

Richard Wollheim on Value and Projection in Philosophy and Psychoanalysis

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1. Introduction

Projection is one of the most celebrated concepts of the psychoanalytic corpus. Not only is it known by all who have a nodding acquaintance with psychoanalysis, but it has entered folk psychology as a concept that ordinary people use to make sense of their own psychology and the psychology of those whom they encounter in their day-to-day lives.

Projection also has a venerable history in philosophy that stretches back well before Freud. In some sense, it can be traced back at least as far as Hume, albeit his sense of projection is somewhat different from Freud's. Both Hume and Freud had a major influence on the Anglo-American philosopher, Richard Wollheim, who was a prominent figure in the second half of the twentieth century. Not only a professor of philosophy, Wollheim was an acknowledged expert on psychoanalysis (with a particular interest in the work of Melanie Klein) as well as the history of Western painting. These interests coalesced in his philosophy. For present purposes, what interests us about Wollheim's philosophy is the remarkable use that he makes of the concept of projection.

Freud introduced *projection* into psychoanalysis as a *defence mechanism*. It is a means of coping with anxiety or a painful emotion: the mind projects its own mental state onto another mind, and, in doing so, gains a measure of relief. Wollheim begins with Freud's conception of projection as a defence mechanism, however, he extends it considerably. For Wollheim, projection is capable of explaining a range of different features of human life. In doing so, Wollheim extends the explanatory power of projection into areas that it does not reach in classical psychoanalytical theory.

In this paper, I should like to investigate three aspects of Wollheim's approach to projection. First, I should like to consider his analysis of the concept. What is particularly notable about this analysis is that he offers a number of different ways of thinking about it: we quickly see that there is no single Wollheimian analysis of projection. Secondly, I should like to consider the use that he makes of these different conceptions of projection. Projection is central to his analysis of a range of different aspects of human life, and it is in these different contexts that he advances the different conceptions of projection: understanding projection in different ways enables us to see how projection is central to understanding quite different aspects of human life. Finally, I should like to point out the significance that projection has, in Wollheim's philosophy, for our understanding of human nature and human flourishing.

2. The concept of projection

What do we mean by 'projection'? For Freud, 'projection' means a particular defence mechanism. However, other theorists have used the concept in ways that have nothing to do with psychological defence mechanisms. It is worth thinking about the range of ways in which theorists have used the term, because they are relevant to an overall understanding of projection, and, in particular, to what Wollheim means by 'projection'. For, although his approach is undoubtedly psychoanalytically informed, his work is also informed by his deep understanding of the Western philosophical tradition.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the primary meaning of *projection* is "The action of projecting; the fact of being projected; throwing or casting forth or forward; impulsion or ejection." So there is the basic sense of being cast out or thrown forward. The *OED* gives twelve meanings, the ninth of which is:

9. a. A mental figure or image visualised and regarded as an objective reality.
- b. *Psychoanal.* The unconscious process or fact of projecting one's fears, feelings, desires, or fantasies onto other persons, things, or situations, in order to avoid recognising them as one's own and so as to justify one's own behaviour. Also in more common use.

Projection comes into philosophy in an important way as a means of understanding the distinction between fact and value. Facts are assertions about how the world actually is independently of any subject's particular perspective on the world. Building up a picture of reality out of facts about the world is at the core of metaphysics and the empirical sciences. So it is an important philosophical issue whether moral and aesthetic evaluations are claims about how the world is. If so, then moral and aesthetic evaluations are facts. However, there is a strong basis for believing that value claims are not facts about how the world is, but rather are claims about how the agent making the claim feels about the world.

For Hume, the good and the beautiful are not part of how the world actually is. Being good or beautiful is not the property of an object, in the way that height or mass is. Goodness and beauty are projected onto objects by subjects. For a subject to claim that an object, such as a painting, is beautiful is not to assert that it possesses an objective property, but that the subject feels a certain way about the object. Hume speaks of the way that we *stain* the world with value: how we feel about things imbues those things with value, and so claims about value are always claims about projective properties. They are never claims about facts.

In the twentieth century, philosophy famously took the 'linguistic turn', and its focus became linguistic analysis. A. J. Ayre established a way of analysing how we use language when we make value claims, and this classical statement of logical positivism is subsequently developed by Simon Blackburn in *Spreading the Word*. In some sense, this is simply a development of Hume's insight. But now the focus has shifted from understanding the relationship between fact and value (a metaphysical problem), to understanding the linguistic structure of value claims.

For Hume, projection is important for understanding the metaphysics of fact and value. For Blackburn, projection is important for understanding the way we use language when we talk about value. Both of these are doing something quite different from Freud, for whom projection is important for understanding the psychology of coping with anxiety and painful emotions.

I begin with all of this background, because I think that Wollheim is interested in Freud's sense of projection as a defence mechanism, but we can see in his work a concern with the philosophical categories of belief, evaluation, and perception, and how the defence mechanism affects our beliefs, evaluations, and perceptions of reality. So he connects up the psychological and philosophical investigations. Given these different ways of using the concept of 'projection' in psychology and philosophy, and Wollheim's psychological and philosophical interest in projection, let me begin by clarifying how we should understand the concept in his writing.

When Wollheim discusses 'projection', he is not talking about a defence mechanism. He is talking about a capacity of the mind to *project* something mental onto the world beyond the mind. The mind owes this capacity to the Freudian defence mechanism. It is only because the archaic mind has this defence mechanism that projection is possible. Wollheim's concept of projection is best understood, I suggest, as a redeployment of a capacity that belongs to a Freudian defence mechanism. Given that the mind has this defence mechanism, the imagination is then able to recruit the capacity to project and redeploy it in other contexts; contexts that are not necessarily ones in which a psychological defence mechanism has any obvious role. What is fascinating about Wollheim's philosophy is the ways in which he suggests the mind can redeploy this capacity.

3. The varieties of projection

Wollheim uses the concept of projection in a number of different ways. In this section, I shall sketch out the way he uses projection in several of his books. In each case, he seems to give a different account of projection. In the following section, I shall consider the different contribution that each variety of projection makes to human psychology.

(a) Simple projection (borrowed from Freud in Wollheim's *The Thread of Life and Painting as an Art*)

What Wollheim calls *simple projection* is Freud's defence mechanism of *projection*. Simple projection does not do much work in Wollheim's philosophy. He introduces it, in *Painting as an Art*, only in order to distinguish it from 'complex projection'. For Wollheim, simple projection does not contribute to aesthetic appreciation of art or nature in any significant way. Its contribution to our lives is limited to the role of a defence mechanism.

As we learn from Freud, simple projection is a defence mechanism through which the psychological processes of the mind's archaic mental functioning seek to cope with painful or overwhelming emotions (or feelings) by using the imagination to assign them to another mind. The mind thus gains relief in the belief that the painful or overwhelming emotion is now (imagined to be) part of someone else's psychology rather than one's own.

When Wollheim discusses simple projection in *Painting as an Art*, he takes this to be an authentic part of Freud's system. He does not claim to alter it in any way.

(b) Complex projection (*Painting as an Art*)

Complex projection is advanced by Wollheim as his own development of Freudian/Kleinian depth psychology. There is no obvious basis for the development in Freud's writing (or Melanie Klein's). Wollheim supposes that the archaic mind is aware that simple projection can only work when one seeks to project the emotion in question onto another psychological subject—it cannot be projected onto a non-psychological object and the archaic mind knows this. He further supposes that the archaic mind's awareness of the limits of simple projection leads the mind to develop a new capacity that will succeed where simple projection cannot. The new capacity is complex projection.

The idea is that I can project my fear onto you because I know that you possess a psychology (or, rather, because I regard you as possessing a psychology), so my fear could be part of your psychology just as well as it is part of mine. But Wollheim supposes that, even in archaic mental functioning, there is an awareness of the distinction between psychological subjects and non-psychological objects. With this is supposed to come the awareness that only a psychological subject could be the bearer of psychological phenomena—non-psychological objects cannot bear psychological phenomena. So, when the mind seeks to project an emotion onto a non-psychological object, rather than engaging in simple projection, it engages in *complex projection*.

Complex projection involves projecting a *projective property*, rather than an emotion. As the non-psychological object lacks a psychology, it cannot contain an emotion of any kind, let alone one of which the archaic mind seeks to rid itself. So Wollheim supposes that the archaic mind develops the capacity to project something that is not actually psychological, but which is 'of a piece' with the psychological phenomenon of which the mind seeks to be rid. Whereas I might project my actual melancholy onto you or your pet dog, I might project a *projective property* that is of a piece with melancholy onto the estuary behind your house.

Because a non-psychological object does not possess a psychology, the mind does not imagine that an object's psychology is changed when it receives a projective property. Rather, the mind imagines that the projective property changes the appearance of the object onto which it is projected. So, if I project melancholy onto the estuary, I do not believe that the estuary feels melancholy, but rather I perceive the estuary to have a melancholy appearance. (In contrast, I can believe that you are melancholy, even though nothing about your appearance or presentation has a melancholy quality to it.)

When I perceive an object to possess a projective property, it is the way I perceive the object's appearance that changes. Wollheim maintains that the appearance of an object becomes imbued with a melancholy quality when the object possesses a projective property that is of a piece with melancholy. At this point, Wollheim's account becomes murky (to say the least). He seems to claim that when I perceive an object that possesses a projective property, my experience has an emotional quality to it as well as having a sensory quality. This all gets very tricky, and Wollheim himself changes his account of projective properties. (The final version

of his argument is found in “Correspondence, Projective Properties, and Expression in the Arts” in *The Mind and its Depths*.)

It is because complex projection changes how we perceive the appearance of objects that it can make a special contribution to aesthetics. Aesthetic appreciation is concerned with the value that we attach to the experience offered by the appearance of works of art (and nature). Expressive perception makes a contribution to aesthetic appreciation because it enables us to appreciate the emotional quality of the appearance of a work of art (or a portion of nature).

(c) Love, extroversion, and value (*The Thread of Life*)

One of the central problems of Western philosophy is morality and moral value. This problem has to do with what it means for an action to be morally permissible or impermissible. Wollheim believes that such problems concerning value can be explained psychologically. His moral psychology depends upon his distinguishing *morality* from *value*. Morality, he believes, involves judgements about obligations according to which we must act. Value, however, involves judgements about the worth of objects. He further believes that he can give an account of both of these using the categories of psychoanalysis.

It is important for Wollheim that morality and value are not two ways of talking about the same thing. Morality, he believes, owes its existence to the superego and introjection. Value, on the other hand, involves projection rather than introjection. And it is not merely that these two forms of evaluation have a different origin in our psychology: they also make different contributions to it. Wollheim is fond of lamenting how ‘baneful’ morality is. He thinks that value, on the other hand, enriches our lives. In this section, I shall sketch out the way in which he analyses value in terms of projection.

In order to preserve a state of *archaic bliss or love satisfied*, presumably the state experienced by the infant when suckling at the mother’s breast, the child projects it onto the world. What happens subsequently, when one encounters an object onto which is projected this archaic bliss or love satisfied? The response to such an object does not, according to Wollheim, involve the belief that the person is in a state of bliss or that a sense of blissfulness fuses with our perception of the person. Rather, the way that we evaluate the person changes. We judge the person to possess value on account of the archaic bliss or love satisfied that we have projected onto the person.

These constitute but three examples of the ways in which Wollheim thinks about projection in his philosophy. It is, for him, an extremely fecund concept, and he recruits it in his analysis of all manner of human experiences, ranging from those discussed here to the meaningfulness of religious rituals in the essay, “The sheep and the ceremony” in *The Mind and its Depths*. But these three examples are sufficient to make a further point about the way projection contributes to human psychology.

4. Three contributions projection makes to human psychology

In this section, I shall revisit the varieties of projection discussed in the previous section. However, the focus of the discussion is different. Whereas I was previously interested in the differences between the various forms of projection, my emphasis now is on the different

results of these different forms of projection. In each case, projection changes something about the relationship between the mind and the external world. However, in each case it changes the relationship in a different way.

(a) Belief (about other minds)

Simple projection changes our beliefs about other minds. If I project my fear onto you, then my *beliefs* about your mind have changed: I believe that you feel a certain way, irrespective of whether or not you present as feeling that way.

In the therapeutic context, the interest in simple projection lies largely in the way that an analysand has set up a particular defence mechanism, and in analysis as the process through which the analysand comes to understand that projection has occurred, and why there has been a need for the analysand to project an emotion onto someone else. It is also relevant to the therapeutic relationship, because the analysand can project emotions onto the analyst, and this can assist in working through the issues that need to be investigated in order to arrive at an analysis.

For present purposes, however, what matters is not why a person engages in simple projection, but the effect of engaging in simple projection: when I engage in simple projection, what changes are my beliefs about another person's mind. This is important for Wollheim's philosophy because other forms of projection do not affect my beliefs about how the world is, but how I perceive or evaluate the world.

(b) expressive perception

Complex projection, rather than simple projection, is at the core of Wollheim's theory of the artistic expression. Expressive perception involves an experience in which an emotional quality is fused with a sensory experience, so that the perceptual experience contains both sensory and emotional aspects: the emotion somehow becomes imbued in the sensory experience. This is possible because complex projection changes how we perceive objects in the world. If I project my melancholy onto the Thames estuary (or, to be more precise, if I project a projective property that is of a piece with melancholy onto the estuary), then my *perception* of the estuary has changed: I perceive the estuary to have a melancholy quality, even though I do not believe that the estuary actually feels melancholy. It is because complex projection changes our perception of an object, rather than our beliefs about the object, that it provides the foundation for the expressive perception of art and nature.

If you can accept Wollheim's theory of complex projection, then it is not too difficult to accept that one can perceive a projective property in an object in the immediate aftermath of the act of complex projection. However, this is not enough to get his theory of expressive perception going. He needs to explain how it is that we can perceive a work of art to possess an expressive quality even when we have not engaged in complex projection immediately prior to the act of expressive perception. That is, he needs to account for why it is that our first experience of a painting can involve an awareness of the painting's emotional quality even though we have never projected anything onto that painting before. This is where Wollheim's theory gets particularly difficult. But, for present purposes, it is not my aim to defend the theory. I seek only to reiterate that, on his account of expressive perception,

aesthetic appreciation can be the result of projection, but it is the result of a particular variety of projection that changes our perception of an object, rather than our beliefs about the object.

(c) love

In Wollheim's philosophy, love gives rise to an evaluation that an object is *good* or *valuable*. Such an evaluation that an object possesses value depends, according to Wollheim, on projection. The projection of this archaic bliss onto you does not change my beliefs about your mind. Nor is my perception of your appearance changed. Rather, I now judge you to possess a particular kind of value, so my *evaluation* of you has changed.

An evaluation that something possesses value is contrasted with an evaluation that something is moral. Wollheim links the institution of morality to the development of the superego. It is the conventional wisdom of psychoanalysis that the superego emerges through introjection: a frightening voice is internalised as a means of coping with the anxiety that it causes. The superego then exercises a supervisory role over the id and the ego, imposing rules that constrain the pursuit of pleasure. This can be used as a model for understanding the conscience: the child internalises the voice of the mother, and then has an internal voice telling it what it should not do, notwithstanding the natural urge to do such things. Morality, according to Wollheim, is built on these foundations.

Whereas morality depends upon introjection, value depends upon projection, and whereas morality is baneful, value is not. So the point is that the imagination can affect our evaluation of the real world either through introjection, or through projection. And whereas the evaluations derived from introjection are baneful, those derived from projection are not.

What this sketch of certain aspects of Wollheim's philosophy is meant to demonstrate is the range of ways in which projection changes the inner life of the mind have an impact upon the external reality of the world that the mind experiences:

- Projection can change our *beliefs* about other minds (simple projection)
- Projection can change our *perception* of non-psychological objects (complex projection)
- Projection can change our *evaluation* of another person's worth (love)

So Wollheim's philosophy enables us to make a case that projection can affect our interaction with the world by changing our beliefs, perceptions, and evaluations. If projection really does all of that, it is a pretty powerful force in our life. Of course, the scholarly literature reveals objections to a range of claims that Wollheim makes. In particular, complex projection has been subjected to rigorous criticism by Malcolm Budd. A thorough treatment of the topic would require us to consider the objections in detail. For the moment, however, I am not so much concerned with whether Wollheim's programme succeeds, as much as I am concerned with what it would mean for such a programme to be successful. If projection can affect each of the main categories of mental states (beliefs, evaluations, feelings, and perceptions), then it is undoubtedly central to how we live our lives.

Projection gives rise to evaluations about objects in the real world, but evaluations can also be generated through introjection (this is the difference between love and morality). Projection gives rise to the perception of expressive properties in the real world, but our perception of emotion in the world can also be generated through our awareness of other minds (this is the difference between the expressiveness of nature, on the one hand, and human physiognomy, on the other). Projection gives rise to beliefs about other minds and does so as a way of coping with painful emotions, but it is neither the only means at our disposal for generating beliefs about other minds (and it is certainly not the most reliable), nor the only defence mechanism available for coping with difficult emotions. So all of this suggests that not only must we acknowledge the possibilities created by projection, but then consider whether or not these possibilities always—or sometimes—contribute to human flourishing.

Projection involves the imagination being exercised in a particular way. I should point out that there is a range of other ways in which Wollheim acknowledges that the imagination can affect our experience of the world. In grouping these together, I do not mean to say that these are the only ways in which he thinks that our inner life colours our experience of the external world. But these represent several different ways in which the capacity to project colours our experience of the world, and each of them depends upon a capacity that is derived from the same defence mechanism in archaic mental functioning.

5. Four conceptions of human nature

People who have no acquaintance with philosophy often assume that the project of philosophers involves a concern with the ‘meaning of life’ question. To understand the meaning of human life suggests a value question: what is the value of human life? or What is it to live a good life? But to understand the meaning of human life in this sense requires us first to understand the nature of human life: unless we understand what it means to be human, we cannot understand what is good or valuable about being human.

Richard Wollheim’s philosophy suggests a particular take on what it means to be human. And I would suggest that the concept of projection is central to his approach to being human. But before we consider Wollheim’s approach, let us briefly consider four other approaches that we find in the literature, and which give us some context for thinking about Wollheim’s approach.

(a) Human beings as sinful creatures

First, there is the classic approach of Christianity: mankind is inherently sinful and in need of salvation. That is to say that a human being is by nature sinful, and the aim of life is to overcome this state by achieving salvation: what it is to live well is to gain salvation from sin.

(b) Human beings as rational creatures

Secondly, there is an approach that has had currency in Western philosophy, at least since Aristotle, but which finds its apotheosis in Kant’s critical philosophy: to be human is fundamentally to be a rational agent. What it means for a rational agent to live properly is to think about the world in a rational way and will his actions in a rational way.

(c) Human beings as sentimental or hedonistic creatures

Whereas Kant saw the human being as fundamentally rational, Hume saw rationality as being subordinate to sentiment. For Hume, we are fundamentally sentimental creatures that are driven by passion. He regards emotions as all inherently either pleasurable or painful. So what it is for a sentimental creature to live well is to pursue the pleasurable sentiments, and avoid the painful ones. This approach to human nature might be thought to find its apotheosis in the utilitarian philosophy of Bentham and Mill. On their conception, human beings are fundamentally hedonistic: all sensuous creatures seek pleasure, and, as sentient beings, human flourishing is a matter of maximising pleasure.

(d) Human beings as erotic creatures

Finally, I should like to touch on a conception of human nature that Jonathan Lear develops in *Radical Hope*, and which draws heavily on Plato. Lear conceives of human beings as ‘finite erotic’ creatures. We are finite in the sense that our capacity to think and create is limited (and so, unlike the Judaeo-Christian God, we are neither omniscient nor omnipotent). Despite the limitations of our finitude, we are also ‘erotic’, in the Platonic sense that we reach out to the world for what we take to be beautiful, good, or otherwise valuable. To be such a finite erotic creature is to be vulnerable: our ability to grasp the true, the beautiful, and the good is severely limited by the finitude of our capacities, and yet as erotic creatures we continue to strive for all that seems valuable.

These four conceptions of human nature are by no means exhaustive of how we might conceive of human nature. But they show that what it means to be human might mean being sinful, rational, sentimental, hedonistic, or erotic. Depending which of these you regard as being central to human nature will, in an important way, influence what you regard as human flourishing or the meaning of life: for a sinful creature, it is salvation; for a rational creature, it is acting rationally; for a hedonistic creature, it is the pursuit and attainment of pleasure; for a finite erotic creature, it is being a good risk-taker. It is in this context that I should like to investigate what Wollheim has to tell us about the meaning of life, because I think that he shows us something important about the centrality of projection to human nature, and hence something about the significance of projection for human flourishing.

6. Wollheim’s conception of human nature

For Wollheim, humans are fundamentally creatures who project their inner lives onto the (outer) world in which they live. This might not sound all that remarkable, but I think that this insight has something important to tell us about the nature of being human and of human flourishing. Given that Freud was well aware of the role of projection in the way we live our lives, you might wonder why we should regard this as a Wollheimian—rather than a Freudian—conception of human nature and human flourishing. The reason is not explicit in the Wollheimian corpus, and Wollheim himself would probably have summed his position up differently. The reason that I think Wollheim makes a special contribution is that he identifies a variety of different forms of projection, and these different forms of projection affect a range of different aspects of our lives, so that projection in all its permutations ends up underpinning the diversity of experiences that are part of being human.

Through the activity of projection, the imagination gives rise to beliefs about other minds, altered states of perception, and value judgements. Imaginative, or projective, activity is not the only way that value gets into the world, that we acquire beliefs about other minds, or that we perceive emotion in the world. But it gives a kind of unity to knowledge of other minds, aesthetic experience, and value in practical life. The unity lies not merely in the role of the imagination: something about my inner world shapes the (outer) world in which I live through imaginative activity.

We live in reality, and our minds must engage with reality. It is a feature of archaic mental functioning that the imagination plays a special role in mediating the mind's experience of reality, and that, through projection, the inner psychological world can be cast out onto the outer real world, in ways that enable the formations of the mind to shape reality. This might enable the mind to engage with reality in a constructive way. But this capacity for projection might also frustrate the mind's capacity for a satisfactory relationship with reality. In a very fundamental way, the ability to manage this capacity will determine a person's ability to flourish in the real world.

7. Conclusion: Wollheim, projection, and the human condition

What does Wollheim tell us about the significance of projection for an understanding of the human condition? He shows us that projection is relevant to an understanding of human psychology, and that there are different ways of thinking about projection. But this is nothing new: the literature already abounded with theorists who have conceived of projection in different ways (e.g. Hume, Freud, and Blackburn). However, he also shows us that different conceptions of projection are relevant to a comprehensive analysis of different aspects of human life, and that a complete picture of the human condition would not only account for the role of projection, but for the variety of ways in which we need to conceive of projection in order to understand the different parts of human life that are affected by projection.

Wollheim was not a systematic philosopher. He was not ambitious for a Wollheimian school, system, or *Weltanschauung*. The result is that we find references to projection scattered across his writing. It might appear that he is inconsistent in his treatment of projection, conceiving of it in one way, when it suits a particular argument; and in another when it suits a different argument. I suggest, however, that it would be a mistake to read Wollheim in this way. It is true that he does sometimes say inconsistent things. (For instance, on complex projection, he seems to analyse it differently in several papers.) However, when read as a whole, I think his approach to projection reveals an awareness of the varieties of projection that are present within any individual psychology, and this is a strength of his philosophy.

Projection is highly involved and I think it is appropriate to acknowledge that it operates in different ways within our psychology. And it is correct to understand these as different varieties of the category of projection, rather than as discrete concepts that should not be drawn together under the umbrella of 'projection'. These are all ways in which our inner life colours our interaction with the world around us.

And it should now be apparent why the fact that we are the kind of creatures whose inner life is projected onto the world around us in a variety of ways now turns out to be important for an understanding of human nature and human flourishing.

Our earliest mental functioning gives imagination the capacity to change our beliefs, evaluations, and perception of reality. Given that we are the kind of creatures whose imagination operates in this way, what it means for us to flourish will depend on what it means for imagination to make a constructive contribution to our beliefs about reality, evaluations of reality, and perception of reality.

Flourishing might be a matter of rational agents being as rational as they can, or hedonistic creatures pursuing as much pleasure as they can. But a projective creature that is fundamentally imaginative (as we might say that an infant's mind or an adult's unconscious) does not necessarily flourish when the imagination's ability to mediate the interaction between the inner mind and outer reality through projection is unfettered. Wollheim is clear that when it comes to evaluation, the value that comes from projection is by far preferable to the value that comes from introjection (morality). He also makes a case for why complex projection makes a positive contribution to our aesthetic contemplation, through expressive perception (although it is less clear whether it makes a positive contribution to our practical lives through the meaningfulness of ritual). But when it comes to our beliefs about the world, it is surely clear that projection does not help us to develop accurate beliefs about other minds, whether or not it provides us with useful coping mechanisms in our emotional life.

Being good at using projection to mediate the relationship between inner and outer—or mental and real—would enable a fundamentally imaginative creature to flourish. This would involve imagination mediating to a greater or lesser degree, depending whether we are concerned with belief, evaluation, or perception. No creature that lives in the real world is going to flourish unless the relationship between the creature's mental life and the real world is adequately mediated. Wollheim offers us an insight into the range of ways in which projection mediates our beliefs, evaluations, and perceptions. In this way, he helps us to get clearer about human flourishing.