Humor and Humiliation: Narratives of Modernity on Nukulaelae Atoll

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This workshop focuses on a genre of story-telling, echoing other

instances familiar from many societies of the world, in which old ladies

on Nukulaelae Atol (Central Pacific) spontaneously relate for

humorous effect narratives of their own or each other's embarrassing

encounters with tokens of modernity. These texts are semiotically and

interactively complex, mixing humor and humiliation. Their repeated

entextualization through performance bears witness to Nukulaelae

Islanders' more multi-layered ambivalence towards development than a

literal reading would yield. The workshop will focus on recordings of

two such narratives.