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Autore	McLaughlin Thomas <1948->
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Nota di contenuto	Intro -- Contents -- Acknowledgments -- 1. Introduction-Theory outside the Academy: Street Smarts and Critical Theory -- 2. Cultural Theory and Social Activism in the Southern Christian Antipornography Movement -- 3. Criticism in the Zines: Vernacular Theory and Popular Culture -- 4. Stories of the New Age: Narrative, Healing, and Transformation -- 5. The Cunning of the Hand, the Weakness of the Heart: Theoretical Work in the Advertising Profession -- 6. The Teachers Meet the Experts: Vernacular Theory in the Whole Language Movement -- 7. Pedagogy and Vernacular Theory -- Works Cited -- Index.
Sommario/riassunto	Everybody's got a theory... or do they? Thomas McLaughlin argues that

critical theory-raising serious, sustained questions about cultural practice and ideology-is practiced not only by an academic elite but also by savvy viewers of sitcoms and TV news, by Elvis fans and Trekkies, by labor organizers and school teachers, by the average person in the street. Like academic theorists, who are trained in a tradition of philosophical and political skepticism that challenges all orthodoxies, the vernacular theorists McLaughlin identifies display a lively and healthy alertness to contradiction and propaganda. They are not passive victims of ideology but active questioners of the belief systems that have power over their lives. Their theoretical work arises from the circumstances they confront on the job, in the family, in popular culture. And their questioning of established institutions, McLaughlin contends, is essential and healthy, for it energizes other theorists who clarify the purpose and strategies of institutions and justify the existence of cultural practices. Street Smarts and Critical Theory leads us through eye-opening explorations of social activism in the Southern Christian anti-pornography movement, fan critiques in the 'zine scene, New Age narratives of healing and transformation, the methodical manipulations of the advertising profession, and vernacular theory in the whole-language movement. Emphasizing that theory is itself a pervasive cultural practice, McLaughlin calls on academic institutions to recognize and develop the theoretical strategies that students bring into the classroom. "This book demystifies the idea of theory, taking it out of the hands of a priestly caste and showing it as the democratic endowment of the people."-Daniel T. O'Hara, Temple University, author of Radical Parody: American Culture and Critical Agency after Foucault and Lionel Trilling: The Work of Liberation. "McLaughlin takes seriously the critical and theoretical activity of everyday people and does so in a way that will empower these very populations to take seriously their own activities as theorists.... A manifesto that is sure to be heard by the younger generation of thinkers in American cultural studies."-Henry Jenkins, MIT, author of Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture

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