

PURPOSE STATEMENT:

ARNOVA SECTION ON VALUES, RELIGION, ALTRUISM

AND DRAWBACKS ("VRAD" Section = "VRADS")

(9/2/2008--Slight Name/Content  
Revision of Brief Version used in Formation-Petition)

The central purpose of the proposed new ARNOVA VRAD Section is to give a "social structural home" within the larger organization for those members who have a strong interest in studying and understanding the role in any given nation or in the larger global society and especially in the global Voluntary/Nonprofit/Third/Civil-Society Sector ("VNPS" as a shortened abbreviation) of one or more of the related issues within its name---Values, Religion, Altruism, and the Drawbacks of the VNPS, defined and described in more detail in the full version of this document. **THE MOST CENTRAL UNIFYING THEME OF THE PROPOSED ARNOVA VRAD SECTION IS THE VALUES SPECTRUM FROM POSITIVE TO NEGATIVE AS APPLIED TO PHENOMENA IN THE VNPS IN ANY GIVEN NATION AND WORLDWIDE THROUGH PAST HISTORY AND THE PRESENT TIME, OFTEN ROOTED IN RELIGION AND RELIGIOUS ETHICS/MORALITY OF SOME KIND.**

Some of us like to refer to the "Drawbacks" of the VNPS as the "Dark Side of the VNPS." The latter phenomena can range from minor fraud or embezzlement in conventional nonprofit organizations to fundamentally deviant nonprofit groups with a global impact (over 30 million deaths) like the German Nazi Party from 1921-1945, initially a revolutionary, nonprofit, political party.

We see these four major themes or topics of study as clearly related to each other in important, overlapping ways, without being identical. We propose to foster and disseminate interdisciplinary, scholarly study of such issues within ARNOVA in a more concentrated way than has heretofore been the case, in the prior absence of a Section focused centrally on these matters. We believe that these issues are both interrelated in fundamental ways and also central to the VNPS as a whole.

We further believe that the more positive, humanitarian, and public interest/general-welfare-oriented aspects of these issues and phenomena are the reason why nonprofit groups, associations, and organizations all over the world are usually granted tax-exempt status by national and sub-national (e.g., state/provincial) governments. We also believe that, for the VNPS to survive, let alone to grow and be increasingly effective, much more attention needs to be paid both by VNPS researchers and VNPS leaders/managers/consultants to issues dealing (a) with VNPS values of all kinds, from positive to negative in perceived effects, keeping the full variety of socio-cultural contexts and stakeholders in mind, (b) with deviance or variation (including principled system-challenge) from such VNPS values and related norms that is perceived

to be present or that would be so-labeled if generally known, rather than kept secret, and (c) with VNPS accountability and self-regulation vs. government regulation as an increasingly salient issue.