THE ROLE OF INTERNALISM IN MORAL THEORY

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David O. Brink, in various writings, claims that moral theorists should be moral realists.[1] However, his argument in favor of the acceptance of moral realism includes an argument to reject internalism, and Brink claims that *all* versions of internalism fail; moral theorists must accept both realism and externalism. If Brink is correct, no version of internalism can provide us with an adequate moral theory. Thus, any internalist must defend his or her theory from Brink's criticisms, and such a defense will be given in this paper. I will argue that Brink's claim that externalism, not internalism, ". . .is the appropriate way to represent the practical or action guiding character of morality"[2] is false.

I. BRINK'S CHARACTERIZATION OF INTERNAL THEORIES

Brink's rejection of internalism is supposed to be aimed at all versions of the view. Since this is the case, the fundamental problem with his rejection of internalist theories is that it fails to address the more plausible versions of internalism. Because of the way in which he characterizes internalism, Brink fails to include versions of internalism like those of W.D. Falk[3] and Bernard Williams.[4] Instead, Brink defines every internalist position as a position concerning the connection between motivation and moral *concepts*. He states that:

> . . .we can, for our purposes, formulate, internalism as the claim that the concept of a moral consideration itself [read: 'concept itself'] necessarily motivates the agent to perform the moral action or necessarily provides the agent with reason to perform the moral action.[5]

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[1] For the most complete discussion of his views, see David O. Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), especially pp. 37-50.

[2] Brink, "Externalist Moral Realism," *The Southern Journal of Philosophy*, vol. XXIV, Supplement (Spindel Conference 1986: Moral Realism), p. 37.

[3] For an account of Falk's version of internalism, see: W.D. Falk, "'Ought' and Motivation" in *Readings in Ethical Theory*, Wilfrid Sellars & John Hospers, eds. (NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1952), pp. 492-510.

[4] For an account of Williams' version of internalism, see: Bernard Williams, "Internal and external reasons" in *Moral Luck* (Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 101-113.

[5] Brink, "Externalist Moral Realism," p. 26.

By this, Brink means that all internalist theories are ones which:

> . . .claim that it is a part of the concept of a moral consideration that such considerations motivate the agent to perform the moral action or provide the agent with reason to perform the moral action.[6]

This formulation of internalism originates with Frankena.[7] Frankena considers all versions of internalism as theories concerning the analysis of moral terms, and Brink seems to be influenced by this view.

However, Frankena's formulation of the internalist position fails to capture an important aspect of internalism. Internalism does not have to rely on a claim that the concept of a moral consideration necessarily motivates an agent. Since Brink accepts Frankena's characterization, Brink argues that all internalists rely on the claim that the 'concept itself' necessarily motivates. Thus, when Brink characterizes all versions of internalism as conceptual claims about the connection between obligations and motives or reasons for action, he fails to address the internalist view in its most plausible form.

This mistaken characterization of internalism is apparent in Brink's consideration of a principle taken from Harman's defense of relativism. The principle is stated as:

> 1. To be under an obligation to do X, one must have reason to do X[8]

Brink then uses this principle to define all versions of internalism. However, his definition relies on his characterization of internalism as a thesis about moral concepts. Brink states that:

> (1) is sometimes defended as a conceptual truth about morality. The proponents of (1) say that it is "simply part of the concept of morality," that to be under a moral obligation to do X is to have a reason to do X. This position is sometimes called internalism.[9]

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[6] Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*, p. 39.

[7] William K. Frankena, "Obligation and Motivation in recent Moral Philosophy" in *Perspective on Morality*, K.E. Goodpaster, ed. (Notre Dame Press, 1976), p. 41.

[8] Brink, "Moral Realism Defended," in *Ethical Theory: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, Louis P. Pojman, ed., (Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1989), p. 44.

[9] Ibid, p. 46.

Although Brink himself claims that "sometimes" those persons defending (1) as a conceptual truth about morality call this position "internalism," he criticizes, and rejects, all versions of internalism based on the above definition. Brink immediately generalizes from this version to all other versions of internalism, and he begins to call this position by the general name "internalism."[10]

He stresses that a consequence of internalism (of any form)[11] is that:

> Since it is the concept of morality which shows that moral considerations necessarily motivate or provide reasons for action, this claim about the motivational power or rationality of morality must be a priori. Since it is the concept of morality itself which determines this fact, the rationality or motivational power of moral considerations cannot depend upon what the content of morality turns out to be, facts about agents, or a substantive theory of rationality.[12]

Brink presents an inadequate characterization of all versions of internalism, since internalism, in its general, and most plausible, form (the form suggested by Falk and accepted by Williams), is a claim that, necessarily, if any agent has a moral obligation to do an action, x, at a time, t, that agent has a motive or reason (or both) to do x at t. This general internalist claim is closer to premise 1 of Brink's reconstruction of the "antirealist argument":

> 1. To be under a moral obligation to do x, one must have a reason to do x.[13]

This is quite a different view from Brink's picture of internalism as a general thesis. Even if Brink is defining an internalist position, i.e., *one* way in which the necessary connection between motivation and obligation (or reasons for action) can be explained, he has not addressed all versions of internalism. In spite of this, Brink continually characterizes all versions of internalism as conceptual claims about morality. On Brink's characterization, the agent is either necessarily motivated, or necessarily provided with a reason for action, by moral considerations.

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[10] Ibid, pp. 46-47. See also: David Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 39 & 278.

[11] Brink, "Externalist Moral Realism," p. 28.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*, p. 52.

II. TWO VERSIONS OF INTERNALISM

Brink identifies two versions of internalism, strong and weak. His characterization of all internalist theories also affects this distinction, because both versions of internalism are identified as conceptual claims. He states that:

> Weak internalism claims that it is a conceptual truth about morality that moral requirements provide the agent with a reason for action, whereas strong internalism claims that it is a conceptual truth about morality that moral requirements provide the agent with conclusive, overriding, or sufficient reason for action.[14]

While Brink fails to notice that internalism, as a general thesis, is not this kind of claim, he does recognize that an internalist may take one of two positions. The internalist accepts the view that having an internal motive (i.e., a motive either already in--Falk's version--or derivable from--Williams' version--the agent's set of motivations) or having an internal reason (i.e. a reason based on a motive either already in or derivable from the agent's set of motivations) is a necessary condition for obligation.

However, the internalist position is divided concerning the role played by the motives or reasons for those actions we consider to be the moral ones. Focusing on internalism concerning motivation, some theorists, like Falk, claim that motives for moral actions are also sufficient reasons for action. Contrary to Brink's characterization, Falk does not think that moral motives are sufficient reasons in light of the 'concept itself.' Instead, Falk suggests that this status of moral motives is a result of:

> . . .some natural incentive to do any of these things, whether this incentive to be rooted in an innate disposition to be kind, or an acquired disposition to be law-abiding, or in the expectation of good for ourselves.[15]

The priority of moral motives is not a result of a conceptual truth. Instead, moral motives are sufficient motives for action because they involve the most important human motivations.

Other internalists reject this type of view. They claim that the motives for moral action, even though they provide a reason for action, are not sufficient. Williams holds this second version of internalism. He claims that whether the agent has a reason, or a sufficient reason, to act is

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[14] Brink, "Moral Realism Defended," p. 47.

[15] W.D. Falk, "Morals Without Faith," *Philosophy*, v. 19 (1944), p. 15.

entirely dependent on the motives that agent has (the existing elements of S). Thus, not all internalists must accept the same claims about motives or reasons for action.

III. A DEFENSE OF INTERNALISM

Since characterizing internalism as simply a conceptual claim fails to address the main emphasis of both Falk's and Williams' theories, I will focus my defense of internalism on the versions of internalism which claim that, necessarily, having a moral obligation to perform an action at a time t, entails that the agent has a motive at t to perform that action, and rely on something other than the conceptual truths of morality to determine the role which moral motivations play in determining the agent's actions. On such views, whenever an agent has a moral obligation to perform an action, that agent also has a motivation for performing that action, i.e., an agent is never morally obligated to perform an action at t which the agent has no motive, at t, to perform. How this necessary connection gets spelled out varies from theory to theory. According to *some* internalist theories, the 'concept itself' may provide the necessary motivation the agent must have in order to perform the moral action.

As Brink points out, these theories do not provide a strong case for internalism. Even though he fails to recognize that not all internalist theories make the claim that the 'concept itself' necessarily motivates, Brink identifies some problems with the internal theories that depend on conceptual truths regarding morality. His point may be clarified by discussing the three types of internalist theses that Brink identifies. The first type of internalism is labeled "Agent internalism" and is characterized as follows:

> Agent internalism claims that it is in virtue of the concept of morality that moral obligations motivate, or provide reason for, the agent to do the moral thing. Thus, it is a conceptual truth about morality, according to agent internalism, that agents have reason or motive to comply with their moral obligations.[16]

I will restrict my discussion of Agent internalism to those theories making claims about motivation. How are we to understand Agent internalism? The thesis, as stated, is ambiguous. There are at least three ways of interpreting the Agent internalist's view. First, such theorists might be claiming that the agent is morally obligated to do x and this obligation is followed by a motive to do x. Since Agent internalism has been defined as the view that the moral obligation *provides* the motive, one interpretation

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[16] Brink, "Externalist Moral Realism," p. 27.

of "provides" is that the agent is obligated and this obligation then results in a motive for performing that action. Since this version of Agent internalism claims that the agent is obligated to do x, and this obligation results in a motive to do x, the obligation must apply to the agent no matter what motivations that agent presently possesses.

Agent internalism, on this first interpretation of "provides," claims that the agent can have a moral obligation at a time, t, to perform an action x and that moral obligation motivates the agent at a time later than t to do x. Consequently, such an Agent internalist must accept the view that the moral obligation comes from, as Falk would say, "outside" the agent, i.e. the agent is not obligated to do x from within the agent's own set of motivations. Falk has claimed that a theory is an external theory if the moral obligation comes from a source outside, or external to, the agent. Agent internalism, in this first interpretation of "provides," seems to be such a theory. The moral obligation applies to the agent and, only then, the agent is motivated to act. This follows from the claim that the moral obligation to do x provides the motive for performing x. In other words, the agent is morally obligated to, e.g., feed the poor, and it is a conceptual truth that this obligation provides the agent with a motive to feed the poor.

Notice, however, that this first interpretation includes the claim that the agent can have an obligation, at t, to do x without x having any connection to the agent's set of motivations. Thus, anyone holding the above type of theory is claiming that moral obligations are external to the agent, i.e., that these obligations apply to the agent regardless of any lack of connection with the agent's present motivations. If the obligation to feed the poor provides a motive to feed the poor, then, regardless of the agent's existing motivations, a motive for feeding the poor is provided by the moral requirement to feed the poor. Since the agent's obligation to feed the poor provides the agent with a motive to feed the poor, this first type of Agent internalist is claiming that moral obligations can be temporally prior to any motives for performing the obligatory action. Such a theory is not helped by claiming that once the agent is obligated, he or she will, in fact, be motivated to perform the moral action. Claiming the agent is provided with a motive once that agent is obligated does not result in an internalist theory. Internalism, in general, claims that moral obligations are not imposed from an outside, or external, source. Thus, this characterization of Agent internalism does not seem to be internalism at all.

Perhaps we need another sense of "provides" to adequately capture Brink's characterization of Agent internalism. We can give a second interpretation of "provides" that does not claim the obligation is temporally prior to the motivation it provides for the agent. If, according to this sense of "provides," the Agent internalist is claiming that the moral obligation occurs simultaneously with the motivation, this may be some

version of internalism, but it is not intelligible. On this second version of Agent internalism each moral obligation has at least one motive attached to it. The agent is obligated to do x regardless of that agent's present motivations, and acquiring this obligation brings at least one motive with it. This is, indeed, mysterious. Some explanation of how these motives are attached to the obligations must be given, and such an explanation does not seem possible. One possible explanation of this simultaneous motivation is to claim that all agents have a desire to do what is moral. However, this seems false. As Robertson has pointed out,[17] attributing a universal desire which is frustrated in many, perhaps most, people (and these people are unaware of this desire and its frustration) is not a satisfactory explanation.

Finally, Agent internalism may appeal to a claim concerning a third sense of "provides." This third interpretation results in a version of Agent internalism that may be found in Brink's discussion of his view that Agent internalism threatens morality. Brink explains this threat as follows:

> If agent internalism is true, it would seem that our views about people's moral obligations would have to be restricted or tailored to actions people already have a desire to perform.[18]

Setting aside Brink's claim that all versions of internalism are conceptual claims, from this quote it seems as if "Agent internalism" is used by Brink to identify a position similar to the one that I have been calling "internalism."

However, even with this third interpretation, there are further problems with Brink's characterization of Agent internalism. On this interpretation, Brink has restricted this type of internalism to the agent's *desires*. According to this mistaken view of internalism, the internal theory is a theory strictly concerned with an agent's existing desires, and the internalist thesis is one which implies that all agents are obligated to do only those actions which they want to perform. However, internalists do not have to claim:

> 3. Hence, one can have an obligation to do X only if doing X would contribute to the satisfaction of one's desires.[19]

One of Williams' significant contributions to the discussion of internalism was to point out that, since an agent's motives change over time, an internalist is not restricted to the claim that an agent is morally

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[17] John Robertson, "Internalism About Moral Reasons," *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. 67 (1986), p. 129.

[18] Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*, p. 45.

[19] Brink, "Moral Realism Defended," p. 44.

obligated to do only those actions which she already has a motive for performing. The internalist claim is that the agent cannot perform actions which she has no motive to perform. Consequently, the agent must have a motive at a time, t, in order to perform an action, x, at t. From this claim, it does not follow that an agent can perform only those actions which she is presently motivated to perform. As long as the agent can arrive at (by practical reasoning) a motive for performing x from the set of motives the agent has at a time prior to t (t-1), it is possible for the agent to arrive at a motive for performing x at t.

Since the internalist accepts the principle that ought implies can, on the internalist view there can only be universal moral obligations, i.e. moral actions required of all individuals, if all humans have some motive or motives for performing those actions. The motive must either be already present in the agent's existing set of motives or be "closely associated"[20] with the agent's current motives. If Brink intends to object to this consequence of internalism, then his objection is actually based on a consequence of all versions of internalism. Internalism does, in fact, tie an agent's obligations to her motivations. The internalist reply to an objection to this consequence of internalism is simply that, whether the externalist finds this consequence appealing or not, we cannot act without a motive and, since we cannot be morally required to perform those actions impossible for us to perform, we cannot be morally required to perform actions we have no motive for performing. The challenge for the externalist is to explain how we can be morally obligated to perform actions we cannot, possibly, perform.

Additionally, the internalist does not have to base his or her theory entirely on what an agent desires. Although desire based theories are one version of internalism, the internalist claim would require a modification of 3 above. The general statement of an internalist theory would look like this:

> 3'. Hence, one can have an obligation to do x at t only if one has some motive, at t, to do X.

This change (from 3 to 3') is not a minor one. The internalist can recognize that desires are only one type of motivation. Desires to do x are a subset of motives to do x. Motives include desires but, as Williams points out,[21] emotional reactions, loyalties, and various other mental properties of an agent are also motives to do x.[22] As a result, an internalist may claim that

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[20] Williams, "Internal and external reasons," p. 103.

[21] Ibid, p. 105.

[22] If "desire" is read broadly to cover all cognitively accessible inclinations, then I will agree that statement 3 can be used to characterize

an agent has a motive to do x even if that agent does not have a desire to do x. The internalist's general claim is that, necessarily, if an agent has a moral obligation to perform x at t, that agent has a motive, at t, to do x. Thus, Brink's objection to Agent internalism must be changed by substituting "motive" for "desire." When this change is made, Brink's objection is that, according to Agent internalism, each agent's moral obligations must be tailored to those actions she or he already has a motive to perform. This tailoring of obligations to the agent's motives is only correct if Brink realizes that an agent can be obligated not only to perform those actions which the agent presently has a motive for, but also those actions which the agent could be motivated to perform by reasoning from those present motives. Brink does not adequately reject this internalist claim.

Thus, all three interpretations of Agent internalism fail. According to the first interpretation of Agent internalism, the obligation exists prior to the motive or reason. If the obligation exists prior to the motive, the moral obligation may lack any connection with the agent's existing motives, and Agent internalism fails for the same reason that Williams claims externalism fails. There is no motive for the agent to reason from to arrive at the motive to perform the moral action. According to the second interpretation, the motive is somehow attached to the motivation. If we accept this interpretation and present the Agent internalist as claiming that the obligation has some motive attached to it, this claim is not intelligible. Thus, the first two interpretations of Agent internalism result in a view that is either an externalist theory or unintelligible.

The third interpretation is closest to the view Falk originally calls "internalism." However, Brink's characterization must be slightly adjusted in order to capture versions of internalism such as Falk's, Williams', and my own. Brink's third interpretation still identifies all versions of internalism as theories that rely on the concept of morality to motivate or provide reasons for action, and this is false. Additionally, since the internalist does not have to accept that the agent's obligations are tied to that agent's desires, capturing the most plausible internalist claim requires substituting "motives" for "desires." Without these adjustments, Brink's rejection of Agent internalism, as characterized, does not reflect on internalism in general; his argument does not address the internalist claim as this claim is identified by Falk and Williams. Internalism, in its most plausible form, is the view that an agent cannot be obligated at a time, t, unless there is, at t, some connection between the obligatory action and the agent's existing motives, and this is the view that all moral theorists who believe ought implies can *must* accept.

The second version of internalism Brink identifies is Appraiser internalism. Brink states:

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internalism. However, since many externalists do not read desire in this sense, the substitution of 3' for 3 may eliminate confusion.

> Appraiser internalism claims that it is in virtue of the concept of morality that moral belief or moral judgement provides the appraiser with motivation or reason for action. Thus, it is a conceptual truth about morality, according to appraiser internalism, that someone who holds a moral belief or makes a moral judgment is motivated to, or has reason to, perform the action judged favorably.[23]

Acknowledging that Brink is mistaken in his characterization that Appraiser internalism is always a conceptual claim, Brink's comments concerning Appraiser internalism still merit some discussion.

Again, I will restrict my discussion to those theories concerning motivation. According to Brink, this version of internalism is different from the first because Appraiser internalism:

> . . .ties the appraiser's motivation or reasons for action to the appraiser's beliefs or judgments, independently of whether these beliefs or judgments are correct or justifiable.[24]

Thus, this version of internalism is not subject to an earlier criticism of one interpretation of Agent internalism. Appraiser internalism is not claiming that there is an external moral obligation and that obligation motivates the agent to act morally. This version of internalism is not a disguised externalist theory.

Since Brink rejects this second version of internalism for the same reason that he rejects the third version, I will first explain this third version–the view Brink calls "Hybrid internalism." He characterizes this third version of internalism as follows:

> Hybrid Internalism claims that it is a conceptual truth about morality that the recognition of a moral obligation motivates or provides the agent (the person who recognizes his obligation) with reason for action.[25]

The problem Brink identifies for both Appraiser and Hybrid internalism is that on either of these two versions there cannot be anyone who is an amoralist, and Brink notes that the psychological facts are that some persons simply are amoralists. As Brink points out:

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[23] Brink, "Externalist Moral Realism," p. 27.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid, p. 27.

> Though indifference to what are regarded as moral considerations may be fairly rare, it does seem to exist. Some people (e.g. certain sociopaths) do not care about moral considerations.[26]

Since Brink believes that these versions of internalism cannot allow for the fact that amoralists, although rare, do exist, he claims that internalism must be rejected.

If Brink is correct in claiming that these versions of internalism cannot allow for the existence of the amoralist, this would be a good reason to reject Appraiser and Hybrid internalism. However, Brink's claim that these versions of internalism cannot allow for the amoralist rests on his characterization of internalism as a view involving a conceptual truth about morality. Brink states:

> The (appraiser or hybrid) internalist about motives claims it is a conceptual truth about morality that moral judgment or belief motivates. According to the internalist, then, it must be conceptually impossible for someone to recognize a moral consideration or assert a moral judgment and remain unmoved. This fact raises a problem for internalism; internalism makes the amoralist conceptually impossible.[27]

Since the more plausible versions of internalism do not have to involve conceptual claims, these internalists could claim that the agent can recognize a moral consideration or assert a moral judgment and fail to be moved. Perhaps such internalists might claim that the amoralist has other motivations that always override any moral ones. On this view, the amoralist's claim that he doesn't care at all about moral concerns is an expression that the stronger motivations control that agent's behavior. An internalist also has the option of relying on a claim similar to Hume's, and asserting that moral reasoning without sentiments cannot move. On such a version of internalism, the amoralist, although he can perform moral reasoning, lacks moral sentiments and, consequently, is not moved by moral considerations. Thus, there are at least two different ways in which internalism can explain the existence of the amoralist, and neither Hybrid nor Appraiser internalism must always deny his existence.

Although I do not believe that Hybrid internalism is an adequate version of internalism or that Appraiser internalism is the best version of internalism, one can consistently maintain a version of these types of

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[26] Ibid, p. 29.

[27] Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*, p. 46.

theories with the fact that amoralists do exist. If an Appraiser or Hybrid internalist claimed that moral beliefs or the recognition of moral obligations provide a motive for action, but do not provide a sufficient motive for action, such a theorist could claim that the amoralist is a person who's moral motivations never override other motivations. Brink himself recognizes that the Appraiser or Hybrid internalist may respond in this manner, but he claims that such a response is inadequate.[28] Brink claims that this response still does not acknowledge that the amoralist can be ". . .someone who is completely indifferent to what he recognizes to be morally required."[29] Rather than defend Appraiser or Hybrid internalism against Brink's amoralist challenge, I will argue that this challenge does not require the rejection of the more plausible versions of internalism (those most similar to the version Brink labels as Agent internalism).

First, Brink does not claim this amoralist challenge (the amoralist's asking why he should care about moral demands) even applies to Agent internalism. Instead, Brink claims that:

> . . .agent internalism holds our moral theories hostage to agents' desires, and appraiser and hybrid internalism prevent us from recognizing the amoralist and, thus, from in this way taking the amoralist challenge seriously.[30]

Thus, it seems as if Brink is claiming that the amoralist challenge is not taken seriously only by Appraiser or Hybrid internalism. Assuming that Brink may want to include Agent internalism in his objection, I will provide examples of a means of consistently maintaining internalism along with the view that there are amoralists whose questions concerning moral demands must be taken seriously.

The internalist has several options. First, the internalist can claim that the amoralist is simply a person who has no motive, and consequently no moral obligation, for performing those actions which other people regard as morally obligatory. One explanation for this absence of obligation might be that the amoralist is someone who does not have the typical human motivations and, thus, does not have the typical concern for moral considerations. On such a view, moral obligations are not entirely universal; i.e., moral obligations would hold of almost all human beings (but not every human being) because the motives for performing those actions are present in most, but not all, humans. Thus, the internalist could say that the amoralist, who lacks the moral motives, cannot perform those actions usually considered obligatory and, consequently, is not morally obligated as others are. I am certain that Brink would find this reply

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[28] Brink, *Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics*, p. 48.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid, p. 49.

unsatisfactory, since this internalist would answer the amoralist challenge by agreeing with the amoralist that the amoralist's lack of concern for moral demands is well founded.

However, an internalist may also maintain that the amoralist, although indifferent to moral considerations, does have a motive to perform certain moral actions. Such an internalist could claim that moral motives are not sufficient motives for action and the amoralist (who does have moral motives) simply does not recognize the motives for performing the morally obligatory action. The moral motive could be a dispositional one (i.e. a motive the agent has, but is presently unaware of), and the amoralist's lack of concern with morality could stem from a failure to recognize the moral motive which is a part of his own motivational set. In fact, Williams could argue that the agent has a motive and a moral obligation to perform these actions because those actions are the ones the agent has an internal reason for performing. The agent's desires, aims, etc. are best served by performing that action, even though the agent may not realize it. This may be the case if moral motives are general human social motives. The agent may not realize that moral actions best promote his natural social desire and, consequently, fail to perform those actions. Williams might respond to the amoralist challenge by claiming that the amoralist has a motive and a reason for performing the moral actions. The agent is morally obligated to perform those actions because those actions are the ones which the agent has overriding reason(s) to perform. The amoralist is simply unaware of these motives or reason(s). The amoralist only claims a lack of interest in morality because he does not realize that these actions will best serve his existing desire, aims, etc.

Internalists holding differing versions of internalism may find other ways of responding to the amoralist challenge. The point is that, once it is recognized that internalism is more than a claim concerning a conceptual truth about morality, the amoralist challenge can be taken seriously. Contrary to Brink's belief, an internalist can consistently hold internalism and acknowledge the existence of the amoralist. External theories are not the only theories which can account for the psychological fact that some people claim they lack an interest in moral considerations.

Thus, all of the three versions of internalism, as identified by Brink, do fail. The fundamental problem with Brink's rejection of all internalist theories is that Brink's characterization of internalism about motives and internalism about reasons is too narrow. His general claim is that:

> Internalism about motives holds that the concept of morality itself shows that moral considerations necessarily motivate, while internalism about reasons claims that the concept of morality itself reveals that

> moral considerations necessarily provide the agent with reason for action.[31]

As previously stated, internalism is not a position that must depend on claims concerning "the concept of morality itself." In fact, it is precisely this oversight which allows Brink to conclude that only an externalist can claim that:

> . . .the motivational power or rationality of morality, whether necessary or contingent, a priori or a posteriori, depends upon things other than the concept of morality such as what the content of morality turns out to be, a substantive theory of reasons for action, or facts about agents such as their interests or desires.[32]

Internalists can, and do, claim that the necessary connection between obligation and motivation does not depend on the concept of morality. This necessary connection *can* be a result of facts about general human motivations or reasons for action. Thus, the internalist does have the ability to base his or her theory on such things as the content of morality, a substantive theory of reasons for action, or facts about agents. Brink mistakenly places restrictions on all internalist theories that are not true of the version of internalism originally advocated by Falk and the later version adopted by Williams.

IV. WHY ALL ADEQUATE MORAL THEORIES MUST BE INTERNAL

The plausible internalist claim is that an agent cannot be obligated to perform an action which she or he has no motive to perform. On this view, there is a necessary connection between an agent's motivations and that agent's obligations. The agent necessarily is morally obligated to do an action, x, at a time, t, only if that agent has some motive at t to do x. Without some connection to the agent's motives, no action can be morally obligatory for that agent. We must accept an internalist view because any adequate theory of intentional actions will support internalism.

This position is based on a feature of intentional actions--any intentional action, moral or otherwise, cannot occur if the agent has no motive to perform that action. Without an existing motive at a time, t, the action cannot occur because the agent has no impulse or tendency to act at t. The motive provides the impetus to do action x, and the agent can do x only if an impetus is present. Thus, an agent can only intentionally act when she has a motive for performing that action. There are no motive-less

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[31] Brink, "Externalist Moral Realism," p. 28.
[32] Ibid.

intentional actions. Since the principle that "ought implies can" is true, we must be able to perform an action in order to be morally obligated to perform that action. No one is morally obligated to perform actions which are not possible for her to perform. Adding to this principle the fact that all morally obligatory actions are intentional actions, we cannot be morally obligated to perform any action at a particular time, t, that we have no motive at t to perform. Simply stated, without a motive at t to perform action x, we cannot perform x at t; thus, we cannot be morally obligated to do x at t.

In conclusion, agents do not act intentionally without a motive to perform that action. Since moral actions are intentional actions, this fact about intentional actions combined with the principle that "ought implies can" provides evidence that all adequate moral theories must be internal. External theories are those which claim that the agent can be morally obligated to do x at t in spite of a lack of any motive to do x at t. Thus, the externalist claims that an agent does, or can, have moral obligations without a corresponding motive for performing that action. Externalists demand that the agent perform actions which it is not possible for the agent to perform. The importance of this fact for all moral theories is that morally obligatory actions cannot be actions which the agent has no motive to perform. All adequate moral theories must limit obligatory actions to those which are relative to the agent's motivations. Thus, all adequate moral theories must be some version of internalism.