Dreams, Morality, and the Waking World

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Abstract:

Is it ever wrong to cheat in a dream? It has been argued that the conjunction of reasonable claims about dreams with Evaluational Internalism (the view that moral evaluation is determined by factors "internal" to agency, such as intentions) entails a positive answer. This implausible result seemingly provides reason to favour an alternative theory of moral evaluation. I here argue that a wide range of Evaluational Externalist views (which base moral evaluation on factors "external" to agency, such as harms produced) are similarly committed to morality in dreams. I end by identifying implications for moral theory and philosophy dreaming.

Main text:

Compare two claims about the connection between the dreams of ordinary human beings and morality. First, there is the relatively innocuous:

> *Dream Content*: commonly, we[1] do things in non-lucid dreams which, had they
> actually occurred in the waking world, would be proper objects of moral assessment.

For instance, in one dream a person cheats on their partner and enjoys it; in another they donate a kidney to save a stranger's life. Non-lucid dreams (i.e. ones in which we are unaware that we dreaming) like these will be familiar to the reader from personal experience. Their commonality is also evidenced by the interest that disparate theorists have shown in non-lucid dreams with morally fraught content.[2]

Consider now, the altogether more radical claim:

> *Dream Morality*: sometimes, what we do in non-lucid dreams is the proper object of
> moral assessment as wrong, right, vicious, virtuous, blameworthy or praiseworthy.

If true, then there are some cases (perhaps only a small subset of dreams) where, for instance, cheating in a dream is *actually* wrongful, etc., and donating a kidney in a dream is *really* morally right, etc.[3] For most, Dream Morality will likely seem false, perhaps obviously so.[4]

It is therefore perhaps surprising that, in the very few philosophical discussions of the topic, it has been argued that the conjunction of seemingly reasonable views about mind and morality entails Dream Morality.[5] Specifically, if (i) moral evaluation is determined by psychological

states "internal" to agency such as intentions (as *Evaluational Internalists* claim), (ii) non-lucid dreams are constituted by mental states such as intentions that are of the same type as those formed in waking life (as proponents of the *Orthodox* view of dreams claim), (iii) non-lucid dreamers are not always somehow immune to moral assessment, then assuming a more specified version of Dream Content, Dream Morality follows.

Among the philosophical discussions of Dream Morality, most have thought that its implausibility[6] entails that at least one of (i)-(iii) must be rejected. For instance, Julia Driver argues that the problem lies with Evaluational Internalism and that the above argument provides reason to adopt a theory with an 'Externalist' component, such as her own view according to which the wrongness of action (e.g.) is determined by whether it systematically produces bad. Because what we do in non-lucid dreams lacks a systematic hook up with the waking world, our dream actions stand outside of the moral domain.

Here I argue that we cannot straightforwardly avoid Dream Morality by rejecting Internalism. That is, in conjunction with (ii)-(iii), and a relevantly specified version of Dream Content, a wide range of Externalist views, including Driver's, are committed to Dream Morality. At the very least, Externalists aren't in a superior position to Internalists.[7] Following this, I highlight wider implications of my argument for theorising about dreams and morality. Inter alia, I show that my argument does not clearly provide support for non-Orthodox views of dreams.

Before beginning, a caveat. My argument partially draws upon cutting-edge empirical research on dreams. As a result, at least some of the conclusions reached are tentative and conditional. However, at the very least, my arguments challenge received wisdom about the connection between the constitution of dreams and morality.

I begin by presenting what I call the 'Standard Argument' for Dream Morality. Although something like it is implicit in prior discussions, what follows is the first formal and detailed presentation of it in the literature.

1. The Standard Argument

I here clarify the four theses constituting the Standard Argument. I'll not be defending these claims, but will delineate some of the primary motivations for them. The first thesis is a general framework for moral evaluation:

> *Evaluational Internalism*: the moral quality of a person's agency, what they do, is fully determined by factors that are internal to that agency, e.g. features of their psychology such as affirmations, beliefs, intentions, and motives.[8]

As an example, consider Kant's view[9], according to which intentions underlying actions are the fundamental objects of moral assessment. According to Kant, it is in the formation of intentions (or conscious willings) that our agency is truly expressed, and where we locate the presence or absence of a Good Will. Actions – where this includes bodily manifestations – have, at most, derivative moral value (depending on the underlying intention), and their actual consequences have no bearing on moral status.[10]

Different versions of Evaluational Internalism (hereafter "Internalism") focus on other mental states, e.g. motives, but are united by the claim that the instantiation of certain psychological properties is – absent defeating conditions – sufficient for moral assessment. A primary motivation for Internalism is the thought that, at least for some moral predicates, only expressions of agency merit moral assessment. Factors external to agency, such as the consequences produced by action, are too dependent upon empirical contingencies beyond our control. Hence, Internalism attempts to minimise moral luck, at least of a *resultant* kind, i.e. with respect to the results of our actions.[11]

The second thesis is a more specified version of Dream Content (see above):

> *Internalist Dream Content*: sometimes in non-lucid dreams, subjects form intentions, etc. which had they actually occurred, would be relevant to versions of Internalism.

To understand this, it is crucial to distinguish between X occurring *in* a dream, and X occurring *while dreaming*.[12] For instance, someone might climb K2 *in a* dream, i.e. it's part of the dream's content, without climbing K2 *while* dreaming (they were sleeping, after-all!). Similarly, someone might sleepwalk *while* dreaming, i.e. they are walking around the waking world while asleep and dreaming, without them sleepwalking *in* their dream (perhaps they're dreaming about climbing K2). Now, perhaps there are some values of X for which there is a good inference from X having occurred in a dream to X having occurred while dreaming (or vice versa), but it's clear that this inference fails in many cases.

Internalist Dream Content concerns what goes on *in* dreams, i.e. sometimes, people do things *in* dreams which, by the lights of some Internalist theory, they *would* have been properly morally assessable for had they actually done so, e.g. in waking life or *while* they were

dreaming. To elaborate on an earlier example: in a dream, someone might intend to cheat on their partner. Had this intention really been formed, then it would, according to some Internalisms, be morally wrong or even blameworthy.

If 'sometimes' is understood as 'occasionally' rather than 'commonly' then Internalist Dream Content will seem plausible. Support can be found by reflection on the nature of one's own dreams, as well as from dream reports collected in empirical studies of dreams,[13] which often contain narratives involving mental activity in morally charged scenarios.

The third thesis is an historically popular view about the nature of dreams:

> *Dream Orthodoxy*: non-lucid dreams are constituted by sensory experiences, beliefs, emotions, intentions, etc. that are of the same psychological type as those formed in waking life.[14]

According to Dream Orthodoxy (hereafter 'Orthodoxy'), the distinction between X occurring in a dream, and X occurring while dreaming, collapses when X = sensory experiences, beliefs, etc. To illustrate, when a subject forms a belief with a certain content in a dream, e.g. the belief that *there is currently a pandemic*, this involves the formation of a belief with that content while they dream. Further, the belief is of a type that could have been tokened while the subject was awake. Similar points apply, mutatis mutandis for intentions, etc.

One helpful way of understanding Orthodoxy is that it characterises dreams as multimodal hallucinations to which dreamers respond cognitively and practically, e.g. by forming beliefs and intentions, somewhat akin to navigating a virtual reality simulator.[15] Of course, unlike the virtual reality devices we engage with in waking life, in non-lucid dreams subjects are unaware that they aren't engaging with the 'real' waking world.

A word about the moniker 'Orthodoxy'. Although this view by no means dominates current philosophical and psychological dream theorising, it nevertheless has had most historical popularity. To illustrate, Orthodoxy underpins traditional formulations of the problem of dream scepticism in epistemology. For instance, on one interpretation of Descartes, he thought that the ontological parity between dreaming and waking life made it possible that, while appearing to be awake and sitting by the fire, he was in fact in bed dreaming.

A primary motivation for the view is phenomenological; in dreams, it *seems* like we have sensory experiences, form beliefs, experience emotions, etc. Other proponents have identified neurobiological evidence, such as the fact that visual and motor areas of the brain are activated in REM sleep.[16] Proponents may also point to the fact that mental states formed in dreams apparently sometimes persist into waking life, e.g. emotions.[17]

Although I frame the Standard Argument in terms of an endorsement of Orthodoxy, note that Dream Morality follows – with suitable amendments to Internalist Dream Content – from the four theses were Orthodoxy true only of some subset of dreams, e.g. particularly vivid, false awakenings. Indeed, as we'll see, Driver endorses a Restricted version.[18]

The conjunction of Internalism, Internalist Dream Content, and Orthodoxy are insufficient for Dream Morality. Just as someone might avoid blame in waking life due to their being non-culpably incompetent, dreamers may be in a special condition that constitutes a defeater for moral assessment. To establish Dream Morality, we require the additional thesis:

> *No Special Condition*: non-lucid dreamers are not always in a special condition rendering them immune from moral assessment.[19]

According to this, although dreamers are in a state that is in many respects different from waking life, e.g. they typically exhibit muscle atonia, they are not always in a condition such that they are impervious to moral assessment. For simplicity, we can distinguish four types of defeater for the moral assessment of a dreamer: (1) dreamers are always absent from their dreams, and hence *they* don't do anything; (2) dreamers are present in dreams but their waking characters are never manifested while dreaming, hence actions in dreams can't really be attributed to them; (3) dreamers are always rationally incompetent, and hence are never blameworthy; (4) dreamers always lack agency and hence don't *do* anything.

Proponents of No Special Condition deny (1)-(4). For instance, in his discussion of Dream Morality in the *Confessions,* Augustine thought that dreamers are at least sometimes numerically identical to dream protagonists (sometimes labelled the 'Dream Self')[20] and hence can't escape moral censure by appeal to their disparity.[21] In her discussion of Dream Morality, Driver claims that dreamers' characters are sometimes manifested in dreams.[22] Descartes, though not directly concerned with Dream Morality, thought that dreamers are at least sometimes rationally competent. For instance, it's seemingly because of their

competence that dreamers are able to know a priori truths (*Meditation 1*). Finally, Driver assumes that dreamers can express agency and don't always act in a non-voluntary manner.[23]

As with Orthodoxy, a primary motivation for No Special Condition derives from the phenomenology of dreaming, e.g. it seems like we are at least sometimes present in dreams (in some relevant sense), that we at least sometimes seem capable of making rational decisions, etc. Further limited support for claim (2), that our waking character can be manifested in dreams, may be drawn from the *Continuity Hypothesis[24]* about dream content, i.e. that our waking goals and values are important determinants of dream content.

Although defending No Special Condition isn't my aim, let me briefly acknowledge an objection. According to a widely known neuropsychological theory– the AIM model[25] – non-lucid dreamers (in REM sleep at least) are in state similar to those suffering psychosis. Perhaps, then, dreamers have impaired (or absent) agency. Addressing this objection is beyond the scope of this paper. Note two things. First, if the AIM model is consistent with dreamers having *some* impaired agency, then what they do may still be subject to moral assessment.[26] Second, even if dreamers are incompetent, it may be that they are *culpably* incompetent, in which case they wouldn't be immune to moral assessment.

From these four claims it follows that:

> *Dream Morality*: sometimes, what we do in non-lucid dreams is the proper of object
> of moral assessment as wrong, right, vicious, virtuous, blameworthy or praiseworthy.

Before proceeding, a note about the Standard Argument's scope. Although discussions of morality and dreams have usually been framed in terms of the Standard Argument[27], Dream Morality concerns only one way in which dreamers could be morally assessable. Specifically, it targets the mental actions of the Dream Self in dreams. But there are other possibilities. Consider cases where dreamers are mere passive observers of events but *respond* in ways that are morally assessable. For instance, in a dream the Dream Self may take pleasure at an egregious action performed by another dream character. If Orthodoxy encompasses emotions, then these are genuine affective responses of the dreamer while dreaming, and perhaps some of them are morally *bad*. Another alternative is that dreaming – as opposed to doing something or reacting to something *in* a dream – is itself morally assessable. This could be because having a dream with a certain kind of content is an action, or because dreams are experiences that are morally assessable (cf. occurrent emotions). [28] Indeed, even if dreaming

is an unconscious composition process, it's an open possibility that it could be something for which agents are morally assessable.[29] Note, finally, that it's conceivable that dreamers could be morally assessable by instantiating more than one of these types, e.g. for dreaming of a certain kind of scenario, and for acting in a certain way within that scenario.[30]

Back to the Standard Argument, focusing exclusively on Dream Morality. At this stage, some philosophers have made a further assumption:

Implausibility: Dream Morality is highly implausible.

Implausibility may be held with respect to all predicates in the scope of Dream Morality or some subset. For instance, Ichikawa and Sosa only explicitly endorse Implausibility with respect to blameworthiness (Sosa claims that Dream Morality has 'near-zero plausibility'[31]), while Driver explicitly also holds it with respect to virtue, vice, praiseworthiness, rightness and wrongness (she claims that Dream Morality is 'absurd').[32] As stated, Dream Morality concerns the actuality of proper moral assessment. Perhaps Implausibility is most compelling if we focus on the possibility that what we do in dreams is *commonly* the subject of moral assessment. But, even if Dream Morality merely implied rare cases of morality in dreams, Implausibility will seem compelling to many, e.g. Driver thinks that just one actual instance of proper moral assessment of what we do in dreams is sufficient for Implausibility[33], while Ichikawa and Sosa may be reasonably interpreted as thinking something similar.[34]

Discussions of Implausibility suggest that it identifies an intuitive datum. We can bolster it by considering implications of Dream Morality. Driver presents an example of someone whose dream life is filled with acts of beneficence, but who neglects duties to others while awake. Surely, it would be ridiculous to take what they do in their dream life to have any weight in assessing their character.[35] Further, if Dream Morality were true, then sometimes, we ought to feel regret, remorse, or pride about what we have done in dreams. But, many would regard it as bizarre for someone to feel this way. Finally, if Dream Morality was true, then this implies, implausibly, that we could sometimes have defeasible moral reasons to prevent someone (perhaps ourselves) from falling asleep (so as to prevent moral wrongdoing).

Despite this, there may be dissent about Implausibility. For instance, some may interpret Freud as endorsing Dream Morality while denying Implausibility.[36] If dreams are an expression of unconscious wishes, this position may be tempting. Here is Freud himself: 'Obviously one must hold oneself responsible for the evil impulses of one's dreams. What

else is one to do with them?'[37] But caution is required. While Freud clearly thought that the unconscious wishes that produce dreams are morally assessable, it is a further question whether *dreams* are.[38] Even if Freud thought that dreams were morally assessable, it is unclear whether he believed *what we do in dreams* is. Indeed, in light of his view that the 'manifest content' of dreams – their narrative – is a 'façade', Freud claims that 'it is not worthwhile to submit it to an ethical examination or to take its breaches of morality any more seriously than its breaches of logic or mathematics.'[39] I return to Implausibility in section 4 of the paper, but tentatively assume its truth in what follows.

Endorsement of Implausibility entails that one or more of the conjuncts of the Standard Argument are false. About this issue, there has been divergence. As noted earlier, Driver thinks the problem is with Internalism, while Ichikawa and Sosa reject Orthodoxy. Both groups of authors seem to think that their own preferred view – Driver's Evaluational Externalism, and Ichikawa and Sosa's Imagination theory of dreams – avoids Dream Morality and may explain the intuition Implausible identifies. For instance, we might understand Ichikawa and Sosa as explaining Implausibility in terms of Dream Morality's dependence on a bad theory of dreams, i.e. as involving the formation of intentions, etc.

With the Standard Argument clarified, I now present a parallel argument whose conclusion is that Driver's Evaluational Externalism and similar Externalist views are committed to Dream Morality. I also show that their best reply can be given by Internalists in response to the Standard Argument. Thus, given the psychological claims (Orthodoxy, No Special Condition), these Externalists theories don't have a dialectical advantage over Internalisms.

2. Evaluational Externalisms and Dream Morality

Before considering Driver's Evaluational Externalism and similar Externalist views, let me briefly make explicit Driver's commitment to the Standard Argument. She endorses a restricted version of Orthodoxy (it is true of at least some dreams),[40] which in conjunction with Internalist Dream Content (suitably precisified), entails that at least sometimes the kinds of mental states relevant to Internalism are present in dreams. Driver makes a series of assumptions that can be thought of as constituting her endorsement of No Special Condition: she grants that agency can be expressed in dreams[41] even though there is normally no bodily movement[42](she identifies a similarity between dreamers and paralysed persons), and that *dream action* can be thought of as a pairing of willing and belief,[43] e.g. the dream action of

cheating on your partner can be thought of as the pairing of the belief that I'm cheating, and my consciously willing to do so. Further, dreamers may exhibit a "responsiveness to perceived reasons"[44], and do not always act in a non-voluntary way[45]. Finally, Driver assumes that character traits can be expressed in dreams, such as benevolence and sadism.[46] In contrast to Internalism, consider:

> *Evaluational Externalism*: the moral quality of a person's agency, what they do, is fully determined by factors that are external to their agency, e.g. the production of good or bad effects such as pleasure or harm.[47]

In her *Uneasy Virtue* Driver presents her version of Evaluational Externalism (hereafter "Externalism") with respect to the moral assessment of action and character traits (understood as complex dispositions to act, feel and be motivated in various ways), according to which right and wrong action, virtuous and vicious character traits, are each determined by whether they produce good (or bad) in a *systematic* way. Although not her focus, blameworthiness and praiseworthiness are cashed out in terms of whether blaming or praising, e.g. an agent for an action, systematically produces good consequences[48].

Driver's Externalism is a *Direct* view, as it assesses actions, etc., independently, e.g. right action isn't defined as action produced by virtuous character traits. It is *Actualist* as it bases moral assessment on effects produced in the actual world, as opposed to those expected to occur, or those that occur in a non-actual possible world. And it is *Systematist* as it focuses on systematic effects (i.e. those that are actually produced under normal circumstances) rather than those produced by a token instance. So, punching a child is wrong because that kind of action produces bad outcomes systematically in the actual world, while maliciousness is a vice because, normally in our world, its manifestations produce bad effects. It is compatible with a type of action being wrong, (e.g.), that on occasion a token performance fails to produce bad outcomes, e.g. due to resultant luck. Thus, the Systematist aspect of Driver's view enables her to capture some intuitions about moral luck that motivate Internalism.

In what follows, I refer to Externalist views that are Systematist, Actualist, and Direct as 'SAD Externalisms'. The arguments of this section apply to all such views.

In her discussion of dreams, Driver focuses on the moral assessment of action, arguing that her SAD Externalism avoids Dream Morality because, in the actual world, dream actions do not systematically produce good (bad) outcomes.[49] Although she isn't explicit, Driver

presumably thinks something similar about other moral predicates, e.g. virtue and vice are not manifested in dreams because this requires that what we do (or feel or are motivated to do) in dreams has systematic effects (which it doesn't).

I now argue that, given even a Restricted version of Orthodoxy and No Special Condition, what we do in dreams systematically produces good and bad. Thus, SAD Externalisms are committed to Dream Morality. The argument is framed in terms of rightness/wrongness, but I later extend it to encompass virtue, vice, blameworthiness and praiseworthiness.

P1: *Actions are right or wrong depending on whether they are tokens of types that produce good or bad systematically*. This is SAD Externalism plus an explicit statement of the reasonable assumption that it is only by considering *types* of action that we can assess the systematic production of good (bad) outcomes. Token actions don't have systematic consequences, per se. Rather, actions have systematic effects by being tokens of types whose instances can collectively be said to do so. Note that 'action' includes mental actions such as the belief/willing pairings Driver takes to be expressive of our agency while dreaming.

P2: *While dreaming, we sometimes perform actions that are tokens of types that produce good or bad systematically*. The justification for this premise appeals to a modest empirical claim about the content of actual dreams and a natural way of applying Orthodoxy. The empirical claim is a kind of SAD Externalist analogue of Internalist Dream content, i.e. *in* dreams, we perform actions which, were they actually performed in the waking world, would be tokens of types that produce systematic consequences. For instance, in a dream I might perform the action of cheating on my partner. Sometimes, *in the dream*, this will involve my believing that I'm cheating on my partner and consciously willing to do so. The thought is that, were this a genuine expression of agency, i.e. a belief/willing pairing, it would be of a token of a type of mental act that produces bad systematically.

Orthodoxy claims that, if there are mental actions performed in dreams which are composed of belief/willing pairings, then they are tokens of the same type of mental actions formed in waking life. In the previous case of the dream action of cheating, a natural way of applying Orthodoxy is that it is a token of a type of mental action composed of the belief that *I'm cheating* and consciously willing to do so. Further, this type of mental action systematically produces bad consequences. This is true even if this token instance of the mental action has

no impact on waking life. Compare with the case of waking physical action, such as hitting a child for fun, which, for some accident of circumstance, doesn't have bad consequences. SAD Externalisms would still condemn this as morally wrong because of the *type* of act it is. The same point applies, mutatis mutandis, to dream actions.

P3: *Dreamers are not always in a special condition of moral immunity*. Without this claim, SAD Externalists wouldn't be able to object to Internalism on the basis of the Standard Argument. And we've seen that Driver is explicitly committed to it.

From P1-P3 it follows that, C: *Dream Morality*.

If sound, SAD Externalisms are in more-or-less the same position vis-à-vis Dream Morality as Internalists. We cannot avoid Dream Morality simply by rejecting Internalism.

In reply, SAD Externalists must reject P2. Given the dialectic with Internalists, one option precluded is to deny that dream actions are genuine, e.g. rather than belief/willing pairings, they are pairings of imagined beliefs/willings. Although this might find support from the apparently distinctive functional profile of dream actions (and beliefs, etc.) [50], it gives up Orthodoxy, thus undermining the Standard Argument. I set this aside for now. In section 4, I briefly consider what follows if SAD Externalists adopt an Imagination Theory of dreams.

An alternative way of denying P2 is to argue that, although dream actions are composed of beliefs/willings, they are never tokens of a type that systematically produce good or bad outcomes. That is, the dream action of cheating is not a token of the act-type of cheating, but is instead cheating *while non-lucidly dreaming* (hereafter 'while dreaming'). The thought is that this more fine-grained type of mental action doesn't have systematic consequences. An alternative is that, while a token dream action may be an instance of several types, it is the more fine-grained type that refers to dreaming that is most relevant for moral assessment.

Whichever approach SAD Externalists take, their justification for focusing on the more fine-grained act type cannot be that it enables them to avoid an inconvenient result. Instead, it must appeal to independently plausible act individuation principles, and/or to features that Internalists and SAD Externalists can agree upon as most relevant for moral assessment.

Since both Internalists and SAD Externalists are concerned with the moral quality of a person's agency, and since moral assessments of agency are plausibly connected to the attitude and content of the person's mental states, one natural option is to focus on the content of the mental states that compose mental actions, i.e. beliefs and conscious willings (given Orthodoxy, we should hold the attitudes fixed). Specifically, if the content of such states makes reference to the fact that the subject is dreaming, e.g. consciously willing *to cheat while dreaming*, then this would provide a reason to favour the more fine-grained act individuation as our candidate for moral assessment.

Unfortunately, this is a bad proposal. Phenomenologically, it is false that we have mental states with this sort of content while non-lucidly dreaming (it may, however, be true of lucid dreams). Instead, mental states that compose mental actions while non-lucidly dreaming seem to make no reference to fact that we are dreaming. Although a conflict with phenomenology might not impress some readers, such considerations play a key role in motivating Orthodoxy. Hence, it is dialectically problematic to dismiss them here. This proposal would also threaten the distinction between lucid and non-lucid dreams, since it implies that in both, dreamers possess an *awareness* that they are dreaming. Given that the distinction is well-established in psychological and neuroscientific research, it is a serious cost to jettison it.

The alternative is to claim that we have grounds for individuating in a more fine-grained way/focusing on the more fine-grained act type by appeal to some background parameter (cf. *lighting conditions* and perceptual experience). One option is to appeal to the apparently distinctive neurochemical state of dreamers (at least those who are dreaming during REM sleep – one limitation here is that dreams occur in non-REM sleep). For instance, according to Allan Hobson's theory of REM dreams, the brain in REM sleep is 'aminergically demodulated and, reciprocally, cholinergically hypermodulated'[51] in a way similar to that found in psychosis patients or those under the influence of powerful psychoactive drugs. Perhaps then, appealing to this would justify favouring the more fine-grained act typing.

One initial worry is that, depending on the extent of the neurochemical similarity between REM dreaming and waking psychosis, it may only justify focus on a less fine-grained act typing, e.g. consciously willing to cheat *while in a state of psychosis* etc. In this context, consider Hobson's claim that "dreaming is not a model of a psychosis. It is a psychosis. It's

just a healthy one"[52] This more coarse-grained mental act type occurs in waking life and plausibly does systematically produce bad effects. So, Dream Morality wouldn't be avoided.

But even if successful (and I haven't provided sufficient reason to think so), there is a serious problem with this reply from SAD Externalists. Any plausible[53] version of this proposal – that we should favour the more fine-grained act type that references the fact that the subject is dreaming – is available to Internalists. If it is legitimate to individuate dream actions and other mental states in a way that relativises them to dreams, then it is an open question whether Internalisms are committed to morally assessing them. For instance, if a conscious willing to cheat that occurs in a dream is best individuated as consciously willing to cheat *while dreaming*, it is unobvious whether this fails the Categorical Imperative. This point is clear when considering the Formula of Universal Law: we can conceive of a world in which it is a general policy for people who are dreaming to consciously will to cheat while dreaming. Such a world wouldn't be one in which trust was undermined, for example. The point is also plausible when considering the Humanity Formula: it is unobvious that consciously willing to cheat while dreaming treats humanity, as opposed to fictitious dream characters, as a mere means. Depending on the normative commitments of the Internalism under consideration, one can imagine similar results beyond the Kantian example.

So, if successful, this reply comes at the cost of eliminating any apparent dialectical advantage for SAD Externalism. Indeed, an alternative way of putting this point is that it involves giving up Orthodoxy and hence undermining the Standard Argument. This is because the types of dream action that are being posited are not of *the same type as those tokened in waking life*. It is therefore an open question whether Internalists (or SAD Externalists) should treat them as morally on par with those found in waking life.
It might be objected that, unlike SAD Externalists, Internalists cannot appeal to the neurochemical state of dreamers as a justification for favouring the more fine-grained act type. If a mental state or action can be typed in a way that is potentially at odds with the way it *seems* to the subject, this opens up the possibility of moral luck cases that Internalists presumably want to avoid, e.g. cases wherein it falsely seems to the subject that they are doing wrong. However, their concern to minimise moral luck does not preclude Internalists from adopting this proposal. If appealing to neurochemical composition is the best way to type actions (including mental actions), or if it is a way of typing actions given our purpose of moral evaluation, then this is something that Internalists should accept. As a matter of fact,

some Internalists already allow for a gap between the way a person's agency might seem to them and the way their agency really is. For instance, in the *Groundwork*[54], Kant explicitly countenances the possibility that we may always be mistaken about the true content of our intentions, but nevertheless is widely interpreted as defending an Internalism that minimises moral luck. So, this argumentative strategy is clearly available to Internalists.

In summary: the most promising way for SAD Externalists to deny P2 is available to Internalists. Hence, its success undermines any dialectical advantage vis-à-vis Dream Morality. However, I do not take myself to have provided sufficient reason for thinking that this is a successful move. If it isn't, then SAD Externalist views are committed to Dream Morality, at least with respect to the rightness and wrongness of action.

Assuming the soundness of my argument, SAD Externalisms are also committed to the manifestation of virtue and vice in dreams. First recall that, No Special Condition requires the concession that one's waking character is sometimes expressed in dreams. Second, we have now seen that what we do in dreams systematically produces good (bad) outcomes. From this conjunction, the conclusion that virtues and vices can be expressed in dreams follows.

What, though, of blameworthiness and praiseworthiness? Given SAD Externalism, an action will be blameworthy or praiseworthy depending on whether or not blaming or praising it systematically produces good. And whether or not, e.g., blaming someone, for performing an action systematically produces good outcomes, partly depends on the type of action it is. If we maintain Orthodoxy, and dream actions are tokens of the same type of actions as those performed in waking life, then it is very plausible that some of these will be kinds of action which are, on SAD Externalist grounds, blameworthy. But then it appears to follow that the tokens of these same types occurring in dreams are also blameworthy.

It may seem dubious that dream actions get moral status by merely being tokens of a broad type that spans both waking and dreaming mental action. Appearances notwithstanding, there is nothing actually odd about this. The following analogy may help. Dream actions are similar to a case that Driver gives, of someone who is paralysed, but is able to exercise agency by performing mental actions. Even if what they do rarely produces consequences normally produced by such actions, SAD Externalism enables us to attribute rightness and wrongness to their expressions of agency. This is intuitively plausible.

In summary: SAD Externalisms are plausibly committed to Dream Morality. Thus, they are at no advantage vis-à-vis Internalist theories. In the next section, I draw further conclusions from the foregoing arguments, but also supplement and extend them by considering evidence that the token acts we perform in dreams *do* sometimes produce actual effects.

3. Other Externalisms, Dreams, and the Waking World

The foregoing argument applies to SAD Externalisms (Systematist, Actualist, and Direct). But what of other Externalisms?

Some Indirect Externalist views are similarly committed to Dream Morality. For instance, a view which defines rightness and wrongness, and virtue and vice, directly in terms of systematic consequences, but which defines praiseworthiness and blameworthiness indirectly as actions which are manifestations of virtue or vice, will have the same implications.[55]

Depending on how they are spelled out, Counterfactualist Systematist views[56], i.e. those that define moral predicates in terms of the effects that *would* be systematically produced in some non-actual worlds, which also endorse other relevant theses (Orthodoxy, etc.) may also be committed to Dream Morality. Whether or not they do depends upon the possible worlds that they consider in order to ground moral assessment. If they are worlds like our own, Dream Morality probably follows. If, however, they are worlds unlike our own, then it is an open question. But for at least some such worlds it may be even clearer that there is a systematic connection between dream actions and the world, e.g. in the movie *Inception* where agents can literally enter into the dreams of others, impacting on their psychology.

This brings us to the Systematist assumption. As stated, one motivation for endorsing this is to minimise moral luck. But suppose one is unmoved by this, and holds a non-Systematist Externalist view (hereafter 'NS Externalism') similar to that seemingly held by Classical Utilitarians such as Bentham, which defines, e.g. wrongness, of token actions in terms of their *actual* good or bad effects. I now tentatively argue that, if we maintain Orthodoxy, No Special Condition, and a suitably specified version of Dream Content, NS Externalisms are committed to Dream Morality. My argument focuses on the waking effects of dream action.[57] While there have been many studies investigating the non-trivial[58] effects of waking life on

dream content,[59] there have been relatively few considering the waking effects of dreams. But there have been some, and while far from conclusive, the results are suggestive.

Before proceeding, note my agnosticism about the correct axiological theory, i.e. about what things are good and bad. For instance, Hedonists claim that only pleasure is good, while value Pluralists might also include autonomy, knowledge, etc. This ecumenism is simply to keep the discussion tractable. My argument doesn't substantially depend upon it.

It is well-known that dreams have allegedly inspired artistic accomplishments and scientific discoveries. Driver notes the case of Coleridge's writing *Kubla Kahn*.[60] Others include Robert Louis Stevenson, who supposedly got the idea for *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* from a dream about metamorphosis. Recent empirical studies suggest that dreams affect creativity, even among 'normal' people. For instance, Schredl and Erlacher (2007) found that about 8% of dreams of "ordinary people" stimulated creativity in waking life, and 45% of participants reported having creative ideas via their dreams at least twice a year. More generally, studies suggest that dreams affect waking action. For instance, Schredl (2000) found that 47% of 'normal' subjects had a decision or action triggered by a dream in waking life more than twice in a year, and 44% of the same group reported a dream helping them to solve a personal problem more than twice a year. In a dream questionnaire study Pagel and Vann (1992) found that just over 19% of respondents reported that dreams affect decision "sometimes", "often", or "always". Studies also suggest that dreams can have an impact on social relationships. For instance, 25% of the participants in the Pagel and Vann study reported that dreams affect their relationships either sometimes, often or always, and just under 20% on their attitudes to others. More recently, Selterman et al (2014) suggests that specific dream content predicts subsequent behaviour with relationship partners the following day. In particular, dream infidelity predicted less intimacy, while jealousy or conflict in dreams both predicted conflict in waking life.

Studies also support the claim that dreams affect emotions and moods. 32% of respondents in the Pagel and Vann study reported that dreams affected their waking emotions sometimes, often or always. Kuiken and Sikora (1993) found that 13% of respondents reported that, at least 12 times in the past year, dreams had significantly influenced their daytime mood. In another questionnaire study of 85 'normal' subjects, Schredl (2000) found that 77% respondents had had their daytime mood influenced by dreams at least twice per year.

Add to all of the above the fact that, once recalled, dreamers typically share their dreams with another person. For instance, a study by Vann and Alperstein (2000) reports that 98% of the individual interviewed reported telling dreams to others, particularly friends and intimates. Thus, there is further potential for distal effects of dreams.

Additional support for the actual effects of dreams, which focuses more explicitly on what we *do* in dreams can be found in recent work on lucid dreaming. A pilot study by Erlacher and Schredl (2010) provides evidence for thinking that practicing motor skills in lucid dreams – specifically, tossing a 10 cent coin into a cup – can improve waking performance, and in a way comparable to physical practice in waking life. These findings were corroborated in a study by Stumbrys et al (2015) which focused on a finger-tapping exercise, showing that lucid dream practice resulted in waking improvements comparable to physical and mental practice.[61] It is plausible that a dream action(s) has produced this effect in waking life. Indeed, one might reasonably conclude from these studies that such actions have *systematic* effects. Now although the study concerns lucid dreaming, in which researchers are more willing to ascribe agency to the Dream Self[62], if we are assuming No Special Condition about non-lucid dreams, e.g. that agency can be expressed, it is not unreasonable to tentatively treat this as indirect evidence of the impact of dream actions *in general* on waking life.

I have focused on relatively direct evidence for the effects of dreams on waking life. Indirect evidence may be found by considering reasonable hypotheses about the function of dreaming. Proponents of the *Social Simulation Theory*[63] claim that a function of dreams is to simulate social perception, mind-reading, and important social interactions with the aim of improving them, e.g. to maintain and strengthen the dreamer's most important social bonds from waking life, and to practice social bonding skills. If correct, this further supports the claim that dreams can have effects on waking life, e.g. by enhancing our skills.

In addition to empirical support concerning the waking effects of dreams on social interactions etc., abductive support for Social Simulation Theory can be found by considering dream contents; specifically, whether or not 'some types of social stimuli, social cognition, or social behaviours are simulated actively and selectively, so that they are overrepresented in dreams as compared to waking life'[64]. Interestingly, there is some limited support for these predictions, e.g. McNamara et al (2005) provide evidence that aggressive interactions tend to

occur more frequently in dreams than in waking life, and McNamara et al (2007) provide evidence that mind-reading takes place more in dreams than in wakefulness. However, much empirical work is needed to support this model. My aim is simply to show that views implying causal effects of dreaming on waking life are taken seriously. It's also worth noting that some competing views about the function of dreaming have similar implications.[65]

This growing body of research constitutes cumulative evidence for the claim that token instances of we do in dreams have actual effects, even if those effects are not what we would expect were the same action performed in waking life.

I now consider three objections. The first is that the studies don't provide any evidence for the effects of dream actions on waking life because there is an equally good, and simpler, explanation, for what is happening in these cases: the waking effects are produced by subjects *remembering* what they did in dreams after they have woken up. These recollections might prompt further reflection and action which brings about effects in waking life. So, at best, dream actions prime subjects in certain ways, but do not directly produce good or bad effects. Hence, they are never right or wrong. In this context, it's worth noting that one of the studies cited – Selterman et al – explicitly posits a mechanism that appears germane: 'as participants recalled their dreams, the social content (thoughts, feelings, and images) was made salient in a manner similar to priming, and that predicted shifts in relational behavior.'[66]

I make two points in response. First, the remembering explanation isn't plausible when applied to the lucid dream studies. There it seemed that dream actions (practicing a task) can directly produce effects in the waking world (the subjects' acquisition of a skill) in a way that wasn't obviously mediated by remembering the dream content, i.e. it is reasonable to think that practicing skills within the dream directly produced changes in the motor system of the subjects. Put another way: the hypothesis that, in waking life, skills are acquired by *remembering that* we have practiced them is implausible. It isn't obvious why treat differently those gained while we dream. Second, even if dream actions merely prime subjects to perform further actions, such as remembering their content, this could be enough for them to have indirect effects, and for dream actions to be morally assessable. For instance, consider a case where I make a speech in which I defame a rival, knowing that this will be widely reported and cause bad effects. In this example, it is the *reporting* of my speech that produces the bad effects; my speech only does so indirectly. Nevertheless, we

might think that my speech was wrongful, precisely because of its indirect production of these effects. So, even if dreams actions produce effects in line with the kind of mechanism posited, this is consistent with their producing good and bad effects, and hence with moral assessment.

The second objection[67] is that the waking effects of dream actions don't support Dream Morality. The thought is this: at least some of the studies suggest that the waking effects of dreams are intimately connected to the exercise and enhancement/degradation of *skills*. While there are clear connections between the exercise of *motor* skills, specific dream actions, and waking effects, when it comes to the exercise of *social* skills in dreams, this is neither obviously connected to specific kinds of dream action nor to specific effects. For instance, it might be that cheating on my partner in a dream actually *improves* my social skills in waking life (cf. the Social Simulation theory of dream function), e.g. it make me more reflective about our relationship. Thus, the waking effects of dream cheating would be *good* rather than bad as they are in waking life, and, the effects of skills rather than dream actions are what we should focus on.[68] Doesn't this undermine support for Dream Morality?

I make three points in reply. First, while there may be cases in which the enhancement (or degradation) of social skills results from dream actions that one wouldn't expect, there's no evidence to suggest that this is always the case. Perhaps cheating in a dream typically results in *bad* outcomes (cf. the Selterman study). Second, and crucially, if it turned out that, e.g. dream cheating, always results in good outcomes, then, by the lights of NS Externalism, such actions are morally *right*. Dream Morality doesn't require that dream actions are morally assessable in *the same way* as analogous waking actions, and so isn't undermined (it's unclear whether this supports or weakens Implausibility). Finally, even if dream actions have effects by dint of their being exercises of skills, this merely specifies *which* dream actions are morally assessable, rather than undermining the claim that any are.[69]

The final objection is that, even if dreams can have effects on waking life that are unmediated by memory, the studies cited don't support the claim that token dream actions sometimes have good or bad consequences. This is because the studies don't distinguish *dreaming* (having a dream with a certain kind of content) from *what we do* in dreams.[70] For instance, it may be that having a dream about infidelity has certain kinds of consequences, but that the

specific *act* of infidelity was not responsible for them. Crucially, it is only what we do in dreams that is relevant to Dream Morality.

In reply, I make two points. First, and echoing an earlier point, it seems especially plausible that, in the lucid dream studies, it was the dream actions – as opposed to the general dream content – that produced the changes in the motor system, which then underpinned improved performance. We might take this as at least establishing the empirical possibility that dream actions sometimes produce effects, rather than general dream content. Second, if we assume Orthodoxy, then the distinction between dreaming and what we do in dreams will, to some extent, collapse, i.e. what we do in a dream will partly constitute the content of that instance of dreaming. Further, it is plausible that, in some cases, the salient part of the dream's content vis-à-vis waking effects will be the dream actions that partly constitute it. So, for instance, a dream in which a subject cheats on their partner will – given Orthodoxy – be partly constituted by the dream action of cheating. It is plausible that, in some cases, this action will be most salient vis-à-vis putative waking effects of the dream, e.g. being primed to reflect on the relationship. Thus, the studies may – assuming Orthodoxy – constitute evidence for waking consequences of what we do in dreams.

In sum, I regard this research as tentatively indicating that token actions in dreams sometimes have actual consequences. Thus, for NS Externalists, Dream Morality is true.

The foregoing has focused on right and wrong. Due to space constraints, I set aside virtue and vice. Assuming that waking character can sometimes be manifested in dreams (No Special Condition), it shouldn't be too difficult to see how this argument would go. I end by focusing on praise and blame. Even if dream actions have consequences, it is a further question whether it produces actual good effects to praise or blame dreamers for token performances of dream actions. For instance, even if it is sometimes wrongful to cheat in a dream, it might not produce any good effects for the subject to blame themselves for doing so, e.g. allowing themselves to feel bad about it, or for others to verbally chastise them. Surely there isn't anything to gained from praising or blaming individuals for what they have done in dreams? Presumably this is because we have little or no control over what we do in dreams (at least, non-lucid ones); there is no *point* in praising or blaming people for what they do.

However, this line of thought is problematic. Remember that we are assuming No Special Condition. Inter alia, this requires that, at least sometimes, dreamers possess agency and are rationally competent. So, there is a clear sense in which No Special Condition is at odds with the claim that we have *no control* over what we do in non-lucid dreams. Further, No Special Condition also requires that our waking characters are sometimes manifested in dreams. If that's right, then there may be a sense in which we can exercise indirect control over what we do in dreams, i.e. by altering our waking characters.

Second, even if we have no control over what we do in dreams[71], praise or blame for what we do in dreams may have good effects. Consider the following example. Jane repeatedly cheats on her partner in her dreams and confides in a close friend, Tom, about this. Over time, Tom notices that Jane's dream cheating has bad waking effects, e.g. it is strongly correlated with her having a bad temper the next day. And let's suppose that Tom believes (falsely, let's assume) that we can control what we do in dreams. This leads to Tom criticising Jane for cheating in her dream: 'Why do you keep doing that? It's really inappropriate and it's affecting your relationship. You need to find a way to stop.' While it might be unusual for Tom to do this (probably because his view about dream control is at odds with widely held beliefs), it is not implausible that it may bring about a positive change in Jane: namely, it might get her to reflect upon her actual values and goals (perhaps Jane believes the Continuity Hypothesis) and to realise that she wants out of her relationship. This would be a case in which blame for cheating in dreams comes to have a good effect, and hence the cheating is blameworthy by the lights of NS Externalisms.

4. The Standard Argument (again) and Wider Implications

I have argued that we can amend the Standard Argument to show that a wide range of Externalist views are committed to Dream Morality. We cannot straightforwardly avoid Dream Morality simply by jettisoning Internalism.

One might respond that Externalist theories or Mixed moral theories (e.g. Rossian deontology[72]) that do not morally assess purely mental actions or mental states straightforwardly avoid Dream Morality.[73] Assuming Implausibility, they would gain support from my arguments. However, aside from worries about the plausibility of such Externalist views[74], or whether Mixed views really do avoid assessment of purely mental actions[75], it is unclear whether they would in any case avoid Dream Morality. Consider that subjects who

suffer from REM sleep behaviour disorder physically act out their dreams (plausibly because the neural pathways normally inhibiting the motor system during sleep malfunction). It is not difficult to imagine cases in which subjects act out a dream thereby causing good or bad effects. While these effects mightn't be those typically linked to such actions in waking life, I've already noted that this doesn't undermine Dream Morality. So, my claim that denying Internalism doesn't clearly block Dream Morality remains intact.[76]

Where, then, does this leave the original Standard Argument and Implausibility? One might be tempted to draw the conclusion that, given Implausibility, my argument provides indirect support for non-Orthodox theories of dreams. However, aside from the fact that the denial of No Special Condition remains a live option, my argument would support the rejection of Orthodoxy only if Externalist theories, when combined with non-Orthodox theories, clearly avoid Dream Morality. But, as I now show, this is far from straightforward.

For illustration, consider two versions of the Imagination Theory. First,

Modest: non-lucid dreams are constituted by sensory imagery and propositional imaginings that are of the same psychological type as those formed in waking life.

On this view, dreams are constituted by the imaginative analogues of sensory experience (sensory imagery) and belief (propositional imagination). In the case of cheating on your partner in a dream, this may be composed of relevant sensory imagery and propositionally imagining that, inter alia, *I am willing to cheat on my partner*, etc.

Now consider another Imagination theory:

Robust: non-lucid dreams are constituted by sensory imagery, propositional imaginings, and the imaginative analogues of desires, emotions, intentions, conscious willings, etc. that are of the same psychological type as those formed in waking life.[77]

On this view, dreams are composed of sensory imagery and propositional imaginings as well as distinctive imaginative analogues of desires, emotions, intentions, etc. (sometimes referred to as *i-desires, i-emotions,* etc.)[78]. These 'i-states' are not to be confused with propositionally imagining *that* you are desiring, emoting, intending, etc. They supposedly differ from their 'genuine' analogues in virtue of their distinctive functional role and are posited to account for immersive engagement with fiction such as pretend play and stage acting, etc. In the cheating dream, a proponent of Robust may claim that this is composed of relevant sensory imagery, propositionally imagining that *I am cheating on my partner,* and, crucially, *i-willing* to cheat.

Despite differences, both Imagination theories claim that the imaginative states constitutive of dreams are tokens of the same type as those found in waking life, e.g. the i-willings that compose dreams may be of the same type as those tokened in waking pretend play.

We can now consider these theories in light of the foregoing arguments. The first thing to note is that the empirical studies cited in the previous section – that apparently evidence actual good and bad effects of dreams – did not assume a particular theory of dreams' constitution. So, we can combine these with relevant NS Externalisms to consider the moral implications of the two Imagination Theories.

First, while the Modest theory isn't committed to dreamers willing or i-willing to cheat in dreams, the empirical evidence nevertheless supports the claim that engaging in certain kinds of sensory and propositional imaginings produces good and bad effects. So, although Dream Morality isn't entailed, something similar is:

> *Dream Morality**: sometimes, having non-lucid dreams with a certain kind of content is morally assessable as right, wrong, blameworthy, praiseworthy, vicious, virtuous, blameworthy or praiseworthy.

Now, perhaps Dream Morality* doesn't give rise to a concomitant Implausibility*.[79] Nevertheless, many will at least find the implication striking.

Second, and more interestingly, the i-willings posited by Robust may (in conjunction with relevant propositional imaginings) produce good or bad effects, and hence will be morally assessable. So, along with the empirical evidence and relevant NS Externalisms, Robust is just as plausibly committed to Dream Morality as Orthodoxy. This implication also holds if we adopt an amended Robust view that denies that the imaginative states tokened in dreams are of the same psychological type as those found in waking life.[80] And it follows if we adopt a *Sui Generis*[81] view, according to which the states composing dreams are of their own unique kind, i.e. *dream willings* are neither willings nor *i*-willings of the sort we are familiar with from waking life. So, my argument from section 3, appropriately extended, supports the claim that a range of non-Orthodox theories are committed to Dream Morality.

Things are less clear if we combine these non-Orthodox theories with SAD Externalisms. The empirical evidence for systematic effects of what we do in dreams or for dreaming itself

is suggestive, e.g. with respect to the development of physical skills, but extremely tentative. We are a long way from being able to assess this adequately. Hence, given SAD Externalism, we are equally far from being able to tell whether theories like the Sui Generis view, which mark a clear distinction between dreams and waking life, are committed to Dream Morality.

Things are, however, different for the Modest and Robust Theories, which claim that the imaginative states composing dreams are of the same type as those found in waking life. For these, we can look to evidence for the systematic effects (or lack thereof) of imagination in *waking life* (as per my argument from section 2). While I lack space to consider this in any detail, it is nevertheless instructive that there is a large body of literature on the waking effects of imagination (though note that there is debate here about what *kind* of imagination is implicated, e.g. propositional vs other i-states). For instance, many think that imagination plays a central role in developing *mind-reading* capacities (the ability to understand the mental states of others)[82], which in turn effects subjects' abilities to empathise (cf. the Social Simulation theory of dream function). Others identify the important role of imagination in immersive pretense[83], engagement with (and creation of) art and fiction[84], and in delusions[85]. Given this, and SAD Externalism, it is a live theoretical issue whether or not Modest and Robust Imagination views are committed to Dream Morality (or Dream Morality*).

In sum, the connection between non-Orthodox views, Externalism, and Dream Morality is far from obvious. Thus, Orthodoxy isn't clearly left in a weaker position by my arguments.

At this stage, one might hypothesise that the combination of a non-Orthodox theory with certain well-known versions of Internalism is left better off by my argument. Let me explain. I've just argued that, when combined with Externalisms, non-Orthodox views may entail Dream Morality. But, at least in the case of certain well-known versions of Internalism, it is plausible that the combination with a non-Orthodox theory avoids Dream Morality. As an illustrative example, consider Kant's moral theory again, which bases moral assessment on the content of genuine intentions or conscious willings. On non-Orthodox views, no such states constitute dreams. That's true, even if things seem otherwise from the subject's perspective, e.g. if i-willings are phenomenally indistinguishable from willings (as per my arguments from Section 2). Hence, assuming Implausibility, the combination of non-Orthodoxy and Kantian Internalism may be better off as a result of my arguments. But more work needs to be done to adequately support this tentative hypothesis.

Any putative support from my arguments for a theory of morality or dreams depends upon maintaining both No Special Condition and Implausibility. Although not this paper's focus, let me end by saying a little about these two claims and the Standard Argument. Faced with a choice, most readers will think that No Special Condition is weaker than Implausibility, and is indeed the weakest claim of the Standard Argument. Note that its denial is open – at least in principle – to all theories of morality and dreams discussed. If, however, No Special Condition is true, then, assuming Implausibility, I've shown that several theories of dreaming and morality have a problem vis-à-vis Dream Morality. But consider a further possibility. Even if No Special Condition and the other claims of the Standard Argument (and its Externalist analogues) are true, we may only rarely be epistemically placed to tell whether the various conditions for Dream Morality have been met in a given case, e.g. whether a dream action involved the exercise of a skill, whether it produced bad effects, etc. So, even if Dream Morality is true, we may almost always be unjustified in making moral assessments of what people do in dreams, even in veridical cases. If correct, this might make Implausibility less compelling, and thus lessen the theoretical significance of the Standard Argument.

5. Conclusion

After providing the first formal presentation of the Standard Argument in the literature, I proceeded to show that, combined with reasonable views about mind and morality, a wide range of Externalist views are committed to Dream Morality (or something similar). If there is a way for Externalists to avoid this result, it is plausibly also available to Internalists. Hence, they are at no dialectical advantage. If there isn't a way for Externalists to avoid Dream Morality, then we may need to reconceive the connection between dreams, morality, and the waking world.[86]

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[1] Or at least the protagonists whose perspective we adopt in dreams.

[2] See, e.g. Augustine *Confessions,* Book X, Chapter 30, Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams,* Ch1, Selterman et al (2014).

[3] Compare with the claim that sometimes, what we do in dreams constitutes *evidence* for moral assessment of a person. See Driver (2007: 7).

[4] Some might make an exception for ascriptions of moral *permissibility*. If it's true that dreamers *do* things while they dream, then perhaps there is nothing problematic about assessing this as permissible.

[5] See, e.g., Augustine *Confessions*; Arpaly and Schroeder (2013) ch. 9; Driver (2007); Ichikawa (2009); (2016); Mann (1983); Matthews (1981); and Sosa (2005); Windt (2015a). See also Smuts (2015).

[6] Interestingly, the same is not true of psychological discussions. See n36 for more details.

[7] Cf. Rosen (2019). She briefly considers the moral implications of evidence that dreams have waking effects. My paper differs in that it explicitly discusses Dream Morality in the context of the Standard Argument, considers a wide range of Externalist theories, and responds to a wide variety of objections.

[8] Cf. Driver (2007: 5).

[9] See *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

[10] A prominent contemporary Internalist is Slote (2001).

[11] Nagel (1979)

[12] Sosa (2005: 8)

[13] See, e.g., Selterman et al (2014)

[14] For historical proponents see Descartes, Russell. Cf. Ch.5 of Windt (2015).

[15] E.g. proponents of the *virtual reality* model of dreaming, such as Revonsuo (2006).

[16] See, e.g. Hobson, et al (2000). See also, Rosen (2019) for evidence from eye movements.

[17] See, e.g. Yu (2007).

[18] (2007: 9-10)

[19] Some might include No Special Condition as part of Orthodoxy. For conceptual and presentational reasons, I keep them distinct. It doesn't substantially affect my arguments.

[20] See Rosen and Sutton (2013)

[21] See Matthews (1981) for discussion.

[22] (2007: 17)

[23] Ibid, 10

[24] See, e.g. Domhoff (2001).

[25] Hobson (1999)

[26] See Sosa (2005: 9-10) on blameworthiness.

[27] Exceptions can be found in Mullane (1965) and Hunter (1966). See also Rosen (2019).

[28] See Mullane (1965) on the possibility that dreams are actions.

[29] See Dennett (1976), for a presentation of the "cassette" theory of dreams. Mann (1983) discusses the possibility that dreaming could be morally assessable, even assuming this theory.

[30] See Mann (1983) for discussion of this moral "double jeopardy".

[31] Sosa (2005:9)

[32] Note that she thinks it's *empirically* absurd, i.e. relative to the way actual dreams are.

[33] (2007: 10)

[34] Dream Morality, and hence Implausibility, concerns only non-lucid dreams. It is an open question whether the moral assessment of what we do in lucid dreams, i.e. those where the subject has awareness that they are dreaming, would also give rise to a claim similar to Implausibility.

[35] Ibid. 8

[36] In Ch 1 of his *Interpretation* Freud discusses several theorists, e.g. F.W. Hildebrandt, who may be interpreted as endorsing Dream Morality and denying Implausibility.

[37] Freud (1925: 133)

[38] Freudians may think that dreams in some sense constitute *evidence* for moral assessment of a person, i.e. by providing material to discover their unconscious wishes.

[39] Ibid, 131

[40] See (2007: 9-10)

[41] Ibid 5

[42] Ibid 9

[43] Ibid. 8

[44] Ibid. 9

[45] Ibid. 10

[46] Ibid. 17

[47] There are also Mixed views which count both internal and external features as determinants of the moral quality of a person's agency, i.e. they have an Externalist component. For simplicity the discussion proceeds as if we face a choice between Internalism and Externalism. The reader is invited to keep Mixed views in mind.

[48] 2001, p. 77

[49] (2007: 11)

[50] One might wonder how dream states, e.g. beliefs, could have the same functional profile as waking states, given the lack of bodily manifestations. The answer proponents of Orthodoxy may give is that the absence of bodily manifestation is due to efferent motor commands being actively suppressed by neural structures in the brain stem (Hobson et al 2000) – an exception is eye movements.

[51] Hobson (2009: 810)

[52] Hobson (1999: 44)

[53] One might argue that we can individuate the dream action as *cheating while dreaming* without having to individuate the mental states that compose the action – the belief and conscious willing – in this way. Thus, the conscious willing that composes the dream action would simply be consciously willing to cheat. Internalists may struggle to avoid morally assessing this as they would the waking analogues, while SAD Externalists plausibly could. While I cannot rule this approach out, I don't see any positive justification for individuating the action and its constituents in different ways. Thanks to Fiona Macpherson for raising this challenge.

[54] §4:407

[55] For another kind of Indirect view see, e.g., Adams (1976).

[56] See Driver (2001) Ch.4 for discussion and criticism.

[57] An alternative line of thought would focus on the effects of dream actions *within* dreams, e.g. producing positive and negative emotional responses in the dreamer.

[58] By "non-trivial", I mean effects other than *remembering* or *recounting* that we have dreamt. Note, however, that if such effects are good or bad, then Dream Morality would follow (given Actualist Externalism).

[59] See work on the Continuity Hypothesis.

[60] (2007: 11)

[61] See also Schadlich et al (2016)

[62] See Voss & Hobson (2015).

[63] Revonsuo et al (2015). See the related *Threat Simulation View*, defended in Revonsuo (2000).

[64] Revonsuo et al (2015: 15/28)

[65] E.g. Barrett's (2017) suggestion that problem-solving may be a function of dreams.

[66] (2014: 115)

[67] Thanks to anonymous referees for this line of thought.

[68] Cf. Driver, (2007: 8) on the rare waking effects of dreams.

[69] A related objection: we should only morally assess dream actions if they are actions that the waking self wants or intends to perform. However, even if true, this is compatible with the truth of Dream Morality (although would reduce its scope). Further, note that the view that only states formed in waking life are morally important may ultimately rest upon a denial of No Special Condition. Thanks to an anonymous referee for this.

[70] Another worry is that we can't rely on dream reports. See Ch 1 of Windt (2015) for the claim that an assumption of the trustworthiness of dream reports is methodologically indispensable for dream research.

[71] Assessing this claim is complicated by the well-established fact that people can train themselves to transition – frequently, but without perfect success – from non-lucid to lucid dreaming states. See Stumbrys et al (2014).

[72] See Ross (2002 [1930])

[73] Strictly-speaking, this denies No Special Condition, since it entails that dreamers are in a state (temporary paralysis) rendering them immune to moral assessment. But Internalists can't help themselves to this denial.

[74] See, e.g. Greaves (2020) for the argument that all Externalists face pressure to morally assess mental states.

[75] For instance, the arguments of section 3 provide some support for claim that mental acts found in dreams can count as "acts" of beneficence or maleficence, and hence may fall under the relevant Rossian prima facie duties.

[76] It might be replied that, so understood, Implausibility is less compelling. If someone physically acts out their dream and causes bad effects, depending on the details of the case, perhaps moral assessment will seem fine.

[77] Ichikawa at least endorses Modest in his (2009), while some of his comments (see 2009: 118-9) suggest that he is open to Robust, at least for i-emotions. Walton (1990) seems to endorse Robust.

[78] See, e.g., Currie and Ravenscroft (2002) and Doggett and Egan (2007).

[79] See, e.g., comments from Sosa (2005: 9)

[80] O'Shaugnessy (2000) holds something like this view.

[81] See Windt (2015).

[82] Goldman (2006)

[83] Doggett and Egan (2007)

[84] Walton (1990)

[85] Currie and Ravenscroft (2002)

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