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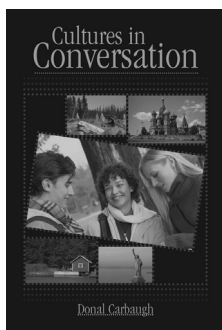
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## CULTURES IN CONVERSATION

**Donal Carbaugh**

*University of Massachusetts Amherst*

A Volume in LEA's Communication Series



*Cultures in Conversation* introduces readers to the ethnographic study of intercultural and social interactions through the analysis of conversations in which various cultural orientations are operating. Author Donal Carbaugh presents his original research on conversation practices in England, Finland, Russia, Blackfeet County, and the United States, demonstrating how each is distinctive in its communication codes—particularly in its use of symbolic meanings, forms of interaction, norms, and motivational themes. Examining conversation in this way demonstrates how cultural lives are active in conversations and shows how conversation is a principal medium for the coding of selves, social relationships, and societies.

Representing 20 years of research, this volume offers unique insights into the ways social interactions not only gain shape from, but also are formative of cultures. It makes a significant contribution to communication scholarship, and will be illuminating reading in courses focusing on cultural communication, language and social interaction, intercultural pragmatics, and linguistics.

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# CULTURES IN CONVERSATION

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University of Massachusetts Amherst

A Volume in LEA's Communication Series

*"Donal Carbaugh is one of our wisest analysts of culture and communication. Here he draws on his direct experience of Russian, Finnish, and Blackfoot Indian cultures to present a comprehensive and incisive approach to understanding conversation in cultural perspective. It is a perfect text for classroom use, but even the most seasoned researchers will find enlightening insights as well as delightful and vivid examples. I'll definitely assign this book the next time I teach Cross-cultural communication."*

—Deborah Tannen  
Georgetown University

*"In **Cultures in Conversation** Donal Carbaugh offers a compelling and nuanced analysis of the many ways in which culture shapes moments of intercultural contact. His comparative accounts of the working of cultural codes in conversation invite readers to a journey of discovery of both self and other. The book presents a rich array of case studies of face-to-face or mediated encounters in which cultural differences are puzzled over, negotiated and sometimes bridged, and thereby demonstrates how the nexus of communication and culture can be productively and systematically explored."*

—Tamar Katriel  
University of Haifa

*"At a time when our contemporary world seems to be characterized and confused by reactivity, Carbaugh's book offers insight on the ways in which alternate systems of being, living, relating, and speaking take place in human interactions. Going beyond generalizations in exploring cultural communication, Carbaugh demonstrates the interdependence of culture and conversation through a rich collection of culturally situated encounters. His writing expands our imagination, stimulates our minds, and touches the hearts and souls of his readers."*

—Ozum Ucock  
Hofstra University, School of Communication, Dept. of Speech Communication, Rhetoric, and Performance Studies

*"**Cultures in Conversation** is another milestone in Donal Carbaugh's exploration of American culture as it manifests itself in characteristically American patterns of communication. The comparative perspective adopted in the present book leads to brilliant new insights into common American ways of speaking as well as the shared cultural assumptions and values reflected in them. Detailed studies of intercultural encounters, with careful attention to native labels for kinds of speech practices and cultural values, allow Carbaugh to identify "cultural rules for conversation" from the insider's point of view, while making them intelligible to outsiders...The book also identifies some sources of intercultural miscommunication and negative cultural stereotypes and suggests some practical remedies for them as well as providing theoretical insights. **Cultures in Conversation** is "ethnography of speaking" at its best. It will engage anyone interested in intercultural communication, language in society and American culture."*

—Anna Wierzbicka  
The Australian National University

*"Whether it be exploring public discourse in Russia, learning to listen with the Blackfeet of Montana, or building relationships in Finland, Carbaugh writes with clarity and enthusiasm, quickly drawing the reader into the subtle workings of culture in everyday life. This book brings together some of his most intriguing work with new research and insights that give the reader a deep understanding of how communication, meaning, and identity are closely interwoven. In doing so, Carbaugh extends and elaborates on the theoretical implications of his work and an ethnographic understanding of the world...I have been reading and using Donal's work in graduate and undergraduate courses for years. The clarity with which he develops his examples and arguments makes his work ideally suited for students. I strongly recommend this book for anyone interested in understanding the relationship between culture and communication and the misunderstandings that are so apt to happen in intercultural contexts. For someone interested in understanding the ethnography of communication perspective and the insights it can provide, this is a must read."*

—Bradford 'J' Hall  
University of New Mexico

*"What Carbaugh does with great delicacy is show how culture is imbricated in the details of conversational practice. He examines cross cultural conversation because the misunderstandings which arise reveal the unusually unstated cultural understandings which the speakers bring to their conversations. Through this work Carbaugh shows how to link the detailed micro-study of conversation with the larger themes of social and cultural anthropology."*

—David Zeitlyn  
Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing Department of Anthropology Eliot College, The University of Kent

*"Donal Carbaugh makes an outstanding contribution to the study of cultural and cross-cultural communication through his detailed analysis of communicative practices in four different cultures. Using numerous examples of naturally occurring speech, gathered from the author's many ethnographic studies, Carbaugh demonstrates how the premises which guide communication can be discovered, described, and interpreted in such a way as to reveal how people create a sense of shared cultural identity. No other author has so clearly articulated the intersection of communication and culture as has Donal Carbaugh."*

—Chuck Braithwaite  
University of Nebraska at Lincoln

*"Donal Carbaugh's book, **Cultures in Conversation**, is remarkable. It is based on first-hand knowledge over a number of years of a considerable range of cultures and situations. The result is an invaluable contribution to the understanding of communication and the ethnography of speaking."*

—Dell Hymes  
University of Virginia