Week 6 Activity #1: Discussing the Ernest House Article on Blowback in Evaluation (Ahmed to Lee)

For this class discussion, carefully ready the article by Ernest House. After having read it, post three short paragraphs that address each of these questions:

- What is House saying are the risks to randomized controlled drug trials in the USA?
- In your view, is what he is saying accurate?
- Based on what he says and your own understanding, how would you suggest that the problems he identifies, be fixed?

To respond to the second question spend some time on the Internet looking at the issue of whether drug trials are biased or not. Bring your findings into our discussion in your responses to the second question. Make your words count in your postings. Get to the essence of the issues that are included in each question.

Posting your responses to the above questions by 11:59 pm Tuesday. The discussion will continue until Friday.

Visible groups Group B

This forum requires group membership

Unit 3 Content Continued

Readings

Required

- Text - McDavid, J. C., Huse, I. and Hawthorn, L. R. L. (2012). Chapter 3: Research Designs for Program Evaluations
- House, E. (2008). Blowback: Consequences of Evaluation for Evaluation. *American Journal of Evaluation*, Volume 29 (4), pp. 416-426.

PowerPoints

- Quasi experimental designs (PowerPoint)
- Quasi experimental designs (Audio presentation)

Notes

This is the third week we spend on research design issues. In Week 6, we have one online activity planned - a discussion of an article by Ernest House in which he challenges the uses of Randomized Controlled Trials particularly in drug-testing evaluations. Randomized controlled trials for new drugs are widely considered to be the gold standard in assessing the effectiveness of drugs before they are approved for marketing. In the USA and in Canada, drug research is a high-stakes business and as you will see, it is substantially funded by drug companies.

House writes his article from a personal point of view but his observations on how drug trails are conducted in the USA are applicable to situations here in Canada. Here is one example of the consequences to a researcher who challenged a drug company over her right to publish findings that differed from what the company would have wanted published: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nancy_Fern_Olivieri

Activities

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