

## ‘Health and Volunteering’

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**Tuesday 10 February 2015 , 4 - 5pm, Queens Building, Room 01.09 (NEAT)**

### Seminar Presentation

The topic of this lecture is the intricate interaction between health and volunteering, which affect each other over time in any individual's lifetime. Healthy people are more likely to do *formal* volunteering such as through a voluntary organisation than are sick, injured, or handicapped people. People in very poor health, such as those who are housebound, in hospital or long term care, rarely engage in any formal volunteering ("FV"). When the health of a usually healthy person declines, FV similarly declines or ceases, but can often recover to former levels if health improves markedly. People reduce or stop volunteering in old age as their health declines, but not by age alone. Formal Volunteering can itself bring a variety of positive effects on individual physical and mental health, as demonstrated in long-term, longitudinal/panel studies done over several years on large samples of the same individuals. Although usually healthier on average to begin with, people who do FV tend to remain healthier than similar *non*-volunteers. When people active in FV get sick, injured, or even permanently disabled, they tend to recover (some or all of) their health more quickly and fully than comparable non-volunteers. Most importantly, Formal Volunteering significantly prolongs life. Taking a sample of formal volunteers and non-volunteers at nearly any age, the volunteers on average are more likely to be alive 5-10 years later---not just for the elderly, but especially for the volunteers. WHY? Come to the lecture and find out.

### Brief Biography

David Horton Smith is an international interdisciplinary scholar who gained his Ph.D in Sociology at Harvard University. He was Professor of Sociology at the university of Boston College (1968–2004) Massachusetts and is now a Professor Emeritus and actively engaged in research, writing, and organizing in the nonprofit sector/civil society field. He co-founded of the organized field of Nonprofit Sector/Civil Society Studies, the first President of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action/ARNOVA the first and largest international association of civil society researchers. He was founding Editor of the Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly/NVSQ, the world's first academic journal in the field. He has since founded other international researcher organisations concerned with the voluntary sector/civil society studies, collaborating with founders of different national civil society/ nonprofit sector researcher associations (now more than 20 in the world).

Smith received the ARNOVA Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Contribution to Nonprofit and Voluntary Action Research in 1993. He has made major contributions to the field, including conceptualising the voluntary sector, distinguishing between volunteer-run and paid-staff organization subsectors of the nonprofit sector, developing the interdisciplinary ISSTAL Model for explaining individual volunteer participation, and evidencing the major social importance of grassroots (local, volunteer-run) associations worldwide. He has highlighted the lack of research on the "dark side" of deviance and incivility in and by nonprofit groups. His publications include:

Smith, D. H. (2009). *Imperfections: The dark side of goodness in the angelic nonprofit sector*. Bradenton, FL: David Horton Smith International.

Smith, D. H., Stebbins, R. A. & Dover, M. (2006). *A dictionary of nonprofit terms and concepts*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Cross-References: ▶ARNOVA ▶ Civil Society, Definitions and Approaches ▶ Grassroots Associations ▶ Membership and Membership Associations ▶ National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy ▶ The Commission on Private Philanthropy and Public Needs (The Filer Commission) ▶ Uncivil Society ▶ Volunteers

**Free. All welcome. No need to book.**

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**Contact Sally Beet: 01603 591212 or email: [Sally.Beet@uea.ac.uk](mailto:Sally.Beet@uea.ac.uk)**

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