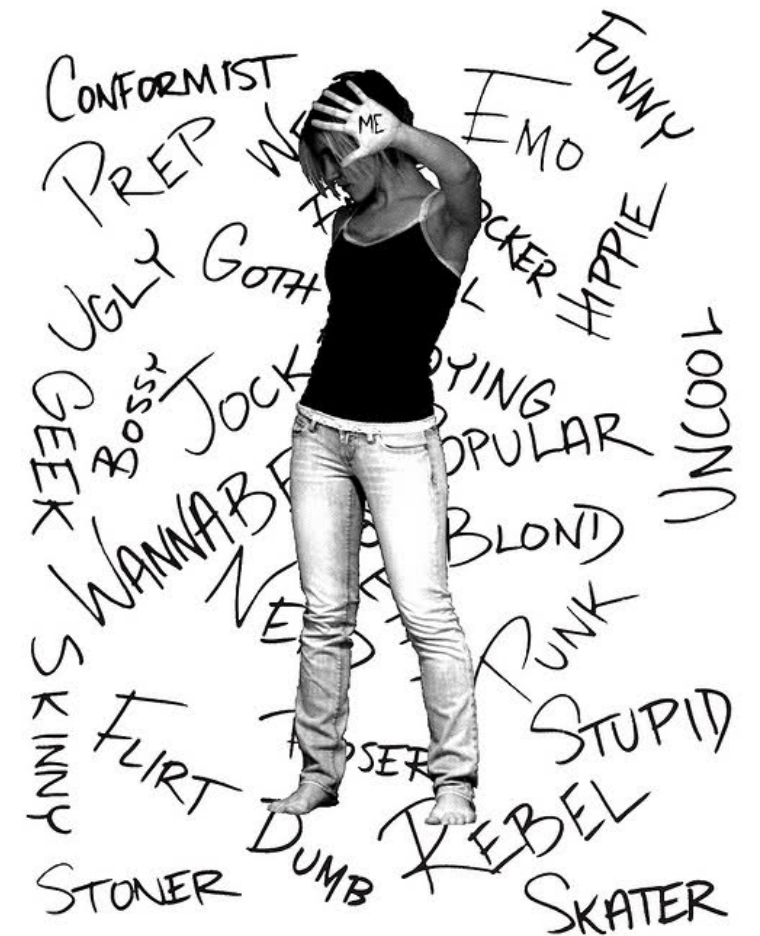


INTERACTIONISM

A theory that states that it is the **INDIVIDUAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE** and the **INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION OF MEANING** within those interactions that are important in understanding society. Through these interactions, **INDIVIDUALS MOULD SOCIETY**. Interactionists believe that sociology should not study social structures, but look at the **relationships between people** in order to figure out how we learn norms and values.

During social **INTERACTIONS**, some groups are **LABELLED** negatively/positively. This labelling affects their worldview, forming a **SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY**. Individuals in society are influenced by positive/negative labels.



(INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOUR)

KEY IDEAS OF SOCIAL ACTION THEORY

- **INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION:** Individuals create their own meaning in society. This individual meaning is not fixed, it changes due to social **INTERACTIONS**.
- **LABELLING/SELF FULFILLING PROPHECY:** Certain groups in society are labelled positively/negatively. These labels in society affect the way individuals see themselves and society.
- **LOOKING-GLASS SELF:** Interactionists state that our identity (image of ourselves) is reflected back to us (like a mirror) in the views of others.
- **SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM:** Public society is like a play. Each member of society is acting out a performance. This is how we want to be viewed by others. In society, we show our individual identity in public through symbols: Through symbolic acts and behaviours.

