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# [(Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation)] [Author: Michael H. Agar] published on (December, 1996)

*Michael H. Agar*

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**[(Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation)] [Author: Michael H. Agar] published on (December, 1996)** Michael H. Agar
Modern society is loaded with cultural differences. Michael Agar's fascinating new book, Language Shock, shows how we unconsciously bring such differences to life - through our everyday language. It is with language, ultimately, that we express who we are and what is important in our world. In fact, language is so deeply rooted in culture (and vice versa) that linguistic anthropologist Michael Agar combines the two into what he calls languaculture. With so much present conflict, from personal to global, based on words as well as weapons, the exploration of languaculture is of a vital and timely importance. As the old song goes, "You can't have one without the other" - not if you want to communicate in today's culturally complex world. Michael Agar takes the reader on a fascinating, and often humorous, journey as he demonstrates not only how to find the culture in language, but also how to use it to pursue a different, richer point of view. He incorporates his own experiences, ranging from paying an electric bill in Austria to handling a bank account in Mexico to dealing with a parking ticket here in the United States. In Agar's hands, potentially problematic situations become instead enlightening glimpses of languacultural differences. Put into practice, Language Shock encourages readers to develop an increased understanding of others, both at home and abroad, and shows how these differences can be wonderful, rather than threatening.

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