



When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge

By K David Harrison

Download now

Read Online 

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison

It is commonly agreed by linguists and anthropologists that the majority of languages spoken now around the globe will likely disappear within our lifetime. The phenomenon known as language death has started to accelerate as the world has grown smaller.

This extinction of languages, and the knowledge therein, has no parallel in human history. K. David Harrison's book is the first to focus on the essential question, what is lost when a language dies? What forms of knowledge are embedded in a language's structure and vocabulary? And how harmful is it to humanity that such knowledge is lost forever?

Harrison spans the globe from Siberia, to North America, to the Himalayas and elsewhere, to look at the human knowledge that is slowly being lost as the languages that express it fade from sight. He uses fascinating anecdotes and portraits of some of these languages' last remaining speakers, in order to demonstrate that this knowledge about ourselves and the world is inherently precious and once gone, will be lost forever. This knowledge is not only our cultural heritage (oral histories, poetry, stories, etc.) but very useful knowledge about plants, animals, the seasons, and other aspects of the natural world--not to mention our understanding of the capacities of the human mind. Harrison's book is a testament not only to the pressing issue of language death, but to the remarkable span of human knowledge and ingenuity. It will fascinate linguists, anthropologists, and general readers.

 [Download When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World�...pdf](#)

 [Read Online When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World&...pdf](#)

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge

By K David Harrison

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison

It is commonly agreed by linguists and anthropologists that the majority of languages spoken now around the globe will likely disappear within our lifetime. The phenomenon known as language death has started to accelerate as the world has grown smaller.

This extinction of languages, and the knowledge therein, has no parallel in human history. K. David Harrison's book is the first to focus on the essential question, what is lost when a language dies? What forms of knowledge are embedded in a language's structure and vocabulary? And how harmful is it to humanity that such knowledge is lost forever?

Harrison spans the globe from Siberia, to North America, to the Himalayas and elsewhere, to look at the human knowledge that is slowly being lost as the languages that express it fade from sight. He uses fascinating anecdotes and portraits of some of these languages' last remaining speakers, in order to demonstrate that this knowledge about ourselves and the world is inherently precious and once gone, will be lost forever. This knowledge is not only our cultural heritage (oral histories, poetry, stories, etc.) but very useful knowledge about plants, animals, the seasons, and other aspects of the natural world--not to mention our understanding of the capacities of the human mind. Harrison's book is a testament not only to the pressing issue of language death, but to the remarkable span of human knowledge and ingenuity. It will fascinate linguists, anthropologists, and general readers.

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #692648 in Books
- Published on: 2008-07-21
- Released on: 2008-07-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 6.10" h x .80" w x 9.10" l, .94 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 304 pages

 [Download When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World� ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World& ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison

Editorial Review

Review

"At our current rate of language loss, by the end of this century the vast majority of the world's languages will be either extinct or will be spoken by only a few old people. While much effort and money are now being spent to stem the loss of plant and animal species, the human tragedy of language loss is receiving little attention. This movingly written and fascinating book tells why languages are vanishing, and what we can do to save our linguistic heritage." --Jared Diamond, Professor of Geography, University of California, Los Angeles and Pulitzer prize winning author of *Guns, Germs, and Steel*

"In this scholarly yet very readable study, Harrison writes powerfully of the value and beauty of these vanishing knowledge systems." --*The Guardian*

Rich in details yet surprisingly easy to read, *When Languages Die* shows what we are losing. --*Science Magazine*

"Depending on how one counts, it is likely that half of the world's languages will be lost over the next thirty years, a dramatic change in human history. Harrison explores dying languages, how they differ from stable languages, how they encode cultural information that is lost with them, how their speakers behave, and much more. He tells a fascinating and tragic story of immense drama." --David W. Lightfoot, National Science Foundation

"This important and useful book fills a valuable niche in what is now a voluminous and ever-growing collection of studies devoted to understanding reasons for and consequences of language death. Harrison's book focuses on the intellectual loss from the sum of human knowledge that such language death represents." --*Journal of Anthropological Research*

"Harrison tackles the question of what is lost when a language dies from the vantage point of field studies with some of the few remaining speakers of endangered languages in Siberia, Mongolia, and elsewhere. *When Languages Die* reveals an astonishingly rich catalog of human intellectual heritage and scientific knowledge on the verge of disappearing as many of the world's small languages become extinct." --Suzanne Romaine, Oxford University

"Written in clear and concise prose, *When Languages Die* provides a captivating account of how languages

encode and categorize human knowledge and experience. Harrison brings together a wealth of examples from all over the world to illustrate just how very much is lost when a language ceases to be spoken. The book is a must-read for anyone interested in people and how we think, perceive, and understand the world we live in." --Lenore A. Grenoble, Dartmouth College

"Depending on how one counts, it is likely that half of the world's languages will be lost over the next thirty years, a dramatic change in human history. Harrison explores dying languages, how they differ from stable languages, how they encode cultural information that is lost with them, how their speakers behave, and much more. He tells a fascinating and tragic story of immense drama." --David W. Lightfoot, National Science Foundation

"An important book with a clear niche in the teaching of undergraduates and in alerting a larger reading public to the magnitude and consequences associated with current trends in linguistic extinction. Harrison's book succeeds in representing the potential, even perhaps the inevitable, loss of the "intellectual treasure" of linguistic diversity." --*Journal of Anthropological Research*

About the Author

K David Harrison is Assistant Professor of Linguistics, Swarthmore College. As a linguist and specialist in Siberian Turkic languages, he has spent many months in Siberia and Mongolia working with nomadic herders and studying their languages and traditions. He has also worked in India, Bolivia, the Philippines, Lithuania, and the United States. His work on endangered languages is featured in the documentary film *The Linguists* and was featured on the Comedy Central series *The Colbert Report*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Frank Hall:

This *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* are usually reliable for you who want to be described as a successful person, why. The main reason of this *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* can be on the list of great books you must have is giving you more than just simple studying food but feed you with information that might be will shock your preceding knowledge. This book is handy, you can bring it just about everywhere and whenever your conditions in the e-book and printed versions. Beside that this *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* forcing you to have an enormous of experience for instance rich vocabulary, giving you test of critical thinking that we realize it useful in your day task. So , let's have it and luxuriate in reading.

Lourdes Williams:

This *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* is a fresh way for you who has a fascination to look for some information since it relieves your hunger for knowledge. Getting deeper you upon it getting knowledge more you know or you who still having small amount of digest in reading this *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* can be the light food in your case because the information inside this kind of book is easy to get by simply anyone. These books build itself in the form which can be reachable by anyone, sure I mean in the e-book type. People who think that in book form make them feel drowsy even dizzy this publication is the answer. So there is no in reading a publication especially this one. You can find what you are looking for. It should be here for you. So, don't miss that! Just read this e-book type for your better life along with knowledge.

Donald Link:

Within this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability in doing something more are more important than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple way to have that. What you should do is just spending your time not very much but quite enough to have a look at some books. On the list of books in the top list in your reading list is *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge*. This book and that is qualified as *The Hungry Hills* can get you closer in getting precious person. By looking upward and review this publication you can get many advantages.

William Carroll:

That guide can make you to feel relax. This specific book *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* was vibrant and of course has pictures around. As we know that book *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* has many kinds or variety. Start from kids until adolescents. For example *Naruto* or *Private eye Conan* you can read and believe that you are the character on there. Therefore, not at all of book tend to be make you bored, any it makes you feel happy, fun and chill out. Try to choose the best book for you personally and try to like reading that.

Download and Read Online *When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge* By K David Harrison #E34JAO7ULN6

Read When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison for online ebook

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison books to read online.

Online When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison ebook PDF download

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison Doc

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison Mobipocket

When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison EPub

E34JAO7ULN6: When Languages Die: The Extinction of the World's Languages and the Erosion of Human Knowledge By K David Harrison