

LIBERAL ARTS

Laptop Sticker Poems: Inventing Personas in Poetry

Student researcher: Sydney Luk, Senior

Have you ever been sitting in class and taken notice of a fellow student's laptop stickers? This is a common occurrence in my own life, and I find that many others are also drawing internal conclusions and even communicating through laptop stickers. Laptop stickers are an important method of non-verbal communication in today's modern world. These stickers can be used to display an individual's affiliation with an organization, showcase religious beliefs, show support for a certain cause, and profess political ideology, among other uses. By simply glancing at a decorated laptop lid, one can easily draw certain conclusions and form judgements about an individual.

To combine my area of interest in both laptop stickers and poetry, I began collecting photos of laptop lids from students. From these photos, I identified laptop stickers that were of interest to me and began forming a persona from these stickers. A *persona* in poetry is the character that is assumed by an author in written work. In considering an interesting laptop sticker, I thought about the kinds of morals and important causes an individual who chose that sticker would have. Following this exploration, I composed a series of persona poems that were all inspired by a variety of laptop stickers. These poems are a creative exploration of the public



Example of laptop stickers, an important method of non-verbal communication in today's modern world.

face that each individual dons, as well as a dive into the questions surrounding how poetry might be used to explore representations of personality.

Research advisor Donald Platt, poet and author of Man Praying and Tornadoesque, writes: "Sydney Luk grew intrigued by how people use stickers on their laptops to project visual representations of their interests and who they are. Her persona poems invent very private selves inspired by these public 'laptop selves.' She explores poetry's ability to inhabit a multiplicity of selves and connect with others."