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Danish Evaluation Society Conference
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Making Evaluation Relevant for Policy and Practice

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Why Evaluate Public Policy?

- Effectiveness - ensure that policy makes a positive *impact*
- Efficiency - use scarce public resources to maximum effect
- Implementation – ensure that policy is implemented and delivered successfully and effectively.
- Adaptation – allow policy makers to know when a change of policy is required
- Service Orientation - meet citizen's needs/expectations
- Accountability - transparency of what is done and why
- Democracy - enhance the democratic process
- Trust - help ensure/restore trust in government and public services

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Effectiveness of What?

- Intervention effectiveness – what works?
- Resource effectiveness - at what cost/benefit?
- Diversity of effectiveness across different groups – what works for whom and when?
- Implementation effectiveness - how it works?
- Experiential effectiveness - users' views

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Two Main Types of Evaluation

- Impact (or *summative*) evaluations
  Does the policy (programme, intervention) work?

- Process (or *formative*) evaluations
  How, why, and under what conditions does the policy (programme, intervention) work?

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Types of Evaluation Evidence

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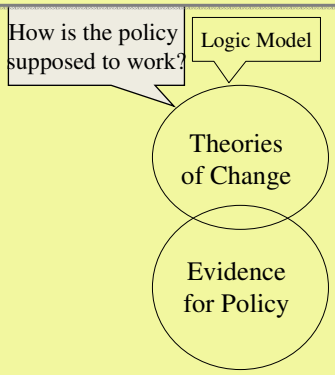

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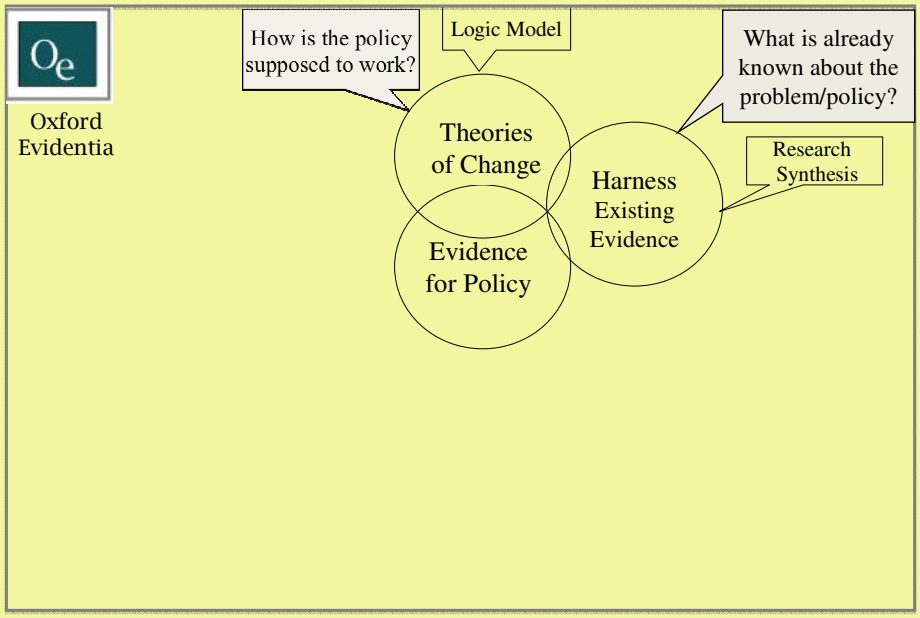

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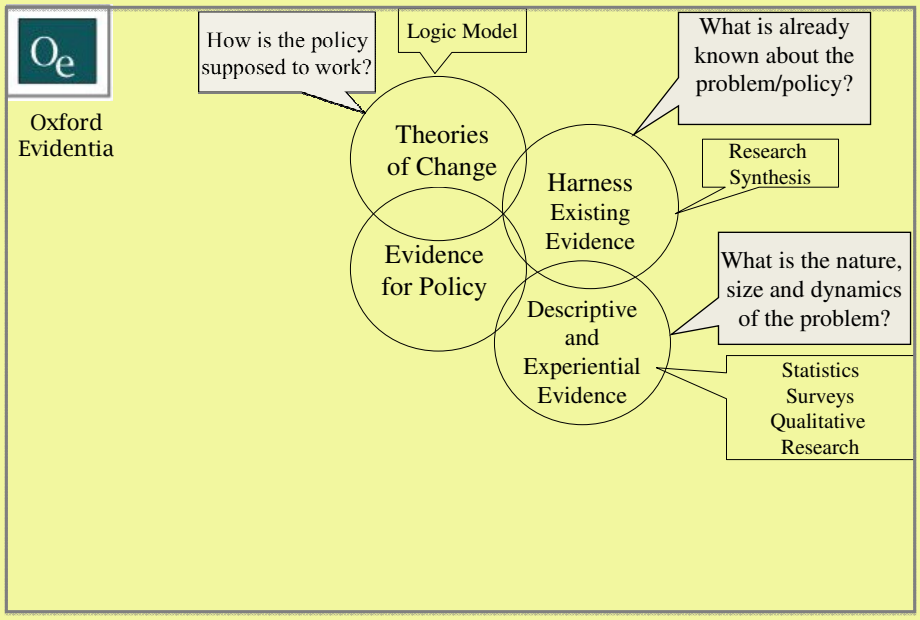

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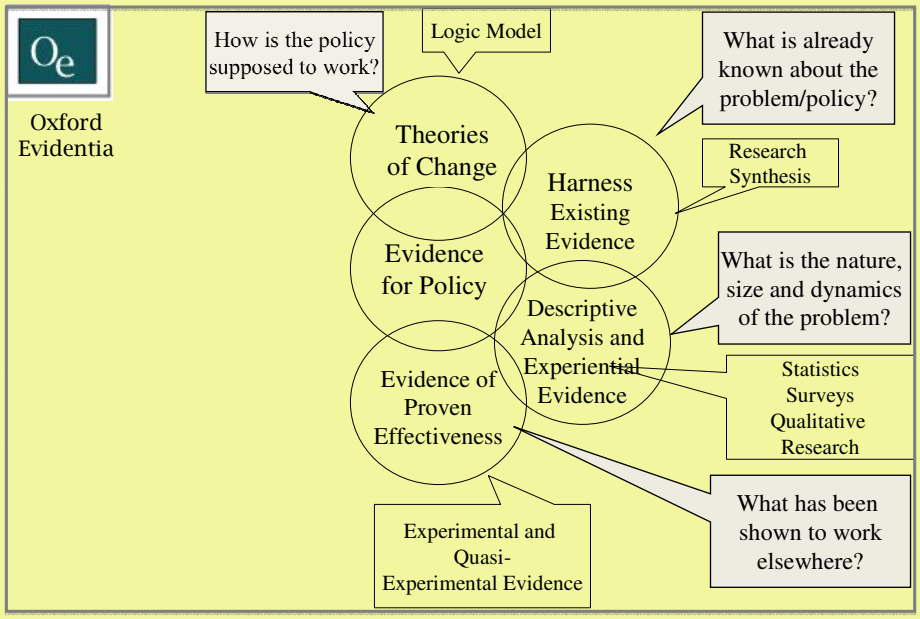

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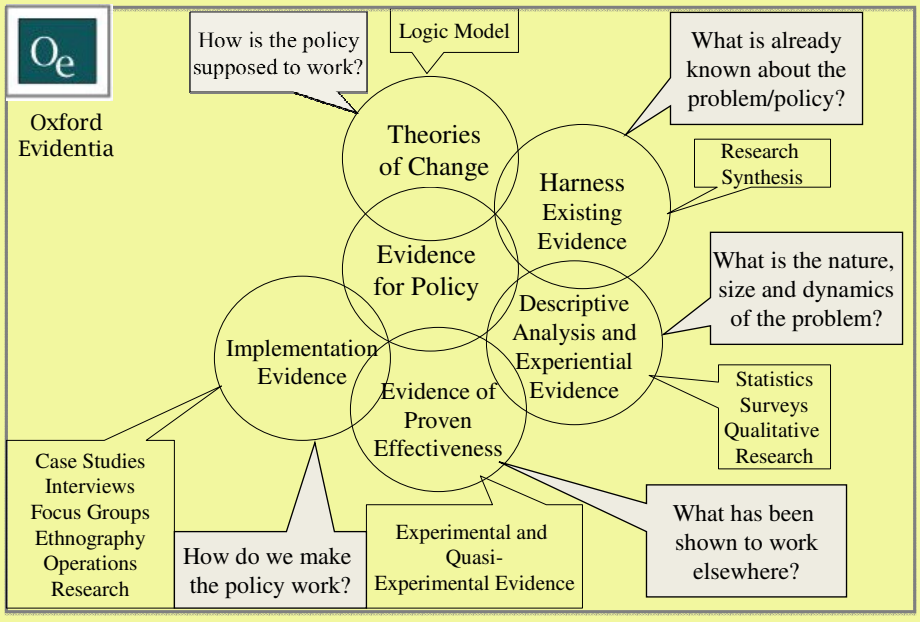

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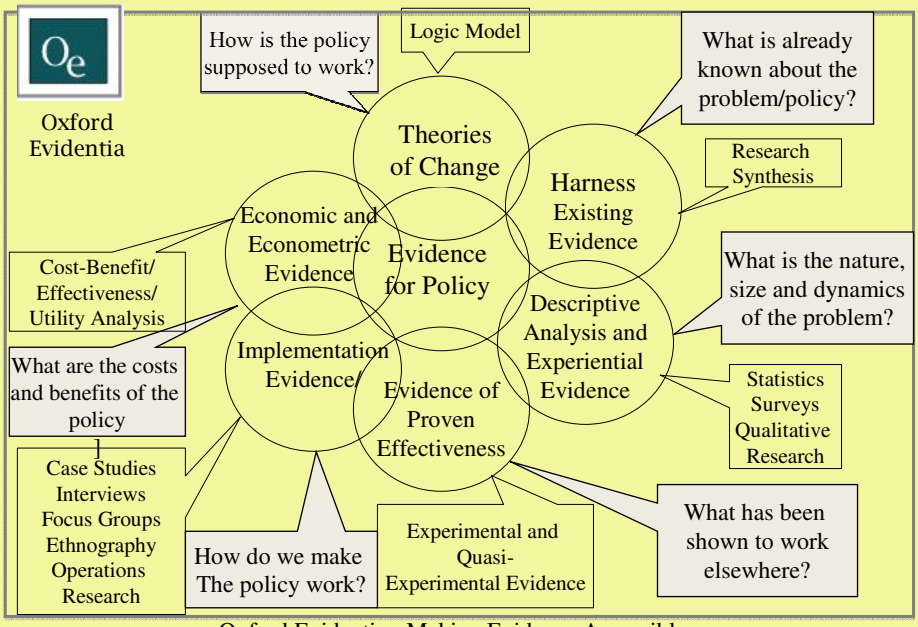

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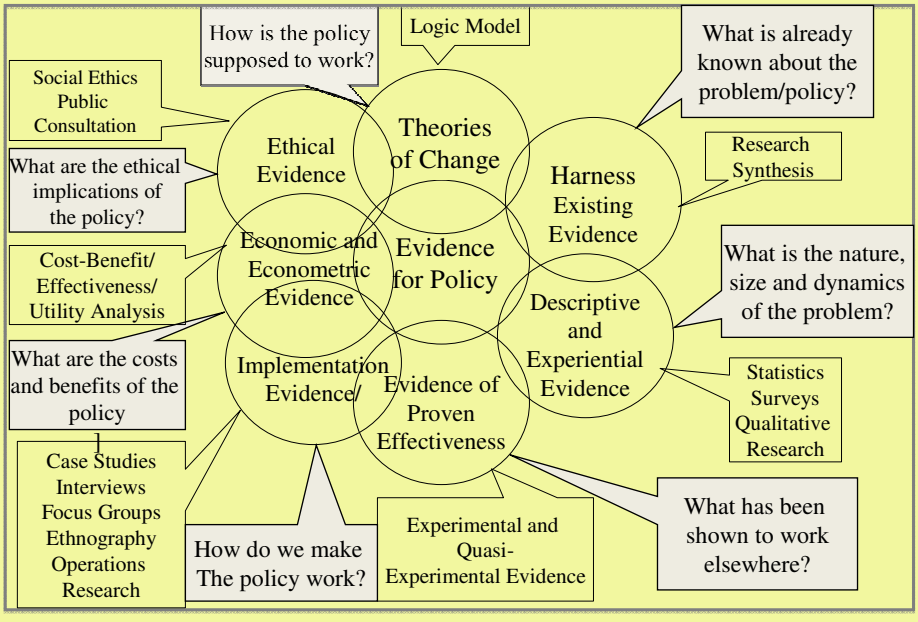

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Evaluation and Policy Making - Challenges

- Evaluation and policy timetables often differ
- But not necessarily – important to develop (some) policy and evaluation *strategically*, and *together*
- And to evaluate and use *existing evidence* effectively
- Not all evaluation evidence is of sufficient quality
- Evaluation evidence is often inaccessible to policy makers
- Different notions of evidence

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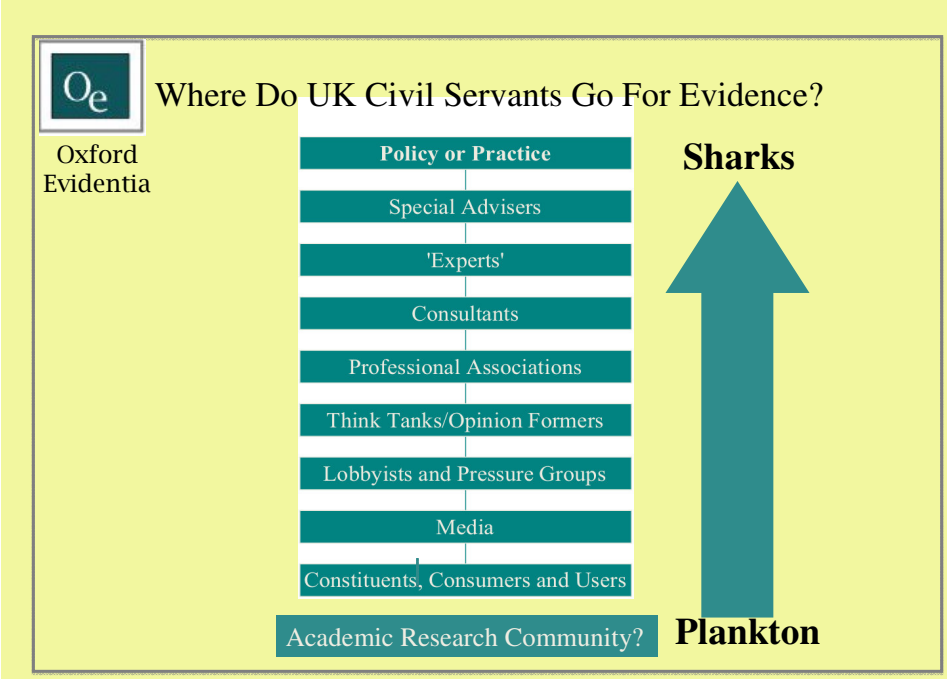
Different Notions of Evidence

Policy Makers' Evidence	Oxford Evidentia	Researchers' Evidence
• Colloquial (Contextual)		• 'Scientific' (Context free)
• Anything that seems reasonable		• Proven empirically
• Policy relevant		• Theoretically driven
• Timely		• As long as it takes
• Clear Message		• Caveats and qualifications

Source: J. Lomas et al, 2005



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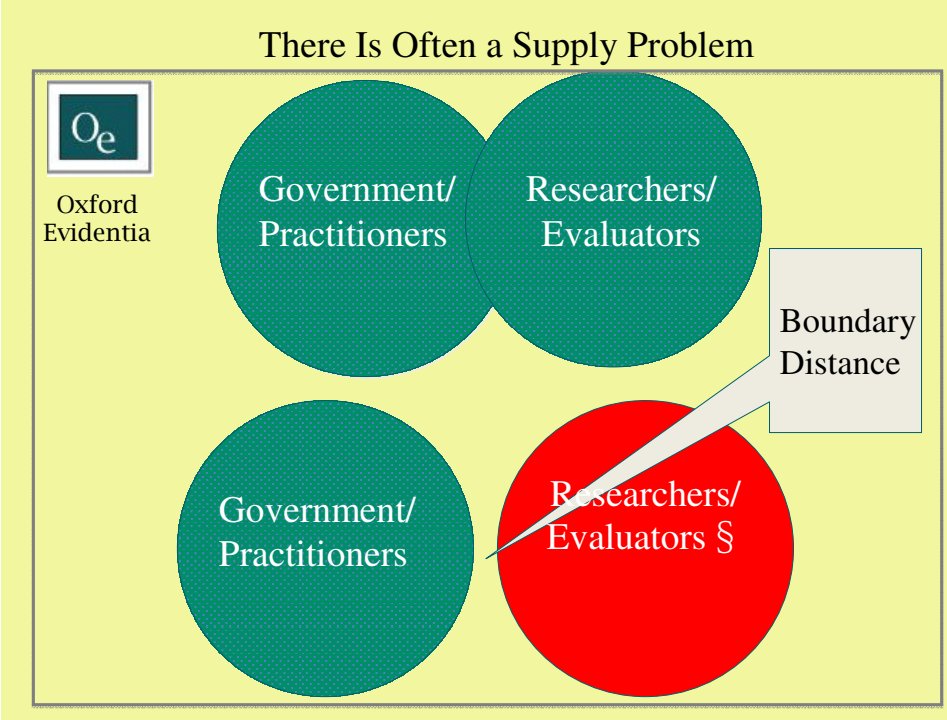

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Bridging The Gap Between Policy and Evaluation

- Integrate and plan evaluation/research and policy *strategically*
- Clarify the policy/practice issues with stakeholders at outset
- Establish how policy is supposed to work - (theory of change)
- Establish ownership of the *evidence* for policy
- Establish and ask answerable questions
- Establish the policy/practice timetable
- Knowledge translation (establish key messages *clearly*)
- Use appropriate formats for presentation (e.g. *1:3:25*)
- Establish incentives to *use* evidence (PSG initiative)

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Making Evidence Work in Government
Incentivizing Policy Makers to Use Evidence (PSG)

- Leadership
- Financial Management
- People Management
- Project and Prog[illegible]nagement
- Commu[illegible]d Marketing
- S[illegible]hinking
- [illegible]ofessional expertise
- Broader Experience
- **Analysis and Use of Evidence**

Built Into Appraisal and Rewards Systems

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Making Evaluation Relevant for Policy - Conclusions

- Evaluation is essential for effective policy making
- Integrate policy development and research/evaluation in a *strategic way* – and operationally
- Learn from what has been attempted elsewhere
- Use the full range of evaluation methods - *appropriately*
- Test/pilot options with sufficient power *before* national roll out
- And test for *local relevance* and feasibility
- Be prepared to adjust/adapt policy in light of evidence

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