New TIG: *Theories of Evaluation*

DEBORAH FOURNIER

At the 1992 San Francisco meeting of the American Educational Research Association TIG, *Research on Evaluation*, a discussion ensued among its members, many of whom are also members of AEA, as to the organization of a Topical Interest Group within AEA that would focus on evaluation theory. Thus, a new TIG is currently being organized: *Theories of Evaluation*.

This TIG-in formation will hold its first business meeting at AEA's upcoming annual conference in Seattle, Washington. The initial meeting will focus on signing up members, electing officers, and discussing future activities and direction. A panel presentation entitled, *Forum on Recent Advances and Persistent Problems in Evaluation Theory*, will precede the meeting.

The purpose of the TIG is to encourage and support the development, critique, and application of theoretical aspects of evaluation practice and research, with the intent of extending our knowledge, challenging practice, and establishing a more comprehensive theoretical foundation for evaluation. Over the years, much attention in evaluation has been on methodology with less on the theoretical aspects that inform the methods employed in practice. Simply, theory of evaluation is the logic and reasoning, and methods are the tools; both are needed for successful, conscientious practice and research.

This TIG should not be confused with the existing TIG on *Program Theory and Theory-Driven Evaluation*, in which theory-driven evaluation uses existing theory (e.g., self-concept in high-risk students) from diverse disciplines to guide evaluation. Rather, this TIG is focused on theories of evaluation.