UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

# The Democratic Model of Evaluation:

# An Educational Form of Social Theory?

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Submitted for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Social Sciences

May 2000

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

## ABSTRACT

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

**Doctor of Philosophy**

# The Democratic Model of Evaluation: An Educational Form of Social Theory?

**by Sally Glen**

This thesis explores the philosophical arguments and normative foundations for the claim that 'the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory' (Simons, 1987, p83). In my view, this claim was inadequately substantiated, although very well founded in practice. In tracing and seeking to substantiate this claim, this thesis draws on four areas of analysis: political philosophy; conceptual analysis; the history of political thought; and evaluation theory. The approach is broadly analytical rather than descriptive.

The principal question asked is: Why is the democratic model of evaluation an educational form of social theory? The secondary question asked is: Is it tenable at the epistemological, ontological, theoretical and conceptual levels to claim a link between democracy and education and thereby provide a conceptual framework to support the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory? The central assumptions of the model in question, that it is democratic, political and educative are also explored.

The major findings are: first, that there is a historical discourse that links democracy and education. Second, the concept of democracy is both historically and socio-politically located. Third, a case is made for a more social ontological basis to under pin the democratic model of evaluation if it is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

The final chapter locates this model of evaluation within the contemporary political and intellectual context and argues that principles underpinning the democratic model such as community, respect for persons and the emancipatory potential of relationships, resonate with concepts that are central to citizenship conceptualised as a moral bond, community and 'third way' politics.

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**Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my supervisor Helen Simons and also acknowledge Amalia Gallego's encouragement.

# INTRODUCTION

**Introduction**

The principle aim of this thesis is to explore the philosophical arguments and normative foundations for the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory (Simons, 1987, p83). In her book Getting to Know Schools in a Democracy: The Politics and Process of Evaluation, Simons draws on social and educational theory in making this claim. In my view, this claim is inadequately substantiated, although very well supported in practice. The educational proposals made by democratic evaluators have been largely implemented without any reference to the political philosophy from which they emanate or to the view of democracy they were designed to promote. It is the purpose of this thesis to draw on philosophy and, in particular, political philosophy[1] and evaluation theory to develop a more rigorous theoretical framework to support the above claim.

Secondary aims are to:

(i) Establish epistemological, ontological, theoretical and conceptual foundations for claiming a relationship between democracy and education.

(ii) Analyse the relationship between democracy and education and, in particular, the relationship between specific conceptions of democracy and education.

(iii) Identify a contemporary family of ideas to support the link between education and democracy.

Questions

The principle questions that evolve from the above aims are:

- Why is the democratic model of evaluation an educational form of social theory?
- Why is this a justifiable belief?

The secondary question is:

- Is it tenable at the epistemological, ontological, theoretical and conceptual levels to claim a link between democracy and education and thereby provide a conceptual framework to support the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory?

The dawn of the 21st Century is a propitious time for further exploration of the implications for the democratic model of evaluation, conceptualised as an educational form of social

[1] It is recognised here that the boundaries between social theory and philosophy are inherently fluid, perhaps merely artificial (Hollis, 1988, p5).

theory, for this is meant to be the great moment of democratic revival when democracy has returned to the centre of the political stage. This revival is linked, of course, to the collapse of the democracy/totalitarianism opposition (Mouffe, 1993, p3). Democracy seems to have scored an historical victory over alternative forms of governance (Held, 1993, p13). Held (1993, p13) argues that this celebratory view of liberal democracy neglect an exploration of whether there are any tensions, or even perhaps contradictions, between the 'liberal' and 'democratic' components of liberal democracy. Similarly, democratic evaluators may also be accused of assuming an uncritical affirmation of liberal democracy. MacDonald (1980), for example, notes:

> *I start from an attitude to the society I live and work in. That is a liberal democratic society ..... Liberalism I take to be about maximizing individual powers, democracy I take to be about holding power to informed, collective account.*
>
> p1

The above essentially uncritical stance leaves unanalysed the whole meaning of liberal democracy and its possible variants. This stance fails to provide a theoretical and conceptual basis for the claim that the democratic model is an educational form of social theory. By the end of the nineteen-nineties, at the moment when liberal democracy has seemed most triumphant, there has been intense dissatisfaction with that liberal democratic world (Holliday, 1994; Lovery, 1994). At the dawn of the twenty-first century, our society is undergoing a deep process of redefinition of its collective identity and is experiencing the establishment of new political frontiers. In the West, it is the very identity of democracy which is at stake, in so far as it has depended to a large extent on the existence of the communist 'other' that constituted its negation. Now that the enemy has been defeated, the meaning of democracy itself has become blurred and needs to be redefined by the creation of a new frontier. There is also a touch of hubris in the idea that, through the natural selection of political economics, market capitalism and liberal democracy have been singled out as fittest to survive. Liberal democratic thought appears to have reached a major point of transition. This thesis seeks to address this lacuna by:

- Exploring the meaning of democracy both in a historical context and in the context of conceptual analysis.
- Examining the development of different models of liberal democracy.
- Examining the epistemological, ontological, conceptual and theoretical basis of these different models of democracy and their conceptual relationship to education.

Methods

The style of this thesis is conceptual rather than empirical. The aim is to unpack the concept of democracy at the theoretical, conceptual and epistemological levels to determine whether it is possible in this way to substantiate the claim referred to above (Simons, 1987, p83). The methodological approach has been influenced by considerations deriving from moral and political philosophy. This approach has been adopted because the democratic model of evaluation is a political model of evaluation (MacDonald, 1974, pp14-15) and the political dimension inevitably leads one in the direction of moral and political philosophy (Kleinberg, 1991, p3).

Secondly, Simons has noted the educative intent of the democratic model of evaluation and acknowledges that education is a political as well as a moral activity. It is not possible to have a comprehensive, workable and defensible theory of education without an underlying political ideology to motivate and inform it. This premise is hardly original but it is nevertheless worth repeating here. Hollis (1971) notes:

> *Every political theory makes educational demands ...every educational policy is a political policy. Education is a process of shaping society ... whether the shape is well chosen is a question in public moral philosophy, whose other name is political theory.*
>
> p153

To participate in educational debates is also and always to take a particular view about the society of which education is a product and which education itself helps to produce and sustain. Hollis (1971) makes this point:

> *Either we ask what makes man good and try to create a society which allows good men to flourish; or we ask what makes a society good and requires education to produce suitable members. The former approach would usually be described as moral philosophy and the latter as political theory. But they are two sides of the same coin and the political version is fundamental .... Political theory is communal moral philosophy, the only kind of moral philosophy there is.*
>
> p169

Educational debate is part of that much wider debate about which existing patterns of political, economic and cultural life ought to be reproduced and which ought to be modified

or transferred. Just as different educational policies are related to rival conceptions of education, so rival conceptions of education are related to rival conceptions of the good society. Simons (1987) does not claim in her book that democracy is perfect or that all democratic decisions are correct. She would agree with Gutmann (1987) who rightly maintains that:

> *The primary aim of a democratic theory of education is not to offer solutions to all the problems plaguing our educational institutions, but to consider ways of resolving those problems that are compatible with a commitment to democratic values.*
>
> p11

Thirdly, philosophical discussion of the political pays close attention to definition and investigates the most basic assumptions being made. Hence a major part of this thesis is to reveal the meanings people actually give to words, terms, concepts and, perhaps more importantly, the subtle differences and nuances given to related families of words. These nuances and differences suggest in turn that there are subtle conceptual differences which need to be appreciated and understood. The result of a careful conceptual analysis can assist in the process of clarifying thinking in all intellectual spheres by pointing out important, and often quite subtle, conceptual distinctions and thus refining the use of language and raising the quality of thinking. Fine linguistic distinctions make possible more precise analysis of complex questions. What conceptual analysis cannot do is to reveal meanings or essences in any absolute sense, in any metaphysical or essentialist sense - in short, in any sense which, it may be claimed, offers a basis for prescriptions.

The move to regard the study of philosophy as conceptual analysis has been with us for some time now (Ayer, 1936). It represents an attempt to establish a radical alternative to traditional, essentialist and positivist approaches. It reflects a rejection of universals, of all forms of metaphysical philosophy, all attempts to go beyond the physical, beyond the evidence of the senses, and a denial of the claim that there can be a priori knowledge. In particular, philosophy as conceptual analysis has led to a recognition that assertions of value are logically distinct from scientific assertions. It has even led to the view that such assertions of value are not real assertions but are 'literally meaningless' and at the very least, are not seen as having any kind of universal status or force (Ayer, 1936). The task of moral philosophy has come to be regarded not as a quest for universal moral 'truths' for irrefutable moral prescriptions, but rather as the analysis of the language of morals and of the concepts which moral language encapsulates. Therefore, one can see its place in the intellectual

scenario of the twentieth century. One of the major concepts it is important to analyse in this thesis is that of democracy, in order to be clear about the ideals and assumptions it encapsulates and to see how it augments democratic models of evaluation and their practice.

This thesis also draws on the history of political thought which among other things, traces the development of ideas about politics. The ideas of political thinkers, both their philosophical analysis and their statements of political ideals, cannot be properly understood without reference to the conditions peculiar to their own times. It would be absurd, for example, to read Plato's attacks on Athenian direct democracy as if they were applicable without modification to modern mass democracy. Yet most political philosophers seek to reach conclusions which are true for all time. The challenge is to distinguish between ideas about politics and, in particular, political ideas which link politics and education which are ephemeral because they are based on transient historical circumstances, and those which penetrate to the permanent and essential.

In summary, in tracing and seeking to substantiate the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory, this thesis draws on three areas of analysis: political philosophy, conceptual analysis and the history of political thought and evaluation theory. Evaluation theory developed by MacDonald and Simons will be a particular reference point: MacDonald, because it is to him we owe the concept of democratic evaluation; Simons because her book Getting to Know Schools in a Democracy: The Politics and Process of Evaluation is a major explication of the theory and practice of democratic evaluation. This thesis is therefore analytical rather than descriptive and, at some key points, relies on ideal, typical procedures in order to substantiate the argument, or its claims. How it does this is prefigured in the outline of the chapters which follow.

## Outline of Chapters

### *Chapter One*

Chapter One gives a brief history of the development of educational evaluation in the USA and Britain and the emergence of the democratic model of evaluation. It is suggested that the underlying values and beliefs that give rise to evaluation in both countries are very similar, although the practice differs in emphasis. These include the belief that societal structures are not immutable, that the inherited order is not pre-ordained and that social systems can be rationally managed and are amenable to research and development (Norris, 1990, p10). Such

beliefs have their roots in the common experience of industrialisation with its associated demographic and social upheavals. Most importantly, it is noted in Chapter One that the premise that evaluation is inherently a political activity is now widely recognised, although not all evaluators acknowledge their political stance. Of all the models of evaluation, the democratic model proposed by MacDonald is the most overtly political. It is important therefore to examine how, and in which forms, this model is political.

*Chapter Two*

Chapter Two begins by making it explicit that there is no generally agreed definition of the term 'political'. One can nonetheless identify within the tradition of Western political thought a collection of issues that have elicited perennial attention. Chapter Two draws loosely on a conceptual framework developed by the political philosopher Stanley Kleinberg (1991) to examine the nature of the 'political'. Kleinberg's framework consists of the following elements: focus of concern, perspective and motivation (including power). In addition, the relationship between politics and ethics is explored. Chapter Two argues that a critical exploration of the relationship between these elements and the democratic model of evaluation substantiates the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is a political model of evaluation.

*Chapter Three*

Having identified in what sense the democratic model of evaluation is political, it is necessary at this point to examine in what sense it is democratic. Chapter Three further develops the theme, introduced in Chapter Two, relating to the definitional fluidity of liberal democracy, by analysing connecting 'traditions' or conceptualisations of liberal democracy and their manifestation within the context of the democratic model of evaluation. The concept of democracy is socio-contextually relative and has to be interpreted, or re-interpreted, within the context of particular historical societies. Democracy is thus constantly re-interpreted in terms of the current social and political order. In Chapter Three it is suggested that historically, democracy is complex. The implications of this for any understanding of the role of education in a democratic society, and for the democratic model of evaluation as an educational form of social theory, are thus also complex. An historical perspective throws into sharp relief the socio-contextual relativity of conceptions of democracy. In Chapter Three it is argued that democracy, as a form of society, consists of a dialectical relationship between a procedural component (the constitution) and a moral component (the mores, norms and beliefs which constitute a mode of existence).

*Chapter Four*

This chapter begins by examining the premise that 'democracy' has become a 'hurray' word (meaning 'hurrah' for this political system) emptied of all descriptive meaning. Continuing the approach of drawing on work in political philosophy, the chapter questions the definition of democracy. The idea that 'democracy' is an example of an 'essentially contested concept' is challenged and, fundamentally, different opinions are expressed about the general conditions or pre-requisites of successful democracy. In Chapter Four, these are referred to as "conceptions" and a distinction is made between settled conceptions and rival conceptions. Differing definitions of democracy derive in part from different ways of justifying democracy. While it is possible to agree on a concept, there are nevertheless differences in conception. It is noted that questions about whether some person is actually 'educated' and the nature of 'real' education are always a matter of political dispute. Any evaluation of conceptions of education, including conceptions of education implicitly embedded in the democratic model of evaluation, will have been informed by an understanding of the specific social functions they were and are designed to perform in the reproduction of social life.

*Chapter Five*

Chapter Five argues that the abstract individualism which underpins models of evaluation, takes individuals, or persons, as the basic entities that constitute the social world. This chapter is a critique of the liberal individualistic model with a view to reconceptualising the ontological basis of liberal democracy and the relationship between individual and community. It is argued that individuals are who they are, or become who they are, fundamentally through their social relationships. These premises cannot be comprehended within liberal individualism and must ultimately come from a different source from liberalism itself. A more social ontological basis is needed to underpin the democratic model of evaluation if it is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

*Chapter Six*

Chapter Six argues that the democratic model of evaluation is located in a particular model of liberal democracy, and that the justification of the former cannot be undertaken independently of justification of the latter. If democratic evaluators defer only to the traditional liberal democratic paradigm, described in Chapter Five, then the implications of rival models of democracy for the substantiation of the notion that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory are entirely missed. The distinction between market and moral conceptions of democracy is made and the relevance of this distinction for the democratic model of evaluation is discussed. The moral model of

democracy endorses democratic education; this seeks to empower members of the democracy to participate collectively in the process through which society is being shaped and reproduced. The chapter concludes by arguing that it is a moral concept of democracy in which the democratic model of evaluation must be embedded if it is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

*Chapter Seven*

This chapter locates prevalent concern with citizenship, community and 'third way' politics in recent history. This is followed by an examination of the implications of these concerns for the democratic model of evaluation. It is argued that the recent emergence of the notions of dialogical rationality as deliberative democracy provide the democratic model of evaluation with a context which is congruent with its aspirations. It would seem that the democratic model of evaluation is a model whose time has come.

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE DEMOCRATIC MODEL OF EVALUATION: IN THE CONTEXT OF EVALUATION THEORY

## Introduction

This chapter comprises a brief contemporary history of the development of educational evaluation in the USA and Britain and the emergence of the democratic model of evaluation. Naturally, evaluation has developed rather differently on each side of the Atlantic and differently once again in Continental Europe. Nonetheless, the underlying values and beliefs that give rise to evaluation are very similar. A belief in the immutability of societal structure, and a belief that social systems can be rationally managed and are amenable to research and development, are the beliefs that sustained evaluation, and their roots are in the common experience of industrialisation, with its associated demographic and social upheavals (Norris, 1990, p15). Evaluation is a characteristic that has developed in advanced capitalist society (House, 1993). The belief that institutions and culture can be deliberately fashioned through experimentation and research is one of the hallmarks of twentieth century and early twenty-first century social thought (Norris, 1990).

Evaluation, in some conceptions, is an attempt to use the authority of science to legitimate and inform government actions in societies in which the traditional institutions have lost much of their legitimating power. In other comceptions, such as the democratic model of evaluation explored throughout this thesis, evaluation has aspirations to inform dialogue and debate. As Norris (1990) has noted, all histories are partial and unfinished. The brief history of evaluation outlined in this chapter is no exception. It represents only one possible selection among the many that could have been made. Once the democratic model is considered from this brief but broader historical perspective, its ascendancy in the nineteen-seventies and relative decline in the nineteen-eighties and early nineteen-nineties are revealed to be both embedded in and determined by the contemporary socio-political context. As House and Howe (1998, p5) suggest *'... one ... conclusion(s) is that specific political conditions have strong effects on how evaluations are done.'*

## Conceptualisation and Categorisation

The literature contains many approaches to the conceptualisation of evaluation (see for example: Nevo, 1986, p151). Several attempts have also been made to put some order into the growing evaluation literature through classification of evaluation approaches. These include: classifications pointed out by Simons (1987), Stufflebeam and Webster (1983), Guba and Lincoln (1981), House (1980) and Popham (1975). These conceptualisations have made a significant contribution to the development of the field of evaluation through their

critical reviews of the evaluation possibilities denoting similarities and differences among the various approaches. However, Nevo (1986, p151) suggests that these classifications are based on a somewhat holistic approach. He does this by placing each specific evaluation model in one of the labelled broader categories with various other models. One of the difficulties associated with such classifications is that they tend to ignore the major issues underlying the agreement and disagreement between the various evaluation approaches. For example, several theorists link illuminative evaluation and case study and/or portrayal evaluation and responsive evaluation. While these approaches certainly do share major methodological premises in common, they also have differences in conceptual and political stances. One might also argue that the notion of 'models' of evaluation does not include a sufficient degree of the complexity and completeness that might be suggested by the term 'model'. Stake (1981), for example, suggests 'persuasions' may be a better word. The majority of classifications have used the term 'model' so I have accepted this word in drawing attention to the major earlier differences in evaluation theory.

**'Achievement of Objectives Model'**

*Emergence of Formal Evaluation*

Simons (1987), in an overview of the development of the evaluation field, suggests that evaluation has evolved from an aims achievement model of evaluation to a broader framework of informing decision makers, and finally to informing and improving the operation of the social system as a whole (Simons, 1987, p8). The following account is an overview of this evolutionary process.

After World War II, the liberal ideological consensus included the belief that an inherent harmony of interests existed among social groups (Hamilton, 1977). The post war consensus also included the belief that social problems could be solved by the application of resources and intelligence. One of the earliest models of evaluation became the measurement of the achievement of objectives. The well known definition of evaluation, originated by Tyler, conceives evaluation as: *'the process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are actually being realised'*(Tyler, 1949, p69). The 'achievement of objectives' model represents what is usually thought of as the traditional model of educational evaluation. The social origins of the American tradition of educational evaluation were influenced by progressivism, scientific management and the ideology of social efficiency. However, in the USA, it was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which gave an immense impetus to evaluation (McLaughlin, 1975). Evaluation, it was believed,

could determine which programmes maximised the desired outcomes, and it was strongly modelled, some authors have argued (e.g. MacDonald in Hamilton et al 1977), on Taylorism and industrial efficiency. The initial growth of evaluation was the result, according to Hastings (1966), of a desire to base judgements on more reliable evidence:

> *The most commonly held idea of the sequence of evaluation endeavours starts with the act of stating the objectives of a set of materials - a full course, a unit of some sort, or a group of several units. This is followed by the definition of these objectives, in behavioural terms. Next comes the development of items, that is, situations which call for the behaviour defined. These items are combined into scoreable units; scores are obtained on appropriate samples of youngsters. Thus, finally, the sequence ends in attempts to interpret these scores in terms of the extent to which the new materials have developed the behaviours which satisfy the purposes the innovators had in mind.*
>
> p27

With the rise of the centre-periphery curriculum development projects in the sixties, the 'achievement of objectives' model provided a ready-made approach for development and evaluation (Simons, 1987, p34).

Around the same time, in the mid to late nineteen-sixties, Scriven (1967, p40) suggested that evaluation: '"*consists*"' *simply in gathering and combining ... performance data with a weighted set of goal scales. It yields either comparative or numerical ratings; and in justification of (a) the data-gathering instruments, (b) the weightings and (c) the selection of goals.*'

Unlike the US, where it was possible even in the early days of the evaluation field to identify numerous evaluations, there was not a great growth of formal evaluation in the nineteen-sixties in Britain. The institutional or executive commitment to programme evaluation that could be found in the US did not exist in Britain at this time (Norris, 1990). By comparison with the US, educational evaluation in Britain has been a modest activity, initially, largely seen as an adjunct to educational research and development. The growth of formal educational evaluation in Britain began with the influence of project evaluation under the auspices of the Nuffield Foundation and the School's Council (Nevo, 1986; Simons, 1987).

Despite British evaluation activity being seen as an adjunct to educational activity, British evaluators, writing in the late sixties, also basically accepted the 'achievement of objectives' approach due to lack of alternative models at this time. Kerr (1968, p25) for instance wrote: *'If the objectives of a course have been identified and described in concise operational terms, it is logically a simple exercise to identify those aspects of a course which it is desirable to evaluate and then to choose an appropriate instrument or technique for each job.'* Once the evaluation movement started to flourish in the UK, other models quickly emerged. For a number of reasons, the 'achievement of objectives' model failed to take root in the UK. In seeking an explanation for this lack of interest, MacDonald wrote the following in an introduction to a section of a book on readings in curriculum evaluation (Hamilton et al, 1977). The section of this book was intended to illustrate the objectives model of evaluation and its development from the early papers of Ralph Tyler to the then current application in America and Britain:

> *Mechanistic analogies have a peculiar appeal for a people who see themselves as the raw materials of a vision which can be socially engineered. Their culture is characteristically forward looking, constructionist, optimistic and rational. Both the vision and the optimism are reflected in the assumptions that goal consensus, a pre-requisite of engineering, is a matter of clarification rather than reconciliation. In contrast, British culture is nostalgic, conservationist, complacent, and distrustful of rationality ... The theory and practice of the objectives model of evaluation is thus wedded to an American view of society, and an American faith in technology. Pluralist societies will find it difficult to use, unified societies will use it, and discover they are pluralist.*
>
> MacDonald in Hamilton et al, 1977

While the above characterisation may be slightly overdrawn, it draws attention to the social embeddedness of theories and models of evaluation noted in the introduction to this chapter.

Both in the US and UK, it was not long before evaluators found that the 'achievement of objectives' model of evaluation was too restricting for informing decisions curriculum developers had to make (Hamilton et al, 1977). It also did not reflect the reality of practice (Norris, 1990; Simons, 1987). Hastings (1966) had earlier alerted evaluators to the problem. After stating the 'accepted' view he remarked: *'A bit of experience in this area on a real job*

*of evaluation will convince everyone that the steps of this total procedure - as simple as they are to state - are laden with problems of several kinds.'* (Hastings, 1966, p27).

**Informing Curriculum Decisions**

Early recognition of the above problems, cited by Hastings, stemmed partly from an inadequate conception of the scope and purpose of evaluation. This was noted by Cronbach in his 1963 paper Course Improvement Through Evaluation. The context of educational development had changed in the US to include a proliferation of national high school subject projects, given impetus by post Sputnik alarm (Guba and Lincoln, 1981). Evaluation models, like Tyler's, focusing as it did on decentralised curriculum marking and classroom instruction, were seen to be ill-suited to the task of evaluating complex innovations (Simons, 1987).

Cronbach (1963) argued that evaluation had become too dependent on the routines and rituals of testing. He emphasised the role that evaluation could play in course improvement rather than to establish whether a course should be terminated or not through testing of behavioural outcomes. For him, the outcomes of instruction were always multi-dimensional and therefore inadequately described by studies that aggregated different types of performance into single test scores. His concern was twofold. First, he wanted to extend the range of evidence which an evaluator might collect to describe an educational programme, and second, he wanted evaluation to pinpoint features of an education programme which required further attention and revision (Norris, 1990). Cronbach's definition of evaluation at this time marked a radically different approach to the task: *'To draw attention to its full range of functions, we may define 'evaluation' broadly as the collection and use of information to make decisions about an educational programme'* (Cronbach, 1963 p675).

The wide range of questions to be considered throughout most evaluations increasingly began to be acknowledged. During the nineteen-sixties, evaluators were forced to move beyond the shackles of the very narrow 'achievement of objectives' model. This acknowledgement also represented an epistemological shift that began opening up a wide range of political options for evaluators beginning to seek a defensible social service role. This shift also underlines the premise that the nature of the epistemology, underpinning approaches to evaluation, is determined as much by political influences as intellectual influences.

House (1993) suggests that by the nineteen-sixties, the national ideological consensus began fragmenting in the US. Different groups asserted different interests. Many groups protested, and civil disobedience became routine. The Civil Rights struggle, the Cold War and the conflict in Vietnam all also eventually raised deep problems for the justification of liberal democracy. Concern about the direction of contemporary politics had given way to consideration of the very essence of liberal democracy. This social discord led political scientists to develop the pluralist-elitist equilibrium model of democracy, in which leaders bargain with other leaders for their constituencies with the government acting as referee.

Still in the nineteen-sixties, Cronbach (1963) established the notion of evaluation as a service activity to decisions that needed to be made. The client was initially defined as the curriculum developer and the purpose as 'formative' (Scriven, 1974), the implication being that there is much more to evaluate in an educational programme than its stated objectives (Simons, 1987). Stake (1967a) furthered this broadening of perspective by emphasising the need for evaluation to tell the programme 'story'. 'Story-telling' suggests that consumers needed to know a lot more about prestigious innovations than merely whether they survived the uni-dimensional null hypothesis (Simons, 1987). The key to Stake's model was an extension of the range of relevant data that evaluation should collect. Stake's concern was that evaluation should not only contribute to short-term judgements about programme effectiveness, but that it should also improve understanding of the process of innovation (Norris, 1991). Stake (1967b) also drew attention to the 'particularity' of evaluation when he wrote:

> *The purpose of educational evaluation is expository: to acquaint the audience with the workings of certain educators and their learners. It differs from educational research in its orientation to a specific programme rather than to variables common to many programs. A full evaluation results in a story, supported by statistics and profiles. It tells what happened. It reveals perceptions and judgements that different groups and individuals hold - obtained, I hope, by objective means. It tells of merit and shortcomings. As a bonus, it may offer generalisation ('The moral of the story ...) for the guidance of subsequent educational programs.*
>
> Stake, 1967b, p6

At this time, evaluation approaches/models that were evolving, such as Stake's countenance model, reflected the social context of an increasing awareness of value pluralism in the social/political context.

**Informing Administrative Decisions**

The notion of informing decision makers (albeit in a different sense), was taken further by Stufflebeam et al (1971, p40) when he stated that : *'Evaluation is the process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives.'* Stufflebeam's model is the best known American attempt to link evaluation with programme decision-making. The framework was an analytic and rational model of programme decision-making conceived of as a cycle of planning decisions, structuring decisions, implementing decisions and recycling decisions, each serviced respectively by a different form of evaluation - context, input, process and product evaluation. Stufflebeam and his colleagues thought of evaluation in terms of the types of decision it served. The approach was one that categorised evaluation according to its functional role within a consensual system of planned social change.

Stufflebeam's model was informed by systems theory. This conception of evaluation was based on rational reconstructions of decision-making processes. This model of decision-making speaks more to idealised notions of what the process should be rather than to its actuality. There is a clear distinction between the collection of the evidence and the act of judgement which comes from it. Nonetheless, the model was an attempt at making evaluation directly relevant to the needs of decision-makers during the different processes and activities of a programme (Norris, 1990).

As previously suggested, in the late nineteen-sixties, early nineteen-seventies, British evaluation practice was very different in approach to that taking place in the United States. A humanistic and egalitarian social democratic political ideology dominated the UK for most of the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies. Prior to the nineteen-eighties, education policy in Britain was also largely determined through the collective deliberation of teachers, politicians, local education authorities, employers and others with a legitimate interest in education (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p2). What characterised British educational evaluation in the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies was a focus on development, with a corresponding mistrust of summative policy evaluation. Norris (1990, p10) has noted that it

is important to remember that, in Britain, the existence of an independent inspectorate was probably seen to obviate the need to commission external programme evaluations.

The impetus for evaluation in the US stemmed from legislation and was presaged by federal investment in large-scale social action programmes. In Britain, as indicated earlier (cf. p19), it was the curriculum reform movement, which found expression in the curriculum project, that led to the growth of an evaluation community which, by comparison with its American counterpart, was very small indeed. Evaluation of major curricular projects varied greatly in their approach but the focus was almost exclusively on provision of information which decision makers - either the project teams or potential users - might need. Tawney, in 1975, pp11-12, wrote: *'If it is accepted ... that evaluation is the provision of information for decision makers, then it is the task of the evaluator to try to meet these demands.'*

**Longer Term Contribution To Society/Policy Development**

A major theme that has been at the heart of the debate about evaluation, since it emerged as a substantial field of activity, is the role of evaluators in relation to policy making and policy makers. Following the realisation of the limits of the 'aims-achievement' models came a broadening of the concept of evaluation to provide Information to Improve the Development of Programme Decisions (Cronbach, 1963). With more experience of the process, it became clear that using evaluation data to inform specific decisions or decision-makers was perhaps too ambitious a task. In 1982 Cronbach suggested that a more modest aspiration for evaluation was to contribute to decision-making as policy development in the long term (Simons, 1987, p183). This was an extension of his earlier definition, which focussed upon improving curricular decisions of specific programmes and is a concept that fits more appropriately with the inherent nature of evaluation as a political activity.

**Evaluation As Political Activity**

House (1973) was one of the first US evaluators to recognise that evaluation is a political activity when he noted what he called the 'context of evaluation':

> *Contrary to common belief, evaluation is not the ultimate arbiter, delivered from pure objectivity and accepted as the final judgement. Evaluation is always derived from biased origins ..... Likewise, the way in which the results of an evaluation are accepted depends on whether they help or hinder*

*the person receiving them. Evaluation is an integral part of the political processes in our society.*

House, 1973, p3

Decisions, however, are rarely based on 'objective' evidence: they must also take into account such notions as competing values or political practicability. Evaluation also feeds into a larger political system, for which the community has designated in various ways those people who have the responsibility - and accountability - for making the decisions about the allocation of public resources. Thus MacDonald (1976, p128) noted: *'It was (is) no part of the researcher's right, qua researcher, to usurp the functions of elected office holders in a democratic society.'* MacDonald (1973; 1976) was the first evaluator in the UK to raise issues related to evaluation from a politico-ideological perspective. One can identify MacDonald's concern with democracy in an earlier paper 'Briefing Decision Makers' (1973) outlining a role for evaluators providing data to meet different audience needs. The need to recognise the inherent political dimensions of evaluation evolved out of MacDonald's increasing awareness that evaluators must identify those various, often conflicting, groups who make educational decisions and give them the information they feel to be valuable or that they need in order to make appropriate decisions. But it was in his 1974 paper, 'Evaluation and the Control of Education', that MacDonald argued that the evaluator must necessarily commit him/herself to a political stance.

*In a society such as ours, educational power and accountability are widely dispersed, and situational diversity is a significant factor in educational action. It is also quite clear that our society contains groups and individuals who entertain different, even conflicting notions of what constitutes educational excellence. The evaluator has therefore many audiences who will bring a variety of perspectives, concerns and values upon his presentations. In a pluralist society he has no authority to use his position to promote his personal values, or to choose which particular educational ideologies he shall regard as legitimate. His job is to identify those who have to make judgements and decisions about the programme and to lay before them those facts of the case that are recognised by them as relevant to their concerns.*

MacDonald, 1974, p1

MacDonald (1976, p129) was later to note that this is an essentially political statement, involving an acknowledgement of the distribution of power and values, an affirmation of a decision-making process and an assertion of the evaluator's obligation to democratise his/her knowledge. MacDonald increasingly came to view evaluation itself as a political activity and evaluation as a theory of political interaction. The precise way in which political stances can perhaps unwittingly be adopted by evaluators has been described by MacDonald (1976) in his identification of three ideal typologies of evaluation study - bureaucratic, autocratic and democratic (Table 1.1, p27; Table 1.2, p28; and Table 1.3, p31). At the same time as characterising evaluation in this way, MacDonald (1976, p133) was aware that ideal typology rarely fits exactly. Some evaluators found it difficult to identify with the labels. Simons (1987, p49) suggests that commentators who found the 'bureaucratic' and 'democratic' models broadly acceptable, for instance, balked at the 'autocratic' label. Cronbach (1982) suggested 'authoritative' as a substitute. One might also argue that the three ideal typologies of evaluation are underpinned by three ideal typologies of rationality: instrumental, expert and dialogic rationality, as described by Myerson (1994, pp6-7) (Table 1.4, p32). This notion will be further explored in Chapter Two.

Almost all American evaluation, MacDonald contended at the time, fell into the bureaucratic and autocratic category. Briefly he defined as 'bureaucratic', evaluations which play an instrumental role in managing and extending managerial power. The 'reality of power' is the implicit rationale of bureaucratic evaluation which amounts to evaluation for hire (Table 1.1, p27). The criteria of reason is successful intervention, efficiency and impact - instrumental rationality.

MacDonald defined as 'autocratic', evaluations which maintain and extend academic power by offering scientific legitimacy to public policy in exchange for compliance with the evaluator's recommendations. Hence the underlying rationale is the 'responsibility of office' with the evaluator as guarantor of executive integrity (Table 1.2, p28). The criterion of reason is the achievement of goals by specialised techniques - expert rationality.

An instrumental or expert rational epistemology, may lead to a view of the managers' or experts' knowledge as transcending individual human opinion and thus to a conviction that the manager or the expert and their interests must take precedence over the views, interests or wishes of other individuals. Instrumental or expert rationality, or rather epistemologies, are therefore inherently anti-democratic.

**Table 1.1: Bureaucratic Evaluation**

| | |
|---|---|
| Client | Bureaucratic evaluation is an unconditional service to those government agencies who have major control over the allocation of educational resources. |
| Value | The evaluator accepts the value of those who hold office, and offers information which will help them to accomplish their policy objective. |
| Rationality | Instrumental |
| Role | The evaluator acts as a management consultant. |
| Criterion of Success | Client satisfaction. |
| Techniques | Credible to the policy makers and not laying them open to public criticism. |
| Key Concepts | Service, utility and efficiency |
| Key Justifications | Concept 'reality' of power |

**Table 1.2: Autocratic Evaluation**

| | |
|---|---|
| Client | Autocratic evaluation is a conditional device to those government agencies who have major control over the allocation of educational resources. It offers external validation of policy to exchange for compliance with its recommendations. |
| Value | Its values derive from the evaluator's perception of the constitutional and normal obligations of the bureaucracy. |
| Rationality | Expert: Successful intervention, efficiency and impact |
| Role | The evaluator focuses upon issues of educational merit, and acts as expert adviser. |
| Criterion of Success | Government agencies' compliance with its recommendations. |
| Techniques | Techniques of study must yield scientific proofs, because the evaluator's power base is the academic research community. |
| Key Concepts | 'Principle' and 'objectivity'. |
| Key Justifications | 'The responsibility of office'. |

MacDonald described democratic evaluation in the following terms:

> *Democratic evaluation is an information service to the community about the characteristics of an educational programme. It recognises value pluralism and seeks to represent a range of interests in its issue formulation. The basic value is an informed citizenry, and the evaluator acts as broker in exchanges of information between differing groups. His techniques of data gathering and presentation must be accessible to a non-specialist audience. His main activity is the collection of definitions of and reactions to the programme. He offers confidentiality to informants and gives them control over his use of information. The report is non-recommendatory, and the evaluator has no concept of information misuse. The evaluator engages in periodic negotiation of his relations with sponsors and programme participants. The criteria of success is the range of audiences served. The report aspires to 'best-seller' status. The key concepts of democratic evaluation are 'confidentiality', 'negotiation' and 'accessibility'. The key justificatory concept is 'the right to know'.*
>
> MacDonald, 1974, p18

The democratic model of evaluation is a counter to the power relationships encountered in centrally funded programmes of social intervention (Table 1.3, p31). In this setting, unequal power relationships can result in in-built inequality between sponsors and programme executives on the one hand, and those further down the line whose continuity of support depends upon gaining and keeping the approval of those who control funding. This theme, related to power relationships, and the role of the democratic evaluator, will be further developed in Chapter Two (pp39-40).

The democratic model which developed in the United Kingdom, has much in common with the emergence in the US of responsive evaluation developed by Stake (1972) and the stakeholder model developed by Weiss (1975). It also has affinities with the ideas espoused by Cronbach (1982), in his later writings, of informing policy-making in the long term. Stakeholder models were of course a substantial improvement over the previous technocratic model, which had assumed there were no conflicts of interests. However, according to House (1986), problems still exist within the stakeholder model itself. For example, the interests of the poor and powerless are not usually represented in the evaluation. House (1980) suggests that the reports of early experiments utilising the stake-holder model

indicated that *'its apparently half-hearted and compromised form yielded little satisfaction to anyone.'* (Simons, 1987, p16 quoting House).

In the UK, throughout the nineteen-eighties and early nineteen-nineties, there was a shift away from the more humanistic and egalitarian social democratic political ideology that had, as noted elsewhere (cf. pp23-24), dominated most of the nineteen-sixties and nineteen-seventies, to the more utilitarian political ideology of Thatcherism: an ideology which signalled a return to market forces, individual responsibility and economic freedom. In the nineteen-eighties, with the emergence of a political ideology which defined the major political problems in terms of a concern with economic and moral decline, humanistic and egalitarian democratic political policies were portrayed as the *cause* rather than the *solution* to these problems and the issue of including equality of power relationships was eliminated from the agenda of serious political debate. The socio-political context of much of the nineteen-eighties was not conducive to the development of the democratic model of evaluation.

**Table 1.3: Democratic Evaluation**

| | |
|---|---|
| Client | Community |
| Value | Fairness, reasonableness and respect for persons. Community, diversity and relationships of mutual accountability. |
| Role | Information service to the community and acts as broker in exchanges of information between different groups. |
| Rationality | Dialogic rationality |
| Criterion of Success | Range of audiences served. |
| Techniques | Collection of definitions and reactions to the programme. |
| Key Concepts | 'Confidentiality', 'Negotiation' and 'Accessibility'. |
| Key Justifications | 'The Right to Know'. |

**Table 1.4: Three Models of Rationality: Corresponding Models of Evaluation**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Expert Rationality:** | |
| Corresponding Model of Evaluation | Autocratic |
| Definition of Reason | Effective Intervention |
| Criteria of Success | Achievement of goals by specialist techniques |
| **Instrumental Rationality:** | |
| Corresponding Model of Evaluation | Bureaucratic |
| Definition of Reason | The pursuit of aims effectively and successfully |
| Criteria of Success | Successful intervention, efficiency, impact |
| **Dialogic Rationality:** | |
| Corresponding Model of Evaluation | Democratic |
| Definition of Reason | Reason is found in human interaction |
| Criteria of Success | Reason is good dialogue |

The socio-political context of the early to mid nineteen-nineties was even less so, as the objectives model and more technocratic forms of evaluation re-emerged in an increasingly managerialist, bureaucratic culture. Many evaluators have come to acknowledge that evaluation is inherently political and has political effects although not all evaluators see the conduct and practice of evaluation as a political process. Indeed, increasingly in the contemporary socio-political context, many evaluators conceptualise their practice as a technical process to meet technocratic/bureaucratic ends. Those that aspire to serve democratic ends find that the opportunity for independent critique of social policy is curtailed. The position however is changing with the re-emergence of citizenship, an issue that I will return to in the final chapter. In fact, it will be argued in the final chapter that the late nineteen-nineties and the new millennium may also be a particularly propitious time for further exploration of the implications of the democratic model of evaluation, conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, for this is meant to be the great moment of democratic revival when democracy has returned to the centre of the political stage.

**Conclusion**

That evaluation is a political activity is now widely recognised (Simons, 1987; House, 1980; 1973; Weiss, 1975; Apple 1974; MacDonald, 1974). As Simons (1987) has noted, this recognition was belated and its importance and significance are still contested. Philosophically, evaluators have ceased believing that their discipline is value free. It was noted above that as recently as 20 years ago there was a widespread commitment to educational reforms that were underpinned by a compelling vision of the importance of education in fostering a democratic society. Moreover, most education policy makers and educationalists confidently assumed that the democratic advances and achievements that had helped to galvanise this vision in the past would remain unchallenged and unchanged in the 21st Century. Today, this confidence has been severely undermined, the process of democratisation may have lost its momentum at the societal level and there is a widespread feeling that the time has come openly to concede that the relationship between education and democracy needs to be radically rethought (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p13).

This chapter has outlined the development of evaluation theory and models from the early 'aims-achievement model' to more democratic, pluralist methodologies. Yet, the 'aims-achievement' model remains in ascendancy today. Testing, league tables and empiricism are all manifestations of a market driven, Tylorist type ideology. Government and organisations continue to want evaluation data to legitimate policy, not to critique it - which the democratic

model of evaluation can and often does provide. It has been increasingly difficult to sustain the belief that educational policy should be formed through public dialogue and collective debate (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p2). What is required is a more open, democratic discourse of public policy, receptive to evaluation information, since it is only in such a context that the evaluation can fulfil its political aspirations. MacDonald's democratic model is still the most overt statement of the necessity of recognising the evaluators' political stance. There is, however, a need to examine how, and in which forms, it is political.

# CHAPTER TWO

## THE DEMOCRATIC MODEL OF EVALUATION: A POLITICAL MODEL OF EVALUATION?

## Introduction

Chapter One concluded by suggesting that evaluators now accept that evaluation is inherently political and that it influences social and political action (House, 1973; 1990; MacDonald, 1974 and Weiss, 1975), although it is claimed that the democratic model of evaluation remains the most overtly political (Simons, 1987). If this is true, it is necessary to examine and justify this claim. In order to do this a definition of 'political' is needed. Human activity of course does not come pre-labelled 'political' or 'non-political'. One must choose what is to count as 'political', thereby setting a limit to 'political'. As Nicholson (1984, p43) asks: *'If certain activities are to be grouped together as 'political', how ..... are they to be described'*? According to Davenhaver (1996, p67), there is no generally agreed upon definition. Kleinberg (1991), however, provides a framework for examining the political by suggesting a number of concerns that may be relevant to the concept of the political. These include focus of concern, motivation (including power and the exploration of sympathy) and perspective. In addition, the relationship between politics and ethics will be explored in this chapter because it is not possible to analyse the political without analysing the ethical.

## Focus of Concern

Any political theory must give a description of who is allowed to make decisions. For example, to see a question as political may be to view it not just as the proper concern of a small number of private citizens, nor of those specifically qualified, but as the business of all citizens. This might be referred to as the political's 'focus of concern' (Kleinberg, 1991). Acknowledgement of the inherent political dimension to evaluation was first explicitly recognised by House (1973, p3) in the US, when he noted that: *'Evaluation is an integral part of the processes of our society'*, MacDonald (1974, p18) writing in the context of the UK and referring to the democratic model of evaluation, notes: *'it recognises value pluralism and seeks to represent a range of interests in its issue formulation.'* The democratic model of evaluation regards educational decision-making as the proper 'focus of concern' or the business of all citizens in a democracy.

One of the aims of the democratic model of evaluation is to achieve a more sophisticated public awareness of where we do and do not have choices in the shaping of our social and political systems. When democratic evaluators engage in evaluation, they also widen participants' perspectives. Through the sharing and distribution of information democratic evaluation facilitates dialogue. It faces up to the fact of differences in our moral ideals by looking towards democratic dialogue, not only as a means of reconciling those differences,

but also as an integral component of democratic evaluation as an educational form of social theory (Simons, 1987, p83). The democratic model of evaluation makes a democratic virtue out of our inevitable debates and disagreements in a democracy. The model is inherently political because it views this issue of 'the continuing debate' as the 'focus of concern' (following Kleinberg's (1991) framework) of diverse constituencies.

In conclusion to this section, the democratic model of evaluation is political in its attention to diverse constituencies. This might be referred to, drawing on Kleinberg's (1991) framework, as its 'focus of concern'. As suggested above, as a political model of evaluation, the democratic model of evaluation regards educational decision-making as the proper 'focus of concern' of diverse constituencies in a democracy.

**Motivation**

Taking Kleinberg's (1991) second element, central to exploring the nature of 'political' is the need to identify the motivation for political action. Whether an action is political depends on the reason for which it is proposed (Kleinberg, 1991). However, as Dawkins (1986), a leading biologist, points out: *'whether we classify lobster as fish depends on whether we approach the question as biologists, fishermen or gourmets'*. No answer to conceptual questions can be regarded as correct, independently of the nature of our interest in them. What applies to fish applies equally to definitions of politics. Political theorists must give a description of what characteristics the desired society must have or rather what ideals motivate political activity within the context of a particular society (cf. Introduction, pp10-11). Political argument also inherently advances ideas about what constitutes good government. MacDonald's (1980, p1) definition of liberal democracy presupposes a view of both what it is reasonable to want and care about ('maximising individual powers'), and of the proper arrangements of the communities in which we live or rather what constitutes good government ('holding delegated power to informed collective account').

MacDonald's definition of liberal democracy is quite different from that of a lexicographer's. The concern of the lexicographer is to tell how a term is generally employed. The striking feature of MacDonald's definition is that it subscribes to a participant's conception of politics, in that it embodies a contestable view about the motivation for political activity.[1]

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[1] The alternative to the 'participant's' conception of politics is the 'observer's' conception. Dahl (1963, p6) writes: 'a political system is any persistent pattern of human relationships that involves, to a significant extent, power, rule or authority'. Dahl's definition aspires to be value-neutral in that it might be accepted by fascists, liberals, communists or anyone. One might argue that Dahl operates with an observer's conception of politics and that the wide scope of Dahl's definition is to be regarded as a weakness.

The ideal democratic society, according to MacDonald, allows for the maximum empowerment of the individual and the accountability of delegated power to the collective. It is therefore necessary to examine the inter-relationship between motivation, power and evaluation.

**Power**

It is often said that one motivation for participating in politics is related to power. The notion of power seems to be one of the central concepts that needs clarification if the concept of democracy, and thus the democratic model of evaluation, is to be made more meaningful. It is often suggested that politics is about power (Held, 1987, p275-276); that is, it is about the capacity of social agents, agencies and institutions to maintain or transform their environment, social or physical. It is about the resources that underpin their capacity and about the forces that shape and influence its exercise (Held and Leftwich, 1984, p144). Accordingly, within this view, politics is a phenomenon found between all groups, institutions (formal and informal) and societies, cutting across public and private life. It is expressed in all the activities of co- operation, negotiation and struggle over the use and distribution of resources. It is involved in all the relations, institutions and structures which are implicated in the activities of production and reproduction in the life of societies. Politics creates and conditions all aspects of our lives and it is at the core of the development of problems in society and the collective modes of their resolution. As Raphael (1990, p34) writes: *'Power and conflict are ... key ideas for the understanding of political activity, but they cannot be used as defining terms in order to distinguish political from other social relationships.'* The nature of politics is therefore a universal dimension of human life, unrelated to any specific 'site' or set of institutions. However, politics is about more than power. It is about issues such as education, responsible government and the growth of citizenship.

In Crick's (1962, p21) opinion, politics can be defined: *'as the activity by which differing interests within a given rule are conciliated by giving them a share in power'* [my emphasis]. The notion of conciliation by giving individuals and groups a share in power will be developed in this thesis. Grey (1993, p8) more recently also makes great play of the premise that individual liberty depends less upon the terms or provisions of any constitution thanupon the dispersion of power through autonomous institutions and society at large.

The conditions of freedom are delineated by Oakeshott (1967) when he writes:

> *The conduct of government in our society involves a sharing of power, not only between the recognised organ of government, but also between the Administration as the Opposition. In short, we consider ourselves to be free because no one in our society is allowed unlimited power - no leader, faction, party or 'class', no majority, no government, church, corporation, trade or professional association or trade union. The secret of its freedom is that it is composed of a multitude of organisations in the constitution of the best of which is reproduced that diffusion of power which is characteristic of the whole.*
>
> pp40-1

Concentration of power poses the greatest threat to freedom, in part, because of its tendency to corrupt fallible human beings but, principally, because it destroys the conditions of individuality. As Oakeshott suggests in the above quotation, in a free society, power is diffused through numerous organisations and interests (Tivey and Wright, 1992, p179). It is important to note that there are many different theories related to the distribution of power within society. They include: pluralist theories which argue that power is widely and equally distributed amongst different interest groups who organise themselves around an issue, with the state acting as a referee in the bargaining process; elitist theories, which assert that power is disproportionately concentrated in the hands of a limited number of functional or occupational elite groups, who acquire their power through control of economic resources; Marxist theories, whose fundamental beliefs are based on the fact that the state is an agent for domination by the capitalist owning class over the working class, and finally corporatist theories, which embrace the idea of the state working in conjunction with big business and other corporations such as trade unions to ensure private control of the means of production.

Turning to evaluation, in particular the implications of theories of power for the democratic model of evaluation, Simons (1987, p82-84) notes that MacDonald sought to make the democratic model of evaluation the means of gaining purchase on power relationships and enfranchising disadvantaged groups. Since introducing the model, he has sought and obtained evaluation contracts which give him access to high level power groups and has argued that evaluators must extend their case boundaries to include the sources of social policy (MacDonald and Norris, 1981). This notion that sponsors have no special claim on the evaluation service, and that all parties, irrespective of their power relationships are entitled to the service, imposes a power-equalising set of procedures on the conduct of the

evaluation (MacDonald, 1974, p1). MacDonald assumes a pluralist theory of power distribution within society in that the stance taken by MacDonald, as a democratic evaluator, is to make representatives as accountable as possible to other participants. The stance taken by egalitarians has also been to make representatives as accountable as possible to other participants. It is this process that democratic evaluators as egalitarians are facilitating. That power ought to be more equitably distributed, as the democratic model of evaluation advocates, is a premise that reflects the democratic model's commitment to the principle of equal rights.

The democratic model of evaluation at the micro level of society (i.e. the level at which Simons predominantly works) interprets equality in terms of the principle of equal rights to the conditions of self development (i.e. equal rights to participate in decision-making) (cf. Chapter Five, pp89-90; Chapter Six, pp106-110). Such equal rights are based on the agency or capacity of choice that every individual has by virtue of being human and which makes them equal agents. The exercise of this agency is realised in the form of self-development. This requires material and social conditions that facilitate such development. Both the equality of individuals and their equal rights to these conditions may be seen to be the basis of the ontological nature of individuals and of their activities.

Authority over decision-making is one of the central political issues underpinning the democratic model of evaluation. For example, Jenkins et al (1981, p25) suggest: *'it is a sufficient condition for democracy if the distribution and exercise of power in a social system is in principle referable to its citizens'*. Similarly, MacDonald (1981, p1) suggests, *'democracy I take to be about holding delegated power to informed collective account'* (cf. Introduction, p9). Without clarification of the concept of power in this context, House's (1980, p181) observations about power are pertinent. Power is not a neutral concept. Power arises when there is conflict, and depending upon how it is exercised, it can be imposed or rationally shared:

> *Power occurs when there is a conflict of interests. If sanctions are employed, then power becomes coercion (threat of deprivation) and force (no choice) and is not based on authority. One has imposed against the other's will. 'What if decisions are usually taken on the basis of power rather than consensual deliberation?' To that degree the radical critics of liberalism are correct. Power really decides the issues and evaluation is only cosmetic.'*
>
> House, 1980, p187

The exercise of power within the context of a democracy is subject to the procedures of periodical redistribution. This phenomenon implies that conflict is endemic in institutions.

The democratic model of evaluation contributes to the above institutionalised contest for power by establishing procedures for the redistribution of information and thereby facilitating the process of public education in a liberal democracy. There remains, however, always a danger facing any democratic view of too much power by officials, as they have the structural advantage in society. As suggested above (cf. pp39-40), MacDonald claims that the democratic model is counter to the power relationships encountered in centrally funded programmes of social intervention. In this setting, the problem is seen in terms of unequal power relationships between sponsors and programme executives on the one hand, and those further down the line, whose continuity of support depends upon gaining and keeping the approval of those who control funding. The role of the democratic evaluator in this context is that of an information service to the community by acting as broker in exchange of information between different groups thereby denying access only to powerful sponsors. As noted in Chapter One and above in this chapter (cf. pp29-30), it is a basic value of the democratic model of evaluation to inform the people. MacDonald (1974, p18) writes: *'The basic value is an informed citizenry, and the evaluator acts as broker in exchanges of information between differing groups.'* To see a question as political is to see it as the business of all citizens. By extension, the democratic evaluator's motive is to serve a range of audiences with information on which they can base educational and political decisions (cf. Table 1.3, p31).

It is important to explore a little further here the underpinning concepts of the political inherent in the democratic model of evaluation. Simons' (1987) interpretation of the democratic model of evaluation is more congruent with the 'classical' conception of the political and in particular, Aristotle's notion of politics and practical reason (praxis and phronesis) when she argues: *'Personally speaking, the attraction of the democratic model for me lies in its educative logic rather than in its politics of opposition'* (p53).[2]. The political form most hospitable to classical concepts of politics, and the democratic model of evaluation, is a more participatory or deliberative conception of democracy. One of the features of the democratic model of evaluation is that it makes a democratic virtue of our inevitable debates and disagreements in a democracy. The dialogue that is facilitated is congruent with the model

[2] Arendt (1958) retrieves from the Greeks the classical concept of the political, albeit in a somewhat nostalgic fashion when she argues that the classical idea of unconstrained and egalitarian political debate about principles can indeed be heard in the modern world, if only in the circumstances surrounding revolutions (Arendt, 1963) (c.f. Chapter Seven). MacIntyre (1984) has also advocated a revival of Aristotelian and communal approaches to ethics, emphasising the prudential application of principles to particular cases, in order to achieve a reasoned discourse about values.

of rationality described as dialogic rationality (Table 1.4, p32). Dialogic rationality reconstructs reason as dialogue and connects reason with interaction between people. Such interdependence implies that what one individual thinks is reasonable may be modified in a dialogue with others, modified towards a different view, or modified against compromise. Aristotelian practical reason also involves persuasion, reflection upon values, prudential judgement and free disclosure of one's ideas.[3] The 'classical' conception of politics (and its special rationality) was, however, long eclipsed by definitions of politics in terms of power and the instrumental pursuit of interest on the part of individuals or states (Ball, 1983, pp31-51). In the context of the democratic model of evaluation, Simons' concept of power is more congruent with a classical and developmental conception. Simons (1987, p53), suggests: *'For me the democratic approach is an educational form of inquiry offering the possibility of relationships that are developmental for all concerned.'* Macpherson's (1966) work, clarifying the concept of power, is also particularly relevant here.

### *Macpherson's Concept of Power: Democratic Model of Evaluation*

Macpherson (1966, p42) identifies a way of thinking about power, basic to the liberal tradition and to modern political science, which conceptualises power only in terms of power over others. This he describes as 'extractive' power, which can be roughly calculated (each owner of capital, on average, having an extractive power equivalent to virtually the whole power over nine other men). But while extractive power accounts for the great bulk of power in capitalist market society, and makes it possible to describe that society in terms of a net transfer of power, it is nevertheless only one concept of power and needs to be supplemented by another. The other concept is that of 'developmental' power (Macpherson, 1973, p49): *'power as ability to use and develop essentially human capacities.'* Macpherson presents this concept of power as central to the idea of democracy and to a satisfactory account of what it means to be a human being. Indeed his aim, as will be noted in Chapter Three (cf. pp54-5), is to advance this developmental concept as the only basis for an adequate theory of democracy in the twentieth century: democracy in this context is a claim about the maximisation of human power, in the developmental sense of power. It is: *'simply the principle that everyone ought to be able to make the most of himself or make the best of himself.'* (Macpherson, 1973, p51). However, such a principle also implies a view of the human essence: *'a concept of man as at least potentially a doer, an exerter and developer and enjoyer of his human capacities rather than merely a consumer of utilities.'* Here are the elements, in Macpherson's view, for a modern theory of democracy, the characteristics of the

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[3] The precise political implications of this kind of rationality are a matter of ongoing debate, occasioned in part by the difficulty of appropriating the epistemological categories of the ancient Greeks to contemporary modes of thought (Dryzek, 1990, p9).

desired society (cf. Introduction, pp10-11), an expansive definition of human beings (not just consumer and possessors), and equal rights to human development (not just for some).

Macpherson (1973, pp51-52) summarises the above ingredients for an adequate twentieth century theory of democracy when he writes: *'it must treat democracy as a kind of society and must treat the individual members as at least potentially doers rather than mere consumers. It must assert an equal effective right of the members to use and develop their human capacities: each must be enabled to do so whether or not each actually does so'.* Democracy, following Macpherson, is a claim to maximise human power. The appropriate measure is the 'absence of impediments' to human development, such social impediments being lack of adequate means of life, lack of access to the means of labour and lack of protection against invasion by others. Liberal democratic theory is itself only traditionally concerned itself with the third category, but a satisfactory democratic theory has to address them all.

Turning to evaluation, this section has analysed different concepts of power and their inter-relationship with the democratic model of evaluation. It has been noted that the democratic model of evaluation is counter to the power relationships encountered in centrally funded programmes of social intervention. The role of the democratic evaluator in this context is that of an information service to the community to act as a broker in exchange of information between different groups, thereby denying access only to powerful sponsors. Macpherson's concept of power has a particular contribution to make to Simons' work. Macpherson identifies two types of power, 'Extractive' and 'Developmental' power. 'Extractive' power refers to power over others and 'Developmental' power refers to power as the ability to use and develop essentially human capacities. It is the 'developmental' form of power Simons is essentially interested in developing. This theme will be returned to in Chapter Five.

**Motivation: Sympathy**

This section explores, following Kleinberg's framework, the inter-relationship between motivation and sympathy, and its relevance to the political. A useful starting point is the political philosopher Oakeshott as he locates politics in what he designates in 'Experience and its Modes' (1933) as the world of practice. Politics for him is a practical activity conducted not in the light of abstract principles, but according to the manners, customs, procedures and maxims peculiar to each community. Oakeshott (1967) suggests that political activity is an exploration of sympathy. For example, in discussing the legal status of women Oakeshott declares:

> *The arrangements which constitute a society capable of political activity, whether these are customs or institutions or laws or diplomatic decisions, are at once coherent and incoherent; they compose a pattern and at the same time they intimate a sympathy for what does not fully appear. Political activity is the exploration of that sympathy* [my emphasis] *and, consequently, relevant political reasoning will be convincing exposure of a sympathy present but not yet followed up, and the convincing demonstration that now is the appropriate moment for recognising it.* [my emphasis]
>
> p124

The democratic model of evaluation exploits sympathy for the practical reality of democratic principles by combining a radical critique of the actuality of liberal democracy with a commitment to its fundamental ideas and working within its framework to reform. The central role attributed by Oakeshott to the existing 'tradition of behaviour' and political action as 'the pursuit of an intimation' is useful and productive for the formulation of a concept of democracy congruent with the democratic model of evaluation. MacDonald (1974), in the following quotation, also demonstrates his exploitation of the contemporary 'sympathy' for democracy:

> *Bureaucracy' and 'autocracy' carry overtones of disapproval, while 'democracy' - at least in Western societies - can still be relied upon to evoke general approval. Nor am I free from such affective responses myself, and it will not escape the reader that my own stance falls conveniently under the 'democratic' label.*
>
> p126

In other words, MacDonald employs the symbolic resources of, or rather sympathy for, the liberal democratic tradition (cf. Chapter Four, p70-71). As Held (1993, p13) suggests, democracy bestows an area of legitimacy on modern political life: law, rules and policies appear justified when they are democratic. This demonstrates, once again, the employment of the symbolic resources of the liberal democratic tradition. Evaluation, according to MacDonald, must be guided by the principles, not the practices, of a regime. Conservatism is the moral hazard of this form of relativism. Relativism, in this context, is conservative, not in the narrow sense of maintaining the status quo, but in the broad sense of supporting existing social ideals. MacDonald (1980, p1) is both assuming a relativistic stance and employing the symbolic resources of the liberal democracy when he notes: *'The rhetoric of*

*this society (its qualifying values) constitute for me a source of leverage on an unacceptable reality.'* which is concerned with *'a moral critique of the way in which legitimate actors discharge their responsibilities.'* The need to explore the interface between the promises and realities of democracy is one of the principles underpinning MacDonald's democratic model. In other words, as outlined in the introduction to this chapter, he exploits sympathy for the practical reality of democratic principles by combining a radical critique of the actuality of liberal democracy with a commitment to its fundamental ideas, and working within its framework to reform it.

In summary to this section, as suggested above, central to any exploration of the nature of 'political', is the need to identify the motivation for political action. The first motive identified is the dispersion of power in a society or community. Democratic evaluators assume a pluralist theory of power distribution within society. MacDonald's approach to evaluation reflects a modern concept of the political and its inherent inter-relationship with power. In contrast, Simons' approach reflects a classical conception of the political and its inter-relationship with the Aristotelian notions of praxis and phronesis. It is a classical conception of the political which is congruent with the premise that the democratic model is an educational form of social theory. The political form most hospitable to classical concepts of politics is a more participatory or deliberative conception of democracy. One can think of liberal and participatory democracy as two major democratic possibilities, market and moral conceptions that help define politics. Participatory democracy is oriented to discussion and educationally oriented to truly public interests, and the need for active citizenship. The democratic model, conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, is congruent with a classical/participatory concept of the political.

Another motive identified in this chapter is the need to know what it is reasonable for us to want and care about. The democratic model wants and cares about 'maximising individual powers' and 'holding delegated power to informed collective account' (MacDonald, 1980, p1). A third motive for political activity is an exploration of sympathy. A characteristic feature of contemporary political theory (c.f. Mouffe, 1992; Phillips, 1993) is that it combines a radical critique of the actuality of liberal democracy with a commitment to its fundamental ideas and working within its framework to reform it. It is this contemporary 'sympathy' for the practical reality and the underpinning principles or espoused values of a liberal democracy that democratic evaluators are exploiting. This premise will be returned to in Chapter Seven.

**Perspective**

Taking Kleinberg's (1991) third element, to see something as political is to presuppose a particular context or framework in terms of which it should be viewed. This is what Kleinberg calls the 'perspective'. The ascendant contemporary political perspective is of course liberal democracy. Liberalism itself has come to be associated both with the highly naturalistic strain of thought commencing with Hobbes, which discarded traditional concepts of society, justice and natural law, and deduced political rights and obligations from the interest and will of disassociated individuals; and with the 'moral' strain of individual worth emanating from the puritans (Tarrant, 1989, p17). The grounds for an insidious conceptual confusion between democracy and liberalism are also overwhelming in that the demands of both wings of liberalism in their attacks on autocracy were demands for democratic controls in that they favoured a sovereign legislature and the application of the rule of law and separation of powers. The term 'liberal' is thus an unhelpful one, masking as it does two traditions of individualism, whose divisions increase in strength in the twentieth century. The very distinction indirectly suggests the latter as a unity, which it manifestly is not. A more appropriate distinction is between the market and moral conceptions of democracy which are inherently linked to market and moral conceptions of citizenship. This distinction cuts right across liberalism.[4]

Liberal democracy also spans a range of assumptions about the essential nature of persons, from the individual as an essentially maximising consumer of utilities, to the individual as an exerter and developer of the human capacities or powers. The difference rests on whether the emphasis is placed on liberalism or democracy. However, if the democratic model of evaluation is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, one concept which will need to be reconstructed is the liberal democratic premise that the individual exists prior to and apart from society. In other essence, if one is to claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educative model, one must base this claim partly on an analysis of the ontological foundations of democracy, that is on the nature of individuals as agents and of their social relations as well as on the nature of society. This issue related to the ontological basis of liberal democracy will be revisited in Chapter Five.

[4] It is recognised that this is not an easy distinction to maintain. Some theorists such as Locke and John Stuart Mill are exceedingly difficult to classify since they appear to show a concern for the moral worth of individuals, yet also envisage persons as merely a bundle of utility preferences. For all its difficulties, however, the distinction seems both long overdue and highly relevant to the argument developed here.

**Politics and Ethics**

Politics, ethics and evaluation are in a symbiotic relationship with each other. Weiss (1990, pp236-237) suggests: *'Politics is the system we have for allocating values in our society. It is the core of democratic decision-making. Evaluation of any programs that cost money and allocate valued service cannot escape becoming involved in politics.'* King (1990, p236) also underlines the relationship between evaluation and ethics when she notes: *'Evaluation and ethical issues go hand in hand because of the inevitable value questions that the process raises.'* This section examines the nature of the relationship between politics, ethics and evaluation, starting with an examination of the nature of the relationship between politics and ethics.

*Nature of the Relations Between Politics and Ethics*

To possess moral legitimacy today, a government must be democratic in both form and practice (Held, 1987). Only a recognisably democratic state can satisfy the moral demands of political justice. Political theorists (Gutmann, 1987; Walzer, 1983, p19) are likely to be sceptical about the notion of translating political/ethical principles into practice. For example, referring to the development of 'autonomy' or 'independence' Held (1993, p273) suggests: *'to state this - and to try to articulate its meaning in a fundamental but highly abstract principle - is not yet, it must be stressed, to say very much. For the full meaning of a principle cannot be specified independently of the conditions of its enactment.'* It is not possible to simply apply ethical concepts to practical political contexts - a more Aristotelian approach is required. Aristotle clearly grounds practical reasoning in collective life (cf. Table 1.3, p31).

Contemporary political theorists draw on Aristotelian notions of politics and practical reasoning. For example, Santonyana (1936), Leftwich (1984), Barber (1982) and Gutmann (1987) all suggest that a political question is one of action, not of truth, or even justice in the abstract. Political questions, they all argue, eschew metaphysics and circumvent philosophical issues of final truth and absolute morals. Barber (1982), drawing on this theme of the concrete historicity of politics in the real world of human beings notes:

> *Politics does not rest on justice and freedom; it is what makes it possible. The object of democracy is not to apply independently grounded abstractions to concrete situations but rather to extrapolate working abstractions to concrete situations. In a word, politics is not the application of truth to the*

*problem of human relations but the application of human relations to the problem of truth. Justice then appears as an approximation of action when absolute principles are irrelevant.*

p65

Similarly, Leftwich (1984, p32) argues: *'Politics ..... is the study of how men handle controversial issues which cannot be settled simply by resort to rational argument and indisputable evidence.'* Writing about the epistemological problem of politics, Santonyana (1936) suggests:

*The problem of knowledge which it most concerns man to solve is not an artificial and retrospective one about the primordial articulation of our dream, but the practical progressive problem of applying that dream to its own betterment and of transforming it into the instrument and sect of a stable happiness.*

p15

Ideal theories, including political theories, always abstract from the messy contingencies that are constitutive features of all actual political practice. It is only through such abstractions that they can articulate their ideals. Ideal theories fail to recognise the conflicts of values with which responsible concrete political practice always has to deal. Tamir (1993, p112) refers to the 'morality of community' that always demands 'untidy compromises'. This premise possibly holds for all responsible politics. If rigorously insisted on, these principles would make it practically impossible to justify any concrete extended sequence of political judgements or actions (Wellmer, 1991, pp154-55).

In the context of evaluation, the democratic model of evaluation translates principles not precise procedures for action. Furthermore, the justification of the ethical principles underpinning the democratic model such as: fairness, reasonableness and respect for persons, community, diversity and relationships of mutual accountability at the institutional level, is not an epistemological or metaphysical problem but a practical social task. As Simons (1987) notes with reference to a specific case that had conflicting interests:

*"Reasonableness", the other side of the 'democratic' coin, does, so my question is, with respect to the case, 'What is reasonable? ..... what is reasonable, at this time, in this place, in these circumstances, with regard to all relevant considerations?*

p172

Simons (1987) also identifies the basic principles underpinning a liberal democracy and simultaneously makes the case that the democratic model of evaluation endorses them when she notes:

> *In endorsing the democratic model, this can be seen to favour a view of curriculum development based on community, diversity and relationships of mutual accountability. Fairness, reasonableness and respect for persons are root values within such a view - clearly the rhetoric of liberal democracy embodies these root values.*

p53

The most single important characteristic which distinguishes democratic forms of political organisation from other forms is that, unlike other forms of political organisation (and in this context, other forms of evaluation), they have moral roots and are justified by clear moral principles. Clear moral principles are key constituents of a desirable democratic society and thus the democratic model of evaluation.

**Conclusion**

Central to exploring the nature of 'political', is the need to identify the motivation for political action. Three motives were identified: the need to know what it is reasonable for us to want and care about, the dispersion of power in a society or community, and the exploration of sympathy. Firstly, the democratic model wants and cares about 'maximising individual powers' and 'holding delegated power to informed collective account'. Secondly, the democratic model aspires to counter power relationships by serving a range of audiences with information. Democratic evaluators assume a pluralist theory of power distribution within society. MacDonald, whose focus is mainly at the macro, policy-making level, assumes a modern concept of the political. Democratic evaluators assume a classical conception of the political and, in particular, embrace Aristotle's notion of politics and practical reason (praxis and phronesis). The political form most hospitable to classical concepts of politics, and the democratic model, is a more participatory or deliberative conception of democracy. Although there is no simple dichotomy between liberal and participatory democracy, one can think of them as two major democratic possibilities, market and moral conceptions that help define politics. As one moves towards the participatory role of the spectrum, politics becomes increasingly discursive, educationally oriented to truly

public interests, and need for active citizenship. In contrast, the liberal pole is dominated by voting strategy, private interests, bargaining exchanges, spectacle and limited involvement. The democratic model, conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, is thus congruent with a classical concept of the political.

Thirdly, it was noted that the democratic model exploits sympathy for the practical reality of democratic principles by combining a radical critique of the actuality of liberal democracy with a commitment to its fundamental ideas and working within its framework to reform it. On this basis, it was argued that the democratic model's motivation is political, it is in essence a political model of evaluation. It was also suggested that to see something as political may be to presuppose a particular context or framework in terms of which it should be viewed and that this might be referred to as the 'perspective'. It is the liberal democratic perspectives which contextualise the democratic model as an inherently political perspective with all its inherent limitations.

Fourthly, this chapter located the democratic model within moral conceptions of democracy and thus moral conceptions of citizenship. Only moral conceptions of democracy and citizenship entail a commitment to the educational aim of the critical citizen. Finally, the symbiotic relationship between politics, ethics and evaluation was acknowledged along with the ethical principles underpinning the democratic model of evaluation. It was suggested that generalised moral concepts must be constantly re-interpreted within the specific social context. This theme of re-interpreting concepts within the specific social context will be developed in Chapter Three.

# CHAPTER THREE

## AN HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

## Introduction

Both historically and conceptually democracy is complex. The implications of this for any understanding of the role of education in a democratic society, and the democratic model of evaluation as an educational form of social theory, are thus also complex. Such complexity means that there will always be competing interpretations of the political principles of an ideal liberal democracy and the meanings of liberty and equality will never cease to be contested[1]. Chapter Three analyses connecting 'traditions' or conceptualisations of liberal democracy and their manifestation within the context of the democratic model of evaluation. The main reason for doing this stems from the argument that the development of both democracy and the democratic model of evaluation cannot be adequately understood unless they are placed within a much longer history of changes in democracy.

This chapter will also demonstrate that there is a historical tradition that locates the concept of democracy within an educational developmental perspective. It is also argued here that the concept of democracy is socio-contextually relative and has to be interpreted, or re-interpreted within the context of particular historical societies. The implication of this premise is that some socio-political contexts will be more receptive than others to the democratic model of evaluation and its underpinning values and principles. Once democracy, and the implications for the democratic model of evaluation are considered from this longer and broader historical perspective, their manifestations are revealed to be no more than the latest outcome of a continuous political struggle over how the internal tension between the two political traditions of liberalism and democracy ought to be resolved.

## Democracy: A Longer and Broader Perspective

The history of democracy is often very confusing partly because this is still very much an active history and partly because, as suggested above, the issues are very complex (Williams, 1976). To understand democracy from an historical perspective is to know something about the whole gamut of conditions that have led to, and that now sustain, the way it is used within a contemporary context. It is important to understand how the contemporary conception of democracy is the outcome of a historical process through which democracy was transformed from a moral concept that incorporated a vision of human nature and a commitment to a particular form of life, into a neutral concept that is devoid of both. What this implies, is that

[1] Liberty and equality are what distinguish the democratic ideal from other political ideals. Liberty, equality and democracy might be described as incomplete concepts which cannot be properly understood without a specification of the underlying variables.

any further enquiry into the meaning of democracy and the view of education it sustains must, to a large extent, be a historical study concerned with exposing the cultural, political and ideological contexts in which the classical conception was displaced and out of which the contemporary conception of democracy was eventually to emerge. As Arblaster (1994) puts it:

> *To suppose that this century can fix the definition of democracy, or even more arrogantly that it is in this century that democracy has been finally and definitively realised, is to be blind not only to the probability of the future but also to the certainties of the past.*
>
> p6

This can be interpreted as a request for historical intelligibility rather than a description of contemporary practice (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p45). To interpret democracy (or possibly re-interpret democracy) requires a sensitivity to the historical.

Sartori (1987, p178) argues that: *'ancient democracies cannot teach us anything about building a democratic state or about conducting a democratic system'*. Yet, as he also acknowledges: *'a considerable literature currently recalls the Greek experiment as if it were a lost and somewhat recuperable paradise'* (p270). The ideals of democracy have remained very much what they were in the fourth century BC, when the citizens were still able to meet together in a single assembly and directly govern themselves, and when there was no real sense in which some people were being represented by others. Despite all the subsequent changes in the organisation of social life, the principle value of democracy has persisted in this ancient mould, and still addresses a direct democracy. Thus, as Sartori (1987, p164-165) notes elsewhere *'[t]he astonishing fact that we have created a representative democracy - performing a near miracle that Rousseau still declared impossible - with value support.'*
All deliberative rhetoric is pervaded by contingency and historicity. It is embedded in both a history-already-made and a history-to-be-made. It is only by looking for signs of the new, by asking what came into being with the formation and development of modern democracy, by asking what issues were raised by the progressive separation of state and civil society andby the increase in demands that resulted from the proclamation of the rights of persons[2]:

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[2] Democracy could not have triumphed without instituting a separation between civil society (a locus of opinion with no power) and secular society (a locus of power with no opinions). It is claimed that, as a result of this system, the state grows stronger behind its mask of neutrality, whilst civil society grows weaker, but remains a theatre for the noisy expression of opinions which, because they are merely the opinions of individuals, neutralise one another *(Lefort*, 1988).

As Lefort (1988) notes:

> *It is only by trying to see how theatres of conflict are displaced, how the ambiguities of democracy are transferred from era to era, and how the debate that accompanies change and which to some extent constitutes it evolves that we can possibly hope to take cognisance of the political, as others did in the past, and sometimes with incomparable acuity and boldness, albeit on the basis of a different experience.*
>
> p5

The above quotation throws into sharp relief the ambiguities inherent in the conception of democracy. The following section will stress the importance of context to the understanding of democracy.

**A 'Contextual' or 'Textual' Approach?**

Skinner (1978, pp285-6) suggests that the right way to an understanding of democracy possibly lies not in the close study of the texts themselves, but in an examination of the relations of the texts with publicly accepted meanings of the period. They should not be read in isolation from other contemporary works or from the debates of the period. The history of political thought is essentially historical, and the context is vital. Skinner thus advocates a 'contextual' rather than a 'textual' approach to the analysis of concepts. He suggests that the study of a great work had traditionally been recommended on the grounds that they were about certain 'abiding questions' and that eternal truths might be gleaned from them. There are, in his view, no such questions nor such truths. This misguided approach had led numerous eminent commentators to read into the classics ideas that were not there. Great ideas, such as democracy, were perceived in texts when in fact their authors had no concern with such matters. Since crucial concepts have, in practice, widely different connotations at different times and for different writers, neither could there be any point in studies of any individual writer, unless they were surrounded by the appropriate ideological context, and showed awareness of lesser and more ephemeral writings of the time. In other words, this once again reiterates the need for a socio-contextually, relative interpretation or re-interpretation.

Turning to Macpherson's work again (cf. Chapter Two, pp42-43), Macpherson (1962) suggests that the classical tradition - from Hobbes right down to Mill - is both empirical and normative, scientific and justificatory. The work of these theorists corresponded to a kind of society and they sought to frame a prescriptive theory in terms of the facts of that society. Macpherson argues that this is how their thought might be understood and that this is also

how the contemporary task of political theory can be understood. In his own work, Macpherson demonstrates what it means to give effect to both of these injunctions. This involves a particular method of analysing the work of the classical theorists, a method revealed and employed most fully in The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism. In brief, it involves moving outside the text and introducing the social 'assumptions' of the theorists into the discussion. When this is done, seventeenth-century theorists turn out to be just that: seventeenth-century theorists laden with the assumptions of that society. In this way, Macpherson arrives at the striking conclusion about seventeenth-century theorists that they were, above all, theorists of bourgeois society and bourgeois persons. The Hobbesian person was really a market person in a market society, not a universal species or being and the real significance of the Hobbesian revolution in political thought was in providing the first powerful model of such a market society. What the study of ideas reveals is not the essential sameness but the effective variety of moral and political commitments. As Lefort (1988) notes:

> *We must recognise that, so long as the democratic adventure continues, so long as the terms of the contradiction continue to be displaced, the meaning of what is coming into being remains in suspense. Democracy thus proves to be the historical society par excellence, a society which, in its very form, welcomes and preserves indeterminacy.*
>
> p16

Democracy is, as suggested above, constantly re-interpreted in terms of the current social and political order. Only when ideas are connected to propitious historical circumstances and structural forces do they develop sufficient influence to alter the nature and workings of institutional forms[3]. This view has had a considerable effect on political writing (Tivey and Wright, 1992, p38). The following historical overview traces the location of the educative developmental perspective of democracy starting with Greek democracy and moving to the current day. It is this perspective, of course, which must also underpin the democratic model of evaluation, if it is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

**Democracy and Education: A Conceptual Relationship?**

In the light of the development of democracy, and in particular the development of the educative perspective, reference is first made to Athenian thought. There, apparently, can be found the locus classicus of democratic theory and practice, in a constitution which applauds

[3] This statement itself needs careful qualification for there are unquestionably circumstances in which the impact of particular ideas has either lingered with potent effects or has had the most dramatic consequences.

talent, rewards merit and tolerates diversity - a political association in which persons are free and equal under the law. Above all, it advocates a government which entrusts power not to a minority but to the whole people, whose public-spirited and well-informed deliberations gives Athens its peculiar strength and makes it a model worthy of imitation by other states (Wokler, 1994, p23). The location of participation in Greek democracy is partially contingent in the sense that as a happy coincidence the Assembly was also the locus of potential and possible power relations affecting the citizen. Work had not assumed the dominancy or the essentially hierarchical character it was to achieve under industrial capitalism. What was necessary was that participation and equality should function in just that situation where the individual was affected by power relations in relation to political commitment. It would have been unthinkable to suggest that a 'full' life was possible merely through 'private' satisfaction. This was not just a consequence of the lack of other associations besides the state; it was, rather, a result of a view of public life as the ground of an individual's being.

The ideal of Greek democracy was the maximum direct participation of all citizens in the common life of the community. In this community, man (but not woman) was understood to be by nature, a 'political animal' whose intellectual, social and moral capacities could only be adequately realised through participating freely and equally in the political life of the polis. In Athenian democracy, the primary virtue of democratic participation was that it was constitutive of a form of society in which individuals could develop and realise their distinctively human capacities within the framework of a common life and on the basis of the common good. In this sense, democracy was essentially educative. According to Pateman (1970):

> *The education of an entire people is the point where their intellectual, emotional and moral capacities have reached their full potential and they are joined freely and actively in a genuine community.*
>
> p21

The idea of democracy from the earliest times (for example from Pericles' funeral oration in Book II of Thucydides's 'History of the Peloponnesian War') has been connected with the above idea of learning. A democratic society has been thought of as one where since all could speak, all could be learnt from, and where the toleration of all kinds of opinion and styles of life (the Athenians being free 'from any jealousy, touching each other's daily course of life; not offended at any man, for pleasing himself' - Hobbes' translation of Thucydides,

11, 37) also means there is a right diversity of resources and examples to learn from. This was the essence of the Athenian regime, or style of life.

The point relating to the educative function of participation is recognised by J S Mill in 'Representative Government' (p195). Participation satisfies Mill's criterion for judging political institutions, i.e. that they promote: *'the general advancement of the community.'* (Representative Government, p195). Pateman (1970, pp24-28) shows that for Rousseau, education is the central function of political participation; it is what enhances the democratic quality of political action. The individual learns: *'to take into account wider matters than his own immediate interests if he is to gain co-operation from others, and he learns that public and private interests are linked.'* (Pateman, 1970, pp24-28). In this way, the participatory system becomes self-sustaining: *'the more the individual citizen participates the better able he is to do so.'* (Pateman ibid.). Participation is thus an educational method. Since John Stuart Mill and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, it has been recognised that participation serves an educative function (Walker, 1992, p30). This notion of regime or style of life and its relationship with character will be explored in the following section.

### *Regime and Character*

Plato is probably the first to forge the idea of what Lefort (1988, p21) terms 'a form of society by examining a politeia', a notion which has a substantial contribution to make to clarifying the relationship between democracy and education and, in particular, the formation of character. We have become accustomed to translating the word as 'regime', a term which is now used in a restrictive and perhaps misleading adaptation. As Strauss (1959) observes, the word 'regime' is worth retaining only if we give it all the resonance it has when used in the expression 'the Ancient Regime'. Used in that sense it combines the idea of a type of constitution with that of a style of existence or mode of life[4]. But, as Strauss (1959) also suggests, we have to specify the meaning of those words. 'Constitution' is not to be understood in its juridical meaning, but in the sense of 'form of government' - in the Anglo-American sense of the term. The expression 'style of existence' or 'mode of life' should evoke everything that is implied by an expression such as 'the American way of life', namely, those mores and beliefs that testify to the existence of a set of implicit norms determining notions of just and unjust, good and evil, desirable and undesirable, noble and ignoble. Another important point about a possible correlation between a constitution and a mode of existence, and a constitution and a mode of life, is that one might argue that democracy, as a form of society, consists of a procedural component (the constitution) and a moral component (the mores, norms and beliefs) which constitute a mode of existence. The

[4] In other words an entity, in this instance a form of society, must have a meaning (mise en sens) and a staging (mise en scene) or a quasi representation of itself as being aristocratic, monarchic, despotic, democratic or totalitarian.

questions Plato raises in his search for a theoretical definition of the 'good' regime lead him to posit an analogy between the constitution of the psyche and that of the polis. Similarly, J S Mill's (trans. 1955) attempted correlation between a form of government and the character of its citizens is thoroughly Greek in its orientation. It is a relationship acceded to by democracy's opponents as well as its supporters.[5] Sinclair (1961) states that:

> *Changes in a constitution were therefore regarded with suspicion: if they went too far, they would change the whole character of the city, and of the citizens.... Socrates never tires of calling the constitution the very mind of the city; Aristotle speaks of it as the life of the state; Demosthenes says that a city's laws are its character'* [my emphasis].
>
> p35

The above quotation highlights the relationship between a constitution and character. The link between democracy and character has had a powerful effect, according to Field (1956):

> *The ultimate justification for democracy is a means to produce certain states or attitudes of mind in the citizen, independence of mind, respect and tolerance for others, interest in public affairs, a willingness to think about them and discuss them, and a sense of responsibility for the whole community.*
>
> p125

Field thus underlines an educative/developmental perspective embodied within classical democracy elsewhere. The following section outlines the evolution of modern conceptions of democracy, the associated models of democracy and their relationships to education.

## The Evolution of Modern Conceptions of Democracy

### *Models of Democracy: Education*

By and large, for two thousand years, after the golden age of Athens, democracy seemed a spent force, a generally discredited form of government, unstable, unprincipled, specially subject to violence, corruption and revolution. Even the democratic constitution of Athens was perceived at best as a decidedly mixed blessing. Notwithstanding the praise lavished upon it by Isocrates and Pericles, its most memorable achievement for educated persons of liberal temper appeared to be the putting to death of Socrates. Its chief adherents in ancient Greece had not been the great philosophers - Plato, who abhorred its disorder and assignment

[5] Whilst J S Mill wrote eloquently of the link between democracy and character, individualists from Locke to Hayek have raged against any hint of a 'collective character'.

of authority to the ignorant, or Aristotle who mistrusted its abuses under the covetous poor - but rather some of the Sophists that thrived within it (Isnard, 1977).

It is salutary to recall that, until the Enlightenment, democracy was a form of government only seldom deemed worthy of esteem. Up to the eighteenth century 'democracy' was regarded as synonymous with 'mob-rule' and thus as one of the worst types of government possible. Macpherson (1966) makes the point clearly:

> *Democracy used to be a bad word. Everybody who was anybody knew that democracy ..... would be a bad thing fatal to individual freedom and to all the graces of civilised living . That was the position taken by pretty near all men of intelligence from the earliest historical times down to about a hundred years ago.*
>
> p1

According to Palmer (1953), the word 'democracy' remained in limbo until the eighteenth-century, when it reappears, in restricted, scholastic language and is used in political antipathy to the word 'aristocrat'. It appears that the political thinkers who did employ the term used it in connection with the old Aristotelian classification combined with monarchy and aristocracy. Certainly, it did not enjoy any sort of the favourable connotation noted in Chapter Two. Of more significance is the position of the noun 'democrat'. Palmer (1953, p205) finds that: *The two nouns 'democrat' and 'aristocrat' did not exist until the very last years of the Old Regime. No 'democrat' fought in the American revolution, and the Age of Aristocracy, as long as it was unchallenged, heard nothing of aristocrats.* Dunn (1974, p6) notes that: *'The last eighteenth-century assault on the closed privileged caste order of the post-feudal Ancient Regime, in Europe as a whole and of course above all in France, was responsible for the resurrection of the term 'democrat' as a term of political self-identification'*. In the West, democracy has emerged as a development of liberal constitutionalism, sometimes peacefully, as in the United States and in Britain, and sometimes by revolutionary process, as in France, Germany and Italy.

Democracy's resurgence in the late eighteenth-century accompanied the two great political movements which have most shaped modern history - the establishment, in America, of the first new nation in a New World, and the comprehensive transformation, in France, of an old into a new social order. With the revolution that gave birth to these new republics ancient democracy was recast in a fresh framework. As Wokler (1994) notes:

*The democracies of America and France, however, did not take on the attributes of an altruistic system in belated rediscovery of the Greek experience. They did not spring fully armed like the goddess Athena from Zeus' head. They were, rather, mutant or hybrid varieties.*

p25

The major period of recreation of democracy began with the revolutionary era when, gradually and hesitatingly, the word came to be applied to systems of representative government in which a sizeable proportion of the male population had the franchise. But these systems, and their modern descendants, differed from the Greek democracies not merely in being representative. They were, for example, far larger in scale; they were much more pluralistic in their social organisations (societies rather than communities) and there was a sharper division between the apparatus of government and the citizen body. In short, they were States.

What history reveals was that the 'liberal democracy' of the West has a particular genesis. Returning once again to Macpherson's work, The Real World of Democracy (1966, p5) he suggests that there is an inextricable link between liberal democracy and capitalism, for liberalism and the liberal state were firmly in place long before democracy came along as a 'top dressing'. Indeed democracy is seen by Macpherson (Ibid.) merely as the extension and application of liberal beliefs about choice, competition and the market to the organisation of government. Thus the point about democracy being a later addition to a liberal market society is not just a chronological one, it also explains the terms on which the addition was made. Democracy is transformed into an accomplice in that state, strengthening rather than weakening both the liberal state and the market society. In short it *'liberalised democracy, while democratising liberalism'* (Macpherson, 1966, p24)[6]. Macpherson's positive essays in democratic theory are located within that continuing critique of the liberal tradition (and especially of its version of liberal democracy) which constitutes his larger project.

### *Macpherson's Critiques of Liberal Democracy*

Macpherson believes that the most fruitful way to proceed is to 'look at certain contrasts' (Macpherson, 1977). By elucidating and contrasting different theoretical positions it is possible to identify both affinities and strengths, what can be discarded and what can be shared. In relation to liberal democracy, this means exploration of the modalities of the

[6] Macpherson's mission is to identify the 'possessive' character of liberalism and the need for its transcendence if the humanist claims of liberalism are to be realised, and to retrieve an expressive humanist democracy from the restricted and constricting parameters of its prevailing liberal version. In short, the task is to bury by revision the dominant theory of liberal democracy, identified as possessive and capitalist, and to replace it with a new liberal democratic theory, identified as humanist and socialist.

tradition. This reveals that it is, as previously suggested, a tradition saddled with two claims which are in tension and which contradict each other: the claim (inherited from liberalism) to maximise individual utilities and the claim (added on in the nineteenth-century) to maximise individual powers. Thus Macpherson (1973) writes:

> *The powers which liberal democratic society actually and necessarily maximises are different from powers it claims to maximise, and the maximisation it achieves is inconsistent with the maximisation that is claimed. The powers which it claims to maximise are every man's potential of using and developing his human capacities; the powers it does maximise are some men's means of obtaining gratification by acquiring some of the powers of other men as a continued net transfer.*
>
> pp12-13

There is thus an inherent defect and contradiction in liberal democracy: market freedom versus equal developmental freedom. Macpherson seeks to illuminate this through a life history of liberal democracy told in terms of a series of theoretical models (Macpherson 1977). These represent the assorted attempts since the early nineteenth century to reconcile a (liberal) market with a (democratic) egalitarian ethic. Macpherson's models are designed to expose the inadequacies of a tradition struggling to reconcile such an uneasy mixture of assumptions. Macpherson (1977) examines three successive categories of models of liberal democracy which he suggests have prevailed in turn from the early nineteenth century to the present: 'Protective' Models of Democracy, 'Developmental' Models of Democracy, and 'Equilibrium' or 'Pluralist' Models of Democracy. He then proceeds to consider the prospects for a fourth group of models: 'Participatory' Models of Democracy.

The first models' (Protective Democracy) case for the democratic system of government was that nothing less could in principle protect the governed from oppression by the government. The second group of models (Developmental Democracy) brought in a new moral dimension, seeing democracy primarily as a means of individual self-development. The third category of models (Equilibrium or Pluralist Models of Democracy) abandoned the moral claim, on the ground that experience of the actual operation of democratic systems had shown that developmental models were quite unrealistic: the equilibrium or pluralist theorists offered instead a description (and justification) of democracy as a competition between élites which produces equilibrium without much popular participation. This is the prevalent type of model (Macpherson, 1977, p22). Over the last three decades, the inadequacy of the 'Equilibrium' or 'Pluralist' Models of Democracy has become increasingly apparent, and the possibility of replacing them with something more participatory has become a lively and

serious debate. Macpherson therefore also examines the prospects and problems of a fourth model, 'Participatory Democracy'. The following is a more detailed description of the historical emergence of the above models of democracy.

### *'Protective' Models of Democracy*

'Protective' Models of Democracy (as advanced, initially, by Bentham and James Mill) were designed only to protect market persons from the consequences of self-interest. These muted and ambiguous first models of liberal democracy were challenged during the nineteenth century by a second, the 'developmental' democracy of John Stuart Mill.

### *'Developmental' Models of Democracy*

'Developmental' Models of Democracy (as advanced by John Stuart Mill and such twentieth century successors as Lindsay, 1962; Barker, 1948; and Dewey, 1939) came to have considerable influence in the Anglo-American tradition. These models saw democracy in ethical rather than calculative terms, as a moral vision of the possibilities of human improvement. However, the ambiguities remained as evidenced above by Mill's own difficulties in squaring this qualitative democracy with the facts of a class society and worse still, the tendency of twentieth century successors to avoid difficulties by claiming not to be offering a description of contemporary society. The impossibilities of this claim opened the way to a third model of equilibrium or pluralist elitist model.

### *'Equilibrium or Pluralist' Models of Democracy*

'Equilibrium or Pluralist' Models of Democracy (as advanced by Schumpeter, 1943; or Dahl, 1970) achieved a mid-twentieth century dominance. In some respects, a revision of the first category of models, these empty democracy of its moral and qualitative dimension as a kind of society and reduce it to a political mechanism. This is accurate enough as a description of contemporary reality, but it is flawed as an account of democracy, both because the market it describes is an oligopolistic one and because it reduces citizens to maximising consumers. It is these models, in my view, which underpin MacDonald's work. MacDonald (1974, p14) implicitly acknowledges Equilibrium or Pluralist Models of Democracy when he suggests that the evaluator: *'is faced with competing interest groups with divergent definitions of the situation and conflicting informational needs.'*

### *'Participatory' Models of Democracy*

'Participatory' Models of Democracy address the existing social inequality in participation and recognise that a more equitable society would also need to be more participatory. Society and government go together: in a non-class divided society it is possible to envisage a participatory democracy organised through a pyramidal direct/indirect combination of

political machinery with a continuation of a competitive party system. Participation is required to enlighten the elected leaders about the interests of their constituents as other members of the polity. Participation also enhances the power of communities and endows them with a moral force that non-participatory rulership rarely achieves. Such a system would also embody the ethical principles of 'developmental' models and, as such, could properly be regarded as an authentic expression of the best of liberal democracy.

The above analytical route also yields the conclusion that liberal democracy could be retrieved by removing the internal contradictions which have caused the tradition so much trouble, confusion and tension. Once Liberal Democracy abandons the capitalist market view of freedom, society and human beings, and firmly embraces the ethical, developmental view, then it becomes, according to Macpherson, a serviceable tradition.

Macpherson has come to be regarded as the most ambitious and comprehensive of liberal democracy's modern critics and his work has been very influential around those seeking a new basis for democratic and socialist political theory. Macpherson's work is important because it acknowledges that liberal democracy is not a unitary approach but represents a variety of rival theoretical and political movements. These rival constellations have been endemic in political philosophy and ethics for a long time. Macpherson is a contemporary manifestation of a long tradition in political philosophy which makes a claim for rival constellations of liberal democracy; the capitalist market view of freedom, society and human beings and the ethical developmental view. The developmental view also implies a conceptual relationship between democracy and education. The insight that human relationships and the higher forms of learning are bound up together is one of the central ideas of the American philosopher John Dewey.

### *Dewey: The Case for a Relationship Between Democracy and Education*

John Dewey's work also has an important contribution to make to an analysis of a conceptual relationship between democracy and education. Edwards (1996) argues:

> *John Dewey is one of Americas pre-eminent philosophers, and is often considered to be the educational philosopher. His educational theory is pervasive throughout his writings. Whether discussing philosophy, morals, political theory, social psychology or theories of knowledge, Dewey's point is invariably educational.*
>
> p67

Dewey (1937) suggests that democracy is more than just a way of conducting government and making laws. It is the best way that has yet been found for the development of the human personality, the 'full development of human beings as individuals'. Dewey articulates the connection between democracy and 'freed intelligence', the role of our social and political lives in cultivating the qualities of mind that we bring to choice and debate. We are not to be thought of as bringing our pre-formed selves and our choices into the public realm, as if freedom of action was all we needed to be autonomous agents in a mature democracy. Rather it is the case that the kind of public realm we have shapes ourselves and our choices. Democracy does more for us than just enable us more successfully to pursue our individual choices and ends since we enjoy the co-operation of our fellows. A democratic society is the forum which stands to enrich our senses with what those ends and choices might themselves be (Blake, Smith and Standish, 1998, pp99-100).

Dewey (1937) suggests that democracy is founded on faith in the power of 'pooled and co-operative experience'. Through democratic, open relationships, as opposed to autocratic and authoritarian ones, however benign, we learn from and with one another. We can know things in this way in combination with one another, that we cannot know alone. Unless democratic habits of thought and action are part of 'the jiber of a people', Dewey writes, '*Political democracy is insecure. Political democracy must be supported by democratic approaches to all social relationships.*' Dewey (1939), like Macpherson (1966) identifies two different strands of liberalism in an essay entitled The Future of Liberalism Or, The Democratic Way of Change. Dewey (1939) writes:

> *Liberalism as a conscious and aggressive movement arose in Great Britain as two different streams flowed into one ... One of these streams was the humanitarianism and philanthropic goal that became so active late in the eighteenth century and that in various forms is still a mighty current ... The other great stream that entered into the formation of liberalism sprang from the stimulus to manufacturing and trade that came from the application of steam to industry. The great intellectual leader of the movement was Adam Smith ... This historical summary is more than historical ... It is indispensable to any understanding of liberalism as a social and political movement. For while the two streams came together they never coalesced.*
>
> p5

As the above quotation demonstrates, once again, the term 'liberal' is an unhelpful one, masking as it does two traditions, whose divisions have increased in strength in the twentieth century with the development of elitist and pluralist theories of democracy. Thus the gradual

re-description of these systems as democracies involved a remarkable process of political re-creation. So extensive is this process that commentators have held that there is little more than the word in common between democracy in its original and in its modern incarnation (Sartori, 1987, p178).

*Implications for the Democratic Model of Evaluation*

Participatory democracy, as noted above in this chapter (cf. pp54-58; pp63-5), has an educational intent. A participatory model is without doubt easier to operationalise at the institutional level, the level at which Simons primarily operates. MacDonald et al (1987) attempted to operationalise a participatory model whilst undertaking an evaluation of police probationer training in England and Wales for the Home Office, though inevitably had to work through representative groups. MacDonald and Norris (1981) also explicitly drew on MacPherson's (1973) book 'Democratic Theory: Essays in Retrieval' in rejecting the notion that liberal democracy is *'a mere mechanism of authorisation'* (Macpherson, quoted in MacDonald and Norris, 1981).

Simons (1987, p53) implicitly links her work to a more participatory model of democracy when she notes: *'I am in agreement with MacDonald when he writes of the evaluator's primary purpose as 'to reveal educational possibilities' and of the evaluation process as a shared task'.* This quotation also suggests a normative concept of democracy or democracy as stimulated self-development. Thus Simons (1987, p53) continues: *'Being an educator first, and an evaluator second, it has been important for me to formulate and practice evaluation as an educative activity in itself and as a service to the educative interests.'* The democratic model of evaluation, conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, is embedded in the humanitarian and philanthropic goal of liberal democracy; not the tradition which sprang from the stimulus to manufacturing and trade as outlined above by both Macpherson and Dewey. At the micro institutional level (the level at which Simons operates primarily), the democratic model of evaluation is embedded in a participatory notion of democracy. The democratic model of evaluation is also located in the inherent tensions and contradictions associated with liberal democracy - the tensions and contradictions inherent in market freedom versus equal developmental freedom. The tensions and contradictions inherent within the democratic model include: a focus on the idiosyncratic that is simultaneously with an interest in contributing to a broader notion of public learning and reflection, the reconciliation of moral action within a pluralist constituency, and how respect for legitimate political authority on the part of evaluators can be distinguished from docility in substantive power relationships (Simons, 1987, p29). Once the democratic model of

evaluation is considered from the longer and broader historical perspective, its contemporary manifestation is revealed to be no more than the latest outcome of a continuous political struggle over how the internal tensions between the two political traditions of liberalism and democracy ought to be resolved.

**Conclusion**

It has been suggested in this chapter that interpreting or re-interpreting democracy requires a sensitivity to the historical. An historical perspective throws into sharp relief the socio-contextual relativity of conceptions of democracy. The history of democracy and the development and evolution of the democratic model of evaluation cannot be adequately understood once they have been abstracted from the larger political and cultural history through which our contemporary liberal democratic society has evolved. Democracy and the democratic model of evaluation are constantly re-interpreted in terms of the current social and political order. There cannot therefore be a total distinction between the concept and the socio-political context. This facilitates the concept of democracy's adaptability and raises the question of the means appropriate to implementation. An historical analysis has also demonstrated that there is a tradition of political thought that locates the concept of democracy within an educative/developmental perspective. The democratic model of evaluation, conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, is embedded in this historical educative/developmental perspective. Having described in Chapter Three the historical complexity of democracy, and the implications for the democratic model, it is now necessary to describe the conceptual complexity of democracy and education.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## THE DEMOCRATIC MODEL OF EVALUATION: DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION - CONTESTED CONCEPTS?

## Introduction

This chapter begins by examining the premise that 'democracy' has become a 'hurray' word (meaning 'hurrah' for this political system) emptied of all descriptive meaning. What is important to point out is that its primary interest is the condition for the existence and continuance of democracy. This is the focus of Chapter Four. An uncritical affirmation of liberal democracy would essentially leave unanalysed the whole meaning of democracy and its possible variants and would fail to provide a theoretical and conceptual basis to the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory. In this chapter, the notion that democracy is an example of an essentially 'contested concept' is also challenged. Fundamentally, different opinions are expressed about the general conditions or pre-requisites of successful democracy. These will be referred to as conceptions. The basic argument developed in Chapter Four is that while there is a broad agreement of the definition of the term 'democracy', a distinction must be made between a settled conception and rival conceptions.

In this chapter, the concept of education as an essentially contested concept is examined. It is noted that questions about whether some person is actually 'educated' and the nature of 'real' education are always a matter of political dispute. Any analysis of conceptions of education, including conceptions of education implicitly embedded in the democratic model of evaluation, will have to be informed by an understanding of the specific social functions they were and are designed to perform in the reproduction of social life.

The following section examines the notion that 'democracy' has been emptied of all descriptive meaning and the implications of this notion for the democratic model of evaluation.

## Democracy: A 'Hurray' Word?

The definition of 'democracy' is frequently held to be controversial. This is particularly true of words that are applied to political systems - entities that are themselves complex and about which thinking is often vague and confused. Furthermore, despite its obvious populist appeal, democracy is open to a range of interpretations, not all of which are morally or educationally sound (cf. Chapter Two).

In elucidating the concept of democracy, one is bound to pay some attention to institutional and empirical features. Some statements may arise which though normative, are also sensitive to empirical considerations. A celebrated example of this problem is that of the rational, informed citizen, operating through a sovereign legislature. This is postulated to a varied extent in Locke (trans. P. Laslett, 1966), Rousseau (trans. C D H Cole,1913), J S Mill (1912), Green (1941), Macpherson (1962), Pateman (1970), and Gould (1988). Research by political sociologists, together with advances in psychology, has made the concepts of the rational chooser, the democratic citizen and the sovereign legislature highly disputable. That there are empirical connections between democracy and education is true, but this in itself is philosophically unremarkable. In particular, such connections are found on examination to be in the nature of a functional relationship, such that the higher the general level of education within a society, the greater the probability that it will be a democratic society.

One can, of course, engage in everyday discourse without scholastic precision in the meaning and use of terms, and without troubling too much about technical distinctions between connotation and denotation. Neither is there necessarily a connection between controversy over a policy, practice or institution, and controversy over its meaning and use. Thus, for example, the issue of nationalisation has been a controversial policy item in post-war British politics, yet there seems little difficulty in settling the meaning of the term nationalisation. There has, however, been a very different attitude towards the concept of democracy by different groups. We may say of the concept democracy that there is little difficulty in assessing attitudes towards it, namely that it is, in general, a favourable concept. This was not so prior to the end of the First World War, but today, few people would admit to thinking that democracy is a bad thing. Democracy has become the uniquely valued political system of the age.

Virtually every country in the world proclaims itself to be a democracy (Benn and Peters, 1959, p332; Hanson, 1989, p68). There is also a tendency to call a system 'democratic' simply because we approve of it. When we do this, however, we convey information only about our predilections, not about the system itself. When this happens, it has been said that 'democracy' becomes merely a 'hurray' word. In addition, the 'hurray' view of liberal democracy fails to explore whether there are any tensions, or even perhaps contradictions, between the 'liberal' and 'democratic' components of liberal democracy. One example would be the tension between the liberal pre-occupation with individual rights, or 'frontiers of freedom' which nobody should be permitted to cross, and the democratic concern for the

regulation of individual and collective action, i.e. for public accountability (Berlin, 1969, p164).

*Implications for the Democratic Model of Evaluation*

Turning to evaluation, in particular the democratic model of evaluation, Simons (1987, p29) notes the focus on the idiosyncratic, and simultaneously, the democratic evaluator's interest in contributing to a broader notion of public learning and reflection. Simons also notes the need to reconcile moral action within a pluralist constituency, and how respect for legitimate authority on the part of evaluators needs to be distinguished from docility to substantive power relationships. A suggested above, an uncritical affirmation of liberal democracy would essentially leave unanalysed the whole meaning of democracy and its possible variants and fail to provide a theoretical and conceptual basis to the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory (Simons, 1987, p83). MacDonald (1976) acknowledges that he is using political terms, such as 'bureaucratic, autocratic and democratic' in an evaluative way when he writes (cf. pp29-30):

> *Referring to the notions 'bureaucratic', 'autocratic' and 'democratic', only the academic theorist uses these terms referentially: most of us employ them when we wish to combine a definition of an action or structure with the expression of an attitude towards it. 'Bureaucracy' and 'autocracy' carry overtones of disapproval, when 'democracy' - at least in Western societies - can still be relied upon to evoke general approval. Nor am I free from such affective responses myself, and it will not escape the reader that my own stance falls conveniently under the 'democratic' label.*
>
> pp125-134

The concept of democracy has both an evaluative and a descriptive element. Different conceptions of democracy reflect different value judgements about the political structures and processes appropriate to a democratic society, the arrangement which in turn reflects 'government by the people'. However, dictionary definitions do not get us very far. As Rousseau pointed out more than 200 years ago, 'If we take the term in its strict meaning, no true democracy has ever existed nor ever will ..... It is in conceivable that the people should be in permanent session for the administration of public affairs.' While there may be scope for participatory or direct democracy - defined as decision-taking by the people - in certain circumstances, this is not particularly helpful when it comes to the governance of large,

complex societies or organisations. Hence the competitive struggle to impose meaning on the word; a struggle which has produced a vast academic literature. If democracy has become, as implied above, the 'most promiscuous word in the world of public affairs' (Crick, 1964, p56), it is precisely because it has become the rhetorical flag which everyone seeks to capture (Crick, ibid.).

It has been noted elsewhere that a feature of contemporary political theory is that it combines a radical critique of the actuality of liberal democracy with a commitment to, or sympathy for, its fundamental ideas and working within its framework to reform it. It is the contemporary 'sympathy' for the practical reality of liberal democracy that democratic evaluators are exploiting (cf. pp43-45). According to MacDonald (1980, p1), democratic evaluators must be guided by the principles, not the practices, of a regime (cf. p44). However, the liberal component of liberal democracy cannot be treated as a unity (cf. p61 and p64-65). There are distinctive liberal traditions which embody quite different conceptions from each other of the individual agent, of autonomy, of the rights and duties of subjects, and of the proper nature and form of community. The conflict, therefore, is not about liberal democracy as such, but about competing specifications of the value of liberal democracy. The following section will analyse the notion of a 'contested concept' and the implications for the concept of democracy and the democratic model of evaluation.

**Democracy: A Contested Concept?**

Democracy is often cited as a paradigmatic example of an 'essentially contested concept' - a concept whose very meaning is itself the subject of intense controversy and conflict between rival social and political groups (Gallie, 1955; Connolly, 1983). W B Gallie published 'Essentially Contested Concepts' in 1956. Gallie argues that the proper use of the concept of some organised or semi-organised activities can not be agreed. The examples he uses to illustrate his case are those of a 'Christian Life', 'Art', 'Democracy', and 'Social Justice'. In these cases three conditions can be distinguished. First, the term is commonly used as an appraisal; secondly, it is internally complex; thirdly, it could be used aggressively. Gallie claims these terms are essentially contestable because their proper use can not be determined by a scholarly convention. Though various parties will continue to provide highly persuasive reasons for suggesting that one use is the proper one, the contestation can never be resolved. Two of Gallie's examples are political and clearly there could be others. Perhaps 'corporation' and 'pluralism' turned out in the nineteen-eighties and nineteen-nineties to be among them. And if the concepts are vulnerable, then much of the material used in political

analysis is 'softer' than at first appears. Democracy is a 'contested' concept in the sense that the criteria governing its proper use are constantly challenged and disputed. Such disputes are 'essential' in the sense that arguments about these criteria turn on fundamental political issues to which a final rational solution is not available. As Holder (1993) notes:

> *It is fairly commonly held that 'democracy' is a term applied so widely that it has become vague to the point of meaninglessness. Nearly every form of organisation in the political (and not only the political) sphere has been called 'a democracy' or 'democratic'. Most notoriously, political systems as different as those of the United Kingdom and the United States on the one hand, and erstwhile communist systems such as the former Soviet Union on the other, were spoken of as democracies.*
>
> p2

To say democracy is a political concept whose meaning has always been, and still is, 'essentially contested' is not to say that the concept is so elastic that it can mean whatever anybody wants it to mean. Contested concepts always have some uncontested common core which provides an understanding of the general ideas they express and which helps to clarify the substantial points of disagreement that rival and conflicting interpretations of their meaning incorporate. People may agree at a very general level over what ideas the concept of democracy expresses but yet disagree when it comes down to a more specific level. The fundamental point is that the disagreement involved in - and the difference in meaning implied by - the 'indiscriminate use' of the word democracy is far less than it first appears. Whilst I have argued that democracy is an example of a contested concept, one reason for the disagreement is that disagreement about the application of democracy reflects differing assessments of the things to which it is applied rather than disagreement about its meaning. Despite appearances to the contrary, 'democracy' does have one settled primary meaning. Evidence for this is provided by an exhaustive semantic survey (Cristopherson, 1966), which concludes that there is a broad agreement about the general area of meaning covered by the term. For example, Abraham Lincoln's famous definition of 'democracy' was 'government of the people, by the people, for the people'.

Phrases such as 'government by the people' and 'rule by the people' occur very commonly in definitions of 'democracy'. The ambiguities of the notion of 'the rule by the people' lie at the root of different views about the extent to which the idea of democracy has been recreated. An American critic of the Soviet system and a Russian could both agree that

'democracy ' means, say, 'government by the people' but could disagree about whether government by the people actually existed. Positions taken derive, in part, from different ways of justifying democracy. There is much significant history in the attempt to restrict the meaning of 'the people' to certain groups: among others, owners of property, white men, educated men, those with particular skills and occupations and adults (Appendix 1, p132). There is also a telling story in the various conceptions and debates about what is to count as 'rule' by 'the people'. One commentator has usefully summarised them (Table 4.1, p74).

There is general agreement that democracy requires the governors to be elected by the governed. But while this may be a necessary condition, it is not a sufficient one. There are plenty of examples, past and present, of regimes whose constitutions provide for regular elections but which nevertheless would generally be described as dictatorships. The second necessary condition for anything approaching democracy to exist is that there should be an opportunity for the governed to make the governors answerable for what they have done and, if they fail to satisfy, to throw them out. In short, competition between rival, would-be governments would seem to be essential.

But while it is easy to identify regular elections and competition for the people's vote as the essential pre-requisites, it is not self-evident that these define the core of the notion itself. This is more complex and elusive, and has at least as much to do with the way in which governments conduct their affairs as with the way in which they get into office. While the people's mandate may give governments their legitimacy, it does not necessarily provide protection against elective tyranny. Therefore, within the history of the clash of positions there lies the struggle to determine whether democracy will mean some kind of popular power (a form of life in which citizens are engaged in self-government and self-regulation) or whether it will mean an aid to decision-making (a means to legitimate the decisions of those voted into power - 'representatives' from time to time) (cf. Chapter 3, pp57-58).

What look like differences in the meaning of democracy often turn out to consist in differing ideas concerning how rule by the people - the agreed meaning - can be achieved. Such ideas involve varying accounts of the necessary conditions for the existence of rule by the people, though these can be interlinked with differing notions of the nature of 'rule' and of 'the people'. In other words there can be different ideas about how a political system can embody 'rule' by 'the people' - as the concept of democracy. The differing ideas about how such rule is to be achieved can be called conceptions.

**Table 4.1: What Counts as Rule by the People?**

| |
|---|
| 1. That all should govern, in the sense that all should be involved in legislating, in deciding on general policy, in applying laws and governmental administration. |
| 2. That all should be personally involved in crucial decision-making, that is to say in deciding general laws and matters of general policy. |
| 3. That rulers should be accountable to the ruled; they should, in other words, be obliged to justify their actions to the ruled and be removable by the ruled. |
| 4. That rulers should be accountable to the representatives of the ruled. |
| 5. That rulers should be chosen by the ruled. |
| 6. That rulers should act in the interests of the ruled. |

Lively (1975), p30

**Democracy: Concepts and Conceptions**

Graham (1986) makes the point that there is a distinction between a *concept* and *conceptions* when he says that: *'In the terminology adopted by some theorists we may say there is one overarching concept of democracy but several different and rival conceptions of it.'* (Graham, 1986, p8 refers to Rawls, 1972 and Dworkin, 1978). This distinction between a settled concept and rival conceptions is an illuminating one. It would seem more accurate to say that there is in fact agreement on the concept but seemingly endless disputes about the merits of rival concepts. Moreover, regarded in this way, such disputes may not necessarily be endless in principle: it may not be impossible to settle them. It is possible, for example, to rationally assess competing accounts of necessary conditions. This is a modification of the term of 'essential contestability'. The failure to realise this is usually due to a failure to recognise the distinction between 'defining characteristics' and 'necessary conditions'. May (1976, p3) makes essentially the same point when he says that his definition *'exemplifies an effort to distinguish the nature of democracy from the nature of democracy's prerequisites'.*

A defining characteristic of an object, one can say, is one by virtue of which a word is correctly applied to that object. A necessary condition or a prerequisite, on the other hand, is something that must be present in order for the object to exist or to continue to exist. Once the true nature of disputes about the necessary conditions of democracy become clear, no disagreement about definition need remain. The identification of democracy with particular organisational forms - forms of election and legislative and executive institutions for example - can similarly be disputed without disagreeing on definition. Such identification really boils down to the specification of those forms as necessary conditions of democracy. As Holden (1993, p48) argues, this provides a corrective to Hanson's (1985, p13) view - following Habermas - that the identification of democracy: *'with particular organisational forms (eliminates) any chance of criticising those forms and the distortion they embody.'* Such 'identifications' are apparent only, and once this is realised, it is quite possible to critically analyse these specifications of the necessary conditions of democracy without criticism of the idea of democracy itself.

In conclusion to this sub-section, the above argument is a corrective to Hanson's (1985) view, following MacIntyre, that there cannot be a trans-historical concept of democracy existing independently of a set of (varying) ideas and practices in an unfolding tradition. These various ideas and practices amount to differing conceptions of democracy incorporating varying specifications of necessary conditions. More generally, arguments to the effect that the concept of democracy changes historically with the varying socio-economic and political conditions to which it is applied (Hanson, 1989; Hoffman, 1988) refer

- insofar as there are changes of ideas - to varying conceptions rather than to changes in the concept.

*Implications for the Democratic Model of Evaluation*

Turning to the democratic model of evaluation, the position taken has been to make representatives as accountable as possible to other participants in the context of democratic evaluation. For example MacDonald (1981, p1) argues: *'democracy I take to be about holding delegated power to informed collective account.'* (cf. Chapter Two, p40). Similarly, Simons (1987, p185) aspires to expand our understanding of what counts as democratic at the micro (institutional) level of the school when she writes: *'My concern ... is with finding ways of getting to help schools that will enable them to become more democratic institutions offering a more educational service.'* It would seem that the premise that power ought to be more equitably distributed is a premise that underpins the democratic model of evaluation at both the macro (policy) level and micro (institutional) level of society (cf. Chapter Two, pp38-42). This argument will be further developed in Chapter Five.

The following section will analyse the implications of 'education', conceptualised as a contested concept for the democratic model of evaluation.

**Education: A Contested Concept**

The concept of education is also an essentially contested concept. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, such disputes are 'essential' in the sense that arguments about criteria turn on fundamental political values and beliefs. It is for this reason that questions about whether some person is actually 'educated', and the nature of 'real' education, are always a matter of political dispute. It is for the same reason that the problems to which the educational debate is addressed are always enduring problems that present and represent themselves over time in different forms but which have no general resolution, or once and for all solutions.

Since education is an 'essentially contested concept', it is always possible to evaluate any educational proposal by evaluating the particular conception of education it advocates and the particular political interests and values that it incorporates. The contestability of the meaning of education also explains why its meaning is so frequently the focus of political conflict not only between political parties, but also between various interest groups who have more or less power to influence the political process through which the educational system is controlled. These groups compete with each other to control decisions not only about the aims and content of education but also about the conception of education that is to be

officially recognised. In this situation, rival groups try to ensure that their own conception of education becomes part of the politically dominant educational discourse.

Feinberg (1983, p. 6) argues that 'education is best understood by recognising that one of the functions of education ..... is that of social reproduction' (p6). Elsewhere he writes:

> *To speak of education as social reproduction ..... is to recognise its primary role in maintaining intergenerational continuity and in maintaining the identity of a society across generations ..... At the most basic level, the study of education involves an analysis of the processes whereby a society reproduces itself over time such that it can be said of one generation that it belongs to the same society as did generations long past and generations not yet born.*
>
> p155

In serving as an instrument of social reproduction, education performs two specific functions. First, there is 'the reproduction of skills that meet socially defined needs'. These skills include not only those related to specific economic functions but also '*those habits and behaviour patterns that maintain social interaction in a certain structured way*' (p155). Second, there is '*the reproduction of consciousness or of the shared understanding ..... that provides the basis for social life*' (p155). Once it is acknowledged that *'reproduction is the focal point of educational understanding'* (p155), then it becomes clear that understanding the form, content and control of education is always a matter of understanding *'the specific habits and skills needed for an economic system to function'* (p154) and the ideological mechanisms for producing the form of consciousness that social continuity requires. To recognise this is to admit that educational changes cannot, since the late nineteen seventies, be understood in isolation from the economic and ideological structures within which the process of social reproduction is played out (cf. Chapter One, p17). It is also to admit that future possibilities for significant educational change are always constrained by structures and processes of reproduction that have been inherited from the past. To recognise the reproductive role of education is also to recognise that the different conceptions of education that now exist have their historical origins in *'the perceived needs ..... of existing societies and can always be traced to the ability of some to capitalise on this need to persuading or coercing others to address it in a certain way'* (p227).

### *Implications for the Democratic Model of Evaluation*

Turning to evaluation, any analysis of conceptions of education, including conceptions of education implicitly embedded in the democratic model of evaluation, will have to be

informed by an understanding of the specific social functions they were and are designed to perform in the reproduction of social life. The democratic model of evaluation is grounded in a way of life in which all individuals can develop their distinctive human qualities and capacities. It envisages a society which is itself intrinsically educative, a 'learning society' (c.f. Chapter Six, 106-7). In such a society, the primary aim of education is to initiate individuals into the values, attitudes and modes of behaviour appropriate to citizenship and conducive to active participation in democratic institutions. This argument will be further developed in Chapters Six and Seven.

**Conclusion**

Chapters Three and Four have combined a search for the essential meaning of democracy and simultaneously acknowledge that specific ideas relating to meaning are also historically embedded. Identification of the subject 'democracy' is a genuine problem. This is compounded by the fact that the concept has a strong normative aspect. MacDonald acknowledges that he is using the term 'democratic' in such an evaluative or normative way.

Chapter Four began with the question of the definition of democracy. The idea that democracy is an example of an 'essentially contested concept' was challenged. It was suggested that there is a broad agreement about the definition of the term and that a distinction must be made between a settled concept and rival conceptions. One might argue that what look like differences in meaning of 'democracy' often turn out to consist in differing ideas concerning how 'rule by the people' - the agreed meaning - can be achieved. It may not therefore be, in principle, impossible to settle disputes relating to meaning. It is possible, for example, rationally to assess competing accounts of necessary conditions without criticism of the idea of democracy itself. This is a modification of the term of 'essential contestability.'

Finally, in Chapter Four, the notion that education is a contested concept was explored by drawing on Feinberg's work. It was argued that education has a major reproductive role. Any analyses of conceptions of education, including conceptions implicitly embedded in the democratic model of evaluation, will have to be informed by an understanding of the specific social functions that they are designed to perform in the reproduction of social life. These issues and the implications for the democratic model of evaluation, will be returned to in Chapter Six.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## THE DEMOCRATIC MODEL OF EVALUATION: A SOCIAL ONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

## Introduction

Having analysed the concept of democracy by drawing on aspects of the history of political thought and conceptual analysis, it is now necessary to explore the ontological basis of democracy. Chapter Five argues that an analysis and critique of the ontological commitment of social and political theories ought to be part of the philosophical examination of them. This argument is based on the premise that if the democratic model of evaluation is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory a convincing philosophical account of human beings and becoming will be required. In Chapter Four, it was suggested that the acceptance of the premise that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory will require a reconception of the concepts of community and citizenship within a political tradition other than liberal individualism. If the democratic model of evaluation is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, there are two concepts which need to be critically reconstructed; first, that of the individual as someone who exists prior to and apart from society, and secondly, the conception of freedom as a formal and abstract principle. The following section begins this process of reconstruction.

## Individualism: Models of Evaluation

This section will establish the relationship between individualism and models of evaluation. Acknowledgement of this relationship is important because, as House (1978, p5) suggests: *'The current models (i.e. of evaluation) all derive from the philosophy of liberalism.'* It is important to note that the liberal component of liberal democracy cannot be treated as a unity. There is not simply one institutional form of liberal democracy. Contemporary democracies have crystallised into a number of different types, which makes any appeal to a liberal position vague at best (Dahl, 1989). In Chapter Three, it was noted that Macpherson illuminated an inherent deficit and contradiction in liberal democracy: market freedom versus equal developmental freedom. Similarly, Dewey suggested the term 'liberal' is an unhelpful one, masking as it does two traditions, whose divisions have increased in strength in the twentieth century with the development of elitist and pluralist theories of democracy. There are therefore distinctive liberal traditions which embody quite different conceptions from each other of the individual agent, of autonomy, of the rights and duties of subjects and of the proper nature and form of community (In Chapter Six two broad and very different traditions of liberal democracy will be identified). Tamir (1993, p13) argues that the essence of human nature (i.e. ontology) is a central methodological issue lying at the foundation of every political philosophy as well as a very personal matter. An important common element in many liberal democratic theories can be summed up as a form of 'individualism'. House (1978) makes this point when he suggests:

*A ..... key idea of liberalism is that of an individualist psychology. Each individual mind is presumed to exist prior to society. The individual is not conceived initially as part of a greater collectivity, although he may submit to one later as in a social contract situation. Liberalism is profoundly methodologically individualist in its intellectual constructions.*[1]

p5

The following premises are two central planks of liberalism: first, the notion of an individual mind existing prior to society and thus the individual not being conceived as part of a greater collectivity; second, the conception of freedom as a formal and abstract principle. These two central planks of liberalism contextualise the democratic model of evaluation, as a political model of evaluation (cf. Chapter Two).

In order to begin the process of developing a convincing philosophical account of human beings and becoming, the following section discusses in more detail the above premises. The final section of this chapter will discuss the implications for the democratic model of evaluation.

## Individual Mind Existing Prior to Society

### *Individual Not Being Conceived as part of a Greater Collectivity*

Within the liberal view of the self, individuals are considered free to question their participation in existing social practices, and opt out of them, should those practices seem no longer worth pursuing. As a result, individuals are not defined by their membership of any particular economic, religious, sexual or recreational relationship, since they are free to question and reject any particular relationship. In essence, individuals are conceptualised as persons, not roles.

Rawls (1971, p56) summaries this liberal view by suggesting that 'the self is prior to the ends which are affirmed by it', by which he means that we can always step back from any particular project and question whether we want to continue pursuing it. No end is exempt from possible revision by the self. This view is often called the 'Kantian' view of the self.

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[1] House is referring both to 'moral individualism' and 'ontological individualism'. 'Moral individualism' indicates viewpoints which give moral importance to the individual. They are typically expressed by statements such as 'the individual ought always to be treated as an end in himself and never only as a means'. 'Ontological individualism' involves seeing society as composed only of individuals and having its character determined by the characteristics of constituent individuals.

Kant is one of the strongest defenders of the view that the self is prior to its socially given roles and relationships and is free only if it is capable of holding these features of its social situation at a distance and judging them according to the dictates of reason.

The liberal view also abstracts from the particular qualities that make each individual concretely different from each of the others. Instead, it characterises all of them in terms of their universal human properties alone, that is those properties that they all share in common and that make them the kind of individuals they are. On these grounds, liberal individualism takes all individuals as equal in their basic liberties and rights. Furthermore, these individuals are taken to exist independently of each other and to be related to each other only in external ways. That is, each individual is understood as an independent ego, seeking to satisfy his/her own interest or to pursue his/her own happiness. The relationships among these individuals are external in that they do not affect the basic nature of these individuals, leaving them essentially unchanged. Thus this nature is regarded as fixed and at the same time as a universal nature, common to all individuals. Among the basic features of this essential human nature are freedom, rationality, and self-interest. These individuals are understood as free agents in the sense of possessing free choice. The motives of each individuals' actions are taken to be each one's self-interest, which is pursued by rational choice among alternatives. This is understood to require negative freedom, or the absence of external constraint, as its appropriate condition.

**Criticism of Abstract Individualism**

*Abstractedness of Individual*

The first major criticism that can be made of abstract individualism as an ontology of social reality concerns the abstractedness of the individuals outlined above. On the one hand it is true that human beings have certain features in common, insofar as they are human and that these are the ground for equal rights. On the other hand, abstract individualism does not account for the differences among individuals that constitute them as the distinctive beings they are. The uniqueness of individuals, which consists of their differentiated qualities and capacities, is not accidental to their individuality and it is just this particularity of real individuals that abstract individualism fails to capture. The political philosopher Gould (1988, p94), building on Dewey's work, suggests that it is the development of each individual's distinctive qualities that is the full meaning of freedom and for which democracy serves as a condition.

*Individuals as Isolated Individuals*

The second major criticism that can be made of abstract individualism as an ontology of social reality concerns its conception of individuals as isolated individuals unrelated to each other. The view that individuals are isolated and self-seeking also gives rise to the idea that society is no more than an aggregate of such externally related individuals. This view also fails to take into account the fact that, in social life, the purposes and actions of individuals develop and change in their relations with others and are affected by these interactions. As Aristotle pointed out in 'Categories':

> *Those things are called relative which, being either said to be of something else or related to something else, are explained by reference to that other thing ..... All relations have correlatives: by the term 'Slave' we mean the slave of a master, by the term 'Master', the master of a slave.'*
>
> (Categories, 6a, 36-8, 6b, 28-30)

Aristotle presumably means here that the entity in the relation is the kind of entity it is only with respect to its correlative, and that apart from this relation it would not be what it is but something else. Social relations may be analysed in a similar way in terms of what Aristotle in the Categories calls 'the reciprocity of correlation' (Categories, 6b, 37). In social relations, the characters or natures of the entities in the relations are interdependent. Social relations are internal in another sense as well. The relation of conscious agents to each other in their activity presupposes that each one understands the actions of the other with respect to some shared understanding of the situation. Minimally, each understands the other to be an agent like himself/herself and to be acting intentionally. Such a relation is therefore internal in that each one, in his/her actions, takes into account the understanding which the other has. To this degree the actions of each are affected by how these actions are understood by the other.

Another way of viewing this inter-relationship is advanced in social construct theory. The social construction of persons is not simply the antithesis of the individual construction formed in social construct theory. It is dialectical, for it perceives an ongoing interaction by which world and persons together shape each other. As Berger and Luckmann (1966) note:

> *Man is biologically predestined to construct and inhabit a world with others. The world becomes for him the dominant and definitive reality. Its limits are set by nature but once constructed, this world acts back upon nature. In the dialectic between nature and the socially constructed world the human*

*organism itself is transformed. In this same dialectic, man produces reality and thereby produces himself'.* [my emphasis]

p183

By drawing on social construct theorists such as Berger and Luckmann (1966), the work of political philosophers such as Carrithers et al (1985), Gould (1988), Macmurray (1961), Kymlicka (1989) and Taylor (1985) and that of cultural anthropologists such as Geertz (1973), it can be argued that the development of both individuals and institutions is a dialectical process between persons shaping each other as an important condition of human freedom.

Plant (1974, p52) raises the question: *'Is there some way of understanding community which will enable the freedom of the individual and the co-operation and the fraternity of the community to be meaningfully held together?'* Macmurray's work has an important contribution to make to the development of a theoretical framework to bridge the liberal individualistic polarity of individual and society. His work has had a profound impact on many thousands of people between the two world wars and, more recently, on Tony Blair (Fielding, 1998, p55). Macmurray argues for the significance of friendship and community as the centrally important condition of human freedom. For Macmurray, we become ourselves, we develop as human beings through trying to understand and take into account the nature and value of what surrounds us. Particularly important in our development as persons is our encounter with other persons, and central to that encounter is the persistent and insistent fact of mutuality. The notion of an isolated, unencumbered self turns out, according to Macmurray, to be a nonsense. *'We need one another to be ourselves. This complete and unlimited dependence of each of us upon the others is the central and crucial fact of personal existence'. 'Here'* Macmurray says *'is the basic fact of our human condition'* (Macmurray, 1961: 211). The view that neither the totally situated description of a 'self', nor the liberal description of a self antecedently free of all attachments adequately portrays human nature is now shared by many.

A satisfactory conception of human beings who are political agents must also allow us to make sense of the broad range of conduct that the historical record displays. This record shows a persistent tension between the individual and the communal dimensions of all aspects of human life, political and otherwise. Sometimes this tension gives rise to conflicts and antagonisms and sometimes to convergences and collaboration. As Ignatieff (1984) suggests, the language of universal human rights with corresponding duties, has made only

slight headway against the claims of ethnic, cultural and social differences. According to Ignatieff, the reason for this slim progress is that:

> *We think of ourselves not as human beings first but as sons and daughters, fathers and mothers, tribesmen and neighbours. It is this dense web of relations and the meanings which they give to life that satisfies the needs which really matter to us.* [my emphasis]
>
> p29

The claim that political rights are not significant is challenged in Chapter Seven (p122). However, the conception that individuals are isolated and self-seeking fails to recognise that the association of individuals in society, social institutions or projects is often interactive and not summative and can be described as relational.

Several contemporary political philosophers have also more recently attempted with considerable success to bridge the gap relating to the liberal and the communitarian approaches to the question of human nature (Taylor, 1985; Carrithers et al (1985) and Kymlicka, 1989). These writings suggest that embeddedness and choice are not necessarily antithetical. No individual can be context-free but all can be free within a context. Human beings have developed in close interaction with culture; they are, as Geertz (1973, p35) notes: *'incomplete or unfinished animals who complete or finish themselves through culture - and not through culture in general but highly particular forms of it.'*

Geertz's criticism suggests that the term 'human nature' is meaningless. Our idea of the person has developed alongside civilisation. What human beings are has changed historically, which has made an essential difference in who they are. For example, at one time, people tended to believe that their social roles or their station and its duties were determined by God or constituted their natural and necessary place within the community. This was not merely a matter of belief but was embodied in the social structure and informed their actions. In important respects, people were what they were by virtue of these social definitions and roles, for example, slaves, serfs, lords, kings. But clearly, these changing definitions and roles are historical and people no longer act in accordance with them. For those reasons, the presupposition of a fixed human nature is, at the very least, problematic. As Mauss (1938) argues:

> *From a simple masquerade to the mask, from a 'role' (personage) to a person (personnae), to a name, to an individual; from the latter to a being possessing metaphysical and moral value; from a moral consciousness to a sacred being; from the latter to a fundamental form of thought and action the course is accomplished.*

Many have questioned the linear, evolutionary assumption latent in this description. Nevertheless it is still the case that our ideas of the person have developed hand-in-hand with different societies; systems of law, religious customs, social structures and mentality (Mauss, 1938, p3) and are 'both culturally specific and a historical product' (Lukes, 1985, p293).

Taylor (1986, pp190-1) also notes that many liberal theories are based on 'atomism', 'utterly facile psychology', according to which individuals are self-sufficient outside of society. Individuals, according to atomistic theories, are not in need of any common context in order to develop and exercise their capacity for self-development. Taylor argues for the 'social thesis' which says that this capacity can only be exercised in a certain kind of society with a certain kind of social environment. The 'social thesis' is clearly true. It is argued here that Individuals develop through social interactions - in other words, individuals in relation (Gould, 1988). Furthermore, individuals who stand by each other in these relations are essentially changed in and through them.

As noted above, an important consideration regarding the agency of individuals is that their activity is often joint or common, that is, involves many individuals acting together with a shared or common purpose. Such common activity may be seen to be ontologically distinct from the individual activity of agents acting to realise their separate purpose. Common activity is not to be understood as simply an aggregation of individual activity, which may be accidentally co-ordinated. Rather, it is defined by a shared aim and joint activity to realise that aim. In other words, social choice is the outcome of social deliberation and debate, not just a matter of personal preferences.

The individual therefore occupies a determinate position in a network of relations which constitute society on the one side and himself/herself as a social individual on the other. This is a 'dialectical' interpretation of self and society. As Davenhaver (1996, p61) argues: *'The interrogatory project that is constitutive of each of our lives is radically dialectical and dialogical. My life is open-endedly intersubjective.'* Participatory democratic theory also posits the social nature of human beings in the world and the dialectical inter-dependence of persons and their government. As a consequence, it places self-realisation or development through mutual transformation at the centre of the democratic process (cf. pp56-57; p63).

Persons are developmental animals - creatures with a compound and evolving telos whose ultimate destiny depends on how they interact with those who share the same destiny. Lindblom (1977) calls these relationships 'preceptoral' or 'perspective transformational

relationships'. As Marquand (1988, p233) notes: *'Men and women do not only command and obey, and exchange one good for another. They also teach and learn, persuade and are persuaded'.* People change, not because they have been ordered or given incentives to, but because they have learned to see the world and themselves in a different way: because in some measure they have become different people. Two distinguishably different ways of thinking about education and of translating that thought into practice underpin most of the differences of opinion that have circulated within educational circles over the past two or three centuries - the mimetic and transformative traditions (Jackson, 1986). The mimetic tradition assumes expert knowledge and the principle function of 'teaching' is to convey this knowledge. Within the transformative tradition, the good teacher is not so much an expert as a role model, a questioning guide and a teller of stories. The relevance of this notion of transformational relationships to the democratic model of evaluation of education will be examined in the final section of this chapter.

### *Marginalisation of Economic and Social Inequalities*

The third major criticism which can be made of abstract individualism is its failure to recognise in theory the relevance of economics, social inequality and constraints in the political sphere. Liberal individualism tends in practice to permit them to intrude into the very political process that is intended to exclude them. Contrary to its intention of political equality, this representative form of democracy has often led in practice to rule by powerful minorities. These practical shortcomings are in fact attributable to the ontological view, as outlined above (cf. pp103-106), which takes individuals as only abstractly the same and as related to each other only in external ways. Since this view abstracts from the concrete differences and internal relations that mark social interaction in personal, cultural and economic life, it cannot account for the role these differences play in the political process itself. The restriction of democracy to the political sphere can also be related to the understanding within this ontology of freedom as merely freedom of choice, rather than also as freedom of development.

It was also noted in the Introduction to this chapter that the second central plank of liberalism that contextualises the democratic model of evaluation as a political model of evaluation, is the conception of freedom as a formal and abstract principle. Dewey (1937; 1939) pointed out (cf. pp81-83) that individual freedom remains a meaningless concept unless individuals are able to control and change the conditions under which they live. Questions about the extent to which individuals are free are always distributed and controlled through the institutional agencies of the state. Understood in this way, freedom is advanced, not simply

by reducing the power of the state, but by the state distributing power democratically - that is, in ways that are conducive to developing the freedom of everyone in society.

**Implications of Abstract Individualism for the Democratic Model of Education**

The abstract individualism which House (1980) suggests invariably underpins models of evaluation, taking individuals or persons as the basic entities that constitute the social world (cf. pp81-83). The relationships among these individuals are external in that they do not affect the basic nature of these individuals and leave them essentially unchanged. Thus their nature is regarded as fixed. In tension with this view, it was suggested that if the democratic model of evaluation is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, individuals must be perceived as not being isolated, but becoming the individuals that they are through their social relations (cf. pp84-88). In essence, individuals develop through social interactions. In the context of the democratic model of evaluation, the common purpose amongst teachers in a particular school is in the development of the school (Simons, 1987, p237). The actions of individuals within institutions such as schools are social rather than private in that the individuals have to take each other's understanding and actions into account in their own activity. In this way, the social relations among teachers are internal relations, as described above, and the school as the totality of such social relations, as noted by Simons (Ibid.), cannot be understood as an aggregate of external relations among private individuals. Furthermore, individuals who stand by each other in these relations are essentially changed in and through them. If the gap between 'respect for persons' and 'respect for society' is to be bridged, it has been argued above that a more social ontology of individuals in relations, and a positive concept of freedom - or rather freedom of self-development - is required. The contribution of the transformative tradition of education will be discussed in the next section.

Within the transformative tradition, the good teacher is not so much an expert as a role model, a questioning guide and a teller of stories (cf. p88). Stake (1967) (cf. p22), emphasised the need for evaluators to tell the programme 'story' and thereby Stake implicitly associates evaluation with the transformative tradition:

> *The purpose of educational evaluation is expository: to acquaint the audience with the workings of certain educators and their learners .....A full evaluation results in a story supported perhaps by statistics and profiles. It tells what happened. It reveals perceptions and judgements that different groups and individuals hold - obtained, I hope, by objective means. It tells of*

*merit and shortcomings. As a bonus, it may offer generalisations ('the moral of the story .....') for the guidance of subsequent evaluation programs.*

p5

Of the many attributes associated with transformative teaching, the most crucial ones seem to concern the teacher as a person. For, as again stated above, it is essential to success within that tradition that teachers who are trying to bring about transformative changes personify the very qualities they seek to engender in their students. To the best of their ability they must be living examples of certain virtues or attitudes. Learning within the transformative tradition is conceptualised as a social process. Turning again to evaluation, Simons (1987, p185) writes: *'I seek to establish and sustain educative relationships through evaluation ..... I take an educational view of evaluative inquiry ..... I believe that the cultivation of such relationships has an important contribution to make to the social transformation of our society and thereby to social justice.'* It is this transformative tradition of education which underpins the democratic model of evaluation as an educational form of social theory.

Finally, it should be noted that the liberal individualistic conception of liberal democracy has several positive features which the democratic model of evaluation preserves. One crucial feature that is central to the democratic model of evaluation is the emphasis on the universality and equality of rights and, as noted throughout this thesis, on their corollary, equal representation in the political process. The ground for this equality is seen to be the equal agency of all individuals. This has much in common with the abstract individualist characterisation of all humans as equally free; but, as previously suggested, democratic evaluators' views differ in rejecting egoistic self-interest as the fundamental and universal features of individuals. MacDonald et al (1975, p12) write: *'the public 'right to know' must always be balanced against the individual's 'right to be discreet' ..... the boundaries of public knowledge should be negotiated between these two rights'* [my emphasis]. Democratic evaluators thus do not share the liberal individualist ontology's emphasis on the ontological primacy of the individual.

**Conclusion**

This chapter began by suggesting that a common element in liberal democratic theories can be summed up as a form of 'individualism' with individuals being bearers of negative rights. If the democratic model of evaluation is to be conceptualised as a form of educational social theory, the traditional view of the citizen as a bearer of negative rights is inadequate. What is required is a social ontology of individuals in relations, and a positive concept of freedom. In other words, the development of each individual's distinctive qualities needs to feature in the full meaning of freedom.

By reformulating the core liberal values of individuality, freedom and equality in this way, liberal democrats, including democratic evaluators, are able to conceptualise liberal democracy as having an educative intent. They are also able to recast liberalism's concern with autonomy as a concern to specify the political and educational arrangements which would give all individuals equal opportunity to determine the conditions under which they live. A positive concept of freedom as self-development and a more social ontology would lend support to Simons' thesis that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory. If the democratic model of evaluation is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory, it must be underpinned by a coherent social ontology which transcends an individual-society duality. In other words, individuals are who they are (or become who they are) fundamentally through their social relationships.

Finally, the notion of ontology has an important contribution to make to clarification of conceptions of democracy. Liberal individualism underpins market conceptions of democracy and the more social ontological view outlined in this chapter underpins moral conceptions of democracy. Chapter Six explores these two broad models of democracy (market and moral conceptions) and also outlines the differences in the way autonomy, democracy and democratic education are conceived within each of these models of democracy. Chapter Six will analyse these models' congruence with a positive concept of freedom as self-development, a more social ontological perspective and education. Such an analysis will also facilitate the development of a conceptual framework to support the democratic model of evaluation conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

# CHAPTER SIX

## TOWARDS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: A MORAL MODEL OF DEMOCRACY

## Introduction

Having analysed the ontological basis of the democratic model of evaluation, it is now necessary to identify a particular model of democracy. This model of democracy needs to be congruent with the two conditions that have been identified in Chapter Five as necessary pre-requisites if the democratic model is to be conceptualised as an educational form of social theory. These two pre-requisites are firstly, a more social ontological perspective, and secondly, a more positive concept of freedom, as freedom of self-development. This chapter argues that the democratic model of evaluation is located in particular models of liberal democracy and that the justification of the former cannot be undertaken independently of justification of the latter. If democratic evaluators defer only to the traditional liberal democratic paradigm, then the implications of rival models of democracy for the substantiation of the notion that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory are entirely missed. The following section starts by analysing the notion of 'models of democracy'.

## The Notion of 'Models of Democracy'

It is commonplace for political theorists to construct analytical 'models' which encapsulate the core principles, key features and basic assumptions which different ideas and arguments about democracy tacitly presuppose (Held, 1987).[1] These distinctions cut right across that between 'conventional' and 'radical' democratic theory. These are also distinctions reflecting the differing basic philosophies or underlying theories with which intellectuals have linked the democratic idea. In addition, those who construct these models do not claim that they correspond to any particular democratic theory or capture any given political reality. One might argue that all 'representation' involves interpretation - interpretation which embodies a particular framework of concepts, standards and beliefs. Such a framework is not a barrier to understanding; on the contrary, it is integral to it (Gadamer, 1975). Such frameworks determine what we 'see', what we notice and register as important. Accordingly, particular interpretations cannot be regarded as the correct or final understanding of a phenomenon: the meaning of a phenomenon is always open to future interpretations from new perspectives.

[1] By a model is meant a theoretical construction designed to reveal and explain the main elements of a political form or order and its underlying structure of relations. Models in this context are networks of concepts and generalisations about aspects of the political economic and social spheres (Miller, 1993, p49).

Every normative concept of democracy is, or should be, action guiding. A normative concept makes claims about how societies both see and conduct themselves or, from another standpoint, it should aim to guide the formation and operation of institutions concerned with democratic citizenship and its exercise. Normative concepts of democracy are therefore future oriented. Normative concepts are contributions to deliberations about how we should judge and act now and in the foreseeable future. The assessment of rhetorical arguments must also always take into account what would happen if they were actioned. The system of education in a democratic society also always reflects and refracts the normative concept or model of democracy which society accepts as legitimate and true (cf. Introduction, p10).

Models have two dimensions (Macpherson, 1977, p4). Firstly, they may be concerned to explain not only the underlying reality of the prevailing or past relations between wilful and historically influenced human beings, but also the probability or possibility of future changes in those relations. The second dimension of models in political theorising is an ethical one, a concern for what is desirable, good or right. The outstanding models in political science, at least from Hobbes, have been both explanatory and justificatory or advocatory. They are, in different proportions, statements about what a political system or a political society is, how it does work or could work, and statements of why it is a good thing, or why it would be a good thing to have it or to have more of it. As Macpherson (1977) notes:

> *Some democratic theorists have seen clearly enough that their theories are such a mixture. Some have not, or have even denied it. Those who start from the tacit assumption that whatever is, is right, are apt to deny that they are making any value judgements. Those who start from the tacit assumption that whatever is, is wrong, give great weight to their ethical case (while trying to show it is practicable). And between the two extremes there is room for considerable range of emphasis.*
>
> p4

What Macpherson is drawing our attention to is the fact that throughout history two broad conceptions of democracy have been advanced (cf. p60 and p65; p70-71). One conception takes democracy to mean some kind of popular power (a form of life or style of existence in which citizens are engaged in self-government and self-regulation), the other conception interprets it as 'an aid to decision-making' (a means of legitimating the decisions of those voted into power as 'representatives') (Held, 1987, p3). These two conceptions of democracy - democracy as a form of popular power and democracy as a representative

system of political decision-making - may, following common usage, be labelled the 'moral' and 'market' conceptions of democracy (Pateman, 1970, p21). The representation of traditional democratic theory into just two types is something of an over-simplification - although arguably, a permissible and helpful one. Politics is a far from perfect form of human activity (cf. Chapter Two). Some approximation to the ideal is all that one can look for. In order to do so, however, one needs to be clear about what the ideal is. These two conceptions are offered as ideal 'types', constructs, whose sole function is to clarify the similarities and differences that a variety of different conceptions of democracy possesses.

The following sections examine in more detail, first the 'market' model of democracy and, secondly, the moral model of democracy and their implications for the democratic model of evaluation conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

**Market Models of Democracy**

Market models do not claim to be 'moral'. This set of positions is one which presents a much more limited view of what democracy may 'realistically' achieve. The prime protagonist of this conception is Schumpeter (1943) but it has been elaborated in recent years by Nordlinge (1981) and, most notably, by Sartori (1987). Within this model, any suggestion that democracy is a moral idea is rejected as unrealistic, impractical, misleading and illusory. The 'market' concept of democracy is congruent with Plato's notion of a form of society (trans. F. M. Cornford, 1941) (cf. pp57-58) This model can be represented diagrammatically, as in Table 6.1 (p95).

What unites the different views of democracy incorporated in the market 'model' is the claim to offer a realistic understanding of democracy based on detailed empirical studies of how modern democratic societies actually work. Those who advocate market models of democracy also claim that the essence of democracy is not its allegiance to a moral ideal but its method for selecting between competing political elites for the right to exercise power. What these studies also claim to show is that most of the population of modern western democracies do not possess the knowledge or expertise that positive participation in political decision-making requires. Democratic freedom is thus not the positive freedom to participate in political decision-making (i.e. the ancient notion of liberty) but the negative freedom to pursue one's own private interests with the minimum of state coercion or control.

**Table 6.1: The Market Models of Democracy**

| | |
|---|---|
| Core Principles | Democracy is justified extrinsically as the political system which is most instrumentally effective in securing the core principle of individual liberty. It provides a method for selecting political leaders which curtails an excess or abuse of political power. It helps to protect the freedom of individuals to pursue their private interests with minimal state interference. |
| Key Features | Democracy is a value-neutral descriptive concept and its achievement is synonymous with certain empirical conditions. These include regular elections, universal suffrage, the existence of plural political parties, a representative government, a centralised political leadership, and a free and independent judiciary. |
| Main Assumptions | Human beings are primarily private individuals who form social relationships in order to satisfy their own needs. They have no obligation to participate in decision-making and most ordinary people have no desire to do so. A rigid distinction is, therefore, made between active elite political leadership and the passive majority of ordinary citizens. |
| Social Conditions | Democracy flourishes in an individualistic society with a competitive market economy, minimal state intervention, a politically passive citizenry and a strong active political leadership guided by liberal principles and circumscribed by the rule of law. |

Market models of democracy flow from an analysis of how interests are best protected. Democratic elitism is probably most consonant with the present social and political forms of Western societies and market conceptions of democracy.[2] According to market democrats, liberal democracies have evolved a satisfactory method of accountability in the form of competitive elections in which rivals for political leadership campaign for the votes of the electorate. According to some market democrats (for example, Sartori, 1987), all the more demanding forms of participation end up as the preserve of an unrepresentative minority: the 'politically active with their unusual appetite for meetings' (Sartori, 1987, p114). Sartori argues that a more participatory democracy can end up as a more elitist politics, in which: *'the few do better and count for more, than the passive, inert, apathetic, non-participant many.'* This complaint is often reinforced by a suggestion that activists follow an agenda peculiar to themselves and that their pre-occupations bear no relation to the preferences of those who are inactive. Even if one rejects this accusation (which is often at odds with the findings of empirical studies) there remains an important point for anyone concerned with democracy.

In his seminal statement of elitist theory, Capitalism- Socialism and Democracy, Schumpeter (1970, p269) defines the democratic method as: *'That institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.'* In Schumpeter's reformation of democracy the passive role of the citizen is apparent. Shumpeter's (1970, p242) attack is also directed towards 'moral' conceptions of democracy. He seeks to demythologise democracy to the extent that it becomes a political method only. Schumpeter declares that democracy is merely a political method and: *'hence incapable of being an end in itself.'* When Schumpeter declares that democracy is a political method, he has a very definite view of public participation in the process of governing, namely that it shall be at a minimum. As far as individual voters are concerned: *'..... they must understand that once they have elected an individual politician action is his business and not theirs.'* (Schumpeter, 1970, p283). He declares that: *'democracy is the rule of the politician.'* (Schumpeter, p285). Schumpeter's concept of democratic government involves a highly structured and narrowly defined end, that of popular endorsement of the policies of a political party from time to time. In giving citizens the very minimum role to play, and confining that role to confirming a party in power, Schumpeter is then able to plausibly cast democracy in the role of a political method. According to Schumpeter, political action is not the business of the ordinary voter, politicians

[2] The reference here is both to beliefs that political elites exist and to judgements that they arc desirable. These can be disconnected. Some condemn the existence of political elites, and others, including some elite theorists describe their existence without (allegedly) passing judgement on them. In fact, however, in elitist theories the desirability as well as the existence of political elites is normally maintained.

must be left to get on with the job. The logic of his position is to make parties and not voters the custodians of democracy. Here there are, fundamentally, two kinds of citizen, and two kinds of political group, each exercising a different kind of power. The power of electors is limited to voting. The power of representative groups is exercised through the centralised state, and the longer the life of such groups, the more the interests become identified with the survival of the state. Elitist theory is an instance of democratic dualism because it sees democracy as constituted by two kinds of political power (Walker, 1992, p318).

Whatever the vagaries of Schumpeter's definition, the importance of his work is that it represents a reaction against ambiguities and opaque generalisation, such as the attribution of epistemic rationality to individuals in general, and a belief in the efficacy and propriety of governmental institutions and practices to achieve moral ends. There is, too, novelty in the claim that democracy is a political method and not amenable to questions of value. For Schumpeter mass participation in politics is a Freudian nightmare in which the typical citizen regresses to an avenging savage. The democratic polity is preserved in the face of these challenges by Schumpeter, by markedly limiting participation by the electorate to the vote simply of endorsing or rejecting one or more of the elites at election time. Critics of elitism (for example Macpherson and Pateman) claim that the inequality of political power lays the basis for political inequity and social division (cf. p56 and p63). As noted elsewhere in this thesis, they see restrictions on participation as undemocratic exclusions from basic political power. Democracy cannot work through representation alone; democracy requires participation. In the normal political use of the terms 'representation' and 'participation' democratic elitism is a representative/non-participatory theory.

For Schumpeter and subsequent elitists, the working of the democratic method requires that certain prior conditions be met. The most important, from an educational point of view, is that *'... all the interests that matter give their allegiance to the structural principles of existing society'* (pp295-96). There should also be civil liberties, tolerance of opinion, and a *'national character and national habits of certain types'* (pp295-96) to whose production we might expect education to make some contribution. However, what is of primary importance is that it is not only functional for society, but important for democratic civilisation, that political initiatives are taken by leaders, and that the mass merely chooses among leaders. Democracy consists in the freedom of the mass to choose and of leaders to compete for the vote.

Schumpeter (1970) claims, as an advantage to his model, that it is realistic in the sense that, unlike the classical theory, it fits conditions in the real world. Part of his thesis is that, in

general, people have rudimentary irrational notions about politics. His solution to this problem is the essential status quo procedure of advocating a strong executive government with the most limited participation by the electorate. In this respect, he differs markedly from other revisionists who, in general, favour construing individuals as centres of preference aiming at a maximum utility income, served by weak governments whose utility is to be found in holding office and who strive to please their electorate.

Within the contemporary context, politics is professionalised and the system is one in which, as the economist Schumpeter puts it, there is a 'division of labour' between the political actors and the people at large. Today, many political scientists see the existence of political elites as inevitable. But, since the rule by an elite is the very opposition of positive rule by the people, this means that the non-existence of radical democracy is also seen as inevitable. Studies of elites and of voting behaviour clearly seem to demonstrate that, in reality, the Western 'democracies' are not all like the democracies portrayed in radical democratic theory. In a word, radical democratic theory is shown to be unrealistic.

Democratic elitism is built on the concept of negative freedom, or freedom from external constraints of interference. It starts from the premise of individual liberty as the principle value to be protected by the government. It also holds that the right to private property is to be secured by the state against interference. All other activities including the economic, the social and the personal, are regarded as private rather than public matters and therefore outside the sphere of political decisions. It recognises and endorses the divide between those who want and are able to participate in politics and those who do not want to and are unable. It radically restricts popular participation in decision-making, virtually eliminating such participation as a practical or desirable possibility for the mass of the population. For democratic elitism, democracy is a form of representative government. Decision-making is restricted to elected representatives; electors, having voted, participate no further (Bachrach, 1969; Pateman, 1970).

The elitists' inattention to education reflects an assumption that the procedures involved in running the state can be learned only on the job; then those who run the state would best know how to run it. The most that could be said of the rest is that some might have potential as political representatives. Thus the epistemic differentiation between the leading groups and the led masses emerges through personal careerism and professionalisation of politics. Thinking about politics becomes the occupational responsibility of those who discharge certain social roles. The educated public has been replaced by a heterogeneous set of specialised publics. The political dualism is expressed through the division of society into

professional and laity. The professionals arrogate to themselves the epistemic privilege of defining the criteria for sound policy. The professionalisation of politics thus undermines a basic democratic value: the freedom of individuals to pursue their interests as they see them. If there is any substance in this claim, it poses a problem for democratic egalitarians whose solutions to the representation/participation dilemma hinge on the widest possible broadening of non-representative participation - as noted, through procedures.

The democratic elitist theory is based on an economic market concept of democracy: the party leaders are the entrepreneurs, the voters are the consumers, thus reducing the definition of democracy to merely a mechanism for choosing and authorising a government. In other words, democracy as a form of society or constitution. There is no desire to venture further and stipulate that political equality requires additional institutional provision, such as educational attainment, possibly through participation. The democratic elitist view of government, and of the relationship between government and governed, is thus 'mechanical and procedural' not 'moral', emphasising outward changes of structure and law rather than inner changes of value and belief. Rational political action is construed on a means-end basis. This denigrates an important aspect of some empirical political behaviour and merely demonstrates how ill-adapted the model is to coping with this, explaining away continued adherence to traditional democratic norms such as voting, responsibility and loyalty. For the system to work, as they believe it should, political theorists such as Riker and Ordeshook (1973) have to omit the 'finer properties of man' from political behaviour. Tullock (1976) has to substitute the preference schedule for persons; Downs (1957) vainly attempts to square 'social responsibility' with his utility maximisers and Schumpeter (1970) recommends that the masses be simply kept out of politics.

Most of the apologists for a market view of democracy do not, moreover, regard it as a second best to a more participatory vision. The distance between political decision-makers and public is not necessarily a matter of regret. The professionals can commit their lives to developing a knowledge of policies, to debating and reflecting upon issues which cannot be expected of the average member of the demos. This is not to endorse Schumpeter's (1943, p262) view of the person in the street as descending to: *'a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field'*. It is merely to acknowledge the multifarious interests, additional to politics, which compete for the attention of contemporary men and women. It would be foolish to expose them to the responsibilities of decision-making which the professional politician should expect to assume. For Sartori (1987) the 'reductio ad absurdum' of participatory or, as he prefers to call it, 'referendum' democracy is the home voting-machine.

Market models can do little to explain the most eminent feature of the democratic polity, namely, that it affords the opportunity whereby the engagement in politics precisely need not be a one-dimensional means-end relationship. The conception of education congruent with market models of democracy is an education that prepares the many or ordinary individuals for their primary social roles as producers, workers and consumers in a modern market economy (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p46). Since market models of education do not make any intrinsic connection between democracy and education, educational policy will primarily be formulated by political leaders rather than through public discussion and democratic debate, as proposed by democratic evaluators (cf. p36-7 and p41). Also, insofar as the political ignorance and the apathy of the masses are regarded as essential to social stability, political education will always be viewed as irrelevant. Market models of democracy stress that people are not social or political animals (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p47). They endorse a view of autonomy as a '*commitment to developing the capacity of individuals to ... determine and pursue their own version of the 'good life' for themselves free from ...external pressures and constraints*' (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p47) (cf. pp81-83). The kind of education appropriate to moral conceptions of democracy, which is examined in the following section, is very different.

Market models rest on a philosophy of mind in which all enterprises in which persons engage are enterprises of utility. This is fallacious. Though pursuing enterprises will increase the utility income of the person for whom these enterprises are worthwhile, those enterprises are not themselves enterprises of happiness. Whilst the revisionists seem bent on equating democracy with the society which maximises happiness, they do not seem to appreciate that this stance does not require that what everyone in that society is doing is just pursuing the maximisation of utility. Hence, they do not see that amongst the things that make persons happy is being taken up or involved in a vast range of projects or commitments. In particular, they do not see that a participatory political and social system can afford the opportunities for just those sorts of involvement, commitments and self-development.

Drawing once again on Feinberg's (1983) work (cf. p77) 'two major social functions of education, two paradigms that can begin to provide an understanding of the possibilities that exist for progressive change' (p228) can be distinguished. In the first of these paradigms, the social functions of education are primarily economic and vocational. This is the paradigm that involves:

*those areas that provide deliberate instructions in a code of knowledge, a set of principles and techniques designed to further the participation of an individual in the market through the mediation of skills that possess an exchange value ..... It would include not only all those performances that involve simple rule procedures in which one has been instructed, but also those performances that involve the ability to deal with contingencies through the application of well-grounded scientific understanding, hence this category would include not only the simplest kind of vocational training, but education into a craft or profession as well, and it is primarily concerned with the transmission of technically exploitable knowledge.*

p226

The above concept of education, or paradigm of education, articulates with market conceptions of democracy. The primary social function of education-market models (vocational paradigm) is economic: to contribute to the regeneration and modernisation of industry and so advance the economic development and growth of modern society. Market models sustain a conception of education appropriate to a meritocratic society in which all individuals have equal opportunity to compete for economic rewards on the basis of their talent, skills, efforts and achievements. They are sharply critical of the traditional distinction between education and training. Market paradigms of education also tend to marginalise norms and values, or rather the questioning of norms and values is discouraged.

The social functions of Feinberg's second paradigm are primarily political and cultural. This concept of education, or paradigm of education, resonates with moral conceptions of democracy which are described in the following section.

**Moral Models of Democracy**

'Moral' models of democracy are congruent with Plato's notion of a 'style of existence', (cf. pp57-58), or certain social ideals (Raphael, 1990, p85). The main characteristics of moral models are summarised in Table 6.2 (p103). Within these models, democracy is 'moral' in two senses. First, it includes theories in which the idea of a democratic form of government derives from, or is intermeshed with, a basic theoretical or philosophical analysis in which fundamental moral principles are seen as having a central role. Democracy within this conception is not a political system but a political expression of the values of self-fulfilment, self-determination and equality - values constitutive of the kind of society in which autonomous individuals can fulfil themselves by freely and equally determining the public good. Democracy is 'moral' in the sense that it prescribes the moral principle to which any

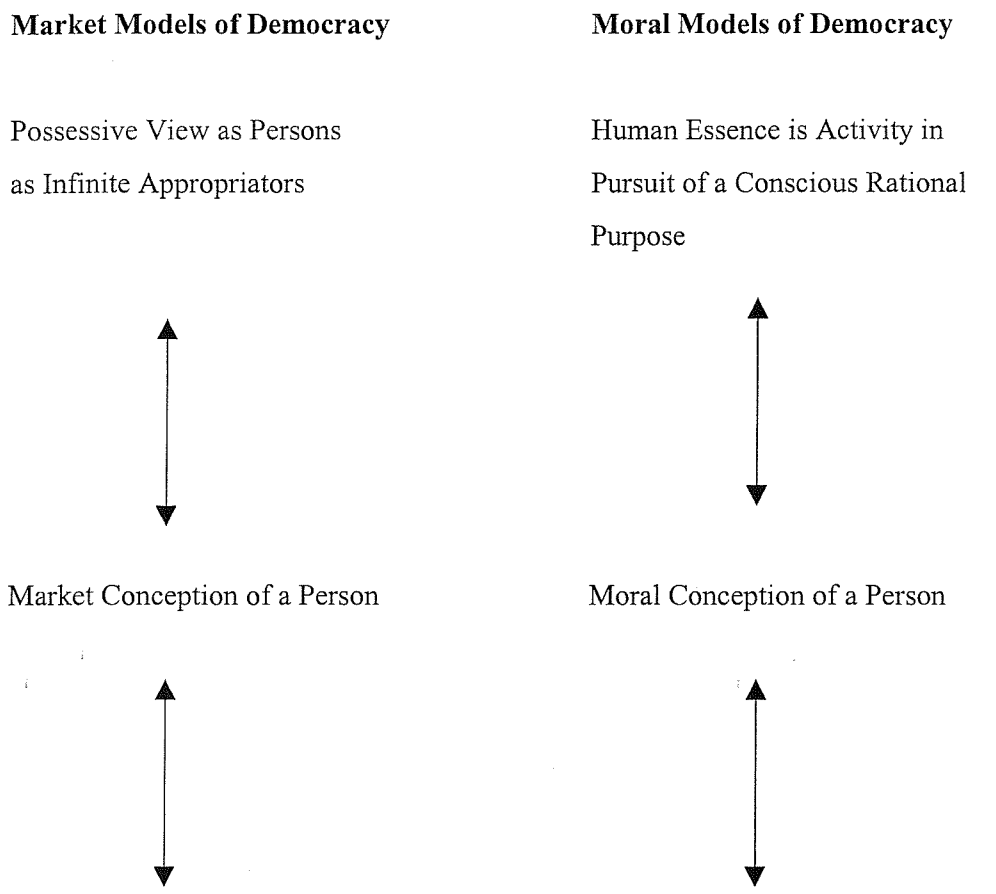
society which claims to be democratic should conform. As such, it provides a moral basis for evaluating the social relationships, political institutions and cultural practices of any society that seeks to give expression to democratic values and ideals.

Secondly, moral models of democracy include theories which see democracy as necessary for the proper development of the individual. Thus, as noted elsewhere, there are two particular senses in which liberal democracy, rooted as it is in liberal assumptions, has to be regarded as a contraction of a larger and longer democratic tradition (cf. Chapter Three, p61; Chapter Four, pp62-65; and Chapter Six, pp94-95). First it has restricted democracy to the arrangements of the political system (Plato's form of society) where it was properly to be seen as a kind of society (Plato's style of existence/form of life) not just a system of government. As Macpherson (1973, p51) notes: *'As soon as democracy is seen as a kind of society, not merely a mechanism of choosing and authorising governments, the egalitarian principle inherent in democracy requires not only 'one man, one vote' but also 'one man, one equally effective right to live as fully and humanly as he may wish.'* Secondly, a conception of democracy as merely procedural, rather than fundamental, begs further questions. As suggested elsewhere (cf. Chapter Five), to subscribe to democracy is to hold certain views of human nature - of its essence or plasticity, its base or noble motives, its confined or limitless prospects. Allegiance to or suspicion of democracy provides fundamental clues to the ways in which one interprets the whole nexus of a persons' moral, social and political relations and the manner in which individual and collective goals may be realised or must be frustrated.

**Table 6.2: Moral Models of Democracy**

| | |
|---|---|
| Core Principles | Democracy is an intrinsically justified form of social life constituted by the core value of political equality. It is the way of life in which individuals are able to realise their human capacities by participating in the life of their society. A democratic society is thus a society whose citizens enjoy equal opportunities for self-development, self-fulfilment and self-determination |
| Key Features | Democracy is a moral ideal and, as such, is never fully achieved. It requires continuously expanding opportunity for direct participation of all citizens in public decision by bringing society, politics, industry and institutions under more genuine democratic control. |
| Main Assumptions | Human beings are essentially political and social animals and fulfil themselves by sharing in the common life of a community. Since involvement in the life of the community is a necessary condition of individual development, all should participate in deliberation about the good of their society. Any distinction between rulers and ruled is a distinction in degree rather than in kind. |
| Social Conditions | Democracy can only flourish in a society in which there is a knowledgeable and informed citizenry capable of participating in public decision-taking and political debate on equal terms. It thus requires a society in which bureaucratic control over public life is minimal and in which decision-making is not treated as a professional expertise. |

**Figure 6.1: Market and Moral Concepts of a Person: Inter-Relationships with Concepts of Power**



Returning once again to the work of Macpherson (1966, p50), there has been a contraction in the concept of what it means to be a human being, involving a 'diminution of the human essence'. The arrival of market society underpinned by liberal theory had ousted a 'traditional view' that 'the human essence was activity in pursuit of a conscious rational purpose' and established its own, narrowed and possessive view of man as 'an infinite appropriator' (Macpherson, 1966, p50). Figure 6.1 (p104) outlines the inter-relationship between concepts of a person and the concepts of power also identified in Chapters Two and Four. In essence, moral democrats argue that liberty and democracy are not in fact realised in market conceptions. As argued above, a commitment to moral conceptions of democracy is intertwined with certain moral principles and a commitment to certain facts about persons. Thus Gutmann (1980, p11) claims: *'We must presume the potential judicial attributes of all citizens.'* Wokler (1994, p38), echoing this premise, suggests that underpinning models of democracy *'are not only different ideas of liberty but also diverse perceptions of human nature.'* The most important trait to be aimed at by education is 'The right kind of person'. Education is conceived in this context as participation in an ongoing dialogue or conversation (cf. Introduction, p10; Chapter Four, pp78-79).

Moral conceptions of democracy are grounded in a way of life in which all individuals can develop their distinctively human qualities and capacities. They envisages a society which is itself intrinsically educative: a 'learning society' in which political socialisation is a distinctly educational process - In such a society, the primary aim of education is to initiate individuals into the values, attitudes and modes of behaviour appropriate to democratic citizenship and conducive to active participation in democratic institutions. Education within the context of moral democracy seeks to empower its future members to participate collectively in the processes through which their society is being shaped and reproduced. In essence, education within the context of this model of democracy is a transformative process (cf. Chapter Five).

The survival of a pluralistic democracy requires a belief that mutual understanding among diverse parties can be achieved. There can be no democracy where values are treated as given, as non-problematic, as not themselves a subject of the continuing debate (Kelly, 1995). Survival requires genuine dialogue and critical encounter (cf. Chapter Two, pp41-42). In a conversation, according to Oakeshott (1962, p198): *'there is no 'truth' to be discovered, no proposition to be proved, no conclusion sought.'* The first moral principle of a moral conception of democracy is the passionate commitment of its citizens to such discourse

(Bryk, 1988). Attempts to promote dialogue across the diversity of beliefs as values, within a democratic society, are the business of educators (Haydon, 1986).

There has recently been a revival of interest in conceptions of democracy that focus on the process of discussion, and similar and overlapping ideas. Habermas' work and his theory of communicative action (Habermas, 1989) has been one of the inspirations for this work. This intellectual debate has been the impetus for the development of concepts such as dialogic rationality and deliberative democracy and an epistemological basis which is more congruent with democratic ideals and thus the democratic model of evaluation (cf. Chapter One, Table 1.4, p32). Turning to evaluation, this contemporary intellectual debate is congruent with moral and therefore inherently participatory/educative models of democracy. The following section describes the main arguments for moral or participatory models of democracy.

**Moral Models of Democracy: Main Arguments**

The main arguments for moral or participatory models of democracy are instrumental, developmental, communal and philosophical. These are examined in more detail below.

*Instrumental*

Instrumental arguments are not the most distinctive, they are essentially an adoption of liberal democratic - in this case utilitarian - arguments. Participation is not an end in itself, but is instrumental to achieving another end - the protection of interests. The developmental, communal and philosophical arguments are, however, more congruent with the democratic model of evaluation conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

*Developmental*

The developmental arguments for participatory democracy, as suggested elsewhere (cf. Chapter Two, p45; Chapter Three), argue that it is valuable because it develops individuals and their capacities. Taking part in political activity develops one's mental and spiritual capacities. At bottom this is to re-assert the view of persons expressed in Aristotle's famous dictum that 'man is by nature a political animal'. This reflects the view that persons need to engage in politics, with all that it involves in human interaction, rational discourse and the exercise of autonomy, in order to develop into a fully human being. But the basic notion is filled out with a more specific account of the educative function of participation, when

'education' is used in a wide sense to cover the development of responsible, individual social and political action. One important aspect of this is said to be that political participation itself increases people's confidence in their ability to participate efficiently and meaningfully in politics: participation increases their sense of 'political efficacy'.

### *Communal*

The communal arguments are in part an extension of these developmental arguments. As noted in Chapter Five (cf. pp85-88; pp89-90), it is held that an important aspect of how individuals are developed and educated by the experience of political participation is the way in which this teaches them about the nature and importance of community and of their place within it, participation is valuable in various ways but above all it integrates the individual into the community. This has a dual aspect. On the one hand it benefits individuals, for example, by giving them a true perspective on the communal aspect of life and how to relate to other individuals and their claims. On the other hand, it develops and strengthens the community itself: the individual's subjective perception of, and commitments to, the community are at the same time objective bonds which bind the community together; and to strengthen the former is at the same time to develop the latter. Participation strengthens the community and the individual's attachment to it.

### *Philosophical*

Philosophical arguments relate to basic theoretical issues and contend that only in participatory democracy can they be satisfactorily resolved. In essence, they are those posed by the individualism of mainstream liberal democratic theory. Arguably, fundamental theoretical difficulties are intrinsic to this individualism. At the risk of over-simplifying complex matters, one could argue that whereas Marxists see liberal democratic theory's individualism as an irredeemable fault, participatory democrats wish to preserve vital aspects of it and overcome the faults it develops in liberal democratic theory. Participation fills the vacuum between the individual and society by actively engaging individual citizens in the process by which it is run; and in a proper participatory democracy all adults would be engaged. In this way there is a genuine sense in which they can all feel they have individually contributed to, and are committed to, upholding the community's decisions (Pateman, 1985). Participation, then, is seen as giving the fundamental nexus between the community and the individual. Participatory theories thus also facilitate along one conceptual plane the logical consonance between 'respect for society' and 'respect for

persons' (c.f. Simons, p83). Moral conceptions of democracy underline the premise that there is no straightforward 'scientific' way of effecting the necessary reconciliation this will require. One would never find a formula for it that can be simply applied, any more than one would find a formula for any other moral decision. It must always be a matter of judgement (cf. Chapter Two, pp47-49). It is important not to treat such matters as economic or technical problems and to realise that the intention must be to satisfy as many of the basic principles of democracy as one can in any one instance.

**Moral Conceptions of Democracy and Positive Freedom**

Education produces 'citizens' who are both motivated towards and capable of effective participation. Moral conceptions of democracy take the notion of self-development to mean full or positive freedom which serves as the central normative conception. A crucial part of enabling positive conditions is the idea that individuals should be enabled or empowered to achieve what they want (cf. Chapter Five). To claim a conceptual relationship between democracy and education, one must not only be committed to certain moral principles and to certain facts about people, one must also make a case for a positive concept of freedom and of identifying opportunities or social rights, such as education.

The social functions of Feinberg's (1983) second paradigm of education, as noted above, are primarily political and cultural (cf. Chapter Four, p77). Its purpose is to provide:

> *those forms of instruction primarily intended to further social participation as a member of the public through the development of interpretative understanding and normative skills. This form of instruction is often called general education. It is that component of education that prepares students for a common life regardless of the nature of their vocation, and it is often thought that because general education projects a life in common ..... it requires a common curriculum ..... General education, as education for participation in a public, ideally implies a community of equal, active partners engaged in a process of self-formation.*
>
> p229

A democratic view of education prepares individuals for a form of social life in which free and equal individuals can collectively participate in formulating the common good of their society. Education is thus intimately related to the need of a democratic society for an

educated public. A democratic view supports a conception of education which recognises the role of education in promoting the active development of the kind of general understanding, social intelligence and cultural awareness that active democratic participation requires . A democratic view also eschews authoritarian teaching methods (such as direct instruction) which breed anti-social attitudes in favour of active methods, which foster the qualities of new and social attitudes which participation in public life presupposes and requires. Table 6.3 (p112) compares and contrasts market and moral paradigms of education. A democratic view of education is congruent, at the conceptual level, with the democratic model of evaluation conceptualised as an educational form of social theory.

It has been argued above that different conceptions of democracy 'entail' different conceptions of education. Congruent with the liberal individualistic conceptions, market models of democracy offer an education that prepares many ordinary individuals for their primary social role as producers, workers and consumers in a modern market economy. Moral models of democracy endorse democratic education which seeks to empower members of the democracy to participate collectively in the processes through which their society is being shaped and reproduced (Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p46). Education is conceptualised as a social and not just a public good, characterised by moral obligation, reciprocity and commitment. Such an analysis shows the persistence of rival conceptions of democracy and education which, in recent years, has been closely documented and argued. It is possible to infer points about the kinds of knowledge and ability required in politics from a given model of democracy. Market conceptions of democracy are obviously naturalistic and utilitarian. However, there are ample building blocks (as demonstrated in this thesis) to be found for a non-instrumental conception of democracy in the democratic theories of Rousseau, Dewey, Pateman and Macpherson, as explored in Chapter Three. What must be appreciated is that it is no coincidence that theorists, whose concepts of democracy are moral and relational, also see education both as the means and end of every citizen.

This simple and crude characterisation of the values and assumptions underlying 'moral' and 'market' models of democracy does little justice to the complexity and sophistication of the thinking that informs them. Nor should the fact that they have been presented as two isolated and independent models be allowed to obscure the extent to which they may, in reality, merge and overlap. To a significant extent there is a sharing of the ideal of liberty and democracy. However, they do indicate an opposition between democratic politics conceived as a fixed pattern ('market' models), and democratic politics conceived as a process of development and learning where change and contingency are the watchwords ('moral'

models). Market and moral models of democracy are also a further manifestation of the ongoing debate to determine whether democracy will mean some kind of an aid to decision-making (a means to legitimate the decisions of those voted into power), or some kind of popular power (a form of life in which citizens are engaged in self-government or self-regulation). The implications of these rival conceptions of democracy for the democratic model of evaluation will be analysed in the following section.

## Conceptions of Democracy

### *Implications for the Democratic Model of Evaluation*

The notion of market and moral conceptions of democracy has not permeated the discourse of democratic evaluators, with the result that the latter are particularly vulnerable to the sort of probings which first inspired the critics of classical democratic theory. Moral democracy, however, provides a firm measure of support to the notion that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory. If democratic evaluators, as educators, are to make sense of democracy, they must of necessity view it in normative or moral terms. In essence, democracy is both more than any one contextual instance: it is an ideal towards which democrats may strive, if they are to accomplish educational ends. To substantiate the claim that there is a conceptual link between democracy and education requires a revision of democracy. In essence, this is a drastic revision of the political theory in which it is located. This is achieved by conceptualising democracy as consisting of two rival models of democracy, i.e. a 'market' and 'moral' model of democracy. These rival constellations have been endemic in political philosophy and ethics for a long time, but have developed both momentum and sophistication in recent years (Tarrant, 1992, p2). The distinction is novel insofar as it has not been acknowledged by democratic evaluators or their critics (critics, for examples, such as Lakomski, 1983, Stronach and Fox, 1986).

Democratic evaluators, as participatory theorists, wish to preserve vital aspects of liberal democracy and overcome the faults it develops in liberal democratic theory. It is therefore argued here that the democratic model of evaluation is embedded in moral conceptions of democracy. This conceptual framework facilitates theoretical consonance between 'respect for society' and 'respect for persons' along one conceptual plane. The difference between Simons' and MacDonald's work, as it relates to conceptualisations of democracy, is one of emphasis. MacDonald's strategy is underpinned by accountability as the guiding concept,

rather than participation. Simons (1987) underlines this difference in emphasis when she writes:

> *Personally speaking, the attraction of the democratic model for me lies in its educative logic rather than in its politics of opposition. I am in agreement with MacDonald when he writes of the evaluator's primary purpose as 'to reveal educational possibilities' and of the evaluative process as a shared task.*
>
> p53

and:

> *Being an educator first, and an evaluator second, it has been important for me to formulate and practice evaluation as an educative activity in itself and service to the educative interest of others. (p259)*
>
> p53

What Simons is implying above is that reciprocity is one of the principal social conditions for self-development. The democratic model of evaluation recognises the distinctive nature of common activity and joint interests, which are characteristics of much of social, political and economic life. If the democratic model of evaluation is to be conceptualised as an educative form of social theory, then logically morality must imbue not only the ends which it pursues, but also the means by which they are attained (cf. Chapter Five).

Democratic evaluators, as moral democrats, would argue that the point of the concept of democracy is not merely to mark off decision-making procedures of a given kind, but to mark them off because they realise certain values to do with human dignity and the idea of being master of one's own fate. Democratic evaluators, as moral democrats, attempt to promote dialogue across the diversity of beliefs and values within a society. As House (1980, pp72-3) notes: *'Evaluations themselves, I would contend, can be no more than acts of persuasion.'*

**Table 6.3: Two Paradigms of Education**[3]

| | **Market Paradigm of Education** | **Moral Paradigm of Education** |
|---|---|---|
| Political Orientation | Technocratic | Democratic |
| Main Function | Economic Regeneration | Public Participation |
| Political and Social Values | Meritocratic | Egalitarian |
| Guiding Educational Metaphors | Relevance, Enterprise | Participation, Collaboration |
| School Organisation | Managerial | Democratic |
| Teacher's Role | Mimic | Preceptoral |
| Teaching Methods | Didactic | Role Model |

Adapted from Carr and Hartnett, 1996, p21

[3] Important to make three points: firstly, the fact that the paradigms have been described in an ahistorical way should not obscure the fact that each is the product of a particular historical period and emerged in response to new social circumstances. Secondly, although the paradigms have been portrayed as mutually exclusive, this should not be allowed to obscure the extent to which, in practice, they merge and overlap. Thirdly, major educational reforms are the negotiated outcome of a process of conflict, disagreement and compromise between individuals and groups about the primary social functions that education should serve, the actual outcome reflecting the degree of political power that one or more of these groups manages to attain.

## Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with elucidating a conceptual connection between democracy and education and to further substantiate the notion that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory. Two traditions of liberal democracy, whose divisions have increased in strength have been identified. Schumpeter describes these two traditions as 'market' and 'moral' conceptions of democracy. 'Moral' conceptions of democracy utilise one general strategy, the use of political activity, for the purposes of public education. Furthermore, an important part of how individuals are developed by the experience of participation teaches them about the nature and importance of community and of their place within it, and gives them a true perspective on the communal aspects of life and how to relate to other individuals and their claims. Participation strengthens the community and the individual's attachment to it.[4] To substantiate the claim that the democratic model of evaluation is an educational form of social theory has demanded a philosophical focus on the ontological foundations of democracy and the development of a complementary conception of social agency and of the social conditions for the development of human powers. What is also required is a theoretical basis to the argument developed here that facilitates the transcendence of the liberal-socialist polarity in order to develop a viable democratic theory. The potentially important contribution of citizenship theory to developing such a theoretical basis to underpin the democratic model of evaluation as an educational form of social theory was noted.

[4] Interpretations are of course always open to challenge while the most defensible and attractive form of democracy is one in which citizens can participate in decision-making in a wide array of spheres (political, economic and social). No one existing model alone provides a satisfactory elucidation of the conditions, features or rationale of this democratic form.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## THE DEMOCRATIC MODEL OF EVALUATION: MORAL CITIZENSHIP

**Introduction**

Having explored in Chapters Two to Six the principal and secondary aims of this thesis, my intention in this concluding chapter is to locate the democratic model of evaluation within the contemporary political and intellectual context. Is this model anachronistic in the 21st Century? Or does it have a place in the new emerging political context, and, if it does, what is its function? Since the emergence over the last thirty years of the democratic model of evaluation, other notions with similar aspirations have also come into currency, such as: citizenship; community; and the 'third way' (Giddens, 1998). What links might there be between these recently emergent concepts and the democratic model of evaluation?

Recent political developments in various parts of the world have promoted renewed attention to social democratic politics as faith in the capacity of society to deliver on the founding principles of democracy has declined. At a time when democracy seemed most triumphant in Eastern and Central Europe, there has been intense dissatisfaction with that liberal democratic world. Since May 1997, 'New Labour' has emerged with its associated concepts of devolution and more scope for local democracy. This would seem to suggest liberal democracy is at a major point of transition. A central question underpinning contemporary political thinking is how the maxim of pluralism can be defended without destroying the framework of the political community? The crucial issue today is how to establish a new political frontier capable of giving a real impulse to democracy. The notion of citizenship provides a form of identification that enables the establishment of a common political identity amongst a plurality of democratic struggles (Mouffe, 1992, p4). This chapter draws in particular on theories of moral citizenship in order to develop a framework to support the resolution of issues cited above that are central to the democratic model of evaluation. These issues include the reconciliation of moral action within a pluralist constituency and transcendence of the traditional liberal democratic polarity between the individual and society. It is pertinent at this point to note that in Chapter One (cf. p17), it was argued that the democratic model of evaluation is both embedded in, and determined by, the contemporary political and intellectual context. The same is true of citizenship theory, the resurgence of community and the emergence of the third way. The following section therefore locates prevalent concern with citizenship, community, and the 'third way' in a recent history of the rise of these trends.

**Citizenship and Community: Evolution Over Three Decades**

As the geographical boundaries of the political community have moved beyond national communities, any dream of citizens actively combining together in the administration of their society begins to seem naive. As we have insisted on extending the rights of participation, we have not only enlarged, but also complicated the citizen body. We have made it far more heterogeneous. By the end of the nineteen eighties, concern about the direction of contemporary politics had given way to fresh consideration of the very essence of liberal democracy leading Held in 1987 to question 'what shall it mean today?'. Writing in the 'Guardian' one year later, Hugo Young comments on the lack of faith the populace has in the democratic system:

> *People ..... have lost faith in the political process. The parties are locked in artificial polarities unable to address the real choices late 20th Century Britain has to make. Politics itself has become a cultural backwater. The state is no longer the sole focus of either political activity or social change. The result is that although politicians can see their societies falling apart, they do not know now to put them back together again.* (my emphasis).
>
> Guardian, March 25, 1988

The realists may have a point (Phillips, 1993, p124). It would seem that it is no longer possible to deliver on the founding principles of democracy: such as active citizenry and participation in the making of the laws. As Shapiro and Kachés-Condon (1999) note:

> *At best we can perhaps say that the democratic ideal lives in adaptive tension with the political realities in most so-called democracies. At worst it proves a misleading gloss for practices that scarcely deserve the name.*
>
> p1

How has this come about? The following section describes the possible reasons for this alleged failure to deliver on the founding principles of democracy.

*Failure to Deliver on Founding Principles*

Democracy emerged through a dual shift - from direct to representative democracy, and from a politics of the common good to a politics of individual protection. Sandel (1980) describes this gradual shift from:

*the public philosophy of common purposes to one of fair procedures, from a politics of good to a politics of rights, from the national republic to the procedural republic'* [my emphasis].

p93

Democracy, according to Sandel, has become less a matter of active citizenship and more a matter of 'fair-dos'. Kelly (1995) makes a similar point. He argues that it is more than two hundred years since Rousseau (The Social Contract, Book IV, Chapter XV) said of the form of democracy as practised in the England of his day:

> *The people of England regards itself as free; but it is grossly mistaken; it is free only during the election of members of parliament. As soon as they are elected slavery overtakes it and it is nothing ..... The use it makes of the short moments of liberty it enjoys shows indeed that it deserves to lose them.*
>
> PXV

Kelly suggests that it would be extremely difficult to argue that the two centuries which have passed since Rousseau made the above comments have witnessed any significant progress from this position. Similarly Phillips (1993) argues:

> *The predominant theme of the twentieth century discussions has been that we must come to terms with reality, that we must abandon the anachronisms of the classical ideals, recognise the limits of democracy, cut our values to the sorry shape of the world.*
>
> p123

If these authors are correct in their observations expectations have been reduced and earlier promises have not been fulfilled. Sartori (1987) makes the case for a quick fix in value management and argues that it is time to bring our ideals more in line with reality.

The following developments over the last three decades, at the social and political level, may be seen as attempts to provide a form of social living conducive to fuller and more meaningful human relationships where something more than fair procedures, rights and mere production and consumption are emphasised. I briefly explore the evolution of these

developments in the order in which they occurred - citizenship, community and the 'third way'.

**1980s: The Rise and Fall of Liberal Democracy: The Emergence of Citizenship?**

In the nineteen-eighties, as noted in Chapter Four, democracy seemed to score an historic victory over alternative forms of governance (Held, 1993, p13). Whilst in Western societies, as indicated above, there was a disillusionment with the principles of liberal democracy; in other continents there was a rush to proclaim a democratic society as a counter to previous totalitarian regimes. Liberal democracy was seen as a safe, if unexciting, alternative to societies sick of experimentation - 'democracy by default' - as some Latin Americans have termed it (Whitehead, 1992, p148).

In Latin America, the nineteen-eighties witnessed one military regime after another handing over power to an elected government. In sub-Saharan Africa, the same years brought a crisis in legitimacy - if not yet in power. For the post colonial one-party states in Southern Africa, there has been an unstoppable impetus towards the democracy of one-person, one-rule. 1989 is commonly regarded as a watershed year: the year when one-party rule crumbled through Central and Eastern Europe when, in one country after another, people mobilised to dismiss the ruling communists from their monopoly of power and to replace them through competitive elections. This was also, of course, the year when the Chinese Communist Party had to resort to brutal suppression of popular demonstration in order to retain its control. Political regimes of all kinds throughout the world claimed to be democracies, as noted elsewhere in this thesis, yet what these regimes say and do is often substantially different (cf. Chapter Four).

*Liberal Democracy: The Agenda of Progress?*

Against this background, some political commentators have proclaimed (by means of a phrase borrowed most notably from Hegel) the 'end of history' - the triumph of the West over all political and economic alternatives' (Fukuyama, 1989). The revolutions which swept across Central and Eastern Europe at the end of 1989 and the beginning of 1990 stimulated an atmosphere of celebration. Liberal democracy was championed as the agent of progress and capitalism as the only viable economic system: ideological conflict, it was said, is being steadily displaced by universal democratic reason and market-orientated thinking. Such historicism has been shown to be unwarranted (Mouffe, 1993, p6) as well as dangerous,

and a study of world history in any case does little to support such a thesis. What we have in the West is not a strong democracy but in fact a fragile one.

Up to the 1930s, there had emerged a sort of uni-linear notion of political progress. The totalitarian horrors, such as the holocaust, caused a revulsion in the Western liberal democracies. Mouffe (1993, p3) for example, quotes Lyotard who declares with pathos that after Auschwitz the project of modernity had been eliminated. The confidence that new orders were better or higher than older ones was gone. Mouffe (1993) makes the case for the continuing fragility of democracy when she argues:

> *Far from being the necessary result of a moral evolution of humankind, democracy is something uncertain and improbable and must never be taken for granted. It is an always fragile conquest that needs to be defended and deepened. There is no threshold of democracy that once reached will guarantee its continued existence ..... It is also endangered by the growing marginalisation of entire groups whose status as an 'underclass' practically put them outside the political community* [my emphasis].
>
> p6

In his notion of the 'sturdy plant' view Giddens (1994, p192) also offers an alternative interpretation of democratisation:

> *The sturdy plant theory suggests that there are profound social changes occurring in the current era that do not occur mainly at the level of the state* [my emphasis].
>
> p192

Such a perspective, however, does not equate democracy solely with liberal democracy at the level of the nation state but indicates a broader sense of democracy at the level of the regional, local, organisational and interpersonal.

In addition to the survival of democracy as the preferred form of government, one of the other key principles of democracy, autonomy, has also witnessed a reinterpretation within the contemporary context. Giddens (1994) sees opportunities for representing one's views and interests in various sectors of social life outside the formal political arena. He says, for example, that there are clear trends towards the replacing of bureaucratic hierarchies by more flexible and decentralised systems of authority, and towards democratising processes that are

tied to institutional reflexivity and clearly exhibit the principle of autonomy. It is often held that a form of liberal democracy is inevitable at the level of the state. A far more plausible conclusion in the late eighties was that, if those new democratic institutions were to survive, they would need to be continuously cherished and protected through the exercise of democratic social practices, such as the democratic model of evaluation.

### *Liberal Democracy: A Major Point of Transition*

Many Societies at the beginning of the twenty-first century are undergoing a deep process of redefinition of their collective identities and experiencing the establishment of new political boundaries. This process has been precipitated by the following three factors. First, as already stated, this redefinition is partly linked to the collapse of communism and the disappearance of the democracy/totalitarian opposition that, since the Second World War, had provided the main political factor discriminating between friend and enemy (Mouffe, 1993, p3). In the West, it is the very identity of democracy which is at stake, insofar as it has depended to a large extent on the existence of the communist 'other' that constituted its negation (cf. p9). Now that the enemy has been defeated, the meaning of democracy itself has become blurred and needs to be reappraised. As Squire (1993) notes:

> *We must ask whether the growing and profound loss of faith in the political system not only in Britain but throughout the West can be adequately addressed by a reappraisal of the liberal democratic model.*
>
> p30

Secondly, within those countries with the longest experience of democracy, public disillusionment with politics and politicians was higher by the end of the nineteen-eighties than at any time since opinion polling began. There was never a 'golden age' (Davenhaver, 1996, p1). But the political class of the advanced democracies lacked the self-confidence even of the nineteen-fifties and nineteen-sixties. Politics sensed that the people were moving from it, but had little idea what to do to reverse the trend (Platt and Smyth, 1994). Finally, there is also a touch of hubris in the idea that, through the natural selection of political economies, market capitalism and liberal democracy have been singled out as fittest to survive (cf. p9).

### *A Shift in Political Debate - The Emergence of the Concept of Citizenship*

Into this context of the populace's disillusionment and apathy with democracy entered the notion of citizenship (Walzer, 1989; Heater, 1990; Oldfield, 1990, Kymlicka and Norman,

1994), resuscitating the democratic political virtues of fraternity, co-operation and participation. This signalled an important shift in political debate, though the concept can be variously interpreted (Oldfield, 1990; Turner, 1992). In 1989, the then Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, gave a speech which celebrated the 'active citizen' as a necessary ingredient in social cohesion, and appealed to a self-help tradition of voluntary service as an alternative to dependence on the state (Phillips, 1993, p75). Sceptics were quick to identify this as a belated recognition that the market cannot meet all our needs and that the gradual dismantling of welfare services was throwing up more problems than it solved. A disturbing explanation was that citizenship was coming to be regarded as a possible source of cures for malaise besetting modern society: *'Something is rotten in the state of Britain, and all the parties know it.... The buzz-word emerging as the salutation for this disease is something called citizenship'*, as Young noted in the 'Guardian' on 1 September 1988.

Other conceptions of citizenship came from writers positioned to the Left of the Conservative Party. Most notable among these were Marquand (1988) and Plant (1988). In their concepts of citizenship, Marquand (1988) and Plant (1988) refer us back to a rather grander tradition of civic republicanism which viewed political activity as the highest form of happiness and considered it in opposition to 'merely' social concerns. In this view, citizenship recovers the dimension of active participation that is held in the classical republican tradition. A tradition of thought is being tapped which originates in ancient Greece and is encapsulated in Aristotle's famous statement that 'man is by nature a political animal' (Aristotle, trans. T. A. Sinclair, 1981).[1]

More recently Oldfield (1990) has explained what he meant by moral citizenship. In his discussion of the topic he explores what it is that autonomous individuals do when they act as citizens. According to Oldfield, (1990, p26) they make judgements about their identity and about the common purposes they wish to pursue: *the spirit of autonomous beings making judgements in concord. It is this which constitutes citizenship* (my emphasis). In doing so, they identify themselves as members of this political community rather than any other. In this concept of citizenship there is clearly a recognition of a moral dimension (Oldfield,

[1] Citizenship was temporarily almost lost as a political concept following the collapse of the Roman Empire (Heater, 1990). It was revived in the medieval city-states of northern and central Italy, most famously in France. Indeed Machiavelli (1459-1529) is a key figure in the origination of 'civic republicanism' or 'civic humanism' which is important in transmitting citizenship theory to the modern world (Pocock, 1975; Oldfield, 1990). Toqueville (1968) is important also in 'Democracy in American' first published in 1835 and 1940, Toqueville suggests civic republicanism is of key significance in the American political tradition. Modern citizenship theory also draws inspiration from the work of Arendt (1958); Wolin (1960) and Oakeshott (1975).

1990; Table 7.1 (p124)). Oldfield (1990, p20) is drawing on the Aristotelian notion of 'concord' when he suggests: '*It is friendship which motivates the actions of the autonomous individual and which creates citizens.*'[2] Citizenship defined as a moral activity, propels us towards an ideal of transcendence, a greater collectivity in which we think in more general terms. The significance of this for a theory of liberal democracy lies in the way it overcomes key defects in mainstream liberal individualism. These key defects include an emphasis on an individualism that is divorced from any collective, democratic responsibility; on competetivism rather than co-operation; on market forces rather than social policies as solutions to social problems. Such an approach leads society away from democracy as well as away from any concept of citizenship (cf. Chapter Five).

There are several reasons why citizenship theory has come to prominence at this point in time. Firstly, citizenship theory is important in directing attention away from individual and group self-interest and towards the common good, in essence, a reversal of the trend identified by Sandel (1980) and noted above. This is not only desirable in itself. It also brings coherence and sense to the idea of individuals acting together as a people which must be central to any democratic theory and with which the liberal individualism of mainstream democratic theory has such difficulty (Holder, 1993) (cf. Chapter Five, pp80-88).

Secondly, one of the messages citizenship theory sends out is that, despite Ignatieff's (1984) claim (cf. Chapter Five, p85), political rights and freedoms matter: citizens need guarantees of their civil and political liberties. This view reverses much socialist thought (Phillips, 1993, p38). For a variety of reasons (many of them good), socialists have been wary of attaching undue significance to the political realm, and have stressed the prior importance of economic and social relations. Political equality can accommodate itself all too easily to structural inequalities in the distribution of wealth and power and yet these systematically undermine any formal equality in rights. The problem is that socialists then become too dismissive of the 'merely' political, tending to blur the distinction between democracy and dictatorship until the difference virtually disappears (Phillips, 1993, p38) (cf. Chapter Five, p87). The new emphasis on citizenship is a deliberate attempt to readdress this situation.

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[2] Oldfield (1990) draws on Aristotle's discussion of friendship in Books VIII and IX of the Nicomachean Ethics. Friendship, Aristotle remarks in Book VIII of the 'Ethics': *'Seems to be the bond that hold communities together, and lawgivers seem to attach more importance to it than justice ..... but people who are just still need the quality of friendship and indeed friendliness is considered to be justice in the fullest sense.'* Crucial to Aristotle's account of friendship is the idea that our friends help us to lead better lives through sharing with us the commitment to certain goods.

A third reason why citizenship theory has come to prominence is found in the extensive changes which have been occurring in the social fabrics of Western societies. Rapid technological development and the advent of consumerism have brought changes in the material circumstances of our lives and our values.

Fourthly, there has been a massive intellectual shift from modernism to post modernism. As Gilbert (1992) notes:

> *[there has been] major cultural reorientation, known by its protagonists as post modernism, which is said to have wide-ranging implications for knowledge, politics and individual identities.*
>
> p5

The above change has raised important questions concerning the role of the citizen and his/her relationship to the community, about individual and social values and their inter-relationship and has given rise to a revival of democratic ideas and campaigns. These include: a growing disquiet over the arrogance of government and infringement of individual liberties; significantly, higher levels of popular concern and popular legitimacy for reforms of the electoral system, for abolition of a hereditary House of Lords (achieved in November 1999) and for the introduction of a Bill of Rights (Phillips, 1993, p127). The idea of citizenship reflected in such actions, it could be argued, is an antidote to the political apathy Zola (1993, p254) earlier described as the 'democratic melancholy'.

**Table 7.1: Definitions of Types of Citizenship**

| Type of Citizenship | Defining Issues |
|---|---|
| Citizenship as Entitlement | The issue has been how the material or prosperity can be more equitably distributed, in recognition of the dignity of human life. |
| Citizenship as Need | The issue has been how to provide people with the resources thought to be necessary for effective human agency. |
| Citizenship as Admission | The issue has been how groups suffering prejudice against some kind of social stigma can have the stigma removed and be admitted to the human world that everyone also lives in. |
| Citizenship as Self-Government | The question has been how to widen the opportunities for popular participation in political life. |
| Citizenship as a Moral Bond Between Autonomous Individuals[3] | The issue is that a particular form of moral bond must exist between autonomous individuals before they become citizens. This bond is identified by Aristotle as 'concord' or that form of citizenship which is appropriate to citizens. It is this bond which motivates individuals to perform the duties of citizenship. Autonomous individuals when they act as citizens make judgements about their identity and about the common purposes they wish to pursue. In doing so, they identify themselves as members of this political community rather than any other. This is the definition advocated by Oldfield. |

Adapted from Oldfield (1990)

[3] Oldfield (1990, p20) argues that a particular form of moral bond must exist between autonomous individuals before they become citizens (Table 7.1, p124). A moral conception of citizenship draws on Dewey's (1937) work (cf. Chapter Two, pp64-65). In essence, the view that democracy does more for us than just enable us to pursue our individual choices more successfully since we enjoy the co-operation of our fellows (cf. Chapter Five).

### 1990s: The Need to Fill a Socio-Political Void: The Re-Emergence of Community

Some commentators have also suggested that the political apathy of the early nineteen-nineties can be redressed by a re-emergence of the concept of community (Pahl and Spencer, 1997; Fielding, 1998). The concept of community has of course been around for some time (cf. Chapter Five, p85). During the nineteen-seventies, demands for a more co-operative and participatory mode of existence were beginning to be made in all spheres of life. Such attempts are evident in the thoughts of political analysts such as Pateman (1970); Kanter (1972) and Plant (1974). In these works generally, one finds the emphasis is on improving the quality of life for the individual in terms of more satisfactory relationships with others. Plant draws our attention to the notion of the 'functional community', which attempts to assimilate the values of individuality such as autonomy, independence and freedom within a more communal form of living, encompassing the values of fraternity, co-operation and participation. These values are, of course, central to the democratic model of evaluation as it emerged in the late nineteen-seventies and early nineteen-eighties (cf. Chapter Five, p84).

During the nineteen-nineties, community acquired a greater urgency. All the major political parties made attempts to appropriate the idea of community (Blake et al, 1998). Blake et al. (1998) suggest that this was a reaction to the effects of the free market capitalism, initiated by the Governments of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, during the nineteen eighties. The above commentators have suggested that with the political tiredness that ensued from eighteen years of Thatcherism, community seemed like an idea whose time had come. This analysis, however, might be too crude. There was possibly a dimly perceived notion by some on the Right that, in their thinking about democracy, there was a need for something of an antidote to their thorough-going individualism. However, this interest was not confined to the Right, as Marquand (1988) and Plant (1988) demonstrate. Other writers, such as Miller (1989), Tamir (1992), and White (1996), argue that the political arrangements that social democracy favours presuppose that citizens be bonded together not only by ethical and political principles but also as members of a community in which the fate of each matters to each. Only by fellow-feeling for the people will the rich have a motive for accepting redistributive politics. The central question is how can this sense of community be achieved in the context of the global heterogeneity? In the view of several contemporary theorists of political thought, the strongly linked concepts of both 'citizenship', 'community' and the 'third way' provide a 'solution' (Giddens, 1998).

**The Late 1990s: The Emergence of 'Third Way' Politics**

Since the election of the labour administration in May 1997, the idea of finding a 'third way' in politics has been widely discussed. In his book, The Third Way: The Renewal of Democracy (1998), Giddens argues that developing a 'third way' represents the renewal of social democracy in a world where the views of the old left have become obsolete; while those of the new right are inadequate and contradictory. The 'third way' programme promotes an active civil society; renewal of the public sphere - transparency and equality as inclusion (Giddens 1998 p70). 'Third Way' values embrace: equality; protection of the vulnerable; freedom as authority; no rights without responsibility and no authority without democracy (Giddens 1998 p66). Giddens suggests:

> *Rather than see ours as an age of moral decay ..... it makes sense to see it as an age of moral transition ..... The theme of responsibility, or mutual obligation was there in old-style social democracy but was largely dormant, since it was submerged within the concept of collective provision. We have to find a new balance between individual and collective responsibilities today.*
>
> pp36-37

According to Giddens, a social democratic agenda is emerging which facilitates transcendence of the individual-social polarity and resonates with the concepts of citizenship and community. These concepts also resonate with some of the key concepts of democratic evaluation. In the final section of this chapter, I take a closer look at this relationship.

**Implications for the Democratic Model of Evaluation**

It was noted in Chapter One that the democratic model of evaluation evolved out of the socio-political consensus of the nineteen seventies (cf. pp25-26). It was also suggested that the change in the socio-political context during the nineteen-eighties and early nineties, contributed to the difficulty in fully realising many of its principles in practice and the relative lack of adaptation of the model to government-funded contracts. Part of the reason for this may have related to the challenge of the model in advocating equalising procedures in a policy context where policy-makers are not accustomed to having their policies challenged. A second and concomitant reason may have been the appeal of traditional models, and the outcomes they generate, to central governments in an increasingly centralised managerialist context. Certainly at the local level, the democratic model and its

procedures were widely used in the nineteen-eighties and nineteen-nineties and are still prevalent at this level today.

The above recent history of the changing socio/political context contributes further to our understanding of the factors that have contributed to the rise and relative decline of the democratic model of evaluation in the nineteen-seventies. As economic constraints and the demand for accountability intensified in the late eighties and nineties, central agencies found objectives/outcome models of evaluation more useful (or less threatening perhaps) in meeting their needs. In essence the dominance of free market capitalism in the nineteen-eighties was incongruent with principles, such as reciprocity and the emancipatory potential of relationships embodied in the democratic model. These principles, as I have already argued, articulate with the ascendant political climate of 'third way' politics and moral conceptions of democracy (cf. Chapter Six). While they may not have resonated with the political climate of the nineteen-eighties, in the late nineteen-nineties and the new millenium it could be argued they fit rather well and are consonant with the emerging moral conception of citizenship.

**The Democratic Model of Evaluation: Moral Conceptions of Citizenship**

The democratic model as outlined by MacDonald (1980, p1) is implicitly located within moral conceptions of democracy (cf. Chapter Six). His definition of liberal democracy also suggests a belief in the moral potential of the individual. This is congruent with the ascendant political climate outlined by Giddens (1998) and concurs with citizenship defined as a moral bond between autonomous individuals, as explored in the previous section.

Two other central concepts within democracy, and issues that need to be reconciled within democratic evaluation are moral action within a plural constituency and the transcendence of the traditional liberal democratic polarity between the individual and the community.

*Reconciliation of Moral Action Within a Plural Constituency*

The democratic model of evaluation connects with moral citizenship in three particular ways:

Firstly, the concept of moral citizenship with its emphasis on a form of moral bond or 'concord' links very closely to Simons' interpretation of the democratic model of evaluation. Simons frequently writes about the School as a community of professionals working together

to evaluate a policy issue on behalf of the school as a whole (Simons, 1987, pp53-4) (cf. Chapter Five, p88). Notions such as collective democratic responsibility, co-operation and facilitating democratic debate as a contribution to the development of social policy are central to the democratic model of evaluation.

Secondly, in its recognition of value pluralism and brokerage of different interests through the sharing of information, the democratic model of evaluation aims at further dialogue and debate (MacDonald, 1974, p15). Such an aspiration is in keeping with classical conceptions of democracy, a process which is educative in itself.

Thirdly, the democratic model, by not being co-opted to any interest group (MacDonald, Ibid.), takes on the responsibility of nurturing the relationship between individual and community towards participatory democracy. Once again this is similar to a moral theory of citizenship facilitating the reconciliation of moral action within a plural constituency.

*Reconciliation of Individual-Society Polarity*

In examining the individual-society polarity we can again see links between the democratic model of evaluation and moral citizenship theory. Simons' account of the principles underpinning the democratic model, particularly the model's emphasis on community, respect for persons and the emancipatory potential of relationships or friendships, concurs with concepts that are central to citizenship conceptualised as a moral bond which, as argued in the previous section, facilitates the transcendence of individual-society polarity. For example:

> *In endorsing the democratic model, this can be seen to favour a view of curriculum development based on community, diversity and relationships of mutual accountability. Fairness, reasonableness and respect for persons are root values within such a view. Clearly the rhetoric of liberal democracy embodies these root values.* (my emphasis).
>
> Simons (1987), p53

In the above quotation, Simons makes explicit the basic principles underpinning the democratic model including community and respect for persons. Elsewhere, Simons (ibid.) emphasises the importance of relationships or friendship in the Aristotelian sense:

> *I seek to establish and sustain educative relationships through evaluation ..... I take an educational view of evaluative inquiry. I believe that the cultivation of such relationships has an important contribution to the social transformation of our society and thereby to social justice* (my emphasis).
>
> p185

Through the development of relationships based on the procedures that are explained in the democratic model of evaluation, the individual-society polarity is transcended. The democratic model recognises that individual and collective development take place within the context of a 'community'. The ontological perspective which facilitates personal development which underpins the democratic model of evaluation is individuals-in-relations. This reflects a transformative perspective of social relations (cf. Chapter Five, p87) and is both key to the democratic model of evaluation and moral theory of citizenship.

The following section explores the link between the nature of education embedded in the democratic model of evaluation, and moral citizenship. This draws on the argument developed throughout this thesis, that democratic evaluators see their business as being to facilitate dialogue. It will be argued that politics is conceptualised as an educative process and that the democratic model of evaluation facilitates participation in this process.

### *Dialogue and Dialogic Relationships*

It was indicated earlier in this chapter that the theory of moral citizenship facilitates the reconciliation of moral action within a plural constituency by providing a framework that facilitates dialogue. So too does the model of democratic evaluation, where the evaluator is conceived as the 'broker of information' to facilitate dialogue between different interest groups. The notion of dialogue being central to a democracy was noted by Peters (1966, p299) over thirty years ago, when he wrote:

> *the Anglo-American version of the democratic 'way of life' ... amounts to the determination to settle political matters by recourse to reasonable discussion rather than by force or arbitrary fact* (my emphasis).
>
> p299

Similarly, the democratic model of evaluation, as outlined by Simons (1987), attaches great importance to the notion of reasonableness. She writes:

*'Reasonableness' ... [is] ... the other side of the 'democratic' coin, ..... so my question is, with respect to the case 'What is reasonable?' ..... What is reasonable, at this time, in this place, in these circumstances, with regard to all relevant considerations?*

p172

In writings as ancient as Aristotle, as contemporary as Gadamer, Habermas and Arendt, as secular as Dewey, as religious as Aquinas, one finds strong support for the contention that the survival of a pluralistic democracy requires a belief that mutual understanding among diverse parties can be achieved. Political participation itself increases people's confidence in their ability to participate efficiently and meaningfully in politics: participation increases their sense of 'political efficacy'.

A number of philosophers now also see reason, dialogue and communication as essential features of genuine participation (Putnam, 1981; Habermas, 1984; Lyotard, 1988). Dialogic rationality reconstructs reason as dialogue and connects reason with interaction between people (cf. Chapter One, Table 1.4, p32; Myerson, 1994).

At its simplest, such interdependence implies that what one individual thinks as reasonable may be modified in a dialogue with others, modified towards a different view, or subject to compromise. Dialogic rationalism is sympathetic to democratic reason. No single movement embodies dialogic rationalism, nor any single discipline or text. Dialogic rationality is not advanced by any particular philosophical school or tradition. It is an idea emerging in different places, an idea of relating reason and dialogue. Diverse commentators, such as those referred to above, have contributed to the emergence of a concept of dialogic rationality which has many aims. These include:

- Defending reason as an essential requirement for democratic progress;
- Applying a dialogic principle: reason is good dialogue;
- Showing that understanding reason means interpreting rational dialogue. A search for good dialogue makes argument central, for different ideas impinge on each other at the heart of reason;
- Promoting rational disagreement as the path to a good society and to make a good society sustainable.

The democratic model of evaluation through its principled procedure for the acquisition and sharing of knowledge facilitates dialogic relationships. The dialogic form of reasoning also has profound ethical, and social implications for democratic evaluators. It could be argued that a democratic approach to evaluation faces up to the fact of differences in our moral ideals by looking towards democratic dialogue not only as a means of reconciling these, but also as an integral component of democratic evaluation as an educational form of social theory. The process of dialogic rationality has two further features that unite moral citizenship and the democratic model of evaluation. First, the importance of relationships through which democratic rationality is sustained avoids the individual/social polarity. Secondly, the process also exemplifies or facilitates the process of evaluation embedded in the democratic model. This again justifies the premise that the democratic model is an educational form of social theory.

In conclusion as indicated at several points in this thesis, concepts are historically and socio-politically located. The recent emergence of the notions of dialogical rationality and deliberative democracy (Cohen, 1989; Dryzek, 1990) provides the democratic model of evaluation with a context which is congruent with its aspirations. That this opportunity is not confined to the UK can be seen in the recent publication of a book on deliberative democratic evaluation by House and Howe (1999). It would indeed seem that the democratic model of evaluation is a model whose time has come.

## Appendices

Appendix 1

**What is to Count as Rule by the People?**

**'The People'**

- Who are considered 'the people'?
- What kind of participation is envisaged for them?
- What conditions are assumed to be conducive to participation?
- Can the disincentives and incentives, or costs and benefits of participation be equal?

**The idea of 'rule' evokes a plethora of issues:**

- How broadly or narrowly is the scope of rule to be construed?
- Or, what is the appropriate field of democratic activity?
- If 'rule' is to cover 'the political' what is meant by this?
- Does it cover
  - (a) law and order?
  - (b) relations between states?
  - (c) the economy
  - (d) the domestic or private sphere
- Does 'rule by' entail obligation to obey?
- Must the rule by 'the People' be obeyed?
- What is the place of obligation and dissent?
- What mechanisms are created for those who are avowedly and actively 'non-participants'?

Under what circumstances, if any, are democracies entitled to resort to coercion against some of their own people or against those outside the sphere of legitimate work?

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