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LIS 450 IBL
Proposal for Marshall Islands Project

After reading about the chronology of events following the nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands I discovered several facets that intrigue me. During the ten year period of testing involving 66 nuclear tests the people of Enewatak, Rongelap, Wotho, Bikini, and Utrik were moved from their atolls to surrounding atolls some several hundreds of miles away. I know just moving from Chicago to Champaign was a cultural shift for me. I can't imagine the impact on the Marshallese culture as they were moved and re-moved among their islands and the impact on the receiving atolls.

I'm really interested in the cultural issues that the constant relocation of the islanders has had on various aspects of the atolls. Over the course of ten years there were numerous relocations among residents on the atolls. I believe that this would create several forms of population dynamics that would impact societal issues, resident relations, and educational concerns.

Now, these impacts may not be as evident today since 40 plus years has past and the island cultures may have congealed a bit more (possibly due to the constant migration). That will be one

Possible foci (and guiding questions) include but are not limited to:

- Educational impacts
 - The 2 high schools are located far from one another – has this been an issue since the relocation?
 - Size of schools. Was/is this an issue? How do the physical size of schools and populations interact?
 - Communication between schools. How is this accomplished? Improved? Impacted by school populations?
- Social impacts
 - People that were on atolls that were evacuated were relocated to other populated islands. Were they viewed differently by the indigenous population?
 - Are/were there any custom and language differences and similarities? Have their traditions changed from additional cultural influences?
- Population dynamics and physical resources
 - How did the influx of people impact resource availability on the atolls?
 - Notably, the availability and acquisition of food.
 - Had the islanders that were moved visited the other atolls?
 - What happened during repopulation when islanders discovered islands that may have had diminished or destroyed resources?
 - Communication. How is communication conducted between and among islands? How has communication changed due to population shifts?

- Current emigration issues may be related to this shifting and moving of populations?
- Families split among other atolls. Is this largely due to the emigration during the time of testing? How does this affect the family dynamic compared to that which existed 50 years ago?

These foci may mesh with others especially in the areas of education, resource usage, and additional social issues that others may be exploring.

Resources that would be useful may include:

- Contact with islanders (especially those who remember the “relocations”)
- Contact with government officials
- Contact with educators, administrators, or other officials
- Web resources describing the relocations
- Timeline of relocations

Next steps may include:

- Electronic pursuit of printed and resources
- Searching for information on the Marshall island area and Micronesia specifically related to population issues
- Communicating with people that experienced the migration and it’s impact.