

Source: [News & Business](#) > [Combined Sources](#) > **News, All (English, Full Text)** ⓘTerms: **BME & tattoo** ([Edit Search](#) | [Suggest Terms for My Search](#)) Select for FOCUS™ or Delivery*NETWATCH The Guardian (London) September 11, 1997*Copyright 1997 Guardian Newspapers Limited  
The Guardian (London)

September 11, 1997

**SECTION:** THE GUARDIAN ONLINE PAGE; Pg. 9**LENGTH:** 806 words**HEADLINE:** NETWATCH**BYLINE:** Jack Schofield**BODY:**

THINKQUEST is an annual contest that encourages students aged 12 to 19 to create educational Web sites and win up to \$ 1 million in prizes.

So far, about 500 entries have been posted in ThinkQuest 97, which is at [www.advanced.org/thinkquest/](http://www.advanced.org/thinkquest/) Finding the best efforts is somewhat hit and miss, but Forum Romanum, about ancient Rome, is worth the trip to [library.advanced.org/11402/](http://library.advanced.org/11402/) and there's Project Avalanche at [hyperion.advanced.org/11326/](http://hyperion.advanced.org/11326/) Three 12 year olds offer a tutorial in HTML, the Web page language, at [library.advanced.org/10127/](http://library.advanced.org/10127/) ThinkQuest entries are indexed by subject, number of accesses and alphabetical order. .

MOTHER TERESA, who was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, died last week. The Los Angeles Times has an informative guide to her life and work at [www.latimes.com/teresa](http://www.latimes.com/teresa) with links that lead to a biography at [www.tisv.be/mt/life.htm](http://www.tisv.be/mt/life.htm)

LYCOS, one of the Internet's major search engines, has finally come to a UK server at [www-uk.lycos.com](http://www-uk.lycos.com) with support from European partner, Bertelsmann. The Web site provides special guides to popular subjects such as travel and sports.

TRIMDON is, it says, the Village of the Future, and its computerisation is being supported by the University of Teesside and British Telecom at [www.daelnet.co.uk/trimdon](http://www.daelnet.co.uk/trimdon) Visitors can write to its most famous resident, Prime Minister Tony Blair.

LANDMINES: the UN's De-mining Database pages can be found at [www.un.org/Depts/Landmine/](http://www.un.org/Depts/Landmine/) while the International Committee of the Red Cross has a Landmines Page. Start at [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org) WHICH computer did Microsoft's Bill Gates say he would rather 'piss on' then develop software for? Computer trivia buffs will love the trivia quizzes on Kevin Savetz's new Web site at [www.trivial.net](http://www.trivial.net) Visitors can also sign up to get a daily trivia question, delivered by e-mail.

SKINEMA, the award winning Web site devoted to the dermatological problems of the stars, has been updated by its creator, Vail Rose MD. The address is [www.skinema.com](http://www.skinema.com)

**BME** is a Body Modification E-Zine (electronic magazine) devoted to decorative mutilation, piercing and **tattoos**. If [www.bme.freeq.com](http://www.bme.freeq.com) isn't shocking enough, the publishers are planning to post stronger stuff in a new section, **BME/hard**.

ONLINE is the online music magazine run by Sony Music Europe at [www.sonymusiceurope.com](http://www.sonymusiceurope.com) It also offers tracks to download.

ARCHIE COMICS doesn't just cover Archie, Veronica and Jughead at [www.archiecomics.com](http://www.archiecomics.com) It features the company's other comics too - including Sabrina the Teenage Witch, which is also a US television series.

VENTANA has started publishing its Internet books - which include the Official Netscape titles - online at [www.vmedia.com/commodity/](http://www.vmedia.com/commodity/) onlinebooks/ Windweaver's Tracy Marks has links to these and other Internet books at [www.windweaver.com/searchpage6.htm](http://www.windweaver.com/searchpage6.htm)

SCREENSAVER.COM provides links to many of the Internet's best free screensavers. The address is [www.screensaver.com](http://www.screensaver.com) The pick of the week is based on Alicia (Clueless) Silverstone's film, Excess Baggage.

TREVOR SORBIE, who claims to be 'the world's best-known hairdresser', is offering a hair clinic and is promoting his salon in Covent Garden, London, at [www.trevorsorbie.com](http://www.trevorsorbie.com)

DIGICAM is a new mailing list about digital cameras, and buying and using them. To subscribe, e-mail the message subscribe digicam to [majordomo@leben.com](mailto:majordomo@leben.com) Also, Webmedia has launched the UK Net Marketing list to provide a forum for people to discuss Internet marketing. To join, e-mail the message subscribe UK Net Marketing Firstname Surname (your name) to [list-manager@mail.chinwag.com](mailto:list-manager@mail.chinwag.com)

TALKING HEADS, an avatar-based chat program for Windows 95 and NT4, is available free while the site is on test [www.on-line.co.uk/talk](http://www.on-line.co.uk/talk)

CHRISTMAS is coming: it's time to start designing cards for the Web, so you can enter them in an educational project for students aged five to 18. The top 12 cards posted by October 15 will be used on a Send-a-Card site, and one will be used by Toshiba Australia, which is donating a laptop computer as a prize. Details are at [www.ash.org.au/mmcard](http://www.ash.org.au/mmcard)

AMERICA'S Make A Difference Day - an annual celebration of neighbours helping neighbours - won't be held until October 25 this year but participants can already find background material at [www.usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html](http://www.usaweekend.com/diffday/index.html)

CLA, the Country Landowners Association, has a Virtual Village at [www.cla.org.uk/vvdefault.html](http://www.cla.org.uk/vvdefault.html) with information from the Food and Farming Education Service being posted at [www.cla.org.uk/ffes](http://www.cla.org.uk/ffes)

ELSOP, the Electronic Software Publishing Corporation, now has a Humour for Webmasters page at [www.elsop.com/wrc/humor/](http://www.elsop.com/wrc/humor/)

PROFESSOR BUBBLES, an entertainer, has a suitably frothy Web site at [bubbles.org/pbfa2.htm](http://bubbles.org/pbfa2.htm) It includes a brief history of the Pears Soap Company and a beatable version of noughts and crosses.

**LOAD-DATE:** September 12, 1997

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*Don't try this at home New Scientist October 30, 2004*

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**NewScientist**

New Scientist

October 30, 2004

**SECTION:** Features; Pg. 57**LENGTH:** 908 words**HEADLINE:** Don't try this at home**BYLINE:** Staff**BODY:**

HERE'S how to split your tongue in two. One: have it pierced. Two: put a piece of fishing line through the hole. Three: pull.

That, at least, is how 20-year-old Dustin Allor of Menlo Park, California, did it in 1997, when tongue splitting was becoming popular. Nowadays it's more usual to find a dentist or surgeon to do it for you. The results, though, are the same -- a forked tongue with tips you can move independently.

As extreme as it sounds, tongue splitting is just one of dozens of types of body modification practised in the west today. The spectrum runs from the commonplace tattooing and piercing to savage "heavy mods" such as nipple removal, genital mutilation and amputation, often self-inflicted. Think of any part of the human body that can be stretched, pierced, mutilated or removed altogether, and someone, somewhere has done it.

Last year Shannon Larratt, founder and editor of the respected online fanzine BMEzine, posted an exhaustive questionnaire about body modification on a members-only section. Of more than 4700 people who responded, most were only pierced or tattooed ([iam.bmezine.com/megasurvey.html](http://iam.bmezine.com/megasurvey.html)), but 870 of the respondents reported having had some form of heavy modification.

The most common heavy mods revealed in the survey were genital modifications ranging from circumcision -- female as well as male -- to scrotal and labial stretching, glans splitting and relocation of the urethra. Decorative implants of various sorts are also popular, including some which are inserted under the skin. Branding, scarification and tongue splitting score highly. At the extreme, 30 people reported that they had been castrated, had their penis cut off or had voluntarily amputated an extremity such as a toe, hand or limb. Amputees are known on the scene as "nullos".

What might motivate someone to do such a thing? Whatever it is, it is strongly felt. According to Mark Benecke, a psychologist at the University of Cologne in Germany, many of those involved will operate on themselves if they cannot get a professional surgeon to do the job. And finding help can be difficult: in the US it is illegal for surgeons to perform procedures that alter people's bodies beyond what is deemed socially acceptable. In the **BME** survey, the majority of people with heavy mods reported doing it themselves.

"Some do it for aesthetic reasons, as a spiritual quest, or out of recklessness," says psychologist Armando Favazza of the University of Missouri in Columbia, who studies self-mutilation in all its forms. But he suspects that many are probably mentally ill. "In the absence of a proper examination I can't really speculate about what is wrong with them," he says. One obvious possibility is that they suffer from body dysmorphic disorder, a personality disorder characterised by extreme body dissatisfaction which has driven some people to seek medically sanctioned amputations.

Nearly 30 per cent of the respondents to the BMEzine survey rated their mental health as worse than average or very poor, and 17 per cent reported that they were taking prescription drugs for a mental health problem. However, there is no evidence that people with heavy modifications have worse mental health than the soft mod crowd; if anything, the opposite is true. And the majority of heavy modifiers said they were happier people as a result of their body modifications.

Sex can play a big part. Split tongues have an obvious utility and many of the genital modifications supposedly enhance sensation, in much the same way that piercings do. Even ultra-heavy modifications can have a sexual motivation. This year a team led by Richard Wassersug of Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, surveyed 134 men who wanted to be castrated, or already were. Around 30 per cent said they found the idea of castration sexually exciting, while a similar number said they liked the cosmetic appearance it would achieve. Only 40 per cent said they wanted to be castrated to free themselves from uncontrollable sexual urges, which is the orthodox explanation for castration fantasies (Archives of Sexual Behavior, vol 33, p 433).

Having studied the scene and met many of its adherents, Benecke has come to the conclusion that body modification is often simply a lifestyle choice. In 1999, he published the first, and still apparently the only, case study. The subject was a 28-year-old New York woman who had a split tongue, extensive scarification, branding, **tattoos** and piercings. Her social circle consisted of other members of the body modification scene, but in other respects she was utterly normal. She had had a regular childhood, was psychologically stable and had an ordinary office job.

Eric Sprague, also known as Lizardman, is another disarmingly normal body modifier. Sprague is one of the world's most heavily modified people and, unusually, he is willing to talk about it. He is tattooed all over his body and face, has a split tongue, multiple piercings, horn-shaped implants on his forehead, and sharpened teeth -- all directed towards making him look like a lizard. He sees his motivations as unremarkable. "First and foremost it is an internal drive towards self-satisfaction," he says. "The same thing that makes people exercise or style their hair a certain way." The lizard thing is a "pure, personal, aesthetic choice", he says. "I chose a lizard for the same reason you chose the colour of your suit or car."

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*Shannon Larratt discusses the allure of tongue splitting National Public Radio (NPR) June 7, 2003 Saturday*

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**SHOW:** Weekend Edition Saturday (12:00 Noon PM ET) - NPR

June 7, 2003 Saturday

**LENGTH:** 536 words

**HEADLINE:** Shannon Larratt discusses the allure of tongue splitting

**ANCHORS:** LINDA WERTHEIMER

**BODY:**

LINDA WERTHEIMER, host:

The state of Illinois has acted against a growing trend in body modification, tongue-splitting, not just **piercing** the tongue, but actually splitting it in half, like a serpent's. The practice has become so popular that the Illinois Legislature last month approved a bill allowing it only when performed by a physician. **Shannon Larratt is the editor of the online magazine BME, Body Modification Ezine. He's on the line with us from Tweed, Canada.**

The idea is actually to cut your tongue in half. How do people go about this?

**Mr. SHANNON LARRATT (BME, Body Modification Ezine):** Exactly like it sounds. The middle of the tongue is pretty much just connective tissue, so you're not really cutting through, you know, much essential tissue.

WERTHEIMER: And how far back can you go?

Mr. LARRATT: Well, in theory, someone can cut back right to the base of the mouth, really.

WERTHEIMER: What's the appeal?

Mr. LARRATT: Well, I mean, what's the appeal to certain hairdos, right? People like a lot of different things. You know, for some people it's as simple as, well, they just kind of like the way it looks. Other people like it functionally, and, other people, it appeals to them on a spiritual level.

WERTHEIMER: I hesitate to ask, but--functionally?

Mr. LARRATT: Oh, yeah.

WERTHEIMER: OK.

Mr. LARRATT: Anything you can do with your tongue, you can do it twice as well.

WERTHEIMER: I see. What if you were to decide you wanted to undo it? Can you get your tongue put

back together?

Mr. LARRATT: You could, but the reversal procedure is a lot more dangerous than the splitting procedure. I only know one guy that did it and he ended up with massive scarring, shortened his tongue, caused nerve damage. He can't taste properly. It's a real mess.

WERTHEIMER: I understand that you have a split tongue.

Mr. LARRATT: That's right.

WERTHEIMER: You, obviously, can speak clearly. Could you give us a little vocalizing, a little 'la, la, la, la, la'?

Mr. LARRATT: La, la, la, la, la. Yeah. It's not a problem at all.

WERTHEIMER: What about whistling?

Mr. LARRATT: I couldn't whistle before, so if I whistle it'll just be an embarrassing blowing sound.

WERTHEIMER: Has it affected your sense of taste?

Mr. LARRATT: No, everything is still exactly the same as far as all those nerves are concerned.

WERTHEIMER: Now the other thing that we all wanted to know is do you find it any easier to tie a cherry stem into a knot?

Mr. LARRATT: Again, that really wasn't on my roster of skills. But, yeah, I'd be inclined to say it would make it much easier.

WERTHEIMER: Mr. Larratt, thanks very much.

Mr. LARRATT: No problem.

WERTHEIMER: Shannon Larratt is the editor of **BME**, Body Modification Ezine. He was on the line with us from Tweed, Canada.

(Soundbite of cartoon)

(Soundbite of whistling)

Unidentified Character: (Singing) Just whistle while you work.

(Soundbite of whistling)

Unidentified Character: (Singing) And cheerfully together we can tidy up the place. So hum a merry tune.

(Soundbite of humming)

Unidentified Character: (Singing) It won't take long when there's a...

WERTHEIMER: It's 22 minutes before the hour.

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*Dealing with tattoos, piercings San Jose Mercury News (California) March 23, 2002 Saturday PS1 EDITION*

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San Jose Mercury News (California)

March 23, 2002 Saturday PS1 EDITION

**SECTION:** B; Pg. 3

**LENGTH:** 632 words

**HEADLINE:** Dealing with tattoos, **piercings**

**BYLINE:** David E. Early Mercury News

**BODY:**

I have never seen a good-looking tattoo.

The tiny ones, on both men and women, try to be unobtrusive, but look like splotches or visual spoilers on otherwise well-carved biceps or nicely turned ankles.

The big ones -- busy bruises of blue-and-red squiggles -- are downright hideous. But hey, no harm because they are usually on sailors, bikers, strippers or felons.

Not anymore, say today's confused parents.

Now there seems to be an epidemic explosion of epidermic ink -- especially among average teen boys and, arguably more so, among girls. And if that's not alarming enough, there is also lots of **piercing** -- tongues, lips, eyebrows and intimate body parts -- driving even the most understanding parents to distraction.

"She used a pin and did her own **piercing**," stammered one distraught San Jose dad about his otherwise normal 16-year-old daughter. She now proudly wears a stud through her bottom lip. His other daughter celebrated her 18th birthday with a sizable tattoo on her back. "I'm really ticked off about it, but what can I do?"

Not much," says an expert "body modification artist."

Sharrin Spector, owner of Pierce/Ink in San Jose, said young people who really want tattoos and **piercings** will get them, one way or another. But the 10-year veteran body artist said parents should try to understand the phenomena, discuss choices openly and then make sure their kids get safe, hygienic applications.

"It's all about understanding the way body modification makes young people look and feel," said Spector, 35. "It's about, 'My friends have it, I want it,' she said of **piercing**, which doesn't hurt much, but is said to produce a momentary endorphin rush. "For some it's peer pressure, for others it's, 'I always wanted this but I was scared.' So it can be about conquering fear, being part of a tribe, a sense of belonging. For some it's just decoration. For others, it marks an occasion or a special time in their lives."

Tatoos and **piercings**, Spector said, are no longer fads, but a permanent cultural presence. They are the newest way for young people to separate from their parents, to become individuals. "They are joining a different culture, the way their parents did in the '60s with sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll."

Surprisingly, Spector said, parents tend to hate tattoos more than **piercing**. The latter can be removed and usually heal over.

"Tattoos are forever," Spector said, "so we do a fair amount of coverups. Who you are at 18 is not who you are at 35 or 45. The only names we do are kids or parents, because those relationships will never change. We discuss designs and choices a lot before we go ahead with anything. We joke that a sure-fire way to end a marriage or relationship is for couples to get name tattoos."

Parents should check local age limits on body modifications and beware of the outlaw shops that ignore those regulations -- producing illegally modified minors and lots of infections. If parents really want to help, they should accompany their kids to prospective shops and ask these questions:

- \* Do you have an autoclave, proof of spore testing and a "clean room"?
- \* How much experience do you have? Can we see your portfolio? And can we contact former customers?

Also, Spector advises, parents should weigh whether their child will be responsible about following the cleaning routines required for hygienic healing.

Spector understands parents are puzzled but she said it's not the end of the world.

"You are not going to love them less," Spector said. "Body modification is simply part of what growing up is all about in this century."

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED

Helpful modification Web sites: [www.Tribalectic.com](http://www.Tribalectic.com) and [www.BME.freeeq.com](http://www.BME.freeeq.com).

Contact David E. Early at [foreveryoung@sjmercury.com](mailto:foreveryoung@sjmercury.com) or (408) 277-3777.

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*Parents can help kids with tattoos, piercings San Jose Mercury News (California) March 23, 2002  
Saturday F1 EDITION*

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March 23, 2002 Saturday F1 EDITION

**SECTION:** B; Pg. 3

**LENGTH:** 633 words

**HEADLINE:** Parents can help kids with **tattoos**, piercings

**BYLINE:** David E. Early Mercury News

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MX (Melbourne, Australia)

May 21, 2002, Tuesday

**SECTION:** TALK; Pg. 16**LENGTH:** 79 words**HEADLINE:** site of the day [www.bmezone.com](http://www.bmezone.com)**BODY:**

**BME** or body modification ezine is the place to come if you are interested in body piercing, **tattoos** or scarification. Although the home page has a fairly confronting picture, there are some interesting reads to be found on this site. But make sure you read the warning as you go as the pictures are quite graphic. Click on "Scarification Photos/Stories" for some stories full of misplaced bravado of encounters with **tattoo** guns, scalpels, flames and the like.

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*On the outer; Reviews: R3 Skin Sydney Morning Herald (Australia) March 18, 2000 Saturday*

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Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 18, 2000 Saturday  
Late Edition

**SECTION:** COMPUTERS; Icon; Pg. 12

**LENGTH:** 1064 words

**HEADLINE:** On the outer;  
Reviews: R3 Skin

**BYLINE:** Lissa Christopher

**BODY:**

Lissa Christopher gets a skinful of our biggest organ.

R3 Skin

Tummy and Thigh Cream

[www.callamerica.com/~ihf/bodhlthprd.html](http://www.callamerica.com/~ihf/bodhlthprd.html)

Simply rub the International Health Foundation's cream into the belly or thighs to make them lean and mean in just two to six weeks. There's also a cream that cures PMT and one that sorts out both alcoholism and depression - yes, just rub them into the skin. Yes, of course it really works. There are before-and-after pictures to prove it. Unfortunately, there's no advice about the consequences of overdosing. Leglessness? Snapping in two at the waist? And why, why, why, won't the order form load?!?!?!?

The Melanoma Foundation

[www.med.usyd.edu.au/medicine/](http://www.med.usyd.edu.au/medicine/)

[melanoma/index.htm](http://melanoma/index.htm)

This hugely informative site is a freckle-sprouter's best friend. There are photos to help identify the trouble-makers as well as advice on melanoma prevention, research, treatment and protective products. The early-intervention message is emphasised: don't ignore changes in freckles or moles. Getting in there fast will usually mean a simple surgical procedure with local anaesthetic and a 90 per cent chance of survival.

Australian Society of Plastic Surgeons

www.asps.asn.au

If you harbour a burning desire for larger breasts or a tighter face, you can start your research here. The information is from qualified surgeons and not entrepreneurial ex-fishermen or cake decorators. There are basic outlines of how breast implants, tummy tucks and so forth are done, including some of the risks. There's no hard sell, and psychological issues are broached. There are no photographs, just before-and-after drawings that create a disturbing air of unreality. The buttock-enlargement and penis-reduction fact sheets seem to have been misplaced.

Aussiepol

<http://homepages.tig.com.au/~aussipol/emuoil.html>

Here's the good oil on emu oil, aloe vera, tea-tree oil and jojoba oil. The site, which carries an impressive-looking bibliography to back up its claims, says emu oil helps with joint aches, scarring, burns and a host of other skin problems and also makes an excellent moisturiser. It's not expensive and sounds at least as worthy as one of those mainstream cremes de yak and mermaid ova by Estee Louder or Channel. Tea-tree oil has certainly proven itself useful. If you're really keen you can order a 40-litre drum of emu oil, but spare some thought for the guy who has to squeeze all the emus.

Body Modification e-zine

[www.bme.freeeq.com](http://www.bme.freeeq.com)

Squeamish? Turn back now. Body piercing, scarification, rituals involving hooks and wire, voluntary amputation ("I need to be an amputee," says "S") and more live here. There are also some striking **tattoos**. Parts of the site require a password and other pages carry a warning about the potentially disturbing content that follows. If this sort of stuff upsets you, heed all warnings. This site doesn't muck around.

**Tattoo** History Source Book

<http://tattoos.com/jane/steve/toc.htm>

Comprehensive coverage of international **tattoo** history: Samoa, New Zealand, circuses, South America, England, Japan ... Links to half the **tattoo** parlours in the known world. There's a great collection of small illustrations on the introductory page but a frustrating dearth everywhere else.

Medical Online - skin problems

[www.medicalonline.com.au/medical/disease\\_index/skin/index.html](http://www.medicalonline.com.au/medical/disease_index/skin/index.html)

Covers 10 skin issues sensibly - acne, baldness, scabies, hirsutism, eczema, electrolysis, ingrowing toenails, two kinds of tinea (yes, two) and varicose veins - all with an endearing turn of phrase. Tinea forms "an inflamed, mushy area" and electrolysis will require "a firm enthusiasm". New theories and treatments are briefly critiqued.

The New Children's Hospital - bites and stings

[www.nch.edu.au/parents/health/factsheets/bitesj.htm](http://www.nch.edu.au/parents/health/factsheets/bitesj.htm)

Ah, nature ... In the event of an acrimonious transaction between a human and a blue-ringed octopus, redback, funnel web, snake, bee, wasp, jellyfish, scorpion or tick, calmly follow these efficiently described steps provided by The New Children's Hospital, Westmead. An ideal resource for parents.

The Largest Bruise

[http://spectacle.berkeley.edu/~ken/injury/big\\_bruise.html](http://spectacle.berkeley.edu/~ken/injury/big_bruise.html)

This is a gruesome but spectacular photographic diary of one helluva bruise that resulted from an inline skating mishap. Click on the tiny pics of a leg turning all the colours of the rainbow in order to get enlarged images, then wince and marvel at the wonders of the human body.

Aromatherapy in The Raw

[www.aromaraw.com.au/bodycare.htm](http://www.aromaraw.com.au/bodycare.htm)

Buy "cleanimals" (colourful sponges and loofahs in the shape of hippos, chickens et al), French active mineral clays (enthusiasts have been seen seaside in Sydney covering themselves from head to foot in this stuff), balms, soaps, shampoos and oils with butter, beeswax, rose petals, coconut oil and apricot kernels. You'll find yourself hungry if not clean and sweetly scented. This site is fresh-looking and low key and all the more enticing for it.

The Cop Shop bruise aging chart

[www.cowtown.net/cop\\_shop/bruise\\_age\\_dating\\_chart.html](http://www.cowtown.net/cop_shop/bruise_age_dating_chart.html)

Set up by a Texan law enforcement officer - how to judge if a claim that a child's black eye was sustained from a fall rather than an assault is consistent with the appearance of the injury. Also, a "bruise age-dating chart" to see if the date of the event matches the development of the bruise. Troubling, interesting and potentially useful for anyone dealing with children who may be at risk.

Cosmetic Physicians Society of Australasia

[www.cosmeticphysicians.org.au/treatment.htm](http://www.cosmeticphysicians.org.au/treatment.htm)

Find a practitioner to erase "Trevor" from the heart tattooed on your bum so you can get "Nigel" in where he belongs, or to treat your face like an orange, and peel it. These guys argue that not all cosmetic procedures require a member of the Royal Australian College of Plastic Surgeons to perform them. Information about the "lighter" procedures such as laser hair removal, chemical peels, botox injections (botulinum toxin - yes, related to botulism - is injected into facial muscles to paralyse them and so reduce skin creasing) as well as a directory

of members around Australia.

I Am She

[www.iamshe.com.au](http://www.iamshe.com.au)

"Magical Skin Care Products wholistically formulated using Ancient Alchemic Techniques gathered and formulated in harmony with the moon's cycles to facilitate enlightenment with regard to the beautiful nature of our true being, totally nurturing the outer skin & honouring The Temple of the Soul, the Physical Body." Righty 'o, then.

**GRAPHIC:** TWO ILLUS: Tatts out: for those who are bored with plain old skin colour.

**LOAD-DATE:** July 24, 2007

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*Body piercing: a billion dollar business United Press International March 16, 2004 Tuesday*

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United Press International

March 16, 2004 Tuesday

**LENGTH:** 977 words

**HEADLINE:** Body piercing: a billion dollar business

**BYLINE:** By ANDREW P. MOISAN

**DATELINE:** WASHINGTON, Feb. 25 (UPI)

**BODY:**

To most people, flesh is just flesh.

And then there are the body piercers. To them and their clients, flesh is a blank canvas, ripe for the kind of creative expression that comes from piercing it with surgical stainless steel -- or whatever metal suits one's taste.

Regardless of what side of the piercing equipment you may be on, the body piercing industry has been among the most adaptable and widely recognized on earth. Practiced on every continent for thousands of years and for thousands of reasons, body piercing remains a venerable force in contemporary business and culture.

"Please don't ask us if it hurts," said Paul King, a body piercer and treasurer of the Association of Professional Piercers, an industry watchdog group. "Of course there's some sensation."

But it's worth it, says King, who also gives lectures about piercing at colleges in California. "Childbirth hurts a lot more than piercing."

King told United Press International that body piercing is about a \$1 billion industry in the United States, even as it rebounds slowly from the turbulence that struck after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

He and others are cautiously optimistic that business will pick up and again reach the apex it did in 2000 -- "the single biggest year that body piercing has ever had," King said.

As was the case with many other businesses in the wake of the devastating Sept. 11 terror attacks, consumer demand fell through the floor. Prospective piercees didn't deem body piercing a necessity in the weeks and months after the attacks, King said, and it sank with many other industries into the red.

"We got slaughtered" in 2001, he said.

Another major player in the industry is **BME** -- Body Modification Ezine -- a popular online forum dedicated to educating people and promoting issues about body piercing and modification. The site is rife with shared experiences, health and safety information and photographs of pierced ears, nostrils, navels and -- for better or for worse -- male and female genitalia, among many others.

In an e-mail, **BME** spokesman Shannon Larratt estimated that each piercing studio in the United States grosses between \$250,000 and \$500,000 annually, adding that there are about 5,000 such studios listed in phonebooks.

Among the destinations in Washington, D.C., -- seemingly the most unlikely of body piercing cities -- for those seeking body modification is Fatty's Custom Tattooz, a second-floor shop on Connecticut Avenue in Dupont Circle.

Emerging from Fatty's with jewelry through an eyebrow or the tongue will cost approximately \$65, according to Jason Simmons, a body piercer at the studio. As at other such establishments, Fatty's charges separately for piercing, which itself runs about \$40, and the jewelry one later slips through the newly punched holes.

Jewelry at Fatty's starts at \$13 and tops off at \$250, Simmons said, while waiting for his next appointment to arrive. The latter product is for one's navel and is made of 14k gold and includes platinum chains laden with gemstones.

Surgical stainless steel tends to be among the most inexpensive of materials found in body jewelry, according to a sampling of body piercing merchants advertising on the Internet. But there are myriad happy mediums in as many forms, from gold to titanium.

The contrasts between some jewelry prices can be yawning gulfs, with a single merchant at once catering to clients with only pocket change to spare and to others with a serious propensity to spend much more. The online shopping pages at Tribalectic Body Jewelry, for example, shows a platinum ring listed at \$599.95. The same ring in surgical stainless steel costs \$9.95. And there are several other options between the two extremes.

As a business, Simmons, 33, has seen body piercing expand locally, suggesting increased popularity for the practice in general, but not necessarily for Fatty's, which has seen several new shops emerge in the city, which offer some competition.

"I don't see quite the same volume I saw then," Simmons said, referring to when he started working in 1996. In all, he's been piercing for 10 years.

Other ways the pastime has changed, Simmons noted, include which body parts customers opt to have pierced and, more broadly, the makeup of the clientele.

Nostril piercing now seems the order du jour. "For so long it had been navel and tongue," Simmons said.

As for customers, a "pretty sizable proportion of professionals" are coming in, he said, some in their 40s and 50s. About a third are college students. Unlike some other shops, Fatty's policy does not allow body modification to anyone under age 18.

But in terms of daily appointments to attend to, it's been "as busy as I've ever seen it," Simmons said, excusing himself to meet his next appointment.

Recently, Elliot Lyons, 19, a sophomore at American University, was one of the appointments at Fatty's. He has four piercings -- all above the neck, he notes -- including one through his lip.

What Lyons has paid varies, depending on where the work was done, he said. Having gotten his first piercing about a year ago, when he turned 18, Lyons estimated he's spent more than \$100 so far.

For Lyons, the allure is simply that he likes how the piercings look. Overall, he said, his satisfaction has justified the monetary expenses. "It was worth it cause they do a pretty good job," he said.

For decent results, one should expect to pay at least \$50 or \$60 per piercing, said King, the piercer from California. He added that while one can get pierced for \$20, "you get what you pay for."

The real professionals in the business "really get into the health and safety aspects of it," King said, considering "what is the newest information out there and how can we make it safer."

**LOAD-DATE:** March 17, 2004

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