20. Causal beliefs in the self-concept and identity-based consumption

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INTRODUCTION

The theme of this section is the identity conflict principle: people must manage and are motivated to reduce the conflict between the various identities that they possess. This principle is based on the assumption that people hold multiple identities – that is, self-associate with multiple social category labels – that have potentially conflicting norms (Reed II et al. 2012). In contrast to this assumption, much work on identity-based consumption and choice has examined a single identity at a time. So, a key challenge for identity researchers is to understand how the various parts of the self-concept come together and relate to identity-based behavior (Reed II and Forehand 2016). The need to examine identity-based consumption within the context of the broader self-concept is also highlighted by theoretical accounts of the self-concept. These theoretical accounts tend to characterize the self-concept as multifaceted, made up of many different aspects or features of the self, including identities but also individual-level characteristics (for example, memories, moral qualities, personality traits, preferences and desires) (Bartels and Rips 2010; Bartels and Urminsky 2011, 2015; Chen et al. 2016; Ersner-Hershfield et al. 2009; Markus and Wurf 1987; Parfit 1984; Strohminger and Nichols 2014).

This chapter aims to understand identity-based consumption with a more complex view of the self-concept. There are two main goals of this chapter. The first is to examine how people organize information about, or mentally represent, the various parts of their self-concepts. That is, what information determines what we think makes us who we are as individuals? The second goal is to use this new understanding of the self-concept, one that places any given identity into the broader self-concept with individual-level aspects as well as other identities, to gain a better understanding of identity-based consumer behaviors. Throughout the chapter I use the term "identity" to refer to any category label that people incorporate into their sense of self (Reed II et al. 2012), and the term "self-concept" to refer the set of beliefs that people have about what makes them who they are as individuals, including but (as I will argue) not limited to beliefs about what

identities and individual-level aspects they have. I use the terms "feature" and "aspect" interchangeably to refer to any property of the self-concept, including identities as well as individual-level characteristics.

In the following sections, I first review a recent theoretical approach to how people mentally represent the self-concept, the "causal centrality approach" (Chen et al. 2016), and discuss how this approach differs from past work on the self-concept. The causal centrality approach, inspired by work in cognitive psychology on conceptual representation, suggests that any given aspect of the self-concept is defining of an individual to the extent that they believe that it is causally central: causally related to many other aspects of the self-concept, including identities and individual-level traits (for example, memories, moral qualities, personality traits). I then explore the implications of the causal centrality approach for identity-consistent behaviors. As the causal centrality account suggests that identities that are seen as causally central are perceived as more defining or important, it predicts that people for whom a given identity is more causally central will be more likely to act in ways consistent with the norms of that social category (as compared with those who believe that the same identity is more causally peripheral). Finally, I review evidence that supports this account of identity-based behavior. By using a theoretical model of self-concept representation to predict differences in identity-based behaviors, this chapter highlights how understanding the internal representation of the self-concept provides a deeper and more nuanced understanding of identity-based consumer behavior.

HOW DO WE THINK ABOUT THE SELF-CONCEPT?

In this section, I focus on two related questions. First, what information is in the self-concept? Second, how does this information guide what people think define their self-concepts? In other words, what do people think makes them who they are as individuals? These questions have been studied by researchers from a number of academic disciplines and have yielded somewhat different answers. Regarding the first question, in general, the self-concept has been characterized by various approaches as consisting of a set of aspects of the self. Where these approaches differ is on the types of features that they emphasize as making up the self-concept. Broadly speaking, approaches differ in whether they focus on identities (for example, gender, profession, ethnicity, brand-loyalist, and so on) or on the individual-level traits that a person has (for example, autobiographical memories, personality traits, moral qualities, preferences and desires, and so on). More theoretical approaches to how people think about the

self-concept from philosophy and cognitive psychology tend to emphasize individual-level aspects that are not necessarily strongly associated with identities such as autobiographical memories and moral qualities (e.g., Blok et al. 2005; Nichols and Bruno 2010; Parfit 1984; Strohminger and Nichols 2014, 2015). In contrast, approaches to identity-based consumption and choice from marketing, economics and social psychology tend emphasize identities (e.g., Akerlof and Kranton 2000, 2010; Oyserman et al. 2007) that can each have clusters of associations that can include things such as attitudinal and behavioral norms, and emotion profiles (Reed II et al. 2012).

The answers to the second question – what do people think defines the self-concept? – diverge even more. Work on identity-based consumption and choice has seemingly put social categories at the center of the self-concept. This literature has generally focused upon identities (and their associations) as the drivers of behaviors, finding that people who share a given identity tend to be more likely to act in ways consistent with the norms of the group – that is, display identity-consistent behaviors – than those who do not belong to the group (e.g., Akerlof and Kranton 2000, 2010; Benjamin et al. 2010; Brough et al. 2016; Cohn et al. 2014; LeBoeuf et al. 2010; Forehand et al. 2002; Puntoni et al. 2011; Oyserman et al. 2007; Shang et al. 2008; Reed II 2004). Among the approaches that focus on individual-level features, it is debated which type of feature is most defining of the self-concept. Philosophers have long suggested that autobiographical memories are key to defining an individual, and psychological studies have provided empirical data suggesting that disrupting a person's memories leads to perceptions that the person has become a different individual (Blok et al. 2005; Nichols and Bruno 2010). Other accounts have suggested that personality traits are particularly important in defining who a person is (Haslam et al. 2004). More recent research has instead suggested that moral qualities define one's self-concept (Strohminger and Nichols 2014, 2015).

Although the above approaches to the self-concept differ in which types of features they focus on, they all suggest that the self-concept is some set of aspects that one associates with the self: one's identities, autobiographical memories, moral qualities, personality traits, and so on And answering the question of what people perceive as defining of who they are as individuals is a matter of figuring out which feature type (memories versus morals qualities versus identities, and so on) people generally perceive as most defining of who they are as individuals.

The Causal Centrality Approach to the Self-Concept

The features emphasized in the approaches to the self-concept described in the previous subsection are clearly important to the self-concept. They

are the types of things one would use to describe oneself (or another person); for example, I am a bookish academic who loved science camp as a child. The causal centrality approach to the self-concept (Chen et al. 2016), however, suggests that there is more to the self-concept than a list of features. More specifically, that the self-concept includes not only features but also beliefs about the causal relationships between these features. For example, people not only know their identities (for example, academic) and their personality traits (for example, bookish) and their autobiographical memories (for example, loving science camp), but they also have beliefs about how these features are causally related to one another (for example, I became an academic because I loved science camp and am bookish). While the causal centrality approach focuses on knowledge of the relationships that exist between the features within the self-concept, other complementary approaches to the self-concept and identity-based consumption focus on the relationship between the self and items (including identities) situated within our broader social knowledge (see Connors and Perkins, Chapter 7 in this volume).

It is worth noting that the causal centrality approach (Chen et al. 2016) is about people's subjective beliefs about causal relationships, not what the true state of the world is (for example, maybe I would have become an academic whether or not I went to science camp). In most cases, it seems unlikely that one would be able to figure out what the true state of the world really is (for example, I do not know what would have happened if I had not gone to science camp but everything else had remained the same). So, it is these subjective beliefs that are included in the self-concept. And later in the chapter, I will discuss how these subjective beliefs relate to people's behaviors.

Building on the study of concepts in cognitive psychology, the main proposal of the causal centrality approach to the self-concept (Chen et al. 2016) is that causal beliefs about the relationships between features guide what people perceive as defining of the self-concept. A seminal finding from research on concepts is that features are perceived as defining of a concept to the extent that the features are seen as causally central (Ahn et al. 2000; Rehder and Hastie 2001; Sloman et al. 1998). In this chapter, I define causal centrality as the total number of other features of the self-concept a given feature is seen as causally linked to, as either a cause or an effect (Rehder and Hastie, 2001). I use this definition in all the studies described in the chapter as Chen et al. (2016) found that it described participants' judgments of the self-concept better than an alternative form of causal centrality (Ahn et al. 2000; Sloman et al. 1998) which suggests that only being the cause of other features (and not being an effect of other features) contributes to a feature's causal centrality. However, the issue of

how to best operationalize causal centrality is still a topic of debate (Chen and Urminsky 2019; Rehder and Kim 2010; Hayes and Rehder 2012) that is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Beliefs about causal relationships appear to be particularly important in our representation of concepts relative to simple associations. People are significantly more likely to recall that features are correlated if they can describe a causal relationship between them than when there is no clear causal relationship. For example, people readily seem to recognize (or represent) the correlation between clothing being made out of wool and being warm; a pair of features where there is a clear causal relationship (being made out of wool makes clothes warm). In contrast, people do not readily recognize that clothing with buttons tends to have long sleeves; a pair where there is not a clear causal relationship (Ahn et al. 2002; Malt and Smith 1984). This is consistent with theory-based views of concepts (Murphy and Medin 1985; Murphy 2002) which suggest that we have lay theories about why features go together. Since simple (non-causal) associations only encode co-occurrence, they do not provide any explanation for why features go together as causal relationships do and, theoretically, do not hold the same privileged status in conceptual representation.

While ideas about causal beliefs have been very influential in the study of concepts in cognitive psychology, they have tended to be studied in everyday concepts (for example, animal categories) or artificial concepts (novel concepts that experimenters designed and taught to participants). Exploring these ideas in the self-concept brings these ideas to a very different type of concept, a highly individualized one that people have rich knowledge about.

The causal centrality approach to the self-concept suggests that causal beliefs about how features are related are an integral part of the self-concept that guides judgments about how important features are. That is, how defining a feature is of the self-concept depends on the total number of causal relationships it has with other features. To illustrate, imagine two Democrats who are academics, Marissa and Nicole. Marissa believes that her moral qualities caused her to become a Democrat and also caused her to choose her profession as an academic. Nicole instead believes that it is being a Democrat that has caused the development of her moral qualities and also caused her to choose her profession. As a result, even if Marissa and Nicole's profession, moral qualities and political affiliation are identical, their self-concepts will be fundamentally different. Moral qualities will be more causally central to Marissa's self-concept than to Nicole's, because Marissa believes that her morals are causally connected to more other features (both her profession and political affiliation), while Nicole believes that her morals are causally connected to fewer features (only to

her political affiliation). In contrast, Nicole's political affiliation will be relatively more causally central, because she believes that it is causally connected to more other features (both her profession and moral qualities), while Marissa believes that her political affiliation is causally connected to few other features (only her moral qualities). As a result, Nicole would perceive her identity as a Democrat as more defining of her self-concept than Marissa would.

Unlike previous approaches to the self-concept, the causal centrality view does not assume that there is a feature type that is most defining: any feature type can be seen as defining if it is causally central enough. By focusing on beliefs about the causal relationships between the features of the self-concept, this account may help to reconcile some of the debate about which type of feature is most defining of the self-concept (is it memories or moral qualities or identities?). Causally central identities like being a Democrat or an Apple user may be seen as defining of the self-concept, but so can causally central individual-level traits like being responsible or a memory of a traumatic event. Further, the causal centrality account of the self-concept can explain both why some feature types might, on average, be perceived as more defining (that is, because they are seen as causally central by more people), and also why a given feature may matter more to some people than others (that is, because of differences in subjective beliefs about the causal relationships that the feature is involved in like the differences between Marissa and Nicole's beliefs).

Evidence for the Causal Centrality Approach to the Self-Concept

A good place to start to examine the causal centrality account of the self-concept is to ask: are the features that people believe are more causally connected to other features seen as more defining of their self-concepts? That is, do people think that changing causally central features makes them into more of a different individual than changing causally peripheral ones? To explore this question, Chen et al. (2016, experiment 1) selected a set of 16 features from feature types suggested to be important in previous research (memories, moral qualities, personality traits, preferences/desires; Strohminger and Nichols 2014). Participants reported two things about each feature (in counterbalanced order). For each of the 16 features, they reported which of the other 15 features they thought the feature caused or shaped; for example, a participant could have reported that they thought their intelligence level shaped what their favorite activities are. Participants also reported how defining each feature was to their self-concept, by stating to what extent changing each feature would make them feel like a different person. The rationale being that if a feature is perceived as defining

who a person is as an individual, changing the feature would change who the person is (for example, "If my morals changed, I would not be me anymore") to a greater extent than changing a less defining feature (for example, "If I wasn't an Apple user anymore, I would still be me").

Chen et al. (2016) found that participants did indeed perceive causally central features as more defining of their self-concepts than causally peripheral ones. Regardless of whether participants reported causal relationships before or after reporting how defining features were of the self-concept, there was a positive correlation between the number of causal relationships that a feature was involved in and how disruptive to the self-concept a change to that feature was expected to be. In fact, most participants (>75 percent) displayed this pattern. These results were replicated with an alternative method for measuring causal centrality, adapted from Sloman et al.'s (1998) concept map task, in which participants were shown a visual display of the 16 features and drew the causal links (drew arrows between the features that they thought were causally connected). Further, the same results were found when participants were asked about the relationships between the features of other people, suggesting that, much like the self-concept, people see a feature as defining of another person to the extent that the feature is seen as causally central.

One might wonder whether the results had something to do with the specific features chosen for the experiment described above. However, the same results were obtained when participants generated their own features, such that they each had a unique set of the most important features from each of the five categories used in experiment 1 (Chen et al. 2016, experiment 2). The same results were also obtained when participants generated features of another person who they knew well (Chen et al. 2016, experiment 2). These results suggest that the correlation between a feature's causal centrality and perceptions of how defining it is to the self-concept (and concepts of others) generalize to a wide range of features.

The results described above demonstrate that features that are seen as causally central are indeed perceived as more defining of the self-concept. A perhaps more interesting question is whether the same feature can be made more or less defining by simply changing its causal relationships; that is, by making it more or less causally central. For example, does making a person's identity as an Apple user more or less causally connected to other features of their self-concept make other people see the identity as more or less defining of who they are as an individual? This is an important question, because the feature-based accounts of the self-concept discussed earlier suggest that it is a feature's type (moral quality, memory, identity, and so on) that determines how defining the feature is. However, if the exact same feature can be made more or less defining by simply changing

its causal connections with other features, there has to be more to how defining a feature is than feature type: namely, its causal relationships. To isolate the effect that causal centrality has on how defining a feature is, Chen et al. (2016) examined whether the exact same feature could be made more or less defining by manipulating the causal centrality of a given feature of hypothetical people's self-concepts. Across many feature types, the results revealed that the manipulation of a feature's causal centrality did indeed influence participants' perceptions of how defining the feature was. That is, participants believe that changes to a feature made the hypothetical person seem like more of a different person when it was described as causally central than when the exact same feature was described as causally peripheral (Chen et al. 2016; Experiment 3 and Supplemental Experiment 4, Appendix A1).

The studies described in this section demonstrate that causal beliefs are a critical part of the self-concept that guide judgments about what is defining of who a person is as an individual. People saw causally central features as more defining of their own self-concepts as well as of their concepts of other people than more causally peripheral features. Further, the exact same feature could be made more defining by changing its causal relationships with other features, a result that is not predicted by previous approaches to the self-concept that emphasize feature type as a determinant of how defining features are.

While I have focused on aspects that are already considered part of the self-concept, the causal centrality approach has implications for how features become incorporated into one's self-concept. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, a social category only becomes an identity once a consumer has "begun to incorporate it into his or her sense of who he or she is" (Reed II et al. 2012, p. 312). That is, one can believe that one belongs to a social category without seeing it as an identity (for example, I may technically be an Apple user, but that is not really part of my sense of self). The causal centrality approach suggests that part of incorporating a category label into one's sense of self may include seeing it as causally connected to other aspects of the self-concept (for example, I am an Apple user because of my aesthetic preferences and my profession).

As these causal beliefs are subjective, people's beliefs about the relationships any given feature has can vary a great deal, as in the earlier example of Marissa and Nicole, the two Democrat academics. Although Marissa and Nicole shared the same features, they differed in how causally central they thought their Democrat identity was and, as a result, in how defining this identity was to their self-concepts. In the next section, I will use this variation in beliefs about the causal centrality of identities to predict differences in identity-consistent behaviors.

IMPLICATIONS FOR IDENTITY-BASED CONSUMER BEHAVIORS

In this section, I explore the implications of the causal centrality account of the self-concept for identity-based choice. More specifically, as causally central features of the self-concept are perceived as more defining of one's self-concept, the causal centrality approach predicts that those who see a given identity as more causally central will be more likely to display identity-consistent behaviors than those who see the same identity as relatively more peripheral. This prediction is consistent with both theoretical accounts that suggest that aspects of the self-concept that are more important or central will be more likely to influence behavior (Markus and Wurf 1987), and research that finds that identity importance moderates the effect of identity salience (LeBoeuf et al. 2010; Reed II 2004).

Using the causal centrality approach to understand identity-based behaviors provides a new perspective on why people who share an identity may vary in how likely they are to demonstrate identity-consistent behaviors. As research on identity has often explored how environment influences identity-consistent behaviors, variance in likelihood to act in identity-consistent ways across individuals can often be attributed to differences in their environments, and in particular, to differences in how salient a given identity is (e.g., Brough et al. 2016; Cohn et al. 2014; Forehand and Deshpandé 2001; Forehand et al. 2002; Kleine et al. 1993; LeBoeuf et al. 2010; Puntoni et al. 2011; Reed II 2004). So, a key challenge for identity researchers is to explain variance in identity-consistent behaviors among people who share both an identity and a situation. For example, self-ascribed Democrats do not all vote for the Democratic candidate (an identity-consistent behavior) even when they live in the same town, go to the same polling place, and are exposed to an election that makes their political identity very salient. Thus, explaining these differences in identity-consistent behavior requires a focus on internal beliefs about identity rather than on environmental factors. The causal centrality approach provides an understanding of these internal beliefs that makes predictions about who is more or less likely to display identity-consistent behaviors in the same situation; predictions that approaches to identity-based behaviors which focus on environmental factors are unable to make.

Oleg Urminsky and I have run a series of studies that test the prediction that people who perceive an identity as more causally central are more likely to engage in identity-consistent behaviors than those who see the same identity as more causally peripheral (controlling for the overall number of causal links they see within the self-concepts). In this work, we examined people who self-ascribe to the same identity (for example, political party)

that has norms for behavior (for example, voting for the party's candidate). In all the studies presented below, participants reported the causal relationships that exist between the features of their self-concept, including the identity of interest, in a similar manner to the studies described in the previous section. Participants also reported on a behavior associated with the norms of the identity. To focus on internal representations rather than the salience of an identity in the environment, these studies were executed at times when membership in the identity was very salient to everyone (for example, the 2016 United States presidential election).

Causal Centrality of Political Identity and Political Behavior

Chen and Urminsky (2019) explored whether the causal centrality of identities with norms for political behavior predicted the likelihood of demonstrating behavior consistent with those norms. In one study, participants who identified with one of the major United States (US) political parties (Democratic and Republican) reported the causal relationships between the features of their self-concept, including political party, the day before the 2016 US presidential election. The day after the election, participants reported whether or not they had voted for their party's candidate; that is, whether or not they had performed an identity-consistent behavior. Consistent with the predictions of the causal centrality approach, participants who saw their political identity as more causally central were significantly more likely to vote for their party's candidate than those who saw this identity as causally peripheral. Further analysis suggests that the relationship between causal centrality of political identity and voting does not simply reflect stronger preferences for a party's candidate among people who see their political party as causally central. The relationship between causal centrality and political party remained even when controlling for satisfaction with the candidate. This result suggests that even among people who personally may not agree with their party's choice of candidate, if their political identity is causally central enough, they may still behave in line with the norms of the group. As the conflict principle suggests that people are motivated to reduce conflict between identities via self-regulatory strategies (for example, managing the salience of conflicting identities; Reed II et al. 2012), it may be that similar strategies are used in the case where personal preferences conflict with identity norms (such as the case of people who did not agree with their party's choice of candidate).

While political identity is an obvious identity to examine when exploring political behaviors, the causal centrality theory suggests that any identity with an associated norm may be predictive of political behavior.

In two studies, Chen and Urminsky (2019) examined another identity with norms for political behavior: national identity and support for the United Kingdom leaving the European Union (Brexit). Our study confirmed that the British and English identities were more associated with support for Brexit than other national identities in the United Kingdom (Welsh, Irish, Scottish, European). More importantly, among people who self-identified as British or English, those who saw their national identity as more causally central were more likely to have voted in favor of Brexit in the United Kingdom European Union membership referendum in 2016 (the "Brexit referendum") than those who saw their national identity as more peripheral.

Causal Centrality and Identity Importance

Why might people who view a given identity as more causally central be more likely to act in identity-consistent ways than those who see the same identity as causally peripheral? As discussed earlier, previous work on the self-concept and identity-based consumption suggests that the importance of an identity is a moderator of how behavior relates to identity (Markus and Wurf 1987; Reed II 2004; Reed II et al. 2012). Reed II (2004) found that people who rate an identity as more important react more favorably to products geared towards that identity. Furthermore, the strength of identification with the social group has been shown to moderate the effect of identity salience on behavior (LeBoeuf et al. 2010; Reed II 2004). As causally central features of the self-concept are perceived as more defining of who an individual is, it may be that causally central features seem more important to one's identity than causally peripheral ones. If this is the case, we would expect importance to mediate the relationship between causal centrality and identity-consistent behavior.

To examine the relationship between identity importance, causal centrality and identity-consistent behavior, Chen and Urminsky (2018) ran a study with American football fans the day of the 2017 Super Bowl, a day when this identity is particularly salient. Participants reported the causal centrality of being a football fan and how important the football fan identity was to their self-concept. To report importance, participants answered questions about how much they felt being a fan of a team describes who they are, how much they identify with that group, and how much they admire the group (Reed II 2004). Replicating the results of the studies about political behavior described above, participants who saw their identity as a football fan as more causally central reported greater willingness to pay for an identity-consistent experience, seeing their favorite team play in the Super Bowl (a result we also found the year before, during the

2016 Super Bowl). This result cannot be explained by income differences between those who see being a football fan as causally central and those who believe that it is more peripheral; the results remained the same after controlling for income.

Further, Chen and Urminsky (2018) found that football fans who saw their football fan identity as more causally central also reported that the identity was more important. As predicted, importance mediated the relationship between causal centrality of the football fan identity and willingness to pay to see their team play in the Super Bowl. These results are consistent with accounts of the self-concept that suggest that important aspects exert more influence over behavior, and provide a novel psychological explanation for what it means for an aspect of the self-concept to be important.

The causal direction between importance and causal centrality cannot be determined from the above study. Does causal centrality influence importance? Or does importance influence causal centrality? Or do they influence each other? While there is no direct research on whether importance influences causal centrality, it is worth noting that some of the results in the previous section suggest that causal centrality may influence importance. Manipulating the causal centrality of an aspect of identity in a hypothetical person influenced how defining it was of identity (Chen et al. 2016; Experiment 3 and Supplemental Experiment 4, Appendix A1), providing evidence that changing causal centrality may influence importance. However, the details of the relationship between casual centrality and identity importance is a key topic that requires further research.

Given that importance mediates the relationship between causal centrality of an identity and identity-based consumption, it is worth noting that causal centrality provides additional information beyond measures of importance. By treating importance as an external attribute of an identity, simply asking consumers about the importance of an identity does not provide insight into how people who think a given identity is important differ from those who do not in their overall representation of the self-concept. Further, understanding how a consumer believes an identity is causally related to other features provides insight into what changes may influence an identity's importance. For example, imagine a person who sees their identity as a London Business School (LBS) alumnus as what led to her successful career. Understanding these causal relationships allows for the prediction that changing the person's career in a way that diminished the causal connection between LBS and their career would decrease the importance of their LBS identity.

Further, differences between these causal connections may have implications for another identity principle: the relevance principle. This principle

states that an identity will be influential to the extent that it is seen as relevant to the context or choice (Reed II et al. 2012). Differences in beliefs about what a given identity is causally linked to may predict which other identities are seen as relevant for choices primarily associated with the given identity. To illustrate, imagine another LBS alumnus, who – unlike the LBS alumnus described above – sees his LBS identity as causally linked to his identity as a husband and father (and not linked to his career). It may be that via their causal connections to the LBS identity, other identities (for example, family and professional identity) become relevant to choices related to the LBS identity. For example, during an alumni giving campaign, it may be effective to appeal not only to the LBS identity, but also to the professional (for the first alumnus) or family identity (for the second alumnus).

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The identity conflict principle highlights how challenging research on identity-based consumption is. It must both explain how an identity fits into the complex self-concept, and understand how the various aspects of the self-concept relate to behavior. The causal centrality approach takes a unique approach to answering these questions by focusing on internal representations of the self-concept; in particular, beliefs about how identities are causally related to each other as well as to individual-level traits. The work reviewed in this chapter has demonstrated that people's self-concepts are more than a list of aspects of the self. They also include beliefs about how these features are causally related to each other, beliefs that guide what people see as most defining of who they are as individuals and that predict who is more or less likely to demonstrate identity-consistent behaviors. Further, the causal centrality approach to self-concept and to identity-based consumption addresses recent calls to connect research on identity-based consumption with theoretical views of the self-concept that describe it as multifaceted (Reed II and Forehand, 2016).

The second half of this chapter focused on predicting which members of a given social category are most likely to act in ways consistent with that identity; for example, which Democrat is most likely to vote for a Democratic candidate? The identity conflict principle points out that all people have multiple identities with potentially conflicting norms (LeBoeuf et al. 2010; Markus and Wurf 1987; Oyserman 2009; Reed II et al. 2012). So, another key question for identity researchers is: within a given individual, which of her identities is most likely to influence their behavior? For example, someone may see herself as a (hypothetical) Brand X loyalist and an environmentalist. What would happen if news came out that Brand

X had been violating environmental regulations in manufacturing some of its products? Would the person show behavior consistent with the Brand X user identity (continued loyalty to Brand X), or would she show behavior consistent with the environmentalist identity (discontinued use of Brand X products)? The causal centrality approach also makes predictions about such issues. This theory predicts that in cases where an individual's identities have conflicting norms for behavior, an identity would be more likely to predict behavior the more causally central it is relative to the competing identities. Examining these predictions, and how causal centrality may be used to further address how identity conflict is resolved, is an important avenue for future research.

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