

David J. Ekerdt

Dave Ekerdt's career in sociology and gerontology has taken place primarily in two settings: a research institute in Boston and the University of Kansas (Medical Center and Lawrence). The former was an epidemiological panel study of aging in 2,200 men and their wives. Here he began his funded studies of the retirement process; its effects on health, well-being, and marital relationships; and behavioral expectations for later life. His paper about the "busy ethic" for retirement has been cited over 500 times. In this period, he had appointments at the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and the Boston University School of Public Health.

At both KU campuses, he has led interdisciplinary units devoted to research and training in aging. After joining the Sociology Department, his research interest extended to another transition of later life—residential relocation and the way that people manage their lifelong accumulation of material when they can no longer accommodate it. Drawing on interviews and national survey methods, findings from this collaborative research appear in the new book *Downsizing: Confronting Our Possessions in Later Life* (Columbia University Press). In recent years he has joined an international team of social scientists who are comparing older adults' conceptions of aging, time, and the future in five nations. The supposition is that differing welfare-state regimes will shape elders' imagination of and plans for the future.

Dave has had leadership positions in the Gerontological Society of America (GSA), the American Sociological Association, and the American Society on Aging. He has led grant review panels at NIH, edited a leading journal in gerontology, and led the creation of a four-volume encyclopedia on aging. He served as 2018 President of the GSA, the nation's oldest and largest interdisciplinary society for research, education, and practice in the field of aging whose members come from more than 50 countries.