

THE MORAL REBEL: MEASUREMENT, CORRELATES, AND PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract

The term “moral rebel” describes an individual who refuses to comply, remain silent, or conform to others when doing so would compromise his or her values. Although researchers have identified individuals whose moral judgments reflect an adherence to “individual principles and conscience,” little attention has been given to the assessment, correlates, and perceptions of individuals who follow their own moral convictions despite considerable social pressure not to do so. The present study examined (1) the extent to which adolescents, peers, and teachers agree in their ratings of adolescents’ tendencies to be a moral rebel, (2) some characteristics potentially associated with differences in adolescents’ tendencies to be a moral rebel, and (3) the extent to which adolescents’ attitudes toward a moral rebel (vs. a non-moral rebel) are influenced by their own level of “moral rebelness” (as assessed by self, peers, and teachers). Results revealed significant positive correlations among all of the self-report, peer, and teacher ratings of moral rebelness for the entire sample (and for male and female participants considered separately). Contrary to predictions, self-report, peer and teacher ratings of adolescents’ moral rebelness were not robustly associated with any individual difference variable. Generally, adolescents reported relatively favorable attitudes toward a moral rebel (compared to a non-moral rebel), especially when they themselves had heightened ratings on this characteristic. The implications and limitations of the present findings, as well as directions for future research on the topic of moral rebelness in adolescents, are addressed.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Through reviewing the rich history of the psychological study of morality, it is evident that many theorists and researchers have strived to identify different types of extraordinary or exceptional moral behavior. This research tends to “define” exceptional moral behavior as prosocial action that is atypical and that positively exceeds mainstream expectations for a particular behavior. Individuals who have engaged in exceptional moral behavior that has been subject to psychological research include (but are not limited to) influential social activists (Colby & Damon, 1992; Haste & Hogan, 2006), caring volunteers (Hart & Fegley, 1995), humanitarians, heroes and altruistic individuals (Monroe, 2002), moral role models (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997, 2000), and even religious leaders (Smith, 2003). However, unlike previous research investigating the principles and moral scruples of exceptional moral individuals within our society, the present study sought to identify and examine a specific type of moral extraordinaire, the moral rebel.

The term “moral rebel” is new to psychological inquiry and was introduced by Monin, Sawyer, and Marquez (2008). These authors described a moral rebel as an individual “who often takes a principled stand against the status quo, who refuses to comply, stay silent, or simply go along when this would require they compromise their values” (p. 76-77)¹. Although the label of moral rebel is fairly new, individuals with related characteristics have been studied in various domains. For example, within Industrial/Organizational Psychology, the prosocial behavior of “principled organizational dissent” refers to behaviors of employees who challenge organizational policies because these policies violate a personal standard of fairness or honesty (Piliavin, Grube, & Callero, 2002). Whistle-blowers are an obvious example of principled organizational decent by employees, as these individuals report concealed problematic behaviors

because they believe it is wrong not to do so. Within the social psychological research, moral rebelness may be attributed to the one-third of participants in Milgram's (1974) classic obedience study who refused to shock a "victim" to full strength. Similarly, in Asch's (1956) early conformity study, rebelness was present when only a few participants courageously gave a correct answer when surrounded by confederates all voicing an incorrect answer. Further, within developmental psychology, the idea of the moral rebel is nicely illustrated in stage six, individual principles and conscience, of Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development (1973, 1976). In this stage of moral reasoning, the moral perspective of an individual is grounded in his or her internalized beliefs of right and wrong. An individual in this stage believes that moral action should be guided by what his/her conscience determines to be proper, not by what is expected, legal, or previously agreed upon.

In sum, there is evidence to support the existence of exceptional moral individuals. However, few studies have focused specifically on individuals who stand up for their beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures not to do so. Perhaps by investigating factors associated with being a moral rebel and perceptions of a moral rebel, a better understanding of this exceptional moral individual can be achieved. Thus, the purposes of the current study were to examine (1) if moral rebelness can be reliably measured, (2) some characteristics that may be associated with being a moral rebel, and (3) some factors potentially associated with adolescents' perceptions of a hypothetical moral rebel.

Measuring Moral Rebelness

Researchers have long attempted to identify different types of individuals, moral and non-moral alike. In their pursuit of the moral individual, psychologists have examined a broad range of morally relevant behaviors including (but not limited to) helping, empathy, forgiveness,

honesty, generosity, cooperation, and altruism. Given that measuring different types of moral behavior is a common inquiry, many valid and reliable research methods have been developed. Common methods utilized when examining adolescents' characteristics and behaviors include paper and pencil self-report measures as well as sociometric and teacher ratings. Because an adolescent sample was utilized in the current study, literature supporting the criterion related validity of these methods with this age group will be reported to provide support for employing these methods when attempting to measure moral rebelness².

Self-Report Measure

Self-report measures are one of the most common methods used to learn about people's attitudes, behaviors, and cognitions. These measures have a long history in psychology and have provided valid and reliable measures of moral behaviors. For example, by means of self-report measures and behavioral observations, Laible, Eye, and Carlo (2008) investigated if different aspects of self-reported conscience (moral affect and moral cognitions) in adolescents are linked with behavioral observations of prosocial behavior (e.g., more helping of the victims of bullying). Results revealed that higher levels of moral affect and cognition were associated with less participation in bullying and more frequent helping of the victims of bullying (Laible et al., 2008). Consequently, this research demonstrates that adolescents' self-reports of conscience may serve as valid measures associated with observations of morally relevant behavior.

Further support for using self-report measures with adolescents comes from research conducted by Aquino and Reed (2002). These researchers examined if self-reported moral identity predicts donation behavior. Specifically, these authors administered a 10-item self-report measure of moral identity to adolescents followed three months later by an opportunity to engage in a moral act. The moral act was the opportunity to donate canned food to the needy as

part of a broader school based program to promote civic involvement and participation. Aquino and Reed (2002) found that the stronger an adolescent's self-reported moral identity, the more likely he/she was to donate and the greater the number of canned foods donated. Similar to the research conducted by Laible et al. (2008), the study conducted by Aquino and Reed (2002) provides a good example of how self-report measures may serve as a valid approach to studying variables associated with morality in adolescents.

The morally relevant behaviors of generosity and helpfulness have also been investigated through the use of self-report measures and observations of behavior. For example, Carlo, Hausmann, Christiansen, and Randall (2003) examined if self-report measures of generosity and helpfulness related to observations of adolescents' generous and helpful behavior towards peers in various school settings. Results revealed a strong positive relationship between scores on the self-report scales of generosity and helpfulness and observations of these behaviors in the school context.

Given the aforementioned research demonstrating the potential usefulness of self-report measures in the moral domain, the current study will attempt to measure moral rebelness using this method. Because investigations identifying and measuring moral rebelness have yet to be conducted, a self-report measure of moral rebelness was created. A review of the literature yielded a Measure of Susceptibility to Social Influence (MSSI; Bobier, 2002) applicable to measuring the individual difference variable of being a moral rebel. The MSSI was designed to assess possible responses to social influence pressure and is applicable to measuring moral rebelness as items on this scale assess an individual's desire to remain independent of others' beliefs and behaviors. This independence arises because some individuals find it "morally difficult" to say or do things that they do not believe. Their refusal to go along with others is not

derived from a desire to be stubborn or contrary; instead, it is a result of the desire to adhere to their beliefs even in the face of opposition. The newly developed trait measure of moral rebellion initially consisted of nine items adapted from the MSSSI (Bobier, 2002). These items measure the extent to which adolescents refuse to go along with others, but instead have a desire to adhere to their beliefs even in the face of conformity pressures to comply (see Method and Appendix A for a complete description of the self-report moral rebel measure). All second-level subheads in the template use Heading 3. If you need to add another subhead level within Heading 3, use Heading 4 as shown below.

Peer and Teacher Measures

A self-report measure may serve as one method of acquiring information about an individual's characteristics and behaviors. Another popular method of acquiring information about a wide range of adolescent characteristics and behaviors is to ask those who are likely to observe the adolescent's actions, such as peers and teachers. A common method for examining adolescents' behaviors or characteristics is a sociometric rating. A sociometric rating occurs when adolescents in a particular classroom or group rate each of their peers on a specific characteristic or behavior. The following section will present research that supports utilizing this method when investigating a wide range of morally relevant behaviors.

Sociometric Rating

To examine the relationship between psychological understanding and positive social behaviors, Cassidy, Werner, Rourke, Zubernis, and Balaraman (2003) utilized self-report, sociometric ratings, and classroom observations. Adolescent participants were first administered measures of mental and emotional understanding; these measures were then followed by peer

ratings and classroom observations of positive social behavior (e.g., assisting, helping, borrowing). Results revealed that peer ratings and observations of prosocial classroom behaviors were highly positively related, indicating that peers' perceptions of their classmates' behaviors accurately reflected the researchers' systematic observations.

In a related study reported earlier, Carlo et al. (2003) examined if peer ratings of generosity and helpfulness related to observations of adolescents' generous and helpful behaviors towards peers in various school settings. Consistent with the researchers' findings for self-report measures (see above), peers' reports of their classmates' helpful and generous behaviors were found to be significantly positively related to observations of these behaviors in the school context. The Cassidy et al. (2003) and Carlo et al. (2003) studies support the use of sociometric ratings as a method to assess morally relevant characteristics in adolescent samples.

Given that there are studies to support the usefulness of peer ratings in assessing adolescents' morally relevant characteristics and behaviors, the present study gathered sociometric data to supplement the newly developed self-report measure of moral rebellion. Initially, the characteristics of a moral rebel (e.g., someone who stands up for his/her beliefs in spite of pressures to conform) were described to the adolescent participants. They then rated each of their classmates (as well as themselves) on the tendency to behave like a moral rebel (see Method section and Appendix B for a complete description of the sociometric measure).

Teacher Rating

Besides self-report measures and peer ratings, researchers have also relied on the use of teacher ratings when trying to assess the morally relevant behaviors or characteristics of adolescents. A teacher rating occurs when a teacher rates each of his/her students on a specific characteristic or behavior (using a single-item or multi-item measure). Support for the use of

teacher ratings was found in a study examining the relationships among emotional expressiveness, empathy, and prosocial behaviors in a group of adolescents (Roberts & Strayer, 1996). Emotional expressiveness and empathy were evaluated by measuring facial and verbal responses to emotionally evocative videotapes and by ratings from teachers. Adolescents' prosocial behaviors were assessed using teacher ratings and observations of helping behavior during three laboratory tasks. Results revealed that teacher ratings of emotional expressiveness and empathy were positively related to observations of emotional expressive and empathic responses during the emotionally charged videotapes. In addition, teachers' assessments of adolescents' prosocial behaviors were robustly associated with helping behaviors across all three laboratory tasks. Roberts and Strayer (1996) concluded that teachers are able to provide valid assessments of adolescents' prosocial characteristics and behaviors, as their ratings corresponded to actual observed behavior.

Further support for the use of teacher ratings comes from a study that examined adolescents' ability to integrate the perspectives of others (perspective taking) when making choices about engaging in prosocial and avoiding antisocial behaviors (Lenhart & Rabiner, 1995). Teachers completed rating forms assessing adolescents' level of aggression and competence in understanding others' perspectives. Classroom observations were used to examine adolescents' prosocial and antisocial behaviors. Results revealed that adolescents who were rated by teachers as having heightened capacities to understand others' perspectives were observed engaging in fewer antisocial and more prosocial behaviors than other adolescents. In addition, adolescents who were rated as relatively unaggressive by teachers were also observed engaging in fewer antisocial behaviors (but not more prosocial behaviors) than classmates rated as more aggressive by teachers.

The findings from the studies by Roberts and Strayer (1996) and Lenhart and Rabiner (1995) give credence to examining teacher ratings of adolescents' morally relevant behaviors. Therefore, in addition to self and peer ratings, the present study gathered teacher ratings of the extent to which adolescents display the characteristics of a moral rebel. The rating form given to teachers paralleled the sociometric rating form completed by peers (see Method and Appendix C for a complete description of this measure).

Relations Among Self-Report, Peer, and Teacher Ratings

In addition to the direct link between observed behavior and self-report, peer, and teacher ratings of behavior (criterion related validity), previous research has also examined the degree of concordance among raters (inter rater reliability). To provide further support for the use of these measures in the present study, research examining the degree to which different raters agree in their judgments of morally relevant behaviors in adolescents will be briefly reviewed.

In one relevant investigation, Carlo, Koller, Eisenberg, Silva, and Frohlich (1996) found that self-reported prosocial moral reasoning was positively linked to peer ratings of students' helpfulness and generosity. Specifically, the more advanced an adolescents' reported prosocial moral reasoning, the more frequently peers reported observing the adolescents engaging in helping and sharing behaviors.

The utility of self-report and peer ratings of behavior was also demonstrated in a study reported earlier in this review. Cassidy et al. (2003) examined the relationship between adolescents' psychological understanding and positive social behaviors by utilizing self-report, sociometric ratings, and classroom observations. Cassidy et al. (2003) found that the more an adolescent reported understanding the mental and emotional states of others, the more peers rated that adolescent as engaging in positive social behaviors.

In a study that revealed information about both criterion validity and inter rater reliability, Eisenberg, Cameron, Pasternack, and Tryon (1988) examined the behavioral and cognitive correlates of prosocial behavior. Within this study, participants completed self-report and sociometric measures of prosocial behavior, and teachers completed ratings of adolescents' prosocial behaviors (helpfulness, giving) and prosocial dispositions (friendliness, kindness, sociability). These ratings were compared with observations of the adolescents' naturally occurring prosocial behaviors (helping, sharing) within the classroom. Results revealed that self, peer, and teacher ratings of prosocial behaviors were positively associated with the frequency of observed helping and sharing behaviors within the classroom. In addition, the greater a participant's self-reported and peer rating of prosocial behavior, the more teachers reported the participant engaging in friendly and helpful behaviors.

In a related study, Greener (2000) examined the concordance among self-report, peer, and teacher ratings of prosocial behavior and peer acceptance. Participants first generated a list of normative prosocial behaviors that were subsequently used to describe the construct of prosocial behavior in the peer and teacher ratings of prosocial behaviors. Along with the sociometric ratings, adolescents also filled out a self-report measure of social behavior. Adolescents and teachers then completed a second sociometric rating of peer acceptance. Greener (2000) found that on both the peer and teacher ratings, popular children were rated as significantly more prosocial than rejected children. The strongest positive correlations were found among teacher and peer reports of prosocial behavior and acceptance. Self ratings and peer ratings of prosocial behavior were significantly positively related, as were self ratings and teacher ratings of prosocial behavior. The pattern of results demonstrates that teachers and peers

have acceptable sensitivity and specificity when rating the behavior of their students and classmates, respectively (and both of these ratings are related to self-reports).

In sum, previous research supports the usefulness of self-report, sociometric, and teacher ratings when investigating a wide range of moral behaviors in adolescents. Indeed, findings suggest that ratings yielded by each method tend to be associated with independent assessments of relevant behavior and that the various raters tend to agree in their ratings of morally relevant behavior. Given these patterns of results, the present study attempted to measure moral rebel behavior through the use of self-report, peer, and teacher ratings.

Characteristics Associated with Being a Moral Rebel

In addition to assessing adolescents' tendencies to be a moral rebel, it is valuable to investigate the characteristics that may be associated with being a moral rebel. It is proposed that individual differences in conscience, the tendency to engage in moral violations, the need to belong, and self-esteem might relate to being a moral rebel³. However, because this is the first investigation specifically measuring moral rebelness and possible individual difference variables associated with it, there is little empirical research that can be cited to support the need to investigate any particular characteristic.

Conscience

The study of conscience has a long history in developmental psychology beginning with the seminal work of Freud on the concept of the superego (internalized parent or conscience; Freud, 1935). Freud's theorizing on the personality structure of the superego has promoted empirical inquiry into adolescents' internal standards of how they should behave (Kochanska & Aksan, 2006). Adolescence is an important time to examine the conscience, as a number of

researchers have emphasized the significance of this factor in motivating or inhibiting behavior believed to be right or wrong (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Hart & Carlo, 2005; Matsuba & Walker, 2005). Adolescents learn to behave in a manner consistent with their internalized beliefs and values or risk feelings of a guilty conscience.

As described earlier, Lawrence Kohlberg's (1973, 1976) theory of moral development posited that moral judgments and principles motivate moral action. As moral reasoning develops, individuals become more prone to internalize values and beliefs and to use moral principles in making judgments about how they and others should act. This increasing ability to reason morally is the basis for Kohlberg's six hierarchical stages of moral reasoning. The conscience is explicitly identified in stage six, "individual principles and conscience," where the moral perspective of an individual is grounded in one's internalized beliefs of right and wrong. This description is very similar to definitions utilized by researchers who investigate the construct of the conscience (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Hart & Carlo, 2005; Kochanska & Aksan, 2006; Matsuba & Walker, 2005). For these authors and Kohlberg, the conscience guides action by what one believes is moral, not by what is expected, legal, desired, or previously agreed upon.

Given the character of a moral rebel, the conscience may be one factor contributing to regulating his/her intentions and behaviors. For example, an adolescent whose behavior is regulated by his/her internalized values of right and wrong (i.e., conscience) would be likely to refuse to comply in a situation where those values are challenged or questioned. Research conducted by Quinn (1987) showed that when adolescents encountered a moral crisis, those who reported a stronger conscience also reported a deepened sense of moral character (e.g., they felt better about themselves, believed they did what was right) following the crisis. In a similar sense, moral rebels face a crisis to stand up for their beliefs and values in the face of pressures

not to do so. If the conscience is an important factor regulating the intentions and behaviors of moral rebels, the more individuals identify with being a moral rebel, the more they may report that their conscience guides their intentions and behaviors (that is, the more they may report a guilty conscience when they behave in a manner inconsistent with their intentions and behaviors).

In a specific example, the conscience has been considered as a factor that may provide insight into the moral rebel behavior that is typified in whistleblowers. Tsahuridu and Vandekerckhove (2008) suggest that the conscience guides whistleblowers to live and behave in accordance with their beliefs and values, which is one reason these individuals challenge organizational policies that violate a personal standard of fairness or honesty. These authors assert that whistleblowers act as moral agents who are responsible for their behaviors and have the autonomy to behave as their conscience dictates. Although whistleblowing behavior is not the focus of the current proposal, research on this type of individual provides support for examining the conscience as a variable that may help explain moral rebel behavior in adolescents. Because a moral rebel is someone who wants to do what he/she believes is right in the face of pressure to behave otherwise, it was hypothesized that scores on measures of moral rebelness (self, peer, and teacher) would be positively correlated with scores on a measure of conscience (see Method section and Appendix D for a complete description of the conscience questionnaire).

Minor Moral Violations

A moral rebel was defined earlier as an individual who refuses to behave in a way that compromises his/her values and beliefs despite the behavior of others (Monin et al., 2008). An uncertainty that arises from this description is if moral rebelness is generally associated with a

heightened level of morality. The term *moral* can apply to a wide range of behaviors, as Treviño, Weaver, and Reynolds (2006) define moral behavior as actions that are judged according to generally accepted norms of behavior. In our culture, these norms reflect the enactment of positive, morally acceptable behaviors (e.g., helping, sharing) and the avoidance of negative, morally unacceptable behaviors (e.g., lying, stealing). If a moral rebel accepts and internalizes these norms of moral behavior, he/she would then be likely to behave in a manner consistent with those norms, as he/she would go to great lengths to stand up for those norms. Still, it is unclear if moral rebelness is associated with the tendency not to engage in minor moral violations, as no research to date has investigated this relationship. Based on the argument presented above, it was speculated that adolescents with heightened tendencies to behave like a moral rebel (based on self-report, peer, and teacher ratings) would be relatively unlikely to engage in various minor moral violations.

To measure adolescents' tendencies to engage in minor moral violations, the current study adapted seven items from Barnett, Sanborn, and Shane's (2005) Minor Moral and Legal Violations scale. The adapted scale assessed an adolescent's tendency to engage in morally unacceptable behaviors (e.g., I would pretend to be sick to get out of doing something I did not want to do; see Method section and Appendix E for a complete description of the Minor Moral Violation questionnaire)⁴.

Need to Belong

Another individual difference variable that may be associated with moral rebel behavior is one's need to belong. This construct reflects a human need to form and maintain interpersonal relationships in order to feel that one fits in (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Research suggests that individuals differ in their need to belong, where some individuals will go to great lengths (e.g.,

change behavior, fake a belief) to fit in, while others simply have little desire to be part of a group (Brown, Eicher, & Petrie, 1986). The adolescent period of development is typically marked by a strong desire to acquire and maintain friendships and friendship groups. This individual difference variable is known to play an important role in adolescence because belonging to a crowd or friendship group may depend upon an adolescent's willingness to conform to peers (with regard to attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors). Given that a moral rebel is not motivated to change his/her beliefs or values just to be compliant, it was hypothesized that the stronger one's tendency to be a moral rebel (as assessed by self, peer, and teacher ratings), the less he/she would report a need to belong. The current study examined participants' need to belong using six items adapted from Lee and Robins's (1995) measure of belongingness (see Method section and Appendix F for a complete description of this measure).

Self-Esteem

Self-evaluative judgments, like self-esteem, may be an individual difference variable associated with moral rebel behavior. Self-esteem is broadly defined as the extent to which a person has confidence in his/her worth and abilities (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Rosenberg (1989), a prominent self-esteem researcher, defines it simply as a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the self. Given these definitions, it was hypothesized that adolescents who have heightened confidence in their worth and abilities and/or have relatively favorable attitudes toward themselves, would be especially likely to stand up for their beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures not to do so.

Research has demonstrated that adolescents with high self-esteem are more self-confident in the face of social pressure than adolescents with low self-esteem. In one relevant study, Dielman, Campanelli, Shope, and Butchart (1987) found that self-esteem was positively

correlated with middle school students' resistance to peer pressure. Specifically, the higher an adolescent's self-esteem, the less frequently the adolescent reported engaging in negative behaviors with peers (e.g., smoking, skipping school, lying).

In a related study, Bamaca and Umana-Taylor (2006) investigated if self-esteem is associated with adolescents' resistance to social pressure to engage in negative behaviors (e.g., toilet papering houses, eating candy from an open bag at a store, not reporting finding an answer key to an upcoming test). Bamaca and Umana-Taylor (2006) found that adolescents with a more positive self-esteem reported engaging in fewer of the negative behaviors than adolescents with lower self-esteem. The studies by Dielman et al. (1987) and Bamaca and Umana-Taylor (2006) provide evidence that self-esteem is one factor associated with adolescents' confidence to resist social pressure. Moral rebels also resist social pressure by refusing to comply in situations that go against their beliefs and values, and relatively high self-esteem may be one personal characteristic related to this self-confident behavior.

In sum, an additional individual difference variable that may be associated with adolescents' tendencies to stand up for their beliefs and values is self-esteem. Possessing a relatively high level of self-esteem may be a critical component in moral rebel behavior because it may provide the self-confidence needed to stand up for one's beliefs and values. Adolescents with high levels of self-esteem may have more confidence than their low self-esteem counterparts to adhere to their own beliefs and values and resist conformity pressures to behave otherwise. The current study assessed adolescents' self-esteem using Rosenberg's (1989) 10-item self-esteem measure (see Method section and Appendix G for a complete description of this measure).

Perceptions of a Moral Rebel

Besides measuring moral rebelness and the possible individual differences that may be associated with being a moral rebel, the current study examined factors that may be associated with perceptions of moral rebels and their non-moral rebel counterparts. As mentioned earlier in this review, Monin and colleagues (2008) were the first to explicitly label and systematically investigate perceptions of those who stand up for their beliefs (moral rebels). These authors also examined perceptions of those who fail to stand up for their beliefs (non-moral rebels). Specifically, the goal of their research was to document factors that may influence if moral rebels are perceived as threatening or inspiring (when compared to non-moral rebels).

One factor thought to impact perceptions of moral rebels and non-moral rebels was one's personal involvement in a situation. Monin et al. (2008) predicted that an individual who fails to take a stand on behalf of his/her values (actor) may perceive the moral rebel's behavior as a personal threat, whereas those who simply hear of the moral rebel's behavior (observer) may perceive the moral rebel as inspiring. Conversely, Monin et al. (2008) predicted that an individual who fails to take a stand on behalf of his/her values (actor) would respond favorably to someone who, like him/herself, failed to stand up for his/her beliefs (a non-moral rebel). To test these predictions, Monin et al. (2008) employed a method from the induced compliance paradigm. In this procedure, half of the participants (actors) were instructed to write a speech in favor of eliminating the reading week at the university (a class-free period preceding final examinations; presumably a counter-attitudinal stance), whereas the other half of participants (observers) did not engage in the writing task. Subsequently, participants were either provided information about a hypothetical previous participant (i.e., the non-moral rebel) who had complied with the counter-attitudinal writing task (as had the actors), or a hypothetical previous

participant (i.e., the moral rebel) who had refused to comply with the writing task based on moral grounds.

As mentioned earlier, it was predicted that perceptions of the moral rebel and non-moral rebel would largely depend upon an individual's personal involvement in the situation. That is, when faced with an individual who refused on moral grounds to write the counter-attitudinal speech (i.e., the moral rebel), participants who complied and engaged in the writing task would feel threatened, and they would devalue, dislike, demean, and degrade the character of the moral rebel (relative to the non-moral rebel). Conversely, participants who did not engage in the counter-attitudinal writing task would feel inspired, by the individual who refused to comply, and they would like, value, and appreciate the character of the moral rebel more so than the character of the non-moral rebel.

The results were consistent with predictions. Participants who obediently wrote the speech (actors) subsequently disliked and devalued the peer who refused on principled grounds to write the speech (i.e., the moral rebel), but they liked and valued the peer who complied with writing the speech (i.e., the non-moral rebel). Conversely, participants who did not have an opportunity to write the counter-attitudinal speech (observers) perceived the moral rebel as likable and as having a strong moral character, but perceived the non-moral rebel as having a weaker moral character. These findings reveal that the same behavior (i.e., the behavior of the moral rebel or non-moral rebel) was judged quite differently depending on the perceiver's own involvement in the situation.

Monin et al. (2008) extended the previous study by examining perceptions of a moral rebel in the less ambiguous moral domain of racism. By making a methodological change, replacing the counter-attitudinal speech task with the problematic behavior of going along with a

racist task (choosing an incriminated African American suspect among two Caucasian Americans as the most likely perpetrator of a crime), perceptions of a moral rebel and non-moral rebel could be examined with regard to less morally ambiguous behavior. In this study, half of the participants engaged in a police decision task in which they were instructed to choose the “most likely suspect” (p. 81). The other half of participants did not engage in the police decision task. Subsequently, participants were either exposed to information about a hypothetical previous participant (i.e., the non-moral rebel) who complied in the police decision task by choosing the African American suspect, or a hypothetical previous participant (i.e., the moral rebel) who refused to comply in the decision task by saying it was “offensive and wrong to make a black man the obvious suspect” (p. 81).

As anticipated, the results from the racism study revealed the same pattern of perceptions of the moral rebel and non-moral rebel as was found in the counter-attitudinal study. Specifically, participants who completed the racist task by incriminating the African American suspect (actors) subsequently disliked and devalued a hypothetical peer who refused on principled grounds to choose the black suspect (i.e., the moral rebel), but preferred the compliant peer (i.e., the non-moral rebel). In contrast, participants who did not engage in the police decision task (observers) perceived the moral rebel as likable and as having a strong moral character to a greater extent than the non-moral rebel.

Although one’s own reluctance to take the “moral high ground” may result in devaluation of an individual who chooses to follow his or her conscience in the same situation, little is known of the personality factors that may be associated with perceptions of a moral rebel. Therefore, another purpose of the current study was to expand our understanding of attitudes toward both moral rebels and non-moral rebels by examining two individual difference variables that may

affect perceptions of these individuals. The individual difference variables that were explored are (1) the adolescent's similarity to the moral rebel and non-moral rebel (i.e., the adolescent's own status as a moral rebel as assessed by self, peer, and teacher ratings; the adolescent's belief that he/she would have made the same decision as the moral rebel or non-moral rebel in the situation; and the adolescent's beliefs that he/she is similar to the moral rebel or non-moral rebel), and (2) the adolescent's general level of cynicism.

To assess adolescents' perceptions of a moral rebel and non-moral rebel, a variant of the induced compliance paradigm employed by Monin et al. (2008) was developed for the current study. Monin et al.'s (2008) method of encouraging someone to engage in a behavior (presumably) inconsistent with his/her beliefs is ethically questionable (especially, with a sample considerably younger than that utilized by Monin and colleagues). In an attempt to parallel Monin et al.'s (2008) method and to make it appropriate for an adolescent sample, two scenarios were used in the current study that depicted a middle school English teacher requiring his students to write an essay in favor of implementing a mandatory community service requirement for eighth graders prior to graduation. Following the description of the assignment, half of participants heard about a male student (the moral rebel) described as refusing to write the essay as it was assigned because it goes against his beliefs and values. The other half of participants heard about a male student (the non-moral rebel) who complied with writing the essay even though it went against his beliefs and values. After being presented with the moral rebel or non-moral rebel scenario, all participants were asked to respond to 13 statements assessing their perceptions of the moral rebel or non-moral rebel (see Method section and Appendix H for the scripts of the scenarios and Appendix I for the associated 13-item questionnaire).

Similarity to the Moral Rebel

A variable that may influence adolescents' perceptions of a moral rebel is the extent to which they, themselves, exhibit moral rebel behavior. For example, an adolescent who views him/herself as similar to the moral rebel may be inclined to evaluate the moral rebel more positively than an adolescent who views him/herself as dissimilar. Further, if an adolescent is rated (self-report, peer, and teacher ratings) as behaving like a moral rebel, he/she may be inclined to evaluate the moral rebel more positively (and the non-moral rebel more negatively).

Previous research has demonstrated that individuals tend to respond relatively favorably to similar others. For example, Sturmer, Snyder, Kropp, and Siem (2006) investigated if empathy had a stronger effect on helping intentions when the potential adult helper and the target belonged to the same cultural group than when they belonged to a different cultural group. Results revealed that empathy was a significant predictor of helping intentions when the helpee shared the same cultural group membership as the helper. In a related study, Sturmer et al. (2006) demonstrated that even trivial categorizations to groups (belief that one is a detailed or global perceiver) is sufficient to increase helping to those perceived as similar. Specifically, participants' lead to believe they were detailed perceivers felt more empathy toward and helped more when the helpee belonged to the same group (detailed perceiver) than when the helpee belonged to a different group (global perceiver). These studies suggest that similarity to another individual tends to promote relatively favorable responses to that individual.

Further, research has demonstrated that children like and are attracted to similar others. Rubin, Lynch, Coplan and Rose-Kransnor (1994) assessed the extent to which boys and girls desired to play with similar and dissimilar newly acquainted children. During a single experimental session, children were allowed to engage in free-play with three same-sex peers.

Results revealed that children who displayed a clear preference for one of his or her playmates were more behaviorally similar to the preferred playmates than to nonpreferred playmates with regard to cognitive play style and social participation. The relatively favorable responses made by adults and children in the Sturner et al. (2006) and Rubin et al. (1994) studies are likely attributable to participants' perceived similarity to the others, even though perceptions of similarity were not directly assessed.

When perceptions of similarity are directly assessed, research demonstrates that these perceptions influence the valence of evaluations of others. For example, a study by Romero and Epkins (2008) investigated the role of perceived similarity in adolescents' evaluations of three different types of hypothetical friends (prosocial, withdrawn/depressed, aggressive).

Adolescents read vignettes depicting each type of hypothetical friend and then rated each friend for how alike, similar, or the same they were to themselves. Results revealed that perceived similarity was related to a greater desire for friendship, greater acceptance of, and more positive attitudes towards all three types of friends. For example, adolescents who rated the prosocial peer as similar to themselves also reported a greater desire to be friends with, greater acceptance of, and more positive attitudes toward this peer.

In addition, a favorable evaluation of another person may result from the belief that one would behave in a similar manner as that person. Research by Hoffner and Buchanan (2005) investigated this idea by examining participants' perceived behavioral similarity to various fictional television characters. When respondents reported that they have behaved like, or desired to behave like, a particular television character, they attributed relatively positive traits (e.g., smart, successful, attractive, funny, admired) to that character. In contrast, respondents who

reported never behaving, nor desiring to behave like, a particular television character, attributed less favorable traits (e.g., stupid, has few friends) to that character.

Given that perceptions of similarity may be associated with relatively favorable interpersonal evaluations, the current study examined similarity to the moral rebel in different ways. First, similarity was assessed by the extent to which participants were rated as behaving like a moral rebel (as determined by the self-report measures as well as peer and teacher ratings). Second, two statements on the Perception Questionnaire (see Appendix I, items 12 and 13) assessed participants' perceived similarity to the middle school moral rebel (or non-moral rebel) presented in the context of the scenario. It was expected that the more similar a participant is to the moral rebel (as determined by the self-report, peer, and teacher ratings), the more favorably the participant would evaluate the moral rebel. In addition, it was predicted that the more strongly a participant agrees that he/she (a) would have made the same decision in the situation as the moral rebel and (b) is similar to the moral rebel, the more favorably he/she would evaluate the moral rebel (but not the non-moral rebel).

Cynicism

Another individual difference measure that may be associated with perceptions of a moral rebel is cynicism. A definition of the word "cynic" offered in Webster's (1996) New Universal Unabridged Dictionary is: "...a person who believes that only selfishness motivates human actions rather than action for honorable or unselfish reasons" (p. 215). Webster's further defines "cynical" as: "distrusting or disparaging the motives of others; showing contempt for accepted standards of honesty or morality by one's actions" (p. 215).

In one of the few studies examining cynicism with an adolescent sample, Heyman, Fu, and Lee (2007) examined adolescents' evaluations of claims others make about themselves.

Results revealed that adolescents relatively high in cynicism were skeptical of others' reports of positive personal characteristics (e.g., honest, smart, nice), but were not skeptical of others' reports of less value-laden characteristic (e.g., likes the color red).

A relevant adult study demonstrated that individuals relatively high in cynicism report more negativity when describing others' behavior. Allred and Smith (1991) had undergraduates observe different ambiguous social interactions (e.g., strangers meeting for first time) and then rate the individuals interacting on a series of trait adjectives. Allred and Smith (1991) reported that the higher participants scored on a measure of cynicism, the more they rated the behavior of those interacting as significantly more negative (i.e., superficial, pointless, inappropriate).

The extent to which individuals are cynical may influence their evaluations of a moral rebel as well as their beliefs about the motives behind the moral rebel's exemplary behavior. The current study measured cynicism using six items adapted from the Scale of Interpersonal Cynicism (Moore, 2000, see Method section and Appendix J for a complete description of this measure). It was hypothesized that the more cynical a participant, the less favorably he/she would evaluate the moral rebel presented in the scenario. Specifically, adolescents who score relatively high on the measure of cynicism were expected to reject the moral rebel and doubt the goodness of his actions. Further, it was hypothesized that participants' level of cynicism would be unrelated to attitudes toward the non-moral rebel.

Overview and Purpose of the Proposed Study

Research on the moral rebel has been limited and it is important to extend our understanding of the extraordinary individual who resists pressures to conform in order to defend his/her own beliefs and values. In an attempt to further knowledge about the moral rebel, the purpose of the current study with adolescent participants was three fold. First, the current study

aimed to accurately measure the extent to which an individual is a moral rebel. To achieve this end, self-report, peer, and teacher ratings were collected. Second, the current study examined the role of four individual difference variables potentially associated with being a moral rebel. The variables of interest included conscience, willingness to engage in minor moral violations, need to belong, and self-esteem. Lastly, the current study hoped to expand our understanding of adolescents' perceptions of a moral rebel by examining two individual difference variables, similarity and cynicism, that may be associated with these perceptions.

Chapter 2 - Method

Participants and Experimenters

The participants consisted of 107 seventh- and eighth-grade adolescents from a public middle school in central Wisconsin. The sample included 44 females and 63 males who ranged in age from 147 months to 183 months ($M = 162.79$, $SD = 8.74$; see Appendix K for demographic information requested of participants). All participants had the written permission of a parent or legal guardian (see Appendix L) and were required to provide their own assent to participate at the start of the study (see Appendix M).

Materials

The materials used in this study have been organized according to the three main purposes of the investigation.

Measuring Moral Rebelness

Moral Rebelness.

The trait measure of moral rebellness initially consisted of nine items adapted from the Measure of Susceptibility of Social Influence (MSSI; Bobier, 2002; see Appendix A). Statements were rated on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) and reflected the extent to which an adolescent refuses to go along with others, but instead has a desire to adhere to his/her beliefs even in the face of opposition. The internal reliability of the initial nine-item scale ($\alpha = .57$) was unsatisfactory. Evaluation and elimination of four items yielded an internally consistent five-item measure ($\alpha = .72$; Five-Item MR). Each adolescent's total score was calculated by adding his/her ratings in response to the five statements. Thus, the higher the Five-Item MR score, the more the adolescent reports behaving in accordance with his/her own beliefs and values (see Appendix A).

Self, Peer, and Teacher Ratings of Moral Rebellness

In addition to the Five-Item MR measure, a sociometric rating assessed peers' perceptions of each participant's desire to adhere to his/her beliefs or values in the face of conformity pressures not to do so. Each participant rated him/herself (MR Self) and each of his/her "same school year" classmates (similar to procedures followed by Parkhurst & Hopmeyer, 1998 and Rose & Swenson, 2009) on the tendency to behave like a moral rebel (see Appendix B). A participant's peer rating was calculated as the average of all of his/her same school year classmates' ratings (Average Peer). At the time of data collection, although only half of a grade's participants were in the same classroom (or "block"), peers in this relatively small school likely had an equal opportunity to observe moral rebel behavior in all of their same-grade classmates. In fact, average peer ratings "in block" significantly correlated with average peer ratings "out of block" ($r = .78, p < .001$).

In addition to self-report and peer ratings of participants' moral rebellness, pairs of teachers rated each adolescent on this characteristic using a form that is highly similar to the sociometric form (see Appendix C). Middle school teachers who had considerable contact with the adolescents were selected to provide these ratings. A participant's teacher rating was calculated as the average of the two teachers' ratings (Average Teacher). Although the intercorrelation between scores on the pairs of teacher ratings was only marginally significant ($r = .17, p = .08$), the average teacher rating was used in the analyses. The decision to use the average teacher rating was based on two factors: (1) each teacher likely had limited and different opportunities to observe moral rebel behavior in specific participants and (2) there was no way of determining whether one teacher made more valid assessments of participants' tendencies to be a moral rebel than the other. Indeed, there was no evidence that one teacher's rating consistently correlated more strongly with MR Self, Five-Item MR, and Average Peer ratings of moral rebellness than the other teacher's ratings.

Characteristics Potentially Associated with Being a Moral Rebel

Conscience

The measure of Conscience ($\alpha = .84$; see Appendix D) included six items adapted from the Guilty-Conscience subscale of the Revised Mosher Guilt Inventory (Mosher, 1988). Statements were rated on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) reflecting the extent to which a participant feels guilty when he/she has done something inconsistent with his/her beliefs or principles. Scores on the conscience measure were totaled after reverse-scoring the one negatively keyed item on the scale. Thus, the higher the score on this Conscience measure, the more the individual feels guilty when engaging in behaviors conflicting with his/her beliefs.

Minor Moral Violations

To assess an adolescent's tendency to engage in various behaviors that could be considered inappropriate or immoral, seven items ($\alpha = .84$) were adapted from the scale of Minor Moral and Legal Violations (MMLV; Barnett et al., 2005; see Appendix E). The participants were asked to rate each Minor Moral Violation on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) reflecting the extent to which they agree that they would engage in each of the seven behaviors. Each participant's total score was calculated by adding his/her ratings in response to the seven statements. Thus, the higher the Minor Moral Violations score, the more the adolescents would be willing to engage in these moral violations.

Need to Belong

An individual's need to belong was initially assessed using six items adapted from the Measure of Belongingness (Lee & Robbins, 1995; see Appendix F). Statements were rated on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The internal reliability of the six-item scale ($\alpha = .64$) was unsatisfactory. Evaluation and elimination of three items yielded a more internally consistent three-item measure ($\alpha = .72$). A composite score was calculated for each adolescent by adding together his/her ratings on the three statements. A higher Need to Belong score reflects a greater desire to fit in and feel part of a crowd or group.

Self-Esteem

Adolescents' self-esteem was measured using Rosenberg's (1989; see Appendix G) 10-item ($\alpha = .87$) self-esteem scale. Participants responded to statements on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Scores on the items were totaled after reverse-scoring

the five negatively keyed items. A higher self-esteem score reflects a more positive evaluation of one's worth or value.

Social Desirability

The short form of the Crandall Social Desirability Test for Children (Crandall, Crandall, & Katkovsky, 1965; see Appendix N) assessed an adolescent's tendency to give socially desirable responses to statements rather than his/her true views, opinions, or feelings (see Carifio, 1992 for prior reliability and validity information on the short form). Participants responded to the 12 statements ($\alpha = .76$) on a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Scores on the items were totaled after reverse-scoring the six negatively keyed items. A higher score on this measure reflects an adolescent's tendency to provide more socially desirable responses (see Appendix N).

Perceptions of a Moral Rebel

Audio-Recordings Presenting the Moral (and Non-Moral) Rebel

To examine participants' perceptions of a moral rebel or non-moral rebel, they listened to one of two audio-recorded scenarios. These two scenarios were adapted from the materials used by Monin et al. (2008; see transcriptions in Appendix H). Specifically, the scenarios described a teacher assigning a writing task to support implementing a social service requirement (30 hours of community service) prior to middle school graduation. All participants heard about a male moral rebel or non-moral rebel. The moral rebel scenario depicted a student rebelling, on moral grounds, against this writing assignment in a middle school English class. The non-moral rebel scenario depicted a student complying with this writing task even though it went against his beliefs.

Perception of the Moral (and Non-moral) Rebel Questionnaire

After listening to one of the two audio-recorded scenarios, participants were asked to respond to 13 statements assessing their perceptions of the moral rebel or non-moral rebel (see Appendix I). These statements were meant to reflect a variety of possible perceptions of and reactions to the moral rebel and non-moral rebel. One of these statements (item 6) served as a manipulation check⁵. Ten of the statements (items 1-5, 7-11) were evaluative in nature, and as anticipated, a single, internally reliable scale emerged reflecting “attitudes toward the target” ($\alpha = .90$). After reverse scoring the three negatively keyed items, scores on the 10 items were averaged, with a higher score reflecting a more favorable attitude toward the moral rebel (or non-moral rebel).

Perceived Similarity to the Moral Rebel or Non-Moral Rebel

Similarity to the moral rebel or non-moral rebel was assessed in two different ways. First, similarity was operationalized as the extent to which participants were rated as behaving like a moral rebel (as determined by the MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher ratings). Second, two statements on the questionnaire (see Appendix I, items 12 and 13) assessed the participants’ perceived similarity to the moral rebel or non-moral rebel in the context of the scenario. Scores on these two items were highly positively correlated ($r = .71, p < .001$). An average score based on participants’ responses to the two perceived similarity items were used in the analyses.

Cynicism

Adolescents’ suspicions about the motives and earnestness of others’ behaviors were assessed with six items ($\alpha = .76$) adapted from the Cynical Behavior Justification subscale of the

Scale of Interpersonal Cynicism (Moore, 2000; see Appendix J). Scores on the Cynicism measure were totaled after reverse-scoring the one negatively keyed item, with a higher score reflecting greater disbelief in the goodness of human motives.

Procedure

University IRB approval was obtained prior to conducting the present study. After gaining approval from the District Administrator of Edgar High School, Wisconsin, the middle school principal, and the classroom teachers, the parents/legal guardians of the seventh and eighth graders were provided with an informed consent document (see Appendix L). Parental permission forms were collected well before the start of the study so that the peer and teacher rating forms could be prepared (only students with permission were listed on the rating forms).

One female experimenter ran the group sessions in the adolescents' regular classrooms. At the beginning of each session, the experimenter lead the participants to believe that they would be taking part in two separate and unrelated studies during a single 30-min session. For the "first" study, participants were asked to help the researcher understand a little about themselves, their personalities, and their behaviors by completing a series of questionnaires. The "second" study presumably focused on the types of behaviors adolescents engage in by having them rate their own actions and evaluate the action of a peer from another school. The experimenter explained that the two studies were being conducted together during a single session in order to take up less class time and to be less disruptive than two separate sessions. After this preliminary information was provided, the participants were asked if they had any questions. Then, adolescents completed an assent form (see Appendix M).

After providing assent, the adolescents were asked to complete the brief demographics form (see Appendix K). The experimenter then explained the rating scale that was to be used on

the sociometric rating form and gave participants practice using the scale. After the adolescents were comfortable using the scale, the sociometric rating form (see Appendix B) was distributed to the adolescents. The experimenter read the instructions at the top of the rating form out loud and then instructed each adolescent to circle his/her name on the page and rate him/herself on the tendency to be a moral rebel. Then, each adolescent was allowed to complete the remainder of the rating form on his/her own. Each participating teacher (two for each school grade) was given a similar rating form (see Appendix C) and was asked to complete the form at a time that was convenient for him/her.

After the adolescents completed the sociometric rating form, the experimenter described the rating scale that was to be used to measure their personalities and behaviors. Once the adolescents were comfortable using the scale, they were allowed to individually read and respond to the statements. For clarity, each measure (Moral Rebelness, Conscience, Need to Belong, Self-Esteem, Cynicism, and Social Desirability; see Appendices A, D, F, G, J, N respectively) appears in its own appendix, however items were mixed and presented as one 49-item questionnaire to the adolescents. The experimenter read the instructions at the top of the questionnaire out loud and then allowed the adolescents to respond to the statements on their own.

After the adolescents completed the sociometric rating form and questionnaire, the experimenter reintroduced the second study. The experimenter restated the purpose of the second study and described how the adolescents would complete two different tasks. For the first task, participants would rate the extent to which they agreed that they would engage in different behaviors that could be considered inappropriate or unacceptable. The participants were told that after they completed this task, they would be asked to evaluate an eighth grader who attends a

another school. After providing the brief preview of the two tasks of study two, the experimenter described the rating scale that the adolescents would use to assess the extent to which they agree that they would engage in behaviors that could be considered inappropriate or unacceptable (see Minor Moral Violations Scale; Appendix E). Once the adolescents were comfortable using the scale, they were allowed to complete the measure.

After the adolescents completed the Minor Moral Violations questionnaire, they were instructed that they would be asked to rate the behavior of an adolescent from a different school. The participants were led to believe that the experimenter had interviewed many adolescents who have engaged in many different behaviors. The experimenter explained that she had randomly chosen one peer for them to evaluate. Next, the experimenter played the audio-recorded scenario of the moral rebel or non-moral rebel (see transcriptions in Appendix H). After listening to one of the recordings, the participants were given a copy of the transcribed scenario to refer to, as necessary, and were asked to respond to a series of statements regarding their perceptions of the moral rebel or non-moral rebel (see Appendix I). Following completion of this questionnaire, participants were asked if they have any questions, thanked, and debriefed (see Appendix O).

Chapter 3 - Results

The preliminary and major analyses are presented below for each of the three main purposes of the current study. The preliminary analyses explored potential gender difference on the variables assessed in the current study. The major analyses focused on the inter rater reliabilities among scores on the four measures of moral rebelness, relationships among scores on the moral rebelness and four individual difference measures, and relationships between (a) scores on the four measures of moral rebelness, the participants' perceived similarity with the

moral rebel (and non-moral rebel), cynicism, and (b) attitudes toward the moral rebel (and non-moral rebel).

Measuring Moral Rebelness

To determine if there were any gender differences in scores on the four measures of moral rebelness, independent samples *t*-tests were conducted. Because there is little research investigating adolescents' desire to behave consistently with their beliefs and values in the face of pressure to conform, no specific gender differences were predicted on the ratings of moral rebelness. As seen in Table 1, no gender differences were found on the four measures of moral rebelness.

One major purpose of this study was to examine the interrater reliabilities among the MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher ratings of moral rebelness. Based on the previous studies demonstrating significant positive intercorrelations among self-report, peer, and teacher ratings in the moral domain (e.g., Eisenberg et al., 1988; Greener, 2000), it was predicted that the correlations among the self-report, peer, and teacher ratings of moral rebelness would be positive and significant. Consistent with the prediction, all intercorrelations were positive and significant for the entire sample (see Table 2) and when males and females were considered separately (see Table 3).

Characteristics Associated with Being a Moral Rebel

Although not a main focus of the present study, independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to determine whether males and females differed in their scores on any of the individual difference variables potentially associated with the tendency to be a moral rebel. As

seen in Table 4, only one significant gender difference was found, with females scoring higher on the measure of Conscience than males.

One of the major purposes of the current study was to examine the relationship among scores on the four measures of moral rebelness and the four individual difference measures potentially associated with the tendency to be a moral rebel. It was predicted that higher moral rebel scores (as assessed by MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher ratings) would be associated with higher scores on the measures of Conscience and Self-Esteem, but lower scores on the Minor Moral Violations and Need to Belong measures.

As shown in Table 5, zero-order correlations were computed among scores on the individual difference measures potentially associated with the tendency to be a moral rebel and scores on the four measures of moral rebelness. Only a few significant correlations emerged. For the combined sample of males and females, a significant positive relationship emerged between MR Self and Self-Esteem scores, and a significant negative correlation emerged between MR Self and Need to Belong scores. When examining the correlations by gender, MR Self scores were significantly positively related to Self-Esteem scores for both males and females. For females, but not males, MR Self scores were significantly negatively correlated with Need to Belong scores, and Five-Item MR scores were significantly positively related to Minor Moral Violations scores.

Hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted to compare the strength of associations among the individual difference measures and the tendency to be a moral rebel (as assessed by MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher measures of moral rebelness; see Tables 6-9). In each of these regressions, social desirability scores and gender were included in the first step as covariates. The second step included the individual difference variable scores

(Conscience, Need to Belong, Self Esteem, and Minor Moral Violations). It was hypothesized that (a) the set of predictors at step two would account for a significant proportion of variance in moral rebel scores (for each measure of moral rebelness), and (b) moral rebel scores would be uniquely positively associated with scores on the measures of Conscience and Self-Esteem, and uniquely negatively related to scores on the Need to Belong and Minor Moral Violations measures.

The only significant unique relationships to emerge were for the regressions involving MR Self (see Table 6) and Average Teacher (see Table 9) scores. Consistent with the bivariate correlations reported earlier, the MR Self regression revealed (a) a unique negative relationship between MR Self scores and Need to Belong scores and (b) a unique positive relationship between MR Self scores and Self-Esteem scores. Although not significant in the bivariate correlations, the regression for Average Teacher scores revealed a unique positive relationship between Average Teacher scores and Conscience scores.

Perceptions of a Moral Rebel

To determine whether males and females differed in their attitudes toward the targets, a 2 (gender of participant) x 2 (moral rebel condition: moral rebel vs. non-moral rebel) ANOVA was conducted. Because no research has investigated the role of participant gender in the evaluation of moral rebels and non-moral rebels, no predictions were made. As presented in Table 10, the results revealed a significant main effect of moral rebel condition, $F(1, 103) = 37.23, p < .001$, with the moral rebel being evaluated more favorably than the non-moral rebel. The main effect of gender, $F(1, 103) = .06, p = .81$, and the interaction between gender and moral rebel condition, $F(1, 103) = 1.43, p = .24$, were both found to be nonsignificant.

A 2 (gender of participant) x 2 (moral rebel condition) ANOVA was also conducted on the adolescents' "perceived similarity" scores. As presented in Table 11, the results revealed a significant main effect of moral rebel condition, $F(1, 103) = 10.80, p < .01$, with participants perceiving themselves as more similar to the moral rebel than the non-moral rebel. The main effect of gender, $F(1, 103) = .04, p = .84$, and the interaction between gender and moral rebel condition, $F(1, 103) = 3.25, p = .08$, were both found to be nonsignificant.

To determine whether males and females differed in their levels of cynicism, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. Males ($M = 17.63, SD = 3.97$) reported being more cynical than did females ($M = 14.70, SD = 4.07$), $t(105) = 3.70, p < .001$.

One of the major purposes of the current study was to examine factors that may influence adolescents' perceptions of the moral rebel. The following section of the Results describes the findings concerning the Perceptions of Moral Rebel Questionnaire and scores on some variables expected to be associated with these perceptions: the four measures of moral rebelness, the participants' perceived similarity with the moral rebel (and non-moral rebel), and cynicism.

As presented in Table 12, zero-order correlations were computed to examine the relationships between the participants' attitudes toward the moral rebel or non-moral rebel and their (1) moral rebelness ratings, (2) perceived similarity to the moral rebel or non-moral rebel, and (3) level of cynicism. As predicted, significant positive correlations were found between participants' moral rebel rating scores (for the MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher measures) and favorable attitudes toward the moral rebel, whereas non-significant relationships were found between participants' moral rebel scores and favorable attitudes toward the non-moral rebel. Strong positive correlations were found between perceived similarity to the moral rebel and non-moral rebel scores and favorable attitudes toward the moral

rebel and non-moral rebel, respectively. Cynicism scores were unrelated to attitudes toward the moral rebel and the non-moral rebel.

To determine the associations among the potential predictors (social desirability, gender of participant, MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, Average Teacher, and Cynicism scores) and condition (moral rebel or non-moral rebel) on favorable attitudes toward the target, a series of four hierarchical regressions were conducted. A separate analysis was conducted for each measure of moral rebelness. In each of these regressions, gender and Social Desirability scores were included in the first step as covariates. The second step contained scores on one measure of moral rebelness (i.e., MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, or Average Teacher) and Cynicism scores. Because main effects involving the individual differences variables (i.e., gender, measure of moral rebelness, Cynicism) on attitudes toward the target are not of interest without considering the moral rebel vs. non-moral rebel condition distinction, they will not be discussed. The third step of the regressions contained the “dummy-coded” moral rebel conditions. The fourth step of each of the regressions included the product terms for the two-way interactions between (a) gender entered in step 1 and the individual difference variables entered in step 2 and (b) Moral Rebel condition entered in step 3⁶.

The series of regressions (see Tables 13-16) were consistent in yielding no effect of gender, a significant effect of condition (reflecting more favorable attitudes toward the moral rebel than the non-moral rebel), and no interaction between gender and condition or cynicism and condition in predicting attitudes toward the target.

One of the regressions (involving MR Self; see Table 13) revealed a significant interaction between moral rebelness rating and condition in predicting favorable attitudes toward the target. Figure 1 displays the simple slopes for the interaction between MR Self rating and

Condition on attitudes toward the target. Consistent with prediction, as participants' moral rebelness increased (as reflected in High vs. Low MR Self ratings), participants responded more favorably to the moral rebel ($\beta = .336, t = 2.96, p = .004$), whereas participants' moral rebelness was unrelated to attitudes toward the non-moral rebel ($\beta = -.086, t = -0.68, p = .50$).

Chapter 4 - Discussion

Moral rebelness is an individual difference variable that describes a person's tendency to stand up for his or her beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures not to do so. The current study examined (1) if moral rebelness in adolescents could be reliably measured by examining the agreement among self-report, peer, and teacher ratings, (2) some characteristics that may be associated with differences in adolescents' tendencies to be a moral rebel, and (3) adolescents' evaluations of a hypothetical moral rebel and some variables potentially associated with those evaluations. There were a number of interesting results and, while some confirmed hypotheses, others did not. In general, the present findings yield valuable information on the moral rebel and perceptions of the moral rebel, as well as questions that provide directions for future research on the topic.

Measuring Moral Rebelness

Moral rebelness appears to be an individual difference variable that can be reliably measured, and the current study adds further support to the literature on the relatively strong interrater agreement among self-report, peer, and teacher ratings of moral behavior (Carlo et al., 1996; Cassidy et al., 2003; Eisenberg et al., 1988; Greener, 2000). Consistent with predictions, the intercorrelations among the four measures of moral rebelness (MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher) were positive and significant (see Table 2). This robust

pattern of intercorrelations also emerged when males and females were considered separately (see Table 3). These findings demonstrate that adolescents, peers, and teachers understand the construct of moral rebelness and they displayed a considerable level of agreement concerning the extent to which various adolescents display the characteristics of a moral rebel. These findings also suggest that adolescents were providing relatively accurate self-assessments of their tendency to be moral rebels via the MR Self and Five-Item MR measures.

The concurrence among the measures may have been heightened in the current study because of the “small school” characteristic of the sample. Adolescents in this public school switch classes throughout the school day, and with relatively small numbers of same-grade classmates, they likely have ample opportunity to interact with and observe their same-grade peers. Further, at the time of data collection, participants in the current study had at least one class with every peer in their same grade and the participating teachers instructed at least one course in which all students in the same grade were enrolled. Even though only half of a grade’s students were in the same classroom or “block” at the time of data collection, the extremely high correlation between scores on peer ratings “in block” and “out of block” ($r = .78, p < .001$) demonstrates that adolescents in this small school were quite familiar with the moral rebel behavior of their same-grade peers. Further, it is possible that peers talk amongst themselves about others’ moral rebel behavior, and adolescents who (as rated by their peers) have a greater tendency to be a moral rebel may get a “moral rebel reputation” among their peers.

Despite ratings of peers “in block” correlating highly with ratings of peers “out of block,” the pairs of teachers’ ratings of adolescents’ moral rebelness were not highly correlated ($r = .17, p = .08$). Moral rebel behavior may not occur that frequently, and the relatively weak agreement between teachers’ ratings suggests that they likely had different opportunities to observe the

adolescents' tendencies to be a moral rebel. Because there was no way of knowing which of the two teachers had a greater opportunity to observe moral rebel behavior in the adolescents, and there was no evidence that one teacher's ratings consistently correlated more strongly with scores on the self and peer ratings of moral rebelness, it seemed most appropriate to use Average Teacher ratings in the analyses.

The high intercorrelations among the four measures of moral rebelness may be attributable to the highly "visible" nature of the characteristic of moral rebelness. The act of defending one's own beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures to comply is likely a highly salient and observable behavior. Although (as just mentioned) moral rebel behavior may occur infrequently, when such a behavior occurs, it is likely memorable. Previous research in the moral domain that has reported high levels of interrater agreement has also measured behaviors that likely have heightened visibility. For example, high interrater agreement has been found between self and peer reports of adolescents' generosity (Carlo et al., 2003), between self and teacher reports of adolescents' donating (Aquino & Reed, 2002), and among self, peer, and teacher reports of adolescents' sharing (Eisenberg et al., 1988). These prosocial behaviors and behaviors reflecting moral rebelness may allow peers and teachers to recall specific instances in which a particular adolescent has behaved in a salient moral manner, and this may increase the likelihood that raters agree.

Overall, the use of multiple raters to assess moral rebelness was a strength of the current study. Adolescents, peers, and teachers appeared to comprehend the construct of moral rebelness, and they displayed a considerable level of agreement concerning the extent to which various adolescents display the characteristics of a moral rebel.

Relations Among Scores on the Moral Rebelness and Individual Difference Measures

Contrary to predictions, higher moral rebelness scores (as assessed by MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher) were not consistently associated with higher scores on the measures of Conscience and Self-Esteem, and lower scores on the Minor Moral Violations and Need to Belong measures. For the few significant relationships that did emerge, in no case were the scores on the individual difference measures correlated with scores across the four measures of moral rebelness (see Table 5). Therefore, subsequent discussion of the significant relationships that did emerge in this study should be considered highly speculative.

Both the Five-Item MR and Average Teacher measures of moral rebelness yielded only one significant relationship with an individual difference measure. In the opposite direction than predicted, Five-Item MR scores were significantly and positively correlated with Minor Moral Violations scores (relationship emerged for females, but not for males; see Table 5). Average Teacher scores were positively related to Conscience scores (in the Average Teacher regression; see Table 9). In both circumstances, because of the lack of consistency of these relationships across the four measures of moral rebelness, additional research is needed to determine if the findings are replicable and meaningful.

The only assessment of moral rebelness to yield a significant relation with more than one individual difference measure was MR Self. As seen in both the zero-order correlations (see Table 5) and regression analyses (see Table 6), a significant positive relationship emerged between MR Self and Self-Esteem scores, and a significant negative relationship emerged between MR Self and Need to Belong scores.

The positive relationship between MR Self scores and Self-Esteem scores supports the hypothesis that the more confident an adolescent is in his/her worth and abilities, the greater his/her tendencies to behave like a moral rebel. Previous research suggests that self-esteem is associated with adolescents' resistance to peers' social pressures to engage in negative behaviors (e.g., not reporting finding an answer key to an upcoming test; Bamaca & Umana-Taylor, 2006). Although, higher self-esteem scores were associated with a lower willingness to engage in an *immoral* act in Bamaca and Umana-Taylor's (2006) study, higher self-esteem scores were associated with a greater tendency to engage in a *moral* act in the current study (standing up for one's beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures not to do so). In situations involving not engaging in an immoral act and in situations involving engaging in a moral act, higher self-esteem may provide adolescents with the self-confidence needed to resist peer pressure and to stand up for one's beliefs and values.

Consistent with prediction, a significant negative relation emerged between MR Self and Need to Belong scores (see Tables 5 and 6). Although there is research to suggest that belonging to a crowd or friendship group may depend upon an adolescent's willingness to conform to peers with regard to specific attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors (Brown et al., 1986), the current findings suggest that adolescents who have a greater tendency to be a moral rebel are not motivated to change their beliefs or values just to be compliant and to fit in. This finding is noteworthy because the adolescent period of development is typically marked by a strong desire to acquire and maintain friendships and friendship groups (Harold, Colarossi, & Mercier, 2007). Despite the heightened importance of peers during adolescence, for those with relatively strong tendencies to be a moral rebel, doing what they believe is "right" may be more important than fitting in with a peer group.

MR Self was the only assessment of moral rebelness to yield a significant relation with more than one individual difference measure. The pattern of significant findings involving MR Self scores suggest that the MR Self measure may have been the most promising assessment of moral rebelness in this study (as compared to the Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher). Although these findings are not sufficient to establish the validity of the MR Self measure, it is noteworthy that the simplest (single-item) and most direct measure of moral rebelness yielded the majority of the significant results. The MR Self measure of moral rebelness served as the most direct assessment because adolescents were provided with a precise and unambiguous description of what a moral rebel is and *is not*. Therefore, adolescents should have had a clear understanding of moral rebel behavior when they rated themselves on the sociometric form on the extent to which they behave like a moral rebel.

Previous research has demonstrated that one-item measures, such as MR Self, can be as valid as multi-item measures at assessing various constructs such as interpersonal closeness (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992), quality of life (de Boer, van Lanschot, Stalmeier, van Sandick, Hulscher, de Haes, & Sprangers, 2004), and personal happiness (Holder & Klassen, 2010). For example, Aron et al. (1994) revealed that a single-item measure of interpersonal closeness correlated just as strongly with the variables of intimacy, relationship satisfaction, and longevity (measured 3 months later), as did a multi-item measure of interpersonal closeness. Of course, additional research will be needed to assess the relative value of the MR Self measure in assessing individuals' tendencies to be moral rebels.

Perceptions of a Moral Rebel

Male and female adolescents reported more favorable attitudes toward the moral rebel than the non-moral rebel depicted in the audio-recorded scenarios (see Table 10). As with a previous study involving adults, (Monin et al., 2008), adolescents may recognize the courage and moral strength necessary to stand up for one's beliefs and values in the face of pressures to comply. Moral exemplars, like the moral rebel, seem to reflect the goodness in human nature. Seeing (or hearing) acts of human morality have been shown to induce a "warm or glowing feeling," making the moral other socially attractive, and inspiring people to do good themselves (Haidt, 2000, p. 15).

In addition to favoring the moral rebel over the non-moral rebel, the participants rated themselves as more similar to the moral rebel than the non-moral rebel (see Table 11). These patterns of findings likely are related, given the research that the more similar individuals perceive themselves to a target, the more favorable their attitudes toward that target (e.g., Parks, Sanna, & Berel, 2001; Sonnentag, Barlett, Livengood, Barnett, & Witham, 2009)⁷.

Although participants generally favored the moral rebel over the non-moral rebel, this was especially true for adolescents who scored relatively high on moral rebelness themselves (as assessed by all four measures of moral rebelness). Specifically, and consistent with prediction, there were significant positive correlations found between participants' moral rebel rating scores (for the MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher measures) and favorable attitudes toward the moral rebel, whereas non-significant correlations were found between participants' moral rebel scores and favorable attitudes toward the non-moral rebel (see Table 12). Unexpectedly, this pattern of findings translated into a significant interaction between moral rebelness scores and condition only in the MR Self regression. In this regression, heightened moral rebelness scores were associated with more favorable attitudes toward the

moral rebel, whereas heightened moral rebelness scores were unrelated to attitudes toward the non-moral rebel (see Table 13 and Figure 1). These results demonstrate that the tendency to be a moral rebel is not indiscriminately associated with more favorable attitudes toward others. Adolescents scoring relatively high on moral rebelness demonstrated especially favorable attitudes toward a peer who was presumably seen as similar to the self (i.e., another moral rebel). Given that non-moral rebel behavior is the norm (or status quo), adolescents' perceptions of such "typical behavior" appears related to their own tendency to be a moral rebel.

Limitations and Future Directions

The present findings contribute to our understanding of the 1) measurement of moral rebelness in adolescents, 2) characteristics associated with the tendency to be an adolescent moral rebel, and 3) perceptions of (and variables related to perceptions of) a moral rebel. The limitations of the present study provide direction for future research.

Although the multi-method measurement of moral rebelness was a strength of the current study, one potentially knowledgeable informant (i.e., parent) was not included. It would be useful for future research to collect parents' ratings of their adolescents' moral rebelness and to examine the intercorrelations with self-report, peer, and teacher ratings. Because adolescence is a time characterized by increasing independence from parents and greater involvement with peers (Harold et al., 2007), it is possible that parents may have less opportunity to observe, than peers and teachers, their adolescent's tendency to defend his/her beliefs when under conformity pressures to comply.

The self-report, peer, and teacher ratings used in the current study, did not directly inquire about the adolescents' specific moral rebel behavior, and it is unknown what behaviors contributed to these ratings. Although scores on the four measures of moral rebelness were

found to be significantly, positively intercorrelated, only MR Self scores yielded a significant relation with more than one individual difference measure (as compared to Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher scores). Given that the current study is the first investigation to attempt to measure moral rebelness, assessing moral rebelness with observations of participants' behavior in contrived settings would be a reasonable and appropriate future direction in measuring this characteristic. One feasible approach for future investigations is to examine the extent to which adolescents display moral rebel behavior in a contrived setting. Such a study might ask participants to engage in a counter-attitudinal task (e.g., like writing and essay in the current study) in the presence of "compliant" confederates, to determine if participants acquiesce to the request (scored 0), privately refuse to complete the task (scored 1), or publically verbalize their non-compliance based on moral grounds (scored 2). Such a study could help to determine whether a self, peer, teacher, or (perhaps) parent measure is most strongly associated with observations of moral rebel behavior.

The current study's examination of variables potentially related to moral rebelness was not particularly successful. Although only one measure of moral rebelness (i.e., MR Self) yielded significant relations with more than one individual difference variable (i.e., Self-Esteem and Need to Belong), future research should continue to investigate characteristics potentially associated with adolescents' tendency to be a moral rebel. One direction for future research might be to explore the relation between moral rebelness and risk taking. Risk taking may be involved in adolescents' willingness to take a principled stand against conformity pressures to comply because of the possibility of being rejected or ostracized by peers – a considerable "risk" for many adolescents. With regard to the possible moral rebelness – risk taking relation, the current study did find a significant positive relationship between Five-Item MR and Minor Moral

Violation scores for females ($r = .44, p < .01$; see Table 5). Scoring relatively high on Minor Moral Violations, while reflecting an willingness to engage in “antisocial” or “immoral” acts, also likely reflects a tendency to take risks. Adolescents who report a heightened willingness to “use someone else’s answers to complete a homework assignment that (he/she) was supposed to do on (his/her) own” (see Appendix E for other items on the Minor Moral Violations measure) may also be willing to take the risk of standing up to peers to defend his/her beliefs. Although a significant relationship between moral rebelness and Minor Moral Violations scores only emerged for the Five-Item MR measure (and only for females), this finding hints at the possibility that an adolescent’s tendency to take risks may be associated with the tendency to be a moral rebel.

Future research might also examine the potential relationship between various sex-role orientations (i.e., masculinity, femininity, androgyny, undifferentiated) and the tendency to be a moral rebel. Although the current study did not find any gender difference in adolescents’ tendencies to be a moral rebel (on any of the four moral rebelness measures), traditional sex-role stereotypes suggest that “defending one’s own beliefs” and “willingness to take a stand” are traditionally masculine characteristics, whereas “soft spoken” and “yielding” are traditionally feminine characteristics (Bem, 1979). Consequently, future research should examine whether specific sex-role orientations (i.e., masculine, androgynous) are more strongly associated with adolescents’ tendencies to be a moral rebel than other sex-role orientations (i.e., feminine, undifferentiated).

In addition to measuring moral rebelness and the variables potentially associated with adolescents’ tendencies to be a moral rebel, the current study examined adolescents’ perceptions of a hypothetical moral rebel. One limitation of this part of the study was the inclusion of only

one situation in which a male adolescent did (or did not) display moral rebel behavior. Given that moral rebelness consists of behaviors that may be more traditionally masculine, future research needs to address males' and females' perceptions of male and female moral rebels. If moral rebelness is perceived as more gender appropriate for males than females, female moral rebels may be evaluated less favorably than their male counterparts. Further, males may be less accepting than females of female moral rebels, as previous research has found that males respond less favorably than females to females acting in a self-assured, decisive manner (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004)

Clearly, there are many situations in which an individual may stand up for his/her beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures to comply. It should be noted that the moral rebel scenario used in the current study was designed to parallel Monin et al.'s (2008) procedure and "worked" quite well. Nonetheless, the findings (e.g., the moral rebel being rated more favorably than the non-moral rebel) are limited to the specific situation selected and may not generalize to other situations. Future research should examine various scenarios, including more volatile and emotionally-charged situations, where acting like a moral rebel may not be evaluated so favorably.

Lastly, a direction for future research that does not emerge from any limitation of the current study is an examination of the antecedents of individual differences in moral rebelness. Examination of moral rebelness within adolescence was as a strength of the current study because adolescence is a time characterized by heightened peer pressure (Harold et al., 2007), making an adolescent moral rebel especially worthy of study. Despite the importance of studying moral rebelness during adolescence, the tendency to stand up for one's beliefs and

values in the face of conformity pressures to comply likely begins to emerge prior to adolescence.

Longitudinal and/or cross-sectional research could examine the socialization experiences that may promote the development of moral rebelness. For example, individual differences in moral rebelness may be related to parents' styles of communicating values and beliefs to their children. Researchers could investigate if the authoritative parenting style (i.e., highly responsive yet demanding; Baumrind, 1967) is associated with the emergence of moral rebelness. Authoritative parents teach their children clear standards for moral behavior in ways that encourages the child to personally accept the underlying belief or value. Research has demonstrated that children raised in authoritative homes are more resistive to antisocial peer pressures (e.g., vandalism, cheating on an examination, stealing) and are more willing to tell their friends not to engage in these immoral acts (compared to adolescents from authoritarian or permissive homes; Steinberg, 1987). This research suggests that parenting style may be one socialization factor to consider when investigating the emergence of moral rebelness.

Further, future research could examine if children who have parents that model moral rebel behavior are more likely to develop the tendency to be a moral rebel than children whose parents do not model moral rebel behavior. According to social learning theory, modeling is one important way that individuals learn a broad range of behaviors (Bandura, 1969). For example, research by London (1970) revealed that participants, who had been rescuers of Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, reported having parents who acted in accordance with their beliefs and values. Consequently, investigating parents' modeling of moral rebel behavior would be one viable direction to pursue when examining the development of moral rebelness in children.

Further, researchers could examine the role of religious/spiritual training and/or formal moral education programs on the development of moral rebelness. One method of acquiring personal beliefs and values is through exposure to formal (or informal) faith-based training (Kohlber & Power, 1981). Although not all beliefs and values are “moral,” having a *strong* belief may increase the likelihood of standing up for that belief despite conflicting social pressures. Previous research has found that having strong internalized moral values is associated with individuals’ willingness to do what they believe is right, even if the potential cost for doing so is great (Oliner and Oliner, 1998). Consequently, future investigations should examine if faith-based training programs are one means of strengthening individuals’ beliefs and increasing the likelihood that they will go to great lengths to defend those beliefs.

Clearly there is still much to be learned about the moral rebel. Despite the limitations acknowledged, the present study contributes valuable information about the (1) reliable measurement of moral rebelness in adolescents, (2) characteristics associated with differences in adolescents’ tendencies to be a moral rebel, and (3) adolescents’ evaluations of a hypothetical moral rebel and some variables potentially associated with those evaluations. The results yielded from the current study provide direction for researchers to ask additional, important questions about individuals’ tendencies to stand up for their beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures to comply.

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Footnotes

¹ The moral rebel, as conceptualized by Monin et al. (2008) and as presented in this thesis, engages in atypical behavior that reflects high moral standards. However, it is acknowledged that a person could potentially “stand up” for a principle that is immoral or unjust.

² Obviously, some studies have failed to demonstrate the validity of various informant ratings. However, for the purposes of the current study, literature demonstrating acceptable levels of criterion related validity achieved by different raters is summarized to provide support for employing these methods when trying to measure moral rebelness. Research examining the inter-rater reliability of self, peer, and teacher ratings in the moral domain is addressed later in the Introduction.

³ Participant gender and social desirability, although not addressed in this literature review, are two additional individual difference variables that were explored in the current study.

⁴ The statements listed in Appendix E do not include any legal violations, which were part of Barnett et al.’s (2005) original MMLV scale, thus the Minor Moral Violation abbreviation for the current adaptation.

⁵ All but two students were accurate in their response to the manipulation check statement in recognition whether the target’s behavior matched his beliefs. Specifically, two participants in the non-moral rebel condition were uncertain (selected “neither disagree nor agree”) if the target’s behavior was consistent with his beliefs. These participants’ data were included in all analyses.

⁶ The preliminary round of regression analyses revealed that the **main** effect of perceived similarity (which was of no interest in the current study) was a much stronger predictor of attitudes toward the targets than the scores on the measures of moral rebelness and cynicism.

For the following reasons, however, perceived similarity scores were removed from the series of regressions and the analyses were performed again.

First, for the participants in the moral rebel condition, perceived similarity could be considered an additional measure of moral rebelness. Evidence to support this contention is provided by the significant positive relationships found between “perceived similarity to the moral rebel” scores and all four measures of moral rebelness (r s ranging from .40 to .56, all p s < .01). Further, in the moral rebel condition, participants were asked about their perceived similarity to a specific moral rebel, and the correlation between perceived similarity scores and attitudes toward the moral rebel scores was stronger than the correlations between each measure of moral rebelness and attitudes toward the moral rebel (see Table 12). The extremely strong relationship between perceived similarity scores and attitudes toward the moral rebel scores appears to have greatly reduced the possibility of other measures of moral rebelness and cynicism predicting attitudes toward the target in the regression.

However, perceived similarity cannot be considered a true individual difference measure of moral rebelness in this study because only half of the participants were in the moral rebel condition and rated their similarity to a moral rebel (the other half rated their perceived similarity to a non-moral rebel). Because of the issues associated with perceived similarity scores, the regression analyses reported in the Results section were performed with perceived similarity scores omitted.

⁷ The research that has revealed greater liking of others perceived as similar may also account for the strong positive relationships found in the current study between (a) perceived similarity to the moral rebel and non-moral rebel and (b) favorable attitudes toward the moral rebel and non-moral rebel, respectively (see Table 12).

Table 1 Mean Scores (Standard Deviations) on MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher Ratings of Moral Rebelness for Males and Females

Measure	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>t(105)</i>
MR Self	3.51 (.90)	3.50 (.93)	.97
Five-Item MR	16.78 (3.39)	17.09 (3.66)	.65
Average Peer	3.12 (.42)	3.08 (.46)	.68
Average Teacher	3.21 (.68)	3.19 (.66)	.83

Table 2 Inter Correlations Among Scores on the MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher Ratings of Moral Rebelness for the Entire Sample

Scale	1	2	3	4
1. MR Self	--	.40**	.29**	.56**
2. Five-Item MR		--	.34**	.32**
3. Average Peer			--	.48**
4. Average Teacher				--

** $p < .01$

Table 3 Inter Correlations Among Scores on the MR Self, Five-Item MR, Average Peer, and Average Teacher Ratings of Moral Rebelness for Males and Females

Measure	1	2	3	4
1. MR Self	--	.52**	.25*	.57**
2. Five-Item MR	.25*	--	.30*	.36**
3. Average Peer	.34*	.40**	--	.52**
4. Average Teacher	.54**	.26*	.43**	--

Note. Correlations for male participants are presented above the diagonal and correlations for female participants are presented below the diagonal.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4 Mean Scores (Standard Deviations) on the Conscience, Need to Belong, Self-Esteem, and Minor Moral Violations Scales for Males and Females

Scale	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>t(105)</i>
Conscience	19.68 (4.45)	22.14 (5.09)	2.63*
Need to Belong	8.86 (2.44)	9.16 (2.47)	.63
Self-Esteem	36.40 (7.83)	35.77 (6.85)	.43
Minor Moral Violations	17.70 (5.12)	16.67 (6.08)	.94

* $p < .05$

Table 5 Inter Correlations Among Scores on the Measures of Moral Rebelness and Scores on the Conscience, Need to Belong, Self-Esteem, and Minor Moral Violations Scales for All Participants, Males, and Females

Measure	Conscience	NB	SE	MMV
MR Self				
All	.03	-.29**	.34**	-.09
Males	.03	-.19	.32*	-.11
Females	.05	-.43**	.37*	-.06
Five-Item MR				
All	-.03	.08	.10	.19
Males	.14	.10	.01	-.20
Females	-.27	.05	.25	.44**
Average Peer				
All	-.02	-.04	-.02	.05
Males	.07	.03	-.11	-.02
Females	-.12	-.14	.12	.11
Average Teacher				
All	.15	-.04	.11	-.20
Males	.19	.04	.16	-.18
Females	.12	-.16	.03	-.05

Note. NB = Need to Belong; SE = Self-Esteem; MMV = Minor Moral Violations

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 6 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Conscience, Need to Belong, Self-Esteem, and Minor Moral Violations Scores on MR Self Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.01	
Social Desirability	0.07	0.68	.50		
Gender	-0.03	-0.31	.76		
Step 2				.21**	.20***
Conscience	0.17	1.45	.14		
Need to Belong	-0.31	-3.26	< .01		
Self-Esteem	0.36	3.76	< .001		
Minor Moral Violations	-0.08	-0.67	.50		

** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 7 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Conscience, Need to Belong, Self-Esteem, and Minor Moral Violations Scores on Five-Item MR Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.02	
Social Desirability	-0.14	-1.47	.15		
Gender	0.06	0.62	.54		
Step 2				.07	.05
Conscience	0.08	0.62	.54		
Need to Belong	0.06	0.54	.59		
Self-Esteem	0.18	1.74	.09		
Minor Moral Violations	0.18	1.45	.15		

Table 8 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Conscience, Need to Belong, Self-Esteem, and Minor Moral Violations Scores on Average Peer Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.01	
Social Desirability	-0.07	-0.73	.47		
Gender	-0.03	-0.34	.74		
Step 2				.01	.00
Conscience	0.05	0.40	.69		
Need to Belong	-0.06	-0.60	.55		
Self-Esteem	0.01	0.06	.95		
Minor Moral Violations	0.00	0.01	.99		

Table 9 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Conscience, Need to Belong, Self-Esteem, and Minor Moral Violations Scores on Average Teacher Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.00	
Social Desirability	-0.02	-0.21	.83		
Gender	-0.02	-0.19	.85		
Step 2				.09	.09*
Conscience	0.26	2.14	< .05		
Need to Belong	-0.11	-1.07	.29		
Self-Esteem	0.17	1.61	.11		
Minor Moral Violations	-0.18	-1.47	.15		

* $p < .05$

**Table 10 Males' and Females' Attitudes Toward the Moral Rebel and Non-Moral Rebel:
Means and Standard Deviations**

Target	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	
Moral Rebel	4.19 (.70)	4.00 (.76)	4.11 (.73)
Non-Moral Rebel	3.20 (.69)	3.33 (.59)	3.25 (.65)

Table 11 Males' and Females' Perceived Similarity with the Moral Rebel and Non-Moral Rebel: Means and Standard Deviations

Target	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	
Moral Rebel	3.58 (1.09)	3.23 (1.22)	3.43 (1.16)
Non-Moral Rebel	2.45 (1.13)	2.90 (1.03)	2.62 (1.11)

Table 12 Correlations Between Participants' Attitude Toward the Moral Rebel or Non-Moral Rebel (Target) and Their Moral Rebelness Scores, Perceived Similarity to the Target, and Level of Cynicism

Measure	Target	
	Moral Rebel	Non-Moral Rebel
MR Self	.37**	-.10
Five-Item MR	.42**	.17
Average Peer	.33*	.07
Average Teacher	.43**	.00
Perceived Similarity to Target	.72***	.66***
Cynicism	.09	-.02

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, $p < .001$

Table 13 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Self MR, Cynicism, and Condition on Attitudes Toward the Targets Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.00	
Social Desirability	.00	-.01	.993		
Gender	.00	-.03	.973		
Step 2				.03	.03
MR Self	.17	1.72	.088		
Cynicism	.03	.28	.778		
Step 3				.30***	.27***
Moral Rebel Condition	-.52	-6.18	<.001		
Step 4				.35***	.05*
Gender x Condition	.26	.94	.352		
MR Self x Condition	-.27	-2.47	.015		
Cynicism x Condition	-.13	-.97	.333		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$

Table 14 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Five-Item MR, Cynicism, and Condition on Attitudes Toward the Targets Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.00	
Social Desirability	.00	-.01	.993		
Gender	.00	-.03	.973		
Step 2				.08	.08*
Five-Item MR	.29	2.99	.004		
Cynicism	-.01	-.10	.923		
Step 3				.35***	.27***
Moral Rebel Condition	-.52	-6.41	<.001		
Step 4				.37***	.02
Gender x Condition	.25	.91	.364		
Five-Item MR x Condition	-.18	-1.32	.192		
Cynicism x Condition	.04	.31	.758		

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Table 15 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Average Peer, Cynicism, and Condition on Attitudes Toward the Targets Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.00	
Social Desirability	.00	-.01	.993		
Gender	.00	-.03	.973		
Step 2				.05	.05
Average Peer	.23	2.41	.018		
Cynicism	.01	.11	.912		
Step 3				.31***	.26***
Moral Rebel Condition	-.51	-6.12	<.001		
Step 4				.33***	.02
Gender x Condition	.31	1.11	.272		
Average Peer x Condition	-.13	-1.17	.245		
Cynicism x Condition	-.01	-.08	.933		

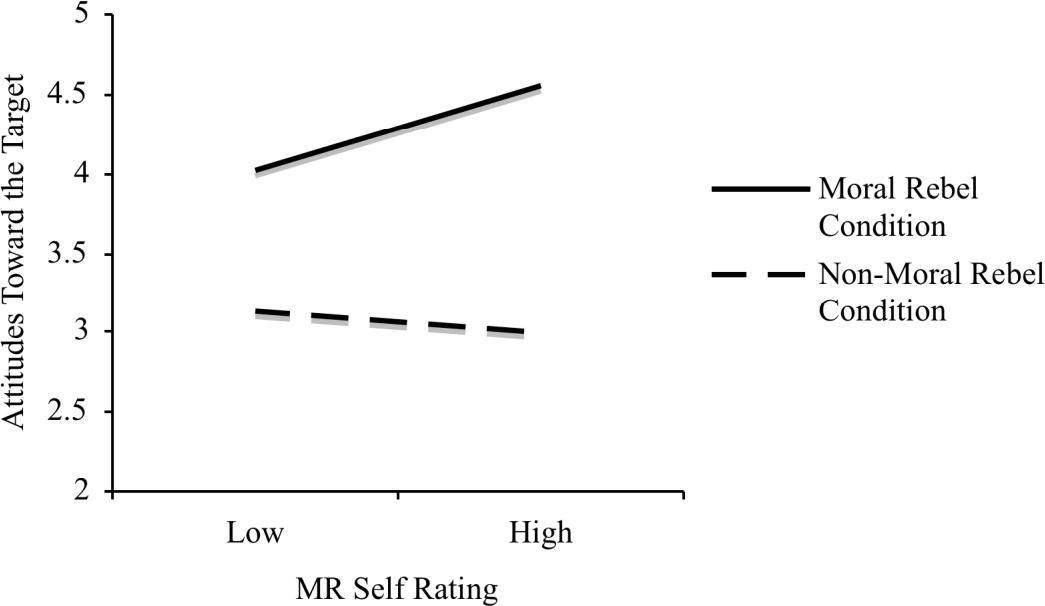
*** $p < .001$

Table 16 Hierarchical Regression Analysis Summary for Social Desirability, Gender, Average Teacher, Cynicism, and Condition on Attitudes Toward the Targets Scores

Variable	β	t	p	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1				.00	
Social Desirability	.00	-.01	.993		
Gender	.00	-.03	.973		
Step 2				.06	.06*
Average Teacher	.24	2.51	.014		
Cynicism	.03	.27	.786		
Step 3				.33***	.27***
Moral Rebel Condition	-.52	-6.29	<.001		
Step 4				.37***	.04
Gender x Condition	.32	1.17	.244		
Average Teacher x Condition	-.22	-2.07	.041		
Cynicism x Condition	-.04	-.33	.742		

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 1. Simple slopes for the interaction between MR Self scores and Moral Rebel conditions on attitudes toward the target.



Appendix A - Moral Rebelness

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the number under each statement that best reflects your opinion. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. I am not afraid to stand up to others in order to defend my beliefs.				
1	2	3	4	5
2. I would be willing to take a public stand regarding my beliefs, even if it meant getting in trouble in school.				
1	2	3	4	5
3. I would publicly disagree with my friends if I did not believe in something they said or did.				
1	2	3	4	5
4. I often find myself taking an active stand for things I believe in.				
1	2	3	4	5
5. I will not participate in things I do not believe in, even if my friends and family want me to. *				
1	2	3	4	5
6. I am willing to stand up for what I believe, even if I lose some friends as a result.				
1	2	3	4	5
7. There have been times that I simply “went along with the crowd,” even when we were doing something that made me uncomfortable. (-) *				
1	2	3	4	5

8. If you want to get along with others, you sometimes have to ignore some of the bad things they do or say. (-) *

1 2 3 4 5

9. I have publicly agreed with something I didn't really believe because it made it easier to get along with another person. (-) *

1 2 3 4 5

Note: * Item eliminated to establish acceptable internal reliability of the final scale.

Negatively keyed statements are indicated with (-).

Appendix B - Peer Ratings of Students' Tendencies to be a Moral Rebel

A Moral Rebel is an individual who stands up for his/her beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures not to do so. A moral rebel is someone who takes a principled stand against the status quo, who refuses to comply, stay silent, or simply go along when this would require that they compromise their values. A moral rebel is **not** someone who challenges others or rebels in situations just to be difficult or to cause trouble. We'd like your opinion of the extent to which each of your classmates has the characteristics of a Moral Rebel.

Below is a list of the names of the students in your class who have permission to participate in this study. Please locate your name on the list below and circle it. Using the following 5-point scale, please circle the one number next to each student's name that best shows how much you agree with the statement.

“ _____ is a Moral Rebel.”

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 In Between Disagree and Agree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C - Teacher Ratings of Students' Tendencies to be a Moral Rebel

A Moral Rebel is an individual who stands up for his/her beliefs and values in the face of conformity pressures not to do so. A moral rebel is someone who takes a principled stand against the status quo, who refuses to comply, stay silent, or simply go along when this would require that they compromise their values. A moral rebel is **not** someone who challenges others or rebels in situations just to be difficult or to cause trouble. We'd like your opinion of the extent to which each of your students has the characteristics of a Moral Rebel.

Below is a list of the names of the students in your class who have permission to participate in this study. Using the following 5-point scale, please circle the one number next to each student's name that best shows how much you agree with the statement:

“ _____ is a Moral Rebel.”

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 In Between Disagree and Agree	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix D - Conscience Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the number under each statement that best reflects your opinion. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. If I do something I am not supposed to do and do not get caught, I feel guilty.				
1	2	3	4	5
2. Knowing that I have done something I am not supposed to do makes me feel bad.				
1	2	3	4	5
3. I do what is right because otherwise I would feel guilty.				
1	2	3	4	5
4. It does not bother me when I do something bad. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel guilty when I do something wrong and do not get caught.				
1	2	3	4	5
6. I dislike myself when I do something wrong.				
1	2	3	4	5

Note: The negatively keyed statement is indicated with (-).

Appendix E - Minor Moral Violations Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine if you believe you would be willing to do some things that could be considered inappropriate or unacceptable. We would like to know if you believe you would do each of the behaviors listed below if you had the opportunity.

Using the following 5-point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree that you would engage in each of the behaviors described below. Please circle the number under each statement that best describes your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. I would tell someone a secret that I had promised to keep.				
1	2	3	4	5
2. I would allow someone else to be blamed for something I did.				
1	2	3	4	5
3. I would pretend to be sick to get out of doing something I did not want to do.				
1	2	3	4	5
4. I would repeat gossip about someone that I know is untrue.				
1	2	3	4	5
5. I would use someone else's answers to complete a homework assignment that I was supposed to do on my own.				
1	2	3	4	5
6. I would make fun of another person's appearance or behavior.				
1	2	3	4	5
7. I would borrow another person's pencil or pen without permission.				

1

2

3

4

5

Appendix F - Need to Belong Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the number under each statement that best reflects your opinion. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. Fitting in with the other kids at school is important to me. *				
1	2	3	4	5
2. I really do not care if other kids do not like what I say or do. * (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
3. I like to do things that help me feel part of a group.				
1	2	3	4	5
4. I tend to say and do things so that other kids will like me.				
1	2	3	4	5
5. I often go along with what the other kids are doing so that I can fit in.				
1	2	3	4	5
6. I do not change my opinion about something just so that I will fit in with the other kids at school. * (-)				
1	2	3	4	5

Note: * Item eliminated to establish acceptable internal reliability of the final scale.

Negatively keyed statements are indicated with (-).

Appendix G - Self-Esteem Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the number under each statement that best reflects your opinion. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.				
1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.				
1	2	3	4	5
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.				
1	2	3	4	5
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.				
1	2	3	4	5
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.				
1	2	3	4	5
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5

9. I certainly feel useless some of the time. (-)

1 2 3 4 5

10. There are times when I think I am no good at all. (-)

1 2 3 4 5

Note: Negatively keyed statements are indicated with (-).

Appendix H - Moral Rebel and Non-Moral Rebel Scenarios

Moral Rebel Scenario

Recently, the school board has been debating implementing a community service requirement in order for middle school students to advance to high school. This requirement would force every student in middle school to complete 30 hours of approved service within the community before he or she can enter the ninth grade. Opportunities could include helping at a local animal shelter, tutoring younger children, cleaning the streets and city parks, fundraising, or similar activities. Many teachers and parents are in support of making community service a mandatory component of middle school education and because this is a new topic of debate, the school board is currently seeking feedback.

Mr. Thomas, an eighth grade English teacher, is strongly in favor of implementing this community service requirement and wants to encourage the school board to reach this decision. Consequently, Mr. Thomas decided to create an assignment in which his students would use their persuasive writing skills to argue in favor of implementing the requirement.

Approximately one month prior to the school board meeting, Mr. Thomas explained to his students his belief that enforcing a mandatory community service requirement would encourage students to learn the value of helping and develop an appreciation for community service. He argued that the requirement would build character in students while helping the community. Mr. Thomas then announced that in order to help the school board make the right decision, every class member would be required to write a persuasive paragraph in favor of the mandatory community service requirement. These essays would be worth 10 points in the class and would also be forwarded to the school board to aid in their decision.

After explaining the details of the assignment, Mr. Thomas repeated that this was a required assignment and that each student's essay should argue for the benefits of implementing the community service requirement. A few students began to whisper and grumble, but soon turned their attention to writing the essay. Mr. Thomas then allowed the students to use the remainder of the class period to write their persuasive arguments.

Chris, one of the eighth grade boys in the class, was frustrated with the fact he was being required to write an essay that expressed a view with which he did not totally agree. Chris believed that volunteering is a respectable and beneficial activity, but forcing someone to volunteer does not promote the same lessons that one would learn if a person were to volunteer freely. After sitting for a few minutes, Chris decided that he was **not** going to comply with Mr. Thomas' instructions to write the essay because doing so would go against his beliefs and values. Instead, Chris wrote the following paragraph and turned it in to Mr. Thomas:

“So I know I am supposed to write an essay saying that we should require all middle school students to volunteer at least 30 hours before they can enter high school, right? Well you know what? I don't think I am going to do that. I know I was told to do it and I am a student in this class, but I am still free to stand up for what I believe is correct, right? And I am not going to do something that I am not 100% comfortable doing, like writing an essay in favor of forcing someone to volunteer. I do not believe making community service mandatory promotes the same morals and values that someone would learn if he or she volunteered without being required to do so. So I am not going to write an essay in favor of implementing this requirement just because I am told to write it. There you have it – my official refusal, in writing and all. I

don't care about the consequences or whatever, I would rather not do something I have a problem with.”

Non-Moral Rebel Scenario

Recently, the school board has been debating implementing a community service requirement in order for middle school students to advance to high school. This requirement would force every student in middle school to complete 30 hours of approved service within the community before he or she can enter the ninth grade. Opportunities could include helping at a local animal shelter, tutoring younger children, cleaning the streets and city parks, fundraising, or similar activities. Many teachers and parents are in support of making community service a mandatory component of middle school education and because this is a new topic of debate, the school board is currently seeking feedback.

Mr. Thomas, an eighth grade English teacher, is strongly in favor of implementing this community service requirement and wants to encourage the school board to reach this decision. Consequently, Mr. Thomas decided to create an assignment in which his students would use their persuasive writing skills to argue in favor of implementing the requirement.

Approximately one month prior to the school board meeting, Mr. Thomas explained to his students his belief that enforcing a mandatory community service requirement would encourage students to learn the value of helping and develop an appreciation for community service. He argued that the requirement would build character in students while helping the community. Mr. Thomas then announced that in order to help the school board make the right decision, every class member would be required to write a persuasive paragraph in favor of the mandatory community service requirement. These essays would be worth 10 points in the class and would also be forwarded to the school board to aid in their decision.

After explaining the details of the assignment, Mr. Thomas repeated that this was a required assignment and that each student's essay should argue for the benefits of implementing the community service requirement. A few students began to whisper and grumble, but soon turned their attention to writing the essay. Mr. Thomas then allowed the students to use the remainder of the class period to write their persuasive arguments.

Chris, one of the eighth grade boys in the class, was frustrated with the fact that he was being required to write an essay that expressed a view with which he did not totally agree. Chris believed that volunteering is a respectable and beneficial activity, but forcing someone to volunteer does not promote the same lessons that one would learn if a person were to volunteer freely. For a few minutes, Chris considered not completing the assignment because it went against his beliefs concerning a mandatory community service requirement for eighth grade students. However, he eventually decided to do what Mr. Thomas asked because it was a graded class assignment and all of the other students were already working on their essays. Chris wrote the following paragraph and turned it in to Mr. Thomas:

“A mandatory community service requirement should be implemented that requires all middle school students to volunteer at least 30 hours before they can enter high school. By having a mandatory community service requirement, students could learn the value of helping and appreciate the community more. In addition, volunteering is good for the community because it promotes the helping of other people. If people volunteer, we all benefit from a cleaner, more cooperative community. Further, middle school students have a lot of time, energy, and skills that could be used in positive ways to assist the community. These are a few reasons why a mandatory community service requirement should be implemented for middle school students to graduate to high school.

Appendix I - Perception Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the number under each statement that best reflects your opinion. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. I would want Chris to be my friend.				
1	2	3	4	5
2. Chris is a good person.				
1	2	3	4	5
3. Chris is immature. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
4. Chris thinks he is better than everyone else. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
5. Chris is a good role model.				
1	2	3	4	5
6. Chris's essay reflected what he truly believed concerning a mandatory community service requirement for eighth grade students.				
1	2	3	4	5
7. I respect Chris for his behavior in this situation.				
1	2	3	4	5
8. Chris did the right thing in this situation.				

1 2 3 4 5

9. Chris should be proud of his behavior.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I would like Chris.

1 2 3 4 5

11. Chris does not have high moral standards. (-)

1 2 3 4 5

12. If I had the same belief as Chris did concerning a mandatory community service requirement for eighth grade students, I would have made the same decision that Chris did in this situation.

1 2 3 4 5

13. Chris and I are similar.

1 2 3 4 5

Note: Item number 6 was included as a manipulation check.

Negatively keyed statements are indicated with (-).

Appendix J - Cynicism Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the number under each statement that best reflects your opinion. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. Sometimes people will help you and not want anything in return. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
2. A person who expresses an opinion in a group that is different from everyone else's opinion is just trying to get attention.				
1	2	3	4	5
3. People only do things to help themselves.				
1	2	3	4	5
4. People are basically selfish.				
1	2	3	4	5
5. Most people watch out for themselves and little else.				
1	2	3	4	5
6. I think that most people would lie to get ahead.				
1	2	3	4	5

Note: The negatively keyed statement is indicated with (-).

Appendix K - Demographic Information

Sex (circle one): Male Female

Age: _____

Birthdate: _____ / _____ / _____
 Month Day Year

Grade in School (circle one): Seventh Eighth

Appendix L - Parent Letter

Dear Parent:

My name is Tammy Sonnentag, I am currently pursuing a Masters degree from the Department of Psychology at Kansas State University. This letter describes the research project I am planning to conduct this semester, which will serve as the basis for my Masters. This study requires the participation of seventh- and eighth-grade students. I am hoping that, after you read this letter, you will allow your adolescent to take part in this study.

The general purpose of this research is to understand more about adolescents' tendencies to stand up for their beliefs in the face of conformity pressures not to do so. The goals of the study are to measure this behavior, examine personality characteristics that may be related to this type of behavior, and explore some factors that may be associated with adolescents' perceptions of a peer who has engaged in this behavior. Your child will complete ratings of his/her personality and behavior and then rate the behavior of a peer from a different school.

Seventh- and eighth-grade students are being asked to assist by participating in one 30-minute group session conducted in the regular classroom. During the session, the participants will be asked to make ratings about themselves, their classmates, and an adolescent they do not know personally. Participation in this study is voluntary. The research no foreseeable risks and places no stress on the participants. Indeed, the large majority of adolescents who have taken part in prior similar studies have found participation quite enjoyable. Students' responses will be handled in a confidential manner. In the analysis and reporting of the data from this study, your adolescent's name will NOT be connected to his or her responses in any way.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to call me at (715) 574-0745 or Dr. Mark Barnett at 532-0603 (Professor, Department of Psychology, 422 Bluemont Hall, KSU). If you have any concerns about participants' rights or the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact Dr. Rick Scheidt at (785) 532-3224 (Chairman, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 103 Fairchild Hall, KSU).

Please indicate on the form below whether you will or will not allow your adolescent to take part in this study and have your adolescent return the permission slip his/her classroom teacher. Student's with parental permission will, of course, be free to withdraw from this study at any time if they so desire. Refusal to participate or discontinuing participation will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to the student. Thank you very much for your help with this study.

Sincerely,
Tammy L. Sonnentag

Permission Slip

_____ I will allow my child,

_____ I will not allow my child,

_____,
(print child's name)

to participate in the study outlined above.

(signature of parent or legal guardian)

Appendix M - Adolescent Assent Form

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may stop participating at any point without any penalty. I understand that I will be making ratings about myself, my classmates, and an adolescent I do not know personally. I also understand that the ratings I make today will be kept private and secret.

If you agree to participate in my study today, please print your full name neatly on the first line below and then sign and put today's date on the next two lines. (If you do not agree to participate in this study, do not print or sign your name below.) Thank you.

Please print your full name

Please sign your full name

Today's date

Appendix N - Social Desirability Scale

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with each statement by circling the number under each statement that best reflects your opinion. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers; we are only interested in your opinion.

STRONGLY DISAGREE		NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE		STRONGLY AGREE
1	2	3	4	5
1. I am always respectful to older people.				
1	2	3	4	5
2. Sometimes I do not feel like doing what my teachers want me to do. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
3. Sometimes I have felt like throwing things or breaking them. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
4. I never talk back to my parents.				
1	2	3	4	5
5. When I make a mistake, I always admit that I am wrong.				
1	2	3	4	5
6. I sometimes feel like making fun of other people. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5
7. I always wash my hands before every meal.				
1	2	3	4	5
8. Sometimes I wish I could just “mess around” instead of having to go to school. (-)				
1	2	3	4	5

9. I have never thought about intentionally breaking a rule or law.

1 2 3 4 5

10. Sometimes I dislike helping my parents even though I know they need my help around the house. (-)

1 2 3 4 5

11. Sometimes I say things just to impress my friends. (-)

1 2 3 4 5

12. I never shout when I feel angry.

1 2 3 4 5

Note: Negatively keyed statements are indicated with (-).

Appendix O - Verbal Debriefing Statement

Thank you for participating our research project. The general purpose of this research is to investigate moral rebel behavior (i.e., standing up for your beliefs in the face of conformity pressures not to do so). The goals of the study are to measure moral rebel behavior, examine personality characteristics that may be related to being a moral rebel, and explore some factors that may be associated with adolescents' perceptions of a moral rebel. We hope that with your willingness to answer some questions today, we can better understand a special type of moral individual, the moral rebel.

Please remember that there were no right or wrong answers to the statements that your rated. We were just interested in learning about you, your personality and, you opinions of another adolescent your age. Also remember that no one besides myself and Adrienne will know what answers you gave today.

When this research project is complete, I will provide a summary to your teachers (and parents if desired) describing the results. Your teacher may post the results in a location where you may read the results. Do you have any last questions?

Thank you very much for your participation!