

ARNOVA

Presents the

2024 Outstanding Article in Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly (NVSQ)

to

Claire Dunning

for

*“No Strings Attached: Philanthropy, Race, and Donor Control from Black Power
to Black Lives Matter”*

The article appeared in Volume 52, Issue 1 and, while strong all-round, committee members particularly appreciated the novel methodology and timely research question.

Drawing on archival collections, the article takes an historical moment of crisis, reflection and experimentation in philanthropy from the late 1960s to ask serious questions about power hierarchies and racial justice today, in the immediate aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and the murder of George Floyd. As the author points out, the research presented is extreme rather than representative in nature insofar as the examined “cases” formed as “a racially conscious experiment in philanthropy that sought to upend mutually reinforcing hierarchies of White over Black, wealthy over poor, and funder over grantee.” Even in these circumstances, the results were mixed with Dunning concluding that “the notion of “no strings attached” giving is relative, shaped by positioning and identity, especially racial identity, that produce multiple understandings of the material and abstract “strings” of philanthropic giving.”

In short, Dunning takes up recent calls from NVSQ for scholars to ask bold questions, and advance the development of “big ideas” – and sometimes uncomfortable conversations – that challenge long-held assumptions, breakdown old categories and enable us to come to issues in new ways. Congratulations.