

# Rejection from 'American Idol' provides insights into perseverance

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New research based on observations at American Idol auditions and in-depth interviews with 43 contestants reveals how contestants come to accept rejection after being cut from the competition.

As reported in a *Symbolic Interaction* article, University of Pennsylvania sociologist Junhow Wei finds that despite [rejection](#) and statistically miniscule chances of success, Idol contestants often accept loss and plan to return and audition again. Rejected contestants believe perseverance is reasonable because their interactions with producers and peers convince them that they are talented and can still excel in the future.

The implications of these findings reach beyond reality TV and celebrity to provide useful concepts for future analyses of workers and other individuals striving and failing to realize their creative talents.

"Season after season, countless numbers of people have repeatedly auditioned for American Idol. Speaking with these contestants provides us with insights into how the meaning of perseverance shapes our thoughts and behaviors in America today," said Wei.

**More information:** Junhow Wei. "I'm the Next American Idol": Cooling Out, Accounts, and Perseverance at Reality Talent Show Auditions, *Symbolic Interaction* (2016). [DOI: 10.1002/symb.206](https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.206)

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