

Alliance for Vulnerable Mission Bulletin – November 2011



ALLIANCE FOR VULNERABLE MISSION

Book on vulnerable mission published and available

Vulnerable Mission book hot off the press! Reflections on and proposals for Western mission strategy for the Majority World from the field and not the armchair, that reflects the globalised world and post-modern ethos of the 21st Century. [Click Here.](#), for a price of as little as \$10.99 per book, containing a collection of Jim's articles, published by William Carey Library. (We are still working on getting a sales/distribution network for UK/Europe.)

Conference Announcement – USA + UK

The AVM in conjunction with ACU (Abilene Christian University) are to hold international conferences in the USA and UK in March 2012.

[For detail click here.](#)

To register for USA conference go to: [Registration.](#)

To register for UK conference email to: admin@cliffcollege.ac.uk



Trans-World Radio is co-sponsoring the US conference

- The Alliance for Vulnerable Mission will have a stall attended by Frank Paul and Jim Harries at the **Mission-net congress** to be held in Germany 28th December 2011 to 2nd January 2012. We will also be leading two seminars – one on the Thursday and one on the Sunday. [Click here for](#)

[details](#). The conference, I believe the largest of its kind, aims to enable young people in Europe to explore the wide range of possibilities in missions internationally today.

- For back-copies of the AVM Bulletin go to: [Click here](#).
- See [the power-point presentation](#) prepared by the International Orality Network This network represents enthusiasts who believe that it is important to present the Gospel in ways that suit oral cultures. Their mission is: “Seeking to radically influence the way oral preference learners are evangelized and disciplined in every people group.”
- Tim Reeves’ (AVM advisory board member) [writes on consciousness](#) The latter, he says, cannot really be studied, as it is the great given of all givens. The mystery of the nature of consciousness should deter us from being too bold in presuming that it is the same for all peoples universally. If it is not ‘the same’, that implies that for education to be effective it has to be different for people who are different, i.e. that it should be in their language and reflecting their context, as advocated by the AVM!
- Aspects of Western enlightenment philosophy seem to have an iron grip on Christian mission efforts today. My realization that John Locke’s notion that people are blank slates waiting to be written on¹ is still widely held had led me to write an article on race. In this article, I point out that Western nations’ struggles at countering racism are strangling development efforts in the Majority World.² Pinker (not himself a professing Christian) pointed as early as 2002 to the errors in the ongoing widely-presupposed belief that people’s intelligence and understanding are formed almost entirely through impacts from their

environment.³ Pinker tells us this belief is clearly WRONG, but that it has acquired the status of a secular religion. Western people, many Christians included, holding this belief extremely closely, to them justifies current trends in mission and development approaches to the Majority World. Now “ideas that seemed immoral even to question turn out to be not just questionable but probably wrong” (Pinker 2002:422).

In short – the above enlightenment position, in assuming that all people are blank slates, considers that one solution fits all, so that Western languages and education will be the panacea to everyone else in the world. The actually much more complex situation requires communication and education to be in tune with the lives of particular peoples. Vulnerable mission seems to be almost the only means in today’s world for Westerners to get to a position of understanding that is sufficient to be able to begin to interact with non-Western people in the light of who they are and not only how, according to aspects of dated Western enlightenment philosophy, they ought to be.⁴

¹ <http://www.iep.utm.edu/locke/>

² An earlier article that I wrote that makes a very similar point is found as Chapter 10 of this book:
<http://missionbooks.org/williamcareylibrary/product.php?productid=715&cat=0&page=1>

³ See <http://www.amazon.com/Blank-Slate-Modern-Denial-Nature/dp/0670031518>

⁴ I appreciate Tim Reeves’ assistance in researching this issue.

- Is English good for India? Some think not: [Some think not.](#)

Yours,

Jim Harries, (PhD).

Chairman, Alliance for Vulnerable Mission