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RE: Grant Completion Report
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In April of 2011, I received a Summer Faculty Research Grant for my project, "The (New) Indian Intelligentsia: Archie Phinney, Native Americans and Transnational Modernism, 1930 to the Cold War." In the grant proposal I submitted, I agreed to draft and submit an article to a peer-reviewed journal based on the primary research done the previous winter in the National Archives, Pacific Northwest Region on the life, political commitments and historical context of Nez Perce anthropologist Archie Phinney. I also agreed to organize and present a panel on the influence of internationalist social movements on theories and practices of racial identity for the 2011 American Studies Association Annual Meeting held in Baltimore. While it remains to be seen if the article will be accepted, both tasks – the submission of an article and the creation of a panel were successfully completed. I submitted an article drafted over the summer with the help of the grant, entitled "Travels of an American Indian into the Hinterlands of Soviet Russia: Native Americans and Transnational Socialism in the Work of Archie Phinney and D'Arcy McNickle" to American Quarterly this past fall, and it is now currently under review by outside readers. I also organized a panel with three other scholars entitled "Transformation Across Diasporas: Re-centering the International Left in the Global Racial Imaginary," which presented at the 2011 ASA Annual Meeting in November. In addition to organizing the panel and drafting the submission, I also presented a paper on the panel entitled "Travels of an American Indian into the Hinterlands of Soviet Russia: Archie Phinney, the Global Left, and Native American Identity at Mid-Century." Both the panel proposal and the submitted article are attached.
Session Title:
Transformation Across Diasporas: Re-centering the International Left in the Global Racial Imaginary

Session Abstract:
In his memoir *I Wonder as I Wander*, Langston Hughes locates the meaning of his own black subjectivity in Soviet Central Asia: he writes that his respect for the region's cultural and economic development comes from seeing the world "through Negro eyes." Hughes’s ocular metaphor links a black diasporic imagination with a Russian colony’s post-revolution, progressive consciousness, compelling a reevaluation of the relationships among black internationalism, ethnic diasporas, anti-colonialism, and global socialism. Rather than see these as separate cultural and intellectual streams in the 20th century, Hughes envisions them as co-constitutive, fused together by both acts of literary imagination and transformative political practice.

For many writers of the color in the first half of the 20th century, international socialism became a critical lens through which formations of race and ethnic nationalism were refashioned. While the recent upsurge of scholarship on black internationalism between the 1920s and 1950s has done much to shift black political consciousness away from Harlem and Paris to the colonial world, less attention has been placed on the way in which a transnational multi-ethnic left fostered a uniquely *racial* formation of the global divide. Rather than look at a black imaginary emergent within an exclusively African diaspora, this panel will examine racial identities formulated *across* diasporas and colonial dislocations.

This panel’s combination of papers elaborate a global, multi-ethnic frame through which four activist writers paradoxically developed their own racial nationalism. In the first paper, "An Eurasian Disciple of the Harlem Renaissance: The Life and Work of Cedric Dover," Ani Mukherji considers a writer whose anti-colonial writings allow us to reimagine racial identity as politically constructed by cross-racial exchange and international migration. Dover encourages South Asians to embrace the New Negro’s racial pride and anti-colonialism in a transformative expansion of Afro-Asian solidarity. In "Travels of an American Indian into the Hinterlands of Soviet Russia: Native Americans and Transnational Socialism in the Work of Archie Phinney and D'Arcy McNickle," Balthaser examines archival documents attesting to the presence of Native activists in the Communist Party as a way to compare 1930s struggles for Native sovereignty in a comparative ethnic context, centered around Richard Wright's debates about socialism and anti-colonial ethnic nationalism. The final paper, “Claudia Jones’s Ellis Island Detention Jeremiads: Diasporic Imaginings of a ‘More Perfect Union,’” mines the Trinidadian-born Communist Party leader’s writings prior to her 1955 deportation under the McCarran Act. As a member of what she called a “virtual U.N.” jailed on political and racial grounds at Ellis Island, her internationalist feminism locates the body of a woman at the center of a racial diaspora.
Together, these papers demonstrate the range among members of United States’ racial, ethnic and colonial diaspora and their varied engagement with international socialism. Together these works suggest that "diaspora" needs to be a read as term emerging within a particular political context, framed by multi-ethnic anti-colonialist and socialist practices, offering a more nuanced understanding of the intersections among the Harlem Renaissance, the Popular Front, and the Cold War.