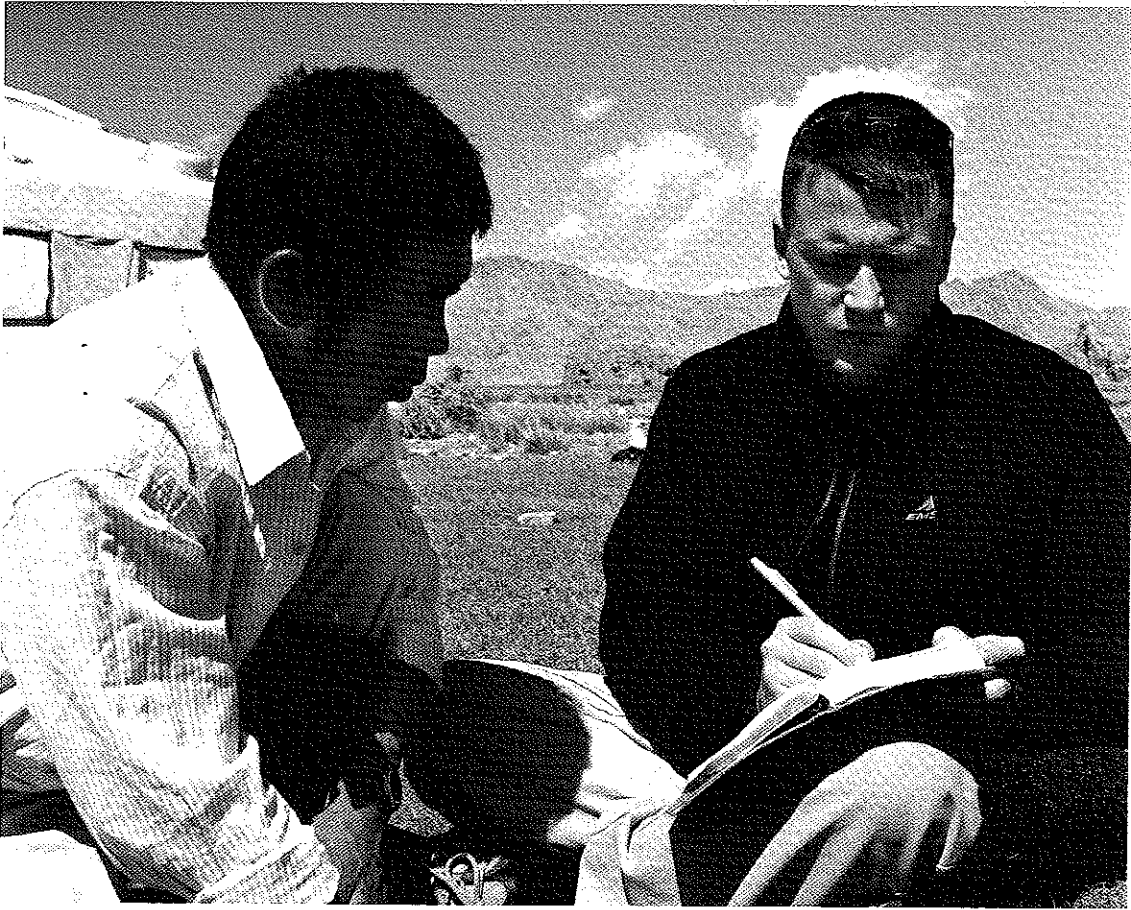


The “Nerdy Scientists” of Sundance



KELLY J. RICHARDSON

David Harrison (*right*) interviews Tserenedmit, a speaker of the Monchak language, in Western Mongolia. A new film—which premiered at this year’s Sundance Film Festival—shows Harrison and fellow linguist Gregory Anderson as they seek to identify and rescue endangered languages around the world.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF LINGUISTICS DAVID HARRISON—already a world authority on endangered languages and the world “hotspots” in which they are spoken in ever-decreasing numbers—was recently catapulted into the world of movie-stardom.

Harrison and fellow linguist Gregory Anderson, who together co-founded and now co-direct the Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages, are the subjects of *The Linguists*, a documentary film recording their work as they travel throughout the world, often to remote and isolated regions, seeking to rescue languages that are facing extinction.

Selected to premiere in the new category “Spectrum: Documentary Spotlight,” at the Sundance Film Festival in January, the film drew enthusiastic responses, including Reuters/*Hollywood Reporter* journalist Kirk Honeycutt’s Jan. 21 article “Linguists talk of the town at Sundance.”

“Indiana Jones’ spirit certainly infects the intrepid heroes of *The Linguists*. These are bold academics who plunge into the jungles and backwater villages of the world to rescue languages about to go extinct.... David Harrison and Gregory Anderson are scientists in a race against time. They trek deep into sometimes dangerous territories to record nearly dead languages, a thing that is at the heart of culture and knowledge,” he wrote.

As Harrison told *Phoenix* journalist Ama Tettey-Fio ’10 in a Jan. 24, article, “It’s pretty amazing for a couple of nerdy scientists.”

For information on screenings, visit the film’s Web site www.thelinguists.com.

—Carol Brévert-Demm