

Performing identity, or capital, is interesting in how identities can be seen as subjective to the audience you are performing to. A person must do certain things to correctly perform this identity, or capital. The use of the environmentally friendly identity, or green capital, in class served as a good example in how to perform it. For example, recycling would fall into the category of a successful performance of the identity, while driving a Hummer or other low gas mileage vehicle would be a misperformance. However, this depends on the audience you are performing to. Take for example you are a vegan who creates an identity that animal-friendly capital is achieved by do whatever you can to be against animal cruelty; whether it be not buying leather to being a vegetarian, any small step is, to you, a performance of animal-friendly identity. However, you can also be a vegan whose animal-friendly capital consists of protesting with PETA, not buying any animal material, lecturing others about veganism (pretty much “the works”), then you are identifying the people who only do a few (but not all) of those things as misperforming, that they are not doing enough, though their intentions were in the right direction.

However, when seen through a larger public eye, particularly the media, the identity of someone can be compromised. For example, the green identity, despite the different thresholds created by individuals of what makes it up, the media will mislead the public into thinking that there is just one identity. Two good examples would be the media coverage of Greenpeace sabotaging whaling ships and PETA pouring red paint over fur wearers. Now, when the general public witnesses these acts, they will create an identity of these two groups, leading to a generalization that everyone who is a part of Greenpeace or PETA (or sympathize with them) must be doing this, which is not the case. This generalization furthers down in other aspects of society, such as race, religion, and nationality, which leads to stereotypes. The general public then takes these stereotypes as the identity, and will assume that a certain person does indeed perform that identity.

While an individual or small group can create an identity of a person's actions, the media can adversely affect how the general public's interpretation of an identity and create generalizations on how a person must perform to achieve that identity. Instead of the different interpretations of the how the vegan identity is performed as mentioned earlier, people will start thinking that *everyone* in that identity performs the same thing, to the same degree and frequency.