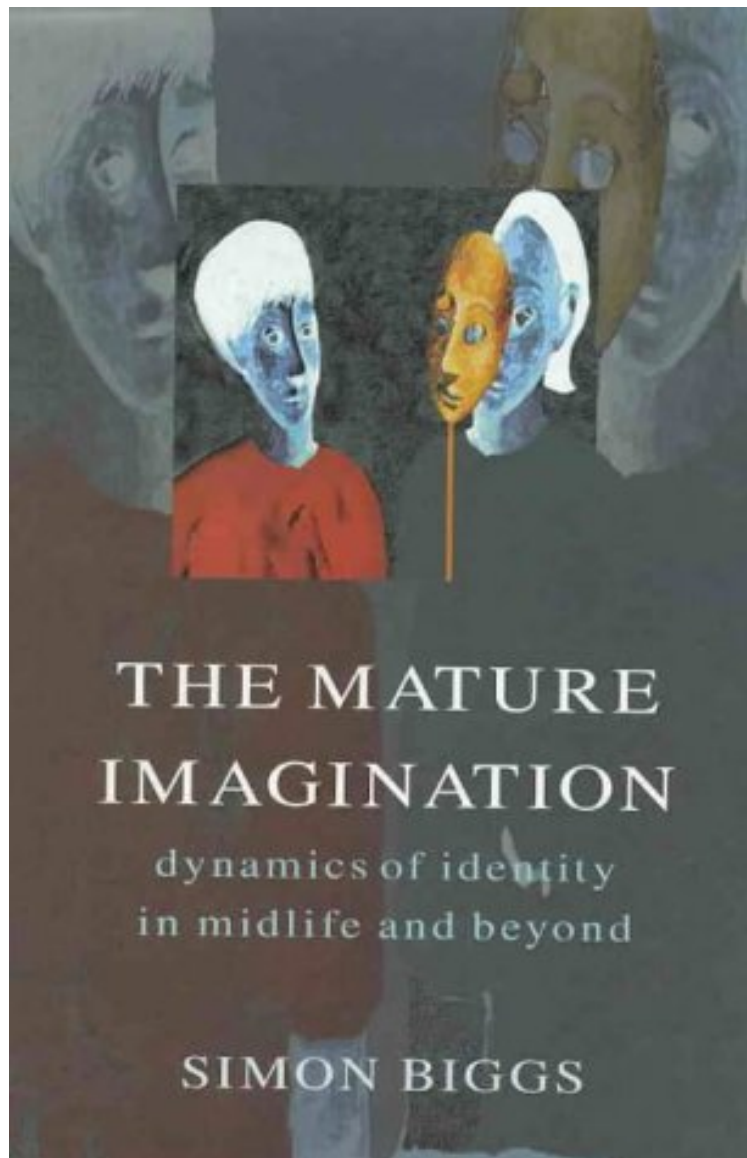


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The Mature Imagination

Biggs

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Biggs : The Mature Imagination before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mature Imagination:

* What does it mean to possess a mature imagination under contemporary social conditions?* Is it possible to choose not to grow old? * How are the core questions for adult identity to be addressed in midlife and beyond? This innovative

and wide-ranging book critically assesses notions of adult ageing as they affect people's lifestyles and their sense of personal and social identity. Drawing on an extraordinary range of theory, original research and empirical sources, Simon Biggs examines the interpretation of these changes within social theory and their implications for practice in therapy and in health and welfare settings. Biggs' argument develops a number of key concepts, and begins by assessing notions of change arising from psychodynamic and postmodern perspectives on ageing. Whilst these ideas shape our understanding, the study of ageing itself challenges easy theoretical assumptions about adult identity. The author critically assesses the contribution of these key perspectives and develops a model for combining the inner world of the mature imagination with the possibilities and uncertainties inherent in contemporary social life. Central to this analysis are tensions between authenticity and masquerade, personal coherence and continuity, and the role of facilitative and restrictive social space. The reader is invited to transgress traditional subject boundaries and draw on insights from sociology, psychotherapy and social gerontology in new and creative ways. The issues that emerge are of both theoretical and practical importance and are presented clearly and concisely. *The Mature Imagination* should be of interest to a broad range of students and practitioners in the areas of counselling, health and welfare as well as readers interested in following debates in contemporary social theory.

"This should become a core text for second year courses in sociology and cultural studies...it synthesizes a vast body of literature and a complex range of debates into a text which is at once accessible, engaging and stimulating...it will lead to students seeing and thinking about the material world in a totally new light and can be used as a way into key theoretical debates." - Keith Tester, Professor of Social Theory, University of Portsmouth

About the Author
Simon Biggs has worked as a community psychologist and as a policy adviser in health and social welfare. He is currently Reader in Social Gerontology at Keele University. He has a wide experience of working with clients, students and professional helpers and has published in the areas of social gerontology, psychodynamic theory and social policy. He is the author of *Understanding Ageing*, and co-author of *Elder Abuse in Perspective* also published by Open University Press.