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	Sommario/riassunto	In this unique analysis of three prominent theorists of modern sociology, theory is understood as implicitly, but importantly, reflecting especially modern problems of individual and social life. From the grand-theoretical systems of Talcott Parsons to the unique symbolic interactionism of Erving Goffman and the radically mundane ethnomethodology of Harold Garfinkel, a wide variety of noted sociological theories have addressed central issues of sociology against the backdrop of modern society. When this modern backdrop is brought into the foreground of analysis, sociological theories assume new depth and breadth and new historical significance. The author outlines features of the modern experience, drawing upon neglected cultural theorists of modernity, and then shows how these features of modernity are reflected and incorporated in the scholarship of Parsons, Goffman, and Garfinkel. The result is an original and eclectic analysis that illuminates previously overlooked dimensions to modern sociological theory, and suggests new possibilities for meaningful and rewarding comparisons between theoretical traditions.