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Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin May 2023 Volume 15, Number 5

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Editor: Jim Harries, PhD, Chairman of the AVM.



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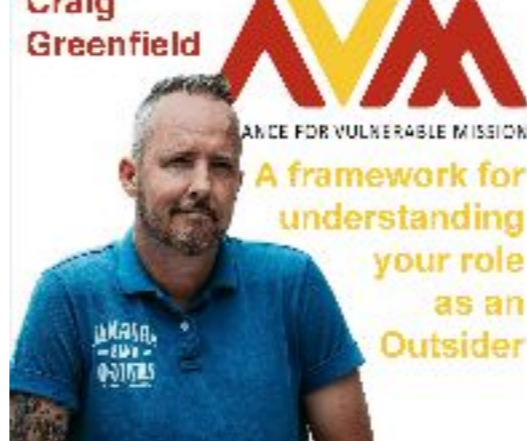
The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission encourages some missionaries from the West to engage in their ministries using local languages and resources.



Please suggest contributions to this Bulletin to jmh@vulnerablemission.org

This month's contents:

- 'A framework for understanding your role as an Outsider' (with Craig Greenfield).
- 'We are not the Hero' (with Jean Johnson).
- Missionaries and Language Learning: What Can Missions Organizations and Missions Leaders Do to Help Their Missionaries Succeed?
- Language and Identity in a Multilingual, Migrating World.
- Subversive Mission: serving as outsiders in a world of need.
- Anti-racist Strategies in the West Perpetuate Global Poverty: a Critique from Africa.
- ChatGPT – Without experience, there is no fullness of meaning.
- The Seductions of Quantification: measuring human rights, gender violence, and sex trafficking.



Come to our next webinar:

A framework for understanding your role as an Outsider.

Speaker: Craig Greenfield.

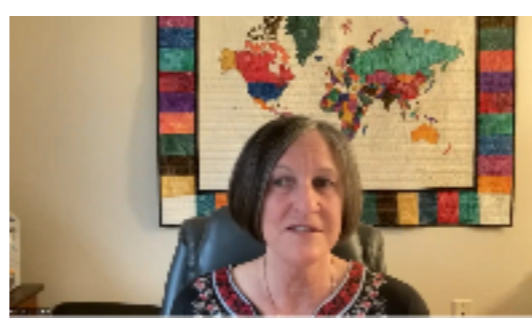
When: Thursday, 20th July 2023.

Time: 14:00 London Time (BST).

Sign up using this form for free and we will send you a Zoom link.

<https://forms.gle/1E58JE9AsYUnLzjB6>

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Missed our April AVM webinar?

'We are not the Hero' (with Jean Johnson)

<https://youtu.be/93OScu7e61U>

Jean Johnson, executive director of five stones global (fivestonesglobal.org) told us about her work, and that of her organisation. "Five stones global believes in a mission approach ... mostly we train and teach and coach Western missionaries ... because we want to help the source to have a different approach ... an approach where it doesn't see deficit in everybody, an approach where they don't download their own culture ... and expect the people they are serving to be the ones to adjust. We ... are made up of missionaries that have been in different parts of the world and have come to this common thinking ... we provide missionaries with coaching and training and practical tools needed ... we offer several courses ..."

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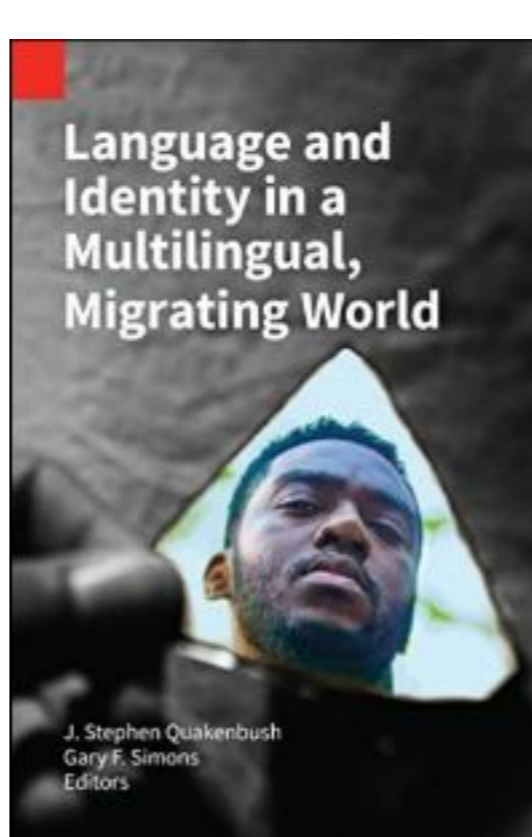
Webinar: Missionaries and Language Learning: What Can Missions Organizations and Missions Leaders Do to Help Their Missionaries Succeed? (missionexus.org)

<https://missionexus.org/event/missionaries-and-language-learning-what-can-missions-organizations-and-missions-leaders-do-to-help-their-missionaries-succeed/>

Free webinar, 12.00pm EDT on 11th May 2023: "Research shows that missionaries have the best chance at longevity on the field if they can communicate at ease and at the heart level in their host places and spaces. This means that language acquisition must be at the forefront of the missionary task for the long-term. However, one of the behind-the-curtain secrets of missionaries is that many struggle with language learning, and it interferes with everything in life— including staying on the mission field. Dr. Natalie Mullen Leisher, the director of the Institute for Cross-Cultural Training at Wheaton College, will discuss what we know now about missionary language acquisition and how missions' organizations and on-field teams can help missionaries succeed in this all-important and extremely difficult task. She will address questions such as:

- Why do some missionaries succeed and others fail at language learning?
- What do missionaries need to know before beginning language acquisition?
- What can missions' leadership do on-field to support language acquisition at every level?
- What do missions agencies need to require of their missionaries in terms of language acquisition?
- What new resources are available to missions' agencies and missionaries when it comes to learning a second (or third or fourth) language?"

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Language and Identity in a Multilingual, Migrating World.

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/B0BZG7WHFT>

This book looks very interesting from a vulnerable mission point of view. Anyone interested in reviewing it for this Bulletin, please write to me at jimharries@gmail.com

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Subversive Mission: serving as outsiders in a world of need.

For review of book: https://www.premierchristianity.com/reviews/subversive-mission-craig-greenfield/14511_article

For interview: https://www.premierchristianity.com/interviews/craig-greenfield-moved-his-family-to-a-cambodian-slum-but-dont-call-him-a-missionary/14936_article

Premier Christianity magazine has published a review of Craig's new book, and has interviewed him to write a feature about him. Craig is to be our speaker at the next AVM webinar, 20th July 2023. Details: vulnerablemission.org

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Anti-racist Strategies in the West Perpetuate Global Poverty: a Critique from Africa.

<http://pneumareview.com/anti-racist-strategies-in-the-west-perpetuate-global-poverty-a-critique-from-africa/>

In this article, recently published in pneuma review, Jim Harries makes a case in favour of Africa and Africans. Nowadays, the West sets the terms, as to what qualifies to be racist behaviour, and what doesn't. 'Hang on a minute' says Jim. 'That's a usurpation of power over African people! Why do people in Africa have to be subject to what others think they should be?' Jim calls out contemporary anti-racism in the West as being biased in favour of the West, so in that sense, racist, partial to whites, and in many ways foundationally anti-Christian and pro-secular. Jim advocates listening to African people in Africa using their own languages as understood in relation to indigenous contexts.

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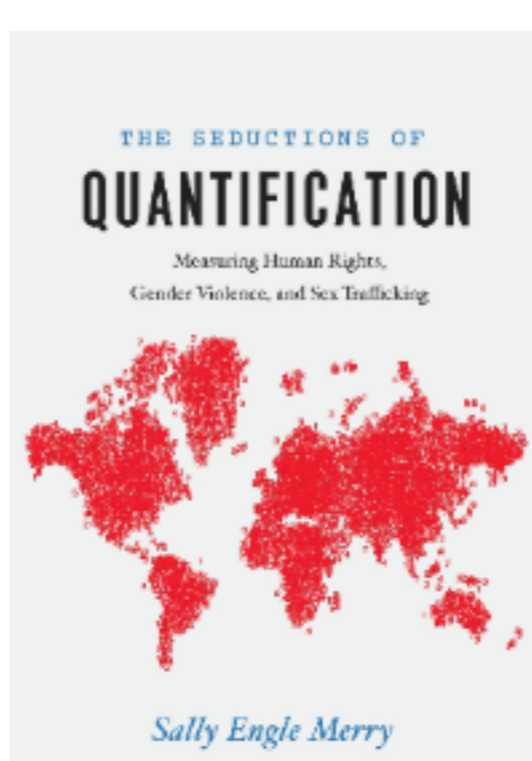


ChatGPT – Without experience, there is no fullness of meaning.

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20230331144552917>

University World News commentator John Richard Schrock adds his to others' critique of ChatGPT. He looks at the role of experience in learning: can one have a full knowledge, without human experience? No, one cannot, he suggests. If this is so for ChatGPT, one wonders whether it might also be the case for other fields of knowledge, e.g., African studies. Someone in the West can read lots of books about Africa. But will the books provide a good understanding, without engagement with people using their own languages?

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The Seductions of Quantification: measuring human rights, gender violence, and sex trafficking.

<https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/S/bo23044232>

Book details: Merry, Sally Engle, 2016, The Seductions of Quantification: measuring human rights, gender violence, and sex trafficking. London: The University of Chicago Press. \$2.99.

Indicators provide knowledge that is decontextualised, homogenised, remote from local systems of meaning, partial, distorted and misleading. Yet, an increasingly wide set of global social phenomena are these days being measured using indicators (p3). ... "It is essential to also develop microethnographic studies and qualitative knowledge of people ... to counter the homogenization and stripping away of the social world inherent in quantification (p221)," shares Sally Merry. She thus endorses a central role of the AVM (Alliance for Vulnerable Mission): to listen to people (in their own languages, not from a superior position of power), to enable them to escape the controlling hand of the West. (Hint: You can get much of the important content of this book in the free kindle sample!)

For a full review by Jim Harries:

https://www.academia.edu/attachments/101554836/download_file?file=portfolio

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