



The Culture Code: An Ingenious Way to Understand Why People Around the World Buy and Live as They Do

Clotaire Rapaille

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Why are people around the world so very different? What makes us live, buy, even love as we do? The answers are in the codes.

In *The Culture Code*, internationally revered cultural anthropologist and marketing expert Clotaire Rapaille reveals for the first time the techniques he has used to improve profitability and practices for dozens of Fortune 100 companies. His groundbreaking revelations shed light not just on business but on the way every human being acts and lives around the world.

Rapaille's breakthrough notion is that we acquire a silent system of Codes as we grow up within our culture. These Codes—the Culture Code—are what make us American, or German, or French, and they invisibly shape how we behave in our personal lives, even when we are completely unaware of our motives. What's more, we can learn to crack the Codes that guide our actions and achieve new understanding of why we do the things we do.

Rapaille has used the Culture Code to help Chrysler build the PT Cruiser—the most successful American car launch in recent memory. He has used it to help Procter & Gamble design its advertising campaign for Folger's coffee – one of the longest-lasting and most successful campaigns in the annals of advertising. He has used it to help companies as diverse as GE, AT&T, Boeing, Honda, Kellogg, and L'Oréal improve their bottom line at home and overseas. And now, in *The Culture Code*, he uses it to reveal why Americans act distinctly like Americans, and what makes us different from the world around us.

In *The Culture Code*, Dr. Rapaille decodes two dozen of our most fundamental archetypes—ranging from sex to money to health to America itself—to give us “a new set of glasses” with which to view our actions and motivations. Why are we so often disillusioned by love? Why is fat a solution rather than a problem? Why do we reject the notion of perfection? Why is fast food in our lives to stay? The answers are in the Codes.

Understanding the Codes gives us unprecedented freedom over our lives. It lets us do business in dramatically new ways. And it finally explains why people around the world really *are* different, and reveals the hidden clues to understanding us all.

The Culture Code: An Ingenious Way to Understand Why People Around the World Buy and Live as They Do Details

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From Reader Review The Culture Code: An Ingenious Way to Understand Why People Around the World Buy and Live as They Do for online ebook

Alan says

This book is brilliantly evil. The author, in real life, found ways to sell chocolate to the kids in Japan when kids didn't even like chocolate. He seeks to reveal the code of what different culture really think about when they are presented with an idea. He covers presidents, sex, cars, etc. The logic isn't compelling but the results are stunning.

Nguyễn Đình Giang says

Đã lâu lắm rồi không có một quyển sách truy tìm những mã ẩn cho mình như cuốn sách này. Nó đúng chính là một quyển sách dành cho những ai yêu marketing, yêu "đào sâu", yêu những "essence", bởi chính, chính lối của bạn viết xung quanh mình, yêu việc tìm hiểu bạn chính là điều gì?

>> "What does it mean with consumers? How they feel about it? What does it stand for?"...

Quyển sách mà những người đi vào một thế giới marketing, nơi mà mọi người có thể "truth", có thể "insight", có thể "conceptualize thinking" từ ánh sáng linh thông qua những bài tập tìm "mã ẩn".

A. Hiểu mình hay không là cách tìm "mã ẩn văn hóa" là trò chuyện, tâm sự với mọi người rằng: "Ký ức trước đây hay sự vật/sự việc đó là gì?", và tìm hiểu chung (câu trúc) của những câu chuyện. Hiểu chung đó chính là "đào sâu", khái quát hóa và sau cùng chính là tên một cách thức gây ấn tượng và quy định lại. Giữ gìn hay không sát/phản ứng với trong marketing vậy.

B. Là phần các mã tìm được từ những điều cho nên M, nó giúp mình hiểu hơn về nên M - quí giá và thành niên, của những trải nghiệm, mà lớn, không thích sự hoàn hảo và kết quả. Tất cả đều có nguyên nhân của nó, xuất phát từ văn hóa, lịch sử, từ thời điểm và bối cảnh nó chính là hình thành và phát triển. Vì thế là một sự thật của những điều này:

1. Giữ gìn và sinh = C L P (Không cần biết, từ làm được)
2. Tình yêu = K V NG SAI L M (thứ tự tình yêu, tôn sùng tình yêu, những cảm xúc thật và tình yêu)
3. Tình dục = B O L C (khả tiêu cực, M thoải mái với bộ phận là gì? => B o dâm)
4. Sự chấp nhận = C U R I ÀN ÔNG (à ông chính là trình cho tình dục, khi sự chấp nhận làm anh ta đáng lý, chiêm ngưỡng, trân trọng, không lao theo bản năng = tâm hồn anh ta chính là nâng lên một tầm cao mới)
5. Sự quy định = Pháp = T nhiên (phải không làm cho mình gì? không trang điểm), ? Anh = S? nếu biết (thì trang điểm, vì phải phải gây chú ý do à ông Anh lãnh đạo, à ông Anh kết nối với nhau nhiều mà vì họ tin rằng họ có à ông mới mang lại hạnh phúc cho nhau).
- à ông Ý thì kết nối với "tính năng" trong mình nhiều => Quy định họ và phải.
5. Béo mồm = S? THOÁT LY (chia tay, đứt kết, disconnect with the rest of the world)
6. Sự khác biệt = V N NG (sự liên tục và những xác nhận rằng chúng ta đang khác biệt, thế sự? đang sống).
7. Tuổi trẻ = M T N (văn hóa M say mê tuổi trẻ, lớn tuổi trong tuổi trẻ, che giấu mình bằng cách gì? trẻ hóa, che giấu lão hóa, tạo ra một thế giới mới từ đó)
8. T? m = RE- (reconnect, return, reunite, renew, v.v...). Từ các văn hóa M, của bạn là trung tâm của sự quay quẩn, là nơi có không gian to lớn nhất.
9. Công việc = B N LÀ AI?
10. Thời gian = B NG CH NG

11. Ch?t l??ng = HO?T ??NG ???C. Ng??i M? không c?n m?t s?n ph?m quá ch?t l??ng, h? g?n k?t "ch?t l??ng" v?i ký ?c v? nh?ng l?n ?? v?t h?ng hóc. ?ó là lý do ng??i M? th?t b?i khi c? g?ng mô ph?ng, b?t ch??c "công ngh? ch?t l??ng tuy?t h?o" c?a các s?n ph?m Nh?t. Nh?t do nh?, tài nguyên ít, nhi?u thiên tai nên "t?i ?u hóa"/ "hoàn h?o" là cái h? seeking for. R?t khác v?i M? - m?t ??t n??c r?ng l?n, th?a dân, "v? thành niên", ngh?ch phá.
12. S? hoàn h?o = CÁI CH?T. N??c M? c? v? cho "th? và sai".
13. Th?c ?n = FUEL/ NHIÊN LI?U (g?p gáp, th?c ?n nhanh, ng?u nghi?n, có n?ng l??ng ?? liên t?c làm vi?c). ? Pháp, ?n u?ng = TR?I NGHI?M S? TINH T?(v?n hóa ch?m), ? Nh?t thì ?n u?ng = PH??NG TH?C TI?P C?N S? HOÀN H?O
14. Bia r??u = SÚNG (th? thái, say mèm, ng? g?c, ch?p nhóang)
15. Mua s?m = S? TÁI K?T N?I V?I CU?C S?NG (v? thành niên, tr? trung, ?i ch?i, ph? n? không mu?n bám m?t ? nhà), ch? không ch? cái c? là "mua th? ta c?n" ?? serve cho "v? não"
16. S? xa x? = V?CH QUÂN HÀM (s? minh ch?ng, phô tr??ng), ch? không ph?i ch? cái c? là "ch?t l??ng t?t, phù h?p v?i tôi" ?? serve cho "v? não"
17. N??c Pháp trong m?t ng??i Pháp = Ý T??NG (tri?t gia, h? t? t??ng, trí tu?)
18. N??c Anh trong m?t ng??i Anh = GIAI C?P (hoàng t?c, cao c?p).
19. N??c ??c trong m?t ng??i ??c = TR?T T? (khuôn m?u, ng?n ch?n s? bi?n ??ng, k? lu?t)
20. T?ng th?ng M? = MOSES (v? thánh, d?n d?t cu?c n?i lo?n, t?m nhìn, th?t b?i, truy?n c?m h?ng v? Mi?n ??t h?a, tích c?c, thay ??i)
21. N??c M? trong m?t ng??i M? = GI?C M? (t? do, thúc ??y s? phát tri?n không ng?ng, làm nh?ng ?i?u phi th??ng, d?n d?t th? gi?i, không gi?i h?n)
- Quy?n sách g?i cho mình nhi?u suy ngh?: M?t mã c?a nh?ng ?i?u trên, trong v?n hóa Vi?t Nam là gì? và Làm cách nào ?? marketing thu?n mã v?i s? ?ông :)
-

Vinod Peris says

I have recently read a couple of books that attempt to explain macro phenomenon by looking through the lens of the culture of its people. "Boomerang" by Michael Lewis explains the financial crisis that is unfolding in many European countries and ties it to the cultural traits of their inhabitants. Rapaille on the other hand has written an entire book on interpreting the code for American culture and he brings this out by contrasting it with the culture of other countries, most notably France, where he was born.

Way back when Isaac Asimov ruled the Science Fiction world, he introduced the concept of "psychohistory" - the idea that you cannot predict what an individual will do, but with a sufficiently large population, you can apply a probabilistic framework to predict the general flow of future events. When Rapaille describes the peculiarities of Americans, French or Italians, it is important to view it as a description of a large population and not a specific individual in that country. When viewed with that lens, the book offers great insight into cultural norms and how they can be tapped in developing and marketing a successful product.

Rapaille's writing style is lucid and is a pleasure to read. His opinionated observations are incisive and I found myself reading several parts multiple times to fully appreciate his view. There are many memorable quotes and passages in the book like "you never get a second chance to have a first experience." This seems cliched, but when you read it again you realize he is talking about "experience" and not "impression".

While I did not find myself agreeing with all of Rapaille's codes, the explanations of seduction in different cultures was spot on and hilarious. Another insightful chapter was the differing notions of quality in various

cultures. For example quality in US can be summed up as "IT WORKS" and this is quite a far cry from the notion of quality in Japan which is perfection!

Many reviewers that were critical of the book, seemed to have a hard time accepting all that Rapaille had to say without any real scientific evidence. While it is true that most of what is written here can be dismissed as one man's opinion, it will certainly get you thinking and more observant of cultural traits. I found myself in agreement with a majority of the observations and was quite amused at the way Rapaille presented them.

There is one aspect of the book that I found hard to swallow. The notion of distilling these observations down to a single code word seems a bit contrived. Rapaille goes the extra mile in finding all kinds of circumstantial proof that resonates with the code word to justify it. This is probably the weakest part of his thesis. However, if you take that with a grain of salt and view it as a way to anchor a theme and provide direction to a marketing campaign, the code words might serve a purpose.

Overall, I highly recommend this to folks who are in the business of building and selling products in the global marketplace.

sampath krishna says

The Culture Code started out as a very promising read with a very interesting concept. However, it did not build on the good start. It purports to enlighten why people around the world live and buy as they do. Sadly, it focuses only on why Americans live and buy as they do, while using Europe (read France) mainly for comparison. As a non-american, I found this focus on America rather limiting and dissatisfying. I would have expected some more case studies from other countries from different continents.

Clotaire Rapaille, originally a Frenchman, glorifies America to no end and bashes Europe (read France again). I found this rather amusing.

The concept of cultures having Codes, and using them for business, is really interesting and the book has certainly added to my perspective. This concept is not, however, new. We all know that every culture has different views and opinions for same products, acts, situations etc. What the author has done is provide the businesses, corporations a proper way of understanding this and market their products accordingly.

This is not a global book in any sense. For the Americans by an American.

Anneta says

Interesting book. Interesting how different cultures have meaning and understanding to different things. Would recommend to read it to anyone.

Uwe Hook says

This is one of the more fascinating books I've read in quite a while. The author claims that subconscious

links created socially" and nationally dictate the meanings of various things. For example, French people form an early Association with alcohol which links drinking with a social family atmosphere, because French children are often given a small amount of wine to drink by their parents at an early age. Americans on the other hand, are not allowed to drink until age 21, and therefore the association that they create is often one of danger and recklessness, because they learn to drink at a much later age and in an underground fashion. For the rest of their lives, they think of alcohol as dangerous, risky, and forbidden. The French view is social and familial. The book is full of examples such as this. For example, Americans link or form code for automobiles as being about freedom, whereas the Germans have a code for automobile which is engineering. This is why for example, American and German auto executives and marketing people cannot see eye to eye.

I found new insights on almost every page of this book. The book is actually quite profound. Many authors try to create the type of insights contained in this book, but they do not have the insight or the knowledge to do so. This book will be of interest to students of anthropology, psychology, international affairs, and marketing of course.

Thao Nguyen says

??c l?n 2 v?n c?m th?y thích thú v?i quy?n này.

T? nhiên ?ang làm d? án b?ng ph??ng pháp focus group, ??c l?i nghi?m ra ???c nhi?u ?i?u h?n. Market research không còn là group discussion hay panel interview nh? nh?ng th? ???c h?c ? tr??ng, mà nó ?ã nâng lên t?m c?a tâm lý h?c.

T? nhiên th?m thía h?n v? m?y lúc depth interview, m?y b?n moderators x?n quá, d?n d?t ng??i ta h?i t??ng b?ng hình ?nh, âm thanh, câu chuy?n ?? ?ánh th?c vùng uncounscious, r?i tìm ra nh?ng c?m xúc, d?u ?n sâu nh?t v? tr?i nghi?m c?a h?.

R?i ng? ra ???c m?t vài mã v?n hóa trong nh?ng câu chuy?n h?ng ngày, t? vì?c l?a ch?n, công vi?c, tình yêu, cho ??n vì?c ?n. Ch?ng h?n, trong n?n v?n hóa M?, ?? khen b?a ?n ngon, vào cu?i b?a ?n, ng??i ta hay nói I'm full, vì trong v?n hóa ?m th?c, ?? ?n chính là n?ng l??ng, ti?p thêm s?c m?nh, s? ??y ?? cho h?. Chính vì th?, v?n hóa fast food v?i kh?u ph?n thu?c lo?i kh?ng nh? double cheese burger, pizza nhi?u cheese, topping. Còn v?i ng??i Pháp, cu?i b?a ?n h? hay nói "That was delicious", vì h? b? ?nh h??ng b?i phong cách "aristocrat". V?n hóa này cho r?ng an aristocrat s? ?n ch?m rãi, t?n h??ng h??ng v? c?a t?ng món ?n, t?ng ly r??u.

Tóm l?i là quá thích quy?n này và ph?i th?t lên sao tác gi? có beautiful mind quá v?y!

Ashley says

Rapaille argues that America, and by extension, our culture is an adolescent nation. Not only in age, but also in the things we love - fast food, blue jeans, loud and violent movies, Coca Cola, Nike, etc. The author argues that it also explains our fascination with celebrities and the adolscent mistakes they always seem to be making. America is a nation of extremes - rich vs. poor, liberal vs. conservative, etc. Just like adolescents, we're either high or low; there is no middle ground.

After this introduction and new way of looking at things, Rapaille discusses different "culture codes" he was consulted to identify by various companies such as Proctor and Gamble, L'Oreal, and others. They seem a little off the wall when they're first revealed, but the author makes a fairly convincing argument for them in most cases. Case in point - the code for alcohol in America is gun. We view alcohol as something that needs to be carefully controlled lest it cause unintended consequences. The consequences of not handling it with respect can be disastrous, if not fatal.

Overall, it was an interesting read, if for nothing more than to think about how I think about things. I especially liked when the author discussed how different cultures view themselves and others (i.e. the French view Americans and "space travelers") and how businesses can use this POV to be more successful in marketing their products abroad. Nothing earth-shattering here, but interesting nonetheless.

Gayle says

This intriguing book by Clotaire Rapaille posits an interesting premise; that very often we prefer or purchase things for reasons not apparent to our rational minds. OK, actually we all kind of know that, but his analysis and findings are revealing. His background as a psychoanalyst in Paris working with autistic children turned out to be a goldmine when he developed a clientele of Fortune 500 companies. His skills were ideal for getting past the answers from the conscious mind ("alibis", which also matter) so often garnered in market research, and delving into what he calls "the reptilian mind," where the earliest experiences are recorded, as well as the emotions attached to them. Rapaille considers these emotions to be of prime importance, because the emotions determine our preferences, even for such mundane items as cars and coffee.

Rapaille explains that these imprints are not only individual, but also cultural, and these cultural imprints have codes that bring the emotions associated with these imprints to the fore. If you tap into the code, you can use it to sell a product. Naturally, all this is presented with compelling evidence. If these ideas intrigue you, consider reading *The Culture Code*.

Nam Pham says

There are two key concepts: code and alibi. I'm not sure if these are all new or just different names to similar concepts (say... relevancy? truth? reason-to-believe? insert more advertising terminologies here). But, it would be much more interesting if there are more information on how he conducted his focus groups. We probably understand the destination but getting there is an entirely different subject matter.

Also that analysis on the code of American president is hauntingly true..

Andrzej says

Interesting idea propelling the book very well. Maybe some Codes are questionable, but generally matches my international experiences. Could have been a bit more concise, but has its charm.

Oleksandr Golovatyi says

?????? ?????, ????? ????????????

Saellys says

Largely absurd and often borderline evil, this is the tale of one incredibly smart man stealing our memories in order to sell us things we don't need.

In one passage, Rapaille declares that since the moon reflects the light of the sun, and the French word for moon is feminine while the word for sun is masculine, the French consider men to be shining and brilliant and women a mere reflection of that. Nevermind that the French language was invented before knowledge of the moon's reflective properties was widespread, or that feminine and masculine words are almost completely arbitrary (please, Dr. Rapaille, analyze the reasoning behind doors being feminine!).

It's arrogant, it's baseless, it's marketed as psychological nonfiction when it's really a load of crap. I doubt I'll even bother finishing it.

????? ?????? says

የሕግ አወጣጥ ስልጠና በኢትዮጵያ የሰነድ አስተዳደር ዘርፍ ላይ ተመሳሳይ ስልጠናዎችን በአጭር ጊዜ ውስጥ እንዲያውጡና እንዲያቀረጹ ማወቅ ያለብን ነው።

በተጨማሪም ስልጠናው በሰነድ አስተዳደር ዘርፍ ላይ የሚሰጠው መሆኑንና በሰነድ አስተዳደር ዘርፍ ላይ የሚሰጠው መሆኑን እንዲያውቁና እንዲያውቁ ማወቅ ያለብን ነው።

በተጨማሪም ስልጠናው በሰነድ አስተዳደር ዘርፍ ላይ የሚሰጠው መሆኑንና በሰነድ አስተዳደር ዘርፍ ላይ የሚሰጠው መሆኑን እንዲያውቁና እንዲያውቁ ማወቅ ያለብን ነው።

[illegible][illegible]

Ala says

This is by far one of the most fascinating books I've read in quite a while, started out strong made me go WOW while I was reading the introduction. Actually I've already read it last year but I didn't finish it. So I decided that I would start reading it all over again this year and yeah I did. FEELING ACCOMPLISHED :D. Anyway. First off, the most parts was about American culture so I don't know I found it weird and funny in some points I mean some of his codes doesn't make sense to me and the rest tbh perfectly does. he says every word has a code like love or coffee and then he gives you the code word and you can take it or leave it. He

sites great examples from other cultures and comparisons after reading it, I still feel he made many good points on how humans deal with things. This book was full of information of how people think and why they do things, specifically buy things that they buy. Clotaire is a semiotician so everything is broken down through language. And this was really interesting.

I found it fast read and full of interesting information about culture codes that have been discovered by Rapaille over time. It's a book about marketing / branding, but it is also a book that is about better understanding human behavior.

He got my attention in chapter 3 when he mentioned the code for beauty and fat. He said the code for beauty in America is man's salvation, from Rapaille's research, American women always tie beauty to men but in Arab nations, society sees a woman's appearance as a reflection of her man's success "like walking billboards for men" Women should be obese to show that their men feed them. And in Norway beauty is reflection of connection with nature no makeup/hair, slim and athletic.

While many of Rapaille's insights seem spot on, a few seem to be a bit of a stretch. Rapaille suggests being overweight isn't a problem, but a solution. He says the American code for fat is "checking out" This means people get fat, so they can withdraw from society. That seems a bit like asking for the cultural code for gravity. It doesn't necessarily have a cultural explanation. It really seems more an issue of food tasting good and calories in and calories out at the waist.

Rapaille argues each product makes a unique imprint on members of any given culture. This imprint can be described in only a few words. For example, Rapaille says the American code for cars is "Identity" while the German code for cars is "Engineering" here's what he says "The American code for Jeep is "Horse" a go anywhere vehicle. Based on this, Rapaille suggested replacing square headlights with round ones, because horses have round eyes. Luxury interiors weren't part of the code. The Jeep was then successfully marketed as a "horse" in America. But in France and Germany, Jeeps were seen differently. People there associate them with the WWII liberation of Europe. Chrysler marketed Jeeps in Europe as symbols of freedom.

#TheCultureCode is a book that represents an important contribution to understanding how cultures work their ways on people. The book should be seen as an attempt to answer the questions raised by Ruth Benedict's quotation that begins the book. She asked what is it that makes Japan a nation of Japanese the United States a nation of Americans France a nation of Frenchmen and Russia a nation of Russians!! Rapaille's answer is that it is the codes that shape each of the cultures and the individuals who grow up in each culture and he offers some intriguing and suggestive insights into how people arrive at their national cultural identities.

Actually my fingers get crampy and tired from typing all day (laugh) I would like to transfer every single word of this book but unfortunately I can't (sad) I know this review doesn't make a lot of sense until you've read the book SO I'm just gonna say DO IT!

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