



The Use of Stickers to Generate Interest in Comparative Psychology: An Extension of Abramson and Long (2012)

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This article describes the use of Stickers to generate interest in comparative psychology. It is based on an earlier publication in which users can design their own official United States postage stamps (Abramson & Long, 2012). The company that developed the product no longer manufactures it, so we created a substitute using stickers that can be placed, for instance, on the bottom flap of an envelope. In addition to highlighting aspects of comparative psychology, such as individuals, apparatus, and movements, the stickers can also be used to feature other aspects of psychology. They can also be used as a fundraiser and recruitment tool. Developing the stickers is an excellent student-based project suitable for all courses, including the history of psychology. QR and/or bar codes can be added to link to student-developed resources.

Keywords: comparative psychology, education, history, QR codes, stickers

比較心理学への関心を高めるためのステッカーの活用：Abramson and Long (2012)の発展的研究

本稿は比較心理学の関心を高めるためのステッカーの活用について論じたものである。本研究は、使用者が自身でアメリカ合衆国公式の郵便切手をデザインできることをまとめた先行論文 (Abramson & Long, 2012)に基づいている。その商品を開発した会社がもはや製造を行っていないため、我々はその代用品として、封筒の底などに貼付できるステッカーを作成した。比較心理学における個体、器具、動作といった側面を際立たせるだけでなく、ステッカーは他の心理学的側面を特徴づけるためにも使用できる。また、それらは資金調達や勧誘のツールとしても使用することができる。ステッカーの作成は、心理学史を含む、全ての課程に適した、優良な学生主体のプロジェクトとなる。学生が作成した資料にリンクさせるために、QRコードやバーコードを追加することも可能である。

キーワード：比較心理学、教育、歴史、QRコード、ステッカー

El uso de adhesivos (*stickers*) para generar interés en la psicología comparada: Una extensión de Abramson y Long (2012)

El presente artículo describe el uso de adhesivos (*stickers*) para generar interés en la psicología comparada. La propuesta se basa en una publicación anterior en la cual usuarios pueden diseñar sus propios sellos postales oficiales de Estados Unidos (Abramson y Long, 2012). La empresa que desarrolló el producto ya no lo fabrica, por lo que creamos un sustituto con adhesivos que pueden ubicarse, por ejemplo, en la solapa inferior de un sobre. De manera adicional a destacar aspectos de la psicología comparada, como individuos, aparatos y movimientos, los adhesivos también pueden utilizarse para presentar otros aspectos de la psicología. También, pueden utilizarse como herramienta para recaudar fondos y reclutar personal. El desarrollo de las pegatinas es un excelente proyecto estudiantil, adecuado para todos los cursos, incluyendo historia de la psicología. Se pueden añadir códigos QR o de barras que enlacen a recursos digitales desarrollados por los propios estudiantes.

Palabras clave: psicología comparada, educación, historia, códigos QR, adhesivos.

In an earlier paper, we describe a unique student project in which official U.S. postage stamps can be created and modified to include quick response (QR) and bar codes. These codes can direct users to sites that highlight significant figures and movements in psychology and other disciplines (Abramson & Long, 2013). Students can include QR codes to direct users to established sites and/or create their own sites.

Unfortunately, the company (Zazzle) no longer manufactures the stamps, so we had to search for alternatives. The alternative we decided upon was stickers. Stickers are popular among students (Bilyj, 2024). Moreover, our anecdotal evidence from students about whether they would use such stickers, coupled with our observations of the number of stickers on the backs of computers and books, suggested that stickers would be a popular alternative.

The purpose of this article is to provide a guide to incorporating comparative psychology themes into stickers. The sticker designs were developed using pre-selected images, digital editing, QR code creation, and commercial printing. It should be noted that we are using Comparative Psychology (CP) as a model, as stickers can be used to highlight any discipline and specific interests such as fundraising and recruitment.

We selected CP as a model discipline for designing our stickers. Our rationale was threefold. First, we are comparative psychologists. Second, the field is in decline, and if CP is going to be saved as an independent discipline, we must attract a new generation of psychology students (Abramson, 2015a, b). Lastly, we wanted to develop a project that would increase public interest in CP, as anyone can scan the stickers to learn more about CP.

Method

Material for the stickers

The material for the stickers can come from articles, CP textbooks, obituary sites, CP organizations, journal sites, and any other reputable source. In our laboratory, we have created several websites that can serve as a source of base material. Several of these are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

A List of Websites Developed by the Laboratory of Comparative Psychology and Behavioral Biology and Associated URLs

Source	URL
A timeline of comparative psychology	http://comparativepsych.wixsite.com/mysite
A history of comparative psychology in stamps	https://comparativestamps.wixsite.com/comparativestamps
A history of women in psychology	https://cas.okstate.edu/psychology/psychology_museum_resource_center/special_exhibits/women_in_psychology.html
The Charles Henry Turner Website	https://psychology.okstate.edu/museum/turner/turnermain.html
African-American pioneers in psychology	http://psychology.okstate.edu/museum/afroam
A brief history of Japanese psychology	http://psychology.okstate.edu/museum/japanese/
Native-American pioneers in psychology	http://psychology.okstate.edu/museum/native/
Hispanic pioneers in psychology	http://psychology.okstate.edu/museum/hispanic/
<i>International Journal of Comparative Psychology</i>	https://escholarship.org/uc/uclapsych_ijcp
International Society for Comparative Psychology	https://www.comparativepsychology.org/

Source Material and Image Preparation

The basic structure of the sticker design was drawn from Abramson and Long (2012), whose stamp-style layouts inspired the structure, framing, and stylistic aesthetic of the materials. Portrait images of each selected psychologist were sourced from online archives. Then they were edited and recreated in the online graphic design platform Canva (<https://www.canva.com/>) to enhance clarity and sharpness, so that details would not get lost through the process of screenshotting (for those that came from the original article), reshaping, and printing.

The original article designs were also edited to remove the postage-stamp elements and to include QR codes that, when scanned, direct viewers to an article about the psychologist, movements, apparatus, themes, etc. In addition to the sticker designs inspired by the original article, a series of stickers for comparative psychologists was created with similar design features to maintain overall symmetry across the projects. The stickers for the *International Journal of Comparative Psychology* and the International Society for Comparative Psychology involved taking each word and the logo design, and rearranging them to fit the desired rectangular shape while still allowing space for their respective QR codes.

Creating the QR Code

Each stamp features a QR code that directs viewers to additional educational resources about the psychologist and/or organization, many of which are from the American Psychological Association (APA). Initially, an online QR code generator was used, where you copy and paste your desired website link into the generator, and it generates a QR code that takes you to the website. The creation of these QR codes was free, but we later learned that a paid subscription costing \$239.40 USD annually would be required to keep them active.

We opted for an entirely free option and found it through the app *Canva*, the same app we used to create our stamp designs. The Canva app lets you create QR codes for free using the exact copy-and-paste method. The QR codes can be activated and deactivated at the creator's request.

Printing the Stickers

One initial test sticker was printed using a design drawn by one of Abramson's previous students. The sticker was printed using the website Vinyl Disorder (https://vinylorder.com/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=381015182&gclid=EA1aIQobChMly6_TqfLJkQMVRhGtBh3DkC12E_AAYASAAEgK3gvD_BwE) and their custom sticker printing services. Premium vinyl, square-cut with a gloss laminate, was selected for durability and print clarity.

A test order of 25 stamps (approximately 2×1.75 in.) was placed for \$21.89 USD, including a \$5 shipping fee. Customers also had the option to leave notes or request an "in-hand date." We left a note stating:

"This order is for a university project in which we will produce stickers to inform students about lesser-known psychologists! This order is our 'test trial,' so we were not very sure what the picture-to-sticker ratio needs to be. We selected the size 2.1 x 1.75 as a wild guess. Our professor asked for 'slightly larger than a stamp.' If these dimensions will prevent the design from turning out fully, please feel free to change them and use your best judgment as professional sticker makers. Thank you!"

Although we allowed the company to make changes, no changes were made to our original order. The order was placed on September 12th, digital proof was received on September 16th, and the order was delivered on October 1st. The process from ordering the sticker to delivery, with no special rush order, took 20 days. Upon their arrival, we evaluated them for quality in both structure and appearance and were overall very pleased.

Step-by-step Guide to Creating Your Own Stickers

First, go to the vinyl disorder website:

https://vinylorder.com/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=381015182&gbraid=0AAAAAD7hA4rK_MDbsw64KoXILd5Op_P9X&gclid=EA1aIQobChMI-t2yhv3EkQMVICtBh0-XzayEAAYASAAEgJsQfD_BwE

Click the custom stickers towards the top left of the screen. Select the shape of your sticker. Select size, quantity, material type, laminate finish, and extras all on the new pop-up screen. You will then choose your file to upload for the design. You will be prompted to wait for a preview and click ADD. When you have done this, you will select add to cart. In your cart, you can add special instructions and then continue to checkout.

Examples

Below are six examples of the finished stickers. The first row contains stickers associated with the International Society for Comparative Psychology and the *International Journal of Comparative Psychology*. Scanning the QR code will direct the user to the Society's or journal's webpages, respectively. The remaining stickers highlight comparative psychologists, including the African American Charles Henry Turner (Abramson, 2024; Abramson, Jackson, & Fuller, 2003), Ethel Tobach, the first editor of the *International Journal of Comparative Psychology*, Morton Edward Bitterman, a comparative psychologist interested in learning, and Margaret Floy Washburn, who wrote the influential text "*The animal mind*."

Figure 1

International Society for Comparative Psychology, International Journal of Comparative Psychology, Charles Henry Turner



Figure 2

M. E. Bitterman, Ethel Tobach, Margaret F. Washburn



Discussion

The Primary goal of this project was to develop an engaging educational tool that promotes awareness of comparative psychology. The results demonstrate that stickers offer a practical and visually appealing method for representing historical content in a format that encourages independent exploration. By integrating QR codes linking to credible academic sources, the stickers encourage self-engagement with psychological history. The findings of our project are consistent with prior work demonstrating the effectiveness of stamps in promoting interest in psychology (Abramson & Long, 2012).

Two issues were found during the creation of the stickers. First, there was the previously mentioned issue of needing to pay to keep the QR codes active. The second issue was that the 2 × 1.75-inch size selected was slightly larger than what we had envisioned. To resolve that issue, the stamps can be reordered in a smaller size, such as 1 × 1.5 or 1.5 × 2 in., that would be sufficient for most projects.

In conclusion, the project was enjoyable, and the stickers were easy to create. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the students enjoyed the stickers and making them. We are especially pleased that the stickers can be used to highlight the importance of comparative psychology to both students and the general public, and particularly to highlight the society and its journal, *The International Journal of Comparative Psychology*. The sticker project can also be easily incorporated into the stable of comparative psychology teaching exercises. A special issue of the *International Journal of Comparative Psychology* contains over 50 inquiry-based teaching exercises specifically designed to explore principles of comparative psychology (Abramson, 2020).

In closing, we would also like to mention that the stickers can be used as a fundraiser for aquariums and zoos, highlighting their facilities, individual animals, and/or exhibits. They can also be created to highlight individual laboratories and to recognize achievements. You are only limited by your imagination.

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