

THE POINT

The Official Newsletter of
The Association of Professional Piercers
Spring, 2005 • Issue 32

MEET THE NEW APP BOARD

The current APP Board is completing their three-year terms of office. In preparation for the change over, APP members have elected a new Board of Directors! The outgoing Board has accomplished a great deal in support of the organization and the piercing industry, and they have set the ball in motion for the new Board to pick up and carry forward.

The new Board will officially take office in May, with the transfer being commemorated through a ceremony at the "banquet" during our annual conference.

The outgoing Board of Directors is pleased about the results of their efforts of the previous three years and looks forward to having the new Board pick up where they are leaving off.

The incoming Board is enthusiastic and excited about moving forward with new accomplishments in 2005 and beyond.

We are pleased to welcome the following individuals who will serve on the Board for the next three-year term of office:

Alicia Cardenas—President
April Johnson—Vice-President
Schane Gross—Treasurer
Christina Shull—Secretary
Phish Goldblatt—Outreach Coordinator
Jim Weber—Medical Coordinator
Luis Garcia—International Liaison

Special thanks to each outgoing Board Member for all of their hard work and dedication during the past three years of service:

Bethra Szumski—President
Jason King—Vice-President
Paul King—Treasurer
Crystal Sims—Secretary
Megg Mass—Outreach Coordinator
Elayne Angel—Medical Coordinator
Alicia Cardenas—International Liaison

The outgoing Board will say their goodbyes in the next issue of *The POINT*.

Alicia Cardenas—President



"Seek not to be like the masters, seek what the masters sought"
—Zen saying

Thank you to the membership for electing me as the President.

I have been piercing now for 11 years and an APP member since 1999. I have co-owned, Twisted Sol in Denver, Colorado for the past nine years. I am an educator for National Safety Council and Health Educators.

I am overwhelmed with the opportunity to take the APP to the next phase. The current Board has set the pace and I intend, along with the new Board members, to keep it. There is a lot of work to be done and I am now, after three years on the Board, ready to take it on. The Association is as solid as we could ever hope, and now it is time to evolve. I have many great plans for the Association and our annual conference. I am especially committed to bringing this community closer and working as a team to get the nationwide respect that we deserve. Although I do not know some of the new Board members, new blood always brings a new and exciting look at an age old tradition. I feel proud and blessed to represent this community and work for it.

Alicia Cardenas, Twisted Sol
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Denver, CO 80218
303-832-1311
www.twistedsol.com

April Johnson—Vice President



Hello again. It is with great honor to say I appreciate your confidence for the nomination and election to the position of Vice President for the 2005–2008 term.

I began my apprenticeship in October, 1997 with Cassandra Looker. She became a member of the APP that year, which gave me the opportunity to be involved with our organization early in my career. In December, 1999, I moved to Atlanta, GA to work for Bethra Szumski and I'm currently employed there. Having been inspired by both these women's leadership and dedication, I will be very committed to my position.

I owe a huge thank you to our previous Boards for all their hard work, accomplishments and for establishing procedures to make our jobs easier, allowing the membership to move forward. My objective is to work together as a whole to continue education and research regarding the health and safety of our industry.

I'm excited to be a part of such an enthusiastic and talented group that all share the same love for our profession and looking forward to serving our community. Thanks again.

April Johnson, Virtue and Vice
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Atlanta, GA 30324
404-315-6925
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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

CARE-TECH UPDATE

In response to the concerns in the piercing industry generated by the FDA's inspection of Care-Tech's manufacturing practices in March 2004, the APP has made inquiry direct to the Care-Tech company.

As Care-Tech is a current corporate member of the APP and since so many piercers use and suggest Care-Tech products it was imperative that the APP receive a response from the company about the FDA's assertions against Care-Tech, and Care-Tech's response to those assertions.

The correspondence involved is rather lengthy. However, interested readers can access the APP letter to Care-Tech; Care-Tech's reply to the APP; their reply to the FDA's warning letter; and the FDA's subsequent reply to Care-Tech by going to the APP website: <http://www.safepiercing.org/caretech.html>.

Washington State Piercers Challenge Law

Troy Amundson, APP Member Phish Goldblatt, and other piercers in Washington State are working hard to change the state's current lack of laws governing parental consent for piercing of minors. Candace Heckman, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* reporter, found that most ethical, professional piercers in the area do require parental consent even though the state of Washington doesn't require it.

Heckman profiles a local piercer of questionable reputation who is known for piercing minors without any parental consent (including nipple & genital piercings) as an example of why parental consent needs to be a part of the body modification regulations. One of the hurdles facing proponents is how this might affect other established laws regarding parental consent and abortion, etc. For the full article: http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/210361_piercing02.html

While they continue to struggle to get good complete legislation passed in Washington, they are making progress. The health care committee in the House unanimously supported the legislation passing the bill the Washington piercers submitted. Voting will hopefully commence in March. For more info see: http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/213700_piercing26.html?searchpagefrom=1&searchdiff=0



THE POINT

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APP Board Members

- President Bethra Szumski
- Vice President Jason King
- Secretary Crystal Sims
- Treasurer Paul King
- Outreach Coordinator. Megg Mass
- International Liaison. . . Alicia Cardenas
- Medical Coordinator. Elayne Angel

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Thanks to the following for their generous donations:

Sharon Looy—Dare 2 Wear
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 1013 HX Amsterdam, Netherlands
 \$50.00

Steve Backus—Cape Fear
 208 E. 5th St., Greenville , NC 27858
 \$50.00

Audrey DeMarrias—Skin and Bones
 1401 W. 10th St
 Sioux Falls, SD 57104
 \$25.00

MEET THE NEW APP BOARD

Schane Gross—Treasurer



Thank you to all the members of The Association of Professional Piercers for accepting my nomination and voting me in for the position of treasurer for the APP. Paul will be a hard man to replace, and it's an honor to pick up where he leaves off. The crew and I are excited for the challenges and events ahead. I come from a wonderful

shop with a wonderful support group, so I hope that in taking this position, it is recognized that I couldn't do so without them.

I am excited to work with the upcoming Board, so congratulations to them. I know many of the new Board members from previous APP conferences, so I know I will be working with a very savvy group of professionals. I am excited to carry on the hard work and progressiveness of the existing Board members who have greatly improved the status of the APP. We become stronger every year. The strength of our association is based on past, future and present hard work by any persons involved in the piercing community. As an APP Board member I feel it is my duty to listen and act, so if there is anything that I can do to help, let me know.

Schane Gross, Holier Than Thou
1111 E. Douglas
Wichita, KS 67211
Shop: 316 266 4100
schanegross@hotmail.com

Christina (Chrissy) Shull—Secretary



For those of you who don't yet know me, I would like to share a little about myself and what I have planned for the next three years.

I was introduced to the APP in 2001 when I was a small town gal who came to the realization that the studio I apprenticed at left much to be desired. Unfortunately, I was young and had

been working in conditions that were far below industry standard. Conference was this amazing experience that was the turning point in my career. I had only experience with piercers who did not share their "secrets", yet here was this wonderful group of piercers who dedicated their time to sharing information with anybody that was willing to listen. I learned more than I could even begin to take in and was so glad to finally understand that there was more to piercing than poking a hole and inserting jewelry. After that first conference, I knew that the APP was something that I would someday be heavily involved with.

In 2003 I got my big break by becoming an APP member when I was working at The Hive in Moses Lake, WA. That was the first time in my piercing career where I

was given the opportunity to finally have a studio that met standards for membership. Shortly after conference I moved to Albuquerque to work at Evolution, Inc. for Crystal Sims, the now-outgoing APP Secretary. Surprisingly when I was hired at Evolution, I had not yet made mention that Secretary was the Board position that I had always hoped to acquire.

I have been asked a handful of times why I wanted this position and if I really knew what the position would entail. For the last year and a half, I have been Crystal's assistant, becoming familiar with the time and amount of work involved. Processing applications has been my favorite duty, as I enjoy being able to evaluate the applicant's studio and if necessary, be able to provide the information to improve the level of health and safety. I also loved teaching at conference last year and am looking forward to instructing and offering new information at conference this year.

Over the next few years I will continue to streamline our recordkeeping and application processing, with a focus on reducing the amount of time spent processing membership applications. I will also continue my work with the Impostors, ensuring that the only people who use the APP logo are those of us who have earned the right.

Christina Shull, Evolution
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Albuquerque, NM 87108
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piercerchrissy@msn.com • www.evolutionpiercing.com

Phish Goldblatt—Outreach Coordinator



I would like to start by thanking everyone for your votes and support. I am so excited about being able to serve the membership of the APP as a Board member. I know its going to very difficult to measure up to the previous hard working Board but I am confident that all the new Board members are up for the challenge. The piercing industry is growing at an astronomical rate and so is the

information involved and it is up to us as to help gather and disseminate that information for the both the piercing community and the general public. I'm looking forward to my part in helping this happen and to helping increase the membership of the organization.

I would also like to extend a big congratulations to Alicia, April, Jim, Chrissy, Schane, and Luis and a big thanks to Bethra, Jason, Elayne, Crystal, Paul, and Alicia for their selfless service to the APP. I look forward to working with all of you.

Please feel free to contact me.

Phish Goldblatt, Slave to the Needle
508 N. 65th St. NW, Seattle, WA 98117
206-789-2618
www.slavetotheneedle.com

Jim Weber—Medical Liaison



I started piercing in 1991, and started working out of a shop in 1993. I began piercing while completing a Bachelor's Degree in Jewelry and Metalsmithing at The University of the Arts. Upon graduation I quickly found myself instrumental in popularizing piercing in Philadelphia by setting up shop at Inferno. In my two years there I built up a sizeable clientele and reputation before leaving and founding Infinite Body Piercing in February of 1995. I have been there ever since.

In addition to work done on behalf of the APP (my business partner, Megg Mass, is the outgoing Outreach Coordinator), I have been actively involved in education and legislation in Philadelphia and the surrounding states, speaking extensively and acting as a contact for legislators, educators, and medical professionals. I welcome the opportunity to continue this work on a national (and international) level.

Jim Weber, Infinite Body Piercing, Inc.
626 South Fourth Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147
215-923-7335
infbod@infinitebody.com

Luis Garcia—International Liaison



First off, I'd like to thank the members who elected me to serve as International Liaison. I will do everything in my power to follow through on the faith you have placed in me. I will also make sure to do my best to serve our industry, both inside and out of the United States.

I started piercing 12 years ago in Miami, Florida, where I pretty much scratched together a basic idea of the way things should be done. In 1995, I moved to Washington, D.C.,

where it became clear that I could do with some updated training, so I had a formal apprenticeship at Perforations under Onabe Tashi. In 1998, after a short stint at Industrial Body Piercing in DC, I moved to Philadelphia to work at Infinite Body Piercing, which was about the same time I became heavily involved in the online body modification community. In 2002 I joined the staff at NoKaOi, where I am still haunting the tropical halls.

I decided not to make this introduction too long winded, so let me finish by saying that if anyone has any questions, comments, or is in need of any assistance, please contact me and I will make sure to help you to the best of my abilities.

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity.

Luis Garcia, No Ka Oi Tiki Tattoo
610 S. Fourth St.
Philadelphia, PA 19147
267-321-0357

freakb0i@comcast.net • www.nokaokitattoo.com

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Demonstrate, Educate, Legislate, Participate!—2

Our members continue to shine in their communities, educating the public about safe body piercing and working long hours to establish legislation that is fair and supportive of ethical professionals in our industry. See "Piercing in the News" for more information about our members and other piercers' efforts. We thank our contributors for this column, and encourage you to submit your own achievements and struggles...reach us at info@safepiercing.org or FAX materials to 888-888-1277.



As some of you already know, I have been working on getting legislation passed in Idaho. This began when I read an article in a nearby newspaper, *The Twin Falls Times News*, entitled "Tattoos Risky for Artists, Clients." The article mentioned Hepatitis C six times. Idaho had no regulations at that time, and the article spoke of the

need for state regulations. I know of at least one of several individuals who contracted Hep C from a local tattoo shop whose autoclave had malfunctioned. They also had pets in the studio and carpet in their work areas.

The problem was that nobody in the industry was involved or contacted. The legislation would have been drafted by a surgeon, a Senator and a business owner who leases space to tattooists and piercers. I knew that this would be as much of a joke as when the Cosmetology Board tried to regulate us seven years ago; with requirements like: "you must have a piercing gun," and "the studio may consult with medical professionals for appropriate sterilization techniques." I knew that I had to get involved to avoid crazy silly laws which might require us all to sing "Happy Birthday" out loud every time we wash our hands, or worse.

The president of the "Idaho Tattoo Association" (which I am gladly no longer a member of) was interviewed by TV news on the subject and responded "We regulate ourselves" and "There is no real problem." I felt that this made our industry look like we didn't care about safety. The president of the Idaho Tattoo Association, whom I apprenticed under for three years (after tattooing at home for 14 years), teaches his apprentices to re-use needles to cut costs. I had to take it upon myself to contact the people pushing legislation, and get on board as a voice for our industry.

Once I got my foot in the door, I felt that it was necessary/appropriate to call together other like-minded piercers and tattooists to join me in helping draft effective, reasonable legislation. I contacted everyone I could in the APP and the APT for assistance. I contacted all the clean, conscientious studios I knew of in my area, and arranged a meeting at my studio. I and Paul Birnbaum (also an APP member) had copies of laws from other states to base ours on, as we know little or nothing about writing laws. People from 4 other studios were in attendance.

Both sets of laws we based ours on had many inadequacies. We decided to work primarily off of the "Hen-

nepin County Minnesota Body Art Code." This was 13 pages long, and catered primarily to tattoo artists; it prohibited suspensions, branding, and scarification as "mutilation." We wanted to keep these procedures as safe as possible for those who wanted them. With numerous amendments and additions, although we had hoped to make the code shorter and simpler, we ended up making it three (3) pages longer.

Once I had completed writing our proposal, it was time to arrange a meeting with those legislators involved. I traveled to Twin Falls to meet with Senator Laird Noh, Representative Leon Smith, Ryan Horsley, and six other artists in order to present our proposal. Hepatitis C came up a lot; apparently it has been a problem in that area, with no definite links to piercing or tattooing. Our proposal was accepted, and re-written into a Draft—Chapter 86, Title 39 Idaho Code: Body Art Establishments. We received reasonably good support, and expected it to pass early in 2004. When the Legislative Session had adjourned, it did not pass. Instead, a much simpler law passed. It merely prohibited tattooing and piercing of minors under 14 (except earlobes) and required parental consent for those under 18.

I felt that this was a pathetic law which would reduce Hep C cases for those under 14. We were told that our draft was expected to pass at the next legislative session, which is coming up soon. So, now I guess it's time to start contacting legislators again, maybe some new ones.

I have always been a rebel—against authority, rules, laws, and regulations—so this has not been an easy process, but a necessary one, nonetheless. The Body Art community is very divided on these issues (which shows who runs the dirty shops); there have been death threats to many people involved. Maybe this intimidation is part of why it did not pass. I feel that, as this is a rapidly growing industry, we must avoid the potential for an epidemic Hep C outbreak related to our industry so that we can keep doing what we do and keep the public wanting it done. If we do not, piercing could be prohibited due to careless, hack shops. After this last election, I have lost what little faith I had in our government/society; but until I find a new country, I must keep striving to do what I can to make this one a little better and safer. Any additional help on this matter would be greatly appreciated!

— Chris Krahn, Krahn Body Art
3703 Overland Rd.
Boise, ID 83705



Here's a little somethin' that we have been doing in the community!! With the efforts of the APP and my studio, Anomaly, we have started a seminar course called SafeMods for our local colleges. This course is directed mostly at the student body, and it is about safety and education in the body modification industry. We touch

on all elements of the industry from employee demeanor and sterilization techniques, to proper metal grades and threading patterns. This course is mostly for the student body as a whole, however, we now realize that it is also especially helpful to the Nursing, Esthetician, and Cosmetology students as well. These particular students are going through specialized programs that deal with the skin, health, and possible cross-contamination. This seminar has helped these students a great deal in areas that I never thought would be useful in their particular areas of study. With directing our seminar toward these programs, I have received fantastic feedback. I have used it regarding other places we can go to educate further.

We have just started SafeMods within the last two months and already we have given the seminar to Citrus College Cosmetology and Esthetician programs and to the student body. Our second SafeMods presentation was given to the Pasadena City College Student Health Services Nursing students! Our next date is slated in February 2005, at Azusa Pacific University in Glendora, CA. We hope to take our seminar to colleges around Los Angeles as well!! We are in the process of making a brochure for the local dermatology, dental, and medical offices around our studio to distribute regarding our seminar and proper jewelry removal techniques. We are also going to try and get into the next health fair that will be held at the Pasadena Convention Center in the near future.

– Sque3z, Anomaly Body Piercing Studio
1039 E. Green St.
Pasadena, CA 91106

This week we attended a Skin Conference that was organized by Vaasa Vocational Institute and the Vaasa Allergy and Asthma Association. There was a lecture about skin allergies and contact dermatitis presented by the Dermatological Unit of Vaasa Central Hospital. After that Sanna and I spoke about jewelry materials, aftercare products and tattoo inks. The dermatologist initially had a very negative attitude towards piercings and tattoos, but we probably managed to change her mind about the industry, because she came by our info booth afterwards to pick up flyers and we talked for a long time. Also the participants were interested so I think we got a lot of information out!

– Katja Nurminen, Valhalla Tattoo & Piercing
Pitkäkatu 51
65100 Vaasa, Finland

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The 10th ANNUAL Association of Professional Piercers CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

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May 1–6, 2005

At the Las Vegas Riviera Hotel & Casino

Conference Overview

The conference is a must for every piercing studio, tattoo studio that does piercing, health official, and health inspector. Because many important and informative courses are offered concurrently it is advisable that you send at least two representatives so that your facility or organization can get the most out of the conference.

As in the past, the APP is offering courses to help piercers to achieve APP membership, comply with local and state regulations, have a say in piercing regulations, enhance business, improve customer relations and much more.

You do not need to be an APP member to attend the conference. Of the nearly 30 courses offered, only two are restricted to members only. Although all are welcome to attend classes, the Expo is not open to members of the general public. A business card from your establishment and proof of retail license will be necessary to enter. In addition, to maintain space in our host hotel and comply with insurance requirements, absolutely no piercing from hotel rooms will be tolerated.

Classes

- Employee Management
- Customer Service & Marketing
- Phuket Vegetarian Festival (Documentary)
- Aftercare
- Basic Accounting
- Jewelry 1
- Jewelry 2
- Indigenous Piercing Techniques
- Studio Setup & Inspection
- Scars
- Medical Risk Assessment
- CPR
- First Aid
- Aseptic Technique & Equipment Management
- Anatomy (Body)
- Anatomy (Oral & Facial)
- OSHA/Bloodborne Pathogens Certification
- Stretching
- Fraud Prevention
- Surface Piercing (members only)
- Grounding & Bedside Manner
- Non-Member Techniques.

Round Table Discussions

In order to make the APP conference an information-sharing venture allowing EVERYONE to contribute, we have scheduled round table discussions on the following

proposed topics: Extreme Piercing, Suspension (members only), Jewelry Display, Building a Portfolio, Anthropology and Body Modification in the Mass Media. There is no charge to attend these workshops.

Exposition

This is the largest gathering of piercers and piercing-related vendors in the world. Manufacturers often utilize this event to present new products and services to the piercing community. In addition, many vendors offer their goods and services at a discount to conference attendees. As a reminder, a vendor's presence at the expo does NOT constitute APP endorsement. Review all products thoughtfully and remember that, in many cases, the Conference and Expo are a learning experience for vendors as well.

On-Line registration

You can find a link to register on-line at www.safepiercing.org, or go to Las Vegas Registration's website at www.lvrsl.com using your MasterCard or Visa. If you sign up on-line, you must bring the same credit card to the registration desk for validation. A link to room reservations will also be located on the APP website.

To Full Conference Attendees

The first 200 full conference registrants will receive a fantastic hard-bound, embossed portfolio. So book early! In addition, to help us to estimate class sizes, we ask that you mark off the classes you plan to attend. You are, however, welcome to change your mind. Marking boxes on the Class Listing once you have purchased the full package will not result in extra class charges.

Health Inspectors: Free Registration

For the first time the APP invites Health Inspectors to attend the Conference free of charge. The only requirement is that the person(s) attending, reserves and stays in a room in the host hotel within the APP room block set aside for Conference attendees. Book early to get your room. If you need documentation confirming this offer, contact info@safepiercing.org.

Prom Night

The Awards dinner will be held Thursday evening at the Top of the Riv North. The theme will be 'Prom Night' with a buffet style dinner (with vegan options) and dance music! You can come as you are or dust off your favorite suit or dress. The drawing for the top ten raffle prizes will be held during this event.

– continued on page 26

"IN THE OFFICE OF THE APP"

Caitlin McDiarmid

info@safepiercing.org
(888) 888-1APP

The Election of the new APP Board of Directors has been a crucial project over the last few months. By the time this goes to press—the APP will know who will be taking the reins from the current Board; and who will lead the organization over the next three years. The official passing of the torch will take place at the APP Conference in Las Vegas in May.

The updated/revised brochures have all been completed and printed and are available for purchase. They are so pretty! The current Board can be very proud of finishing this task at the end of their long term—we are getting a wonderful response from people all over and orders are coming in fast and furious.

The APP purchased its own copier this month! This will save us money for all our small copying projects in office and serve as our emergency copier at Conference—no more high fees from the Hotel Business office!!!

New Members (since last listing)

Business Members

Aphsaga-Meaux, Kelly

Lure Tattooing and Piercing Studio
3206 Dudley Avenue
Parkersburg, WV 26101
(304) 422-6228
August 2004

Bennett, Steve

Marche Noir
Woodfield Mall G-119
Schaumburg, IL 60173
847-413-8883
August 2004

Dennis, Scott

Lure Tattooing and Piercing Studio
3206 Dudley Avenue
Parkersburg, WV 26101
(304) 422-6228
August 2004

Doucette, Scott

The Psychedelic Shack
6707 Plantation Rd. A-2
Pensacola, FL 32504
850-479-9007
May 2004

Earl, Shyla

Axis Body Modification
714 Washington SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414
612-379-4455
December 2004

Hayes, Michael

Checked Past
2 No. Main St.
Red Lion, PA 17365
717-244-7328
June 2004

Silverstein, Penelope

Lucky's Tattoo & Piercing Emporium
37 Main St.
Northampton, MA 01060
413-587-0004
February 2005

Wilkenson, Scott

Saint Sabrina's Parlor in Purgatory
2751 Hennepin Ave. S
Minneapolis, MN 55408
612-874-7360
December 2004

Yerna, Danny

(our first member in Mexico)
Wakantanka
Insurgentes Sur 221-C
Col. Roma, Me 06700
Mexico +(5255)
1998 1989
February 2005



I am going to truly miss my current bosses—they have been the best people to work for and with that

I have ever experienced. I consider them to be my friends and my mentors in the industry. This little Administrator is at a loss for words when it comes to thanking them for all they have done for me. I look forward to the challenges ahead—new bosses—new business!

What APP members are talking about: Who is going to be elected, Legislation and Outreach efforts.

What piercees are talking about: Navels, navels, and more navels; how to become a piercer (still and forever); what being an APP member really means.

Associate Members

Ridgeway, Alii

Lucky Devil
1720 12th Ave.
Seattle, WA 98122
206-323-1637
November 2004

Ott, Anne

Anomaly Body Piercing
1039 E. Green St.
Pasadena, CA 91106
626-793-8930
June 2004

Zyla-Dennis, Danielle

Lure Tattooing and Piercing Studio
3206 Dudley Avenue
Parkersburg, WV 26101
(304) 422-6228
August 2004

Corporate Members

SPSmedical Supply Corp

Shanahan, Joe
6789 West Henrietta Rd
Rush, NY 14543
(800) 722-1529
August 2004

Safe Products

Tim Hawksworth
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February 2005

THE INS AND OUTS OF PRINCE ALBERT PIERCINGS



Elayne Angel
Rings of Desire
New Orleans

In the world of modern body piercing Prince Albert piercings (also fondly referred to as PAs) are a historic piercing. However, this is not because Queen Victoria's consort wore one. In fact, he did NOT! But, thanks to piercing's inventive

founding grandfather, Doug Malloy, it is quite "well documented" on virtually every website that covers piercing history, that Prince Albert wore the so-called "dressing ring" to prevent an unsightly bulge in the tight trousers that were fashionable at the time. This colorful lore has been disseminated to such an extent that it has moved from the realm of myth into "common knowledge." Nonetheless, assurances from Doug's cohort and piercing's founding father, Jim Ward, make it clear that Doug was the original source of this piece of "historical" information, and a host of others. The PA is a classic because during the early years of modern body piercing, when gay Leathermen were exploring their bodies, it was among the most popular.

To reiterate and make PERFECTLY clear: Prince Albert did not have a Prince Albert piercing. Sad but true, at least for the Prince himself. If you have that tidbit on YOUR website, you should either take it down, or amend it to say that this was "history" invented by Doug Malloy. Credit where credit is due....

With history out of the way we can move on to some practical matters. There are several things you can do to make the piercing and aftermath go as smoothly as possible.

Education is of the utmost importance here because many men have misconceptions about Prince Albert piercings (in addition to those about the history of the PA). Taking the time to educate your piercee can go a long way towards making the experience easier for them. One of the facts men find comforting is to learn that the piercing goes through just a very small amount of tissue. By the look of it, the PA appears "major" because of the how the ring rests from the edge of the urethra to the piercing. However, the fact is reassuring that the urethra is NOT in the center of the penis, rather it runs along the bottom. Therefore, the piercing passes through essentially a membrane of skin, NOT a big section of tissue. Piercees are less anxious when they learn it is just a small piercing (much less skin than in the average ear lobe piercing). Also, the brief healing time is a heartening fact. I make sure to let them know that the PA heals as fast as *any* other piercing.

If the client urinates *before* the piercing he is much less

likely to go during the procedure, and, importantly for his comfort, it will be longer before he has to go again after the piercing is done. So, it is good to offer the piercee a trip to the restroom before the piercing. I suggest to my clients that they drink a lot of water during initial healing—specifically water, so their urine is more dilute, and less acidic. It won't hurt as much when they urinate over their fresh piecing. Also, pouring some cool water over the area as they urinate helps to soothe any discomfort, and rinses the urine away, so it doesn't linger and sting. Even better than that is if they partially fill a big, clean cup or other such vessel and submerge the piercing, and "go" underwater. This mini-version of weeing in the bath is very effective to minimize the post-piercing pain of peeing.

Another way you can help is by preparing your clients for the aftermath by fully discussing with them the likelihood of bleeding. This is best accomplished BEFORE they see the flow. In fact, it is appropriate to discuss during the paperwork phase, so that full disclosure is made, and the big guy knows his little guy might be bleeding (not just spotting) for a few days.

Women definitely have the advantage of previous experience when it comes to bleeding from the genitals. But for men, there is no normal precedent, so the sight of blood flowing from their family jewels can be shocking and disturbing. It is truly cruel and unusual practice to leave a man to deal with the bleeding from a Prince Albert, without the benefit of knowing it is perfectly normal. So, I make it a point to tell them about it at the counter, before they pay. *And* I also remind them before I pierce them, that the piercing may bleed, and that, in fact, it may flow off and on for a few days. That way, the piercee is as prepared as possible. Still, occasionally even the informed piercee who expects bleeding will call in a panic, wanting to know if *that much* bleeding is normal. "Yes, it is absolutely normal, and it WILL stop," are my assurances. "It is NOT harmful; it's just messy."

You can also help by providing some supplies so the piercee is not stuck using entire rolls of toilet paper or his girl's favorite towels to staunch the flow. After I am done with the piercing and the gentleman has taken his initial, usually timid peek at his new and improved penis, I wrap him up "to go." This is done even if there is NO apparent bleeding, because sometimes once he begins to move around, or the forces of gravity affect the piercing after he stands, then the bleeding can start. The wrapping consists of some sterile gauze over the piercing, covered by a latex (or latex substitute, if necessary) glove, secured with a rubber band. Make sure the band is snug enough to keep the bandage in place, but not so tight as to cut off the

circulation. This "rubber chicken" is easiest to apply if you wear the bandage-glove (over a set of your own gloves), hold the penis with gauze packing around the piercing, and turn the glove inside out as it is applied to the freshly-pierced member. The rubber band should go at the base of the penis to give maximum holding room within the glove for any blood flow. For later use, I provide the proud piercee with a stack of sterile gauze, some sterile rubber bands, and a handful of gloves, all packaged inside a clean glove for safe keeping.

I advise that they keep the bandage on until it is "full" and needs to be changed, or until they must urinate. I suggest they reapply such bandaging if there is any sign of bleeding, to protect clothing and furniture from the mess. If there is no bleeding when they unwrap, I alert them that the PA can bleed off and on for a few days. So, they may want to stay wrapped up for a while, even if it seems that there is no bleeding.

If the client is a good bleeder right away, I'll apply direct pressure for 5-10 minutes and I'll provide them with a disposable ice pack that they can apply (over the bandage) once they get home. If they want to make their own ice packs, I suggest ice in a zip-top baggie, applied outside their "rubber chicken" package. Also to minimize bleeding I advise against use of aspirin, Vitamin E, alcohol, and excessive caffeine. Taking Vitamin K can help with clotting. This can be obtained at the health food store, and is best started one to two weeks before piercing.

Many piercees have concerns about being able to urinate standing up, and some even have worries about being able to urinate at all! Naturally, the PA does not prevent urination, and the regular flow of urine over the wound is one of the reasons the PA heals so quickly (the other reasons being good vascularity and the small amount of tissue that is pierced). Urine is one of man's first antiseptics and it is not ordinarily harmful to the piercing. Though the description of urine being "sterile" isn't always accurate. Urine produced by the kidneys of a healthy individual, is often sterile. And the overall message is correct, that if you are healthy, your own urine is not harmful to the piercing, and can, in fact, be helpful. The regular flow of urine rinsing the area helps keep crusting down, too.

It is important to remind your client not to grab hold of his penis with dirty hands to urinate! Impress upon him the necessity for hand washing *before* and after urinating during healing. Either that or he can sit, down, or use a tissue or toilet paper to handle him self and NOT dirty hands. To those who express concern about having trouble with aim after piercing, I say: NOT all of the mess I've seen made by men in bathrooms is made by guys with Prince Alberts! That is, it isn't ONLY men with PAs who are messy in the bathroom. Still, millions of people sit down every day to urinate. It works just fine. Granted, most of those people are women, but that doesn't mean a man can't take a seat, at least during healing.

After he has healed, there are a few easy maneuvers that can help normalize urination. It is true that having a ring sit in the middle of the urethra can split the flow and make for a splashy mess. Also, because of the nature of the tissue there, many Prince Albert piercings stretch quite a bit on their own, allowing for extra room around the jewelry at the site of the piercing. This can result in



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leaking from the piercing hole. A simple solution is to place a finger on the underside of the penis, just at the front of the jewelry (if he's wearing a ring, he'll put his fingertip within the ring), plugging the hole on the bottom manually, drawing the ring to the lower edge of the urethra. Therefore, the jewelry doesn't sit in the middle of the urethra to interrupt the flow, and the hole is covered underneath, to prevent leaking. Another option some men have mastered is to twist the penis so that the ring faces the ceiling, which helps them to control any leaking urine from the piercing, merging it into the regular flow.

For marking, I ask the client if he has any plans for stretching up to wear jumbo jewelry in the future. Some men know that they want to have very large jewelry, and this should be taken into account with the initial placement. Unless the man has a large penis, or a high urethra (allowing for a substantial amount of tissue in the piercing) you can put the dot a little further down the shaft to "cheat" extra tissue into the piercing. For the average Joe, there should be no less than a full ½" of tissue when the area is relaxed. For the gent who wants to go jumbo, there should be no less than ⅝" of tissue when the area is flaccid. When you pull on the tissue you will get an excellent idea of the maximum jewelry diameter he will need when erect, as he can grow now larger than the skin will stretch. And of course, the jewelry must fit him at his biggest and best. I like the versatility of circular barbells for fresh PAs because they allow for adjustment in ring diameter. You can make in between sizes by spreading or narrowing

– Continued on page 25

by Paul King
Cold Steel America
San Francisco



RASMUS NIELSEN

Sideshowman Extraordinaire



From the top: An early "Pitch Card"; A photo from the Berkeley Tattoo Archive showing Rasmus' nipple piercings and Madison; The hammer and anvil—now in the Angels Camp Museum—lifted by Nielsen in his act.

By at least 1938 he could lift 10 lb. hammers by the rings through his ears. His top anvil lift by his nipples was about 250 lbs.

Anyone who attends one of my lectures knows that piercing history is spotty at best. I always extend a plea to the audience to come forth and provide any information, leads or proof that they may have to help fill in the gaps. Unfortunately these leads rarely pan out. However after a lecture at the APP's European conference in Amsterdam, Shannon Larratt mentioned I should track down information on a gentleman named Rasmus Nielsen as he was an early pioneer of piercing and had his Madison (surface of throat), tongue, and nipples pierced.

I had every intention of doing an article on the general history of tongue piercing, including a brief mention of Rasmus to compliment Erica Skadsen's article on Aboriginal Tongue Piercing. However, with a little sleuthing, it became clear Mr. Nielsen was certainly worth his own feature and rightfully should be remembered as one of our industry's grandfathers.

Rasmus was a sideshow performer, a contemporary of The Great Omi. He was billed as a "Blacksmith", "Strongman of Denmark", "Tattooed Strongman", "Tattooed Wonder Man" and (my favorite) "Tough Titty." His friends in Angels Camp affectionately called him "Big Nels". The story goes, though he was heavily tattooed, this was no longer enough for the very competitive spot as a self-made freak in the sideshow circuit of the 1930s-50s. It's not certain when he first got his piercings. A photo from the late 1920's or early 1930's shows Nielsen with a full tattooed body and pierced nipples, though not as yet stretched. Certainly by at least 1936 his nipples were well stretched as a photo shows them lifting a 150 lb. anvil.

By at least 1938 he could lift 10 lb. hammers by the rings through his ears. His top anvil lift by his nipples was about 250 lbs. Probably sometime during the late 1930's or early 1940's is when he pierced his neck and tongue. His performance resume' includes Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey circus and Ripley's Believe it or

Not Odditorium.

Chuck Eldridge's Tattoo Archive of Berkeley, California, had the most comprehensive information available on this elusive character. After ordering what he had, I phoned him to see if he had any more leads. He pointed me towards Angels Camp, California, home and resting place of Rasmus Nielsen. Angels Camp has a second claim to fame, as the home of the annual frog race immortalized by Mark Twain's 1865 story, "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County." Neither the city's nor the county's library were able to turn up information on one of their most famous hometown celebrities. They knew of no living kin nor had any archives on the man. However the librarian, Marie Radian, remembers as a little girl, being fascinated by the ring through Mr. Nielsen's neck.

The only place with memorabilia or information on Rasmus in town is the Angels Camp Museum and Carriage House. The museum's curator informed me they had on display some photos and personal tools-of-the-trade such as a Cant Hook, a wooden hammer nicknamed "The Commander," a 40 pound sledge hammer, a blacksmith's anvil, and some massive towing chain. Most of these were used as part of Rasmus' performances.

It seemed obvious by now a pilgrimage was in order. After wandering hours and hours, lost, through tule fog we found the former mining town just outside of Yosemite. The Museum Director turned out to be this wonderful woman with grey hair and a warm smile who still remembered Rasmus fondly. Emily Stemler had lived in Angels Camp for most of her life. She remembers Rasmus sitting on the front porch of the local hotel and buying all the children, including hers, candy and ice cream. It seems no one had a bad thing to say about Rasmus and he was a totally accepted member of this small community. Emily suggested I take a drive to his grave site in the Presbyterian

cemetery, (across the street from the Catholic cemetery). Unfortunately the photo from his headstone has been stolen, but an inscription can still be seen. It reads:

Rasmus Nielson
1874-1957
Native of Denmark
Entered USA 1891

"Blacksmith and strongman of Motherlode, 1902 to 1937, when he began a 20 year career with Barnum & Bailey Circus, featured internationally as the World's Strongest and most Tattooed Man. He lifted 2250 lbs.

A bachelor and lover of children, he left his entire estate to the Crippled Children's Hospital in San Francisco, Cal."

Content that I had exhausted all leads, the file was closed and we hit the road. Fortunately this is not the end of the story. Sideshow performing aficionados such as Matthew Beuvier, aka Molotov, The Great Nippulini, Lizardman, and Mr. Lifo are keeping alive the old carnival traditions including fantastic feats of piercing strength. Please support their artistic endeavors whenever you have the chance!

Very special thanks goes out to Chuck Eldridge of the Tattoo Archives, Shannon Larratt of BME, Emily Stemler and Tam Sherman for enduring an arduous road trip to Angels Camp.





THE HIVE



BUSINESS NAME: The Hive

ESTABLISHED: 1994

STREET ADDRESS: 116 W. Broadway
Moses Lake, WA 98837

PHONE: (509) 766-7418

STAFF: 1 Piercer, 2 Tattoo Artists and 1 Tattoo Apprentice

Christina Shull: Your studio is impressive for being in such a lightly populated area (less than 18,000). What have been the keys to your studio's success?

Rachel Willmorth: Shawn [Willmorth, the owner of The Hive] has built the studio through plenty of trial and error over the last eleven years. He has been adding on and remodeling as the studio has established a stronger clientele.

CS: What do you offer that the competition doesn't?

RW: We have the only studio in our area that is currently utilizing internally threaded jewelry and we also offer the largest selection of jewelry. We also maintain consistent hours and a dependable crew that is always available to assist our clients with anything they may need.

CS: What part of your studio are you the most proud of?

RW: Definitely my piercing room, where I spend most of my time. It was important to me that clients found it to be clean and comfortable.

CS: Have you found any benefits to being the only piercer in your studio?

RW: Being the only person that my clients have dealt with, I always know what information they have been given. My clients like the consistency that I provide them.

CS: What first sparked your interest in piercing?

RW: Spending time at the local tattoo/piercing shop where I grew up, I was given the chance to observe piercings being performed and have always been fascinated by piercing. It was the coolest thing ever!

CS: Do you have a favorite piercing to perform?

RW: I enjoy doing monroes, labrets, and lips because the jewelry is so long that the client initially is shocked by the length of the starter post, but when they are healed and receive the shorter post, they are so excited. It's like a completely different piercing.

CS: What would you say has been the most important thing you have learned as a piercer?

RW: People read your body language. If the piercer is stressed out or hesitant, clients can read that and it can make them uncomfortable and can have a negative effect on their piercing experience.

CS: What have been your personal keys to success?

RW: My clientele. The way we treat our customers ensures them the best experience possible through greeting them the second they walk through the door and really spending the time it takes for them to get what they need.

CS: What are some of your sources for continuing education?

RW: I have learned a lot from the APP Convention and *The POINT*, interaction with other piercers wherever possible, and other more experienced piercers that have served as mentors to me.

CS: In closing, is there anything that you would like to add?

RW: We are always making improvements in our studio and striving to offer the best services and products possible.

Rachel and Shawn Willmorth



Top to bottom: The display and waiting area; the piercing area; the self-contained sterilization room.



EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT SERIES—PART 5

by Crystal Sims

Evolution Body Piercing



DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS & EMPLOYMENT ENDINGS

In the past several issues of *The POINT* we've addressed many employee management issues including finding and hiring good employees, appropriate new-hire paperwork, keeping your employees happy and productive, and the use of an Employee Performance Appraisal as a developmental tool. In this 5th and final part of this Employee Management Series, we will discuss disciplinary actions, employee resignation and terminating employees.

Recognizing Problems

If there has been one recurrent theme throughout this series, it has been *documentation*. Having a written record of events is important in all business dealings, and this is especially true when it comes to employee management issues. You should already have a file for each employee that contains new hire paperwork and certifications. I would like to suggest keeping an attendance log here also where you can record things like requested days off, absences due to illness or otherwise, and tardiness. In addition, any written disciplinary actions or records of conversations with employees regarding performance issues should be kept here as well. This way, if a problem arises with a specific employee, looking at this file can help you see an employee's performance realistically over an extended period of time, rather than focusing only on the most recent events.

Disciplinary Action Forms

Having a Disciplinary Action Form is extremely useful. Most employees will take a written reminder of what is expected of them far more seriously than a verbal one. In addition, they can provide the necessary paper trail of warnings should an employee need to be terminated. A Disciplinary Action Form should contain, at a minimum, these important elements:

- Name of employee
- Name of supervisor
- Date of incident(s)
- Description of violation
- Employee's comments
- Actions taken
- Supervisor's signature and date
- Employee's signature and date

Keep these completed forms as part of each employee's permanent record, even if the employee no longer works for you.

Employee Resignation

Documentation of an employee's resignation can be just as important as documentation of termination, which we will discuss below. When an employee comes to you to give notice that they will be moving on, request their resignation in writing and have them sign and date it. This will ensure that there is no dispute in the future over how the employment ended (whether the employee quit or was fired).

A Separation Notice form can also be a good way to document this information as well. This is a form that will include questions such as:

- Dates of employment and position(s)?
- Dates benefits end?
- Is employee eligible for any continued benefits?
- Is employee eligible for Unemployment Compensation?
- Was there any severance compensation?
- Did employee return keys?
- Was employee informed/reminded of restrictions (confidentiality agreements, etc)?
- Is employee eligible for rehire?
- Reason for separation?

- What circumstances led to separation?
- Overall evaluation of employee.
- Employee's comments.
- Supervisor's comments.

This form should be dated and signed by both the employee and the studio manager.

Also, you can use an employee's resignation as a way to get information about you and your company (information that you may not be able to get from employees who are not leaving) by having them complete an Employee Exit Interview form. You can create this form yourself by listing items you would like to have rated on a scale of one to five, such as:

- Did management adequately recognize your contributions?
- Were you properly trained for your job?
- Was your workload reasonable?
- Was your salary adequate?
- Did you have good working conditions?
- Did you understand company policies?
- Have you seen theft of company property?
- (Add your own questions...)

Follow this with questions that you would like a written response to, such as:

- What do you feel are the company's strengths?
- What do you feel are the company's weaknesses?
- How can we improve work conditions?
- How can we improve security?
- Other comments or suggestions?

Ending Employment by Termination

Terminating employees can be one of the hardest things we have to do as managers. In most body art studios, we work closely with our employees, and they become our friends. We often want to give second, third or even fourth chances when we know it's time to let someone go. If you are having trouble with how to approach it or what to say, it may be wise to consult your attorney for guidance. Grounds for immediate termination should be outlined in your company's written policies. Lesser violations that could lead to termination must be well documented because they can save you in the event that you would ever be accused of wrongfully terminating an employee. Records of all disciplinary actions and verbal warnings are extremely important, as is documentation of the termination conversation. Whenever possible, have the employee complete a Separation Notice form or an Employee Exit Interview form.

Many employee management forms can be purchased at office supply stores (although you may want to alter them to fit your needs). As always, check with your attorney if you have questions about creating forms, or dealing with other employee management issues such as documentation and termination. You may also feel free to contact me at secretary@safepiercing.org with any questions about this series.



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Responsible Body Piercing
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NEEDLESTICKS

the Piercer's Nightmare

by Christina Shull
Evolution, Inc.
4517 Central Ave. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87108
(505) 255-4567

A needlestick injury is the biggest health and safety risk to body piercers. With every client we run the risk of exposing ourselves to a wide spectrum of communicable diseases, including some that are currently incurable. While there are many bloodborne diseases, the ones that are of greatest concern to the piercing industry, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), are the ones that will be specifically addressed in this article.

We all should have needlestick procedures in place in our studios, but many of us may not be prepared for an actual needlestick injury. The studio I work in had a needlestick procedure that seemed to be more than adequate, until one of our employees had a needlestick incident. Only then did we quickly realize the shortfalls of our post-exposure procedure.

The moment that the needlestick injury first occurs, immediately secure the needle and either complete the procedure or explain calmly to your client what happened and have a co-worker take over for you. If you decide to inform the client of your needlestick and inquire about their medical history to try to assess your exposure risk, be careful. In some states it is not legal to inquire about an individual's HIV or Hepatitis status unless you are a licensed health care professional. If you have not already done so, you may want to check with an attorney who is familiar with your state's regulations on this subject.

Concerning the immediate care of the injury, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) suggests the following: "Immediately following an exposure to blood, wash needlesticks and cuts with soap and water. No scientific evidence shows that using antiseptics or squeezing the wound will reduce the risk of transmission of a Bloodborne Pathogen. Using a caustic agent such as bleach is not recommend-

ed." Some even theorize that using caustic agents can actually have an adverse affect.

You must seek immediate medical attention, especially if your client has disclosed that they are HIV positive or if you have good reason to suspect that they may be. It is important to know that there is now an HIV prophylaxis available that could prevent HIV infection, but this must be done within the first 24–48 hours. While this treatment has severe negative side effects (said to be comparable to chemotherapy), it is an important option for those who have been exposed to HIV or to the blood of somebody who is at high risk for HIV infection.

Blood testing shortly after the needlestick injury is also suggested. Although immediate testing will not indicate if disease was transmitted through the needlestick injury, it will provide a baseline with which to compare future testing. If the employee is unsure if they would like to have their blood immediately tested, it is also important to know that their blood can be drawn and saved for later testing, if they become inclined to do so.

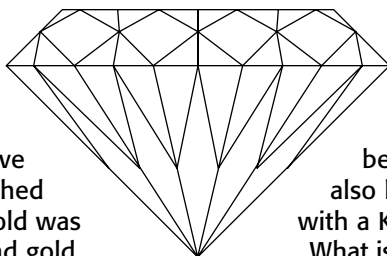
One thing that most employers forget to include in the needlestick procedures is specific information regarding which doctor to see. As we found out the hard way, not all doctors or facilities will handle an Occupational Incident, as injuries occurring while at work are handled differently than personal injuries. Your studio can prepare for these situations in advance by doing some research. There is some basic information that you should seek when searching for a medical practitioner including whether they offer testing for occupational exposures, what spectrum of diseases they can test for, what hours medical treatment is available (make sure that you have easy access to medical help

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Precious Metal & Gemstone Body Jewelry

The Future of Fine Jewelry?

By Nick Martin
Owner & Master Jeweler
Body Vision, Inc.



Gold has had a big hand in shaping our culture. For at least 5500 years we have adorned ourselves with gold. Wars have been fought, lives and empires have flourished or been ruined over this precious metal. Gold was responsible for California's early growth, and gold was also largely responsible for the decimation of South America's Indian cultures. In fact, our whole economic system is based on gold reserves being a backup for currency in circulation. This of course is no longer true....

Gold is an element, #79 on the periodic table. Its chemical symbol AU comes from the Latin word "aurum" which means "glowing dawn."

Gold is Rare: Annual production is about 50 million troy ounces a year. This sounds like a lot but it only adds up to a living room sized cube 14ft x 14ft. Now if we imagine that man has been producing this much for 200 years (a little high maybe but consider the Egyptians and Aztecs) it should work out more or less. So 50 million troy ounces x 200 years=10 billion ounces (150,000 tons) or an 82 foot x 82 foot cube. This has been likened to the size of one third of the Washington Monument. Rare indeed!

Gold is Valuable: The limited quantities coupled with the high cost of mining (approximately \$238 an ounce) plus the fact that gold is useful across a wide range of industries, makes it expensive- and don't I know it!! Actually the price of gold is not static (similar to gasoline). In economic terms it is known as a "commodity" and is traded on world futures markets. The price can vary wildly: four years ago, one ounce cost around \$260, right now it is trading for around \$430. Its price is linked to currency values, economic stability, wars for example, hence the high price right now.

Gold is Useful: From King Tutankhamen's death mask to the Hubble space telescope to J-Lo's engagement ring, gold is extremely useful. This is because of its superiority as an electrical conductor, infrared shielding abilities, and the fact that it does not tarnish or corrode when exposed to air or water. It is the most malleable and ductile of all metals making it very easy to work with—although, if you catch one of my jewelers on an off day, they will tell you that it is not!!! This, and its appealing color and symbolism make it a wonderful metal with which to create objects of beauty and function. Yes, Body Jewelry!

Types of Gold

Pure gold (the element) is also known as fine gold. Fine gold can be recognized by its rich orangey color. It is absolutely beautiful to look at but not of much use in most

jewelry applications because it is very soft. In fact, it is so soft that pure gold can be marked with your fingernail. Fine gold can also be referred to as 24 Karat gold. That's Karat with a K.

What is a Karat? A Karat, (originally spelled CARAT) was a unit of weight used by ancient merchants in the Middle East based on the weight of a seed from the Locust bean tree or a CAROB SEED. It is still used to measure the weight of gemstones. 1 carat= approx 200 mg. For gold, over time it has been adapted as a measurement of the purity of gold. The C was also swapped for K! Hence an object that is pure gold is defined as 24 Karats. Simply put, imagine a pie divided into 24 pieces. 1 Karat would mean that one part of that pie is pure gold, and so on.

Different Karats

So, as you may already know most gold jewelry is not 24K. A 24K finger ring, for example, would become ruined and misshapen in a matter of days or weeks due to the softness of the pure metal. For this reason and to make a more affordable product, manufacturers mix or "Alloy" the gold with other metals to achieve desired results. This is sometimes called "down Karating." Following this through: 18 Karat=18 parts gold of 24 parts. This is 75% pure gold. 14 Karat=14 parts gold of 24 parts. This is 58.5% pure gold.

22K is becoming more and more popular in the piercing industry due to its beautiful color and purity—91.7% pure gold. Because of this high purity it is too soft for internally threaded posts, but it lends itself to rings and nostril screws.

Colors of Gold

Most of you know that gold is available in a few colors, namely yellow, white, and rose. Green gold is also available but is not widely used. Of course gold itself only comes in one color—Gold! So how do we get that nice red tint?

Okay. Remember we just talked about alloys. That is: adding different metals to change the Karat content. Well, depending on the amounts and types of metals added, in addition to changing the Karat we can change the color too...like adding cream to coffee. For example, a typical 14K Yellow gold recipe might be:

58.5% gold
4% silver
31.25 % copper
6.3% zinc

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The Fall of an Empire

The traditional business ethic states that if you have a quality product at a competitive price you will flourish. This idea is no longer correct.

There are two schools of thought in our industry, those who believe business is going to keep getting bigger and those who think we have surpassed the apex and will begin to drop, level out and/or fade to what it was at the beginning. Different forms of this statement have been spoken about, written in side notes, and generally complained about in shop gossip all over the world. My hope is to try and give an honest perspective from the local scene and many friends and co-workers throughout the industry. The main basis for this article is the Las Vegas body art industry. The reason for this (besides living and working here the longest) is that it's my belief that Las Vegas is the Babylon of the industry. Our town offers a time line and, more appropriately, a glimpse into the future of other towns feeling the same dismay as those of us working here are feeling. It's time we as professionals recognize these cancerous problems infecting our industry and band together for the greater good of everyone. Many of you out there will be angered by this article; you are the reason I'm writing this. The problems that frustrate me frustrate all of us and must be eliminated so those of us who worked for and appreciate what we have can flourish.

The good die young, or more appropriately the good get the shaft. Listening to a friend and coworker tell you he can no longer afford to be a piercer/tattooist is a terrible feeling. I have been active in the piercing community for seven years now.

Generally it's been a positive and fulfilling experience. Throughout my career friends have come and gone and I've had the opportunity to meet and work with many great people in the biz. These people are not just good human beings but astounding artists. The traditional business ethic states that if you have a quality product at a competitive price you will flourish.

This idea is no longer correct. The blame can't be placed solely on a single cause; there are too many problems to list in just one article. There are however a few certain forces driving the decline. The most obvious factor is our deviant economy. Things just aren't like they used to be.

We are teetering on the edge of an economic breakdown and job loss is nagging us all. Our business is considered novelty; people just don't have the income to spend on adornment. It affects all business but not as much as the second reason:

over saturation. All of you out there with dreams of opening a new shop need to read carefully. First off, march yourselves down to the local college and take a business class. Our industry is

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overpopulated, and we are all suffocating because of it. We are the Chinese population problem of the business world. In Las Vegas there are over 70 tattoo and piercing salons. Let that number resonate in you head for a moment. Our local population is relatively small and therefore spread thin. The old timers always talk about the thinning time when all the hack shops will bottom out but this has been going on for years and everyone suffers. Instead of encouraging people to spend money on quality work we are breeding the cheap uncaring customer: "Who cares what your work is like?—if you can't do it for 20 bucks, piss off." Thanks a ton Maurey you've set the bar so low we are suffocating under it. (Those of you who have been here for a while will understand that.) Because of all this, great artists are having to hang up their needles and go work at Wal-Mart. Everyone but the non-artist suffers. The artist makes less, which, in turn, makes the owner raise rent or cut people and the money is spread so thinly it can barely hold our egos.

The apprenticeship virus is apparently as difficult to cure as a cold. Firstly I don't want to be misquoted; there are circumstances when you have to pass on your knowledge. About 10 years ago there was a serious need for more workers in the industry. There are many great apprentices and many great people doing apprenticeships. Those times are over. Today we are literally being eaten out of house and home by mid-grade workers. These workers have sub-standard values and ability. There is a new satisfaction in doing mundane, sometimes bad work, as long as they get some money. These workers are selling drugs and having sex with customers during work. You may say this has been going on for years but the height of piercing is a relatively new thing and this behavior takes us back to the time when piercing and tattooing were associated with only the pariahs in society. This is a learning business. The day I stop learning is the day I'll go shear sheep for a living...sheeeeeep. If someone says that they know everything about this business they should be spanked and sent to bed without dessert. How can an artist who has been working less than two years justify taking on an apprentice? There's only one answer, money. This is a repeating cycle that feeds off itself. You can't always blame the artist, since he has lost money to the abundance of new workers and shops. So he takes on an apprentice to help his income, but you can't blame the apprentice. The student wants to learn and there is never enough emphasis on the problems with a career like this. Finally, there's the business owner who opens a shop to make easy money off of cheap apprentice labor and opens multiple locations. Apprentices take apprentices to supplement income and it starts all over again. This is a pattern we can all see in the towns where we work, and it replicates until it's spread so thin you can see through it.

Does giving aspirin to someone make you a pharmacist? No, and getting tattoos does not qualify you to own a tattoo shop. A major bane on our industry is the non-artist shop owner. And just as dangerous is the get-rich-quick tattoo shop. Don't get me wrong there are positive working examples of both types that compliment and further our cause. The owner of the shop where I am currently employed has done a reasonable job making me comfortable. Though in retrospect of the last few months, I see I am being raped, pushed around, and almost completely

discarded. My loyalty and skill means nothing anymore. In general the positive, caring understanding non artist/owner is a small percentage of the overall industry. I have seen artists incredibly discontent because their boss knows nothing else but "make money or leave." To customers out there, don't think this doesn't apply to you. An unhappy artist is an artist who is not doing his best. We are slaves in our own world. The combination bong/tattoo shop is a creation of the greedy business owner. We are being exploited because of our financial situations (I think you all know what I mean). We are stuck with horrible conditions just to feed our families. These owners are like Wal-Mart and McDonalds. They have the money to start off big and shut down people who care about what they do. Most of these smaller shops are just charging rent so people can do art and deal with customers and love what they do. They get to wake up with an empty wallet because the Bong/tattoo shop down the street just hired a bunch of apprentices who work for dirt and do horrible work. You can see the similarities between our business problems and the immigration problems plaguing America. These owners are profiteers stealing our lives. They show up to take the money and fire people who are taking too much time TALKING to customers. It is up to us to make these deviants realize that we are not a franchise; we are not an easy way to make a buck without them having to work. Just remember this little snippet: Every time a non-artist lines his pockets with our hard-earned money or opens another franchise, a good artist loses his soul.

So there's nothing left. Careers are ended, lives are ruined, and we all lose a little more. A little more patience and money is taken. A bit more safety and satisfaction lost to kids. It's not about money it's about survival. It's waking up one day and realizing you have to throw away something you have loved and given your blood and sweat to for seven years because of others' greed and the inability to stand up for yourself. I remember a time when walking into a tattoo parlor meant being a bit frightened and intimidated. They sat you down in the chair and it hurt like hell but you walked out feeling like a man. More importantly, you had respect for the industry. If I would have tried to bust balls on the price, I would have gotten beaten, and rightfully so. I feel violated. It feels like I lost a loved one. Everyone out there needs to feel this because it's not just my pain; we should all feel violated. The idea of a true "old fashioned" tattoo parlor is as extinct as the mammoth. Maybe I'm just complaining or venting to someone that can listen. If I were alone on this notion I would believe it but I'm not. There are many, many people who agree with me. Most of them are the peers we all look up to; the royalty and inspiration of our industry. Whether you see it my way or not, everyone agrees something has to be done.

As I am writing this, the Las Vegas convention is looming. I'm sure many of you have seen me there and maybe even had the chance to shake hands and exchange quick thoughts on business. I can't help but feel a sort of uneasiness I haven't felt in past years. I think of the impending army of hacks (you know who I mean) mulling about and taking advantage of people like Steve Hayworth, Ron Garza, Allen Faulkner, and all the other capos and godfathers.

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Jewelry

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If we wanted 14K white gold we would still start with the same amount of gold but change the recipe slightly:

58.5% Gold

0.5% Silver

27% copper

7% zinc

7% palladium

If you look very closely at white gold it has a very slight hint of yellow compared to, say, 316L steel.

The metals I just mentioned are the ones most commonly alloyed with gold. A lot of traditional jewelry manufacturers also use nickel to make white gold. This is not very good for piercing jewelry, as we will explain later. To sum up: by changing the recipe you can create a gold product with the color and fineness of your choice, and to be best suited to different uses.

Platinum

Now to touch briefly on Platinum: Often called “the King of all metals” it is also an element, PT, and is very rare indeed. To use our earlier example, all the platinum ever produced would fit into a 20-foot cube, or the size of a very small home!

History

Even though pre-Columbian Indians in South America used it to a limited degree (they could not melt it!) it wasn't really noticed by the Western world until around 1800. The Spanish call it Platina or “little silver” and considered it a “worthless nuisance and impurity.” How wrong they were!

Platinum really took off in the jewelry market in the Art Deco period of the early 20th Century. World War II saw a sharp decline in platinum jewelry production as the precious element was used extensively for military projects, radar, etc. It is an extremely good electrical conductor. Lately we are seeing it gain major popularity— but at around \$900 an ounce, it is in an elite category. Much denser than gold, its value is palpable. It has an extremely high melting point (3215.1° F), great strength and durability, and a low spring-back rate which make it great for jewelry use, especially gemstone setting.

Gold and the Piercing Industry

Gold lends itself beautifully to body piercing jewelry applications. It is soft and workable, it is stunning, and is able to be set in a diversity of ways with a variety of gemstones.

Buying Gold

There are myriad suppliers and manufacturers from which to buy gold piercing jewelry these days. It is very important as a buyer, studio owner, or piercer using this product that you know that your gold is from a reputable source. As in any industry, there are good products made with fine ingredients, and poorly made items using inferior ingredients. Piercing jewelry is no exception. I would especially caution you about buying gold jewelry manufactured overseas, i.e. the Far East, as it is impossible to know the fineness of the gold without testing.

“Underkarating” occurs more often than you think, as there are limited laws governing this practice in places like Indonesia and Thailand. Using “dirty” gold, which is gold

that has been cast two or more times can also be a problem. The alloys get cooked, creating “porosity” or air bubbles in the jewelry. They are not only unsightly but can lead to infection. Other things to watch out for with so called “value jewelry” is the fact that it is seldom hand polished. Even if your state does not require it, request Material Safety Data Sheets on the metals from your manufacturer.

Hand Polishing

Hand polishing is the final stage in the manufacture of gold body jewelry. By using a variety of compounds, each one successively less abrasive than the last, a beautiful, rich luster is achieved. Of course it takes time and costs money to do this, but the end result is an ultra deep shine and smooth finish that lasts a long time.

On the other hand it is possible to achieve a satisfactory finish just tumbling the jewelry in a centrifuge full of steel pins. We know this because we tumble the jewelry BEFORE we polish it. The problem with a tumbled finish as the final step is that gold, by nature has a slightly rough surface. Only tumbling and polishing can adequately remove small surface imperfections so that the piece may be inserted into the body with a minimal risk of irritation or infection.

Sharp or Unfinished Edges

Un-cupped or badly cupped ring ends, or ball threading that has simply been cut and left without rounding are things to watch out for, as in any jewelry item. Don't forget hollow shafts—in our opinion, gold is too soft to use hollow shafts. When the piece is light as a feather there is no perceived value.

Solder

Soldering is the joining together of two pieces of metal using heat and, of course, solder! All solders are not created equal. Some contain Cadmium, whose fumes are poisonous to the jewelers who work with it. In addition, it is a toxic metal—period. The reason it is used as an alloy in solder is because it helps gold flow at a lower temperature. It is possible to use “cadmium free” solders, they just cost a little more, but are a much safer, environmentally responsible product.

Other things to watch out for are messy joins at the point of soldering—the use of excess solder is indicative of poor craftsmanship and it is unnecessary. Watch for solder on the post of nostril screws, for example, or big blobs on fixed bead rings; this is a sure sign of cheap jewelry.

Gemstones

As far as gemstones are concerned, make sure that the prongs or gold that holds the gems in place is pushed down onto the gem. If it is poking up, clothing, towels, etc. can catch, loosening the gem or worse.

The object here is not to scare you. There are some great gold manufacturers out there. But, there is also a lot of really poor quality jewelry too, with glued in gemstones (not set) for example. And while it may seem like a really good deal, and cheap, the fact is “it is cheap” and not such a good deal when it falls apart right after your customer leaves the store with it.

We believe that if a customer is prepared to make the jump to gold, they will be willing to pay a little extra for quality and peace of mind. This will reflect well on your studios, reputations, and careers.

Autoclaving Gold

"Can I autoclave gold?" Yes you can. I advise using cut down pieces of sterilization tube. Do not use the pouches as the indicator dye can sometimes discolor the metal. This does not mean you have bad gold; the dye can generally be wiped off with a polishing cloth. Some organic gems such as pearls are fragile and might not do so well. There are only a few of these. If in doubt, call the manufacturer.

Will My Gold Barbell Discolor in the Piercing?

Again this does not mean bad gold. Some people's chemical makeup, i.e. enzymes in the mouth, smoking, or sweat can turn the gold darker. If this happens and you are using 14K, try 18K instead. That solves the problem in the majority of cases.

Can Gold Be Used in an Initial Piercing?

After talking to many piercers on the subject, I have come to the conclusion that as long as the piece is well made, smooth, well polished and contains no nickel, yes. It appears negative reactions and rejections occur at the same rate as with steel, which is minimal. We have found that a lot of piercees want to wear a gold nostril screw right away, for example.

Why Doesn't My Barbell Have a Hallmark?

Most traditional gold jewelry bears a hallmark, which is a stamped impression indicating the Karat value of the piece and sometimes the manufacturer's logo. Whereas this is possible to do with piercing jewelry I believe that it detracts from the overall look of the piece. There are few places to put the stamp and it has to be small. It can tend to look like an imperfection at first glance and provides a place for bacteria to collect.

In some countries the law requires a hallmark and, of course, it can be done if the client requests it. I have always found this a little strange, as it is possible to stamp nearly anything 14K. The stamp itself does not guarantee karat content in the same way that the labels on weird diet supplements don't guarantee you will lose three extra inches overnight, even though they claim it.

Handmade Beauty

I wanted to add that unlike a basic steel barbell, which is milled on a precision lathe or CNC machine, gold jewelry (basics excepted) is all made by hand. Expect minute variations as they are put together, finished, set, and polished by hand. I want to stress that this does not mean a compromise in integrity and craftsmanship. Each piece should be perfect.

A jewelry connoisseur can see in an instant when a piece is handmade with love and appreciate its unique qualities, especially in a world where so many things are mass produced.

Exciting Possibilities

This is a very exciting time for the body jewelry industry. In the few years I have been doing this, I am happy to say that not only have I seen the market grow massively but also there has been a broadening of people's tastes.

Nowadays, thanks to lots of media attention, I am making some absolutely wonderful and intricate pieces that would hold their own in the country's best jewelry stores.

I am thrilled that something as age-old as fine jewelry in the last few years has been reinvented translating into com-

plete design freedom as opposed to the same-old finger ring styles rehashed. I am excited that our designs and your application is on the cutting edge of this part of our culture.

Crossing the Line

As far as gold is concerned we have crossed a line. For years most people would think nothing of spending \$300 or more on a finger ring or necklace if they really liked it. But show them a \$160 gold navel bar and they looked like they would faint! This always seemed crazy to me, as the navel deserves at least as much limelight. Well, finally with the help of the media, people are more prepared to place as much value in the navel. As a designer it is great that we can create a broader range of beautiful jewelry for a wider margin of dollars. For shops and piercers, an obvious gain is the financial one; also, the elevated status of your shop, and having the chance to work with a customer to design a custom piece they really want.

Repeat Business

A lot of people that got pierced 5-7 years ago are now in a higher income bracket, and on their finger rings they are swapping silver for gold, and for their navel piercings they may be looking to buy a piece with more perceived value. And who better to provide them with it than you.

The Piercers' Edge

You have probably all seen a client wander into your store, nose all infected with a diabolical attempt at a nostril screw from a dodgy earring with a butterfly back and the explanation, "my jeweler made for me." This highlights the fact that jewelry stores are NOT piercing studios and never will be.

I believe that it is your divine right to take advantage of this. Piercing jewelry deals with fine tolerances and exact measurements, which are things that traditional jewelers generally don't do well.

The regular jewelry industry is a multi-billion dollar industry. Just look around next time you go to the mall (god forbid)! Piercing jewelry's market share of this huge amount is growing rapidly. Why let jewelers cash in? They have done nothing to further our cause. In fact, when precious metal piercing jewelry first appeared, they turned their noses up calling it an abomination!

All you have to do (and it sounds easy) is carry a nice amount of good quality gold jewelry that balances out with all the other beautiful things in your shop, i.e., organics, and those customers will have no need to go to a jewelry store. They will spend their money with you.

All this provided you realize that GOLD HAS TO BE SOLD in a slightly different way than other jewelry.

In my opinion, piercers have a much better chance of success of learning to sell fine jewelry than a stodgy old jeweler has of learning how to perform an Ampallang piercing. This is the piercers' edge!

Gold Has To Be Sold, By You!

I remember being on the road a few years back—walking into a piercing studio and looking for the gold section. In one dark corner I saw an 18 ga 3/8" CBR and a dusty curved barbell that looked like it was left over from the Civil War era. My heart sank.

"Can I help you?" the counterperson asked eyeing me with suspicion. "Yes," I say, "I've got some great gold sam-

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ples for you to look at.”

“Ain’t no use in you openin’ that there case. Folks ‘round here ain’t got no money for gold, see.”

WRONG! This is the United States, and whether we like to think so or not, there is money everywhere. The reason our suspicious counterperson is not selling any gold is, why? He has nothing to sell! When you put it like that it sounds “elementary my dear Watson.” I’m sure his lack of enthusiasm has something to do with it too.

Desta from Adorned Body Arts has a saying, “If you stock it they will come.” And they will! Some of our largest accounts are in the most unlikely places.

HOW SHOULD I FILL MY SHOWCASES? (I can get 30 steel barbells for the price of one gold piece?) Start with proven sellers: CZ nostril screws, simple gem curved barbells, flowers. As you sell these, try to siphon off some of the profit to buy new stock and ABSOULUTELY replace what has sold. You sold it; chances are you will sell it again.

Motivation

Commission based sales for counter people works very well indeed. Stores that offer commission sell a lot more gold and are without question our best performing accounts. This is a cold hard fact. Sales contests motivate people to work hard and learn more about what they are selling. Everyone is happy: owners, and salespeople/piercers.

Enthusiasm

Be enthusiastic. When a customer shows an interest in a piece get them pumped on it. They are spending a lot of money, they deserve to be excited. Hand it to them, when they hand it back: hand it to them again. Being confident and knowing and loving the product goes a long way too.

If your client woke up that morning knowing they were going to spend \$400 on a navel curve they may not have gotten out of bed! Gold is generally an impulse buy. Logic speaks against buying a luxury item when there are bills to pay. But they deserve it. It’s a beautiful piece, and it is!

When a customer asks to see a piece—you pull it out, mumble the price, then put it back—you probably won’t sell much. We call this “Radio Shack sales.” You know, when the assistant reads you the specs from the side of the box. Lame!

People always find a reason to justify NOT treating themselves. Look on yourselves as good samaritans.

Marketing Tools

If all this sounds a little much, consider this; there are some great tools to help you. For example if you have a customer really interested in a lovely genuine diamond piece, whether it is in the store or something custom you are working on, offer them a written Appraisal. This is a certificate stating full retail value (often more than you are selling it for) and authenticity of the piece. I am always happy to write these. They go a long way to dispel any of the confidence or trust issues that are sometimes associated with fine jewelry sales.

Retailers tend to mark my jewelry up double or triple the cost or more. If it looks like a client really loves a piece but just needs a little push, offer them a little discount. It does not have to be much, but sometimes it is all that is needed to dispel any remaining doubts. Often it is not about the money so much as the gesture. A 10% or 20 % discount can turn your \$2000 day into a \$2400 day!

Offering to take customers’ unused gems to make a

custom piece is another nice way to generate sales. Regular jewelry stores have been doing this for years with great success. Make sure you take into account the time and effort of shipping them to the manufacturer when estimating the price.

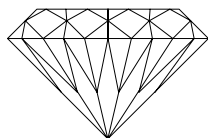
Lighting: We cannot stress enough that showcase lights or even overhead halogens like the \$50 ones at Home Depot do an incredible job of selling fine jewelry. The jewelry and gemstones just jump out of the case at you dramatically, increasing their appeal. Keep a polishing cloth handy so the jewelry always looks its best.

Lastly, remember; the more you know about the products you sell—all of them, not just gold—the more confident you will be, the more your client will trust and value your input, and the more beautiful jewelry you will sell.

Our History

Body Vision is based in the Los Angeles area and started in 1996. Our amazing staff is dedicated to making precious metal jewelry of the highest caliber. We have been lucky enough to make pieces for piercing industry legends, major Hollywood celebrities and happy people all over the world.

Please contact us at 909-596-1802 or info@bodyvision.net



Prince Albert

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the gap between the balls, as needed. Also, you can add a third ball to the center making it a captive-circular barbell. If the gentleman has a female partner with ring style genital jewelry, then closed style jewelry (captive ring or captive circular barbell) is ultimately advisable to prevent catching! I start with a 12 gauge minimum thickness (these ARE less apt to bleed, if that is of concern. And the piercing can easily be stretched larger later), and a 10 gauge maximum.

Many men have a webbed portion of frenum tissue present in the center of the area where the Prince Albert is placed. In this case you can either place it further down the shaft to where the tissue is flat, or, more commonly, place it slightly off to one side or the other. You shouldn't pierce into a web, because it makes the piercing unstable, uncomfortable, and tends to result in little flaps of cut tissue. If the skin is not webbed, then the piercing can go right in the center, on shaft side of the juncture of the head and the shaft. I've seen some placed unnecessarily off to the side on men who were suited to central placement, probably for the same reason a lot of piercers won't pierce the mid-line under the tongue: poor training. If the area is flat, it is perfectly fine to pierce in the center (if there are no visible blood vessels you'd be piercing through).

To select whether to go off to the left or right of the web, look for any visible blood vessels, and, obviously, pierce on the other side. Also check to see if one side lines up better with the edge of the urethra, where the other side of the ring will be situated. You can also inquire which side the piercee "dresses" and take that into consideration for which the most comfortable side would be.



The three-finger tube grasp demonstrated on a rubber glove.

I try to make the procedure as comfortable as possible by warming the portion of the receiving tube I'll be inserting in the urethra. I use friction and body heat, quickly rubbing the tube between my gloved fingers for a minute just before lubricating and inserting it. Many men find the tube to be the worst part of the piercing, but warming it helps a bit. I also use the smallest tube that will suffice, so I don't have to crank open the urethra any larger than is absolutely necessary. During the piercing, once I have the tube positioned underneath the dot that I've marked for the placement, I make sure the tissue is very taut over the opening of the receiving tube. I do this with a secure three-finger grip on the tip of the tube. I use the thumb and index finger of my receiving tube hand basically *holding the tube through the skin*. On most men I find I can see right through this tissue very easily. Then, as I'm about to pierce, I add the pinkie finger of my piercing hand to make the tissue very secure for piercing. I'm also quick about it, leaving the tube in place for as brief a time as possible. Get in, pierce, get out.

Have supplies on your tray ready for bleeding. It isn't kind to leave the client sit there while his penis is bleeding as you run off for gauze. Make sure your client sits for a few minutes after the piercing. Especially if he has seen his own blood, this sometimes results in him feeling lightheaded.

By preparing your client about what to expect, you can alleviate a lot of potential discomfort and distress. Our culture does not prepare us to endure genital piercings, and each individual must get through a lot of fear and anxiety to make it into the piercing studio for such a modification. Talk to your piercee, answer his questions patiently, and supply him with the necessary information to make his experience as pleasant and easy as possible.

Disclaimer: The ideas and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the APP, and are those of the author alone. Please direct questions or comments about this article to: angel@ringsofdesire.com.

Website Banner Ads

Banner ads are available on the APP website Links page to members ONLY. I placed a Rings of Desire banner up and have tracked its progress through a statistics-tracking program. I am VERY pleased and impressed with the results of the traffic sent to my website from this banner. In fact, over the first few weeks the hits from the APP site started coming in, and www.safepiercing.org rose in the ranks of the sites that bring me the most traffic. Now, after several months on the APP site it has continued to rise and now ranks as fourth among the sites that deliver the most traffic to my website! Based on my results I suggest every member with a piercing business and a website consider placing a banner ad!

If you go to the website and look at the information for these banner ads, this is what you will find:

WE GET HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF HITS A DAY AND THAT TRAFFIC IS OFTEN LOOKING FOR SAFE, SKILLED PIERCERS AND OTHER TRUSTWORTHY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES. Make it easy for them to find you on the APP Links page!

Banner ads are available to APP Members only. If your membership should lapse during that year for any reason, your ad will be removed (so keep up your membership!)

The pricing is for one year, and it is payable in full before your ad will be posted.

Ads are sold on a first come-first serve basis. The sooner you get your banner ad to us, and the faster you pay for it, the higher your ad will be on the links page.

We are offering three enormous banner ads sized 640 x 250 that will stay at the top of the page. These cost \$2,500 for one year. Size should be 72K maximum. One is already taken so only two are left!

We are offering three huge banner ads sized 540 x150 and these will be right below the largest banners on the page. They cost \$1,000 for one year. Size should be 40K maximum.

The others will be in the standard banner size of 468 x 60 and they cost \$250 for one year. These should also have a maximum size of 40K (the ad sizes are shown on the web page at www.safepiercing.org/links.html).

All banners should have 72 dpi resolution. They should be gifs or jpegs.

Should you need assistance to design your banner and/or help with the technical aspects, Jim Ward (yes, THE Jim Ward!) is a skilled professional. Contact him at jward@locrian.com for information. (He designed the APP web site. See more of his work at www.rewardinc.com)

Please email your banner in the appropriate size. When payment is confirmed, the banners will be posted.

Banner ads are payable by credit card, check, or money order. Please call (888) 888-1APP, or FAX (888) 888-1277 or (505) 242-2144, or email with the necessary information.

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If you prefer, mail the above information, or a check or money order to:

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Incorrect or incomplete information or an improperly sized banner could delay placement of your ad.

If you have any questions regarding payment, feel free to email info@safepiercing.org or call us at (888) 888-1APP.

Conference

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Room Reservations

The APP has set aside a block of rooms for attendees at a group rate. When making your reservation, request rates for The Association of Professional Piercers (not APP). If you plan to stay at the hotel the weekend before or after conference, book as soon as possible. Weekend rates are subject to availability.

Single or double per night rates:

Standard Room	\$79.00
Petite Suite	\$175.00
One-Bedroom Suite	\$300.00
Two-Bedroom Deluxe Suite	\$400.00

An excellent way to show support for both the APP and your fellow attendees is to book with the host hotel. Our classroom spaces are provided based on room occupancy thereby making the event possible and attendance price reasonable.

Cancellations

Prior to April 15, 2005, the Association will refund 50% of the registration price. After April 15, the attendee forfeits the entire amount paid.

Needlesticks

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during all regular business hours), whether the HIV prophylaxis is available, how soon they can see a patient who does not have an appointment, what paperwork the employee needs to bring with them, and whether the employee has to be an established patient of that facility.

Once a facility and/or specific practitioner has been established, employees must be notified and all information must be made easily available and documented in the studio's Exposure Control Plan. Copies of any post-exposure paperwork and all paperwork that needs to be taken to the medical practitioner should also be kept easily available to employees at all times. Management should also discuss with their employees how the situation will be handled if the employee decides to seek immediate medical attention. If and when a needlestick injury occurs, management may not always be available to make a decision regarding the completion of the employee's work shift.

Stay tuned for the second part of this series addressing Post-Exposure paperwork and documentation of the incident.

They take the kindness and conversations as a green light to hack people apart. So what do we do?

There has been so much shop-related nonsense in just the last week. Since firebombing is too messy, my best answer is to just try. Try to discourage and boycott hack shops. Keep customers well informed. Just because someone says they can implant a Buick in your forehead doesn't mean it will be done right. Stick with the professionals; they are expensive and highly recommended for a good reason. Do not encourage people (especially non-artists) to open new shops in oversaturated areas. For god's sake stop apprenticing every boob that walks into the shop! Don't get too excited about yourself. Chances are, unless you're old, you have nothing to pass along. If you need the money go work the corner. Drop the rock star act. Guess what? We're working a job like anybody else.

Next, get together with your colleagues and work with the health departments. In Las Vegas we want stricter regulations and limiting on licenses. This doesn't imply picking on us and raising rates with no explanation. This means working with us, and having a productive relationship—even forming a coalition or the equivalent of a pierc-


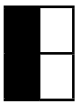
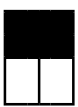
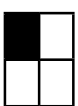
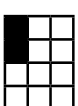
ing PTA to get a group consensus. A little more respect from the agencies and involvement of actual industry workers would also be a big step.

CUSTOMERS: Listen up! This rests on your shoulders just as much as on ours. You need to promote the best and desert the rest. Learn a bit about the work and see the difference between good and bad. Don't be afraid to ask questions and shop around. When you find the best place or person for you stick with them. Don't just settle for who's around. Build a relationship with your piercer or tattoo artist. Follow them if they go to a different shop. Many of these hacks don't want to give out locations of moved artists and steal their business. But with a few calls can find who you're looking for.

Lastly, just be informed and pass it on. Knowing your enemy is half the battle and if we keep closing our eyes to the problems eventually we will go blind. I leave you with a quote in hopes that someday we can conquer this. Regae satanas and thank you for listening.

"You have to paint things black if you want to make future possibilities more vivid"

— Michel Foucault, *Impulse*, Winter 89

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