

# The challenges of ex-post evaluation

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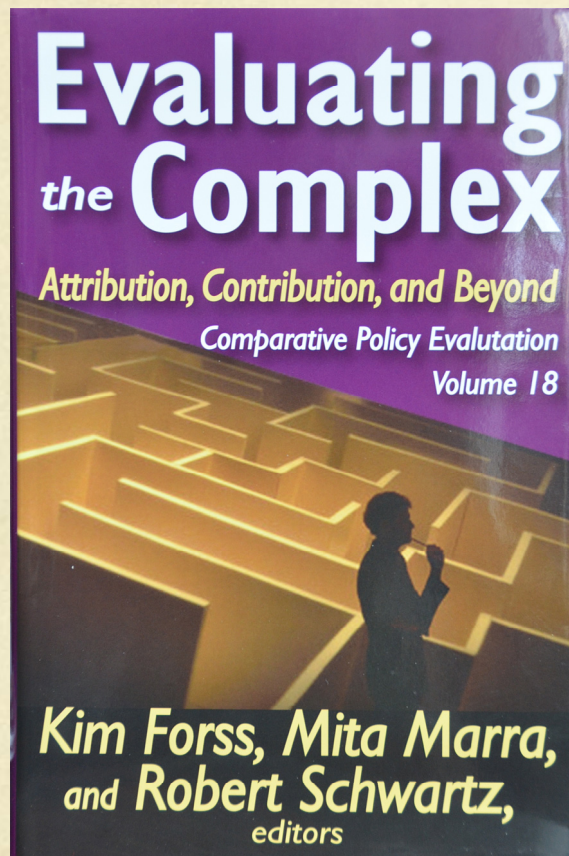
# Ex post evaluation of major projects

- The challenges of ex post evaluation
- Institutional frameworks
- From policy to practice
- Lessons from Norway





# The Challenges?



- Increasing Complexity!
- Transparency and accountability
- New Public Management
- The evidence movement

# Definition

- *"consisting of many and interconnected parts"*
- Latin – **complexus** – extensive, och **plectere** – weaving, being interwoven





# Two forms of uses

- Common-sense, daily usage, somethings that is messy, difficult to comprehend, obscure
- Systems thinking – sciences of complexity; focus on non-linearity





# Non-linear causation



- Time perspective
- Multiple causality
- Assymetric relations
- Qualitative leaps
- Boundary conditions
- Feedback



# Coping with complexity

- Be concrete
- Be innovative
- Be flexible
- Be specific





# Aspects of being concrete



- Levels of complexity
  - The simple
  - The complicated
  - The complex
- Developing and using models



# Aspects of being innovative

- Synthesis as well as analysis
- Towards a contingency theory of evaluating the complex
- Evaluation design



# Aspects of being flexible



- Multiple questions/issues, gradual focus
- Theories of change (note the plural form)
- Towards the assessment of worth and merit
- Multiple levels and perspectives



# Aspects of being specific

- Composition of evaluation teams
  - Legitimacy
  - Knowledge of the evaluand
  - Methodologies, method, data collection and analysis
  - Interaction with stakeholder groups



# You are on your own!

- No cooking book recipes
- Limited applicability of check lists
- Forget standards
- Extensive quality assurance, this is a process





# Complexity and the challenges of ex post evaluation

- Institutional challenges – the setting for ex post evaluation
- Implementation challenges – taking the theory into practice and coping with resistance to change
- Methodological challenges – choosing feasible and reliable methods that work in practice



Onwards!

