

**SIMON SPAWFORTH-JONES:  
MEN, MASCULINITIES, MAGAZINES**

**@JonesSpawforth**

**UTILISING MOOD BOARDS IN MEDIA  
RESEARCH**



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**Representations of masculinity in  
contemporary men's lifestyle magazines  
and their relation to the attitudes of young  
men towards their bodies and identities**



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**ESTABLISHING A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK  
FOR THE PROJECT**

**SETTING PARAMETERS**

**“WHERE IS YOUR CONTRIBUTION?”**



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FIRST CHAPTER...

~~POSITIONING THEORY (DAVIES AND HARRE,  
1990)~~

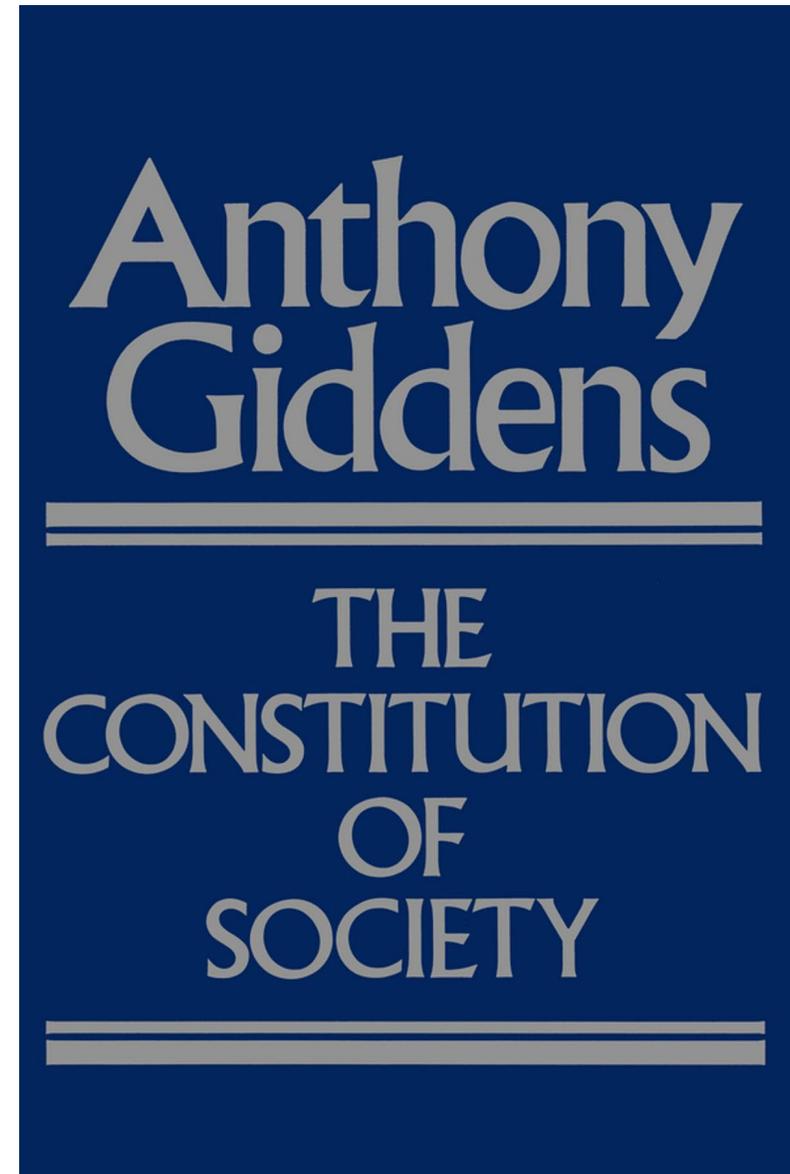


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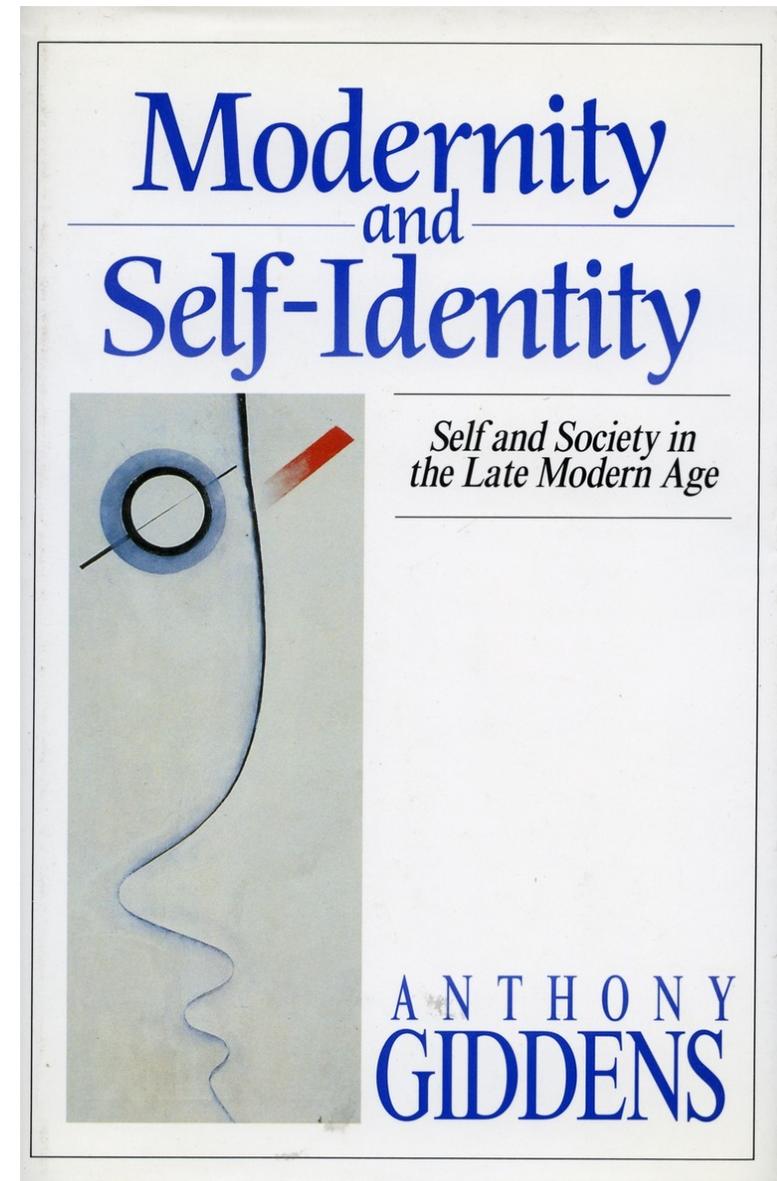
**CHAPTER 2: REFLEXIVITY, POST-REFLEXIVE  
CHOICE AND AFFECT**

'THE REFLEXIVE PROJECT OF THE SELF'   
or "REFLEXIVITY"

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## CHAPTER 2: REFLEXIVITY, POST-REFLEXIVE CHOICE AND AFFECT

### STRUCTURATION AND THE DUALITY OF STRUCTURE

'the self is not a passive entity, determined by external influences; in forging their self-identities, no matter how local their specific contexts of action, individuals contribute to and directly promote social influences that are global in their consequences and implications' (Giddens, 1976: 2)

AGENCY AND STRUCTURE MUST BE  
UNDERSTOOD AS TWO PARTS OF THE SAME  
SYSTEM - DUALITY

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**STRUCTURATION AND THE DUALITY OF  
STRUCTURE**

This was attractive to me as it helped me situate the individual subject whilst maintaining an understanding of social systems.

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REFLEXIVE MODERNISATION

Social systems are continually revised and altered in light of incoming information

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### REFLEXIVE PROJECT OF THE SELF

Social life in late modernity is distinct from pre-modern in significant ways. People living in late modernity are forced to continually revise and alter the trajectory of their lives in light of rapid social and structural changes.

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PROBLEMS! : No one likes Giddens!

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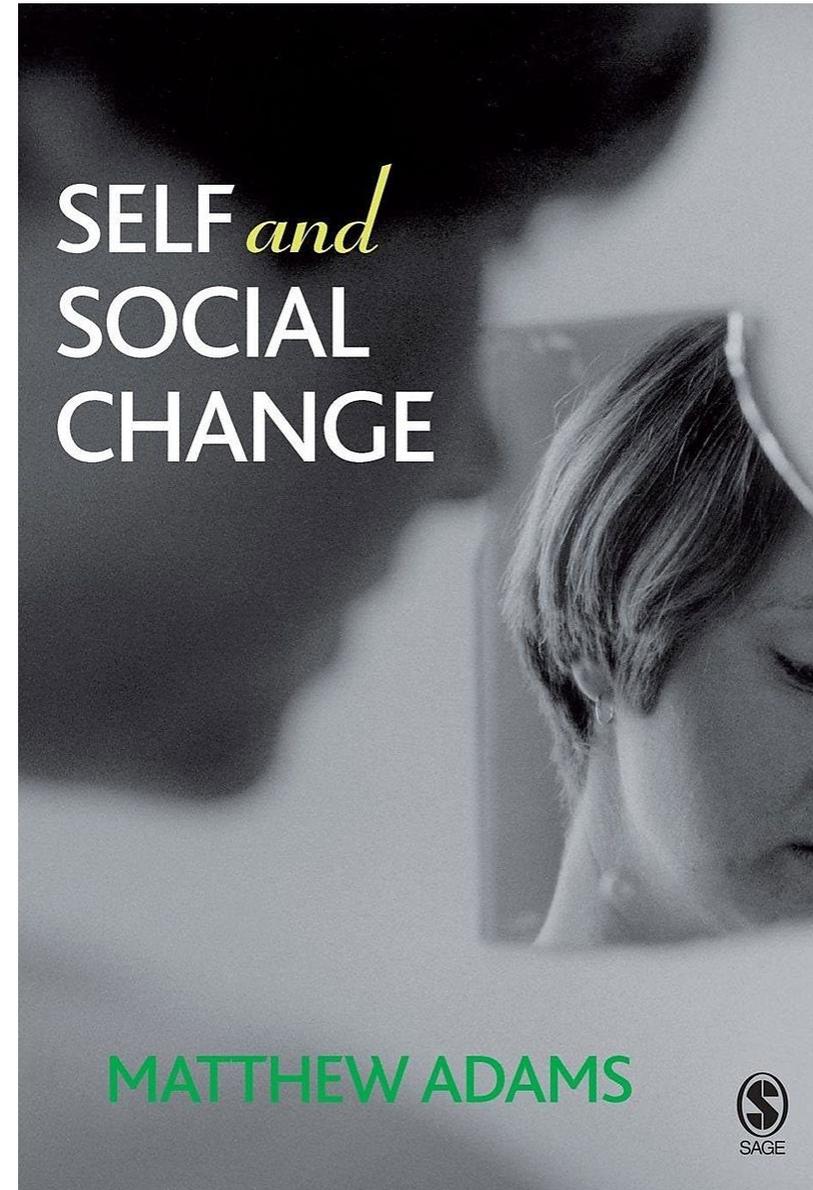
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PROBLEMS! : No one likes Giddens!

The individualisation thesis (including Giddens' reflexivity) affords too much agency to individuals and disregards structural constraint.

**GENDER – RACE – CLASS**

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**Matthew Adams, 2007: CRITIQUE OF  
REFLEXIVITY**

- Reflexivity is relational – the self is determined in relation to others – the self AS other
- The body – social systems inhabit and enact through our bodies – any problem in social theory must have an embodied dimension – bodies anchor us in time and space

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Matthew Adams, 2007: CRITIQUE OF  
REFLEXIVITY

- 'Reflexivity losers' – any universalising assumption about reflexivity should be avoided – reflexivity is unequally distributed according to social circumstances.

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“POST-REFLEXIVE CHOICE” – the social  
problem of “choice” creates a dimension of  
constraint to reflexivity

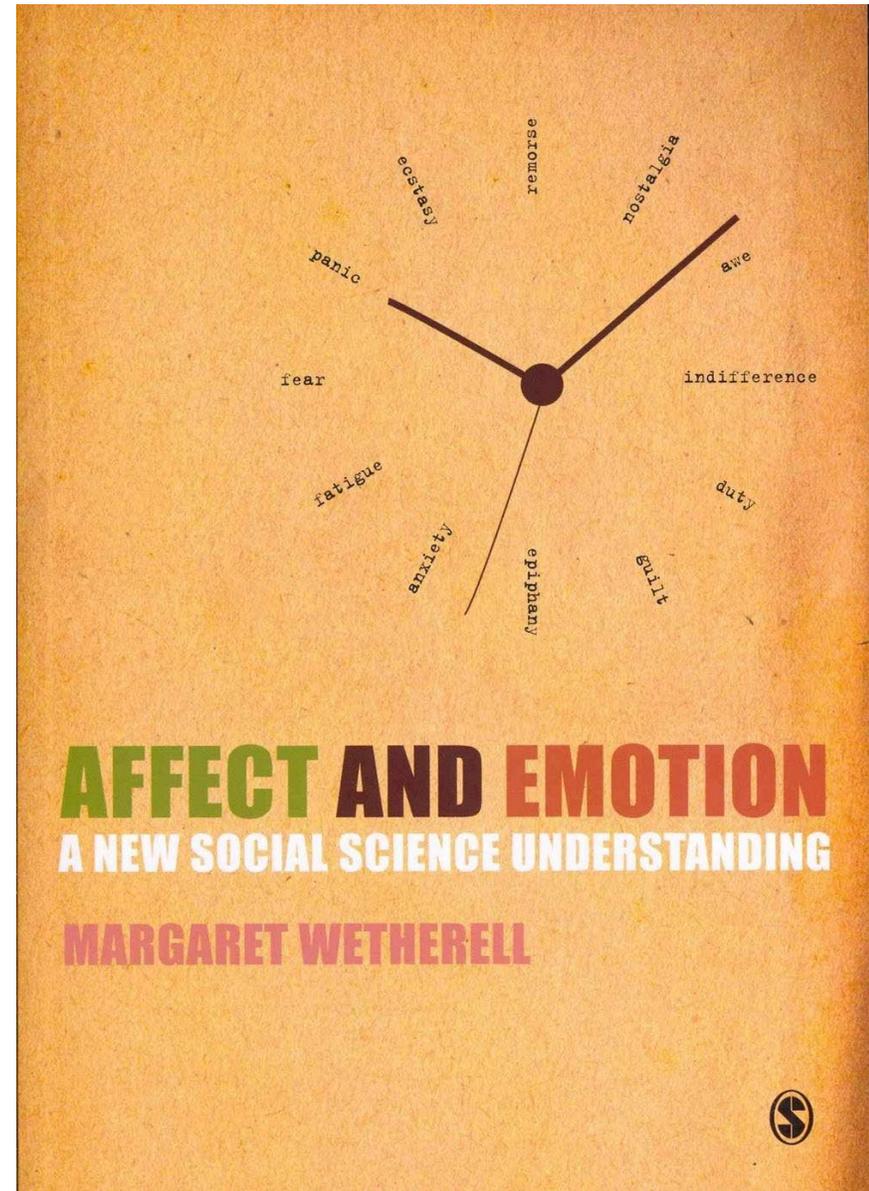
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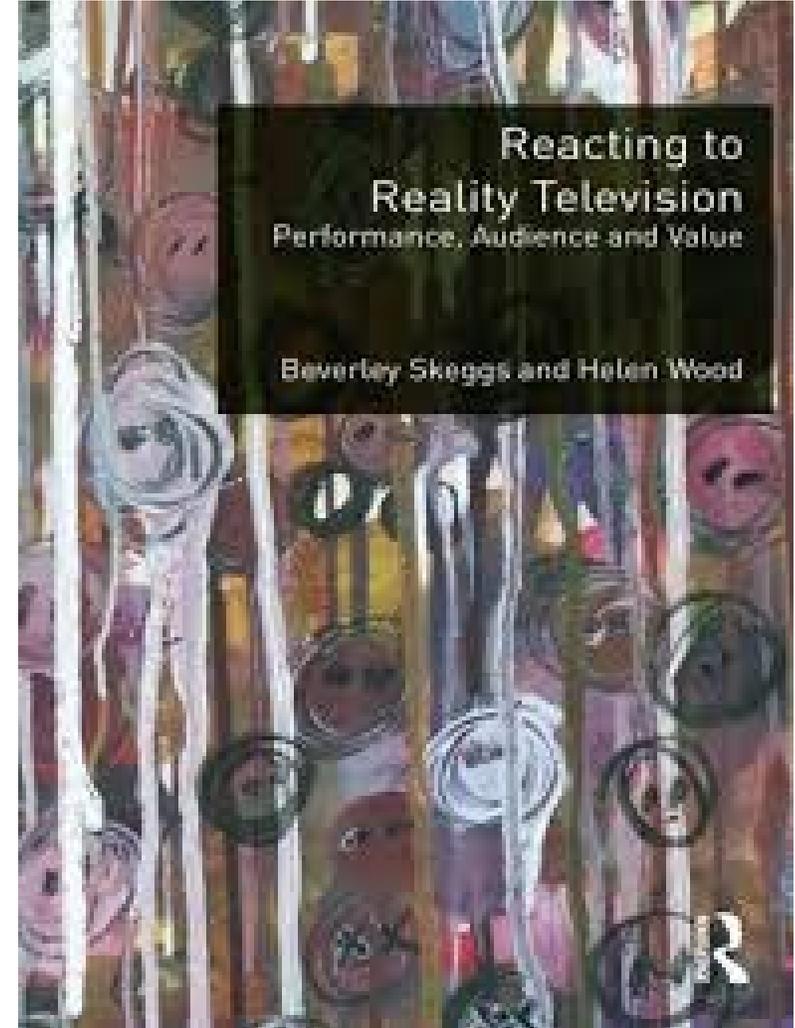
Matthew Adams, 2007

AFFECT and EMOTION – I make the argument that Adams' approach to reflexivity lacks consideration of emotions.

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Holmes, M. (2010) 'The emotionalisation of reflexivity'. *Sociology*. 44:1. 139-154.

Burkitt, I. (2012) 'Emotional reflexivity: Feeling, emotion and imagination in reflexive dialogues'. *Sociology*. 46:3. PP. 458-472.

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Affect, according to Margaret Wetherell is defined as 'embodied meaning-making' (2012: 4) that is, it is how eruptions of ambivalent and amorphous bodily feeling are made meaningful.

Emotions are understood as the coded, latent manifestations of bodily feelings.

Affect is a social process insofar as it is relational, socially coded and entwined with value systems.

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## **CHAPTER 2: REFLEXIVITY, POST-REFLEXIVE CHOICE AND AFFECT**

I argue that although Burkitt (2012) and Holmes (2010) establish an emotional dimension to reflexivity, considerations of social affect theory can help us to understand the embodied and reactive element of emotional meaning-making.

In relation to Adams' schema, affect can be understood as pre-reflexive as it precedes conscious thought.

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**LITERATURE REVIEW:**

**CHAPTER 1: Masculinities**

- a critique of hegemonic masculinity leading to a justification for a more reflexive approach to studying masculinities

**CHAPTER 2: Reflexivity and self-identity**

- establishing a framework that utilises reflexivity in dialogue with affect theory
- leads to a question of how this may be captured in data collection

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**METHODOLOGY**

*Drawing on...*

CREATIVE VISUAL METHODS

MOOD BOARDS

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## METHODOLOGY

### CREATIVE VISUAL METHODS

Gauntlett (2007) argued that CVM in research avoided a lot of the interference common in talk-based approaches.

An intuitive and creative way for participants to respond to the research query.

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## METHODOLOGY

### CREATIVE VISUAL METHODS

Buckingham (2009) criticises Gauntlett and other CVM champions for embellishing the “truth-telling” potential of CVM.

He argues that CVM has most benefit in combination with other methods – interviews, focus groups, etc.

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**METHODOLOGY**

**MOOD BOARDS**

Mood boards are used in design practice and education. Designers use mood boards to quickly and intuitively work through some of the problems of the design brief.

Mood boards are also used to communicate the abstract aspects of the design project.

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Unlike Gauntlett I want to use CVM (mood boards) not in isolation but as a form of *elicitation* device whereby the process of creating a mood board elicits further conversation and discussion about the research query.

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## METHODOLOGY

Utilising this method within the context of a focus group also has the advantage of capturing the relational aspects of the reflexive self.

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**METHOD**

1. Participants are asked to make a mood board (style board) about “masculinity”
2. They can peruse the magazines and cut out any images they feel resonate with their interpretation of masculinity – encourage intuition and gut-reactions
3. The cut out images are then arranged onto an A3 sheet.
4. Participants are then asked to explain the reasons for choosing the images to the rest of the group



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## ANALYSIS

The nature of the discussions after the pilot study suggested an approach to analysis that captured the **themes** of the discussion as well as the aspects of **self-identity**.

LISTENING > CODING > GROUPING > DISCUSSION

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**WORKSHOP TASK:**

IN GROUPS OF 4-5 APPOINT 1 RESEARCHER. THE OTHERS WILL BE PARTICIPANTS.

**PARTICIPANTS:** CREATE YOUR MOOD BOARD ABOUT MASCULINITY (WHAT IS MASCULINITY TO YOU?). TAKE PART IN DISCUSSIONS.

**RESEARCHER:** ASK QUESTIONS AND KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING THROUGHOUT THE TASK. MAKE NOTES ABOUT THE THEMES AND INTERESTING POINTS THAT ARISE. THEN PROMPT EACH PARTICIPANT TO SHARE THEIR MOOD BOARD TO THE REST OF THE GROUP

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**THEMES:**

BODY; HEALTH; CLASS; FAMILY; SEXUALITY;  
BEING ATTRACTIVE; SEXUAL EXPERIENCES;  
PARENTHOOD; RESPONSIBILITY; ROLES;  
CAREER; STRENGTH.

**SELF-IDENTITY:**

IDENTIFYING WITH OTHERS; COLLABORATIVE  
CONSTRUCTIONS; ARGUMENTATIVE  
CONSTRUCTIONS; REACTING EMOTIONALLY;  
DISTANCING; APPRECIATING OTHERS;  
PRIORITISING; ASPIRATIONS.