triangulation of data. However, this was not viable in the compass of the present Masters. An alternative was to do an analysis of a number of published case reports of Empowerment Evaluations. This made it possible to carry out a pattern matching analysis of the evaluations chosen, using a multiple case studies methodology.
As part of the methodology I also recorded a semi-structured interview with David Fetterman at the American Evaluation Association’s 2011 Conference at Anaheim to obtain direct comments on some of the issues involved.

Chapter III is concerned with the concept of democracy within the US program evaluation community and the American Evaluation Association (AEA). This formed the intellectual and professional situation within which Empowerment Evaluation developed.

This chapter illustrates an ongoing concern with ethical and responsible evaluation in an explicitly democratic society. It covers:

- The deep influence of John Dewey
- Evaluation in a democracy as a conscious element in the thought of all the main theorists in program evaluation
- Democracy regarded as State level government, “democratic” values, and as the participation within stakeholder -oriented forms of evaluation
- The evolution of stakeholder involvement evaluation as an outgrowth of utilization focused evaluation
- The possibility that Empowerment Evaluation, with its apparent core position of giving primary and final decision-making power in the evaluation to the participants (client, funder, program staff and managers), seemed to be the restarting of the paradigm wars. This may be the source of some of the bitterness in the disputes in the initial stages that followed its introduction.
- The consistency of this concern over final decision-making power with the later acceptance of Empowerment Evaluation by former opponents in the form of ECB with safeguards for validity.
Chapter IV is concerned with the nature of Empowerment Evaluation.

Empowerment Evaluation is examined in terms of its central concern with the concept of process use, adopted by Fetterman from Patton (Patton, 1977), together with the concepts of “theory in use” and “theory of use” (Argyris, 2006 [2004]). The concept of process use is shown to be vital in Empowerment Evaluation. It involves the key issue of what series of activities (process) seen as an experience (use) is consistent with or necessary for Empowerment Evaluation.

Chapter IV then looks at how Empowerment Evaluation fits into the ongoing discussion around forms of stakeholder-involvement evaluation. Cousins and Whitmore (1998) developed a framework for looking at Participatory Evaluation which divided it into two types: Transformative Participatory Evaluation (TPE) and Practical Participatory Evaluation (PPE). These were distinguished by what was seen as their primary goal. Cousins has previously pointed out that Empowerment Evaluation does not fit easily into either camp. From the perspective of Cousin and Whitmore’s TPE/PPE matrix it has elements of both. At the time “participatory evaluation” was still often used as an umbrella term for stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation approaches.(King, 1998). Participatory Evaluation, with its balance of control between evaluator and stakeholders, is distinct from Empowerment Evaluation, based on stakeholder primary and final control.

Chapter IV then argues for a reformulation of the TPE/PPE matrix developed by Cousins and Whitmore (1998), with transformative and/ or practical goals being parameters of any stakeholder involvement evaluation. When organized in this way, the centrality of forms of decision-making in stakeholder involvement evaluation becomes apparent. Empowerment Evaluation appears as the only type of evaluation with both practical and transformative goals and a position of primary and final control being in the hands of the stakeholders.
Chapter V is an examination of the concept of empowerment. Discussions of empowerment by Kaler (Industrial Relations), Tengland (Philosophy of Health), and Zimmerman (Community Psychology) are compared to establish an acceptable meaning of empowerment as a change in group power relations. This is followed by an examination of what seems to be an important area of empowerment under another name: attention is focused on concerns with democracy and work groups in the work of John Dewey and Kurt Lewin.

The chapter then looks at debates around the theory and practice in schemes for empowerment in an industrial setting. Empowerment in industry is discussed in terms of workers’ involvement as being at most secondary to productivity and other management concerns. Most discussions see employee empowerment as a sham if it claims to be other than a productivity tool (Kaler, 1999; Cooper & Argyris, 1998).

However, there is another tradition concerned with issues of workplace organization. This is part of the anarchosyndicalist and socialist traditions, and involves the concept of “workers’ control”. The central idea is that workers organize their workplace themselves, using some form of direct democracy (Gorz, 1975; Coates & Topham, 1972). This is usually seen as applying in revolutionary situations, and is consciously opposed to any form of management from above (Guerin, 1970; Mintz, 2013).

From the point of view of this thesis, the kind of group decision-making most in keeping with empowerment, seen as a change in power relations, is most clearly characterized as equivalent to workers’ control. Two additions are relevant here. If Empowerment Evaluation is seen as either Transformative Empowerment Evaluation or Practical Empowerment Evaluation, this characterization of group decision-making would seem to apply only to Transformative Empowerment Evaluation. This will be discussed in more detail later. The second concern is that different levels of quality (for example, greater or lesser depth of participation, or adherence to the other nine principles) may make direct decision-making characteristic of
only one type of Empowerment Evaluation. This is also discussed at length in Chapter IV.

This chapter then argues for the operationalization of “empowerment” in Empowerment Evaluation as a decision-making practice within the evaluation analogous to workers’ control in an industrial setting.

Chapter VI is an examination of six case studies of published self-declared Empowerment Evaluations. While recognizing that there are 10 principles in Empowerment Evaluation, these are analyzed in terms of their:

1. commitment to the goals of empowerment and ECB;
2. commitment to the practice of direct democratic group decision-making as an essential aspect of Empowerment Evaluation;
3. commitment to empowerment in a form consistent with a change in group power relations.

From this it is argued that a primary commitment to Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) as the evaluation purpose increases the probability of Empowerment Evaluation, as a coherent approach, being abandoned under pressure. As Empowerment Evaluation is based on ten principles; it could be expected that the overall effect of attention to these would allow neglect in one without derailing the evaluation. However, while ECB can be seen as a result of the evaluation, direct democratic decision-making is a form of acting within the context of the evaluation. Both participants and evaluator are working against their socialization in carrying out this process (Fetterman, 2001, p 115; Fetterman, 2001, p 146). From this it is also argued that the strongest practical force against this danger is a theoretical commitment to the group decision making process as integral to Empowerment Evaluation. This is argued to be an expected result of the
operationalization of empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation as analogous to worker’s control in an industrial setting.

Chapter VII is the conclusion. Both practical and theoretical conclusions are drawn of relevance to those working in the evaluation field and concerned with Empowerment Evaluation, ECB, or stakeholder involved evaluation in general. Practical applications are suggested, together with suggestions for future research.

This study should help provide clarification of ongoing debates around the nature and role of Empowerment Evaluation. It concentrates on the role of the principle of democratic participation in Empowerment Evaluation, and its close connection with the process use that Empowerment Evaluation relies on. This makes possible a clearer and fairer discussion of what counts, and what does not count, as an Empowerment Evaluation. These conclusions are the result of examining a number of Empowerment Evaluations after operationalizing the concept of empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation as analogous to the concept of workers’ control.
2 CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Literature Review
This chapter will place Empowerment Evaluation and discussions around it within the context of US program evaluation, and stakeholder-involvement oriented program evaluation in particular.

One is the development of a concern with evaluation use, which refers to whether evaluation results are actually used in decision-making, especially when they do not reach the conclusions the initiators desired. A parallel development, originating in Michael Quinn Patton’s work on evaluation use, was the idea of the role of process use in evaluation audits effects. Both of these are discussed next.

2.1.1 Utilization and Process Use

The first edition of Michael Quinn Patton's Utilization-Focused Evaluation was published in 1977 (4th edition, 2008). This followed on the acceptance of a chapter on utilization-focused evaluation that Patton and associates had already had published in Carol Weiss' Using Social Research in Policy Making (Patton et al, 1977; Weiss, 1977) This work was important for Patton, especially for what he called the "personal factor".

Patton discusses how the idea developed from his experience in his first evaluations. Over the first decade of the use of the idea of utilization-focused evaluation, there seems to have been a shift among those using and quoting Patton’s work, towards the issue of the failure of organizations to make use of not only negative evaluations, but also ideas for improvement and development. His focus in the original publications is towards making evaluation useful to potential users rather than getting it used. In writing on “The Roots of Utilization-Focused Evaluation” he says “the focus in utilization-focused evaluation is on intended use by intended users…
Utilization-focused evaluation is highly personal and situational” (Patton, 2004, p. 277).

Patton argues that”

the challenge of increasing use consists of two parts: (1) finding and involving those who are, by inclination, information users, and (2) training those not so inclined. Just as in cards, you play the hand you’re dealt, in evaluation, you sometimes have to play the stakeholders you’re dealt

(Patton, 2004, p. 283)

From the mid-1970s Patton began advocating and developing a form of program evaluation that could be expected to lead to increased use of what would also be better evaluations. His model of involving key stakeholders, originally mostly management, was argued to lead to a “personal factor” that made them much more likely to defend and use the evaluation results. With the goal of fuller and more effective use, stakeholder participation was widened and deepened over time.

Patton reports an early discussion, after his book’s publication, where Carol Weiss argued with Patton on the role of the personal relation in evaluation, saying that “we limit ourselves too much if we think of interpersonal interaction as the critical component in utilization” (Patton, 2004, p. 287). Patton paraphrases her position as “the facts must stand on their own rather than depend on interpersonal relationships” (Patton, 2004, p. 286). However, for Patton the opposition is not between personal relationships and facts. The opposition for Patton is first between personal and organizational relations, and then their relation to facts. Basically, he felt his research showed that the key to evaluation use was the involvement of a particular individual, or group of individuals, in taking up the concerns and issues of the evaluation rather than submitting the best report to a general committee where no one had any particular interest or stake in seeing it acted on.
Weiss was concerned with the role of Patton's "personal factor" in enabling evaluation use. Is the basis for evaluation use to be the quality of the evaluation, filtered to decision-makers over a period, or the effects of a personal relation leading to a taking up of the evaluation results for reasons other than their scientific merits? If adopted and acted on by decision-making stakeholders, how could action based on evidence (the quality of the evaluation) be separated from action based on prejudice ("personal relation" or non-rational social effect of involvement)?

One of the issues was establishing what was politically appropriate. What influence should an evaluator have in a democratic society? In their 1979 article on emphasizing evaluation use, Alkin and Daillak state that:

"Recognizing the limitations of evaluation may also be important… The evaluator who renounces the role of omniscient overseer of a program in favour of the more humble role of advisor may, in the long run, be more effective in achieving the ultimate goals of evaluation, informing policy and promoting rational decision-making

(Alkin & Daillak, 1979, p. 47)

Weiss raises concerns, regarding both the political context and nature of evaluation, and the lack of apparent use. She is also concerned that non-evaluative aspects of evaluation practices, e.g. to encourage use, will distort not only evaluation but also the way in which it should come to be used. She sees appropriate evaluation use as being a process of slow accretion, entering informed consciousness, rather than evaluation X taken as given and applied at once through a "personal factor" effect. This is something emphasized by Patton in his first discussions of Utilization-Focused Evaluation, one of which was sought and published by Weiss. She says ‘I liked that paper a lot, and I am glad to see that in his most recent work, he has returned to recognition of the circuitous routes that evaluation can take to influencing policy’ (Weiss, 2008a, p. 164).
One important aspect of Patton’s work on Utilization-Focused Evaluation was the idea of process use. Patton recalls:

When I have followed up my own evaluations over the years, I have asked intended users about actual use. What I would typically hear was something like: ‘Yes, the findings were helpful in this way and that, and here’s what we did with them’. If there had been recommendations, I would ask what subsequent actions, if any, followed. But, beyond the focus on findings and recommendations, what they almost inevitably added was something to the effect that ‘it wasn’t really the findings that were so important in the end, it was going through the process’. Consequently, I would reply: ‘That’s nice. I’m glad you appreciated the process, but what did you really do with the findings?’ In reflecting on these interactions, I came to realize that the entire field has narrowly defined use as ‘use of findings’. Thus, we have not had ways to conceptualize or talk about what happens to people and organizations as a result of being involved in an evaluation process: what I have come to call ‘process use’.

(Patton, 1998, p. 226)

‘Process use’… refers to using evaluation logic and processes to help people in programs and organizations to learn to think evaluatively. This is distinct from using the substantive findings in an evaluation report. It is equivalent to the difference between learning how to learn and learning substantive knowledge about something. Learning how to think evaluatively is learning how to learn. I think that facilitating learning about evaluation opens up new possibilities for positioning the field of evaluation professionally. It is a kind of process impact that organizations are coming to value because the capacity to engage in this kind of thinking has more enduring value than a delimited set of findings, especially for organizations interested in becoming what is now popularly called ‘learning organizations’.
Replying to Michael Scriven on the issue of what is, and what is not, evaluation, Patton argues that there is more to evaluation as practised than what he sees as Scriven’s narrow focus on formative and summative evaluation joined with a sole goal of assessing a program’s merit and worth.

He argues that:

Evaluation serves other purpose including, but not limited to, the following:

- Generating general knowledge and principles of program effectiveness;
- Developing programs and organizations;
- Focusing management efforts;
- Creating learning organizations;
- Empowering participants;
- Directly supporting and enhancing program interventions (by fully integrating evaluation into the intervention); and
- Stimulating critical reflection on the path to more enlightened practice

(Patton, 1996, p.142)

Patton points out that:

Scriven rejects and ridicules as “pseudoevaluative” what has become a major form of professional practice, what I have called utilization-focused evaluation (Patton, 1986) and others call participatory research (e.g. Cousins & Earl, 1995), or collaborative evaluation (e.g. Cousins et al., 1995). In utilization-focused, participator, and collaborative
approaches, the evaluator, for the purpose of increasing use, facilitates the judgments of those who bear responsibility for making decisions. That is, a utilization-focused evaluator facilitates judgment and decision-making by clearly identified, primary intended users rather than acting as a distant, independent judge. Since no evaluation can be value-free, utilization-focused evaluation answers the question of whose values will frame the evaluation by working with clearly identified, primary intended users who have responsibility to apply evaluation findings and implement recommendations. In essence, I argue, evaluation is too important to be left to evaluators

(Patton, 1996, p. 138-139)

2.1.2 Stakeholder Involvement in Program Evaluation

Stakeholder involvement oriented approaches to evaluation, often referred to as “participatory” or “collaborative” as umbrella terms at the time, developed throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Their advocates regularly addressed the issue of better data and more probability of useful and used findings. However, the idea of stakeholder involvement was increasingly seen as desirable in itself and a question of right (Brisolara, 1998). Liliana Rodriguez-Campos, in her review article ‘Stakeholder Involvement in Evaluation: Three Decades of the American Journal of Evaluation, argues these decades have been ‘very fruitful for the advancement of the stakeholder approaches to evaluation, both the theoretical development and practical application (Rodriguez-Campos, 2012. P. 70). Quoting Preskill and Boyle, she says that:

Specifically, evaluators may look back on the first decade of this century and note that “these years marked an important evolutionary stage in the evaluation profession’s history. They might observe that it was during this time that participatory, collaborative, and
stakeholder forms of evaluation became commonplace” (Preskill & Boyle, 2008 p. 443)

(Rodriguez-Campos, 2012 pp. 7-71)

2.1.3 Empowerment Evaluation

Evaluation utilization, process use, and stakeholder involvement in evaluation became important concepts in the development of Empowerment Evaluation, whose appearance as a new approach to stakeholder involvement in evaluation can be dated from David Fetterman’s 1993 Presidential Address to the American Evaluation Association (AEA) Conference. He says:

Empowerment Evaluation is the use of evaluation concepts and techniques to foster self-determination. The focus is on helping people to help themselves. This evaluation approach focuses on improvement, is collaborative, and requires both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It is a multi-faceted approach with many forms, including training, facilitation, advocacy, illumination, and liberation

(Fetterman, 1994, p.1)

After detailing its origins in Community Psychology, Action Anthropology, and Disability Self-Determination, he continues, under the heading of “Training”:

In one form of empowerment evaluation, evaluators teach people to conduct their own evaluations and thus become more self-sufficient. This approach desensitizes and demystifies evaluation and ideally helps organizations internalize evaluation principles and practices, making evaluation an integral part of program planning

(Fetterman, 1994, p.3)
Under “Facilitation”:

As an empowerment evaluator, I provide general guidance and direction to the effort. I attend sessions with units to monitor and facilitate as needed. However, I always emphasize that they are in charge of this effort. This is critical because unit staff members might otherwise look to me as the expert during the session, which would make them dependent on an outside agent. Instead, they see themselves as the driving force

(Fetterman, 1994, p. 5)

Fetterman points to a further aspect of facilitation:

The empowerment evaluation coach role ensures that the evaluation remains in the hands of program personnel. The empowerment evaluator simply provides useful information, based on training and past experience, to provide direction and keep the effort on track.

(Fetterman, 1994, p. 6)

Under “Advocacy”, Fetterman stresses that ‘Evaluators have a moral responsibility to serve as advocates -- after the evaluation has been conducted and if the findings merit it’ (Fetterman, 1994, p. 6).

Fetterman’s fourth aspect is ‘Illumination”

This experience of illumination holds the same intellectual intoxication each one of us experienced the first time we came up with a researchable question. The process creates a dynamic community of learners as people engage in the art and science of evaluating themselves.

(Fetterman, 1994, p. 8)
Liberation:

The issue of empowerment speaks to the heart and soul of the anti-Apartheid movement and the reconstruction of South Africa. Empowerment evaluation demands that program participants take part in establishing their own goals and objectives, as well as in determining the strategies required to realize their dreams. It is symbolic that we are being invited to participate in this historic struggle as this emerging nation inches its way toward democracy and that we have a role to play through evaluation.

In essence, empowerment evaluation is the “give someone a fish and you feed her for one day; teach her to fish, and she will feed herself for the rest of her life” concept, as applied to evaluation. The primary difference is that in empowerment evaluation the evaluator and the individuals benefiting from the evaluation are often on an even plane. The evaluator thus serves more as a facilitator and in some cases as an advocate for the group.

(Fetterman, 1994, p. 9-10).

Fetterman describes the reaction to his Presidential Address;

I went to South Africa, they invited me to do some work over there… and they thought this [approach] made perfect sense and we actually used it…. So I came back and presented it as my presidential address… and half the people absolutely loved it. ‘Why didn't you come out with this sooner’ [There were] a fourth who hated it, like Stufflebeam absolutely hated it… [I said] ‘For those of you who think I’m giving evaluation away, that is exactly what I’m doing’

(Fetterman, personal communication, 2011)
Leading evaluator Daniel Stufflebeam was strongly opposed to Empowerment Evaluation at the Conference and replied to the published form of Fetterman’s Address in ‘Empowerment Evaluation, Objectivist Evaluation, and Evaluation Standards: Where the Future of Evaluation Should Not Go and Where It Needs to Go’ (1994):

Stufflebeam based his opposition on the Joint Committee’s proposed Standards for Educational Evaluation.

He argues that:

To some degree the problem with empowerment evaluation involves accuracy in labelling. I would have had much less problem with the presentation, had it been labelled and presented as ‘evaluator adjunct roles and associated social responsibilities… The evaluation’s social service and evaluator training roles of the evaluator must not be equated with or confused with the evaluator’s obligation to assess merit and worth

(Stufflebeam, 1994, p. 324)

He continues that:

Fetterman ‘must, at the very least, strongly advocate that empowerment evaluations be subjected to an independent evaluation against acknowledged professional standards of the evaluation field’ invokes Metaevaluation Standard

(Stufflebeam, 1994, p. 325)

Stufflebeam provides a critique of what he calls Relativistic Evaluation. He argues that Fetterman has not addressed ‘[What] to do about the value conflicts that are inherent in a pluralistic society…’ He continues that ‘By uncritically accepting conflicting interpretations of a set of evaluation findings, the relativistic evaluator promotes conflict and confusion about
what constitutes good service and how to improve it’ (Stufflebeam, 1994, p. 325)

He argues that evaluative criteria are necessarily absent from any relativistic approach, including Empowerment Evaluation:

[Leaving] the issue to negotiation among the stakeholders hardly bodes well for empowering the weakest members… The evaluator can and should play a powerful professional role in assuring that evaluation conclusions are grounded in appropriate and validated criteria of merit and worth’

(Stufflebeam, 1994, p. 326)

In his conclusion Stufflebeam defines Empowerment Evaluation as:

[Giving] away the control of the evaluation’s quality and integrity and turning evaluation into pseudo evaluation exercises, in the quest to foster self-determination’

(Stufflebeam, 1994, p. 333)

Fetterman’s reply to Stufflebeam’s criticism of Empowerment Evaluation (EE) pointed out that:

The approach is still evolving… Nevertheless empowerment evaluation has solid foundations in collaborative and participatory evaluation. Moreover, it is modelled on action anthropology and community psychology, and grounded in the instructive tradition of action research (Fetterman, 1995, p. 179)

Fetterman sees Stufflebeam’s concerns as arising from a two-part misconception of the EE evaluator’s role: The first is that the evaluation is the work of a single evaluator:
Empowerment evaluation is a group activity, not an individual pursuit. It is not the evaluator who is the focus of the activity, but the group. An evaluator does not and cannot empower anyone. People empower themselves, often with assistance and coaching. Program participants conduct their own evaluation – they are the facilitators. An evaluator typically serves as a coach. The selection of inside facilitators increases the probability that the process will continue and be internalized in the system and creates the opportunity for capacity building. With an outside evaluator, the evaluation can be an exercise in dependency rather than an empowering experience. The evaluation process too often ends when the evaluator leaves, leaving participants without the knowledge or experience to continue on themselves.

(Fetterman, 1995, p. 181)

Fetterman sees the second part of Stufflebeam’s misconception as coming from an idea that ‘empowerment evaluation has only one goal’, and so necessarily fails in the goal of establishing a program’s merit and worth:

In empowerment evaluation the context has changed: the investigation of worth or merit and plans for program improvement becomes the means by which self-determination is fostered, illumination generated, and liberation actualized. Value determination and plans for program improvement are conducted by the group with the assistance of a trained evaluator and are at the heart of every step of empowerment evaluation. In addition, actualizing or approximating these further goals stimulates the ongoing and cyclical process of reflection and self-reflection. Roles (as defined by Stufflebeam and Scriven), such as training, also become an integral part of the evaluation process. Empowerment evaluation, by design, institutionalizes systematic evaluation.

(Fetterman, 1995, P. 181)
While pointing out that different types of evaluation are suitable in different situations, Fetterman adds:

Training, facilitation, advocacy, illumination, and liberation are all facets – if not developmental stages – of empowerment evaluation. They add to and enrich rather than dilute or detract from an evaluator’s dedication to determining worth or merit and recommending program improvements

(Fetterman, 1995, p. 182)

Fetterman continues answering Stufflebeam’s charges in order. On Stufflebeam’s concerns that an Empowerment Evaluation could become a public relations exercise, without adequate controls on data used and interpretations made, Fetterman argues that Empowerment Evaluation, being a group process, is open to continual checking by members of how adequate the evidence they have gathered is, and what they would have to do to improve it. An Empowerment Evaluation:

[Also] provides an opportunity and forum to challenge authority and managerial facades by providing data about actual program operations – from the ground up. The approach is particularly valuable for disenfranchised people and programs to ensure that their voice is heard and that real problems are addressed

(Fetterman, 1995, p.183)

Fetterman argues that Stufflebeam’s attack on relativism in evaluation approaches, expressed as the ‘charge that heightened uncertainty that may emanate from relativistic evaluation can actually assist biased, autocratic decisions by Machiavellian decision makers… seriously underestimates program participants’ capabilities, and ignores the context and conduct of empowerment evaluations’ (Fetterman, 1995, p. 184-5) He continues ‘Program participants – including those with little formal educational training – are capable of appreciating the limitations and boundaries of
decision making’. He finishes by pointing out that ‘empowerments evaluation is a fundamentally democratic process. It is purposely constructed to invite (if not demand) participation, examine issues of concern to the entire community in an open forum’ (Fetterman, 1995, p. 185).

On the issue of external evaluations, Fetterman points out that ‘Empowerment evaluation and external evaluation are not mutually exclusive approaches’. The participants in an Empowerment Evaluation could agree on the desirability of an external evaluator for some particular purpose. In one actual case ‘Participants agreed on the value of an external perspective to add insights into program operation, serve as an additional quality control, sharpen inquiry, and improve program practice’ (Fetterman, 1995, p. 185).

In the last section of his reply Fetterman takes up Stufflebeam’s invocation of the Joint Committee’s Standards, pointing out that at this time they have not been adopted and are aimed at Educational Evaluation. Stufflebeam includes the Standards as an appendix to his article (1994). Fetterman provides a rewrite or interpretation of the Standards in terms of Empowerment Evaluation, showing how, from this perspective, it meets their requirements. Before doing so, he criticizes their being used in such a way that:

[In] this case an entire evaluation approach was condemned without significant input from participants concerning the construction or orchestration of the effort. In addition, no data are cited or specific examples given instead, significant and faulty assumptions are made, permeating the entire discussion, and the approach is publicly condemned – in the name of the standards

(Fetterman, 1995, p. 185).

In concluding, Fetterman notes that ‘There are multiple ways of knowing and evaluating that transcend our fractious discussions about methods and
methodologies’ He emphasizes ‘I believe that evaluation is basic – like reading, writing, and arithmetic. I also believe that anyone can learn the basic skills of evaluation, as demonstrated with empowerment evaluation’ (Fetterman, 1995, p.190).

Fetterman’s development of Empowerments Evaluation in part grew out of concern about self-evaluation that were being done, under difficult circumstances, and without a real plan of action. He says:

[There was] a gap in the literature, in people's self-evaluation… I knew people were doing it and it was sloppy… It didn't have any coherence. I would see like these great mini-evaluations but they wouldn't be tied to any mission [with respect to] the values of the group. So it was interesting [There’d be mission statements] beautifully written… But no idea where they came from…

Fetterman’s three-step Mission – Taking Stock - Planning for the Future was a form of:

[Taking] the planning for the future and contextualising it within the evaluation, and then the evaluation contextualised within the mission, so you have an intellectual coherence… So the next thing that happened was I got enough people that thought this is a whole different way of looking at what we're doing, and a whole different way of conceptualizing ourselves as evaluators… also my background's in anthropology so it didn't seem strange to me… There’s precedence with Sol Tax, and the Fox Indians, where they were in charge and he did work for them in action anthropology; it wasn't like it was totally crazy

(Fetterman, personal communication, 2011)
2.1.4 Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-assessing and Accountability

Fetterman and Wandersman's first book, (Fetterman, Kaftarian & Wandersman, 1996) followed Fetterman's November 1993 Presidential Address to the AEA (Fetterman, 1994a) and a year of positive and critical reaction and reply in the evaluation journals. Based in several previous evaluation and social science theories, Empowerment Evaluation drew specifically on Zimmerman’s social and community psychology work on empowerment (Zimmerman, 1995; Zimmerman 1996/2000; Zimmerman 2001; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Zimmerman, Israel, Schulz & Checkoway, 1992).

Fetterman and Wandersman both put forward summaries of Empowerment Evaluation as a process in their Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-Assessment and Accountability (Fetterman, Kaftarian, and Wandersman, 1996),

In this book Wandersman and Linny (Linney & Wandersman, 1996) described an Empowerment Evaluation approach based on four steps. They saw the goal of this as ‘empowering community groups with evaluation skills’ (261). Their four steps were:

Step I: Identification of Goals and Desired Outcomes
Step II: Process Assessment
Step III: Outcome Assessment
Step IV: Impact Assessment


For both Fetterman (Fetterman, 1996) and Linny and Wandersman (1996), all decisions in the evaluation process would be made by the evaluation team, consisting of all participants and the (voteless) evaluator. Within this the evaluator would play a facilitator or resource role. Fetterman often
describes this role as “critical friend”. Linny and Wandersman found that their use of workbooks (based on these steps) provided community groups with ‘enough structure and direction to get evaluation activity started’ (Linny & Wandersman, 1996, p. 263). This put community groups in a position where they were able to take on decision-making in the evaluation.

This section will look at the initial responses to Empowerment evaluation: Knowledge and tools for self-assessment and accountability, both positive and negative, and Fetterman and Wandersman’s replies to them. Positive responses focused on increasing stakeholder involvement and participation in all parts of the evaluation process, and the Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) effect that could be expected from it. For example, Brown argues that ‘Empowerment evaluation is political because it explicitly shifts power from the privileged position of the evaluator to the program participants’ (Brown, 1997, p.388). Altman, noting that the book will resonate with a Community Psychology audience, asks what makes the book unique. He points out that ‘mainstream evaluation is not as likely as community psychology to ascribe to these values. Indeed, the methodological purist might argue that empowerment evaluation compromises scientific objectivity. Thus, this is an important book for the evaluation community to read’ (Altman, 1997, p. 16). Wild ‘This book's central theme is that evaluation can help "build capacity and self-determination" within the client system… Essentially as noted by Stevenson et al. in Chapter 10, empowerment evaluation is designed to "give evaluation away." Perhaps this is where traditional evaluators might have the most difficulty with the approach’ (Wild, 1997, p. 171).

Reviews by Patton and Scriven’s were responded to by Fetterman, with further response from Patton. Scriven’s criticisms, similar to Stufflebeam’s (1994), are treated later in this chapter. This section will look at the exchange between Fetterman and Patton.
Patton emphasizes that:

Fostering self-determination is the defining focus of empowerment evaluation and the heart of its explicit political and social change agenda locates empowerment evaluation in the larger context of emancipatory research that grew out of Freire's liberation pedagogy (1970), feminist inquiry (e.g., Harding, 1987; Maguire, 1987), critical theory (ref. Forester, 1985) and communicative action

(Patton, 1997, p. 148)

For Patton, Empowerment Evaluation constitutes a definite addition to existing theorizing on the dimensions of stakeholder involvement in evaluation:

Cousins, Donohue and Bloom (1995) have identified three dimensions along which evaluations can vary: (1) degree of researcher versus practitioner control of the process; (2) depth of participation; and (3) breadth of stakeholder participation (a continuum from a limited number of primary users to all legitimate groups). Following these efforts at classification and distinction, Fetterman's overview would suggest that, in addition to these dimensions of participation and collaboration, empowerment evaluation adds attention to and varies along the following continua: (1) the degree to which participants' power of self-determination is enhanced, that is, the extent to which "liberation" occurs; (2) the extent to which evaluators are advocates for disempowered groups or enable groups to advocate for themselves, and (3) the degree to which training participants in evaluation skills is an explicit, primary, and attained outcome of the evaluation process. The first, the liberation dimension - would seem, by definition, to be the defining characteristic of empowerment evaluation. The second and third dimensions are enabling processes in support of liberation

(Patton, 1997, p. 149)
He points out that ‘Fetterman's other two dimensions - facilitation and illumination - are not at all unique to empowerment evaluation. All participatory, collaborative, and utilization-focused approaches emphasize a facilitative role for evaluators and include illuminative outcomes for participants’ (Patton, 1997, p. 149).

Patton expresses the view that, in some of the evaluation cases noted, it is not clear what makes it an empowering rather than just a good utilization-focused/participatory (in the language of the time) evaluation. He argues:

Part of the confusion comes from failing to distinguish the potential empowering outcomes of any participatory, collaborative, stakeholder-involving, and/or utilization-focused evaluation from the unique political advocacy and liberation agendas of empowerment evaluation. Many kinds of participatory evaluation processes will feel empowering to those involved because their understanding and sense of mastery has been increased, they feel ownership of the evaluation, and their capacity to further engage in evaluation processes has been enhanced. However, empowerment evaluation as a distinct approach worthy of its own designation, i.e., a distinction with a difference, adds the agendas of liberation, advocacy, self-determination, and self-assessment as primary… Empowerment evaluation, then, cannot be distinguished by empowering outcomes alone, but rather by being a participatory and capacity-building process targeted at groups lacking the power of self-determination whose actual power of self-determination is subsequently increased through the tools and processes of evaluation, including the evaluator's explicit advocacy of and working in support of the goal of self-determination (Patton, 1997, p. 151-152)

In Fetterman’s response to Patton, under the heading of Patton: Process Use Focus, he agreed that:
Patton (1997) and Vanderplaat ((1995) accurately place empowerment evaluation in the larger contest of emancipatory research. In addition, Patton (19970 helps to identify empowerment evaluation’s unique contribution to the field by focusing on its exploit commitment to fostering self-determination (p. 148) and building capacity (p. 155).

(Fetterman, 1997, p. 254)

Fetterman continues:

In the process of documenting another purpose of empowerment evaluation, Patton captures a significant part of the theory behind the approach: ‘A fourth purpose … is teaching evaluation logic and skills as a way of building capacity for ongoing self-assessment. In modelling terms, such skills are seen as enhancing the capacity for self-determination. (p. 155)

(Fetterman, 1997, 254)

Fetterman makes gives particular emphasis to the nature of the evaluator’s power role within an Empowerment Evaluation:

Following the same guidelines used by action ethnographers, empowerment evaluators remove themselves form playing a power role. The insiders or participants design and implement the evaluation, with the evaluator’s guidance end assistance. The decision to implement a specific innovation or to advocate for additional resources remains in the hands of staff member and participants. They control the means of making their own changes. However, this approaches (removing oneself as much as possible from a power role) can only take place in a community that has the potential to determine its own fate… However, this approach requires that the group have the capacity to develop a binding decision-making process

(Fetterman, 1997, p. 257)
Patton’s reply to Fetterman’s response focused primarily on the issue of advocacy. However, he states:

In Fetterman’s response, his effort to distinguish between empowerment evaluation in pure or full-blown form versus use of “empowerment evaluation concepts and techniques” only muddies the waters for me. The empowerment evaluation concepts and techniques referenced are participation, collaboration, and coaching, none of which are unique to empowerment evaluation

(Patton, 1997a, p. 269)

This is in line with Patton’s review, where he argued that many features of Empowerment Evolution were common to several forms of stakeholder-oriented or utilization focussed evaluation approaches, and what distinguished Empowerment Evaluation was its goal of liberation and concentration on ECB within a system of stakeholder decision-making.

A different direction in criticism is seen in Scriven (Scriven, 1997), Sechrest (Sechrest, 1997), and Stufflebeam (Stufflebeam, 1994). The main thrust of their criticism could be summarized as “It might be good program/organizational/team development, but it's not evaluation”. Evaluation is here defined by Scriven and Stufflebeam as being concerned with establishing (by whatever means) the relative worth, merit and utility (on whatever criteria) of a program.

They have several specific criticisms. One is that Empowerment Evaluation, by consciously and deliberately giving final decision-making power in the evaluation over to the participants, removes the basic goal of objectivity in judgment by building potential conflict of interest into the evaluation process. If nothing else, this is likely to invalidate even a good Empowerment Evaluation in the eyes of other stakeholders and the public, and lead to a lessening of the public’s view of the profession.

A second issue is that the purpose of an evaluation, commissioned and agreed to by the client and evaluator, is to evaluate the program, not to aid
in the self-transformation of the staff. However, it has been argued that evaluation can serve several purposes, including development, accountability and knowledge (Patton, 1996; Chelimsky, 2006).

A third concern, voiced especially by Stufflebeam (Stufflebeam, 1994) and Sechrest (Sechrest, 1997), was that Empowerment Evaluation would lead, if successful, to people doing their own evaluations. This would cut down on the employment of evaluators, and encourage the view that special skills and abilities were not necessary (Stufflebeam, 1994). Again, Empowerment evaluation, together with other approaches that Stufflebeam regarded as relativistic approaches, was primarily criticized as most likely to lead to a downgrade in the informed public view of the profession, but also as something that should eventually affect employment for evaluators. This was a period in which the American Evaluation Association was trying to raise the status of the profession (Stufflebeam, 1994). Fetterman’s reply to Stufflebeam has been detailed above (Fetterman, 1995). It shares many aspects with Patton’s response to Scriven (Patton, 1996).

In concluding his response to Patton and Scriven, Fetterman comments ‘I did not anticipate either the warm reception or the strong opposition the introduction of this approach sparked’ (Fetterman, 1997, p. 265).

2.1.5 Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation

While Empowerment Evaluation continued to be carried out in practice, the next group of articles by Fetterman (1997a; 1997b; [1994b] 2000), his next book, (Fetterman, 2001) and Wandersman’s Getting to Outcomes (1999), together with the Kellogg Foundation's Empowerment Evaluation manual (1996), further developed the theory. Debate continued as critical and positive reviews were again strongly put forward, and answered or engaged with by Fetterman.
One line of criticism of Empowerment Evaluation, already noted as starting from Fetterman’s 1993 Presidential Address (1994), has been that Empowerment Evaluation may be good program development, but it is not evaluation (Stufflebeam, 1994; Sechrest, 1997).

Fetterman continues debate with Scriven in his later Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 2001) Fetterman considers reservations about Empowerment Evaluation in different contexts. He gives a sympathetic account of Scriven's objections, showing where there is overlap of intention and practice. His summary of Stufflebeam is more critical, with an emphasis on criticising the versions of “expertness” and “value neutrality” in Stufflebeam's objections. The tone of his argument against Stufflebeam is more against an opponent than a colleague raising issues that can be answered. With Scriven he finds more areas of common concerns with different answers.

In answering Scriven here, Fetterman is arguing a defence of Empowerment Evaluation as a valuable practice with a proven record of acceptance and success. Scriven is arguing for a strict, technically correct definition of evaluation. Fetterman is detailing how Empowerment Evaluation supports all the American Evaluation Association (AEA) guidelines in a way which answers the kind of criticism Stufflebeam has made. Scriven is making a different kind of criticism. He is arguing not just what evaluation is but also what it is not.

This sounds reminiscent of Stufflebeam’s initial attack on Empowerment Evaluation, “Empowerment evaluation, objectivist evaluation, and evaluation standards: Where the future of evaluation should not go and where it needs to go” (1994), but this is not the case. Scriven’s objections apply in some form to a large proportion of program evaluation done within the AEA community. Melvin Mark’s ‘Evaluation’s future: Furor, futile or fertile?’ argues that ‘One of the largest rends in evaluation theory and practice is an increased focus on stakeholder participation’ (Marks, 2001, p. 462, quoted in Daigneult et al, 2012, 244). At this stage, across the spectrum
from Patton (1988; 2001; 2012), Greene (1997), and Mertens (2009), to Henry (2000, 2001) and Stufflebeam (2000: 2001), there is acceptance that contemporary program evaluation may entail several different goals and practices emerging from aspects that first became apparent in examining “traditional” evaluation.

In this situation Scriven is arguing about a different object to Fetterman. Scriven is arguing about his strict definition of evaluation, one that excludes much that has become commonly regarded as program evaluation in the AEA, for example in Patton (1988; 2001; 2012), Greene (1997), Mertens (20), Henry (2000; 2001) and Stufflebeam (2001). What this means is that Fetterman cannot “answer” Scriven’s criticisms as they are arguing past each other. Scriven is insisting here on the absolute view of evaluation as necessarily being, and as far as it is evaluation, only being, the establishment of a judgment of the relative merit or worth of a program. What Fetterman does here, and also in Fetterman and Wandersman’s Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice (2005), is show that Empowerment Evaluation fits within the requirements of the AEA Guidelines, and in some areas surpasses them.

However, there has been a shift in some critics from seeing Empowerment Evaluation as, at best, a socially useful practice that is not evaluation, to seeing it accepted as a legitimate form of evaluation, characterized by Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB).

This is particularly clear in the changing responses of Daniel Stufflebeam (Stufflebeam, 1994; Stufflebeam, 1995; Stufflebeam, 2000; Stufflebeam, 2001). An initial critic and opponent of Empowerment Evaluation (Stufflebeam, 1994), Stufflebeam, in the introduction to the ‘Social Agenda-Directed (Advocacy) Oriented Models’ section of Evaluation Models (2000), accepts that Empowerment Evaluation, along with several other advocacy-oriented approaches, can be accepted as a legitimate form of evaluation. He argues that:
[These] evaluations... reflect the philosophy of postmodernism, with its attendant stress on cultural pluralism, moral relativity, and multiple realities. Typically, these evaluation models favor a constructivist orientation and the use of qualitative methods. These evaluation approaches emphasize the importance of democratically engaging stakeholders in obtaining and interpreting findings. They also stress serving the interests of underprivileged groups. Worries about studies following these models are that they might concentrate so heavily on serving a social mission that they fail to meet the standards of a sound evaluation. The particular social agenda/advocacy-directed models presented in this book seem to have sufficient safeguards needed to walk the fine line between sound evaluation services and politically corrupted evaluations. Worries about bias control in these approaches increase the importance of subjecting advocacy evaluations to metaevaluations grounded in standards for sound evaluation.

(Stufflebeam et al, 2000, p. 241)

2.1.6 Empowerment Evaluation: The Ten Principles:

The next stage came with the publication of Fetterman and Wandersman’s second book, Empowerment Evaluation: Principles in Practice (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005).

Fetterman has argued that while Empowerment Evaluation “had been guided by principles since its inception, many of them were implicit rather than explicit” (Fetterman, 2015, p5). These principles were spelled out in Fetterman and Wandersman Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice (2005). In Fetterman’s chapter the principles are:

1. Improvement
2. Community ownership
3. Inclusion
4. Democratic participation
5. Social justice  
6. Community knowledge  
7. Evidence-based strategies  
8. Capacity building  
9. Organizational learning  
10. Accountability  

(Fetterman, 2005, p 5-6)

These Ten Principles are discussed in detail in Chapter IV.

Fetterman’s Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation (2001) shows the effects of the sometimes acrimonious disputes of the years since the 1993 Presidential Address and the first book (Fetterman, Kaftarian & Wandersman, 1996). There is a concentration on possible and already voiced objections, and a section entitled caveats aimed at establishing more clearly what Empowerment Evaluation can, and cannot, claim to do. Within this, the argument for empowerment as participatory democratic decision-making is an important feature of the book’s first section, but is less prominent in the final section on Empowerment Evaluation’s use and future. While both developmental and Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) aspects are stressed, there is still a commitment to the process of participatory democratic decision-making as the process within which these other aspects are realized.

Fetterman has pointed out (personal communication, Fetterman, 2011), that in doing the activities and achieving the results that surround program accountability and self-regulation, people will be involved in the activities that constitute empowerment in the community sense as described by Zimmerman. However, it is important to note that, on this model, this “empowerment” would be achieved at the organizational level, where empowerment as ability or permission to carry out a task occur, but needs to be distinguished from empowerment as a change in group power relations.
Fetterman's conclusion in his Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation (2001) identifies the credibility/validity issues, and misinterpretations surrounding them, as the main ones acting against acceptance of Empowerment Evaluation. He sees Empowerment Evaluation as one possible form, more suited to some contexts than others. It is an approach which is in line with several trends and concerns in program evaluation, but which has a definite position distinguishing it from other forms. This distinction lies in the role of participants as decision-makers, both in their hoped-for role in using the evaluation and in their conduct of the evaluation itself.

Fetterman has consistently raised issues of credibility in Empowerment Evaluation. The Kellogg Foundation is the subject of one chapter in Fetterman and Wandersman's Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-assessing and Accountability (1996). It raises the issue of credibility in, and the concomitant issue of ownership of, program evaluations carried out in this manner. The strong participation line that runs through the Kellogg Foundation study is seen by them as in accord with their founder's philosophy of "helping people to help themselves". The Kellogg Foundation Manual is standard in the field, built on a version of evaluation that came from their work with David Fetterman before empowerment evaluation was named as such. However, there has been little criticism of the Kellogg Foundation in the field. While it requires Empowerment Evaluations to be done by all its grantees, there has been no study of grantee reactions to this. Neither has there been a study of the important issue of evaluator reactions and compliance where the evaluators are not themselves committed to Empowerment Evaluation.

Principles. He argues for looking at Empowerment Evaluations in terms of their levels of commitment and adherence to the different principles and their interrelationship in practice.

Patton review draws attention to the fact that:

Fetterman’s own basic definition of empowerment evaluation has not changed and has been consistent across his writings. It is “the use of evaluation concepts, techniques, and findings to foster improvement and self-determination” (Fetterman, 1994, p. 1; Fetterman, 2005, p. 10; Fetterman, Kaftarian, & Wandersman, 1996, p. 5). Of course, using evaluation processes for improvement was nothing new in 1993. It was the emphasis on fostering self-determination that was the defining—and controversial—niche of empowerment evaluation and the heart of its explicit political and social change agenda

(Patton, 2005 p. 408)

He continues:

The collaboration of empowerment evaluators in this book has revised and refined the definition of empowerment evaluation an approach that aims to increase the probability of achieving program success by (1) providing program stakeholders with tools for assessing the planning, implementation, and self-evaluation of their program, and (2) mainstreaming evaluation as part of the planning and management of the program/organization. (p. 28)

(Patton, 2005, p. 409)

He lists the Ten Principles, and draws attention to the lack of a specific Principle of self-determination:

This new collection of writings aims to differentiate empowerment evaluation by positing 10 principles and illustrating their application in actual cases. The principles are an elaboration and clarification of
a list originally proposed by Wandersman et al. (2004) in an edited volume on participatory community research. The 10 principles are the following:

1. Improvement
2. Community ownership
3. Inclusion
4. Democratic participation
5. Social justice
6. Community knowledge
7. Evidence-based strategies
8. Capacity building
9. Organizational learning
10. Accountability

The first thing I found striking about this list is the absence of self-determination as a principle. Indeed, although the definition of empowerment evaluation as centering on self-determination remains unchanged, the connection of these principles to self-determination remains largely implicit in this new volume

(Patton, 2005, p.409)

Patton states clearly that ‘The great contribution of this book is in clarifying empowerment evaluation principles and the corresponding intended outcomes of empowerment evaluation processes (Patton, 2005, P. 410). He includes Cousin’s view that the idea of there being two types of Empowerment Evaluation, Transformative Empowerment Evaluation and Practical Empowerment evaluation, endorsed by Fetterman, was not the intention of the ‘critical friend” chapter he contributed at Fetterman and Wandersman’s invitation (Cousins, quoted in Patton, 2005, p. 413).

In a response to both Patton and Scriven’s reviews, Fetterman replied that:

The reviewers assessed the book against their own purposes for it rather than against my and my colleagues ‘purpose for the book,
which was to present the 10 principles of EE and to examine these principles in practice. Evaluating the book against purposes other than those that guided the book’s development predictably resulted in misinterpretations

(Fetterman, 2005a, p. 419)

His main criticism is of Scriven’s review:

Scriven suggests that empowerment evaluators are not interested in the synergy of combining EE and external evaluation… Indeed, in Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation, I state that empowerment evaluation and external evaluation are not mutually exclusive . . . a second set of (external) eyes often helps the group avoid blind spots and provides another vantage point outside the internal vision of the program... Empowerment evaluation and external evaluation thus can be mutually reinforcing efforts (Fetterman, 2001, pp. 122-123)

(Fetterman, 2005a, p.420)

Wandersman and Snell-Jones, after primarily discussing Scriven’s review, note in their reply that:

We agree with Patton (2005) and Scriven (2005) that there are situations when self-evaluation is not the most appropriate approach for a given situation. EE is not for everyone, nor is it appropriate for every evaluation need

(Wandersman & Snell-Jones, 2005, p. 423)

Although EE considers individuals’ views of their own behavior as one source of information, EE develops a self-evaluation system that includes methods for gathering data from a variety of stakeholders. This system is designed to include diverse stakeholders in a democratic process to identify goals and indicators of success. A critical role of an empowerment evaluator is to help ensure that the self-evaluation system gathers accurate information. This is guided by the EE principles of improvement, evidence-based strategies, and accountability. Additionally, it is important to note that most forms of evaluation depend on some form of self-evaluation
They argue that Empowerment Evaluation, when first put forward, faced a situation where many:

were concerned that it was not evaluation, whereas others embraced it. Some people were concerned it was not about results, whereas some tried to marginalize it as evaluation suited only for marginalized groups. A few people labeled EE as a movement. Some evaluators were afraid that they would be put out of work. The case examples included in the book should help illustrate that a focus on self-evaluation and building practitioners’ evaluation capacity has implications for the role of the evaluator, not usually for the need for an evaluator. Scriven (2005) suggests that EE is amateur evaluation because nonprofessionals have ownership

(Pandersman & Snell-Jones, 2005, p. 424-425)

Patton, replying to Wandersman and Snell-Jones as well as Fetterman, after pointing out the heated nature of some of the exchange, states:

Wandersman and Snell-Johns sound a more circumspect note in acknowledging that the evidence base for EE’s effects is still in an early stage and that more is needed, which is all I was saying… What Fetterman boldly labels misstatements in my review are actually differences of interpretation, quite a different matter. What Wandersman and Snell-Johns label misconceptions are actually areas of disagreement, also quite a different matter

(Patton, 2005a, p. 428)

In an article aimed at replying to, and continuing, a discussion of Empowerment Evaluation in the American Journal of Evaluation that grew out of an AEA 2006 conference panel ‘Empowerment Evaluation and Traditional Evaluation: 10 Years Later’, Fetterman and Wandersman state:
The most significant improvements in conceptual clarity are the empowerment evaluation principles. Empowerment evaluation has been guided by principles since its inception. However, many of them were implicit rather than explicit. This led to some inconsistency in empowerment evaluation practice. This problem motivated us to make these principles explicit in our 2005 book… In essence, we agree with Patton (2005) that “its (empowerment evaluation’s) longevity and status established and documented the question of precisely what it is becomes all the more important” (p. 408). Therefore, we (in Fetterman & Wandersman, 2005) have worked to (a) reiterate and refine the definition of empowerment evaluation (p. 28); (b) make the empowerment evaluation principles explicit (pp. 1-72); (c) provide case examples (pp. 92-122, 123-154, 155-182); (d) define high, medium, and low levels of commitment to empowerment evaluation (pp. 55-72); and (e) suggest possible logical sequencing of the principles (pp. 210-211)

(Fetterman & Wandersman, 2007, p. 187)

In a section entitled “Methodological Specificity” they argue:

The 1996 book provided an introductory level of methodological specificity. It highlighted the role of taking stock, setting goals, developing strategies, and documenting progress. Today, we have two primary methodological models with a significant degree of specificity associated with each one of them. There is a 3-step approach and a 10-step approach. There are also a variety of permutations to accommodate varying populations and settings. In response to Cousins’ (2005, p. 201) criticisms that there is variability in empowerment evaluation methods, we agree. However, we think that variability is appropriate and desirable. Having only one method and following Cousins’ dimensions (p. 189) in a uniform manner is not realistic or desirable. Evaluation approaches need to be adapted (with quality)—not adopted by communities. The principles guiding an evaluation are more important than the specific methods used

(Fetterman & Wandersman, 2007, p. 187)
2.1.7 Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-Assessment, Evaluation Capacity Building, and Accountability

This was followed by the publication of the second edition of Fetterman, Kaftarian, and Wandersman Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-Assessment, Evaluation Capacity Building, and Accountability (2014). This contains all new chapters, and the addition of “Evaluation Capacity Building” to the subtitle.

Patton’s review argues that:

This new book finally helped me understand what Fetterman means when he says “I’m no purist.” So, flexibility and situational adaptation mean that there are “high, medium and low levels of each of these principles.” What the new book clarifies is that there are also zero levels of adherence to, implementation of, or attention to the principles. Zero. In essence, there are no critical, essential, or core EE principles. It is a pick-and-choose menu

(Patton, 2015, p. 16)

Fetterman, Wandersman, and Kaftarian reply:

Patton states empowerment evaluation can be applied with “zero” levels of adherence to the principles. He refers to this as a “pick-and-choose menu”. This is an inaccurate understanding of the approach. Patton confuses principles designed to guide practice with fidelity to a model. We do not agree with his assumptions, which isolate principles from each other and the larger values shaping the approach… empowerment evaluation’s principles are interconnected, interrelated, and reinforcing. It is that interconnected nature of empowerment evaluation that gives it strength and sustainability

(Fetterman, Wandersman, and Kaftarian, 2015, p.10)
Patton argues that for Fetterman et al, Empowerment Evaluation can be viewed as ‘a “spectrum”’ (p. 8), that is, a continuum from transformative and comprehensive EE to modest and practical applications of EE concepts and techniques’ (Patton, 2015, p. 16). He argues that, as regards the Ten Principles,

Which ones and how many you engage to merit calling the effort an empowerment evaluation is unspecified on purpose. Part of the empowerment evaluation process is to decide which EE principles to engage and at what level to engage with whatever principles are selected for engagement

(Patton, 2015, p. 16)

Fetterman et al reply that:

In addition, there is a “spectrum” or continuum of empowerment valuation. The practice of empowerment evaluation, within this spectrum, is influenced by the type of empowerment evaluation desired. For example, there are two major streams of empowerment evaluation: practical and transformative. They both rely on the same principles. However, practical empowerment evaluation may emphasize: improvement and evidence-based strategies. Transformative empowerment evaluations may highlight: democratic participation, social justice, and community knowledge... evaluators may apply empowerment evaluation concepts and techniques without having to facilitate a full-blown empowerment evaluation. They simply should label it accordingly

(Fetterman et al, 2015, p. 11-12)

Patton is still concerned with what is necessary to define an evaluation correctly as an Empowerments Evaluation, what is specific to Empowerment Evaluation:

Look at Fetterman’s 3-step EE model: (1) establish mission, (2) take stock of current status, and (3) plan for the future (p. 30). This is a
version of the classic: What? So what? Now what? Nothing unique about the steps or framework. What makes it EE is who is involved in addressing these questions (self-evaluation) and how the process is facilitated (EE evaluator’s role)

(Patton, 2015, p. 17)

Fetterman et al reply:

Empowerment evaluation principles are like the principles of a democracy, such as free speech and freedom of religion. Democracies vary throughout the world. Failure to equally and consistently apply all the principles of a democracy at maximum levels, does not mean they are not a democracy. In addition, selecting only the “essential” principles of a democracy in a social and cultural vacuum, privileges some principles and unintentionally minimizes the value of others. They are all needed to fully and faithfully implement a democracy

(Fetterman et al. 2015, p. 11)

Fetterman repeatedly characterizes Empowerment Evaluation as concerned with building and enabling people’s self-reliance and control of their situation. He argues that Marc Zimmerman’s conception of empowerment is concerned with the individual, the organizational, and the society level. This view of empowerment is a major source for empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 1996; Zimmerman, 1995). He points out however that Empowerment Evaluation is focused on programs, in many ways equivalent to Zimmerman’s organizational level. A further distinction in application of the term empowerment is whether it is taken to be a case of “feeling good”, of ability or permission to perform a task, or a change in power relations. An examination of the term empowerment, as used in Empowerment Evaluation, in program evaluation, in social science, and in everyday speech (or at least everyday appeals to empowerment in advertising or media) is necessary to explain how a shift in the meaning of this concept, with major
effects on the nature of the program evaluation involved, can occur in its application without recognition or conscious intention. Owing to its different focus, literature relating specifically to empowerment as a concept, in the work of Zimmerman and others, and its use in mainstream industrial relations and radical workplace change, is included in Chapter V.

2.1.8 What Distinguishes Empowerment Evaluation?

Too open an approach to the concept of empowerment employed in Empowerment Evaluation can amount to different evaluation approaches being applied under the same name. If a particular interpretation has not been operationalized with a clearly delineated and consciously used meaning, the evaluation approach assumed to be based on it has not been applied. If it is not followed through, the approach has not been used. This means both a likely failure in the goal, and a case study that can not be used to evaluate the theory, as the theory itself has not been used.

“Empowerment” is a term that must be operationalized to be applied within an Empowerment Evaluation. Fetterman’s work with disenfranchised communities in South African townships, obviously moving and vital to him, raises clear aspects of empowerment as a change in a group's relations to the power blocs around them, and their collective attempt to change this (Fetterman, 1994a; 1994b; 1995; 1996; 2001; Fetterman & Wandersman, 2009).

Chapter IV argues that “empowerment” in Empowerment Evaluation must be operationalized in a particular way if the goal and logic of Empowerment Evaluation are to be adhered to. Literature particularly tied to this issue is reviewed in that chapter. This conception of empowerment is argued for in Chapter V, as both logically and practically acceptable. Literature particularly tied to this issue is reviewed in that chapter. The conception of empowerment, which fits with the conclusions of Chapter IV, is empowerment seen as a change in group power relations, both within the
evaluation process and in its results, analogous to workers’ control in an industrial setting.

The literature review shows continuing discussion about the nature of Empowerment Evaluation, including:

- the relative importance of the Ten Principles and their interrelation
- levels of commitment to, and achievement of, the ten Principles
- arguments about democratic decision-making and ECB as characteristics of Empowerment Evaluation
- the nature and role of empowerment within Empowerment Evaluation: can it be equated with the Ten Principles with a higher than low level of commitment, or is direct democratic decision-making core to its meaning in Empowerment Evaluation?

Patton points out, in the earlier quote, that ‘What makes it EE is who is involved in addressing these questions (self-evaluation) and how the process is facilitated (EE evaluator’s role)’ (Patton, 2015, p. 17). The question of what is distinctive about Empowerment Evaluation, of what makes it a specific approach, is still being argued in the literature. Fetterman points to the interrelation of the Ten Principles, and high, low, and medium levels of commitment to them, as distinguishing it, whether in the form of Transformative Empowerment Evaluation or Practical Empowerment Evaluation. He also emphasized that in an Empowerment Evaluation the stakeholders/participants are in charge.

Fetterman has compared the range and level of commitment to the Ten Principles in Empowerment Evaluation as similar to the range of democratic values, and level of their achievement, in any democratic society. However, a minimum requirement of a democracy is some form of electoral system. A “democracy” in which people could not vote would not be a democracy. In the same way, an Empowerments Evaluation in which the stakeholder participants do not practice direct democratic decision-making is not an Empowerment Evaluation.
As the literature review shows, the question of what is a necessary aspect of Empowerment Evaluation is still alive. This thesis will examine the role of the conception of empowerment used in determining Empowerment Evaluation practices. It will examine factors and contexts that increase the chance that direct democratic decisions-making will be abandoned under pressure of time and traditional role expectations. I will argue that the way to avoid this is to emphasize the nature and extent of the Principle of Democratic Participation, understood as the practice of direct democratic decision-making, as its necessary form within any Empowerment Evaluation.

This thesis argues that direct democratic decision-making is a necessary structural aspect of any Empowerment Evaluation. It argues that maintaining this practice is dependent on the conception of empowerment used Empowerment Evaluation. It argues that empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation should, in terms of the decision-making by the participants in the program evaluated, be operationalized as analogous to workers’ control in an industrial setting.
2.2 Methodology

My study is concerned with evaluating Empowerment Evaluation as an approach to evaluation both as it is represented theoretically and as it is carried out in practice. My methodology includes elements of meta-evaluation and multiple case study research.

Stufflebeam (2001) argues that meta-evaluation can refer to the evaluation of a particular program evaluation or to the evaluation of an evaluation approach. My study fits within Stufflebeam’s view of meta-evaluation as it is an evaluation of an evaluation approach, Empowerment Evaluation, in as far as it is affected in practice by the operationalization of the concept of empowerment within it. Different meanings of empowerment are consistent with different practices. Operationalizing empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation as requiring stakeholder primary and final direct democratic decision-making within the evaluation, analogous to workers’ control in a workplace setting, helps clarify what is essential to an Empowerment Evaluation. It also helps clarify what practice is necessary for an evaluation to be an Empowerment Evaluation.

The study has two main aspects. The first is the operationalization of a key concept in Empowerment Evaluation, the concept of empowerment. This is the subject of Chapter IV and Chapter V. Theories and arguments in the field are examined to determine which conceptualization of empowerment best fits the nature and purpose of Empowerment Evaluation. There are three primary conceptualizations of empowerment, which can be characterized as empowerment as a feeling (E1), empowerment as the ability to carry out a task (E2), and empowerment as a change in group power relations (E3). Evidence and justification will be made for ‘empowerment” in Empowerment Evaluation as E3, and equivalent, at a program level, to workers’ control in a workplace setting.
This concept is then used to interrogate the principle of democratic participation in Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 2005) to establish which forms of decision-making in practice are adequate to what Empowerment Evaluation demands in theory. The result of this is used to define what change in power relations, both during and after the evaluation, would count as “success” in a successful Empowerment Evaluation. This constitutes the operationalization of the concept of empowerment in this study of Empowerment Evaluation.

The second part of the study is the analysis of a number of case studies of Empowerment Evaluation in regard to the principle of democratic participation (Chapter VI) using the operationalized concept of empowerment already established (Chapter V).

2.2.1 Case Study

This study uses a case study method. A particular program evaluation can treated as a bounded entity, and so can be seen as a case for the purposes of this thesis. Robert Stake, a leading theorist in the field of case study research and evaluation, has argued that ‘even when our main focus is on a phenomenon that is a function such as "training", we choose cases that are entities.’ He cautions that ‘Functions and general activities lack the specificity, the organic character, to be maximally useful for a case study’ (Stake, 2005, p. 2). For my purposes, while “decision-making” may seem to come under Stake’s reservations about functions as a subject for a case study, I think looking at decision-making within the confines of a specific program evaluation, bounded by a definite beginning and end, allows for the case as an entity.

Yin gives a brief definition: ‘A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context,’ (Yin, 2009, p. 18). A case study allows the close examination of process as action and decision that is necessary to make the kind of
argument I want to about the particular effects of particular forms of organization defined in terms of decision-making. A case study approach allows for the analysis of detail that ensures that the relevant experiences are being grouped together: with a concept like empowerment, where several different conceptions are common, together with several possible different operationalizations of each, it is necessary to examine the case closely to see what has in fact happened, and so what can count as a case of the application of the approach intended, and what cannot.

Yin argues that ‘The case study is the method of choice when the phenomenon under study is not readily distinguishable from its context’ (Yin 2003a, p. 4). He argues that the case study is a suitable method when the object of study is embedded in a complex process, one that makes it difficult to separate it from its environment. Such considerations apply here, where I intend looking at a process of formal and informal decision-making within the activities of an ongoing evaluation.

My approach to testing the resulting operationalized understanding of Empowerment Evaluation is an explanatory instrumental case study. Yin divides case studies into exploratory, descriptive and explanatory case studies. An explanatory case study seeks to argue for or against a causal relationship. An instrumental case study, Stake argues, is concerned with the information a case may provide on a further area of interest rather than the intrinsic interest of the individual case itself (Stake 1995, p 3).

Stake argues:

'Ve may choose a teacher to study, looking broadly at how she teaches but paying particular attention to how she marks student work and whether or not it affects her teaching. This use of case study is to understand something else. Case study here is instrumental to accomplishing something other than understanding this particular teacher, and we may call our enquiry instrumental case study' (Stake 1995, p. 3).
Stake points out that:

‘Even fine case methods books such as Yin (1994)… concentrate on instrumental case study, particularly the use of case study for development of theory’ (Stake 1995, p. 77).

When it comes to making sense of the resulting material, both Stake and Yin see pattern matching as a major way of analysing case studies, and particularly instrumental case studies. According to Yin:

‘For case study analysis, one of the most desirable techniques is using a pattern-matching logic. Such a… logic… compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one (or with several alternative predictions). If the patterns coincide, the results can help a case study to strengthen its internal validity… If the case study is an explanatory one, the pattern may be related to the dependent or the independent variables of study (or both)’ (Yin 2003b, p. 116).

In my study the cases are selected with a view to testing the argument that Empowerment Evaluation, carried out with the operationalized concept of empowerment established, will lead to particular organizational results, and that failure to do that will lead to a different result. While seemingly obvious there is a real issue here: Empowerment Evaluation has been regularly criticized as an evaluation approach by opponents on the grounds that different and seemingly contradictory processes are carried out with a goal that seems to shift between some form of “empowerment” and Evaluation Capacity Building. Depending on the operationalization of empowerment being used, it can be expected that quite different practices may be carried out during these evaluations, under the name of Empowerment Evaluation.

Different results are not surprising if different processes have been carried out. The issue is what, within Empowerment Evaluation as defined by Fetterman and Wandersman, constitutes a “different approach”. Within the range of adjustments necessary in any application of a program evaluation
approach to a particular program in its particular context, can there be adjustments that would mean that what is being carried out is no longer an “Empowerment Evaluation”? My argument is that the role of direct decision-making in Empowerment Evaluation is a defining element whose demands must be met for an evaluation to be an Empowerment Evaluation. My further argument is that this form of decision-making goes against expectations in professional evaluators and program stakeholders, and can be expected to be replaced by what seems normal practice unless it is consciously argued for and enacted.

Yin argues that, for an explanatory case study, ‘Explanatory cases can suggest important clues to cause-and-effect relationships, but not with the certainty of true experiments’ (Yin 2003a, p. xvii).

2.2.2 Pattern Matching

However, conclusions can be strengthened by doing multiple cases studies. Yin argues further that ‘...multiple case studies should be selected so that they replicate each other - either predicting similar results (literal replication) or contrasting results for predictable reasons (theoretical replication)’ (Yin 2003a, p. 5). In this study this is done by looking at the cases that used an approach equivalent to the operationalized concept of empowerment (“E3”), providing what Yin calls literal replication. Adding a group of evaluations that do not use the operationalized concept (literal duplication of “not-E3”) constitutes a theoretical replication of the examination of the research question, being a process of “contrasting results for predictable reasons”.
In literal replication the element X, based on the explanatory theory being used, is present in both cases with the result Y. In theoretical replication the element (X) is present in one group of cases, and not in the other. Pattern-matching of the two groups, which showed the result (Y) in line with the theorized explanation working in one group of cases (those involving X) and not in the other (those involving –X), would be a stronger suggestion of effect than just being present in the cases where theory predicted it. The normal threats to validity would apply, such as history, duration, intensity, but this is what it would be hoped might become clearer through the process of pattern-matching.

To be tested, the explanation must entail a causal path that can be tested empirically. The selection of cases has to include those cases of “Empowerment Evaluation” that seem to have given priority to direct decision-making (X) and a group of cases that have not (-X). The relation of the form of decision-making used in the evaluation to the result of “Y” or “not Y” would be the test of the explanatory value of the theory proposed.
Yin argues further that with pattern matching:

The role of the general analytic strategy would be to determine the best ways of contrasting any differences as sharply as possible and to develop theoretically significant explanations for the different outcomes (Yin 2003b, p. 119).

Chapter V is used to establish the break between direct democratic decision-making and any other form of participation as sharply as possible. This is then used in Chapter VI to develop theoretically significant explanations for what is observed in the case studies. In my study pattern matching will be used to interrogate three main questions:

i) The effect of operationalizing empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation as workers’ control in terms of the necessary components of Empowerment Evaluation

ii) The extent to which a consistent pattern of results occurs when a) empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation is operationalized as workers’ control, and b) the decision-making process during the course of the evaluation

iii) A further aspect of my analysis will be to determine whether there is a relation between the evaluator having a primary interest in Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) and accepting a low level of direct democratic decision-making. This is important for overcoming the tendency in several self-titled “Empowerment Evaluations” to show the kind of confusion of purpose and practice that is the subject of Cousins’ “Would the Real Empowerment Evaluation Please Stand Up?” chapter in Fetterman and Wandersman’s Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice (2005).
2.2.3 Obtaining the Case Studies

One approach to examining this would be to carry out a number of Empowerment Evaluations, using a participant observer approach. An Empowerment Evaluation is characterized by an evaluation team having primary and final decision-making power, and an evaluator functioning as a resource, a facilitator, and a critical friend. This could be done with the researcher as evaluator. It could be done with the researcher as part of the evaluation team or even as a non-participant observer. Observation could be carried out of the process of the evaluation and of effects of this on those taking part, in terms of changes in work practices or a desire or interest in such changes where those involved lacked the power to carry them out. A mixed-methods approach including interviews, post-test/retrospective pretest surveys, focus groups of team members, and direct observation of ongoing practice, would allow for triangulation of data.

Within the constraints of this Masters it was not possible to carry out original research to provide the case studies examined. As a substitute I used a number of case studies selected from Cousins and Chouinard’s Participatory Evaluation Up Close (Cousins & Chouinard, 2012). I based my selection of case studies on the summaries provided by Cousins and Chouinard. (see below). However, having made the selection, I used the published version of the evaluation involved.

There are two dangers in using published case studies in this way. One is pointed out by Stake:

For a multicase study, the case records are often presented intact, accompanying a cross-case analysis with some emphasis on the binding concept or idea. As the design is “formalized”… more and more, the case reports may become mere synopses or statistical summaries… There is a danger here that such formalization is likely to waste the
special effort that has gone into a contextual, particularistic, and experiential study

(Stake, 2006.p. 8).

This is a limitation in my study, where the nature of the case reports used has meant that the level of close detail on decision-making in the particular evaluation is often not available. The substitutes used are detailed in the discussion of these case reports in Chapter VI.

The other is a danger that only cases that appear to fit the theory may be selected. Overcoming this danger involves selecting comparable cases where the issue of interest appears to be involved. Yin argues that ‘theory can even enter the picture during the case selection process… a potential causal path is embedded in the explanation’ (Yin 2003a, p xvii).

Taking Empowerment Evaluations as the field of interest, I selected a number of cases that appeared to reflect the “direct decision-making leads to E3” theory, and a number that did not. The grouping of cases used can be divided between those self-titled Empowerment Evaluations that saw their primary purpose as Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB), and those that regarded ECB as part of the evaluation purpose, but not the primary concern at the expense of other aspects. While Fetterman and Wandersman (1996) regarded enabling people to develop the skills to evaluate their own programs as a part of Empowerment Evaluation, this was neither the sole rationale for carrying out an Empowerment Evaluation, nor the sole or primary expected result. However, a large number of subsequent self-titled Empowerment Evaluations have taken just this position: ECB and Empowerment Evaluation in these cases are seen as the same thing.

These cases can also be divided between those that involved direct group decision-making on a regular basis and those that did not. For my purposes this is the division between “real” Empowerment Evaluations and those that are using the term with a different practice and a different primary goal.
Looking at the cases that used an approach equivalent to the operationalized concept of empowerment (“E3”) provides what Yin calls literal duplication. Adding a group of evaluations that do not use the operationalized concept (literal duplication of “not-E3”) constitutes a theoretical duplication of the examination of the research question.

Cousins and Chouinard (2012) contains an annotated listing of 121 stakeholder involvement oriented evaluations. Cousins and Chouinard give the criteria used in selecting these evaluations (below). In addition, Cousins has carried on a 20 year examination of various forms of stakeholder involvement based evaluation (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998; Cousins, 2005; Cousins & Chouinard, 2012). Cousins has a “critical friend” chapter in Fetterman and Wandersman’s Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice (2005) in which he discusses Fetterman’s “Digital Village evaluation” chapter in the same book. He includes extra material from discussions with Fetterman. Fetterman’s evaluations from this book are included in Cousins and Chouinard’s selection of stakeholder involvement evaluations which they group under the term “participatory program evaluation” (Cousins & Chouinard, 2012). These program evaluations were chosen according to four criteria:

First, selected articles had to have empirical observations as a main focus… Second, studies had to be in some way related to participatory evaluation, with for example, direct participation by both evaluators and stakeholders on the focal evaluation(s)… Third, the sample was by research published in the 15-year period 1997 to 2011. Fourth, as a measure of quality assurance, we selected studies that were either published in peer reviewed outlets or, if unpublished, subject to review by a panel of experts… Through our review of the literature, we located 121 empirical studies on participatory evaluation spanning the 15-year period, 1997 and 2011 (Cousins & Chouinard, 2013, p 42).

Cousins and Chouinard point out that they included the evaluations from Fetterman and Wandersman (2005) “only because we knew that published
chapters were reviewed by more than one editor” (Cousins & Chouinard, 2012, p 120). The evaluations by Fetterman included in this sample are the ones that are the subject of his book-length study Empowerment Evaluation in the Digital Village (Fetterman, 2013) which I have used in addition to the case reports included in Cousins and Chouinard’s selection.

Six case studies of published self-declared Empowerment Evaluations were chosen, including three detailed evaluations taken from Fetterman’s Empowerment Evaluation in the Digital Village (2013), and three taken from a selected listing in Cousins and Chouinard’s Participatory Evaluation Up Close (2012). These six are from a total of 15 evaluations labelled as Empowerment Evaluations in Cousins and Chouinard’s sample of 121 stakeholder involvement evaluations. The justification for my selection is detailed in Chapter VI.

A further source for comparison is a semi-structured interview with David Fetterman which I conducted and recorded for this research during the American Evaluation Association Conference in 2011 in Anaheim. Stake points out that ‘Data from a multicase study usually will come mostly from the cases studied, but the researchers may gather other data than case data’ (Stake, 2006, p 8). This interview allowed for discussion of some of the internal aspects of Empowerment Evaluation. This was originally planned as part of a series of interviews with other researchers together with participants in a particular Empowerment Evaluation. However, it was not possible to arrange this to fit with the timing of the AEA Anaheim conference.
CHAPTER III: DEMOCRACY IN US PROGRAM EVALUATION

This Chapter examines concerns with the relation between democracy and program evaluation within the development of US program evaluation. The first section details concerns that see democracy at the State level, as an overall system of representative government. The second section looks at democracy as a value, including aspects like tolerance, inclusiveness, and pluralism. The third is the development of stakeholder involvement in evaluation, expressed as a right or an obligation in a democratic or democratic oriented system of evaluation. The purpose of the extended quotations is to serve as raw data on the role of the concept of democracy in US evaluation.

3.1 Program Evaluation in a Democratic State: Who is it for?

Concern with who program evaluation should be accountable to, and whose interests in should be concerned with, appear from the earliest periods of US program Evaluation. Ralph Tyler, widely regarded as one of the founding figures of US program and educational evaluation (Stufflebeam, 2004), argued that

[A] professional occupation is one where there is a continuous effort in the research of the profession to identify both the proper ends and the effective means of that profession. Research on the proper ends is concerned with the ethics of the professional’s work to the common good rather than the notion that what’s good for General Motors is good for the country


A similar concern with the role of evaluation in a democratic society can be seen in David Campbell, a figure of ‘central importance in the field of evaluation’ (Shadish & Luellen, 2004, p. 80). Carol Weiss discusses his idea
of an “experimenting society” where scientists/evaluators, using the best methods available, would assess what worked or did not work in social and educational programs (Weiss, 2000). This would enable decision makers to base their actions for continual improvement on scientific evidence rather than political factors. Weiss saw this as an essentially rationalist approach to decision-making that ignored the irrational (and contested power related) nature of actual decision-making in large organizations, and especially in the U.S. Congress and its various institutions. It also seemed to give priority to scientists over elected officials (Weiss, 2000).

She argues, however, that:

Campbell is not advocating technocracy. He is committed to democratic institutions and the necessity of a democratic legislature. An experimenting society, he writes, needs channels for moving evaluation results into the policy-making process. Campbell (1988) styles this requirement ‘reconcil[ing]’ (307) our need for facts with democratic decision making

(Weiss, 2000, p. 286).

This maintains a commitment to evaluators providing the best information for democratic decision-making. Michael Scriven has raised the issue of whether an evaluator can accept the priorities of elected governments uncritically. However, he does not argue this from a position of value-neutral science, which he sees as one of several “evaluation ideologies”. He describes goal-achievement evaluation, in which the evaluator’s object is to see if management has achieved their objectives, as a “managerial ideology” in evaluation. He argues that, though regarded as the most professional approach, it could have disastrous social consequences:

Goal-achievement evaluation was thus a smokescreen under which it was possible for adherents of value-free dogma to come out of the woodwork and start working on some rather well-financed evaluation contracts... they were just investigating the success of a means to a given
end. They were also, thereby, committed to connivance-without-cavil in some pretty unattractive programs, including the efforts of the CIA in Central and South America… it was this positivist error that led to the managerial error. For only if one believed oneself incapable of disciplined and scientific investigation of the value claims could one so readily adopt, without careful scrutiny, the shoddy value premises of the counterinsurgency program.

(Scriven, 2000, p. 254).

Against this he argued for goal-free evaluation. This meant that an evaluator would approach a program with only the most general idea of its focus and purpose, and proceed to establish any effects, intended or not, that the program could be shown to have had. He argued that this was preferable to looking only at the conscious goals of the program:

The road to hell is paved with good intentions, and the road to environmental desolation is paved with successful programs of pest eradication. The distinction between intended effects and side effects is of no possible concern to the consumer, who is benefited or damaged by them alike, and consumer-oriented evaluation is, on the whole, considerably more important than manager-oriented evaluation

(Scriven, 2000, p. 253).

His orientation here is to the consumer, which in this context is equivalent to the interests of the citizen.

Along with Campbell, Lee Cronbach was another leading evaluation theorist who combined concerns with scientific method and democratic issues (Greene, 2004). Jennifer Greene argues that the concerns and values underlying Cronbach's work are those of commitment to social betterment, a concentration on the needs of the powerless, and the role of evaluation in a democratic society (Greene, 2004, p. 176-178). She sees Cronbach's social betterment and state democracy as in line with evaluation as a committed, advocacy oriented practice. “Cronbach sought an engaged, influential role
for evaluation. And so he framed evaluation as a fundamentally educative endeavour. For meaningful education is at root inspirational and revolutionary. And that is influence” (Greene, 2004, p. 178). It is also very close to Dewey’s view of education, democracy, and the practice that moves between them. This placing of Cronbach's work is in line with the Deweyan conception of education as collective and creative, formed in working on a specific problem at a specific time, and leading to a shared view based on a group decision.

All these theorists and practitioners saw program evaluation in terms of providing the best information for the use of a democratic government or informing the citizenry within a democratic state. A different aspect of this was argument around what appropriate evaluation use was in a democratic state or society.

Carol Weiss, a leading evaluation theorist, was one of the first evaluators to raise the issue of evaluation use. Her early articles, “Utilization of evaluation: Toward comparative study” (1972) and “Evaluation research in the political context” (1975), together with “Improving the linkage between social research and public policy” (1978), were part of a detailed discussion of the political nature of public policy decision-making and the many conflicting aspects of US Congressional and public service decision-making involved. From initial frustration with what seemed to be the lack of use that followed from her government evaluation work, she developed the idea that evaluation functioned as an accretion to existing knowledge on a subject by those concerned with further action. In a 2006 interview she describes her 1960s experience in working with government staff and elected officials on their use of evaluation reports. She later said:

While we were doing this, almost despite ourselves, we learnt that what they meant by use of a study was that they would think about it. They would take it into account. They weren’t going to run out and change what they were doing. It would have an impression. It would have consequences for the way that they conceptualize the issue. That seemed
to me important. And it was very different from “they won’t use it”, which was the standard wisdom of the day ---- that people “don’t use research.” They used it, but not instrumentally

(The Oral History Project Team, 2006, p. 480).

Her position on this was that the way evaluation studies should come into use was as the best evidence. The state-level democratic process would them make use of it as an aspect of their decision-making.

Chelimsky, a long time evaluator with the GAO (U.S. General Accounting Office, after 2004 the Government Accountability Office) adds a different perspective to these arguments coming from practical application and state level political decisions. She points to the importance of Cronbach and Associates’ (1980) Toward Reform of Program Evaluation. She sees it as valuable for discussions of evaluation use and political context, but argues that:

While it was quite typical in those studies to read statements attesting to the importance of politics to evaluation, statements like: “a theory of evaluation must be as much a theory of political interaction as it is a theory of how to determine facts” (Cronbach, p. 3, thesis 11), or “The evaluators’ professional conclusions cannot substitute for the political process,” (Cronbach, p. 3, thesis 13), there were not many cogent, action-oriented, systematic and specific discussions of how the integration of evaluation and politics should or could take place...

Perhaps one reason why concrete suggestions were so hard to come by was that the political domain with which evaluation had to interact was so little understood by evaluators


Chelimsky argues that ‘many points made, which are on target when it comes to agency politics, are notably inappropriate with regard to legislative politics’ (Chelimsky, 1987, p. 201). Many aspects of decision-making, which were unproblematic when decision-makers were regarded as
independent deciders, changed when decision-makers were a group in conflict, seeking a majority or consensus decision. Ideas like the rareness of continue/discontinue decisions on social programs did not apply to a legislative assembly in which stop/go might be exactly the issue on which political struggle, and hence decisions, would be made (Chelimsky, 1987).

Jennifer Greene argues that ‘Democratically oriented traditions in evaluation have their genesis in Barry MacDonald’s original formulation of “democratic evaluation” for the field of education in England’ (Greene, 2006, p. 119). Discussing MacDonald’s Democratic Evaluation model, Patton says that for MacDonald the democratic evaluator:

[Can] support an informed citizenry, the sine qua non of strong democracy, by acting as an information broker between groups who want and need knowledge about each other… MacDonald’s democratic evaluator seeks to survey a range of interests by assuring confidentiality to sources, engaging in negotiation between interest groups, and making evaluation findings widely accessible. The guiding ethic is the public’s right to know


Jennifer Greene sees MacDonald’s approach as one that “most centrally seeks to balance the public’s right to know with the individual’s right to privacy and to be discrete” (Greene, 1994, p. 540). She goes on to argue that in the context of a democratic evaluation “All relevant perspectives can be represented, Information can be fairly and equitably exchanged, and open deliberation can be encouraged” (Greene, 1994, p. 540).

Greene argues that “The concept of democratic evaluation is derived from the tradition of liberal democracy, and is thus politically and morally and acceptable to existing power holders in democratic societies” (Greene, 1994, p. 540). She continues:
At the same time, democratic evaluation seeks within its own boundaries to forge power-equalizing interactions and to establish a flow of information that is independent of hierarchies. Hence, in a democratic evaluation context, all relevant perspectives can be represented, information can be fairly and equitably exchanged, and open deliberation can be encouraged (Greene, 1994, p. 540).

3.2 Democratic Values: Pluralism, Inclusion, and “Participation”

Looking at the values involved, MacDonald says of the democratic model:

Some of its central ideas can be detected in the views currently advanced by Stake (1974). Evaluation studies which embody his recognition of value pluralism and multiple audiences will meet some of the criteria of democratic evaluation which I characterized earlier (MacDonald, 1976, p. 135).

Robert Stake’s Responsive Evaluation is often linked with participatory or stakeholder-involvement oriented approaches to evaluation. However Bradley Cousins, one of those inspired by Stake, has written:

Most recently, I had occasion to revisit some of Stake's work on responsive evaluation and have come to the realization that my understanding of his position was completely awry. Stake's concept of responsive evaluation is not about being responsive to non-evaluator stakeholder needs at all, but rather, it is about being responsive to context in the creation of knowledge and meaning... His primary justification for responsive evaluation is epistemological. In contrast, I see my primary justification for doing participatory evaluation as pragmatic (i.e., utilization oriented) (Cousins, 2008, p. 325-326).
Stake makes clear that his Responsive Evaluation is not intended to involve stakeholder participation. Speaking of evaluators, he says:

We want to be heard. We are troubled if our studies aren’t used. We feel evaluation is more useful if program participants take some ownership of the evaluation. Many of us, including myself, are strong advocates of self-study and action research. Even an external evaluator can profitably use input from stakeholders --- including suggestions for design and implementation. Many of us, not including myself, [italics added] strongly support participatory evaluation in which certain stakeholders take responsibility for design, data gathering, and resolving questions of merit and shortcomings

(Stake, 2004a, p. 104).

Hood and Hopson hold the same common misreading of Stake’s Responsive Evaluation as Cousins speaks of above. They regard Stake’s paper “The Countenance of Educational Evaluation” (Stake, 1967) as having “launched the participant oriented evaluation approach” (Hood & Hopson, 2008, p. 414). In their article on Asa Hilliard, an African-American theorist and pioneer in educational evaluation:

those evaluation persuasions that are most congruent with our orientation about evaluation and Hilliard’s contributions are namely, responsive evaluation (Stake, 1975), democratic evaluation (MacDonald, 1976), and naturalistic evaluation (Guba, 1978). We resonate most closely with these approaches because they are the most amenable to the facilitation of the evaluation process so that the perspectives of the least powerful stakeholders in the evaluation are meaningfully included in the evaluation. This is what Hilliard called for in his focus on democratic principles in evaluation

(Hood & Hopson, 2008, p. 411).
Separately, Rodney Hopson has argued that:

The promotion and use of inclusive, collaborative, participatory, and empowerment evaluation models and theories may be necessary for the equitable involvement of diverse and often-missing stakeholders and beneficiaries in the practice of evaluation (Hopson, 1999, p. 447).

Tyler was also concerned with democratic values of equality and inclusion. A leading developer of work on testing and educational curriculum and objectives, he argued “As I recall from John Dewey, students are limited not by their intellects but by the experiences that expand their intellects” (Tyler, in Hiatt 1994, p. 789).

Tyler himself talks of the key role for him of his work with the Progressive Educational Association and his explicit debt to Dewey in this (Madaus, 2004). In line with Dewey’s emphasis on the creation of democratic society through constantly renewed acts of participation, Tyler argued that “People require skills for independent living in order to act responsibly in a democratic society” (Tyler, in Hiatt, 1994, p. 787).

His work on this project was carried out in a way that tied it to later attempts at stakeholder and participant research. Bullough says;

Tyler and his staff supported experimentation and implementative research, in which each school functioned as a demonstration site on its own terms and in accord with its own problems and opportunities. Evaluation could be reasonably objective and accurate, but the results were not wholly transferable or replicable… Years later, Tyler referred to these efforts as a form of “action research” (Bullough, 2007, p. 174).

The move towards stakeholder involvement in evaluation can be place in the context of the social and political issues of the 1960s and 1970s, when
evaluation was developing as a field, and many important future evaluators were still students.

Nick L. Smith, in his foreword to Participatory Evaluation, by the Canadian evaluators Cousins and Chouinard, states:

The field of modern program evaluation in North America was born in the 1960s, a time characterized by student unrest, war protests, ambitious government programs to improve society, exploding computer technology, the dominance of liberal politics, and space exploration. Early work in program evaluation reflected the impatient reform energy of the times (Smith, 2012, p. xi)

Tying this issue to its effects on the development of program evaluation, Cousins and Chouinard point out that:

Participatory approaches to social enquiry were strongly influenced by the dynamic and turbulent sociopolitical context of North America in the 1960s and 1970s, a period marked by Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement, mass protests against the Vietnam War and calls for freedom, and a feminist critique of the power structures and demands for equality (Cousins and Chouinard, 2012, p. 8)

One sign of the recognized relevance and importance of the themes of State democracy, democratic values, and participation in US program evaluation is that the American Evaluation Association has produced several volumes of their New Directions for Evaluation edited series on issues directly related to democracy and evaluation. They include Ryan and Di Stefano (Eds.) Evaluation as a Democratic Process: Promoting Inclusion, Dialogue, and Deliberation (2000), Whitmore, E.. (Ed) Understanding and Practicing Participatory Evaluation (1998), Bryk (ed) Stakeholder Based Evaluation (1983), and Seigert and Brisolara (Eds) Feminist Evaluation: Explorations and Experiences (2002).
4 CHAPTER IV: EMPOWERMENT EVALUATION

4.1 Empowerment Evaluation and Democratic Participation

This chapter examines Empowerment Evaluation with regard to its key concepts, its evolution since its introduction with Fetterman’s 1993 AEA Conference presidential address, and its place in the field of stakeholder involvement in evaluation. For this purpose, Fetterman and Wandersman’s approach is capitalized as “Empowerment Evaluation”, although they regularly call it “empowerment evaluation”. This is to keep it distinct from general discussions of empowerment and evaluation.

Empowerment Evaluation is first discussed in terms of its core components, with special attention to the role of its ten principles in providing elements of this specific approach to program evaluation. Particular attention is focused on the role of the principle of democratic participation in Empowerment Evaluation. Empowerment Evaluation is then examined in terms of one of its core components, the concept of process use, and this component’s relation to democratic participation. Empowerment Evaluation is then placed within a matrix of stakeholder involvement oriented approaches to evaluation, derived from Cousins and Whitmore’s ‘Framing Participatory Evaluation’ (1998). The conclusion argues for the role of direct democratic decision-making as the form of process necessary for the process use that constitutes Empowerment Evaluation.

An Empowerment Evaluation, described at its simplest, has three steps:

- Mission Statement
- Taking Stock
- Planning for Future

For my purposes Empowerment Evaluation can be looked at as shaving five main aspects. One is the use of direct democratic decision-making, either majority or consensus, within the group of stakeholders (Evaluation Team) carrying out the evaluation. For this purpose the evaluator is a resource or
critical friend, and has no vote. Second is the carrying out of a program
evaluation by the Evaluation Team. Third is the effect of this experience of
carrying out the evaluation, the “process use”, on the Evaluation Team. A
fourth aspect is Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) within the Evaluation
Team as a result of this process. A fifth is empowerment of the group in
terms of a liberatory conception of empowerment as a result of this process.

Fetterman first describes Empowerment Evaluation in his 1993 AEA
Presidential Address:
Empowerment evaluation is the use of evaluation concepts and
techniques to foster self-determination. The focus is on helping people
help themselves. This evaluation approach focuses on improvement, is
collaborative, and requires both qualitative and quantitative
methodologies. It is also highly flexible and can be applied to evaluation
in any area, including health, education, business, agriculture,
microcomputers, non-profits and foundations, government, and
technology. It is a multifaceted approach with many forms, including
training, facilitation, advocacy, illumination, and liberation
(Fetterman, 1994, p.1)

Fetterman’s Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation described
Empowerment Evaluation as: ‘the use of evaluation concepts, techniques,
and findings to foster improvement and self-determination’ (Fetterman,
2001, p.3). The same definition is used by Fetterman in an earlier work
(1996), Worthington comments on this definition: ‘Participant self-
determination or empowerment is the primary aim, and program and
individual evaluation is the tool to be used toward this aim’ (Worthington,
1999, p. 2). For Worthington the goal is ‘participant empowerment’, and
two features follow from this:
First, it is highly collaborative, with input from stakeholders at every
stage of the evaluation process... The second characteristic resulting
from the goal of participant empowerment is an adjunctive role for the
external evaluator
(Worthington, 1999, p.2)
However, as Empowerment Evaluation developed in practice and in theory, “empowerment” as the ability to carry out a task receives more emphasis. In Fetterman and Wandersman’s Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice (2005), a collective chapter on ‘The Principles of Empowerment Evaluation’ describes Empowerment Evaluation as:

[An] evaluation approach that aims to increase the likelihood that programs will achieve results by increasing the capacity of program stakeholders to plan, implement, and evaluate their own program’

(Wandersman et al, 2005, p. 27)

The same chapter gives this definition:

Empowerment Evaluation: An evaluative approach that aims to increase the probability of achieving program success by (1) providing program stakeholders with tools for assessing the planning, implementation, and self-evaluation of their program, and (2) mainstreaming evaluation as part of the planning and management of the program/organization

(Wandersman et al, 2005, p. 28)

There appears to be a shift here to an emphasis on a view of empowerment that is equivalent to an ability to manage a task rather than a view of empowerment as liberatory or a change in power relations. In the same book Fetterman sees the above definition as a question of bringing certain aspects of the original definition of Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 1996) to the fore rather than as a change in direction:

This carefully crafted sentence highlights the commitment to results or accountability as well as capacity building. It also emphasizes the concept of process use. This definition makes many of the implicit values of empowerment evaluation explicit

(Fetterman, 2005a, p. 11)
Fetterman, in his AEA 2012 Ignite lecture, a five minute introductory presentation on the nature and value of Empowerment Evaluation, defines it in terms of three concepts, with an assumption of direct democratic group decision-making (Fetterman 2012b, http://aea365.org/blog/?p=6584, accessed 4/1/13). His three concepts are:

- Process Use
- Aligning Theories of Action and Use
- Developing reflective practitioners

The process of aligning Theories of Action and Theories of Use helps people develop into reflective practitioners. This last concept relies on the Evaluation Team’s iterative practice of the Empowerment Evaluation process, given by Fetterman as three steps:

- Mission Statement
- Taking Stock
- Planning for Future

In the same presentation Fetterman describes any particular Empowerment Evaluation as motivated by ‘a race toward social justice’. He says that it’s ‘Evaluation turned on its head… You (the Evaluation Team) are in charge… The evaluator helps to keep things rigorous, but does not take control…’ (Fetterman 2012b, http://aea365.org/blog/?p=6584, accessed 4/1/13).

The Ignite lecture may be seen as just an interesting and engaging introduction. However, in terms of the process as experienced by participants, these steps are essential. Fetterman draws attention to the same three steps in his Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation:

There are three steps in helping others learn to evaluate their own programs: (a) developing a mission, vision, or unifying purpose; (b) taking stock or determining where the program stands, including
strengths and weaknesses; and (c) planning for the future by establishing goals and helping participants determine their own strategies to accomplish program goals and objectives’ (Fetterman, 2001, p 23).

Fetterman has described doing this, and whether it makes a difference if all or only part of the staff or community are involved:

As long as you provide a mechanism for internalizing and institutionalizing it, there’s not much of a difference. For example, say working for a community… You’re not technically internal, but you're considered a friend, etc. I'll do a couple of exercises with someone from the community: “Who wants to do this?” I’ll have her do them, I'll stand by… I won't abdicate my responsibility and just walk away. I'll prepare her, I'll help debrief but she will be the facilitator for that [activity]. So I'm slowly working myself out of a job, and internalizing this process in the organization or community. When it comes to planning for the future, I go “You in the audience, you said the most about evaluation, do you want to take the lead on that? The next time you have a normal staff, not an evaluation meeting but a normal staff meeting, you can report.” You know what I've just done there? I've internalized evaluation into the normal staff meeting. See that's the game plan, then you've institutionalized and embedded it

(Fetterman, personal communication, 2011)

For an understanding of Empowerment Evaluation that breaks down this process into its elements, and their relation to the goal proposed, it is necessary to examine the 10 Principles that Fetterman has repeatedly drawn attention to (Fetterman, 2005; Fetterman, 2015). These are:

1. Improvement
2. Community ownership
3. Inclusion
4. Democratic participation  
5. Social justice  
6. Community knowledge  
7. Evidence-based strategies  
8. Capacity building  
9. Organizational learning  
10. Accountability  

(Fetterman, 2015, p 5-6)

For Fetterman Empowerment Evaluation is defined by the interrelation and interaction of these principles. Individual Empowerment Evaluations can be rated according to their varying levels of adherence to these Ten Principles. In the following ‘The term “community” refers to the specific group using evaluation in the organization or local community – rather than the entire town or city’ (Fetterman, 2005, p. 52).

Fetterman describes the improvement principle:

Empowerment evaluations are designed to help people improve their programs and, in the process, their lives. Their work is not neutral or antiseptic... Empowerment evaluators and community-based organization staff members do not conduct research experiments without the purpose of, or prospect to, improving the program. Empowerment evaluation is never conducted for the sake of intellectual curiosity alone (Fetterman, 2005, p. 43)

Community ownership refers to the community regarding the evaluation and its results as their own:

the more the group members control both the conceptual direction and the actual implementation of the evaluation, the more they are likely to use the findings and recommendations, since they are theirs. This is referred to as “process use” (Fetterman, 2005, p. 44)
This has implications for how the main actors, evaluator, stakeholders, and funder, approach their roles in the evaluation. If the funder or the evaluator takes over the running of the evaluation for time reasons, then it is not the community's evaluation. If the evaluator treats the information gained as their own, it is not the community's evaluation. And if the community does not act on the decisions they have made as their own responsibility, it is not the community's evaluation.

The process of doing evaluation in a climate of trust and good faith only enhances a sense of ownership and pride. Conversely it is weakened if a funder takes charge of the effort in the middle, the evaluator shares findings without community approval, and if the community fails to follow through on its own self-assessment (Fetterman, 2005, p. 44)

Inclusion:

For Fetterman, 'inclusion means inviting as many stakeholders to the table as is reasonable or feasible and making a concerted effort to encourage their participation' (Fetterman, 2005, p. 44) Inclusion is related to community ownership, as it is part of creating the community that will own the results.

The principle of inclusion serves to remind empowerment evaluators of their obligation to advise the people they work with to include rather than exclude (Fetterman, 2005, p. 45)

Including all stakeholders helps 'ensure an authentic or meaningful consensus. This is required for any plan of action to move forward' (Fetterman, 2005, p. 45).

Democratic Participation:

Citing John Dewey (1940) with regard to democratic participation, Fetterman argues:
The principle of inclusion is often confused with democratic participation. While inclusion means bringing all pertinent groups together, democratic participation speaks to how the groups will interact and make decisions once they are together

(Fetterman, 2005, p. 45).

For Fetterman, the principle of democratic participation:

[Ensures] that everyone has a vote in the process. This may be a literal vote or a meaningful role in decision-making. In practice, that may mean that everyone gets one vote (or sticky dot) to prioritize his or her evaluation concerns about program activities or implementation. It may mean that each tribe in an 18-tribe consortium gets 1 vote per tribe as decisions are made in the empowerment evaluation

(Fetterman, 2005, p. 45)

Democratic participation also refers to another level, often cited as informed inquiry, deliberation, and action. In other words, democratic participation is both a means of ensuring equality and fairness and a tool to bring forth as many insights and suggestions about how to improve programs as possible It also develops analytical skills that can be applied in society in general, such as reasoned debate (with evidence), deliberation, and action

(Fetterman, 2005, p.46)

Social Justice:

Social justice is a fundamental guiding principle of empowerment evaluation... In practice, empowerment evaluators typically assist people in social programs aimed at ameliorating a specific social concern or injustice... Although there is a bias toward traditionally disenfranchised populations, an empowerment evaluator might work with middle- and upper-middle class communities in an effort to ensure equality of opportunity, due process, racial or ethnic diversity, or related issues

(Fetterman, 2005. p. 46)
In discussing the principle of social justice, Fetterman gives an example of how the Ten Principles can be mutually reinforcing. He emphasizes: ‘The principle of social justice places the image of a just society in the hands of a community of learners engaged in a participatory form of democracy’ (Fetterman, 2005, p. 47).

Community Knowledge:

Local community members have invaluable knowledge and information about their community and its programs... In addition to disrespecting and devaluing a community, ignoring this rich database is inefficient, resulting in needless redundant data collection efforts and misguided interpretations. In addition, local communities develop their own community knowledge within the organization. This is a bottom-up approach to knowledge sharing and development

(Fetterman, 2005, p. 47)

Evidence-Based Strategies:

Communities have been “burnt” by out-of-touch or off-target interventions introduced or mandated in the past... Communities than have been hurt by these interventions and consequently ignore these contributions should “move on” and with a more cautious and sceptical eye, selectively reconsider evidence-based strategies

(Fetterman, 2005, p. 48)

In essence, they offer a useful option that has a track record and external credibility (Fetterman, 2005, p. 48)
Capacity Building:

Capacity building is one of the most identifiable features of empowerment evaluation... Program staff members and participants learn how to conduct their own evaluations. Communities should be building their skill in the following areas: evaluation logic, chain of reasoning, logic models, evaluation design, data collection methods (including qualitative and quantitative methods), analysis, reporting, and ethics. They should also be building evaluation capacity in the areas of making judgements and interpretations, using the data to inform decision making, and making formative and summative assessment about their programs. In some cases this might involve making a determination of the merit or worth of the program. In most cases, their judgement focuses on program improvement

(Fetterman, 2005. p. 48)

… as they improve their evaluation capacity they should be improving their own capacity to manage and operate their programs

(Fetterman, 2005. p. 49).

Organizational Learning:

Fetterman points out how:

Empowerment evaluation helps organizations develop both the climate and the structures for generating reflective practitioners… It also helps communities focus on systemic issues and systems thinking rather than short-term solutions and quick fixes

(Fetterman, 2005, p. 50)

Accountability:

Empowerment evaluation is about accountability... It is useful for an external accountability, but its strength is in fostering further accountability. External forms of accountability last as long as the
external agency is present to exert its force. Internal accountability is built within the structure of the organization or program and is fuelled by internal peer pressure and institutionalized mechanisms developed by members of the group or organization. Empowerment evaluation does not alter the existing power authority structure. Supervisors remain supervisors ... the motivation changes

(Fetterman, 20005, p. 50)

Fetterman has described how ownership and accountability work together:

But the biggest thing is ownership, process use… The more you get people engaged in [the process] the more credible becomes the evaluation cause it's theirs. And thus they're more likely to act on it. [There’s a] sense of ownership, it's used routinely. It's a totally different dynamic: now they have their skin in the game, because they’re now helping to create that change. [They’re] listening to when it has to be tweaked: “So now I'm open to criticism, now I listen to criticism., because that's going to make me sink or swim.” Before, it was “Criticize me all you want, you don't know me.” So the whole dynamic changes. You're still being held accountable, I just hold you accountable now for what you said you were going to do. When you change that dynamic of interaction, it totally changes

(Fetterman, personal communication)

Full inclusion and democratic participation in the production of community knowledge lead to community ownership of the results, which makes their use in program improvement more likely, and accountability focuses the Evaluation Team on the present and future situation of the program. Evidence based strategies, contributed by the evaluator as ‘critical friend’, and the increase in group capacity to understand and evaluate their own program, leads to organizational change and continuing accountability. This can work because the need for change is linked to the power to act, since this need is being recognized by ‘a community of learners engaged in a participatory form of democracy’ (Fetterman, 2005, p. 47)
Two principles of Empowerment Evaluation are accountability and social justice. This combination of objective research and stakeholder advocacy arise in with Fetterman’s previous experience in ethnographic research. Fetterman points out that ‘Action ethnography influenced the development of empowerment evaluation’ (Fetterman, 2010, p. 151). This can be seen in the organization and practice of the Evaluation Team or community: ‘Action ethnographers remove themselves from playing a power role as much as possible; they simply conduct the research’ (Fetterman, 2010, p. 137). This is similar to the ‘critical friend’ role of the evaluator in Empowerment Evaluation. Connected with the concept of democratic participation, ‘Action ethnography can take place only in a community that is able to determine its fate...’ (Fetterman, 2010, p. 138). In this way participation in action ethnography is tied to the power of the group to make real decisions, and points to the kind of decision-making power and process that is intended in Empowerment Evaluation. A further influence can be seen in the principle idea of respect for the development of community knowledge:

The typical model for ethnographic research is based on a phenomenologically oriented paradigm. This paradigm embraces a multicultural perspective because it accepts multiple realities. People act on their perceptions, and those actions have real consequences -- thus the subjective reality each individual sees is no less real than an objectively defined and measured reality...

(Fetterman, 2010, p.5).

This chapter focuses on the principle of democratic participation, arguing that it is a conceptually necessary component of Empowerment Evaluation, while recognizing that the principles may be interrelated and mutually reinforcing in practice.
4.2 Espoused Theory, Theory in Use and Process Use

4.2.1 Process Use I

Fetterman has consistently emphasized the importance of process use in Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman et al, 1996; Fetterman 2001; Fetterman, 2003; Fetterman 2004; Fetterman 2012b). The following sections will build a picture of process use in Empowerment Evaluation through three stages. Process use was first highlighted by Michael Quinn Patton at the time of his initial interest in utilization as an issue in program evaluation (Patton et al, 1977). He argued that the process of involving stakeholders (funders and managers at this time) in the evaluation process was to lead them to see the evaluation as their project rather than something imposed on them. Where results were negative, they were more likely to be acted on because the decision-makers had been part of the process that created them. There was also a psychological effect, where people who had been involved in the evaluation process couldn't easily dismiss the results they had helped create.

Patton also developed the idea that the evaluation process could be regarded as a cultural experience, an immersion for a period in a different culture from which decision-makers would be led to look at issues in new ways (Patton et al, 1977).

Overall, the experience of the process of the evaluation would be a learning/changing experience for stakeholders who took part in it. Fetterman takes up process use with a stronger idea of how far this learning can go. United with Argyris and Schon's concept of "theory of use" and the learning organization, it becomes a mode of transformation for participants. For Fetterman, this can be a transformation to empowerment as a result of the experience of the evaluation process, its challenging of existing theories in use, and their substitution by consciously formed alternatives, which are then subject to the continuing interactive process of critical re-evaluation.
Fetterman, in his contribution to Christie’s The Practice-Theory Relationship in Evaluation (Christie 2003) argues that:

the role of process use is discussed to highlight the distinction between Fetterman’s and House’s theoretical approaches. An authentic and meaningful exploration into the theory-practice relationship in an empowerment evaluation requires attention to program staff members and participant practice. They practice contingent decision making (Mark, 2002; Mark, Henry, and Julnes, 2000) every day, based on local circumstance and conditions—comparing the ideal with the real (Fetterman, 2003, p. 47).

For Fetterman:

‘Christie accurately observes that the “similarity between House and Fetterman is notable: both are concerned with empowering the underrepresented, and their evaluation approaches can be categorized as social agenda–advocacy oriented.”’ (Fetterman, 2003, p. 48).

Fetterman continues:

However, as Christie adroitly observes, House and Fetterman differ most in their “views on stakeholder involvement.” In empowerment evaluation, stakeholders have a “role in all aspects of the evaluation, from inception to conclusion.” In fact, program staff members and participants conduct their own evaluations with coaching in an empowerment evaluation. This is feasible—anticipating one of House’s concerns—because evaluation becomes institutionalized as part of the planning and management of the organization. It becomes a part of what everyone is expected to do… House’s approach favors a more limited role for stakeholders in the evaluation, primarily because of feasibility and stakeholder bias. The focus on process use is instrumental in understanding the underlying difference between House and Fetterman (Fetterman 2003, p. 49).
For Fetterman, the focus on process use is not just a means to get a better
description of the situation, but a focus on the very core of the evaluation
approach. Writing of Christie’s (2003) article on process use, Fetterman
argues: 'The focus on process use is telling and insightful. It clearly
distinguishes the differing levels of stakeholder involvement associated with
Fetterman’s and House’s approaches' (Fetterman 2003, p. 51). It is only a
particular process whose “process use” can have the effect or play the role
Empowerment Evaluation demands of it here. This chapter argues that this
is a process characterized by direct democratic decision-making.

4.2.2 Espoused Theory/ Theory in Use

Fetterman has repeatedly stressed the importance of Argyris and Schon’s
Theory of Action in the development of Empowerment Evaluation
(Fetterman 1997a; Fetterman 2000; Fetterman 2005; Fetterman 2012b,

Argyris describes the Theory of Action approach:

Theories of action are of two types. One is the theory which we espouse,
which is composed of values, beliefs, and action strategies. The other is
the theory-in-use which is stored in our heads in the form of designs that
are composed of action strategies, intended consequences organized in
causal sequence. We call these designs-in-use. Our designs-in-use, when
combined, constitute our theory-in-use

(Argyris 2006 [2004], p8)

Argyris is interested in the big difference between Model I and Model II
Theories in Use; his concern is not with designs in use or the espoused
theory.

Errors are mismatches between intended outcomes and actual
outcomes. The intended outcomes are espoused theories of action.
The actual outcomes are produced by master programs such as theories-in-use and their component subroutines called designs-in-use’


Fetterman uses the concept of espoused theory and theory in use in a way that is different to Argyris. Argyris is concerned with a particular content of theory in use, specifically personally and organizationally defensive routines that he describes as Model I, single loop, thinking. His contrast is with Model II, double loop thinking that is characterized by testing views against evidence rather than keeping social peace. Just as Model I thinking worked from a position of defending existing organizational and individual practices,

The action strategies of Model II also advocate a position, making evaluations and attributions. The difference is that these action strategies are now in the service of the governing values of Model II rather than Model I. This means that the emphasis is upon inquiry and testing (Argyris 2006, p. 10)

For Fetterman, however, the theory in use may have any content. He is not concerned with Model I or Model II thinking at this level. The issue for Fetterman is what is the fit between the theory in use and the espoused theory, and how they can be brought into alignment or reconsidered and one or both abandoned. The learning that Fetterman wants from this is similar to Argyris’ Model II. He wants participants to iteratively develop and test against evidence their understanding of their program and its requirements.

Fetterman shares the desire to build a learning organization. He supports the idea of double-loop learning. However, he is using the phrase in a way that makes it much closer to Argyris' idea of design-in-use or sub-routines rather than the theory in use as a structure of either Model I or Model II thinking that Argyris does. This makes it possible to apply it to lack of fit between
espoused theory and theory in use at program level rather than as the 'theory in use’ as organizational self-blinding that Argyris means by it.

Fetterman's concern is much more with the cognitive awareness of lack of fit that this makes possible. Overcoming the cognitive dissonance involved allows for taking control of your own learning, of your own understanding. The double loop goal is present, but Fetterman is concerned with the empowering effects of recognized cognitive dissonance in making possible a conscious attempt to either bring the espoused theory and theory-in-use together or to change the espoused theory to one in line with the theory-in-use. It could also allow a reconstruction of the theory-in-use (and the practices that accompany it) within the goal framework of the program ("espoused theory") as seen through the critical lens of explaining and reconciling dissonance.

In this model Mission Statement can be seen as like espoused theory. Taking Stock includes detailing the theory in use which may be far from what the mission statement would require. Planning for the Future is the process of developing action plans to bring the two theories into alignment. For Fetterman this is a critical, iterative process that is very close to Argyris’ Model II theories-in use. Fetterman argues:

Empowerment evaluation relies on the reciprocal relationship between theories of action and use at every step in the process. A theory of action is usually the espoused operating theory about how a program or organization works. It is a useful tool, generally based on program personnel views. This theory of action is often compared with a theory of use. The theory of use is the actual program reality, the observable behavior of stakeholders (see Argyris and Schön, 1978; Patton, 1997). People engaged in empowerment evaluations create a theory of action at one stage and test it against the existing theory of use at a later stage. Similarly, they create a new theory of action as they plan for the future. Because empowerment evaluation is an ongoing and iterative process, stakeholders test their theories of action against theories of use during
various micro cycles in order to determine whether their strategies are being implemented as recommended or designed. The theories go hand in hand in empowerment evaluation.

(Fetterman, 2003, p. 50).

Fetterman uses “theory of action” as equivalent to “espoused theory”. He uses “theory of use” as equivalent to the “designs in use” that compose “theory in use” for Argyris. For Fetterman the task is to bring “theory of action” into alignment with “theory of use”, the “actual behavior of the program” (Fetterman, 2003). For Argyris, “espoused theory” is frustrated in its application by Model I thinking within the “theory in use”. The goal is to develop Model II thinking to overcome these effects. Model II thinking is, however, still within the “theory in use”.

Argyris states:

Errors are mismatches between intended outcomes and actual outcomes. The intended outcomes are espoused theories of action. The actual outcomes are produced by master programs such as theories-in-use and their component subroutines called designs-in-use


Theory in use as described by Fetterman when he is applying it can be arrived at by developing a logic model of the program. Theory in use in Argyris is about self-defensive routines and practices that protect an organization from looking critically at its own functioning, with this functioning being of a kind that works against espoused conscious goals. It applies everywhere always. Its single-loop learning reproduces it at every moment. Fetterman's theory in use is a view of what' is happening that may or may not be a good reflection of how the program is supposed to work according to the espoused theory.

Espoused theory disappears from Argyris' account. It remains central to Fetterman’s as it is the gap between theory in use and espoused theory that is being articulated with a view to resolution. Argyris’ theory in use can not
be produced in a logic model specific to the program involved; the program level is the level of sub-routines and designs-in-use for Argyris; to get past the current situation requires the adoption of double-loop learning.

For Fetterman, theory in use is often best constructed by using a logic model; it is the theory in use at program level that he is concerned with. Reflective or double loop learning is what he is after, but it is the lack of fit between theory in use and the mission statement/espoused theory that is used to enable people to take a critical attitude to their own practice and design a course of action that can overcome the cognitive dissonance between their theory in use and their espoused theory (mission). This still allows that the mission statement/espoused theory may itself be changed (consciously) as a result of this process and the process use that is constituted by participants’ involvement in it.

4.3 Process Use II

Part of process use here is the use/effect of the process of aligning “theory of action” and “theory of use” through critical group decisions. This is the process by which participants will become reflective practitioners. For this to occur, they must be personally involved in the issues raised and their resolution. For Fetterman:

An authentic and meaningful exploration into the theory-practice relationship in an empowerment evaluation requires attention to program staff members and participant practice. They practice contingent decision making… every day, based on local circumstance and conditions—comparing the ideal with the real

(Fetterman, 2003, p. 47).

Their taking on the role of reflective practitioners depends on the multiple acts of decision-making they are involved in while resolving the dissonance between the “theory of action”, what the program says it is doing, and the
“theory of use”, what the actual behavior of the program participants is. Their plan for future action is the result of this process of conscious consideration and evaluation of information, a process of inquiry and testing. This is itself then put in action and, as the new theory of action, compared with its resulting “theory of use” The alignment of these is part of an iterative process, whose defining characteristic in Empowerment Evaluation is the multiple acts of direct democratic group decision-making involved. This is the process whose “process use” results in the empowering aspect of the Empowerment Evaluation.

4.4 Stakeholder Involvement in Evaluation and Cousins’ Participatory Evaluation: Practical Participatory Evaluation and Transformative Participatory Evaluation

Cousins and Whitmore made a first attempt to differentiate forms of stakeholder involvement in evaluation, which they term ‘collaborative’ or ‘participatory’ evaluation (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998) in Whitmore’s Understanding and Practicing Participatory Evaluation in the AEA’s New Directions for Evaluation series (Whitmore, 1998). This chapter has proved to be a seminal work in the area of stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation (King, 2007), Jean King has argued that the fact that their chapter is “is near the top of those New Directions for Evaluation manuscripts most frequently cited speaks to the authors’ success” in this (p. 84). While Cousins and Whitmore in this case use “collaborative” evaluation as an umbrella term, other contributors in the same volume, for example Jean King (1998), use “participatory evaluation” as the umbrella term. Cousins and Chouinard’s Participatory Evaluation Up Close (2012) uses “participatory evaluation” as an umbrella term.

This section will use Cousins and Whitmore’s term ‘participatory evaluation’ to refer to stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation approaches in which power is balanced between evaluator and stakeholders
to be consistent with the distinctions they wish to make within their approach to stakeholder involvement in evaluation. They argued for a distinction within “participatory evaluation” approaches between what they termed Transformative Participatory Evaluation (T-PE) and Practical Participatory Evaluation (P-PE). T-PE was a form of “participatory evaluation” concerned primarily with issues of social justice, inclusion, and diversity while P-PE was primarily concerned with program or organizational improvement and development. Since then the T-PE/P-PE schema has become a widely accepted approach to discussing stakeholder involved/“participatory” evaluation in all its forms (King, 2007). As discussed in Chapter I, recent discussions have argued for consistency in terminology (Fetterman et al, 2013; Cousins et al, 2013).

Cousins has carried out two full scale reassessments in the area of stakeholder involvement in evaluation (Weaver & Cousins, 2004; Cousins & Chouinard, 2012). He has also contributed a "critical friend" chapter to Fetterman and Wandersman’s Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice which draws on this typology (Cousins 2005; Fetterman & Wandersman 2005). A constant theme for Cousins has been the difficulty of fitting Empowerment Evaluation into either the Transformative Participatory Evaluation (T-PE) or the Practical Participatory Evaluation (P-PE) groupings.

When Cousins and Whitmore developed the two categories of Practical Participatory Evaluation (P-PE) and Transformative Participatory Evaluation (T-PE), P-PE was seen as developing out of utilization focused evaluation, with an emphasis on stakeholders’ involvement in the evaluation process tying them to the results. It was thought that this would give them a sense of ownership of the evaluation, leading to increased use. This was contrasted with T-PE, which was seen as developing from concerns with social justice and the empowerment of disenfranchised or marginalized groups.
Both involved participation by groups of stakeholders. P-PE drew its participants primarily from program staff and managers (including funders) but sometimes included clients in the process. T-PE also often included program staff and managers, but was oriented to the interests and direct involvement of clients or potential beneficiaries of the program. Its background in development research and evaluation helped give T-PE a strong community change orientation in rhetoric and goals.

In both forms control was seen by Cousins and Whitmore as balanced between the evaluator and the community/practitioner grouping involved. Most forms of T-PE included decision-making by the participants at certain stages of the evaluation. Most forms of P-PE regularly involved participants in data collection or other technical tasks, depending on their abilities and training.

4.4.1 T-PE/P-PE: Where did it come from?

The P-PE stream can be seen as having developed from an initial interest in the utilization of evaluation results. Increasingly experience suggested that the more stakeholders were involved in the evaluation process, the more likely they were to act on the evaluation results. For managers and funders, this could result from their public identification with the evaluation step by step. This made it difficult to ignore unwelcome results that they had been party to arriving at. They could not argue that the evaluation process had failed to look at relevant issues and concerns they had themselves endorsed.

For program staff, their experience in the evaluation told them that information and perspectives based on frontline experience had been considered or incorporated into the evaluation. This could no longer be regarded as an evaluation done by an outside expert who either did not understand the real issues or had had insufficient time with, and exposure to, the program to understand what happened and whether it worked.

While the argument for inclusion of stakeholders was usually put in terms of all stakeholders, the initial orientation was to involve decision-makers, then
widen this to all stakeholders. Community or client stakeholders were often involved, primarily as a source of information and perspectives, along with program staff other than top managers. While utilization focused evaluation oriented itself to forms that would encourage use, it increasingly looked at bringing in previously ignored or excluded groups of stakeholders as sources of information, and sometimes of perspectives, on the program involved.

Under the pressure of this movement for inclusion, different forms of this approach came to be more commonly regarded as collaborative or participatory evaluation than utilization focused as such. That is to say, while utilization was still a desired goal as well as an historical residue, the image of the evaluation in the evaluator's view was that of inclusiveness of stakeholders and an idea that the evaluator, while still having final decision-making power, would seek to take in and include the perspectives of all stakeholders as part of the evaluation.

At this point there were lots of similarities between P-PE and T-PE approaches in their involvement of stakeholders. P-PE, while usually founded on a postpositivist realist epistemology, came into being at the level of actions and understandings within a background epistemology that was not brought into focus for this purpose.

However, transformative approaches in the United States developed not from a utilization focus but from an epistemological commitment to building evaluations on diverse understandings of both the "factual" and the value components of the program experience. Within the US T-PE was consciously founded on constructivist epistemology. It was seen as a first wave of action level initiatives that necessarily broke with the action level activities of social science investigation based on so-called "positivist" epistemologies. Traditional evaluation was represented as attempting a value free scientific operation that ignored existing power relations while serving power-holders' interests. T-PE consciously judged programs in
terms of recognizing different perspectives on what success could be, and whose interests would be served by it.

Cousins and Whitmore argue that while ‘Transformative participatory evaluation invokes participatory principles and actions in order to democratize social change, it has quite different ideological and historical roots from P-PE’ (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998, p. 8). Their category of T-PE, and its distinction from P-PE, draws on their experience and knowledge of the field of development research and evaluation, and stakeholder involvement within it. For them T-PE drew on the related overlapping fields of participatory research and evaluation. Participatory Action Research (PAR) can be traced to the work of Kurt Lewin in England at the Tavistock Institute and in the United States in the 1930s and 1940s. Kemmis and McTaggart point out that ‘Lewin’s (1946, 1952) own earliest publications on action research related to community action programs in the United States during the 1940s’ (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008, p. 272). They argue that ‘Recognition in Australia of the “practical” character of the British initiative [in this form of research] led to calls for more explicitly “critical” and “emancipatory” action research’, and a further development of action research ‘emerged in the connection between critical emancipatory action research and participatory action research that had developed in the context of social movements in the developing world’, developed by theorists including Paulo Freire, Orlando Fals Borda, and Rajesh Tandon, ‘as well as by North American and British workers in adult education and literacy, community development, and development studies’, including John Gaventa and Robert Chambers (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2008, p. 272).

A long term figure in the development PAR field, Robert Chambers argues that in one form of action research, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA):

The aim is to enable people to present, share, analyze and augment their knowledge as the start of a process. The ultimate output is enhanced knowledge and competence, an ability to make demands, and to sustain
action. Instead of imposing and extracting, PRA is then designed to empower

(Chambers, 1994b, p 1266).

The view of empowerment here is linked to future action, “an ability to make demands”, that is expected to contest local power. Chambers argues that ‘Participation has to be lived, and lived at all levels by all concerned’ (Chambers 1998, p xvi). He is clear that PRA can only work if it is carried out fully, requiring a change in the roles of both stakeholders and researchers or evaluators: “PRA stresses changes in the behaviour and attitudes of outsiders, to become not teachers but facilitators, not lecturers but listeners and learners” (Chambers 1997, p xv).

Cousins and Whitmore’s (1998) development of the characterization of participatory evaluation as either practical participatory evaluation (P-PE) or transformative participatory evaluation (T-PE) draws heavily on the PAR and PRA experience of development researchers and evaluators, and the role of liberatory goals within it, in distinguishing between utilization-oriented and transformative goals in the history of participatory evaluation.

Within the United States T-PE has been characterized by its almost total reliance on constructivist or transformative epistemologies. This may be counter-intuitive given the apparent contradiction between relativist and advocacy positions, with constructivism being seen as relativist. However, King stresses:

Transformative participatory evaluation practice now encompasses approaches like deliberative democratic evaluation, inclusive evaluation, and values-driven evaluation, all of which focus on a constructivist epistemology and social betterment as evaluation’s ultimate goal.

(King, 2007, p. 85).
In the introduction to the ‘Social Agenda-Directed (Advocacy) Oriented Models’ section of Evaluation Models (2000), Stufflebeam and colleagues argue that:

[These] evaluations... reflect the philosophy of postmodernism, with its attendant stress on cultural pluralism, moral relativity, and multiple realities. Typically, these evaluation models favor a constructivist orientation and the use of qualitative methods. These evaluation approaches emphasize the importance of democratically engaging stakeholders in obtaining and interpreting findings. They also stress serving the interests of underprivileged groups. Worries about studies following these models are that they might concentrate so heavily on serving a social mission that they fail to meet the standards of a sound evaluation… The particular social agenda/ advocacy-directed models presented in this book seem to have sufficient safeguards needed to walk the fine line between sound evaluation services and politically corrupted evaluations. Worries about bias control in these approaches increase the importance of subjecting advocacy evaluations to metaevaluations grounded in standards for sound evaluation

(Stufflebeam et al, 2000, p241).

The evaluation theorists included here range from extreme relativists such as Guba and Lincoln to real world anti-relativists such as Fetterman and House and Howe.

Part of the T-PE critique of P-PE approaches is that they continue to carry out evaluation in terms of the interests of the decision-makers. From this perspective the P-PE concentration on evaluation use by legitimate users can be seen as a continuation of what T-PE supporters saw as the Campbell and Cronbach “positivist” scientific production of evaluation in the interests of existing power holders rather than in the interests of social justice and a democratic society. Chapter III has shown that this is a misrepresentation of
the political and social melioration positions of traditional mainstream evaluation.

Transformative evaluation has sought to change the situation of those it oriented to, base its activities on the values that helped the disenfranchised, and give voice to diverse perspectives and values. The assumption that qualitative methodologies are automatically to be preferred when evaluations are aimed at advocating the interests of the clients of a program is deeply embedded in T-PE. In Fetterman’s Speaking the Language of Power, Maxwell argues against this assumption:

Qualitative researchers often naively see their approach as inherently beneficial to their clients; more attention needs to be given to the reasons why people, given their goals and social situation, might rationally reject particular qualitative approaches and results (Fetterman, 1993; Maxwell, 1993, p. 111).

A conscious position within transformative evaluation was opposition to the idea of evaluation as being carried out for, or to meet the needs of, decision-makers. The idea that the participants could be/should be decision-makers seems not to have been considered as such. At the same time, T-PE includes some contradictory currents. While Stake and his Responsive Evaluation are included as part of T-PE Stake has argued against both evaluators’ imposing their values in the use of the evaluation and participants being involved in evaluation decisions or activities. House and Howe's Deliberative Democratic Evaluation is included by T-PE supporters unproblematically, but House and Howe have a realist epistemology and make a point of distinguishing postpositivist from positivist epistemology within the area of realist epistemologies (House & Howe, 1999)

However, T-PE advocates of their approach interpret Deliberative Democracy in a sense that has made deliberation without group decision-making a characteristic of Democratic Deliberative Evaluation (DDE) in practice. Vestamn and Segelholm, in The Sage International Handbook of
Educational Evaluation argue that ‘The purpose of deliberative democratic evaluation is to create insights and understandings, rather than make decisions’ Vestman & Segerholm, 2009, p. 471). This includes a conscious opposition by many DDE advocates to Empowerment Evaluation on this very issue. Empowerment Evaluation, with its emphasis on participants' decision-making, is seen as failing to recognize or act on the need to overcome unequal power relations between members of the Evaluation Team. Empowerment Evaluation is also seen as failing to raise questions of social justice within the evaluation process rather than accepting the existing views and interests of the participants. Fetterman’s discussion of the Ten Principles of Empowerment Evaluation deals with these questions of social justice, inclusive participation, and the evaluator’s responsibility, within the evaluation process (Fetterman, 2005).

One question concerning T-PE is whether it is to be seen as transformative in its effects or transformative in its intentions. Responsive Evaluation, for example, is not trying to be transformative in its intentions (following Robert Stake). However, it has often been seen as transformative in its techniques, which are seen to involve actions that are transformative in effect, regardless of intentions. On the other hand DDE, with a clear transformative goal in its intentions, may not be transformative in its effects if deliberative discussion, without decision-making power, seems to be followed by no effect on the situation (either the issue involved or the evaluation itself).

4.4.2 Cousins and Whitmore: The T-PE/ P-PE Matrix

Cousins and Whitmore’s “Framing Participatory Evaluation” (Cousins & Whitmore 1998) analysed participatory evaluation approaches (T-PE and P-PE) using a three dimensional model with three axes. For them an evaluation approach’s position on these three axes determines the level and process of stakeholder involvement. In this model Researcher for Cousins
and Whitmore refers to the evaluator, and Practitioner to the stakeholders. King summarizes Cousins and Whitmore’s schema:

Cousins and Whitmore propose three dimensions for distinguishing forms of participatory inquiry: (1) control of the evaluation process (from research-controlled to practitioner-controlled); (2) stakeholder selection for participation (from primary users to “all legitimate groups”); and (3) depth of participation (from mere consultation to “deep participation”)

King (2007, p 84)

In this section I adapt their 3-dimensional model to a 2-dimensional matrix. The reason for this is to draw attention to differences between stakeholder evaluation approaches with particular reference to the role of decision-making within them. For this purpose I substitute “Primary and Final Control” for their parameter of control seen as lying on a continuum between evaluator and stakeholders. The parameter “Primary and Final Control of Evaluation Process’ Researcher Controlled refers to the final decision-making power being in the hands of, and under the control of, the evaluator. Practitioner controlled refers to a situation where the stakeholders involved have final decision-making power. Both approaches allow for considerable stakeholder and evaluator sharing throughout the evaluation process: Cousins and Whitmore see a balance of power between evaluator and practitioners in P-PE and T-PE (1998). However Practitioner Controlled refers here to stakeholder power of yes/no decision-making both throughout the course of the evaluation and in the final conclusion.
The new axes, adapted from Cousins and Whitmore (1998) are:

**Primary and Final Control Of Evaluation Process:**
- Researcher: controlled
- Practitioner: controlled

**Stakeholder selection for Participation:**
- Primary users
- All legitimate groups

**Depth of Participation:**
- Consultation
- Deep participation
Table 1: How T-PE and P-PE line up on these parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation approach</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-PE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-PE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within this matrix both P-PE and T-PE would fit with “decision-making balanced, with researcher final control”. This is shown by large X (final control) and small x (“balanced” control). Both T-PE and P-PE have forms that could rate anywhere on the “depth of participation” short of final decision-making on the evaluation process. Contemporary T-PE and P-PE practice would almost always allow some form of consultation/ involvement that is more than just being an information source. Where they would be expected to differ in Cousins and Whitmore’s view is in the area of “stakeholder selection for participation”. P-PE is seen as primarily aimed at utilization, and so primarily involves program funders, management, staff: those who have an ongoing role in the performance and development of the program. T-PE is seen as concerned with giving voice to marginalized or otherwise disenfranchised groups and so involving program clients and beneficiaries in a process that’s aimed at some political and social justice oriented transformation (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998).

The initial distinction between Transformative and Practical evaluation goals is already involved in setting up the categories to be applied to the matrix. However, Transformative and Practical evaluation goals could be used as a fourth element of a matrix to look at all forms of stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation. The assumption here is that any
stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation must have either a transformative or practical goal, in the same way that any activity has to happen by day or night. This would allow for investigation of the possibility that there may be several systematic divisions within stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation practice and its related theories.

One reason for doing this is that Empowerment Evaluation (EE) does not fit easily into the present dichotomy. Cousins has commented on this in each version of the T-PE/P-PE matrix. While recognizing that P-PE and T-PE are forms of specifically Participatory Evaluation rather than examples of a broad category of stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation, it is useful here to treat the adapted matrix as dealing with stakeholder involvement oriented approaches to evaluation rather than Participatory Evaluation as Cousins and Whitmore intended (Cousins & Whitmore, 1998). Empowerment Evaluation and Collaborative Evaluation (Fetterman et al, 2014) can be added to this matrix, allowing it to cover the stakeholder involvement oriented approaches of Collaborative Evaluation, Participatory Evaluation, and Empowerment Evaluation. Collaborative Evaluation (CE) can be characterized by the evaluator remaining in charge, involving stakeholders as far as seems practical or useful depending on the situation (O’Sullivan, 2004; Fetterman et al, 2014). Looked at in terms of this new adaptation of the current matrix, Empowerment Evaluation (EE) is practitioner controlled, has deep participation, and is aimed at, or includes, both primary and all legitimate users. With the Transformative and Practical parameters added to the matrix, Empowerment Evaluation (EE) would have both Transformative and Practical goals. Whether this is actually the case, or whether Empowerment Evaluation should itself be seen as being of two types, Transformative Empowerment Evaluation (T-EE) and Practical Empowerment Evaluation (P-EE), will be discussed later in this chapter.
Table 2: How CE, T-PE, P-PE, and EE line up with Goal as a fourth parameter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation approach</th>
<th>Final &amp; Primary Control</th>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>researcher</td>
<td>practitioner</td>
<td>primary users</td>
<td>all legitimate groups</td>
<td>consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-PE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-PE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From this it is clear that a primary distinction between Empowerment Evaluation and other forms of stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation is that Empowerment Evaluation is that primary and final control is exercised by the participants (practitioners). This control by the participants is what makes the transformative goal of Empowerment Evaluation achievable. However, Empowerment Evaluation has consistently declared an interest in ECB. The following matrix includes cases where this is a primary concern.
Table 3: How CE, T-PE, P-PE, EE, EE-ECB1 and EE-ECB2 line up with Goal as a fourth parameter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation approach</th>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Practitioner</th>
<th>Primary users</th>
<th>All legitimate groups</th>
<th>Consultation</th>
<th>Deep participation</th>
<th>Transformative</th>
<th>Practical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-PE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-PE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE-ECB1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE-ECB2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EE</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two extra categories of evaluation approach are listed here. The first is EE-ECB1. This refers to evaluations that claim to be Empowerment Evaluations because of their emphasis on, or interest in, ECB but in fact leave out major components of this approach. Several of these turn up as cases of Empowerment Evaluation in Cousins and Chouinard (2012). They are presented with comment, but without disqualification, as Empowerment Evaluations. The second is EE-ECB2, which refers to Empowerment Evaluations that are framed and conceived entirely in terms of ECB. I regard these as examples of the kind of limited Empowerment Evaluation that Fetterman thinks can still lead to a liberatory conclusion if the process is followed fully (Fetterman 2005, personal communication Fetterman,
2011). This could be expected to happen despite any lack of interest in a change in power relations in the group carrying it out.

4.4.3 “Would the real Empowerment Evaluation please stand up?”

First, from the discussion of the last table, it is clear that the core of Empowerment Evaluation is the control of the evaluation process by the participants as a group. As a strong proponent of stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation, and a sympathetic critic of Empowerment Evaluation, Patton has consistently argued that the defining aspect of Empowerment Evaluation is decision-making, and more especially, decision-making by the group of participants (Patton, 1997; Patton, 2005; Patton, personal communication, AEA Developmental Evaluation Workshop, 2010, Patton, 2014).

As well as being positively remarked on repeatedly by Patton, this is the basis of Sechrest, Scriven and Stufflebeam’s criticisms, noted previously. It is the only form of stakeholder involvement evaluation that is controlled by the participants in principle.

Secondly, a successful Empowerment Evaluation demands deep participation. Without this the decision-making cannot be the frequent action on important questions that it has to be for the evaluation to be an Empowerment Evaluation, given the previous discussion of process use.

Thirdly, the question of stakeholder selection is complex. Leaving aside the further question of how participants are selected, Empowerment Evaluation can in principle be done with (i) a selection of managers, program staff and clients, or (ii) by a community selected/controlled group of clients, or (iii) by all program staff. All these arrangements could be used in an Empowerment Evaluation. The Empowerment Evaluation would be different in each case. This will be returned to after the next point.
Fourthly, looked at in terms of a “new” parameter of Transformative or Practical goal, Empowerment Evaluation has both. Cousins (2005) sees this as a sign of confusion in Empowerment Evaluation, at least in its formulations. Fetterman, commenting on Cousins’ discussion, characterized Cousins’ view as Empowerment Evaluation having two forms, Transformative Empowerment Evaluation and Practical Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 2005). However, Empowerment Evaluation is always both, not because of lack of clarity (although for Cousins this is an issue) but because that is what it is. Empowerment Evaluation as such is consciously concerned with both Transformative and Practical goals.

An Empowerment Evaluation that does not have a transformative goal is not an Empowerment Evaluation. Neither would an Empowerment Evaluation that did not have a practical goal be an Empowerment Evaluation.

Both Patton (Patton, 1997; Patton, 2014) and Cousins (Cousins, 2005), have argued that the concept of empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation is not clear: What would be being measured if it was measured? Fetterman has stressed his debt to Zimmerman’s view of Psychological Empowerment, which can apply at individual, organizational, or community levels. However, as a term empowerment comes with a huge historical baggage and an overlay of popular (and popular academic) usage. It is a highly contested practice and term within industrial relations and human resource contexts. In his criticisms of Empowerment Evaluation Patton goes straight to a Freirean idea of empowerment as liberation. Fetterman does speak of liberation in all his discussions. He also speaks of Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) which Cousins regards as strongly practical, primary user, and utilization focused (Cousins, 2005). However, for Cousins, Fetterman’s commitment to liberation and self-determination has not been presented in a way that makes it clear what would be measured (or how) if we wanted to measure empowerment as an effect of Empowerment Evaluation. For Fetterman, the interaction of the Ten Principles, and the effect of different levels of achievement within them, provides the equivalent of a definition of empowerment. It is a constant process, in which the evaluator as coach,
encourages the community/Evaluation Team to carry through with the evaluation, bringing all the elements together. Different levels of adherence to the Principles will lead to different levels of Empowerment Evaluation.

4.4.4 Empowerment Evaluation: T-EE and P-EE?

Whether it is decided that Empowerment Evaluation has both a Transformative and a Practical goal, or that there is a Practical Empowerment Evaluation (P-EE) concerned with program improvement through use of evaluation skills, and a Transformative Empowerment Evaluation (T-EE) concerned with liberatory empowerment, the results of the matrix remain that Empowerment Evaluation, whether seen as T-EE or P-EE, stands out as the only form of stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation in which (i) primary and final decision-making is in the hands of the participants, (ii) all legitimate groups are involved, and (iii) there is deep participation.

However, this section will argue that there is a necessary connection between Transformative and Practical goals in Empowerment Evaluation. My purpose is to uncover which of the Empowerment Evaluation Principles (and practices) are both characteristic of EE, and necessary for any evaluation being regarded as an EE. Fetterman has twice argued against a “too liberal” interpretation of Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 1995, p. 191; Fetterman, 2001, p.94). He speaks of some situations where it would be useful to talk of the application of Empowerment Evaluation tools and techniques rather than an Empowerment Evaluation.

It is useful to first look at some comparisons with Empowerment Evaluation, especially Collaborative Evaluation as presented by Rita O’Sullivan.

Rita O’Sullivan puts forward two aspects of Collaborative Evaluation that distinguish it from Empowerment Evaluation (O’Sullivan, 2004). The first
is that the evaluator doesn’t abrogate responsibility for the evaluation. By this she must mean final responsibility, as she allows for the desirability of stakeholder decision-making within the course of the evaluation. This decision-making is seen as including the evaluator. However, Empowerment Evaluation also includes and demands group decision-making, though without the evaluator having a vote.

Fetterman does not see the group decision-making as involving an abrogation of the evaluator’s responsibility. The evaluator in an Empowerment Evaluation is concerned with the group’s ownership of, and participation in, all decisions (allowing for delegation), including the final report. At the same time the evaluator uses persuasion and the role of a critical friend to help the group adhere to strong evaluation standards.

However, the Empowerment Evaluation evaluator insists on the final decision being the group’s. This is a major difference in form, though often not in apparent practice (if evaluator and stakeholders agree), between Collaborative and Empowerment Evaluation. It also constitutes a demarcation between them as evaluation approaches, and justifies identifying group participatory democratic decision-making as a defining characteristic of Empowerment Evaluation.

O’Sullivan also argues that Collaborative Evaluations are often empowering, but that this is not a goal of the evaluation as such. Fetterman says ‘In other words, empowerment is a desirable side benefit of collaborative work, but not required, whereas it is one of the primary goals of empowerment evaluation’ (Fetterman 2005, p 8). A goal of empowerment is then another defining characteristic of Empowerment Evaluation.

It is important then to establish what ‘empowerment’ means in this context, and what the relation is between these two defining characteristics that already separate Empowerment Evaluation form other stakeholder involvement approaches. Fetterman argues that “one theme remains
Empowerment Evaluation can be seen as transformative in terms of its intentions depending on the definition of empowerment being used. In his earliest formulation Fetterman says Empowerment Evaluation ‘can take many forms, including training, facilitation, advocacy, illumination, and liberation. Evaluators can teach people to conduct their own evaluations, and thus become more self-sufficient’ (Fetterman, 1993, p. 171). It can be seen as transformative in its effects to the extent that there is either a change in power relations or a change in skill level. But the transformations involved in Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) and liberation are very different.

Transformative goals, and the assumption that there are transformative practices which can be used for their achievement, are compatible with both postpositivist and constructivist epistemologies. The problem that T-PE/P-PE originally appeared to have in finding a place for Empowerment Evaluation has been largely because Empowerment Evaluation has a transformation in mind, but uses, and in practice has been built on, phenomenological but real world epistemology. Empowerment Evaluation can be seen as a form of practical stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation, both in its goal to create evaluations that are used, and to involve people in such a way that they are able to take advantage of the evaluation and use it.

Within this Practical orientation, Empowerment Evaluation has clear practical goals, including both teaching a skill through doing and ensuring evaluations that are useful and used. Its background in ethnography, in utilization oriented evaluation, in seeking social change, is based in real world epistemologies. It could be based in constructivist epistemology, but this has not been the case. This has been one reason for the divide between Deliberative Democratic Evaluation advocates in practice, despite Fetterman's support for House and Howe's work, and Empowerment
Evaluation's interest in, and self-definition as, decision-making by the participants.

Empowerment Evaluation intends to be empowering in some way. The change in participants to a psychologically empowered state, or to being capable of and interested in evaluating their own program in the future, are kinds of transformation that fall far short of liberation. This is part of Patton's original criticism of aspects of Empowerment Evaluation (Patton, 1997). However, Empowerment Evaluation demands more than just learning. Accountability, one of Fetterman’s 10 Principles, is a goal of any Empowerment Evaluation. Accountability would mean that the process has to deliver an evaluation, not just teach how to do one.

For Empowerment Evaluation, to the extent that it is seen as ECB, needs inclusion of the relevant stakeholders. An Empowerment Evaluation aimed at ECB and depending entirely on program staff, could expect to be continued; an Empowerment Evaluation with a very diverse stakeholder group of participants should expect difficulty in any achieved ECB continuing as clients change, funders, etc. stay out of the day to day running of the program, and staff turnover. To the extent the Empowerment Evaluation is achieving community level empowerment at the organizational level it relies on the involvement either of all program staff or a significant number who spread their ideas and practices among the other staff to have the effect intended. Participating clients in this case may be seen as empowered in terms of Zimmerman’s individual level of empowerment depending on the case, but even if they are elected representatives the fact that their base has not been involved in the Empowerment Evaluation process places clients as a group outside its effects in terms of organizational or community empowerment.

Patton and Cousins both point out that Empowerment Evaluation has claims, more regularly articulated in earlier years, to stronger empowerment than that which follows from ECB. However Patton still sees decision-making as vital (personal communication, Patton in AEA workshop 2011,
Patton, 2015), and Cousins demonstrates the continuing ties to wider liberatory empowerment in Fetterman's discussions (Cousins, 2005; Fetterman, 2005). Speaking of the Empowerment Evaluation process, Fetterman says:

They can focus on whatever they want, capacity building, accountability, improvement... if they're taking a constellation of these principles, even if they're emphasizing one, liberation emerges, if they do the lot” (personal communication Fetterman, 2011).

4.5 Process Use III: The Core of Empowerment Evaluation

For Fetterman ECB can lead to empowerment in a sense consistent with Zimmerman's Psychological Empowerment. This is so only if the evaluation is carried out in a particular way. Empowerment depends on process use, and this depends on what the process is that is being used. Some evaluations that are called Empowerment Evaluations by the evaluators involved, for example Miller and Lennie (2005), explicitly speak of minimizing decision-making occasions in the interests of feasibility. This means that the process that occurs is very different from that assumed by Fetterman's approach. This is clear from the third matrix involving EE-ECB1 and EE-ECB2. Miller and Lennie, advocates of EE-ECB1, criticize Fetterman’s approach as too idealistic (2005). However, it is not the case that Fetterman’s approach is too idealistic, but that Miller and Lennie’s “Empowerment Evaluation” is not Empowerment Evaluation, but something else.

This is important for two reasons.

First, if Empowerment Evaluation is to be judged critically as an approach to evaluation practice (and it has been continually since its first presentation) it is important that the judgements of Empowerment Evaluation in practice are in fact based on examining Empowerment Evaluations. An example of this is Miller and Lennie's criticism of
"idealism", in Empowerment Evaluation. They see this as a result of an unrealistic expectation of empowerment coming from ECB as such (Miller & Lennie, 2005). They do not consider whether empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation would be expected to come only from a particular form of ECB as a result of associated particular practices, such as deep democratic participation.

Second, for Empowerment Evaluation to have the process that is expected to lead to the intended process use, it must ensure that those aspects of Empowerment Evaluation that constitute the intended process are in fact in place and carried through.

Empowerment Evaluation has to specify the processes involved. Where these go against common sense or commonly applied approaches they have to be underlined. Terms like "inclusion" or "participation" have a range of meanings most of which do not include (and certainly do not assume) the direct democratic decision-making which I argue is the hallmark of Empowerment Evaluation. This form of decision-making, immediately open to criticism in terms of feasibility (Miller & Lennie, 2005) or accepted evaluator roles (Stufflebeam, 1994), is the structural element of the process whose process use Empowerment Evaluation depends on.

Finally, determining what activities are essential for a self-declared Empowerment Evaluation to be an Empowerment Evaluation depends on the operationalization of the concept of empowerment. The next chapter will examine and justify an interpretation of empowerment in a group situation as group decision-making, arguing for this as the core activity of the process whose process use constitutes Empowerment Evaluation.
5 CHAPTER V: EMPOWERMENT

5.1 Philosophy, Theory and Core Meaning

The positions established in this chapter are vital to the conception of empowerment that justifies operationalizing empowerment evaluation as workers' control. The introductory section concerns the multiple meanings of “empowerment” as term. The second section argues for a definition of empowerment in terms of a change in power relations through a discussion of “empowerment” in the work of Pers-Anders Tengland (Philosophy and Health Science), Kaler (Industrial Relations), and Marc Zimmerman (Community Psychology). This includes discussion of equivalents to empowerment in the work of John Dewey and Kurt Lewin. The third section is an examination of the role of “empowerment” in an industrial setting, first as part of the repertoire of management, then in the field of nursing, with particular reference to the work of Kanter and practical applications. The final part of this section looks at radical approaches to “empowerment” in the form of workers’ control in industry, both in revolutionary settings (the Spanish Civil War), and as a part of a “new strategy for labour”. The chapter concludes that it is conceptually justifiable to operationalize empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation as participants’ direct-democratic decision-making, analogous to workers’ control in industry.

Empowerment is a term that has come to be used in different disciplines and areas of application with varying meanings. For this study I want to establish a particular meaning as equivalent to, or at least demanding, direct democratic group decision-making. I am not arguing that this is the only way that empowerment can or should be understood, nor that this would be the most useful definition in all the situations that the word empowerment is currently applied to. However, I want to show that it is a reasonable meaning within the range associated with the term, and that it is the one that is most useful and appropriate in examining Empowerment Evaluation.
How empowerment is interpreted within Empowerment Evaluation determines what is done in its name and what is regarded as successful empowerment. Different definitions or interpretations will lead to different actions and different results. For an area of applied social science like program evaluation this is a vital concern. It is essential to be clear about what is being attempted, why it is being attempted, and what is expected to follow from the attempt if an approach is to be judged for its relevance or success.

When the particular use or content of a concept requires going against taken for granted positions and practices it is useful to have a clear picture of alternatives. This has a danger of oversimplification. However, it is more useful to refine a working concept than cover all possibilities in advance. In the case of empowerment, applied to a workplace setting or other delimited organizational group, the idea of workers' control, taken in the strongest sense as equivalent to workers' self-management, makes the clearest distinction between approaches to decision-making involving groups. The distinction here is between any structure of top-down decision-making and a structure of direct democracy. This distinction separates direct democracy from other forms of organization, including “democratic” forms that rely on discussion without decision-making, or participation in what remains an hierarchical power structure.

5.1.1 Per-Anders Tenglund

Per-Anders Tenglund proposes a definition of empowerment first as a goal, then, critiquing this definition, as a process, then as a combination in which the disenfranchised person or group “...seizes (at least) some control over this situation or process (goal/problem formulation, decision-making and acting)” (Tenglund, 2008, p. 93). He sees this as capturing the criteria a definition needs, especially “…since it brings out the radicalism in the concept by explicitly addressing the ‘power balance’ between professional and client” (Tenglund, 2008, p. 93).
This is Tengland’s reason for saying that empowerment is not a useful concept for managers, and others like prison staff, which at first seems to fly in the face of its widespread use over the last 30-40 years in human resources (Tengland, 2008, p. 78).

5.1.2 John Kaler

Kaler states that, in the argument between traditional management and empowerment-oriented management practice, empowerment, as a term in management theory, necessarily refers to something that is ‘within the gift of management.’ This is necessary ‘for discussion to take the form it does: that is, a debate about which of the two approaches to adopt. Obviously, were empowerment not in the gift of managers there would be nothing to debate’ (Kaler, 1999, p. 95).

He argues that this is not ‘to deny that empowerment could be a policy imposed on managers (by legislation or the threat of industrial action, for instance). But it is to say that this would not be empowerment in the sense discussed in literature on management theory’ (Kaler, 1999, p. 95). This is not just a semantic point. The actual changes to organization brought about here have a different meaning and purpose when brought about by workers’ direct action. This including areas such as job enrichment that Kaler dismisses (Kaler, 1999, p.103). Writing as Michel Bosquet, Andre Gorz argues this in his “The Prison Factory” (Bosquet, 1972). In a situation where the change was enacted, and hence the power to make the change taken, by workers in a particular workplace the result would be in the area of encroaching workers’ control, as argued for by 60s’and 70s’ workers’ control advocates such as Ken Coates and Andre Gorz (Coates & Topham, 1970; Gorz, 1973).

John Kaler’s article is entitled “Does Empowerment Empower?” (Kaler, 1999). Kaler admits that there is an 'element of paradox to any assertion that empowerment in organisations is not about increasing the power of employees' (Kaler, 1999, p. 95). His argument is directed against advocates
of ‘empowerment’ in industry who argue that it is not about some form of participative management. He argues that there is a core meaning of empowerment that is about a change in power within a situation. This requires a form of shared decision-making. ‘It is in the contrast with democratic empowerment that it becomes possible to talk of empowerment not increasing the power of employees in the case of the managerial variety’ (Kaler, 1999, p. 91).

Kaler argues that the status of empowerment in management theory ‘requires determining whether or not it necessarily involves participation in the sense of shared decision-making’ (Kaler, 1999, p. 103). This brings it together with Tengland’s view that a justifiable conception of empowerment must include some idea of seizing “(at least) some control over this situation or process (goal/problem formulation, decision-making and acting)” (Tengland, 2008, p. 93).

5.1.3 Marc A. Zimmerman

Reviewing different definitions of empowerment, Zimmerman argues that “These definitions suggest that empowerment is a process in which efforts to exert control are central” (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 44). Elsewhere he argues that:

Empowerment is a process by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over issues of concern to them… Psychological empowerment (PE) refers to empowerment at the individual level of analysis… Organizational empowerment includes processes and structures that enhance members’ skills and provide them with the mutual support necessary to effect community level change… At the community level of analysis, empowerment refers to individuals working together to in an organized fashion to improve their collective lives (Zimmerman, 1995, p. 581-582).
This view of empowerment, with different meanings of empowerment attached to the different levels, is one of the main sources of Fetterman’s use of empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation (Fetterman, 2001).

However, in Empowerment Evaluation the kind of change associated with community level empowerment is being applied to the organizational level. This works because the organizational level (the evaluation team) is the functioning community in Empowerment Evaluation. What becomes relevant then is a change in group power relations as both product and process within the Empowerment Evaluation.

5.1.4 Empowerment Under Another Name: John Dewey and Kurt Lewin

The conclusion of the last chapter considered the central role of the concept of empowerment used in Empowerment Evaluation when applying or evaluating Empowerment Evaluation in terms of its goals of its effects. This section will examine several theories of empowerment that have been acknowledged in the development of Empowerment Evaluation and some aspects of the concept that have not been highlighted. Empowerment in the sense used here is concerned with a change in power relations within a group from one characterized by hierarchical control of decisions to one characterized by a direct democratic form of decision-making. It is argued here that the theorists and practices involved, though not always expressed in terms of empowerment, include John Dewey and Kurt Lewin, together with the experiences of human relations and adult education advocates of workplace empowerment or democracy, and the anarchist and socialist experiences of workers’ control and workers’ self-management in contested or revolutionary situations.

Dewey is quoted or referenced repeatedly both in Empowerment Evaluation and in US evaluation work in general. Lewin also is mentioned in both Empowerment (eg Fetterman, Wandersman) and other participatory
evaluation approaches (eg Patton, King). Lewin is also a major reference point in adult education writings aimed at workplace democracy.

While several of these authors and writers within these traditions do not use the term "empowerment", the concept is central to their work. Adult education theorist John Dew’s Empowerment and Democracy in the Workplace points out that the idea of a democratic society for Dewey included a democratic ethos that both demanded and justified the goal of a democratic workplace, not as a distant vision, but as a necessary first or second step in making real democracy viable (Dew, 1997). Dew's emphasis on consensus democratic organization is in line with both the self-developing nature of the version of workplace democracy advocated and the practice of small groups and ongoing commitment and action.

5.1.5 John Dewey

Bullert's chapter on Dewey and Guild Socialism, together with Dewey's membership of, and at one time head of, the League for Industrial Democracy, attached to the Democratic Party, (Bullert, 1983), should be enough to show that Dewey’s conception of a democratic society or a democratic ethos was expected to embrace a workers' control interpretation of his ideas at the workplace level. However, this is not the case. It is unusual for a work on Dewey to refer to this level or position. The loose interpretation of "democratic", and the assumption that Dewey shared and promoted this feeling rather than structural approach to democracy within the community, is evident in the references to him that appear in the evaluation literature as well as many substantial works on him. For example, there is no reference to industrial democracy in the Cambridge Companion to John Dewey (Cochran, 2010).

The reason why this interpretation of his thought has to be spelled out is that, apart from occasional references that reduce its importance to a passing historical incident, the role of a version of workers' control and direct
democracy within Dewey’s concept of democracy is ignored as it goes against the common practice and the common sense of the society it has been adopted in. It is taken that something in the direction of a democratic community or social organization advocated by Dewey, while theoretically desirable, could not possibly mean actual direct decision-making by the groups involved. When these groups are regularly in a subordinate position within systems of authority it becomes even less likely that a radical transformation of power relations could be intended. However, Dewey’s concept of democracy requires just this extension. This is so not just as a logical implication but as an explicit social concern in much of Dewey’s work. It is also true that whatever reservations Dewey may have had at certain times about what was immediately possible in the given conjuncture, he never distanced his ideas from direct democratic and workers’ control. He was aware of the possible connection between his ideas and those of radical labour groupings. For example, he says, that, on the issue of elites, the syndicalists had already done most of the work. However, he does not make a point of distinguishing his concept from theirs at the level of workplace organization. He argues against violent revolution, and against an approach that would enshrine past class organization in a new form of class corporateness, but not against the concept or immediate practice of workers’ control seen as direct workplace democracy (Bullert, 1983). Again, this is not what most professionals in evaluation or other fields would regard as either a practical proposal or an expected interpretation of Dewey.

Dew, who has a detailed discussion of Dewey on workplace and industrial democracy, makes no reference to the revolutionary tradition or experiences (Dew, 1997), despite the radical elements that were, and remained, a part of Dewey’s social milieu from his first period at the University of Chicago till his death (Bullert, 1983). Dewey writes, in a letter to a friend, of the reception of his and his wife’s ideas on their arrival at the University of Chicago in 1886: "They think we’re anarchists” (Bullert, 1983). Dewey was aware of, and sympathetic to, the syndicalist I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World) when it was attacked by the US government; he knew the anarchosyndicalist Carlo Tresca over a long period (Rorty, 1998); and was a
founder of the League for Industrial Democracy, attached to the Democratic Party. To use Dewey’s concept of democracy as one that can include “democracy” understood as workers’ control, is justified by the fact that Dewey knew that such an interpretation was possible, and never distanced himself from it.

The point is that concepts that can be linked together in different ways depending on their interpretation, have been regularly linked together in a particular way which is not the only reasonable way of approaching them, and actually nullifies some of their content. Democratic organization, if it does not consciously include structural direct democratic organization, is a different concept to a view of democracy that does. As Dewey uses “democracy” in its broadest sense most of the time, this has the effect of allowing others, especially later, to interpret his ideas in terms that are common sense to them. Dewey has been criticized for leaving the particular level of meaning vague in much of his writing. However, the assumption that he intends the full meaning at the conceptual level given that Dewey consistently is unhappy with discussions of democratic society or ethos that do not include the everyday lived experience of the people involved. In this he consistently insists on attention being paid at the level of action and decision in people's everyday lives. However, there is a strong tendency in later writers using his ideas, and the general reception of his ideas in the background of social science in the US, to interpret this as a matter of feeling rather than an issue of structure. This is the same problem that runs through discussions of empowerment when applied in industrial, small group, and community settings. It shows that direct democratic decision-making structures have to be argued for explicitly if they are to be taken into account in discussions of “democracy”. This is so whether they are to be accepted or rejected.
After Kurt Lewin fled Germany to the US in the 1930s, he stayed with Karl Korsch for a long period. This was just after Korsch had written his “Collectivization in Spain” (Korsch, 1939/1977). This was a detailed account of the Spanish anarchosyndicalists' practice of workers' self-management in industry during the Spanish Civil War. When Lewin developed his ideas of work groups in the 1940s he never distanced them from ideas of direct workers' management, although he knew this was a possible theoretical and practical interpretation. The scope of the work groups could be expected to be limited within the given industrial setting. However, they always contained an element of direct decision-making as part of their structure.

Kurt Lewin's 1920 “Socializing the Taylor System” is concerned with the implications of Lewin's distinction between workers as producers and consumers of work or labour (Lewin, 1920/1999). Lewin, a non-Communist socialist, wrote the article at Karl Korsch's request for the Communist journal Korsch edited. Lewin discusses workers as consumers of the work process. He is concerned with the consciousness produced by and experienced within different kinds of work arrangement. Against Taylor's concentration on workers as producers of labour, Lewin argues for the equal importance of workers as consumers of labour. His concern is with the resulting lived life of workers within the workplace (Lewin, 1920/1999). While advocating democratic work relations he is also concerned with the conscious experience of the process (Lewin, 1920/1999). This concern is similar to Dewey's conception of a democratic society as requiring a democratic ethos. For Dewey this can only exist within an experience of participatory and direct democracy, especially within the workplace.

Lewin's ideas were one source for various moves towards a participatory workplace. This was usually in a form far short of any control beyond, at most, the immediate work process. However, they helped embed a loose
idea of some kind of participation in the work environment. Lewin’s small
groups, like Dewey’s views on democratic society and democratic ethos,
continued as an aspect of US social science. This was particularly so in the
areas of community development and, less directly, organizational
development.

My argument is not that Dewey and Lewin were secret anarchosyndicalists, but that their
concepts, at this level of abstraction, can cover the specific meanings or applications
consistent with strong empowerment as equivalent to workers’ control. Concepts
developed in their work have played a continuing role in US social science, especially in
areas of social policy and human resources. They have also had an impact on program
evaluation. Within the field of stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation both David
Fetterman and Michael Quinn Patton refer to Lewin and Dewey regularly.

5.2 Empowerment and Industry

The entry for empowerment in Cooper and Argyris’ The Concise Blackwell Encyclopedia of
Management (1998) reads:

‘Prior to its adoption as a management term, the word empowerment was most often
used, in fields such as politics, social work, feminist theory, and Third World aid.
Writers in these fields have taken it to mean providing individuals (usually
disadvantaged) with the tools and resources to further their own interests, as they
see them. Within the field of management, empowerment is commonly used with a
different meaning: providing employees with tools, resources, and discretion to
further the interests of the organization (as seen by senior management)’ (Cooper &

Whether criticized or supported, this is the most common view of the purpose of
empowerment within an industrial relations framework (Quinn, 1999; Bird, 1999; Kaler,
1999). However, there is an alternative approach to workplace participation, where the
goal is seen as democratic self-management.

Against the tradition of workplace participation and empowerment as a managerial
concern, there is another tradition concerned with issues of workplace organization. This
is part of the anarchosyndicalist and socialist traditions, and involves the concept of
“workers’ control”. The central idea is that workers organize their workplace themselves,
using some form of direct democracy. This is usually seen as applying in revolutionary situations, or in movements that aim at revolution.

However, one area where workplace empowerment has involved looking at issues of change in decision-making and structural power within the workplace, is in the work carried out on empowerment in nursing.

5.2.1 Nursing Practice: Structural and Psychological Empowerment

Concern with empowerment in nursing began with management interests; in this case the issue of retention of nursing staff. This was assumed to be related to job satisfaction and it was posited that a feeling of empowerment would lead to greater job satisfaction, resulting in retention of staff. Studies consulted have taken the form of examining nurses’ empowerment within existing situations rather than programs to promote empowerment.

The main theorist taken up by these nursing studies was Rosabeth Moss Kanter, with concentration on her ideas of structural empowerment and psychological empowerment. Li, Kuo, Huang, Lo and Wang (2013) summarize these:

‘Kanter (1993) notes that structural empowerment is defined by two factors: (1) power, meaning access to resources, support and information; and (2) opportunity, meaning access to challenges, growth and development. As a consequence of higher levels of empowerment, employees experience positive feelings about their jobs, and perceive that they have a greater sense of control over the work itself, which leads to an increase in job satisfaction’ (Li et al, 2013, p. 441).

Li and colleagues note Spreitzer’s (1995) ‘four domains of psychological empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination and impact’ (Li et al, 2913, p. 441) and continue:
Psychological empowerment is defined as the psychological state that employees perceive when their values, beliefs and behaviours are congruent with their job requirements, when they have confidence in their work-related abilities and when they feel they have a sense of control over their work 

(Li et al, 2013, p. 442, referencing Spreitzer, 1995).

Psychological empowerment is the more common concern, and Li et al’s description of this is consistent with others such as Gibson (1991), quoted in several nursing studies, and primarily seen as referring to a feeling about self and work situation.

As regards structural empowerment, Trus and his/ her colleagues have argued that

Changing work structures to enhance access to the sources of work empowerment described by Kanter is a legitimate task for nurse administrators. It is reasonable to believe that nurses who perceive their work environments to be empowering are more likely to provide high-quality care through more effective work practices  


Assuming that this is so, structural empowerment here is a collection of resources and opportunities that become the environment within which nurses can make decisions or develop innovative behaviors which are the source of psychological empowerment. This psychological empowerment is then a factor in job satisfaction.

However, it is necessary to clarify some of the language here. Nurse administrators, nurse managers, and senior nurse leaders can be regarded as equivalent. At the same time, while they are nurses, they are in a managerial role as regards staff nurses. Discussion of nursing empowerment often speaks of both groups using the same term, “nurses”. In this situation, “nursing empowerment” could refer to either a group that are at the bottom
of the hospital hierarchy, or a group who are already in a position to make decisions and have them acted on.

In line with Trus and colleagues (2012) position, and regarding nurse managers (senior nurses leaders), Li and colleagues (2013) argue that ‘Nurse managers are in a position to influence the implementation of strategies that increase accessibility to structural empowerment for nurses’ (Li et al, 2013, p. 446). They follow this with a Kanter-type list of resources that nurse managers could provide, and, after arguing that ‘Modification of the workplace is more effective than attempting to alter the personal attitudes of the employees’ (Li et al, 2013, p. 447), they conclude that ‘workers need to become increasingly involved in the decision-making and developmental processes of the facilities’ (Li et al, 2013, p. 447).

However, the possibility of interpreting structural empowerment in traditional management terms is clear in Kluska et al:

Nurses should reflect on their own empowerment and make the choice to strengthen it. Then they can pro-actively innovate and realize their own ideals and the caring values of nursing. Managers should decide to what extent and how to create conditions for the empowerment of nurses, and should focus on the structural dimensions of empowerment in the working environment, as these can influence psychological empowerment and innovative behaviour (Kluska et al, 2004, p. 115).

It is evident that for Kluska et al the nurse being empowered is an individual with responsibility for their own attitude towards work, and the managers who could promote structural empowerment are not themselves part of the nursing staff. When the managers “focus on the structural dimensions of empowerment” they are doing this as resource managers, not as participatory decision-makers. In this way nurses’ own activity would be a case of an individual acting in a situation, where managers had provided the
structural elements to make it easier for them to do so, while leaving traditional power structures intact.

Wong et al have argued that:

Senior nurse leaders play an influential role in the future of healthcare organizations through their participation in decision-making at the senior team level and their ability to influence how nursing is practiced and valued in the organization


This is important because, to the extent that participation in decision-making is a characteristic of empowerment or an empowered workplace, the decisions of staff nurses that are enabled by structural empowerment are different to the decisions taken by managers as such. Any manager could make decisions that amount to structural empowerment, in Kanter’s terms, for nurses. Their act is not itself part of nursing empowerment. However, when this act is carried out by a nurse manager, senior nurse leader or nurse administrator, it counts in itself as an example of nurse empowerment.

This is part of the source of the ambiguity as to whether group decision-making (nursing teams), or individual decisions (manager or staff nurse), or involvement of nurse managers in higher hospital management decisions is intended. Part of this comes from a taken-for-granted “individual feeling” focus in workplace empowerment, rather than a change in effective power relations. from top-down to some form of participatory organization with power, in at least some areas, at the bottom. As Lewis & Urmston point out: “There is widespread acceptance that nurses as a whole are in a subservient position vis a vis administrators and medical staff (Lewis & Urmston, 2000, p. 211).

Within this discussion calls for greater nurse involvement in decision-making sometimes seem to refer to nurses’ individual decisions on their own work, sometimes their decisions as Senior Nurse Leaders (SNLs) as
regards management of their team, and sometimes as involvement of particularly senior nurses in higher management committee decisions. Sometimes the involvement in decision-making seems to be group decision-making by nursing teams. The language used is often consistent with all of these as proposals, although there is a combination of strong support for nurse involvement in decision-making and control of their work with an acceptance of management structures which would seem inconsistent with this. This is to be expected in the description and examination of existing situations, but leads to unclear or contradictory proposals for future action.

The taken-for-granted individualist interpretation is deep within these studies. Stewart et al (2010) suggest that ‘NPs [Nurse Practitioners] who are psychologically empowered would benefit by seeking work environments that have access to structurally empowering elements in order to find meaning in their work, benefit from job satisfaction, and be innovative and effective in their practice’ (Stewart et al, 2010, p. 33).

This is looking at the issue from the point of view of an individual nurse looking for a work situation that would fit their psychological empowerment. At the same time, Stewart et al argue:

To empower NPs [Nurse Practitioners] to have control in their work environment they should have direct input into their professional practice. Encouraging active involvement of NPs in decision-making processes within the organizational setting would be an effective method for enhancing structural and psychological empowerment

(Stewart et al, 2010, p. 32).

Similarly, Laschinger et al (1997) argue that:

Empowerment and nurses’ control over the content and context of their practice are important issues in nursing today. The studies reported here add to our knowledge of work structures that empower nurses and
provide conditions that promote involvement in workplace decision making


Part of Li et al’s conclusion is that ‘… workers need to become increasingly involved in the decision-making and developmental processes of the facilities’ (Li et al, 2013, p. 447), and Lewis & Urmston urge ‘it should be the ideal time to allow nurses a greater say and increase participative decision making to enhance responsibility and feelings of success’ (Lewis & Urmston, 2000, p. 211).

Laschinger et al (1997) concluded:

In summary, although the relationship between Kanter’s … concept of work empowerment and the notion of nurses’ involvement in decision making that affects both the content and context of their practice has not been directly tested, there is indirect evidence in the literature to support this hypothesis

(Laschinger, Sabiston & Kutszcher, 1997, p. 344).

While most proposals for nurse involvement in decision-making and control of their work are put in general terms, this is not always the case. Referring to an Institute of Medicine study on patient safety, Armstrong & Laschinger point out:

Recommendations for creating and sustaining a “culture of safety” included nonhierarchical communication and decision-making strategies, such as empowering all members of the healthcare team to participate in decisions that affect their work processes as well as empowering them to engage in "constrained improvisation" to immediately address patient safety issues as they arise

(Armstrong & Laschinger, 2006, p. 129)
Lewis & Urmston’s proposals recognize what could be regarded as structural empowerment in a different sense to Kanter’s, as involving a change in organizational structures rather than simply a change in attitudes (even if aided by availability of resources) within them:

In particular, allowing freedom for professional decision making, and the need for close effective teamwork; free from unnecessary senior management direction were positively correlated with increased self-efficacy. The notion of effective teams and group support was also reported as an essential feature of professional support in practice


Arguably the changes in opportunity and resources that Kanter looks to management to provide are those that are already possessed by a workplace based on some form of directly democratic group decision-making.

Looking at “Future Directions”, Lanschinger et al (2004) point out that:

The fact that changes in structural empowerment directly affected job satisfaction underscores the importance of studying structural empowerment… Kanter would argue that structural empowerment should help all groups. .. But will our findings generalize to other occupational groups? Nurses are a dedicated group of professionals. When interviewed, they repeatedly stress how important it is to them to give their patients the best care possible… however, not all other groups are as motivated


Lanschinger et al (2004) continue: ‘More importantly, is empowerment desirable for all occupational groups? In some jobs employees are expected to follow orders’ (Laschinger et al, 2004, p. 540). While Laschinger et al wonder whether an advocate of workplace decision-making for nurses would want bus drivers to decide for themselves who they would pick up and where they would go, this is exactly what happened in Barcelona during
the Spanish Civil War. This is the subject of the next section, but the relevant aspect here is that the Barcelona tram drivers assumed that decision making in the workplace was a group direct democratic process, whereas Lanschinger et al, even when extending the idea of how far nurses’ decision-making should go, cannot avoid thinking in terms of individual empowerment assumptions.

5.2.2 Workers’ Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution 1936-37

The purpose of this section on workers’ self-management in the Spanish revolution is to establish the idea that democratic organization can be conceived in a manner that consciously refuses any hierarchy, within a directly democratic form. This discussion of a concrete case in detail is intended to help overcome “common sense” acceptance of terms and their assumed implications and get at the “real” meaning of terms and make explicit their implications. In the Spanish situation, a level of direct democracy and mandated delegate organization was achieved on a scale that has never been equalled. To show this as a practical, rather than simply a logical, possibility it was necessary to give an extended examination of the practice of the workplaces involved.

The largest scale experience of workers’ control occurred during the Spanish Civil War when, after defeating the military rising in Barcelona in July 1936, the anarcho-syndicalist trade unions in Catalonia and surrounding areas took over industry and ran it under various forms of workers’ control until they were finally defeated militarily in 1939 (Alba, 2001; Broue & Temime, 1972; Mintz, 2006/2013).

George Orwell describes his first days in Barcelona in December, 1936:

It was the first time that I had ever been in a town where the working class was in the saddle. Practically every building of any size had been seized by the workers and was draped with red flags or with the red and
black flag of the Anarchists... Every shop and café had a sign saying that it had been collectivized; even the bootblacks had been collectivized and their boxes painted red and black. Waiters and shop-walkers looked you in the face and treated you as an equal. Servile and even ceremonial forms of speech had temporarily disappeared

(Orwell, 1938/1962, p. 8).

Alba argues that there were many variations owing to the level of militancy or commitment of the workers involved (Alba, 2001). Many simply wanted an industry, abandoned by its owners, that could produce and pay wages. Others, while faced with the same problem, were strongly influenced by the anarchosyndicalists’ vision of a world without top-down authority, where some form of direct democracy would cover most working situations (Alba, 2001; Fraser, 1979).

Within the Spanish anarchosyndicalist union, the CNT (Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo), argument had raged throughout the 1930s on what kind of group self-preparation was necessary for the move to workers’ self-management (Vega, 1980; Vega, 1987). The anarchosyndicalists of the CNT had been divided over two main strategies, one aimed at immediate insurrection, and the spontaneous creation of comunismo libertario (libertarian communism) without the State, and the other looking for a period of building the union as an organization. Their approach was to develop the workers involved as a workforce that could take over and run the means of production as a result of their experience of direct democratic management of the union. They believed that it was impossible to set up libertarian communism immediately:

They defended the idea of a transition period, in which union organization would have to play an important role; assuring production, defending the revolution, and preparing the next step toward a libertarian communist society (Vega, 1980, p. 212).
In practice the form of the “next step” taken by the Barcelona workers was neither that of full libertarian communism nor that of overall union control. Spontaneously, factory by factory, workers adopted a version of the direct democratic/general assembly and elected committee structure which they had been accustomed to in the CNT’s own radically democratic organization (Alba, 2001; Broue & Temime, 1976).

The CNT was the largest union in Spain. In the years leading up to the Civil War, the anarcho-syndicalist CNT developed as a union whose:

brand of syndicalism began, in one way or another, to be in open conflict with the UGT [Socialist Trade Union]. Syndicalists believed in a very flexible and non-bureaucratic organization. They resorted to direct action, fighting the bosses, without intermediates and without state arbitration. In spite of these differences, UGT members and syndicalists took part in various trade union alliances and collaborated in joint activities at the height of the Civil War (Paniagua, 2007, p. 253).

When a Collectivization Decree was issued later in 1936 by the Generalitat (Catalan semi-autonomous government), covering all enterprises with 100 or more employees, most Catalan industry had already been collectivized in various ad hoc forms, including many smaller enterprises. For Alba a major factor in the spontaneous takeover of the first few weeks was the need to pay wages. This was an immediate problem, and one which led to action in many workplaces which had not been strongholds of the CNT. However, where most workers involved were CNT members, the takeovers went further and took up issues of coordination and procuring raw materials for future work. Alba argues that when the workers took over:

My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
While each workplace improvised, in the first moments, this improvisation responded to common issues, the proof of which is the fact that the procedures put in place were in practice similar in all the collectivized enterprises, without the necessity of uniformity or consultation… In fact, the collectivisations reproduced the structure of a syndicalist union

(Alba, p. 86-87).2

Alba includes several interviews with workers who were involved in the collectivization of industry in Barcelona. Jose Robuster was a member of the entertainment union. On the day of the military uprising he heard that the police in one area were handing out arms to known militants but arrived too late to get any:

During the week there was a general assembly of all the dog-track workers in order to collectivize them. This was celebrated in the cinema in the Plaze de Urquinaona. It was decided that the workers would stay with the dog-tracks… The assembly elected a committee of three who were charged with the administration of the newly collectivized enterprise. It was decided that, to be elected, it was necessary to obtain two thirds of the votes of those present

(Alba, 2001, p. 262-263).3

Juan Farré, involved in the takeover of a major department store, comments that:

Once the enterprise was collectivized, and a management committee elected… all those who worked in the enterprise whether manual, office, or intellectual workers, had the same rights and the same obligations, without differences of any class

(Juan Farré quoted in Alba, 2001, p. 199).4

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2 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
3 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
4 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
Juan Farré continues:

Despite the triumphalist feeling of the first weeks, no enterprise that had been taken over or put under workers’ control increased the wages. Any of the bosses who remained were given a wage that was not excessively different from the rest of the workforce …

(Juan Farré quoted in Alba, 2001, p. 200).5

Alba argues that:

The general assembly of all the workers and employees in an enterprise elected a control committee or an enterprise management committee of five to ten people… In these committees all sections of the enterprise were represented… As a result, many committees had a majority of members who were recent adherents to the CNT, while the organizing force and “soul” of the committees were the veteran union militants… In general, all the members of the committee were male, while in the least bad cases, and where a majority of the workers were women, there was sometimes a woman on the committee

(Alba, 2001, pp. 87-88).6

When the Collectivization Decree was declared later in the year, it also affected workplaces where the owner had remained and only a supervisory form of workers’ control had been carried out. The owner was given the choice of leaving or taking a job, basically as a management consultant, within what had been their company. A separate issue was that in industries seen as white collar or cultural, union membership and workers’ involvement was lower.

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5 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
6 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
In the entertainment industry some sections, such as live theatres, were like this, while others, like the blue-collar dogtrack and cinema workers, were strong CNT groupings and had collectivized immediately. The Collectivization Decree meant that sections of the entertainment industry that hadn’t gone this far now had to organize on the same lines. Jose Robuster says that, following the Collectivization Decree:

The autonomous groupings of musicians and actors had to decide whether to join the CNT or the UGT, as to remain unaligned in this situation was to lose all influence. Given that the bases of the entertainment industry, both workers and workplaces, were in the CNT, these unaligned groups entered the CNT. It was logical, given that they had no ideological affinity

(Alba, 2001, p. 267).7

This does not mean that only anarchosyndicalist workers had strong convictions. Jose Robuster points out an example that is also interesting in terms of the role of women and independent action within the collectives:

However, there was one exception. A group of acrobats, almost all women, had come from… Madrid, where they had been affiliated to the UGT. They organized a sindicato [local union] of the UGT for acrobats in Barcelona. A group of actors also organized a UGT sindicato for actors. I have to say that the CNT always respected their rights as workers in the entertainment industry, and that they never had trouble getting work in the theatres controlled by committees consisting of CNT members

(Alba, 2001, p. 267).8

Not everybody was in agreement with collectivization, and not every union section or enterprise had the same resources. According to Jose Robuster:

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7 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
8 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
During the week there was a general assembly of the workers from all the dog-racing tracks, to collectivize them... A committee of three was elected to take charge of the administration of the new collectivized enterprise... The managers of the dog-racing tracks hadn’t fled… Nobody lost their job, no matter how high their position had been. The only thing they lost was their power. And this was despite the fact that we knew they were enemies of the union. No one was forced to join the union

(Robuster, quoted in Alba, 2001, p. 262-3). 9

One worker, identified only as Y.Y. comments that he is often asked about work discipline and abuses of power by the elected committees in the factories and other workplaces. He says, speaking of his own experience in the textile industry:

The answer is that, from the start, we did everything democratically. The general assembly met, especially at the beginning, whenever important decisions had to be taken. All the offices were elected directly, both by the general assembly for the management committee, and by the sections for offices at section level… If the worker chosen by the section had been appointed by the management committee, they wouldn’t have had enough moral authority. But they were elected by their workmates, and by choosing them they automatically agreed to respect their decisions and help them (Alba, 2001, p. 214).10

As regards the question of resources and the idea that a worker-run enterprise would only look out for itself, Robuster speaks of a situation where it was necessary to buy film-stock. The section of the union concerned with film-making did not have enough money to purchase it.

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9 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
10 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
However, the dog-racing section did. The issue was put to the general assembly of the dog track workers, who agreed to the loan:

Despite our knowing that the union involved had a considerable deficit, and we would probably never recover the money loaned. But as long as we could keep paying wages, and keep the racetracks functioning, what did we want with more money? We weren’t capitalists looking for profits …

(Robuster quoted in Alba, 2001, p. 264).11

Problems occurred. Jose Robuster describes a situation where the elected treasurer had spent 50,000 pesetas without notifying the other members of the committee. They objected, and took the matter to the general assembly, who were extremely annoyed:

Not because of the money itself, but because it had been spent without consulting the general assembly. The assembly removed the treasurer from his position

(Robuster quoted in Alba, 2001, p. 263).12

Chris Ealham speaks of collectivization in Spain as ’the most extensive and deeply rooted experiment in workers’ self-management since the advent of capitalism’ (Ealham, 2013, p. 4). Workers’ self-management in Spain, he continues:

[W]as nothing less than the material expression of the will of hundreds of thousands of workers to seize control of their destiny and eliminate capitalism… Interestingly, the published testimonies of several landowners and industrialists who later regained their land and factories, thanks to Franco’s victory in the civil war, pointed to the vast economic improvements introduced by the collectivizers. And all this was the

11 My translation. For the original see Appendix 1.
12 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1
more audacious since it occurred in the context of a violent civil war that ultimately devoured the revolution

(Ealham, 2013, p. 6).

Regardless of how successful this attempt at large scale industrial self-management was, its importance here is an image of an alternative form of organization that consciously seeks to organize without bosses by a consciously radical form of direct democracy.

5.2.3 Workers' Control and Workers’ Self-Management

In the 1960s and 1970s a movement developed in parts of Europe and the English speaking countries that sought either workers’ self-management at the factory level, or some form of encroaching control over management’s prerogatives (Hunnius, Garson & Case, 1973; Coates & Topham, 1972). Revolutions in both Algeria (Clegg, 1971; Raptis, 1980) and Chile (Raptis, 1974; Espinosa & Zimbalist, 1978), together with what many saw as near revolution in France in 1968 (Mallet, 1975; Raptis, 1980; Gorz, 1975), contained versions of workers’ self-management that made workers’ control appear a serious issue in various countries.

In the case of Algeria, lack of preparation, union or class consciousness, and manipulation by sections of the revolutionary government (even under Ben Bella, regarded by the French Left as the real revolution) worked against this being a model for elsewhere (Clegg, 1971; Guerin, 1970; Raptis, 1980). In Chile the situation was different. Movement from below pushed the Allende government further to the left than it wanted to go, with the main push within the government being MAPU, a breakaway from the Christian Democrats, with a strong social Catholic and workers’ self-management (autogestión) ideology, and continuing radicalization at the base (Raptis, 1974) as workers confronted each new government version of participation with what amounted to “This isn’t real participation… We’re always outnumbered on the participation committees... We want real participation”.

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The accounts in Espinosa and Zimbalist make it clear that the workers involved in these cases, may be speaking the language of “participation”, but are using the concept of workers’ control and autogestion (Espinosa & Zimbalist, 1978).

A range of proposals and struggles came out of this. Among them was the position of changing the quality of everyday life, urged by revolutionary socialists such as Andre Gorz, in a way that has echoes in some of the positive views of empowerment in industry (Gorz, 1968; Gorz, 1973; Gorz, 1975; Bosquet, 1972). Gorz argues against the idea that a worker or a union member on the board would represent an increase in workers’ power over the production process. In a manner reminiscent of Dewey and Lewin, he argues that a change in the everyday work situation should be seen as a genuine change in everyday lived-life at the factory level for those concerned.

From Gorz’s perspective there is no conflict between this and an overall goal of autogestion. Changes in everyday working conditions, simple aspects like job rotation or team activities associated with Total Quality Management, when carried out by workers themselves, can be part of a conscious takeover of areas of factory life. For Gorz this, rather than one worker on the board of directors, makes sense as a form of encroaching workers’ control.

Following the May ’68 events in France, the Confederation Francaise Democratique du Travail (CFDT), a trade union founded on Catholic social thought and since the 1950s an advocate of democratic socialism, took up autogestion, or workers’ self-management, as the defining aspect of its approach to democratic workers’ organization and union policy and practice. Mallet argues:

Looking at the positions defended by Edmond Maire of the CFDT or by Maurice Labi of Force Ouvriere, one sees the resurgence of a modern anarcho-syndicalism, founded like the old one on the hegemonic pre-
eminence of the most advanced part of the skilled working class, those who hold the essential weight in the decisive sectors of production

(Mallet, 1975, p. 213).

Mallet is critical of this as not being capable of including all sections of the working class, and for its ‘underestimation of the internal antagonisms of the working class’ (Mallet, 1975, p. 213). However, according to Edmond Maire, General Secretary of the CFDT at the time, and Jacques Juillard, a member of its National Bureau, a professional historian, and the author of a book on the anarchist Fernand Pelloutier and the origins of revolutionary syndicalism in France (1971):

The struggle against economic exploitation has taken such a place in the history of the workers’ movement – one can easily see why – that it has forgotten the struggle against alienation. But a socialism that forgets its fundamental goal, which was to enable all men to reconcile themselves with themselves, with their labour, with their society, with their environment, with nature itself, is only a truncated socialism, only a collectivist personification of the human-devouring machine that is industrial society. The role of autogestion is to put the struggle against alienation back on the order of the day, to let men take back power over themselves and the good things of life


Taking the argument back to its immediate context, they argue:

It isn’t by chance that the concept of autogestion reached its height during the upheavals of 1968. The aspiration to freer and more egalitarian social relations which characterised that moment rediscovered, spontaneously, the deepest meaning of revolutionary syndicalism: the reconciliation of work and pleasure, in the newly discovered autonomy of individuals and groups

(Maire & Juillard, 1975, p. 174).14

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13 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
This concentration on the individual, the group, and the organizational structures of autogestion parallels Zimmerman’s psychological, organizational, and community levels of empowerment.

5.3 Conclusion

The chapter was divided into three sections in order to clarify the key concepts of empowerment and workers’ control.

The first section considered empowerment as theory showed that empowerment can be seen in terms of a change in power relations. The section on nurses’ empowerment showed that this was not just a logical possibility, but that achieving the goals even of psychological empowerment required involvement in real decision-making. The section on workers’ self-management in Spain and later movements for workers’ control showed that strong involvement in decision-making, seen as real control at the base, is a practical possibility and a conceptually coherent interpretation of what a social relation would look like structurally after empowerment. Operationalizing the concept of empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation as equivalent or analogous to workers’ control in industry ties it to a clear anti-hierarchical perspective where direct democratic decision-making means just that.

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14 My translation. For original, see Appendix 1.
6 CHAPTER VI: SIX CASE STUDIES

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will examine a number of case studies of Empowerment Evaluations. The parameters of the comparison are developed on the assumption that empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation is operationalized as strong democratic decision-making, equivalent to the model of workers’ control, and seeing multiple acts of micro decision-making as the process whose process use enables empowerment in this sense. For Fetterman the principle of direct democratic decision-making is one of the ten principles that together make-up Empowerment Evaluation. Chapter IV has argued for direct democratic decision-making as a necessary and distinguishing aspect of Empowerment Evaluation. It has been argued in Chapter IV that this is so regardless of whether Empowerment Evaluation is regarded as Transformative Empowerment Evaluation or Practical Empowerment Evaluation.

I will follow Chapter IV in arguing that any Empowerment Evaluation has to involve direct democratic decision-making as the form of democratic participation if it is to be regarded as an Empowerment Evaluation. I follow Chapter IV in arguing that this is a necessary component whose level cannot be zero if the evaluation is to be counted as a genuine rather than mislabelled Empowerment Evaluation.

I will examine the studies with a view to pattern-matching, a technique where each evaluation will be described, then the group will be compared in terms of observable patterns involving the following categories: presence or absence of practice of direct democratic group decision-making; whether they used a learning by doing or a teaching model; whether the evaluation involved group, individual managers, or a mixture of groups and managers; whether the group’s outlook could be regarded as philosophically on side with Empowerment Evaluation principles; whether the goal of the
evaluation included empowerment, seen as a change in power relations either within the group or between groups, and whether this was achieved or not; whether the goal was seen as Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB), and whether this was achieved.

Each evaluation is rated on these criteria, with an “X” meaning that that aspect is present, a blank meaning that it is not present, and an “x” meaning that something of the aspect was present, but not as strongly as “X” denotes.

6.2 The Case Studies

These evaluation studies have been drawn from 15 Empowerment Evaluation studies in Cousins & Chouinard’s listing of 121 participatory evaluations in their Participatory Evaluation Up Close (Cousins & Chouinard, 2012). All studies were chosen by Cousins & Chouinard from peer reviewed publications or books with more than one editor (41, 120n.). Cousins & Chouinard include Fetterman’s single chapter account of the Digital Villages group of three evaluations he carried out (Fetterman, 2005). I have used Fetterman’s book length account of the same evaluations Empowerment Evaluation in the Digital Villages (Fetterman, 2013) as the primary account, together with the chapter (Fetterman, 2005) included in Cousins & Chouinard’s list. They are all self-identified Empowerment Evaluations, and all refer to the work of Fetterman and Wandersman.

Six case studies are examined. For the sake of the table they are given short names. Three evaluations are taken from Fetterman (2012; 2005), and three from other sources in line with Cousin and Chouinard’s selection of Empowerment Evaluations (Cousins & Chouinard, 2013). They are:
Diaz-Puente: This is a study carried out by Jose M. Diaz-Puente, Adolfo Cazorla Montero and Ignacio de los Rios Carmenado (Diaz-Puente et al, 2007) of a rural development project in Spain. The same case is discussed with extra information in Jose Diaz-Puente, Jose L. Yague, and Ana Afonson (Diaz-Puente et al, 2008).

Tribal Digital Village: This part of the project involved Native American tribal groups in an extensive project over 18 reservations (Fetterman, 2012; Fetterman, 2005).

Palo Alto Digital Village: This was the second of Fetterman’s evaluations of the Hewlett-Packard project (Fetterman, 2012; Fetterman, 2005).

Baltimore Digital Village: This was the third of Fetterman’s (2012) evaluations. The Baltimore project was concerned with overcoming the digital divide in an area where 40% of the population lived below the poverty line (Fetterman, 2012; Fetterman, 2005).

Miller & Lennie: This is a study carried out by Wayne Miller and June Lennie (Miller & Lennie, 2005). It concerns the evaluation of the Good Start Breakfast Program (GSBP) in several Australian cities and country areas.

Schnoes: This is a study of three Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs) in Nebraska (Schnoes et al, 2000).
6.2.1 Case Study: Pattern Matching

To enable pattern-matching, each evaluation was rated on the following criteria:

i) presence or absence of practice of direct democratic group decision-making;

ii) whether they used a learning by doing or a teaching model;

iii) whether the evaluation involved group, individual managers, or a mixture of groups and managers;

iv) whether the group’s outlook could be regarded as philosophically on side with Empowerment Evaluation principles;

v) whether the goal of the evaluation included empowerment, seen as a change in power relations either within the group or between groups,

vi) and whether this was achieved;

vii) whether the goal was seen as Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB),

viii) and whether this was achieved.
Table 4: Six Case Studies Compared and Contrasted for Pattern Matching

In the following table these six case studies are examined in terms of the presence or absence of various characteristics given the level of detail in available accounts. “X” means the characteristic was present; “x” means that the characteristic could be regarded as partially present, in a weak or incomplete form.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluations:</th>
<th>Tribal DV</th>
<th>Palo Alto DV</th>
<th>Diaz-Puente</th>
<th>Miller/Lennie</th>
<th>Schnoess</th>
<th>Baltimore DV</th>
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<tr>
<td>Decision-making by direct democracy</td>
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<td>Declared support for EE Philosophy</td>
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<td>Approach to group change:</td>
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<td>Teaching model</td>
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<td>Liberatory Emp = group democracy:</td>
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<td>Seen as Achieved</td>
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<td>Evaluation Capacity Building</td>
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<td>Seen as Goal</td>
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6.2.2 Justification for ratings:

Diaz-Puente: This is a study carried out by Jose M. Diaz-Puente, Adolfo Cazorla Montero and Ignacio de los Rios Carmenado (Diaz-Puente et al, 2007) regarding a rural development project in Spain. The same case is discussed with extra information in Jose Diaz-Puente, Jose L. Yague, and Ana Afonson (Diaz-Puente et al, 2008).

For Diaz-Puente and colleagues Empowerment Evaluation ‘is focused on the empowerment of the population through the empowerment process’ (Diaz-Puente et al, 2007, p. 54). They point out that ‘empowerment evaluation gives the stakeholders the primary role in the evaluation activities… focusing on building their capacities and training them to conduct their own evaluations’ (p. 54).’ The results of their evaluation of a rural development program (LEADER) and its Local Action Groups (LAGs) ‘also show the significant possibilities of empowering communities through evaluation and the feasibility and suitability of using evaluation as a tool for continuous community empowerment’ (p. 54). For these reasons Diaz-Puente was rated as having and achieving both liberatory empowerment and ECB goals, and as being philosophically sympathetic to the values of Empowerment Evaluation. Working on an EU mandated evaluation they were limited in devolving evaluator roles. However, their practice was to increase participation and decision-making whenever possible. They argue that ‘Empowerment evaluation aims to empower program stakeholders at the lowest possible level. In our case, this was the local level’ (Diaz-Puente et al, p. 488), and it was at the level of the local technical teams that full group decision-making could be achieved within the EU evaluation limits. For this reason they are rated as practising direct democratic decision-making. While EU rules meant they could not hand over full control of the evaluation to the local groups,
We attended the first focus groups led by members of the LEADER groups. We worked with them as critical friends and provided some suggestions to help them make the meetings more fruitful and rigorous. We insisted on being more inclusive with the people invited to the meetings and on making more use of evidence in collecting information and designing strategies with the rural communities


They consciously facilitated the input of the more powerless within each group they dealt with. Within their groups a range of power relations ‘were found between the different stakeholders. Once a high-status individual had shared an opinion in these meetings, others with less status were initially unlikely to contradict that individual. The evaluation team found that initially, soliciting the participation of the least senior stakeholders was more productive and generated much more discussion and engagement’ (Diaz-Punte et al, 2008, p. 489), and so they are rated X for using “groups and managers” rather than just managers. This also pointed to a consistent attempt to involve stakeholders as deeply and fully in decision-making saw as possible at any time in their situation. Their attention to multiple aspects of stakeholder interaction is in line with Fetterman’s Ten Principles, and shows the effect of several principles converging towards democratic decision-making despite formal problems. They see the LAG technical teams of three or four regular members as areas where full direct democracy was carried out. In these groups they observed stronger learning of skills and support for the evaluation process, with an effect on the surrounding community groups and organizations, that increased the movement towards interest in evaluation and a process of community empowerment. In this, and the changes they made to the evaluation to facilitate it, they showed a commitment to a “learning by doing” approach and are rated as X.

Fetterman carried out the following three evaluations during a major evaluation of a $15 million project, the Digital Village. This evaluation was part of a Hewlett-Packard sponsored project aimed at overcoming the “digital divide” in three communities of color, it involved a $15 million
dollar investment. Fetterman notes: ‘The digital divide refers to the discrepancy between those who have access to technology and those who have been left behind’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 123). Hewlett-Packard:

wanted to help low-income, disenfranchised communities of color to access the Internet and to productively use digital cameras, computers, scanners, and printers. Through an infusion of technology and training, they wanted to stimulate the growth and development of small businesses in ethnically diverse communities of color throughout the United States

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 11).

In terms of the evaluation, Fetterman says “Hewlett-Packard had a task to accomplish – to help Digital Village partners credibly and honestly monitor their progress and assess their performance’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 11). The three separate evaluations are considered below. All three evaluations of the Hewlett Packard projects are discussed in David Fetterman’s Empowerment Evaluation in the Digital Villages (Fetterman, 2012).

Tribal Digital Village: This part of the project involved Native American tribal groups in an extensive project over 18 reservations (Fetterman, 2012; Fetterman, 2005).

As David Fetterman carried out the evaluation himself, it was regarded as in line with Empowerment Evaluation philosophy, and rated X. Fetterman describes the activities carried out by the group, starting with the process of formulating the mission statement. Fetterman points out that:

We also consulted with some of the elders during the week … It was important to respect the work of the elders and their previous contributions to unify the tribes. At the same time, we all agreed that it was of the utmost importance to honor the group that was present at the
moment. They represented the critical mass, the energy, and the force that would drive us forward, shaping the community’s future

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 44)

For this reason the evaluation was rated as using an inclusive community group rather than a managers approach, and was rated X, on being a group approach. The same incident shows the democratic nature of the evaluation process, with the face-to-face group being the decision-making group, while taking in views from others, such as the tribal elders. For this reason, and the group’s own efforts to make itself more democratic, discussed below, it is rated X on direct democracy.

Fetterman describes the initial brain-storming Mission Statement process in the group. He notes that that the evaluators:

asked one of the participants to take the lead in drafting their mission statement. It is important to pull people into every step of the process and to allow them to control it, from the earliest stage of the evaluation. This involvement creates buy-in, ownership, and commitment throughout the effort

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 44)

As a result of this and similar descriptions, the Tribal DV is rated X, as involving a “learning by doing” model.

Fetterman points out in regard to this incident ‘It is the process use theory in action’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 44). As Fetterman holds that an Empowerment Evaluation, carried out with attention to all ten principles, will be both empowering and lead to ECB, it was rated X on both of these as goals. Because of the group’s concern with equal representation of different tribal groups, and ongoing community control of representatives/ delegates, (discussed below) it was rated X on achieving liberatory empowerment. Because of the Tribal DV’s use of evidence in forward planning and
ongoing monitoring of results, leading to program modifications (Fetterman, 2012, p. 70-75), it was rated X on achieving ECB.

Palo Alto Digital Village: This was the second of Fetterman’s evaluations of the Hewlett-Packard project.

The East Palo Alto project included collaboration between several communities of color who had previously shown little cooperation with each other. African American and Latino groups combined with Pacific Islander organizations (Fetterman, 2012; Fetterman, 2005). As David Fetterman carried out the evaluation himself, it was regarded as in line with Empowerment Evaluation philosophy, and rated X.

Fetterman describes the initial meeting:

Muki Hansteen-Izora (an African-American Stanford graduate student with experience in the community) and I served as the empowerment evaluators. Almost everyone in the room knew each other already, having worked in previous projects in the community. So most of us felt at home…. HP (Hewlett Packard) and the East Palo Alto Digital Village were no strangers…Whenever HP was involved in a project in the community, they knew it was serious and had a high probability of success associated with it… We were also excited because our commitment to local control was being validated. HP had made a commitment to allow the community to control both the project and evaluation, and they were honouring it from the first day

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 48)

Their mission statement ‘made many implicit understandings explicit. It represented a shared, democratically derived product, a test of their abilities to work together, and evidence that a diverse group could cooperate for the
common good’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 48). Fetterman points out what factors in the environment made this especially important:

Empowerment evaluation is based on their shared common interests. African Americans, Latinos, and Pacific Islanders had different and often competing agendas. The Digital Village and empowerment evaluation were not designed to make those differences disappear. Instead, the project and process were designed to help these diverse groups find common ground, to identify common denominators of self-interest. That process began with the creation of a mission that could be shared across (often conflicting) groups in the community (Fetterman, 2012, p. 48)

Because of these factors, and the following, it is rated X as having a group approach.

This was a group with previously conflicting agenda that had worked against them cooperating in the search for funds. Speaking of the group’s reaction to their mission statement, Fetterman notes ‘The exercise in collaboration was acknowledged and celebrated. A new community–based partnership had been forged in a remarkably short period of time… One person said, “This is easy, why didn’t we do this a long time ago?”’ Fetterman continues: ‘A simple initial exercise that was conducted under the right conditions (a safe brainstorming environment) with the right players present (an inclusive collection of community members) sharpened their resolve’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 48).

Because of this the evaluation has been rated as X for using a “learning by doing” approach.

Again, as Fetterman holds that an Empowerment Evaluation, carried out with regard to all 139, will be both empowering and lead to ECB, it was rated X on both of these as goals.
Fetterman notes that, in the taking stock phase of the evaluation, the Palo Alto group realized that ‘in the past when they had not designated a specific person for each major task, little progress was made and important tasks would simply slip through the organizational cracks’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 76). They decided to specify:

[Who] in the group would be responsible for each new goal and corresponding set of strategies… After this practice was instituted, members of the East Palo Alto Digital Village were called by name to report on their subgroup’s progress. In addition to adding a measure of individual accountability, this process helped to institutionalize evaluation. Evaluation updates became a routine part of their meeting agenda. They made evaluation an integral part of their planning and management. They were engaged in triple loop learning as an organization. It was late in the game, but they got it. It took a crisis for them to reach this organisational level of understanding, but they made evaluation an authentic part of their normal day-to-day decision making.

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 76)

Because of this it was rated X on achieving ECB. Together with the mission statement description above, this was also an example of ongoing democratic decision-making, and so the evaluation was rated X on direct democracy. Fetterman reports that ‘An unanticipated impact of the funding crisis was that it was liberating. It opened the door to re-visiting and re-visioning the mission and purpose of the group’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 76). Because of the group self-efficacy described in this statement, and the evaluation’s role in developing ongoing cooperation across community groups, it was rated X on achieving liberatory empowerment.
Baltimore Digital Village: This was the third of Fetterman’s (2012) evaluations. The Baltimore project was concerned with overcoming the digital divide in an area where 40% of the population lived below the poverty line (Fetterman, 2012; Fetterman, 2005).

Once more, as David Fetterman carried out the evaluation himself, it was regarded as in line with Empowerment Evaluation philosophy, and rated X.

The Baltimore Digital Village evaluation took place in a situation where a previous traditional evaluation by Deloitte & Touche, brought in by HP because ‘they had such difficulty even getting started’, had given a negative report on the Baltimore DV’s initial work (Fetterman, 2012, p. 48). As a result the Baltimore DV had ‘uninvited HP from a planned site visit’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 49). Fetterman points out that while this showed that “the sense of local power was healthy’, it also encouraged them ‘in ways that later became dysfunctional, bordering on organizational arrogance’ (Fetterman, 2012, p. 49). When Fetterman and the other evaluators were asked to take part, one result of this was that:

It also made our initial empowerment evaluation foray into their territory a bit more tenuous. However, we had faith in the process and it was justified. They took a vote to determine if they still wanted our assistance, and the majority enthusiastically welcomed our skills. However, a few community members still needed convincing. So the tone was constructive, positive, but cautious and a bit cold, like the weather outside

Fetterman, 2012, p. 49-50)

While the group practised direct democratic decision-making this seems to have been done in an unreflective way, leading to a practice of assertion rather than cooperation. For this and the following issue they have been rated x for direct democratic decision-making
Fetterman points out that in rating how well they were doing in the taking stock phase they gave themselves low scores. The highest was for setting priorities, not because they had accomplished it but because of the time they had spent on it:

It had consumed more time and energy than any other task on their plate. It was an ironic rating because problems in setting priorities for their task were the reason enlarge part for inviting the empowerment evaluators to assist them. They were not deluded. They just were not successful at it because they were still competing with each other internally (protecting their pet project) instead of cooperating as part of a unified group with a larger vision

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 62)

For this reason they are rated X as a ‘managers’ group.

Fetterman sees the period of taking stock as having a major effect. ‘These foundational insights and understandings grounded the Baltimore Digital Village. They also served a secondary purpose. They helped prepare the Baltimore Digital Village to interpret and appreciate’ the previous review and its comments (Fetterman, 2012, p. 62). The original review:

[Was] not bad or wrong…It was aimed at a more mature level of organizational and managerial development. In addition the language of the review was at a much higher level of abstraction than was appropriate for member so of the Digital Village. Thus at the time the … reviewers were perceived as irrelevant, insulting, and discouraging. Now “horizontal and vertical links between programs” made sense. The critique about “inadequate plans” was obvious in retrospect. “Insufficient staffing” now was interpreted as the need to request and/ or deploy more resources rather than as an opportunity to play the “blame and shame” game (Fetterman, 2012, p. 62):

This shows learning by doing, and is rated X for this aspect.
These small wins, their additional experience building the Digital Village, and the time devoted to taking stock of their progress bolstered their confidence. It prepared them to mine existing sources. For example, the Deloitte & Touche report resurfaced. They used parts of the report that now made sense to them in their business blueprint for action. One indicator of their shift in self-confidence was that their jokes were now directed at themselves, instead of Deloitte & Touche or HP. This was an indirect measure of their organizational and managerial maturity

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 78)

Given the above, they were rated X for ECB. As Fetterman holds that an Empowerment Evaluation, carried out with regard to all ten principles, will be both empowering and lead to ECB, it was rated X on both of these as goals. Fetterman sees this as an ongoing process, with the “small wins” putting them on track. Because of the problems Fetterman details in terms of developing group responsibility and initiative for future actions it was rated x on achieving liberatory empowerment.

Miller & Lennie: This is a study carried out by Wayne Miller and June Lennie (Miller & Lennie, 2005). It concerns the evaluation of the Good Start Breakfast Program (GSBP) several Australian cities and country areas.

Miller and Lennie held several meetings of managers and coordinators of local Good Start Breakfast Programs. They sent questionnaires to program staff and clients, arguing that cost and other logistics meant that their inclusion in an open forum to begin the evaluation was “ruled out as an option” (Miller & Lennie, 2005, p. 21). For this reason Miller and Lennie was rated as not using direct democratic decision-making and basing their evaluation on managers. On their description, Miller and Lennie used a
teaching model of ECB, relying on lectures and workshops rather than the evaluation process to increase evaluation awareness (p.

Miller and Lennie did not describe empowerment as a change in power relations as part of their goal. For this reason they are rated as not having had this as a goal or achieving it. They did have ECB as a conscious goal. They seem to have achieved this to a certain extent, while being unhappy with some aspects of the Empowerment Evaluation process. Their comment that ‘Only the program staff and community members who participate in evaluation workshops develop a better understanding of the program and the diverse perspectives of those involved’ (p. 25) reflects the effect of their decision to limit participation in terms of inclusiveness and decision-making groups. However in a list of strengths of Empowerment Evaluation they included ‘the various steps and processes involved are highly participatory and aim to be inclusive of a broad diversity of people involved in or affected by the program’ (p. 25). At the same time they describe the evaluation entirely in terms of ECB and argue that ‘A more critical approach is required to avoid some of the idealism that underpins the theories and philosophies that guide this methodology’ (p. 26). This suggests sympathy with Empowerment Evaluation as aimed at ECB, but a feeling that full inclusiveness and participation is unrealistic. Democratic decision-making as part of participation and inclusiveness is not mentioned. For this reason they are rated as having ECB as a goal, and ECB as being achieved.

Schnoes: This is a study of three Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs) in Nebraska (Schnoes et al, 2000).

Schnoes and colleagues carried out an Empowerment Evaluation of several Comprehensive Community Initiatives in Nebraska. While initial meetings included various stakeholders, the evaluation was carried out primarily ‘with project managers at each CCI site’ (Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 56). The meetings “simply became an occasion for the program managers to conduct
business with one another’ (p. 59). For this reason Schnoes’ evaluation was rated as based on managers. Schnoes and colleagues believed that they ‘would empower the CCIs by facilitating their competence in and commitment to the evaluation components of the project (p. 57). They point to the difference ‘between the way we as evaluators and the CCI participants tended to define empowerment. We conceptualized it as an increase in participants’ sense of control over and ownership of the evaluation process in the long term’. For this reason they were rated as having an ECB primary goal. They were dissatisfied with the results, but did achieve some ECB in terms of knowledge of approaches and some data gathering tools. Their ECB is rated as “x” partially achieved. They are also rated as not having a liberatory empowerment goal. Data gathering tools were sent to groups rather than used with them. One of their recommendations was that ‘For those stakeholders with little evaluation knowledge, some sort of didactic pre-evaluation training could be helpful to offer before initiating this type of evaluation discussion’ (p. p. 62). For this reason they were rated as using a teaching rather than a ‘learning by doing” model.

They describe a situation of increasing stakeholder withdrawal from agreed actions and equally increasing evaluator take-up of activities to cover this. They note that “Eventually, the CCIs began to apologize for all of this, admitting that they were busy, that evaluation was not a priority, that their materials were not well written or organized, and that they were not able to recall what we had agreed to do’ (p. 59). They recommend that in future evaluations ‘procedures should be established to guide the process of deciding how to proceed in the event of disagreements between the evaluators’ and the stakeholders’ perspectives concerning appropriate evaluation design and strategies’ (p. 63) This is taken as meaning that group decision-making with evaluator as critical friend was not the norm, and they are rated as not using direct democratic decision-making (x). Their interest and sympathy for what they term participatory approaches in general was a reason for taking up Empowerment Evaluation, and they are rated as having philosophical agreement (X).
6.3 Discussion

Looked at in terms of pattern matching, the evaluations fall into two groups:

Group I, consisting of the Tribal Digital Village, Diaz-Puente, and the Palo Alto Digital Village.

Group II, consisting of Miller & Lennie, Schnoes, and the Baltimore Digital Village.

Group I suggests agreement with the argument that, when empowerment is taken to refer to a change in structural power relations, direct democratic decision-making is the core of Empowerment Evaluation. With the aim of group or community change in power relations there is no alternative to continuing with direct decision-making when it is seen as the motor of the change process hoped for. In this group the case studies can be regarded, in Yin’s terms, as three cases of literal replication (Yin, 2003a, p. 5).

Group II suggests agreement with the theoretical expectation that lack of concern with group direct decision-making and lack of a conscious goal of a change in structural power relations, both dependent on the concept of empowerment employed, would lead to no change in power relations within or between groups. This group can also be regarded as two cases of theoretical replication, and one case (Baltimore) that requires further interpretation.

Taken together, the two groups of cases studies constitute the theoretical and literal replication that Yin speaks of in pattern-matching. He argues ‘...multiple case studies should be selected so that they replicate each other - either predicting similar results (literal replication) or contrasting results for predictable reasons (theoretical replication)’ (Yin 2003a, p 5).
The closest to empowerment operationalized as workers’ control (level of direct democracy) are Diaz-Puente’s study of rural Spain and Fetterman’s Tribal Digital Village. Puente’s study involved both work with existing teams who became Evaluation Teams, but also consciously drew in sections of the community in focus groups organized through and with the existing three person teams. These three person teams had a continuing work relation and responsibility to the local community. Within all elements of the evaluation an approach taken to ECB was one of learning by doing. This was so in the three person teams, the occasional larger groupings of equivalent teams, and the local work including focus groups and meetings. This structure of face to face group decision-making and deep discussion with the wider local community were in line with the conception of empowerment being about a change in group power relations, both as a process and as a goal.

In Diaz-Puente’s case the existing teams worked as Evaluation Teams. Action within them was closest to the multiple acts of micro decision-making, and connection to existing local communities, model that could be expected to lead to some change in power relations within the local community. The focus groups, involving a large number of people in a context where people were in regular contact with the three-person teams, made a situation in which empowerment, seen as a process of involvement in decision-making leading to a change in relations of control over aspects of everyday life, seems to apply.

Diaz-Puente et al is one study where the time scale is sufficient to show how far “empowered” and “empowering” activities have occurred and continued. They record how their initial efforts to create data collection failed, and how this changed to a system that both worked and continued as they concentrated on developing face-to-face groups that could decide on and carry out relevant action.
Similarly, the Tribal Digital Village evaluation sought to combine different local communities via representatives (Fetterman, 2012). There were three important aspects to this Tribal Village initiative.

- First, the idea came from the groups themselves. They felt it was unfair if one tribe had several members present, and another only one. They decided that each tribe would send a representative with one vote.

- Second, this was extended to the managers, who also had to have only one voting representative. Without this the managers would have been overrepresented.

- Third, the tribal representatives came to the meeting with positions that had been worked out in their groups. Basically, they were mandated delegates rather than representatives.

Fetterman described it:

[Working] with Native Americans, you couldn't have all the Native Americans come and participate all at the same time, so they came up with the idea of having a representative from each tribe, being a member who could vote. They decided on their own way of having representative government. If we hadn't done that, so I'm glad you raised this, we would have had an imbalance in the staff and an overemphasis on staff influence and control. They had to have a representative also for the staff. They had to have a key member also, which reduced their impact. So excellent question… That's something we work out, we don't impose it. Often the group comes up with something that’s going to be reasonable and workable and is something they accept. That’s one example of many, but that was a very powerful way to deal with it

(Fetterman, personal communication, 2011)
6.3.2 Evaluation Capacity Building as Goal and Reality

Evaluation Capacity Building: Achieved (x). Baltimore Digital Village, Miller & Lennie, and Schnoess et al, were all unhappy with the level of evaluation capacity built during the evaluation. Baltimore is a little different as processes were seen to be moving in the right direction, but a fair way behind the other Digital Villages. Baltimore also, despite intentions, stayed at a level of meetings by managers of various services rather than a group that made decisions for itself (hence x).

The Tribal Digital Village, the Palo Alto Digital Village, and Diaz-Puente et al, all rated as (X), saw themselves as having achieved a satisfactory level of evaluation capacity. These three evaluations saw themselves as evaluations where (i) decision-making was an issue and (ii) the goal included both ECB and empowerment. In these cases empowerment was seen as in some way equivalent to a change in power relations either within the group or between the group and its surrounding relations of power (X).

There are situations in which Empowerment Evaluation is unlikely to work. Fetterman sees selecting the appropriate evaluation approach as part of the evaluator’s job, whether this means selecting a different method or declining the project. He speaks about doing Empowerment Evaluations in situations where the organization or group’s philosophy is not in alignment with the empowerment approach. Speaking of the problems associated with doing this, Fetterman feels that resources are better spent on projects which have some philosophic sympathy with the goals of Empowerment Evaluation: “Can you do it? Yes. Do I? No” (personal communication, Fetterman, 2011). In the cases of Miller & Lennie’s GSBC evaluation and Schnoes et al’s CCI evaluation, their experience suggests that an Empowerment Evaluation is being attempted where the structure of the situation makes it likely to be difficult, owing to the lack of existing face to face groups as part of the evaluation team(s). The Baltimore Digital Village, discussed below, faced the same problem, but Fetterman’s approach to it was different. A
factor in taking on evaluations as Empowerment Evaluations in this situation is the degree to which some form of liberatory empowerment is intended or expected. To the extent that a change in power relations is anticipated or hoped for, the grouping involved has to be a group whose power relations can be changed. If it is regarded as sufficient that an individual becomes more active, Empowerment Evaluation becomes consistent with environments in which the group decision-making on what is acceptable evidence, on the course of the evaluation, and on the division of tasks, becomes an optional extra. Under the pressure of time and financial constraints, an optional extra will probably be dropped.

6.3.2.1 Baltimore DV

Despite intentions, Baltimore did not develop the kind of decision-making the other Digital Villages developed. Possibly this was because it was entirely a grouping of managers of competing services, who did not usually refer to a base organization, and whose proposed area of action consisted of small businesses, also individual projects. While Fetterman certainly thought community empowerment was part of the project’s purpose, internal factors meant the Baltimore project had to work through a lot of preparatory issues. Fetterman holds that working through the evaluation process, if all the activities and steps are acted on, and the ten principles applied, will both develop evaluation capacity and generate community empowerment. However the Baltimore project, in the period examined, remained concentrated on managers of organizations who had to move from competing to cooperating before the Empowerment Evaluation could proceed. For Fetterman, this was something that had to be worked through. The end result was a situation where managers had learned from their mistakes and the beginnings of an assessment of their real situation was going on. However, this was at the level of the managers. They had no community groups to report to. The grouping they looked to help through the Hewlett-Packard initiative were existing small businesses, not community groups.
6.3.2.2 Miller & Lennie

Miller and Lennie worked with 19 participants, all but one of whom were managers or program coordinators. Questionnaires were used to get information in advance rather than during meetings. Where there was further information developed in meetings, this seemed to be a situation where participants were sources of data, rather than a group deciding on what was credible evidence and what do with it. As the meetings consisted of managers from different projects and States no ongoing group developed. Miller and Lennie were critical of their experience with Empowerment Evaluation. They argued that ‘A more critical approach is required to avoid some of the idealism that underpins the theories and philosophies that guide this methodology’ (Miller & Lennie, 2005, p. 26). However, in their account it is clear that they are contrasting “idealism” with a “realism” that means dropping aspects of the evaluation connected with encouraging or demanding group decision-making in favour of more traditional means of information gathering and skill development. This is despite their philosophical sympathy with what they regard as “participatory” methods, one of their reasons for selecting Empowerment Evaluation: ‘Participatory forms of evaluation aim to produce a range of empowering impacts and outcomes’ (Miller & Lennie, 2005, p. 1).

6.3.2.3 Schnoes

Schnoes et al began the evaluation with a clear concern for evaluation capacity building:

We anticipated that by implementing the empowerment evaluation strategies, we would be able not only to provide to provide projects with an effective first year evaluation plan, but also to facilitate each project’s ability to take increasing responsibility for the evaluation efforts as the programs evolved over time

(Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 54).
They saw empowerment, in the context of Empowerment Evaluation, as empowerment to carry out evaluation tasks and embrace evaluation concerns:

Each project was to be creative in conceptualizing how to put in place new types of interventions to help families. Projects also were supposed to be community-based. Both of these requirements supported the use of an empowerment evaluation approach. It was believed that by working closely with each CCI, teaching them about evaluation, and demonstrating its usefulness to their particular needs, projects would be able to take over more and more of the responsibility for the evaluation process over time. Thus, we would empower the CCIs by facilitating their competence in and commitment to the evaluation components of the project (Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 57).

At the beginning it seemed that there would be effective participant buy-in to the process. For example the evaluators ‘also established regular telephone conference calls at the frequency requested by the CCIs and we conducted site visits to attend board meetings, planning sessions, and training workshops (Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 57).

However, as the project continued there was less involvement by the participants (managers of different units). Stocktaking seems to have been for the evaluators rather than for the evaluation team (Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 57-58). Schnoes points out that the:

[Initiation] of evaluation related topics from the CCIs occurred with less frequency than we had hoped. In some instances, discussions simply became an opportunity for the program managers to conduct business with one another, which led to discussions relevant to the CCI management but not directly related to the immediate needs of the evaluation component (Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 59).
Schnoes et al had some explanation for this:

In our particular case, the CClIs were not consistently involved in the initial request for or the selection of evaluators for their projects. Rather, the state had operated independently in securing contract services with us and then informed projects of our participation. Thus, our services were in some sense imposed on clients; this may have undermined the client's sense of control and “empowerment” in the earliest stage of the process.

(Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 60-61).

This would seem a major problem that could not have happened in this form if the evaluators had held a conception of Empowerment Evaluation that demanded participation in the form of real control by the group. A period of trust building, brought about in part through the participants’ own experience that their decisions were what would be acted on, may be necessary when the approach seems imposed from outside. This seems to be what happened in Fetterman’s Baltimore Digital Village:

The evaluation team repeatedly offered reassurances, ranging from our commitment to the project to our desire to help them. We did not know at the time that we were perceived as an extension of HP and thus suffered from guilt by association. What won the day was our agreement not to share what we were doing with HP until they were ready to have us share the knowledge or information with them. Suddenly, like a ray of sunshine shining through a cloudy sky, the room became a welcoming place.

(Fetterman, 2012, p. 50).
6.3.3 Conclusions:

The evaluators in all six evaluations regarded themselves as in agreement with Empowerment Evaluation philosophy. However, the sample fell into two groups characterised by their interest in Empowerment Evaluation in terms of its liberatory as well as ECB goal, and by the use of direct democratic decision-making within the evaluation process.

Diaz-Puente, despite EU restrictions on handing over power and a dispersed base of groups, used all the aspects of the ten principles to deepen the Empowerment Evaluation, leading to a development of control at the local level in keeping with the handover of power in the evaluation that they were not allowed to carry out at the project level. This included achieving a form of liberatory empowerment as well as ECB.

The Baltimore Digital Village stands out from this ‘two groupings” characterization as the failure to engage came from the grouping of managers rather than the position of the evaluator, and the evaluator supported the liberatory empowerment nature of Empowerment Evaluation. Acting on different aspects of the ten principles did lead to a shift in the quality of internal democracy, though the Baltimore Digital Village developed at a slower rate and had not reached the same level in evaluation goals as the other Digital Villages.

Baltimore seems to be a case where all the Ten Principles were used to move it forward, but it was starting a long way behind in areas that the evaluation tied to develop. The Principle of Democratic Participation was still applied, but in a situation where the group had to be developed to properly act on it. This could be regarded as low level adherence to the Principle of Democratic Participation.

Unlike Baltimore DV, the Schnoes and Miller and Lennie evaluations can be seen not as examples of low levels of adherence to the Ten Principles but
as evaluations that did not keep the structural form that Democratic Participation demands. If Baltimore DV is treated as an outlier and is left to the side, the study appears to be dealing with two different groups of evaluations going under the same name. This suggests that the nature of empowerment, and its relation to direct democratic decision-making, are necessary concerns for any attempt to distinguish what are, and are not, Empowerment Evaluations.
CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

Now the winter time is coming, the windows are full of frost
I went to tell everybody but I could not get across
Well, I wanted to be your lover, never wanted to be your boss
Don’t say I never warned you, when your train gets lost

Bob Dylan It Takes a Lot to Laugh, It Takes a Train to Cry

Empowerment Evaluation has been the subject of controversy since its introduction by David Fetterman in his Presidential Address to the AEA in 1993. He had developed the idea of empowering activity while working with children with disabilities:

They put this kid in a lower math class than she should have been in, and she hated it, but she tolerated it; she got so frustrated one day that she took her electric wheelchair and buzzed in behind the other kids into the advanced class. She'd been put in the wrong place for the wrong reason. That's what I call gutsy self-determination. So from the kids I was learning what it was to be self-determined

(personal communication, Fetterman, 2011)

Fetterman describes how he put together an idea of evaluation as an empowering process, tried it out, found people liked it, and ‘So I gave it as part of my Presidential Address and half the people loved it… “Why didn’t you come up with this sooner”… a fourth who hated it, like Stufflebeam absolutely hated it… I said, “For those of you who think I’m giving evaluation away, that is exactly what I’m doing”’ (personal communication, Fetterman, 2011).

This thesis has been concerned with aspects of this continuing discussion. Several conclusions can be drawn from this study. These are conclusions that could influence practice as much as theory, and so are potentially valuable to evaluation practitioners. There are also conclusions that can
Chapter I and II provided an outline of the thesis, and an examination of the literature that showed that the role of stakeholder primary and final control of decision-making in Empowerment Evaluation remained a live issue in current debates. Chapter III showed a deep and continuing concern with the concept of democracy, and program evaluation in a democratic society, within the US evaluation community and the American Evaluation Association (AEA). Through the influence of Dewey in US social thought and social science, a concept of a democratic society, that includes some level of participation in everyday activities as part of its definition of democracy, has remained a factor in social thinking. This may be in a confused or partial form, but the push towards a right to participation by people in those affairs that affect them is a living part of the background of the various forms of stakeholder involvement oriented evaluation.

Chapter IV discusses process use as a core concept of Empowerment Evaluation. However, Chapter IV also shows the importance of specifying what process was being enacted, and hence what its use could be. Chapter IV argued that, for the purposes of Empowerment Evaluation the core process proposed was multiple acts of direct democratic decision-making within the Evaluation Team. The evaluation needed to really belong to the participants. While this was not the only important aspect of Empowerment Evaluation, it was a necessary one. That it was also a distinguishing aspect became clear when Whitmore and Cousins’ TPE/PPE matrix (1998) was adapted to cover all stakeholder involvement in evaluation approaches, rather than being a matrix for specifically Participatory Evaluation (P-PE and T-PE) approaches.

Chapter IV showed that many of the problems with fitting Empowerment Evaluation into this matrix can be overcome by making transformative and practical goals parameters of all stakeholder involvement oriented
evaluations. When this is done to include Collaborative, Participatory, and Empowerment Evaluation, the issue of decision-making in Empowerment Evaluation is clearly prominent. This focuses decision-making as a necessary component of the process whose “process use” is the central concept in defining Empowerment Evaluation.

Chapter V shows that the concept of empowerment has to be operationalized to be used in applied social science, such as program evaluation. In the case of Empowerment Evaluation, the relevant meaning of empowerment was direct democratic decision-making. This chapter justifies the operationalization of empowerment as workers’ control in Empowerment Evaluation. While the area of industrial and human relations contains many schemes of employee or worker empowerment process leading to supposed workplace empowerment, they have been subjected to heavy criticism as either manipulative or ineffective. Kaler details the effects of “participation” without control (e.g. Kaler, 1999). When the “strong” form of workplace democracy as workers’ control becomes part of the debate, not as exotica but as a parameter of the argument over the meaning of a democratic or empowered workplace, issues of power and structural democracy become central to the argument. Direct democratic organization at the level of workers’ control has been shown here to be both a theoretical possibility and a realistic practice.

Operationalization is necessary for any action to be taken to apply theoretical concepts to real world evaluations. This is equally true for empowerment. Speaking in terms of operationalization makes it clear that any concept being applied has to be applied in a specific way.

Why does this specificity matter? It makes a difference in terms of how the evaluation is conducted. Only operationalization as strong direct democratic decision-making necessitates the practice of multiple acts of group micro and macro decision-making. This is the process whose “process use” constitutes the empowerment effect of the evaluation.
In Chapter VI six case studies were examined. Pattern matching was carried out to test the assumption that using the proposed operationalization of empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation, as a change in power relations analogous to workers’ control, would distinguish between “genuine” and mis-labeled Empowerment Evaluations. In this manner Zimmerman’s “community” level of empowerment was applied at the level of the organization. This is appropriate as the Evaluation Team becomes a community for the purpose of the evaluation, making the community level the relevant version of Zimmerman’s concept of empowerment. For Zimmerman community empowerment is ‘individuals working together in an organized fashion to improve their collective lives’ (Zimmerman, 1995, p. 582).

Pattern matching showed a grouping of evaluations consistent with the proposal that empowerment in Empowerment Evaluation should be operationalized as strong direct democratic decision-making, equivalent to the idea of workers’ control in a workplace setting. It also showed a grouping of intended Empowerment Evaluations that did not give primacy to group decision-making and whose results followed the anticipated failure to realize empowerment in the sense of a change in power relations either within the group or between groups.

Chapter VI also showed the value of a cross-over between Zimmerman’s concept of empowerment at the community level and the application of it within the organizational level in an Empowerment Evaluation. Zimmerman’s “community” empowerment is concerned with a change in group power relations, either within a group or between groups. In this form it becomes consistent with empowerment operationalized as workers’ control.
7.1 Limitations

The most important limitation of this analysis concerns the case studies themselves, both their small number, and that they are published accounts rather than original reports or documents that record the daily activity of the evaluations (except by chance).

In this enquiry published accounts, rather than the evaluations themselves, have functioned as cases. This has meant that, overall, they lack the kind of detail of evaluation activity that is described in the methodology section on the suitability of case study approach to this enquiry. However, it is argued that they give sufficient detail in the broad picture to allow pattern-matching of them as cases based on their apparent characteristics.

A better approach, not possible in this study, would be to work with original reports and process documents, conduct semi-structured interviews with participants from the different groups included in the Evaluation Teams, and focus groups of the same or other participants (depending on scale of original) to allow triangulation of the results.

Another approach, also not possible in this study, could have been to carry out a number of Empowerment Evaluations, ensuring that the direct democratic decision making aspect remained in the forefront, using participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and post-test/retrospective pre-test surveys of participants, allowing for triangulation of the results.

What has been done in this study shows that how empowerment is conceived in theory, and operationalized within the evaluation, has a definite and predictable effect on how the evaluation is conducted. This effect includes how far it resists the pressure of circumstances to change its practice. This conclusion is justified by the analysis of the observed cases and is worthy of further study.
7.2 Empowerment Evaluation: Evaluation Capacity Building, Democracy, and Being Realistic

Empowerment Evaluation is about direct democratic decision-making. Empowerment Evaluation has been consistently concerned with Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB). However, ECB can be an expected process use result of an evaluation carried out through stakeholder final control of micro and macro decision-making. Fetterman points out that democratic decision-making has been a continuing aspect of Patton’s discussions of Empowerment Evaluation, and his attempts to distinguish Empowerment Evaluation from other evaluation approaches. ‘Patton now identifies that we’re the only ones who identify self-determination as a key value’ (personal communication, Fetterman, 2011). This aspect is the key to many of the issues and caveats surrounding Empowerment Evaluation.

However, as the discussion of Miller & Lennie (2005) and Schnoes et al (2000) have shown, there is a tendency to drop decision-making under pressure from participant stakeholders in terms of time and resources. This is especially likely when empowerment has been conceived (operationalized) as “empowered to do a task”. This seems to be what has happened in Schnoes’ case (Schnoes et al, 2000), discussed in Chapter VI. Schnoes and colleagues operationalized empowerment in their evaluation in terms of learning a task. They “would empower the CCIs by facilitating their competence in and commitment to the evaluation components of the project’ (Schnoes et al, 2000, p. 57).

At this point there is a clear division in reactions. The evaluators can take on more of the roles and responsibilities of the evaluation. This has the effect of turning the other participants into receivers of what the evaluators decide to do, while functioning as possible sources of information. While being a source of information is a common minor function of participants in stakeholder involvement approaches to evaluation, it is not what Empowerment Evaluation demands.
Adding organizational democracy, or a structurally direct democratic process, to the evaluation goes against common sense expectations of the role of the evaluator and the level of participation people can normally be expected to have in the evaluation process. The formulation of Deweyan “democracy-as-ethos” that runs through US program evaluation values makes it possible that direct democracy, while also a Deweyan concept, may be seen in practice as equivalent to non-specific forms of inclusiveness and participation representing a kind of “democracy-as-ethos and value”. To counteract this it is necessary to continually draw attention to occasions for enacting, and for falling away from, the direct democratic decision-making process that is the empowering process within the practice of any particular Empowerment Evaluation.

Alternatively, the evaluators may continue to base their practice on the group’s democratic decision-making process. Fetterman says:

Clients and participants have to be re-socialized. They at first accept us, but when it gets hard, or time hits: “You're the evaluator you take it”. You have to go “No, no, no. We will do it. I'm not walking away from you, but it's still yours”

(personal communication, Fetterman, 2011).

This is only likely if group decision-making has been at least an equal focus with ECB in the conception of the evaluation. To the extent that Empowerment Evaluation operationalized empowerment as strong direct democratic decision-making the choice would be between insisting on the democratic process, or consciously abandoning the Empowerment Evaluation and undertaking a different form of evaluation.

The fact that some evaluators do not see this as a problem may reflect the evaluators’ lack of a deep belief that it was the participants’ evaluation. To the extent that the purpose of increasing ECB was paramount, this could be achieved by various means. Without the liberatory goal, there was no necessary connection to ongoing direct democratic decision-making.
For Miller and Lennie (2005) the attempt to increase ECB by adopting an instructional approach seems to have led to less effective ECB than desired. With this has come a feeling that maybe the problem lay with Empowerment Evaluation in the first place. They argue that ‘A more critical approach is required to avoid some of the idealism that underpins the theories and philosophies that guide this methodology’ (Miller & Lennie, 2005, p. 26)

For Fetterman, empowerment and ECB are linked by symbiosis:

This empowering, where they empower themselves because you can't empower anyone, you can create an environment that facilitates [empowerment]… (but) don’t have to be conscious of it. If you're concentrating on the other principles, it emerges out of that process, just by the level and depth of control of their participation

(personal communication, Fetterman, 2011).

7.3 Empowerment Evaluation and Organizations

As far as Empowerment Evaluation is taken up by institutions or organizations, it becomes possible that it will be used in a manner where empowerment becomes a means of cheaper monitoring of programs. This would be much closer to the promotion of “empowerment” in industrial settings where critics argue that “empowerment” means that effectively workers take on management responsibilities without gaining anything except the extra work (Kaler, 1999). To the extent that Empowerment Evaluation is taken up as a form of cost-cutting, it can be expected that aspects involving extra time and resources will be limited or discarded. Democratic participation, seen as a structure of direct democratic decision-making, is such an aspect.
7.4 Managers and Empowerment Evaluation

If the Empowerment Evaluation is aimed only at program managers there are problems that can be anticipated from three sources:

- Managers have other ongoing responsibilities and are likely to feel that time or resources don’t allow them the luxury of full participation

- There is no group that the managers are part of to allow ongoing group decision-making; each manager related to the evaluation meetings as an individual at a meeting rather than as part of a group who will make group decisions about their ongoing affairs

- Group direct democratic decision-making goes against expectations and experience of normal organizational activity for most managers. Participation rarely means direct control.

Given these factors it can be expected that the “control by stakeholders” aspect of the evaluation will be likely to be dropped under pressure. As far as this is the core of Empowerment Evaluation as a distinctive approach, dropping it means abandoning the Empowerment Evaluation as such. However, it may still constitute an evaluation using some Empowerment Evaluation concepts and tools.

7.5 Further work

This thesis has asserted that the core of Empowerment Evaluation is the concentration on the group decision-making of the participants. If this is the case, it makes a difference how far these stakeholders are themselves a group, or become a group. The best test of this argument would be a series of studies of Empowerment Evaluations where the entire program staff can be involved in the Empowerment Evaluation. Such a study, based on
participant observation and multiple case studies, could look at situations where Empowerment Evaluations were carried out involving (i) the entire staff of a program, (ii) the staff plus client representatives, and (iii) only a section of the staff. In such a case the operationalization of empowerment as workers’ control in Empowerment Evaluation could be tested.

This thesis also argues that there is a need to retain the radical roots of concepts that have become diluted in general use. This especially concerns empowerment, Deweyan democracy, and industrial and workplace democracy.

The main claim in this thesis is that direct democratic decision-making is a necessary element of Empowerment Evaluation, both distinguishing it from other stakeholder involvement approaches and constituting the form of interaction whose process use makes empowerment, when operationalized as analogous to workers’ control, possible. The pattern matching of the six Empowerment Evaluations shows a consistent direction that justifies this as a subject for further study, especially given the limitations acknowledged in terms of the number and form of case studies used, including the level of detail available in them.

### 7.6 Conclusion of the conclusion

Fetterman has been considering aspects of this all his life. Speaking of the time he spent on a kibbutz, he says:

> Living on the kibbutz, you felt a sense of purpose that I didn’t feel when living in the United States. Whatever you did, including the laundry, you were part of a cycle of things that you rotated. If you were in charge of irrigation, everyone's lives depended on that. You felt needed and critical to the community… that consciousness of community, I never forgot… What Empowerment Evaluation does is, it helps build a community of learners in a very similar way.
We understand our strengths and weaknesses, so in a way we can pull them together …

As well as purpose and community, the kibbutz also tied into the issues of decision-making and organizational structure:

Decision-making in the kibbutz was by consensus. You could agree, disagree. Can you live with it? And that's Empowerment Evaluation. Same thing. Don't have to agree 100%. Can you live with it? If you had to have 100% you'd never get anything done. That's all consensus is. [In the kibbutz] People's livelihood depends on it so they've learned a long time ago, before us, that it has to be close enough, a greater approximation, but not 100%... Very democratic: everybody has a say, everybody has a vote. Not just a voice, but a vote in where we’re going, a real major say to help shape the direction. We take even the minority opinion into consideration’\ [personal communication, Fetterman, 2011].

Empowerment Evaluation is a form of evaluation that, as Fetterman has repeatedly said, intends to “help people take control of their own lives.” Operationalizing Empowerment Evaluation as workers’ control focuses attention on the conception of empowerment that entails the decision-making practices necessary for Empowerment Evaluation to have its empowerment effect. In this way Empowerment Evaluation creates, through its multiple acts of direct democratic micro and macro decision-making, the process whose “process use” is the empowerment, in structural terms, of the group involved.

Normally what’s nice about the process, what I like about it anyway, is they don't have a choice. They can focus on whatever they want, capacity building, accountability, improvement… if they’re taking a constellation of these principles, even if they're emphasizing one, liberation emerges, if they do the lot [personal communication, Fetterman, 2011].
Empowerment Evaluation is a valuable contribution to program evaluation and community practice that goes against most people’s experience of hierarchical social organizations and the “common sense” that comes from it. In this concept empowerment, when taking the form of a change in group power relations, means a disruption of existing power relations within the group (if hierarchical) or between the group and other actors. The result would then be a new power relation, one that is either directly democratic, or one in which this is regarded as a value to pursue. The child in the wheelchair, whose actions were described at the start of this chapter, was celebrated by Fetterman as an example of ‘gutsy self-determination’. She moved into the class she wanted to be in. But she also stayed there. This was, also, a case of a change in power relations.

The purpose of this thesis is to argue for a conceptualization of empowerment, and hence of Empowerment Evaluation, that identifies the practices that are the practical application of its principles. Core to this is the interpretation of democratic participation as direct democratic decision-making. Hannah Arendt has described the Workers’ Councils as the lost treasure of the workers’ movement (1963/2008). Given Miller and Lennie’s call for “realism” in the application of Empowerment Evaluation, there is a danger that direct democratic decision-making may become the lost treasure of Empowerment Evaluation. The thesis has shown the effect and value of operationalizing Empowerment Evaluation as workers’ control.
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9 APPENDIX I

TABLES

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10 APPENDIX II

10.1 Quotes from Vega: El Trentisme a Catalunya

p. 212
‘per tant defensaren un període de transició, en què el sindicalisme havia de tenir un important paper: assegurar la producció, defensar la revolució i preparer el pas cap a una societat comunista llibertaria’.

10.2 Quotes from Alba: Los Colectivizadores

p. 86-87
‘Aunque cada empresa improvisó en los primeros momentos, esta improvisación respondía a criterios generalizados, como lo prueba el hecho de que los procedimientos puesta en práctica fueran semejantes en todas las empresas colectivizadas sin necesidad de uniformarlas ni de consultarse unas a otras… De hecho, se reproducía, así, la organización de una central sindical’

p. 87-88
‘La asamblea de todos los obreros y empleados de una empresa elegía a los miembros del comité de control o de empresa, que solía constar de cinco a diez personas… En los comités debían representados todos los departamentos de la empresa… Por esto, muchos comités tenían mayoría de integrantes que eran cenetistas recientes o tibios, aunque la fuerza coordinadora y la “alma” de los comités eran los veteranos militantes sindicales… En general, todos los miembros del comité eran varones, aunque, en el menos malo de los casos y cuando se trataba de una empresa con mayoría de trabajadoras, había alguna mujer.’

p. 199
'Una vez colectivizada una empresa y nombrado por elección su comité de gestión, los bienes de la empresa se consideraban de todos por un igual, y todos los que trabajaban en la empresa, manualmente, en ofinias o intelectualmente, gozaban de los mismos derechos y tenían las mismas obligaciones, sin diferencias de ningún clase.'

p. 200
'A pesar del espíritu triunfalista de las primeras semanas, ninguna empresa incautada o controlada aumentó los salaries. A los dueños que se quedaron se les fijó un sueldo que no maracara excesiva diferencia con el resto del a plantilla.'

p. 214
'La repuesta es que desde el principio lo hicimos todo democráticamente; la asamblea se reunía a menudo, especialmente al principio, cuando había que adopter decisions importantes. Todos los cargos se elegían directamente, bien por la asamblea general los de direccion, bien por Isla asambleas de sección para los cargos de la seccion… Si el encargado de una sección hubiese sido designado por el comité de empresa, n o habría tenido suficiente autoridad moral; pero los elelegían sus compañeros, y con su eleccion se comprmetian, automáticamente, a respetar sus decisions y a apoyarlo.'

p. 262-263
'Durante la semana tuvo lugar una asamblea de los trabajadores de todos los canódromos, para colectivizarlos. Se celebró en un cine de la plaza de Urquinaona. Se acordó que los obreros se quedaran con los canódromos… se eligió una comisión de tres que encargaría de administrar la nueva empresa colectivizada. Se decidió que para ser elegido debían obtenerse los dos tercios de los votos presentes… No se marcharon los gerentes de los canódromos… No se despidió a nadie, por alto que hubiese sido su cargo. Lo único que se hizo fue quitarles poder. Y esto a pesar de que sabíamos que eran enemigos del sindicato. No se obligó a nadie a ingresar en el sindicato.'
‘no porque se prestara este dinero, sino porque se había prestado sin pedir autorización a la asamblea; el tesorero, la asamblea lo expulsó de su cargo.’

‘pese de quede sobras sabíamos que el sindicato tenía un déficit y probablemente nunca recobraríamos lo prestado. Mientras se pudieran pagar los salarios y mantener funcionando los canódromos, ¿para qué queríamos más dinero? No éramos capitalistas en busca de beneficios…’

‘Las agrupaciones autónomas de músicos y actores tuvieron que decidirse por ingresar en la CNT o en la UGT, pues seguir autónomas era perder toda influencia, en aquellos momentos. Dado que la base de los espectáculos – los obreros y los locales – estaba en la CNT, esas agrupaciones autónomas ingresaron en la CNT. Era lógico, por razones prácticas, puesto que no había afinidad ideológica.

‘Sólo hubo una excepción: un grupo de pelotaris, casi todos mujeres, que… procedían de Madrid, donde estaban afiliados a la UGT, formaron un sindicato de la UGT de pelotaris, en Barcelona. Algunos actores formaron también un sindicato de actores de la UGT. Hay que decir que la CNT respetó siempre sus derechos como obreros del espectáculo, y que nunca tuvieron problemas para actuar en las salas colectivizadas por comités compuestos de cenetistas.’
10.3 Quotes from Maire & Juillard: La CFDT d’aujourd’hui

p. 173-174
‘La lutte contre l’exploitation économique a pris un telle place dans l’histoire du movement ouvrier – on comprend aisément pourquoi – qu’elle a parfois fait oublier la lutte contre l’aliénation : or un socialisme qui oublie que son but fondamental, universel, est de permettre à tous les hommes de se réconcilier avec eux-même, avec leur société, avec leur environnement, avec la nature elle-même, n’est jamais qu’un socialisme tronqué, qu’un avatar collectiviste de cette grande mangeuse d’hommes qu’est la société industrielle. La function d’autogestion est de remettre à l’ordre du jour la lutte contre l’aliénation
‘Ce n’est pas par hazard que la concept d’autogestion a pris son essor dans le grand soufflé de 1968. L’aspiration à des rapports sociaux plus libres et plus égalitaires qui se manifeste à ce moment-là retrouve spontanément l’inspiration profonde du syndicalisme révolutionnaire : la conciliation du travail et du plaisir, qui ne peut se faire que dans l’autonomie retrouvée des individus et des groups.’