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AN ALTERNATIVE UNDERSTANDING OF THE AMORALIST

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Mentor: Julia Driver

In this paper, I attempt to provide an alternative account of the amoralist challenge to Internalism, which provides the Internalist with a more amenable understanding of the amoralist. With this alternative understanding of the amoralist, Internalists can allow for the existence of amoralists without having to give up the core Internalist commitment. I understand the core Internalist commitment to be that there is a necessary relationship between moral beliefs and motivation. Through examining various Internalist positions, I identify several desiderata we wish an Internalist theory would meet beyond accepting the core Internalist position. I attempt to incorporate these insights into my own Internalist views and address them in relation to the amoralist challenge.

An amoralist is someone who allegedly makes a sincere moral judgment and is not motivated by this judgment. The conceptual possibility or actual instances of amoralists would therefore pose a critical challenge to the core Internalist commitment. I explore the ways in which this challenge has been developed and provide a more concrete picture of how the amoralist can be posed as a challenge to the core Internalist commitment.

Finally, I develop my own Internalist view, which puts judgment and the structure of our practical deliberation at the center of the necessary relationship between moral judgment and motivation. I argue for this position by examining the role of judgment in our practical deliberation and the entailments of judging something to be a reason within one's own practical deliberation. I then offer an account of the amoralist from this position that suggests that an amoralist can be understood as merely recognizing these moral reasons without judging them to be reasons for himself. I argue that this "recognition thesis" is able to grapple with the various ways in which the amoralist challenge has been posed.